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"PUTTING IT TOGETHER": THE PROCESS OF PRODUCING,  
MUSICALLY DIRECTING, AND STARRING  
IN A MUSICAL

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A Project  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
in  
Interdisciplinary Studies

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by  
Shane Maitland Churchill

June 2009

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by  
Shane Maitland Churchill  
June 2009

Approved by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Tom Provenzano, Chair, Theatre Arts

6-2-09  
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Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Margaret Perry, Theatre Arts

  
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Dr. R. Andrew Crane, Music

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this project was to coalesce the demanding roles of actor/singer, musical director, and producer onto one person. While each position has its own specific difficulties, the main challenge surrounding this project fell with mounting a successful production regardless of whether these tasks were performed by one person or three people.

The success of the project was achieved by a combination of hard work, support/assistance from others, and a talented team "behind the scenes." The responsibilities for each position were fulfilled well, but had it not been for the help of others the production itself would not have been as successful. The documentation for this project is presented in an apologia format to give readers an indication of the process.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank my wife, Misty, my daughter, Cordelia, and son Cedric for their understanding and love whilst I have been engaged in the Graduate process. I would also like to thank the members of my committee: Andrew Crane, Margaret Perry, and Tom Provenzano, for their support and inspiration. Lastly, I would like to thank everyone involved that helped get this Master's project off of the ground.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### "WILKOMMEN": AN INTRODUCTION

The 2008-2009 California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) production of *The Last Five Years* was the culminating project of a Master's Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies in Music and Theatre. The performance of this piece was the result of many months of preparation in various areas of musical theatre. As an avid enthusiast and student of musical theatre, I had always marveled at how many tasks are required to perform a musical. From playwrights to directors to actors to crew and more, many people are required to "get a show off the ground."

Musical theatre is, additionally, an invariably complicated art form to generate. Many of the different responsibilities within a production are heightened in comparison to their counterparts on the non-musical stage. Producers are not only trying to procure what is needed to bring a play to an audience but also additional elements to supplement the drama with music performance. A musical director has to juggle instrumentalists, vocalists, and the arrangement of music to bring the two together. An actor

has the concern of bringing a character to life regardless of his role. In a musical the very same actor must add to his palette both the process of singing and the integration of that singing into the believability of the character. Knowing that individually these tasks are demanding, a question arose in my mind: Would it be possible to tackle these three demanding roles in the same production?

For several years I have taken part in two specific areas of musical theatre: as a performer or as a musical director. Of the over three-dozen musicals with which I have been involved, I had been in one position or the other. As I started to apply for a Master's Degree, I became intrigued (as many people do) with multi-tasking within a production. Famous examples of this abound in theatre: Kenneth Branagh, Noel Coward, and several others. This became the focus of my post-baccalaureate studies. Could I improve my ability level enough as both a musician and an actor as to warrant attempting both in a production? While that question does ponder an interesting challenge, I felt that it would also benefit me to learn about another area that interested me and include that in the task at hand: producing. When looking for a show on which to enact

this experiment, one show in particular seemed like a natural choice: *The Last Five Years*.

*The Last Five Years* is a one-act musical written by Robert Jason Brown. The story explores a five-year relationship between Jamie Wellerstein, a rising novelist, and Cathy Hiatt, a struggling actress. It is structured as a series of vignettes in the couple's lives, alternating between Cathy and Jamie from scene to scene. The scenes, however, employ the storytelling device of Cathy's scenes moving backwards in time (beginning the show at the end of the marriage) as Jamie travels forward in time (starting just after the couple had met). The characters do not directly interact except for a wedding song in the middle of the show (as their timelines intersect).

Winner of the 2001-2002 Drama Desk Awards for Best Music and Best Lyrics, *The Last Five Years* has enjoyed a fair amount of acclaim for such an intimate show. The award-winning music ranges from slow, heart-felt ballads to brisk, pop/rock numbers. The orchestration consists entirely of string instruments: piano, guitar, bass, violin, and two cellos. *Time* magazine chose *The Last Five Years* as one of its top ten shows of 2001.

I had other reasons that I wanted this to be the musical I tackled for this project. I needed the production to be set on a small scale. For example, a classic Rogers and Hammerstein musical with over sixty cast and orchestra members would be more than I could handle in my three concurrent positions. I would be able to dedicate an appropriate amount of time to my one co-star and six instrumentalists. While I appreciate shows from the rich musical theatre tradition, I have a special affinity for contemporary musicals. Prior to this production, I had not been involved in anything set in the present day. It would be a new and interesting challenge to prepare and perform music aligned with my contemporary preferences. The rhythms and melodic lines are generally more difficult than in other shows I have performed. Since I was looking for a new and challenging experience, this was a great show to choose.

## CHAPTER TWO

### "I WANNA BE A PRODUCER": A PRODUCER'S JOURNEY

#### Introduction

A former student of mine first exposed me to *The Last Five Years*. As much as I enjoy other musicals, this particular one struck a nerve with me. The beauty of the ballads and liveliness of the up-tempo numbers were a great contrast. Intersecting storylines moving in opposite directions was something I've never heard of before. I thoroughly enjoyed how the heartbreak and humor were present in both characters' perspectives in the show. Just listening to a compact disc (CD) of the music, I knew that mounting a production of this show was going to be a task I needed to undertake. I was not going to be content with just watching a production of this show. Visions of how such an innovative storytelling concept could be brought to the stage were abounding. Having recently applied to CSUSB as an Interdisciplinary Studies major in Musical Theatre, I found that a possibility arose for me to see this production visualized. After successfully petitioning the CSUSB Theatre Arts Department to allow me to perform *The Last Five Years* as the culmination of my studies with them,

I was also granted the role I had been so desperately coveting for this show: producer.

## Documentation of the Process

### Preparation

As I am very familiar with the duties associated with being a musical director and performer, I was able to create methodologies for those roles on my own. Since being a producer is something with which I have absolutely no experience, I immediately began researching duties in prevailing literature and consulted with Mrs. Mari Miller<sup>1</sup> to gain ideas for methodologies in that area.

I found that there are varying amounts of involvement that producers take within any production, provided that certain major objectives are accomplished. The producer's main goals are to get the production up-and-running and to get an audience in to watch the performance. Under the umbrella of these two main tasks are many items that can contribute to the success of the aforementioned goals, such as: arranging finances to pay for incurred costs, working out budget and timetables for the production,

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<sup>1</sup> producer for the Victor Valley youth theatre group Shenanigans

selecting/supervising staff (including cast and crew), handling ticket sales in conjunction with a Box Office Manager, organizing promotion/advertising, and supervising productions by suggesting or approving changes.

#### Departmental Involvement

In a budgetary respect, I did not have as much to do as someone working in the private sector. Between Harlan Jeglin (Technical Director) and Margaret Perry (Department Chair), a budget for my show (Appendix A) and a production calendar were established to coordinate with the other productions for the 2008-2009 season. Initially we were slated for a January 2009 opening in the small Theatre Arts Department venue known as the "Black Box." Ultimately, the change was made in a department meeting to move the production to December 2008 in the much larger CSUSB Ronald E. Barnes Theatre. Securing the money for expenditures was not to be a sole concern of mine. While I did put it upon myself to assist our Box Office and Publicity Manager, Gwyneth Kozbial, in matters of publicity to boost ticket sales, a good portion of the costs would be handled by money allotted to or raised by the department.

Finding technical staff that would join our production team was also an undertaking I would not have to do alone.

The CSUSB Department of Theatre Arts has many talented faculty and staff that design and work on productions. Margaret Perry signed on to direct the show and most of the other technical positions were filled soon after. Ms. Perry also volunteered to design our set (Appendix B) and our props. As propmaster, Sara Flis helped bring these prop designs to fruition. The CSUSB Costume Shop Manager, Catherine M. Erickson, designed our contemporary costume scheme. Trevor Norton, an adjunct instructor, was asked to create a lighting design for the musical. I was able to secure one of the department's talented undergraduates, Michael Gonzales, to work in the capacity of stage manager. In each of the areas of stage, scene, light and sound more undergraduates were coordinated by Margaret to assist on the design team. With each of these positions filled, we cast the show<sup>2</sup> and rehearsals were underway.

### Publicity

My next task as a producer was to start making the public aware of our production. In addition to the methods of promotion that were already in place through our Publicity Manager, I wanted to try some techniques that were not already in place. While the CSUSB Theater Arts

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<sup>2</sup> This will be discussed in further detail in Chapter Three.

Department does send out mailings that publicize the season, I wanted to mail flyers to a targeted audience specifically regarding this show. Over my years of being a high school choir teacher I have made many professional and personal contacts that have expressed interest in my performing career. This list had in excess of one hundred names. Mainly due to the style of music present within *The Last Five Years*, it has also built up a large fan base in the high school age bracket. I included most every high school in the San Bernardino County region that had a music or theatre program on the mailing list as well. All I needed to have was something to mail out to them.

My brother-in-law, Jay Merryweather, graduated from CSUSB with a Bachelor's Degree in Art in 2000. He had dual concentrations in painting and graphic design. It was in this latter respect that Jay had graciously volunteered to assist our production. Jay and I discussed the possibility of designing a postcard that could be sent out to the names on our newly developed mailing list. Jay decided to take the idea a step farther. In creating a design for the postcard Jay, in essence, created the design for all of our printed media (Appendix C). With just a few clicks on his computer screen Jay could alter the design to fit small

postcards, medium sized posters, or extra large marquees. Something that was especially significant was the logo he created to accompany the artwork, which was used on everything from programs to the slideshow used in the performance. Jay's inspiration for the artwork came from another area in which he helped us with advertising: web design.

During the Fall 2008 Quarter Jay was hired by the CSUSB Art Department to teach ART 322: Web Design. As one of the projects assigned to his students, Jay had me come in as a prospective client for a web page design. I gave the students some background on the show, what I was expecting from the site, and answered any questions. Jay broke his class down into five groups and each created a web page to advertise our show (Appendix D). Photographic content for both the printed media and these web pages were generated from a photo shoot that Jay, himself, undertook. When all was said and done, Design #4 was selected. At this point, Jay volunteered to pay for a domain name for posting (<http://thelastfiveyearsusb.com>).

I decided that having a webpage on the internet was not enough to get our show out into the public consciousness. One of the most popular search engines on

the internet is Google™. In order to have people that are interested in *The Last Five Years* know about our show I made a decision to advertise on the Google™ advertising program, AdWords.

AdWords is a Pay-Per-Click (PPC) advertising product that displays text that a client creates when someone searches for specific key words. When someone in California would search for phrases such as "The Last Five Years", "Shane Churchill", "Margaret Perry", "San Bernardino", "musical", or many other words that I had indicated, there was a good chance that my ad would appear next to the results of their search (Appendix E). The advertisement had our internet address, giving people an opportunity to learn more about our show.

Jay's involvement in the show was not limited to advertising. One of the last areas in which we needed assistance was the creation of particular props. To enhance the illusion that the character I was to play was a real novelist I commissioned Jay to create a book cover that appeared realistic and had my picture on it (Appendix F). With all of my financial/promotional and creative inputs enacted, the only thing left to do as a producer was to wait for the show to open.

## CHAPTER THREE

### "THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC": A MUSICAL DIRECTOR'S JOURNEY

#### Introduction

I am no stranger to musical instruction. In addition to the musical theatre productions that I have lent my services to, I have made a career out of teaching high school music. Educating others about the intricacies of notes, rhythm, phrasing, harmony comes very natural to me. In addition to the instructional aspect of musical directing, I thoroughly enjoy the creative freedom of forming the music to my artistic vision. Upon listening to the Original Cast Recording of *The Last Five Years* my mind was flooding with ideas on how to re-interpret and re-imagine the music. Having music that can tug at the heartstrings played solely by string instruments is something I had wanted to mold for a long time. I have been fortunate to conduct pit orchestras with wind and percussion instruments, but never with string players. I was also relishing the opportunity to craft some techniques for our female lead to express the considerable vocal and dramatic range present in the role of Cathy. I thought

that the small orchestra size and the even smaller cast size would make putting music together for *The Last Five Years* relatively easy. The process became more complicated than I originally thought.

## Documentation of the Process

### Instrumental Music

My path on the road to musically directing *The Last Five Years* started with a cellist. With a familiarity of how difficult the string parts in the show were, I knew that I had to find first-rate musicians to perform them. Two years before the eventual performance date I asked a friend, Michèle Tacchia, if she would be interested in playing in a show for my Master's Degree. I gave her a CD of the music to evaluate whether it would be worth playing. She immediately confirmed that she would like to be involved in this project.

Michèle is a noted concert cellist that has developed quite an international reputation as a performer. Mrs. Tacchia's involvement in the show was established at least a year before any other musician signed on to play. One of the most difficult aspects about assembling instrumentalists to play for the show was to establish an

incentive for them. As per the CSUSB Theatre Arts Department budget, we would not be able to offer payment to any pit musicians. This meant that, like Michèle, I would have to populate our mini-orchestra with volunteers.

Given the fact that I would be acting on stage, it was imperative that I find a musician who could act as bandleader for the other musicians. Giving entrances and cut-offs for the band is something that a vast majority of keyboard players do when there is no conductor in a pit band. I was once again fortunate that another friend of mine, Nathaniel (Nate) Brown volunteered to lead the band in this capacity and had played the show recently. As he had musically directed many shows himself, I had the utmost confidence that Nate would be able to enact any variation I requested in the score.

It is especially nice when an instrumentalist has knowledge of how the vocal mechanism works. In instances in which they are accompanying a singer, adjustments can be made to adapt to vocal phrasing and breath control. The bassist and violinist for our production would both come from friendships that I formed with fellow members of the CSUSB Chamber Singers. Jonathan Frias (bass) and Joseph Soza (violin) were both instrumental majors that had an

additional talent as singers. Upon viewing the difficult music, both young men felt that this would be an interesting challenge and a chance to help a friend. Once they had confirmed their involvement, there were only two more instrumentalists to find.

A guitarist and second cellist were not as difficult to find as I had originally thought. I had asked friends for references, followed up on those suggestions and was able to conditionally sign-up both young men interested in playing for the show. One of the perils of using talented musicians in a production is that they tend to be in demand quite often. Such was the case with these last two instrumentalists. The guitarist was heavily involved in performing with his college organizations and rock band. His inability to make it to every rehearsal and even a couple of performances ultimately caused him to pull out of our production. The cellist was an extremely talented high school student that would only be able to free up time in his schedule if his school would accept the college units the CSUSB Theatre Department was willing to offer. His school was unwilling to do this and he had to also end his involvement with *The Last Five Years* about two weeks before the show opened.

During Nate's previous involvement with this show, he was the only instrumentalist. *The Last Five Years* keyboard music is written in a piano/conductor fashion that includes many of the other instrument's cues. As we underwent each of the four band-only rehearsals, Nate invariably had to fill in for one or more of the other instrumentalists' parts that were unable to attend a particular rehearsal. It wasn't until our first dress rehearsal with orchestra that we had all four of our final musicians playing together. I was able to take solace in the fact that Nate would distribute the music changes Margaret and I agreed on to the others.

In order to establish a clearer sense of story, Margaret and I felt that there would need to be several changes made in the music. Margaret expertly handled lyric and song order modifications while I crafted music alterations to accompany these changes. I'm not normally a fan of underscore music. It is very difficult to line up background music being played underneath speech. With a song such as *See I'm Smiling* it is necessary to keep the flow of the song going. In order to keep the emotional tension high at the end of the song, Jamie's lines that normally end the tune were moved to start before Cathy's

poignant final phrase. A new vamp (or repeated section of music) was easily formed from the existing piano and guitar lines. This enabled us to continue with the music under Jamie's lines as if was originally written in. Margaret and I made a choice for most songs to have a definite end. In this respect, I replaced the vamp that would have led into the next song with a simple cadence (notes that indicate the end of a song). In the song *Moving Too Fast* I was able to insert a break immediately before Jamie's line "I found a woman I love." This allowed us to get Cathy on the stage for her upcoming monologue and also give an indication of whom Jamie is talking about. In *The Next Ten Minutes* the song opens and closes with a recitative style of singing. This genre of singing has hardly any discernable melody and wasn't necessary to convey the lyrics. I, instead, organized a vamp to play while Jamie and Cathy speak the opening and closing of the song. To give the actors a slight vocal rest, we inserted an intermission after this song. I had to craft a cadence once again, as this song also leads directly into the next.

A large section of the show that lacked continuity is the area that encompasses the music and monologues present between *A Miracle Would Happen*, *When You Come Home To Me*,

and *Climbing Uphill*. While the rest of the show has Cathy's timeline going backwards every time we see her, this section has all of Cathy's material appear chronologically. In order to bring the scenes back to our diverging order, some musical shuffling was in order. Almost every aspect about the reordering of music flowed naturally. As Jamie is singing how he'll be there for Cathy with the last two words of his song "I will", we jump to Cathy complaining about being in Jamie's shadow. She starts with the words "I will" and even starts on the same note, overlapping with Jamie. We jump musically backwards to Cathy's last bad audition and subsequent complaints to her father and expressing her internal monologue. We then end this section with her first very bad practice session. This was the only area in which we let one song not receive finality, by having it seem that Jamie is cutting Cathy off (when he is engaged in an argument in his timeline). A cadence was once again crafted for the end of *If I Didn't Believe In You*. Margaret had the wonderful idea that every time Jamie gets panicked during the refrain of *Nobody Needs To Know* the music should speed up to match his level of panic and slow back down when he resumes talking to his mistress. The final musical change was to echo a portion

of *The Next Ten Minutes* in which the characters reference each other. This naturally fit into the music for *Goodbye Until Tomorrow*, which concludes the same way the show started: with a solo piano.

### Our Female Lead

With much work and more than a few trials to get our instrumental music (and musicians) ready for the performances, I had the exact opposite experience with finding a co-star and getting her ready to perform. Prior to the CSUSB Summer Quarter of 2008, I had created and placed audition materials in the Performing Arts front office. I figured that this would give prospective auditionees the opportunity to practice over the summer vacation. The audition announcement (Appendix G) stated our original intention of having an early run in the Winter 2009 Quarter. It also asked for students to volunteer in a designing capacity (this was before any staff other than Margaret was signed on). I created music audition materials to prepare the ladies for the songs we (Margaret and I) wanted to hear during the audition. A CD was created with excerpts from three songs in the show: *Still Hurting*, *Climbing Uphill*, and *The Next Ten Minutes*. Along with these excerpts, I included an instrumental version

that I edited to coincide with the reference tracks. Lastly, I created a handout (Appendix H) to accompany each CD that described what we were looking for from those that audition. When the 2008 Fall Quarter resumed, I posted an amended audition announcement (Appendix I) that stated revised performance dates and specific audition dates.

On the evening of the auditions we had thirteen women auditioning for the role of Catherine Hiatt. Each actress had particular strengths and weaknesses that they could have brought to the character of Cathy<sup>3</sup>. In the end, though, we called back six women indicated by a star on the aforementioned notes. Two of the ladies (Auditionees #2 and #7) were unable to return for callbacks on Friday, September 26th and we had their callback at the end of auditions on Thursday, September 25th. The purpose of the callback auditions was two-fold. We wanted to see how well their voices and emotions blended with mine for the lone duet in which the characters are together, *The Next Ten Minutes*. The other portion was to see how well each could act without having to sing. We had the women act the lyrics for a portion of the song *See I'm Smiling* rather than sing them. After their own interpretation, Margaret

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<sup>3</sup> As indicated by my audition notes (Appendix J).

gave them some notes and we watched to see how well they took that direction in their second attempt. The actress we felt that best portrayed the qualities of Cathy we were looking for (equal parts strength and vulnerability with a good sense of comic timing, as well as an excellent voice that merged well with mine) was Jessica Soza.

There was not much that I had to refine in Jessica's interpretation of Cathy's music. Having graduated from the American Musical and Dramatic Academy (AMDA) in Los Angeles, Jessica was well adept at analyzing character and combining that with singing. There was one main area that we worked on in her rehearsals with me: staying in a musical theatre mixed tone. The mixed tone combines a classical sound with strong belting sound. Jessica's vocal lessons at CSUSB have been focused solely on operatic study. The use of a belting tone in classical study is generally discouraged. When singing notes above her passaggio (the area of the voice where there is a shift in ranges) Jessica would resort to a protected classical tone. While that has a beautiful sound, it doesn't match the character of the other notes. Between a little vocal experimentation with me, and a healthy amount of wonderful

coaching with Lisa Lyons<sup>4</sup>, Jessica was able to have a consistent musical theatre tone across her range.

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<sup>4</sup> CSUSB Theatre Arts adjunct faculty.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### "WE'RE A SPECIAL KIND OF PEOPLE KNOWN AS SHOW PEOPLE": AN ACTOR'S JOURNEY

#### Introduction

I am aware that as a performer of musical theatre I have particular strengths and weaknesses. My voice is, most definitely, my strongest suit. My Bachelor's Degree in Music Education had a vocal emphasis. My formal training in that regard has encompassed many years. Even with this training, the music of *The Last Five Years* is particularly challenging. With rhythms that border on Stephen Sondheim complexity and character range of over two octaves, Jamie will be the most difficult role I've sung. My acting ability is where more of my insecurities lie, though. I have consistently struggled with feeling comfortable with my physicality. Even with the wonderful training I had received as part of my Minor in Theatre Arts and the many shows I've performed in, I haven't always felt confident that I could portray a realistic individual on stage. This has led to me to audition exclusively for character roles that are comedic in nature. With *The Last Five Years* I made the conscious decision to attempt a role

that is more of a realistic leading man than I've ever played. In my attempt to bring this character to the stage I hope to come to terms with being myself (or at least a close approximation thereof).

## Documentation of the Process

### Rehearsal and Preparation

The week after Jessica was cast we immediately began rehearsals. Our first rehearsal was a read-through of the lyrics. As at least 90% of this show is sung, I found this process slightly difficult. I desperately wanted to put the words to musical notes but was able to resist the urge. After the first couple of scenes I began to feel more comfortable with the method and was able to tap into the purpose for rehearsing in such a way. In delivering lines in a conversational style, I was better able to understand the emotional connection to the words. The music would only heighten that connection.

Another momentous rehearsal was organized by Margaret to be read chronologically from the first year of the characters' relationship to the last. This meant that instead of the "show order" of scenes, we would run all of Cathy's scenes from the end of the show in reverse to

coincide with Jamie's "forward time" scenes. I was able to see how each character related to one another in context of how life actually progresses. It made the characters' relationship feel more realistic to me. As each scene was analyzed we found how the songs relate to each other. When placed side by side, the lyrics for *If I Didn't Believe In You* and *See I'm Smiling* could be interpreted as two separate sides to the same argument.

A particularly important rehearsal was one in which we placed another physical presence in our scenes. Since we allude to others being in scenes with us throughout the production, we could only imagine the other person's reactions. In this particular rehearsal Margaret had Jessica and I both on stage in the scenes in which both of our characters would have been present. If we weren't singing, we were reacting (without words) to the other person. Our Assistant Stage Manager, Christopher Stumreiter, filled in for characters that were neither Cathy nor Jamie. This was easily the most important rehearsal for me. Every emotional connection that I had to generate from thin air came much more naturally when I had a person with whom to interact. It also made it easier to imagine where my sightlines would be, when singing or

talking with other characters. The aforementioned rehearsals helped the show develop into a very cohesive whole. The individual songs themselves offered particular challenges and triumphs.

### Individual Scene Analysis

While the first song I sing in the show is *Shiksa Goddess*, my first entrance onto the stage is during an instrumental break in *Still Hurting*. I had to establish, without words, a scenario in which I'm waiting for Cathy to arrive for a date. As much as I tried I was never able to get past performing a series of motions, rather than living in a realistically imagined moment.

*Shiksa Goddess* should have been more difficult to establish a sense of time and place, as we had set it progressing over the course of a few months. I actually felt more at ease with my character on this song, though. I feel that this is due to the variety of ways I had to interact with Cathy. With talking on a cell phone, fawning over her on a date, and walking with her in the park I never felt self-conscious about my actions becoming stagnant or extraneous. Vocally, this number includes the highest and lowest notes of the show. As the highest note was to be sung in falsetto, that was not a problem. I did

feel slightly uncomfortable singing the final high F on the word "you" and ultimately altered the vowel as to make a more relaxed tone. This song marked the first of many instances in which I altered the lyrics to suit our production.

My Master's project was to be something to which I would invite everyone I know. The language used in the show contains a fair amount of profanity. While it might have been awkward to use such language in front of grandparents and other family, I know that they would have understood if I chose to include such things. With the inclusion on my students and their parents in the audience, though, I felt some changes were necessary. I was not going to feel comfortable going back to teaching with that vocabulary being some parent's only perception of me outside of the classroom. While Jessica did not change any of her character's questionable language, I went through the script and altered every instance my character had with comparable phrases. There is precedence for substitution of profanity in *The Last Five Years*. I saw a production from a Christian college that changed the lyrics and it had just a strong of an impact on me as the productions I've seen that included profanity.

The next time my character is on stage is during *See I'm Smiling*. I have a few small scenes in between Cathy's verses that establish when Jamie is starting to get noticed by the literary world. During the rehearsal process I created a dialogue that included the other half of the conversations that the audience never hears. This made the scenes feel more natural to me.

Jamie is starting to achieve success in his life during *Moving Too Fast*. The decision was made to play the first half of the song as an awe-struck college kid. I chose to have this song include Jamie reconciling the guilt his family puts on him for not making the same choices as the other Jewish members of his family. This gave me the opportunity to make an otherwise light-hearted song more introspective. We had set the second half of the song several months later, after Jamie is getting famous. I enjoyed the opportunity to play the dichotomy between cockiness and guilt that still plagues my character. This song has several instances of repeated high notes. Even placing the vocal production into a lighter head-voice, I still found that I strained on occasion. A lowered larynx while singing would have helped me be more at ease in this area.

*The Schmu-el Song* was one of my favorite songs to perform in *The Last Five Years*. Before rehearsing for our production I took it for granted that it was a cheerful song in which Jamie is just embellishing his Christmas gift to Cathy with a story. During our rehearsal process I feel we were able to make it much more. In the beginning of the number I added a little opening shtick to establish the humor that attracts Cathy to Jamie. Since Jamie is becoming the main breadwinner in the household, he is telling Cathy to quit her job in a roundabout way as to not upset her. Even though I supplemented the song with a lot of humor, this frame of reference grounded me for the end of the number. I felt a lot of dramatic freedom when my character was getting carried away with telling his story. The contrast of me giving a heartfelt message at the end of the song felt extremely natural and ended the number well.

I think that *The Next Ten Minutes* is easily one of the best-performed songs in the show. Having Jessica physically on the stage while I sing to/with her made connecting with the song much easier. My character's emotions came more effortlessly than in other songs. This scene was one that we spent a great deal of time preparing. Vocally, I had to work hard not to over-balance Jessica in

our harmonies. The song starts and ends with each of us acting out our side of a conversation that occurs before Jamie's marriage proposal. Since this occurs while walking, I had to practice often to make sure that I would be at the appropriate places on stage to coincide with where Jessica would be. An inclusion of rushed marriage festivities was a special joy to perform.

In analyzing the lyrics for *The Next Ten Minutes*, much can be determined about how the show is set up. Through this process I was able to understand this musical much better. We found that even when they are on stage together, they are not always listening to each other. Jamie is talking about life with her in increments. Cathy is talking about bearing children and other long-term commitments. With their own perspectives being so divergent, it is no wonder that in each of the couple's other scenes their partner is not physically on stage. In recounting their relationship, Jamie is remembering his side of the tale while Cathy is working through the pain of the break-up by continually remembering back to the beginning.

After a much needed intermission, I resume with the song *A Miracle Would Happen*. The concept for this half of

the show is that my character is more successful. I found that I had an easier time playing this newly confident and contemporary character than I had expected. At this point we can see that things aren't going how Jamie planned. The self-convincing that I get to play towards the end of the song came to me pretty early in rehearsals and was one of the first non-comedic areas I felt comfortable portraying.

From this point on in the musical I start delving into the negative aspects of Jamie's relationship. In two spoken scenes with Jamie, we see that Cathy might have a jealous streak and that his new book mirrors his perception of their marriage. The subtle and gradual loss of hope that is exhibited here was an acting challenge that I feel helped me to be a slightly more intricate performer.

I've never played true anger and frustration on stage before. In *If I Didn't Believe In You* I was finally awarded that opportunity. In my daily life I do not have much cause to express these kinds of emotions. In rehearsals for this scene I realized that just because I might not need to vocalize these negative emotions does not mean that I am incapable of feeling them. In fact, I feel that this song is one of the most realistic human portrayals that I have performed thus far.

The solo number that I had the easiest time connecting to vocally was also the most difficult to connect to emotionally. *Nobody Needs to Know* is the song that Jamie is singing to the woman with whom he is having an affair<sup>5</sup>. Our perception is that it is his editor, Elise. This gorgeous, albeit sad, ballad sits in a very comfortable place in my upper register. The phrasing of the melody line was very easy to express, especially with the acceleration at the chorus. The context of the song was where I had no shared beliefs with Jamie. Cheating on my wife is the farthest thing from my own personal convictions. I had to realize that I did not need to be convinced of the reasons for being unfaithful and just understand that Jamie believes them. Once this was understood, I felt that this was one of my most powerful scenes.

In the final scene of the musical, Jessica and I have one more opportunity to sing together. She sings *Goodbye Until Tomorrow* and I sing *I Could Never Rescue You*. During my section I express the desperation that comes from feeling you have made the only choice available and wishing things were different. With *If I Didn't Believe In You* and

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<sup>5</sup> Changes in lyrics were made to spring the object of the song onto the audience just before the chorus.

*Nobody Needs to Know* leading into this song, I found it easier to be in the moment once we ran the show in order. Margaret added a story to our exit, not indicated in the script nor shared with the audience via anything other than our expressions. After we end our respective songs, we turn to leave and cross each other's paths. We notice each other and turn back for one more look. This takes place quite a while after the breakup. Cathy's smile at this encounter shows that Cathy has, indeed moved on. Jamie's relationship with Elise has also fallen through and he once again longs for the woman that was his wife. This gave the show a nice sense of closure.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### "ANOTHER OP'NIN', ANOTHER SHOW": A POST MORTEM OF THE PRODUCTION

#### Introduction

On December 7, 2008 the last note had been played. The final bows had been taken. I was left with a strong sense of accomplishment and introspection. My brief stint with *The Last Five Years* had come to a close and I was left to evaluate whether I had accomplished the tasks for all three of my positions effectively. The show as a whole never experienced a drastic problem that could not be overcome. What I wanted to ascertain was my ability to carry across the responsibilities of this musical with the other major responsibility in my life: music education.

Approximately ten months after my production was approved through the CSUSB Theatre Arts Department, I was given a new assignment at work. In addition to the already time consuming tasks of being a high school choir teacher, I had the added responsibilities of a high school band teacher. Time (apart from my choir teacher obligations) that I had set aside to perform duties for *The Last Five Years* now needed to be shared with the hectic schedule of a

band director. If I achieved what I set out to do for the show, then I will have gone beyond my expectations.

#### Producer Perspective

Through this production I was able to indulge in two areas of assistance commonly called upon for producers: financial and creative input. I was able to lend assistance to the promotional (and therefore financial) side of the show by the securing the mailing list and advertising materials. The online and print advertising may have contributed to some of the 687 audience members we had over the run of the show. With the seating capacity for the CSUSB Ronald E. Barnes Theatre at 144 seats, that gives an average of 114 patrons per performance. I feel that with over 79% of the seats being filled, this particular endeavor was reasonably successful<sup>6</sup>. I also recognize that a great deal of the spectators were present due to the hard work and diligence of our Publicity Manager, Gwyneth Kozbial. To establish whether my contributions to publicity were successful, I could have

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<sup>6</sup> The CSUSB Theatre Arts Department uses 90% as their success mark.

created a survey for the patrons of the show to indicate where they heard about the show.

Margaret Perry had many wonderful ideas for our production. As the director, scenic designer, properties designer, and script editor she was entitled to her ideas being placed upon the stage. I was fortunate that some of the creative ideas I had discussed with her had made it into the show. For each scene, Margaret and I had decided to indicate location with a slide from a slideshow and soundscapes on occasion. Inclusion of set pieces and props from scenes such as *The Schmucl Song* and the book reading were also collaborative decisions. I have received positive comments from audience members on these creative areas specifically.

#### Musical Director Perspective

The successes for my musical director duties are mainly anecdotal and dependent upon the talent of the performers. I was given many positive comments about how well the music was integrated into the show and how moving the orchestrations were. The musical alterations I was able to make, for changes in the show, helped to make everything wrap up with each scene. Those familiar with

the show had mentioned that this new orchestration "flowed better" for them and it definitely made it easier for Jessica and me as performers. A prime example of this is how I altered the orchestration to bring the song *The Next Ten Minutes* to an end for intermission. Had I not made that change, and others like it, there would have been many instances that we would have stressed our voices having sung two difficult songs in a row.

One area that I would definitely change, if I were to do this again, is that of monetary compensation for the instrumentalists. My musicians were all volunteers. I would have much rather paid them for the time and dedication they exhibited. I could have raised money through any number of fundraisers, had my time constraints not been so rigid. Those that played for the performances worked just as hard for this production as any paid musician I have known. I also feel that the young men that backed out of the musical might have put us as a higher priority if money was involved. This being said, I have a special appreciation for Nate Brown, our complimentary accompanist. Not only was his performance great during the run, but he also was able to get the band to follow Jessica and I when we jumped ahead or fell behind in the music.

## Actor Perspective

After analyzing my performances throughout the run, I realized that I still have several areas of weakness I will need to improve but I have areas of growth I never expected. I have noticed that I engage in extraneous arm movements to indicate particular emotions or lines. Even with all of the rehearsals covering it, I still was not always consistent with my sightlines during my solo scenes. If Cathy was at one particular level when I first looked at her, I had trouble referring to that same location. I think engaging in mime-style training could help me with this skill. I also found that my positive emotions (joy, humor, and the like) could appear unrealistic and perhaps a bit cartoonish on stage. Armed with this realization, this is a trait that I can work on in future productions.

I did feel that despite the vocal fatigue a day of teaching had on me, I was able to convey the music well as a singer. As a baritone, my tessitura (or average range) lies in a relatively low part of the male voice. Since the role of Jamie is a tenor, I had to alter the full classical tone I generally use. When I brought the vocal production forward in the resonating areas of my vocal mechanism, the

higher range was easier to achieve<sup>7</sup>. I also felt I did a better job on serious numbers than the comedic ones. While I can appear funny on stage, I did not have the sense of "being in the moment" in my comic scenes that I had in my dramatic scenes. I find it ironic that I feel more accomplished in an area that I was so fearful to explore.

### Conclusion

The CSUSB production of *The Last Five Years*, by most accounts, was a general success. Had I attempted the triumvirate of positions in the professional world or private sector I think that the production would have failed. There were many areas in which I received assistance that I would not be afforded in a non-educational venue. The duties that I performed for the project pushed the limits of my time-management skills. If I would be required to secure funding for the production, create a budget, or supervise staff in addition to those duties, I am confident that I would not be able to manage all aspects effectively.

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<sup>7</sup> This is a similar technique to what was introduced to Jessica to free herself of classical tone.

As an educational venture, I feel that I was able to grow in all three of my positions. I have not only learned what it takes to be a producer, but was able to handle many of a producer's tasks my first time attempting them. My experience as a musical director for the project has taught me how to adapt and adjust music to fit what is needed for a show. My orchestrating and composing skills have been improved through usage in the production. Greater realism in my acting technique occurred when I gave myself the opportunity to focus on non-comedic material.

While I enjoyed the process and learned a great deal from it, I would not recommend that every choir/band teacher attempt this project. Juggling such a demanding career with maintaining a high level of commitment to the production incurs a great deal of stress. I am fortunate that I have a strong stress-coping mechanism. I was able to go through the process and keep everything in order. I would not expect everyone to manage as well. Overall, I was pleased with the end result of the project. I would love the chance to perform the show again without the pressure of academic deadlines and during a timeframe that would not conflict with my job.

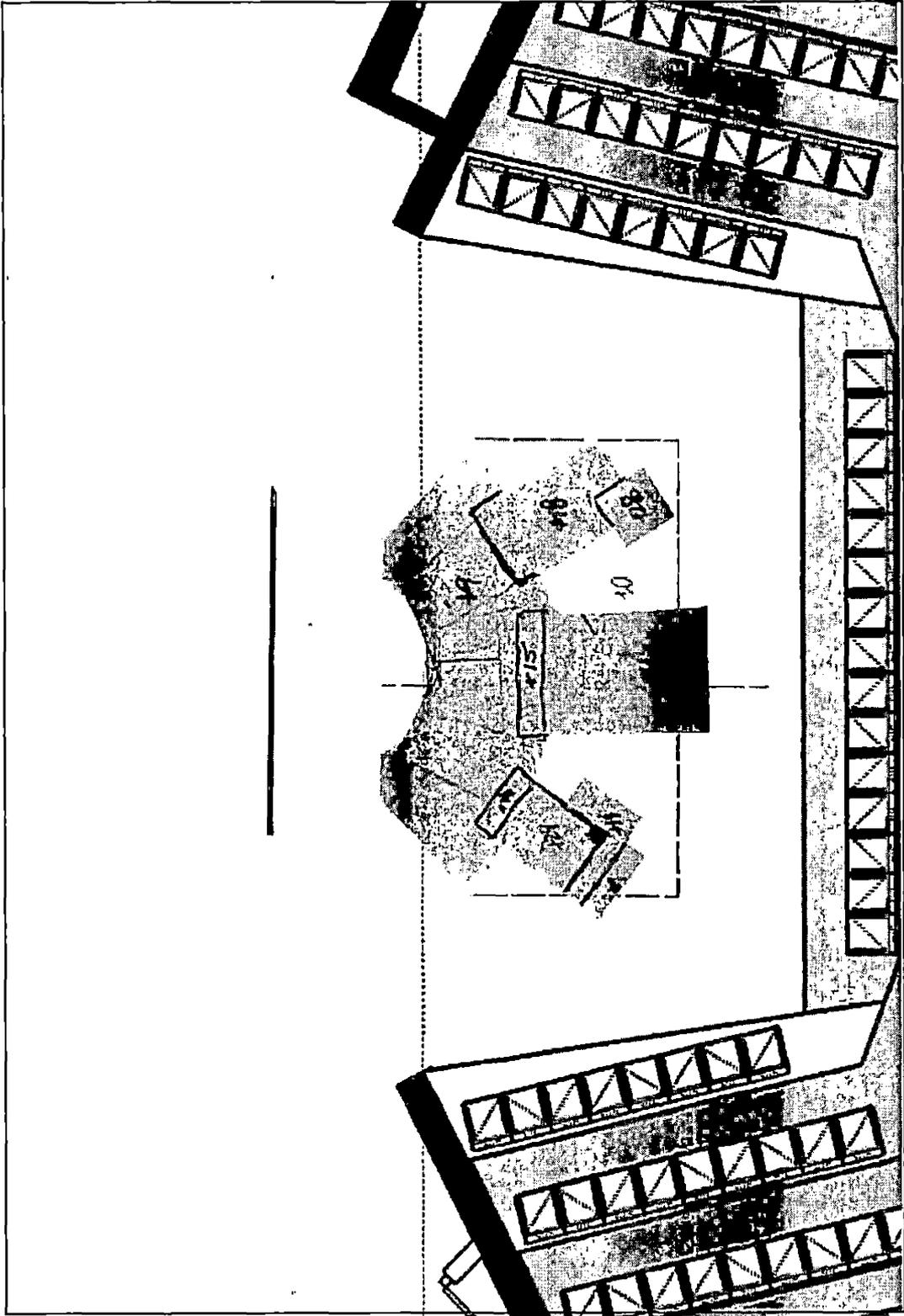
APPENDIX A

2008-2009 THEATRE ARTS DEPARTMENT BUDGET

<b>The Miser</b>										<b>TOTAL</b>		
\$ 4,000.00	\$ 600.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 550.00	\$ 175.00	\$ 75.00	\$300.00	\$ 8,750.00		
<b>SETS</b>	<b>PROPS</b>	<b>COSTUMES</b>	<b>LIGHTS</b>	<b>SOUND</b>	<b>MAKE-UP</b>	<b>SCR&amp;ROY</b>	<b>HIST</b>	<b>RECEPT</b>	<b>ACTF</b>	<b>MISC</b>		
<b>Last 6 Years</b>												
\$1,500.00	\$200.00	\$1,000.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 100.00	\$1,000.00	\$ 175.00	\$ 75.00	\$225.00	\$4,525.00		
<b>SETS</b>	<b>PROPS</b>	<b>COSTUMES</b>	<b>LIGHTS</b>	<b>SOUND</b>	<b>MAKE-UP</b>	<b>SCR&amp;ROY</b>	<b>HIST</b>	<b>RECEPT</b>	<b>ACTF</b>	<b>MISC</b>		
<b>Six Degrees</b>												
\$4,000.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 1,700.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 550.00	\$ 175.00	\$ 75.00	\$225.00	\$ 7,725.00		
<b>SETS</b>	<b>PROPS</b>	<b>COSTUMES</b>	<b>LIGHTS</b>	<b>SOUND</b>	<b>MAKE-UP</b>	<b>SCR&amp;ROY</b>	<b>HIST</b>	<b>RECEPT</b>	<b>ACTF</b>	<b>MISC</b>		
<b>Novio Boy</b>										<b>Transport</b>		
\$2,000.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 175.00	\$ 75.00	\$225.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 6,875.00	
<b>SETS</b>	<b>PROPS</b>	<b>COSTUMES</b>	<b>LIGHTS</b>	<b>SOUND</b>	<b>MAKE-UP</b>	<b>SCR&amp;ROY</b>	<b>HIST</b>	<b>RECEPT</b>	<b>ACTF</b>	<b>MISC</b>		
<b>Pirates of Penzance</b>												
\$1,926.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 175.00	\$ 75.00	\$225.00	\$ 6,850.00		
<b>SETS</b>	<b>PROPS</b>	<b>COSTUMES</b>	<b>LIGHTS</b>	<b>SOUND</b>	<b>MAKE-UP</b>	<b>SCR&amp;ROY</b>	<b>HIST</b>	<b>RECEPT</b>	<b>ACTF</b>	<b>MISC</b>		
<b>Inventory Accounts</b>										<b>TOTAL</b>	\$ 34,525.00	
		<b>Props</b>	\$1,200.00									
		<b>costumes</b>	\$2,000.00									
		<b>scenery</b>	\$3,200.00								\$15,400.00	
	<b>Lights and</b>	<b>Sound</b>	\$2,000.00									
	<b>Chair</b>		\$2,000.00									
	<b>Repair</b>		\$5,000.00								<b>TOTAL</b>	\$49,925.00

APPENDIX B

SET PLOT



APPENDIX C  
PRINTED MEDIA

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY  
SAN BERNARDINO

# THE LAST FIVE YEARS

*There are two sides  
to every story*



California State University,  
San Bernardino  
6300 University Parkway  
San Bernardino, CA 92407

December 3, 4, 5, 6 at 8:00pm  
December 6, 7, at 2:00pm

<http://thearts.csubeb.edu>  
Students \$5  
Seniors \$10  
General Admission \$15

Call (909) 537 5884 or visit the Performing Arts Box Office for Info



Postcard Front

Written and Composed by JASON ROBERT BROWN

**THE LAST FIVE YEARS**

*There are two sides to every story*

December 3,4,5,6 at 8p.m.  
December 6,7,8 at 2p.m.

California State University, San Bernardino  
5500 University Parkway  
San Bernardino, CA 92407

Students \$5  
Seniors \$10  
General Admission \$15

<http://theatre.csusb.edu>  
CALL (909) 537 5884 or visit the Performing arts Box office for info

THE LAST FIVE YEARS  
is presented through special arrangement with  
Music Theatre International (MTI)  
All authorized performance materials are either registered by MTI  
421 West 57th Street, New York, NY 10019  
Phone: 212 512 2484 Fax: 212 512 4484  
www.MTIonline.com

Postcard Back

APPENDIX D  
WEB PAGE PROPOSALS

University Theatre at CSUSB Proudly Presents

# THE LAST FIVE YEARS



"Brimming with *persistent melodies* throughout lyrics *and a heartfelt, compelling story*"  
-Michael Kuchwara,  
Associated Press

"*Unpredictably* heartfelt insights, energized by a seductive, *rhythmic drive*"



**Starring:**  
Shane Churchill and Jessica Soza

**Dates/Times:**  
December 4, 5, 6 8:00pm December 6, 7,  
2:00pm

**Place:**  
The Ronald E. Barnes Theatre, California  
State University San Bernardino.

**Prices:**  
Senior: \$10 Adult: \$15 Child: \$ 5  
Student: \$ 5  
Snapz Pro X

CSUSB University Theatre Department presents

# The Last Five Years

The Most Anticipated Musical of the Season

# COMING FALL 2008

PRE-ORDER YOUR TICKETS NOW  
WHILE SUPPLIES LAST



story cast tickets showtime pricing photos map contact

“Brimming with persistent melodies, throughout lyrics and a heartfelt, compelling story”

★★★★  
-Laura Kernham  
for the Observer

“Unpredictably heartfelt insights, energized by a seductive, rhythmic drive!”

★ ★ ★ ★  
-Linda Winer  
Snap2Pro X  
Newsday

Design #2

Design #3

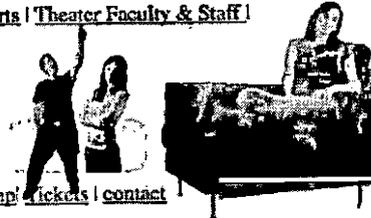


# THE LAST FIVE YEARS

CSUSB Theater Arts | Theater Faculty & Staff

CSUSB Theatre  
Proudly Presents  
"The Last Five  
Years."

[csusb map](#) | [tickets](#) | [contact](#)



**Place:** The Ronald  
E. Barnes Theatre,  
CSUSB San Bernardino

**Dates & Times:**  
Dec 4, 5, 6 at 8:00pm  
Dec 6, 7, at 2:00pm

**Starring:**  
Shane Churchill and  
Jessica Soza

**Musical writer &  
director:** Jason  
Robert Brown and  
Margaret Perry

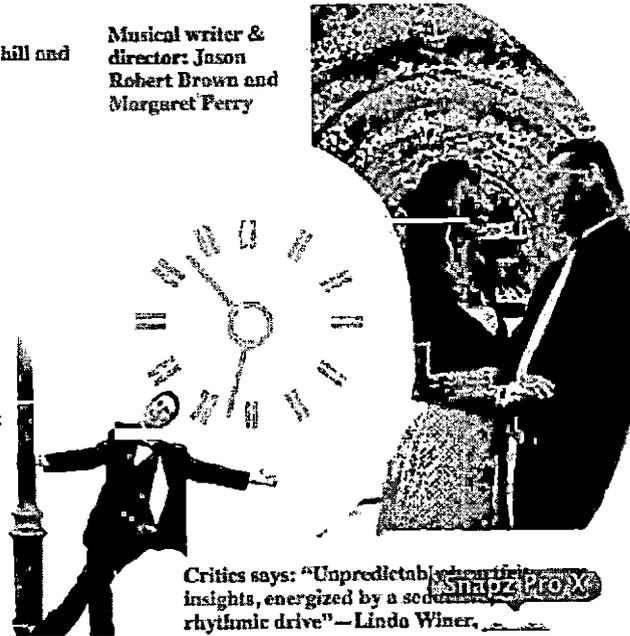
**Ticket Price:**

Senior: \$10

Adult: \$15

Children: \$5

Student: \$5



Critics says: "Unpredictable insights, energized by a soulful rhythmic drive!" —Linda Winer.

**Snapz Pro**

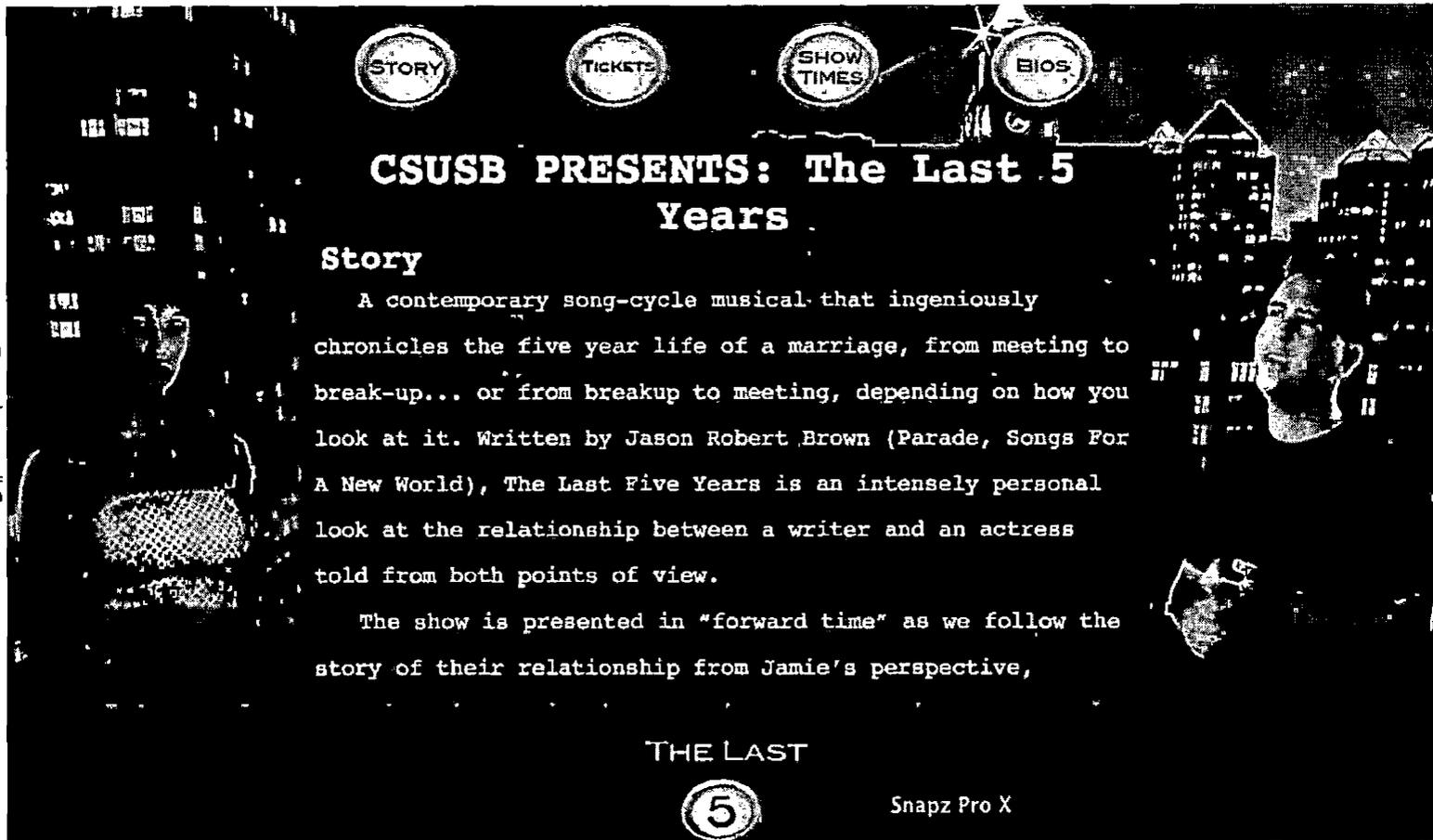
CSUSB Theatre Department Presents

# The Last Five Years

*There are two sides to every story*



Design #4



STORY      TICKETS      SHOW TIMES      BIOS

## CSUSB PRESENTS: The Last 5 Years

### Story

A contemporary song-cycle musical that ingeniously chronicles the five year life of a marriage, from meeting to break-up... or from breakup to meeting, depending on how you look at it. Written by Jason Robert Brown (Parade, Songs For A New World), The Last Five Years is an intensely personal look at the relationship between a writer and an actress told from both points of view.

The show is presented in "forward time" as we follow the story of their relationship from Jamie's perspective,

THE LAST

5 Snapz Pro X

APPENDIX E  
ADWORDS ADVERTISING RESULTS



## My Ad Campaign

### The Last Five Years

A revolutionary new production of Jason Robert Brown's masterpiece  
thelastfiveyears.csub.com

[Edit](#) | [Create another ad](#)

Campaign is Active

Budget: \$50.00 /month

Max CPC: \$1.66

Language: English

Showing in: California

[Pause](#)  
[Edit settings](#)

### Health Meter

Your ads are showing too rarely to spend your full budget. You may need to add keywords or raise your click price limit.  
[Add keywords](#) | [Adjust settings](#)

[Keywords](#) | [Graphs](#)

Statistics for All time - Oct 25, 2008 to Apr 17, 2009 [change](#)

[+ Add more keywords](#) [Customize columns](#)

Keyword		Impressions	Clicks	Avg. CPC	Total Cost	Avg. Pos
Search terms that trigger your ads		Times your ad has shown	Visits to your website	Average cost for each ad click	Charges in this period	Average display rank among all ads
shane churchill <a href="#">Delete</a>		4	1	\$0.04	\$0.04	1.0
margaret perry <a href="#">Delete</a>		38	0	-	-	1.1
jessica soza <a href="#">Delete</a>		13	0	-	-	1.4
jason robert brown <a href="#">Delete</a>		23	0	-	-	2.0
the last five years <a href="#">Delete</a>		1,075	27	\$0.49	\$13.11	2.2
san bernardino <a href="#">Delete</a>		2,079	1	\$1.37	\$1.37	2.5
csusb <a href="#">Delete</a>		174	0	-	-	2.7
musical theatre <a href="#">Delete</a>		342	0	-	-	3.5
musical <a href="#">Delete</a>		16,478	8	\$1.09	\$8.73	3.9
musical theater <a href="#">Delete</a>		20	0	-	-	4.9
<b>Content network</b> Google partner sites that show your ad	<a href="#">On</a> <a href="#">Turn off</a>	289,259	82	\$0.39	\$32.32	2.4
<b>Your overall performance* </b>		309,505	119	\$0.47	\$55.57	3.6

1 - 10 of 10 keywords.

APPENDIX F  
BOOK COVER PROP



Jamie Wellerstein was born and raised in Spring Valley, New York. Upon graduating, he moved a whole 45 minutes away to New York City, New York. With a B.A. in English Composition from NYU and after a brief stint at Columbia University, Jamie was first published and the rest is his story. He is grateful to have two wonderful women in his life: Cathy, his wife and Elise, his editor. "I couldn't do what I do without the two of you."

**#1 New York Times Bestseller**

**"Leading the next generation of young writers"** —USA Today



Off the Deep End, Wellerstein J.  
\$29.95 US \$35 CAN

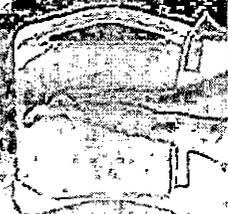


OFF THE DEEP END

Jamie Wellerstein

OFF THE DEEP END

Jamie Wellerstein



APPENDIX G  
AUDITION ANNOUNCEMENT



Greetings Fellow Singers & Thespians,

Shane Churchill here. For those of you that don't know me, I am a CSUSB graduate student pursuing an Interdisciplinary M.A. degree in Musical Theatre. I will be producing Jason Robert Brown's two person musical *The Last Five Years* for my thesis project.

The department has graciously decided to officially include this musical into the 2008-2009 CSUSB Theatre Season. For those of you not familiar with *The Last Five Years*, it is a contemporary musical written by one of the top young playwright/composers around today. It chronicles the five year life of a marriage, from meeting to break-up. Told from each character's perspective (his = beginning to end & hers = end to beginning). The (entertaining & challenging) music unfolds mostly as solo vignettes that require both vocal and acting prowess.

Rumors have been floating around that this show is pre-cast. Well these rumors are.....only half true. Sorry men, but the male role of Jaime will be played by me (it is my project, after all). For those ladies that are interested in a VERY good musical theatre role, I heartily encourage you to audition. The auditions will take place around the same time as auditions for *The Miser* and The Student Play Festival (beginning of the fall quarter.) We would be rehearsing throughout the fall quarter (according to your schedule) for a January 23<sup>rd</sup> through Feb 1<sup>st</sup> run. Whoever gets the female role of Cathy in this show could not also be in *The Miser* or The Student Play Festival. Audition materials are now available in the Performing Arts Office.

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ATTENTION STUDENTS WANTING TO DESIGN (or receive other technical credits)...

*The Last Five Years* needs several positions filled, such as: SET DESIGN, LIGHT DESIGN, SOUND DESIGN, PROP DESIGN, COSTUME DESIGN, ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER, SOUND BOARD, LIGHT BOARD, STAGE/WARDROBE CREW, HOUSE MANAGER. If you have had the appropriate classes and are interested in working on a smaller-scale show please let *The Last Five Years* director and TA department chair, Margaret Perry know ASAP.

APPENDIX H  
AUDITION HANDOUT



## Audition Materials



Thank you for showing an interest in playing Cathy in the 2009 CSUSB Production of *The Last Five Years*. According to Music Theatre International, the role of Catherine Hiatt requires an “excellent actress and singer”. We are looking for nothing less.

The initial auditions will consist of singing an excerpt from two songs in the show, **Still Hurting & Climbing Uphill** (both of which are included on the audition CD). The instrumental version of each song that is on the CD will be what you audition with. Those that are called back will need to have prepared the third song on the CD, **The Next Ten Minutes** and will take part in a cold reading. While it is pretty apparent what the intentions of the songs are, here is a little background on them:

**Still Hurting** – Cathy has just found a letter from her husband, Jaime, telling her that he is ending their 5 year relationship. We will need to see the pain that Cathy is feeling during this song.

**Climbing Uphill** – A chance to show your comedic chops. We are hearing Cathy’s inner monologue while this struggling actress is auditioning for yet another show. The end of the song expresses a real desire to be out from behind Jaime’s shadow. Feel free to include or alter the profanity.

**The Next Ten Minutes** – This is the only point in the show these two characters sing to each other. Just connect with the words.

APPENDIX I  
AMENDED AUDITION ANNOUNCEMENT

# AUDITIONS

for the role of  
Cathy in



For those ladies interested in the leading (O.K., the only) female role in this contemporary musical please go to the Performing Arts Office and check out an audition pack. Please have the materials ready by the auditions on.....

**Date:** Thursday, September 25<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** 7pm

**Location:** TBA (look to the call board for updated info)

The auditions will take place the same time as auditions for *The Miser* and The Student Play Festival. Those auditioning for the other shows will be allowed to run back and forth between auditions. We would be rehearsing throughout the fall quarter (according to your schedule) for a December 3<sup>rd</sup> through December 7<sup>th</sup> run. Whoever gets the female role of Cathy in this show could not also be in *The Miser* or The Student Play Festival.

APPENDIX J  
AUDITION NOTES

LSY AUDITIONS

\* = called back

Jessica Soza - Hurting - classical tone in occasion } \*  
Climbing - good character switching

Auditioner #1  
[redacted] - Hurting - lots of emotion in voice, a little pop \*  
Climbing - great connection  
10 minutes - voices really melted

Auditioner #2  
[redacted] - Hurting - slightly behind, good tone \*  
Climbing - not forced

Auditioner #3  
[redacted] - Hurting - good vocal range, flat a few times  
Climbing - needs maturity / a bit forced

Auditioner #4  
[redacted] - Hurting - thin tone, incorrect notes, spoken for more  
Climbing - lost the key

Auditioner #5  
[redacted] - Hurting - when reaching break = abrupt sustain  
Climbing - great belt, great tone shifts, voice connects \*  
10 minutes - good tone, rushed

Auditioner #6  
[redacted] - Hurting - a little shrill or some, correct, pleasant tone  
Climbing - rushed, pleasant tone \*  
10 minutes - good tone, rushed

Auditioner #7  
[redacted] - Hurting - didn't know it  
Climbing - n/a

Auditioner #8  
[redacted] - Hurting - breathy, young tone.  
Climbing - lost key but fixed it, breathy, didn't seem to open register

Auditioner #9  
[redacted] - Hurting - good tone, tiny flat a and if some forces  
Climbing - good overall, heat issues \*  
10 minutes - good tone, rushed

Auditioner #10  
[redacted] - Hurting - throaty, thin mouth  
Climbing - a couple / changed keys frequently

Auditioner #11  
[redacted] - Hurting - changed melody, throaty pop/pep, thin  
Climbing - can't belt

Auditioner #12  
[redacted] - Hurting - can belt. + a bit  
Climbing - good character changes, tone is a bit forced

Auditioner #13

APPENDIX K

PROGRAM

University Theatre presents

# LOVERS & LIARS

2008-09  
Season

**6 Degrees of Separation**  
*A thought-provoking comedy by John Guare*  
March 13 - 15, 19 - 22, 2009

**Novio Boy**  
*A heartwarming comedy by Grey Soto*  
April 21 - 26, 2009

**The Pirates of Penzance**  
*A rollicking musical by Gilbert and Sullivan*  
June 5 - 7, 11 - 14, 2009



**(909) 537-5884**  
<http://theatre.csusb.edu>



### Music Department

Sunday, Dec. 7 :: 7:30 p.m.  
Concert Choir Concert

Saturday, Jan. 24 :: 7:30 p.m.  
Honor Choir

Saturday, Jan. 31 :: 7:30 p.m.  
Harp Ensemble

Tickets \$5/ \$8/ \$10.  
<http://music.csusb.edu> for more info  
(909) 537-7518

### Robert V. Fullerton Art Museum

Divas! An Exhibition of  
Immodest Photography  
Curator: Tom McGovern  
Through December 13

Excavating Egypt: Great Discoveries  
from the Petrie Museum of Egyptian  
Archaeology  
Through February 15, 2009  
[\$5 General, \$3 Stud/Sen, CSUSB Free]

Museum admission Free, except for  
<http://museum.csusb.edu> for more info  
(909) 537-7373

# THE LAST FIVE YEARS



Written and Composed by  
**JASON ROBERT BROWN**

*The action takes place simultaneously  
from Spring 2004 to Fall 2008 in Jamie's  
version, and from Fall 2008 back to Spring  
2004 as Cathy tells her side of the story.*

There will be one fifteen-minute intermission

Originally Produced for the New York stage  
by Arielle Tepper and Marty Bell

Originally Produced by Northlight Theatre, Chicago, IL

# The Last Five Years

by Jason Robert Brown

## Cast of Characters

Jamie ..... Shane Churchill\*  
Catherine ..... Jessica Soza

## Production Team

Director ..... Margaret Perry  
Musical Director ..... Shane Churchill\*  
Scenic Design ..... Margaret Perry  
Costume Design ..... Catherine M. Erickson  
Lighting Design ..... Trevor Norton  
Sound Design ..... Michael Gonzales  
Makeup Design ..... Andre Harrington  
Properties Design ..... Margaret Perry  
Stage Manager ..... Michael Gonzales  
Assistant Stage Manager ..... Chris Stumreiter  
Assistant Scenic Design ..... Ashley Holeman  
Assistant Lighting Design ..... Kevia Dirton  
Assistant Sound Design ..... Louis Paulet  
Technical Director ..... Marian Joglein  
Costume Shop Manager ..... Catherine M. Erickson  
Scenic Artist & Propmaster ..... Sara Fils  
Publicity Manager ..... Gwyneth Kozbial

## Instrumentalists

Piano ..... Nate Brown  
Cello 1 ..... Michele Tacchia  
~~Violin ..... Joseph Soza~~  
~~Violin ..... Joseph Soza~~  
Bass ..... Jonathan Frias

\* In partial fulfillment of a Master's Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies

## Running Crew

Production Manager ..... Harlan Jeglín  
Running Crew ..... Jeremy Apodaca, Tom Berry, Ashley Hyatt,  
..... Tony Jaksha, Nick Jenkins, Maria Lockhart,  
..... Brian Moreno, Brian Murray, Brian Rosenblum,  
House Manager ..... Chantel Cagel  
Ushers ..... Linda Carter, Octavio Gonzalez, Paigo Hollifield,  
..... Brittany Hortemiller, Hannah Huffstodler, Araceli Martinez

## Scene Shop

Technical Director ..... Harlan Jeglín  
Scenic Artist/ Propmaster ..... Sara Flis  
Prop & Paint Student Assistants ..... Angelica Elliott, Leslie Najarro  
Props & Paint Crew ..... Michael Dancel  
..... Aricno Diaz, Lauren Heryford, Brett Kolarik, Evonne Limones  
..... Ashley Morimoto, Salley Newark, Fausto Orozco, Jessica Saleeb  
..... Brittnie Sedillo, Bonnie Williams, Amanda Wilson  
Scene Shop Student Assistants ..... John Baker, Drew Burkholder,  
..... Ramon Cejas, Michael Gonzales,  
..... Meagan Helms, Ashley Holeman, Sergio Rodriguez  
Set Construction Crew ..... Kenneth Anthony, Devon Bethel,  
..... Eric Brown, Frank Camacho, Amanda Cáriza, Anacari Cuevas,  
..... Mallorie Gomez, Marvin Gonzales, David Idlart,  
..... Kairaco Moore, Brittany Paul, Bethany Pearson,  
..... Daniel Sanchez, Kristen Takagi, Jerrad Thompson, Helen Velasquez

## Costume Shop

Shop Manager ..... Catherine M. Erickson  
Student Assistants ..... Melinda Arellano,  
..... Caitlyn Harkins, Ashley Hernandez, Nicholas Jenkins  
Construction Crew ..... Thomas Berry, Jose Buenrostro,  
..... Anthony Conley, Justino Corrington, Kaley Eaton,  
..... Angelica Espinoza, Diana Estrada, Andrea Gamati,  
..... Elias Gonzalez, Melissa Hernandez, Stephanie Hernandez,  
..... Jonathan Hueso, Machir Lakofka, Maria Maldonado,  
..... Adriana Martinaz, Ashley Neary, Kiersten Olsen

## Theatre Arts Office

Office Manager .....	Natasha Richardson
Office Student Assistant .....	Chelsea Bishop
Box Office & Publicity Manager .....	Gwyneth Kozbial
Box Office Student Assistant .....	Brian Reonblum
Coyote Conservatory Manager .....	James White

## Department of Theatre Arts

Faculty .....	Margaret A. Pory (Chair), Leslie Bryan, Kathryn M. Ervin, Michelle Ebert Freire, André Harrington, Tom Provenzano, Johanna Smith, Terry Donovan Smith
Staff .....	Catherine M. Erickson, Sara Fils, Harlan Jegin, Gwyneth Kozbial, Natasha Richardson, James White
Adjunct Instructors .....	Jany's Antonio, Carol Damgen, Lisa Lyons, Trevor Norton, Steve Morris, Gina Pavlova, Tami Silver-Ryan, Maura Townsend

## Players of the Pear Garden

Our student club was founded in 1966 to promote  
campus interest in Theatre Arts and associated student body activities.  
PPG organizes and performs in various activities and is open to all students.  
Please call (909) 537-5000, ext. 73810 to become a member.

President .....	Nilan Johnson
Vice-President .....	Craig Cleveland
Treasurer .....	Michael Baker
Secretary .....	Caitlin Westlake
Historian .....	Brittany Ellis
Commissioner of Improv .....	Kellie McDonald

*All donations received at the refreshment counter during intermission go  
directly to the Players of the Pear Garden.*

*Thank you for your support.*

## Company Biographies



**Shane Churchill (Juno)** graduated as the 1999 CSUSB Outstanding Undergraduate of the College of Arts and Letters and has spent the last eight years working as the Director of Vocal Music at Granite Hills High School in Apple Valley. He is currently pursuing a M.A. degree in Musical Theatre. Shane has been involved in over forty musicals in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. Favorite roles include *The Courier (1776)*, *Joe Josephson (Mama Mia Reel Along)*, *John Hinckley (Assassins)*, *Smudge (Forever Plaid)*, and both *Audrey II & Seymour (Little Shop of Horrors)*. Shane sends out his deepest appreciation to EVERYONE that helped him get this production off the ground. He

especially thanks his children Cordelia and Cadric for being such a wonderful kids and his wife Misty, for her love, support, and patience.

**Jessica Soza (Catherine)** is a Senior at Cal State completing a major in Music Vocal Performance. After graduation, Jessica plans to pursue a Masters Degree in Opera performance. She graduated from the American Musical & Dramatic Academy in Los Angeles in Spring 2006. Jessica has won competitions such as New Century Singers Whittier Vocal Competition and Miss CSUSB. She is a three time 1st place winner of the DTASC Drama/Shakespeare Festival competitions. Theatrical credits include roles at Crafton Hills College (*Phäa, Funny Thing... Forum*), A.B. Miller Theatre Arts (*Sarah Brown, Guys and Dolls; Hodel, Fiddler on the Roof*), and Sequoia Theatre Arts (*Dorothy, The Wizard of Oz; Helena, A Midsummer Nights Dream*). Jessica thanks Shane Churchill and Margaret Perry for casting her, Dr. Fraser and Dr. Crane for improving her vocal technique, as well as her family, and mentor Janice Rutherford Lim for their love and support. Lastly, she thanks Erik De Mone - "There are so many dreams I need to see with you."



**Nate Brown (Piano)** has musically directed many shows in the Inland Empire. Credits within the last year include *The Last Five Years* at U.C. Riverside, *Grease* at Arroyo Valley High School, *Nonsense* for Chino Community players, and *Guys and Dolls* with Buena Park Theater *Under the Stars*. He thanks Loxy for her loving support and the audience for not using their cell phones during the show.

**Jonathan Frias (Bass)** graduated from Bloomington High School in 2005 and is now a Music Major at CSUSB, where he takes private string bass and tenor vocal lessons. Upon graduation, Jonathan plans to pursue a teaching Credential and to attend Graduate School. Jonathan has played electric and upright bass for numerous Jazz combos and big bands. He also plays in small quartets and trios. Jonathan recently played in the Junior University Orchestra for their performance of *The Jungle Book*.

## Company Biographies Continued

Margaret Perry (*Director*) has worked as a *Director, Design Consultant, and Production Manager* for many regional theaters, including *The Old Globe Theatre, San Diego Repertory Theatre, Steamboat Repertory Theatre, Theatre 40, Redlands Theatre Festival, Performance Riverside and American Theatre Arts.* Her lighting, scenery, costume and stage property designs have been seen on stages throughout the country. Prof. Perry taught at San Diego State University and California State University, Long Beach prior to joining the CSUSB faculty and has served as an *artist-in-residence* for many colleges. She served on the Colorado Council for the Arts and Humanities and as a member of the Board of Directors for several community arts organizations, including *Arts On 5th, Stage One Players, and the Southern California Region of United States Institute for Theatre Technology.* Professor Perry earned her M.F.A. in Theater from San Diego State University.

Joseph Sosa (*Violin*) has been playing violin for about ten years. He enjoys playing a wide variety of music genres and has had traveled the world with several prestigious touring orchestras. He currently studies violin under Karon Palmer at University of Redlands. In addition to his instrumental pursuits, Joseph sings bass in CSUSB's elite choir the Chamber Singers. Joseph is currently working on his Bachelors of Music in education, as well as an abnormal psychology degree.

Michèle Tacchia (*Cello 1*) earned a BA in Music from CSUSB and a Masters Degree from San Diego State. She went on to pursue postgraduate music studies at the New England Conservatory of Music (Boston), the Vienna International Music Center, and at San Francisco State University. She performs with her husband throughout the United States, Mexico, and Europe as the acclaimed Brossbau-Tacchia Duo. She also performed for decades with the San Bernardino Symphony, the Redlands Bowl Summer Festival Orchestra, and the San Bernardino Civic Light Opera Orchestra. Michèle has also been teaching music for over twenty-four years. Current projects include developing the Elementary Magnet Schools Honor Orchestra, producing the County Elementary Honor Orchestra, and establishing a youth string orchestra for middle and high school students (Symphonie Jeunesse).

# Musical Numbers

- Still Hurting* 1  
The end, Cathy alone in their apartment in New York City
- 2 *Shiksa Goddess*  
The beginning, Jamie after their first date
- See I'm Smiling* 3  
Cathy, with Jamie, during her 2nd year doing Summer Stock in Ohio
- 4 *Moving Too Fast*  
Jamie at his apartment and in Central Park
- I'm a Part of That* 5  
Cathy at several of Jamie's book-signings
- 6 *The Schmusel Song*  
Jamie celebrating his second Christmas with Cathy
- A Summer in Ohio* 7  
Cathy writing to Jamie during her 1st year doing Summer Stock in Ohio
- 8 *The Next Ten Minutes* 8  
Jamie and Cathy in Central Park and at their wedding
- INTERMISSION**
- 9 *A Miracle Would Happen*  
Jamie at various places around NYC
- When You Come Home to Me* 9  
Cathy at several different auditions
- Climbing Uphill* 10  
Cathy having dinner with her father
- 11 *If I Didn't Believe in You*  
Jamie with Cathy in their apartment
- I Can Do Better Than That* 12  
Cathy driving with Jamie to her parents' house for Thanksgiving
- 13 *Nobody Needs to Know*  
Jamie at a hotel in NYC
- 14 *I Could Never Rescue You*  
The end, Jamie alone in their apartment
- Goodbye Until Tomorrow* 14  
The beginning, Cathy after their first date



**THE LAST FIVE YEARS**  
is presented through special arrangement with Music  
Theatre International (MTI).

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are also supplied by MTI.  
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# Backwards and Forwards

by Shane Churchill

"I've got a singular impression things are moving too fast!" So says the male character, Jamie, in the show you are about to see. I am definitely sharing that sentiment at this moment. When I had decided to return to CSUSB to attain my Master's Degree a little over a year ago, I never would have dreamed that we'd be here today performing my Master's Project as a half-fledged production (as part of the subscription season, no less). It is only through the graciousness of our talented Theatre Arts faculty and staff that this production of *The Last Five Years* is possible.

I wasn't sure how possible it would be for me to produce, musically direct, and star in a production in which I (and my wonderful co-star) will be on the stage over 40 minutes alone: singing songs in a difficult register of the voice. Yes, there are plenty of small-scale productions that are less demanding of time & talents. I have found that there have been very few shows in which I have performed the aforementioned tasks that have been as rewarding. The musical that Jason Robert Brown has crafted (with some special "editing" by the genius that is Margaret Perry) is filled with laugh-out-loud humor intermingled with heart-tugging sadness... just like real life. One aspect of this show that is not present in "real life" (or so I originally thought) is a backwards chronology.

Much has been made of the convention to follow Jamie's perspective of this relationship forwards, while consecutively following Cathy's perspective backwards from their breakup. The idea of a reverse chronology is nothing new. Stephen Sondheim did the same thing 20 years earlier with his musical *Merrily We Roll Along*. What our show is asking you, the audience, to do is to keep both storylines going in your head (even if they jump between each other). While only intersecting once in the middle, both storylines reference each other often. It is our sincere hope that we will be more entertaining than confusing, but if you have any questions feel free to find me in the lobby after the show. I'll be more than glad to discuss them for "The Next Ten Minutes".

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*The Department of Theatre Arts dedicates this  
season of plays to the memory of*

**Mary Barnes  
1930 - 2008**

*Actress, Mentor, Patron of the Arts*

## About The Author

Jason Robert Brown is regarded as one of Broadway's most sophisticated contemporary songwriters. Born in 1970, Brown grew up in the suburbs of New York City, and attended the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. He began his career in New York City as an arranger, conductor, and pianist. Songs for a New World, which played off-broadway at the WPA Theatre in 1995, marked the first major New York production of Brown's songs. Brown went on to write songs for the Broadway musical *Parade*, based on the trial and lynching of Leo Frank. *Parade*, with a book by Alfred Uhry, won Brown the 1999 Tony Award for Best Original Musical Score.

"The Last Five Years" was inspired by Brown's own failed first marriage. Since 2003, Brown has been married to fellow composer Georgia Slitt. Together, they have a daughter. In addition to composing, Brown also teaches courses in musical theatre performance and composition at the University of Southern California. Brown has a solo album and also performs with his band, the Caucasian Rhythm Kings. His most recent completed work, *13*, was premiered at the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles, CA on January 7, 2007.

**MUSIC THEATRE INTERNATIONAL** ([www.MTIShow.com](http://www.MTIShow.com)) is one of the world's leading dramatic licensing agencies, protecting the rights and legacy of composers, lyricists and book writers and supplying scripts, musical materials and other theatrical resources to theatres around the world. MTI has been a driving force in extending the production life of such great musicals as *Guys And Dolls*, *West Side Story*, *Damn Yankees*, *Fiddler On The Roof*, *Annie*, *The Music Man*, *Regatta*, as well as *The Last Five Years*. With over 250 titles in its catalogue, including hits from the Broadway and London stage, musical revues, the Broadway Junior Collection and other youth musicals, MTI shows have been performed by over 45,000 amateur and professional theatrical organizations throughout the US and in over 60 countries around the world.

**The videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.**

AMERICAN COLLEGE THEATER FESTIVAL

# The Kennedy Center

THE JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

## The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival- 41

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This production is entered in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF). The aims of this national theater education program are to identify and promote quality in college-level theater production. To this end, each production entered is eligible for a response by a regional KCACTF representative, and selected students and faculty are invited to participate in KCACTF programs involving scholarships, internships, grants and awards for actors, directors, dramaturgs, playwrights, designers, stage managers and critics at both the regional and national levels.

Productions entered on the Participating level are eligible for inclusion at the KCACTF regional festival and can also be considered for invitation to the KCACTF national festival at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC in the spring of 2009.

Last year more than 1,300 productions were entered in the KCACTF involving more than 200,000 students nationwide. By entering this production, our theater department is sharing in the KCACTF goals to recognize, reward, and celebrate the exemplary work produced in college and university theaters across the nation.

2008-2009  
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