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**ASSIGN
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Popular Theatre • Theatre designed to appeal to a broad audience.

- Theatre generally designed to make money.
- More likely to be comedy than theatre created for "artistic" reasons.

Commedia dell'Arte Began in the 16th century

Traveling troupes of actors

Semi-improvised with plots from Roman comedies and lazzi

Use of stock characters

Performance was highly physical Lazzi physical comedy, slapstick Stock characters often based on regional stereotypes (dress or act in a certain way)

characters are familiar to the audience

Unmasked are lovers

Masked are servants and masters

Characters are based on the costumes they wear Commedia dell'Arte: The story, the style Old Men: Pantalone, il Dottore - blocking characters keep lovers from happiness

Servants: Arlecchino, Brighella - help the lovers to achieve their goal Opera

Buffa Known as comic opera

No masks, no stereotypes, and lighthearted language

Began early 18th century

Very popular with "everyday people" vs. opera seria which was meant as high art

Similar plots and characters to commedia

The Barber of Seville Opera Seria Serious opera with big costumes and was very dramatic.

Considered high art Rosini The Barber of Seville

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Opera Buffa French Neoclassical Comedy less concerned with unities under less scrutiny than tragedy, but still expected to promote

morality Molière Real name: Jean-Baptiste Poquelin

Playwright and actor/manager and also arranged performances for the king's court

Used stage name to not dishonor his family's name

Career had many ups and downs- no mask, has own stock characters, less physical comedy

Had to tour outside of Paris Molière's Major plays Tartuffe

The Misanthrope

The Imaginary Invalid Tartuffe, or The Hypocrite Tension between who Tartuffe thought he was and what people thought he was

First performed at palace of Versailles in front of King Louis XIV- censored by King

went through several revisions- final messenger as "deus ex machine" The

Misanthrope written by Molière The Imaginary Invalid The Imaginary Invalid is a three-act comédie-ballet by the French playwright Molière with dance

sequences and musical interludes by Marc-Antoine Charpentier. Molière's

Aesthetics Influenced by Commedia dell'Arte

Plays tend to be satirical and mock society

Does it through comedy so statements aren't so harsh

Farce- breaks rules of society

Popular with audiences often unpopular with those in power- Careful not to mock monarchy Jean de Santeuil Comedy criticizes customs through honor

Molière Farce Overturns rules of society, is high energy, physical movement, people hide when others walk into room Tartuffe preface If one takes the

trouble to examine my comedy in good faith, he will surely see that my intentions are innocent throughout, and tend in no way to make fun of what men revere; that I have presented the subject with all the precautions that its delicacy imposes; and that I have used all the art and skill that I could to distinguish clearly the character of the hypocrite from that of the truly devout man

Major characters in Tartuffe
 Madame Pernelle, Elmire, Damis, Mariane, Cléante, Dorine, Orgon, Valère, Tartuffe
 Madame Pernelle
 Orgon's mother

Tartuffe
 Elmire
 Orgon's second wife; stepmother of Damis and Mariane

Tartuffe
 Damis
 Orgon's son

Tartuffe
 Mariane
 Orgon's daughter, engaged to Valère

Tartuffe
 Cléante
 Elmire's brother

Tartuffe
 Dorine
 Mariane's outspoken maid

Tartuffe
 Orgon
 Father of the house, follower of Tartuffe

Tartuffe
 Valère
 Engaged to Mariane

Tartuffe
 Tartuffe
 the hypocrite
 Tartuffe summary
 Orgon trusts tartuffe, tartuffe wants orgon's wife elmire, orgon wants tartuffe to marry mariane, orgon signs papers to tartuffe, tartuffe is exposed as a hypocrite by elmire when she tells orgon to hide and listen, tartuffe tries to evict family but the king sees him as a hypocrite and imprisons him and returns everything to orgon. Theatrical conventions definition
 Common style or system whose meaning is and easily understood and agreed on by audiences and artists

Can often seem entirely natural or "the only way to do things" by people who are familiar with the dramatic form

Can often seem confusing or strange/bad to outsiders
 Theatrical conventions we've discussed
 Verse in Shakespeare and Molière

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The fourth wall

Realistic acting

Brecht relied on surprising his audience by breaking conventions
Theatrical conventions of kabuki theatre VERY different from the one's you're used to, but are easily understood by Japanese audiences
Kabuki Aesthetics: Key aspects
Music- always going on, traditional Japanese music, rhythm to it
Movement-very important! scripts are very short because it's more about the movement and make up rather than dialogue, sharp or jerky movements
Elaborate Design- Make up, costume, set, etc.

Men- played woman roles since women were not allowed to act or be in the theatre
Kabuki aesthetics Generally loud and exciting- Contrast with Noh theatre, which involves stillness, simplicity and spirituality, and was generally for the elite

Performances would last about 12 hours- audiences came and went
Rise of Kabuki Early 17th Century

Time of relative prosperity, isolation

Thought to come out of dance traditions

Form of theatre for the people- middle and working class have the money and time

Around museum theatre Kabuki stage Trap door

Overturning stage

All man powered

Center of the stage rotates

Very bright sets, artistic not realistic

Build the set to make the changes very smooth and easy, part of the artistry

Actors can invade the audience's space

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Long entrances to make

Relatively small things that add to it, such as the the breaking tree
branch
Hanamichi
Runway into audience
Kabuki scripts
Often improvised or adapted from other stories
semi improvised, script outline that they fill in for themselves

Episodic rather than linear
break the time and unity of place

Not divided into tragedy and comedy

Subjects varied, but often history (especially samurai) or domestic scenes
they are trained to play these roles for long periods of time(type cast)
Kabuki
Character types
Tachiyaku, Katakiyaku, Dokekata, Koyaku,

Onnagata
Tachiyaku
Good, loyal, courageous men
heroes
Katakiyaku
Villainous men
Dokekata
Comic roles (including comic villains)
coyote, comic relief

Koyaku
Children's roles
children of the family
(troop)
Onnagata
Women's roles played by men, seen by the most difficult
Tis Pity
She's a *****
brother and sister have sexual relations and she gets married to someone else,

brother goes crazy from jealousy, he kills her then everyone

else
commonwealth of england
theater outlawed
reign of king james 1 and king charles 1
theater bloody and sexual
restoration of monarchy
king charles 2

come back from exile in france to take over england; leads to a strong influence of french culture; celebrates things that were denied by his predecessor eg. many mistresses
restoration theater
heavily influenced by french theater esp. the comedies

audiences went to theater to see and be seen

women on stage for first time in england (these women viewed as only slightly better than prostitutes)

charles 2 mistress Nell Gwynne famous actress
Nell Gwynne famous actress

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Charles II mistress

English Restoration theater
restoration comedy
Mirrors lightheartedness of Charles' court

Sexual humor- not so much violence anymore, happy monarchy is restored, not so much making fun of people anymore

Focus on upper middle class and lower nobility- nobody wrote about the king

Often complicated plots, with several slightly related subplots
Comedy of Restoration: Comedy of Manners
Humor comes from situations, word play - audiences must be familiar with social rules to see humor. not trying to change the rules society

Later examples of this genre: School for Scandal (1777) and The Importance of Being Earnest (1895)
Comedy of Restoration: Intrigue and adventureless overtly humorous

frequently set outside of England
School for Scandal Richard Sheridan
The Importance of Being Earnest Oscar Wilde
Characters in Restoration

Comedy
Rake

Fop

Women roles defined by expertise

Character names often reveal personality traits/flaws

eg. Sir Willful Witwoud in Way of the World

eg. Sir Foppington in The Relapse, or Virtue in Danger
Rake young man who is charming but not particularly reliable or moral. Often the hero. gambles, drinks, womanizer, but dashing, he doesn't reform
Fopman too obsessed with fashion; often thinks he is wittier than he is. often elements of

feminist
Women's roles in Restoration comedy
Generally defined by their levels

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of experience in/comfort with high society.

Heroines generally fall in the middle: witty, but not too experienced

Young sweet innocent girl- when she enters society she is tired of being good

Older women who is trying to reclaim her youth, often a widow Aphra

Behn First female professional playwright

Before writing was spy for King Charles 2

Plays are more about adventure and intrigue than comedy of manners (plays don't take place in England because she is well traveled)

The Rover (1677) The Rover Aphra Behn

Set in Naples during Commonwealth period

Romantic adventures of several Englishmen during "Carnival"

Shown that Italy characters have a lot of freedom, Adventures of an English man who fled the country when the king died. The Country Wife (1675) By William Wycherley

Several plots: Pinchwife jealously tries to maintain the innocence/ naiveté of his young wife Margery (the titular country wife) very controlling of his wife.

"Breeches role" of female characters dressed as men.

Horner spreads false rumors of his impotence so he can have access to married women without their husbands' suspicion

The China Scene: Horner is "looking at china" with the wife in a closed bedroom William Wycherley The Country Wife Changes since

Restoration Another backlash against monarchy.

"Glorious Revolution" Mary 2 replaces father for power.

Increased power to parliament therefore less monarchy power.

Theater was tied to monarchy.

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Rise of middle class the target audience now.

Theatre caters to middle class even more: plots less about sex, more about money. Anti-Theatricality Theatre is a power tool, neutral tool, can be used for good or bad.

All of these things that theatre should be able to do.

Right now it's just showing bad and there aren't any consequences at the end of the play. Theatre Licensing Act of 1737 All new plays must be approved by Lord Chamberlain.

"Spoken drama" can only be produced at limited number of "patent theatres".

Effects: Emphasis on "safer" domestic plays, return to older plays (especially Shakespeare) plays only need to be cleared the first time, so can use old ones with no problem. Lord Chamberlain He can demand revisions or forbid the play entirely

This lasts until 1968

Things that were sexual or making fun of the monarchy were discarded.

They were very nitpicky on what they let through (would take out single words). "Spoken drama" During 18th century, at most three in London.

If you got a patent then you were in good shape, but you don't want to make the government mad.

Pieces with significant musical or non-narrative components can be produced elsewhere.

Only places to go see scripted theatre. Theatre Production in the 18th Century Because of Theatre Licensing Act, there was limited competition between theatres

Continued rise of stars, actor manager system

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Example: David Garrick

Increasing emphasis on morality, emotion.

Higher emotions not lust and angry, supposed to lift you up.

Design: often elaborate sets and costumes which could be reused from production to production they would be doing different shows all the time, change it up. Sentimental Comedies Also called "weeping comedies".

End happily (usually with marriage) not necessarily funny.

Emphasize morality, triumph of good over evil.

Characters usually were led astray but reformed. The Conscious

Lovers Richard Steele playwright.

Sentimental Comedies.

Arranged marriages rejected in favor of love matches.

Disparities in class fixed by discovery of young orphan's true father.

Love can transcend all boundaries (social classes)." Laughing Comedy"

Generally comedy of manners; plays rely on humor.

More similar to Restoration plays than sentimental comedies but with greater focus on morality.

Much less common- Richard Brinsley Sheridan and Oliver Goldsmith are two who attempt this.

They are rare in this time period, they tend to be popular when done, but don't want to do them very often as to not draw attention to themselves.

Olive Goldsmith on Laughing vs Weeping Comedy There are few things that the audience needs to be guided on and Laughing Comedy does a better job than Weeping Comedy. Richard Brinsley Sheridan Most noteworthy of the sentimental comedy genre. Balance of sentiment and comedy. Wrote "The Rivals" and "School for Scandals".

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Manager of Drury Lane Theatre for several years.

Wasn't an actor.

Gradually handed over management as he became more invested in politics

Politician- Member of Parliament for 32 years, of the whig party- generally supported limited monarchy, he wants to tweak behavior not change completely

The School for Scandal Richard Sheridan, 1777. Featuring Sir Peter Teazle, Maria, Lady Sneerwell, Sir Benjamin Backbite, and Charles Surface.

Restoration comedy.

Lady Sneerwell and a group of friends meet often at her house to create and spread malicious gossip.

The affairs in this play would never happen in Weeping Comedies or they would be reprimanded more.

Sheridan wants to tweak behavior not change completely.

Keep in mind the big thing in this play is money!! Melodrama Very popular form in late 18th and 19th centuries.

Develops out of comic opera, sentimental comedy.

Originally French, comes to England and then U. S.

Name literally translates as " music drama" music is very important, used to get people to feel a certain way.

Reinforces community values.

Values emotion rather than reason. Characteristics of a Melodrama

Script Clear division between good and evil.

Designed to provoke sentimental reactions (happiness, pity, sorrow, fear).

Moments of extreme tension, but justice is done at the end.

Usually ends happily, if not, ends beautifully and sentimentally.

Often adapted from novels (may have big, complex plots).

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Melodrama for social reform (particularly common in U. S.).

Identifies a particular social problem (alcoholism, slavery, etc).

Creates villain that embodies that problem.

Defeat of the villain means defeat of the problem. Stock Characters in a melodrama
Embody social norms/ideals

Heroines: delicate, innocent, young, needs to be rescued.

Heroes: strong, noble, masculine

Villains: immoral and malicious (often tries to force heroine to marry him)
Other Common Characters in a melodrama
Hero's sidekick: assists hero, good (but perhaps not quite as noble), sometimes provides comic relief.

Fallen woman: prostitute, woman who was otherwise " led astray." Often compassionate, kind, but can never fully redeem her past sins.

Mother figure: maternal, kind. Often used by villain to manipulate heroine.

Melodrama in Performance
Music - singing and underscoring

Visual spectacles such as animals, flooded stages, panoramas, pyrotechnics, etc. Also can have many scenes with elaborate scenery.

Scripts often written to allow for dramatic special effects at the end of each scene.

Acting style - presentational, performing for a wow. Uncle Tom's Cabin
Based on Harriet Beecher Stowe's 1852 novel.

Characters/ideas widely used in many formats.

Many adaptations - most produced play of the 19th century in the U. S, in one year about 500 touring companies produced this play.

Major characters: Uncle Tom, Little Eva, Simon Legree. Good vs. Evil seen today in Melodrama
Action movies

Disney

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Soap Operas

Lifetime Movies

Celebrity culture (esp tabloids) Spectacle seen today in Melodrama Broadway, Las Vegas, etc.

Action movies Underscore seen today in Melodrama Most movies Minstrelsy - Basics White male performers in blackface (initially - later, also black performers in blackface).

Draws on romantic notions of slavery.

Slaves happy, loyal, childlike, dependant on whites.

Allegedly based on " authentic" slave performances. (people take it as a literal representation)

Exaggerated physicality; Make up- white around eyes with black face to look more african american; Dance- exaggerated, not skilled.

Highly stereotyped dialect. " yes masa" Minstrelsy origin first truly american form of performance

Virginia Minstrels, Christy Minstrels - 1840s

T. D. Rice- Jump Jim Crow

Develops in opposition to abolitionist movement T. D. Rice the father of minstrelsy

1828 - " Jump Jim Crow"

Begins as a comic afterpiece to another show, so popular that he uses it more and more often. Virginia Minstrels, Christy Minstrels - 1840s Create entire evening of entertainment

Solidify formal structure Minstrel Shows Most popular in the North US with white, working-class male audiences. Minstrel show music Banjo, tambourine, percussion (aka " bones")

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Stephen Foster: " Old Folks at Home (Swanee River)," " Camptown Races"
Dance -savage or " cakewalk" the black would make fun of the white, the
white would make fun of the blacks
Format of a Minstrel Show
Variety (many
different short, unrelated pieces)

Minstrel Line/Semi Circle

Olio

Afterpiece

Note that not all plays that use blackface are Minstrel shows - they must
follow (basically) this format
Minstrel Line/Semi Circle(jokes, dance, songs,
Interlocutor)
Olio(short comic pieces, often including " stump
speech")
Afterpiece(longer skit - often parody of popular story, e. g. Uncle
Tom's Cabin)
Characters in Minstrel Shows
Interlocutor - straight man, not in
blackface

Tambo and Bones - musicians
General Stereotypes of characters in minstrel
shows
Sambo - happy, lazy, stupid. Often musical, laughing (also known as
Jim Crow)

Zip Coon - Northern free slave, tries to mimic white ways but gets them
wrong (often delivers stump speech)

Mammy - Fat, sexless, looks after white children

Uncle Tom - Older man, loyal to white masters

Pickaninny - Savage, undisciplined child

Frequently accepted as authentic by white audiences
Black Performers
More prominent post-Civil War.

Forced to black up, play derogatory stereotypes.

Couldn't participate in entertainment industry in any other way.

Were able to gain fame, money. Bert Williams (1874-1922)
Popular black

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entertainer, famous enough to be able to do some less racist work. Blackface outside of Minstrel Shows Frequently used for non-white characters through mid 20th century. (Othello in Othello)

Often used in even relatively sympathetic depictions of black people (Uncle Tom's Cabin) Legacies of Minstrelsy Roles open to African Americans in film/television (esp Mammy)

" Ghetto/gangsta/thug" parties

Performances of other races? (Yellowface, brownface, reface, etc) Burlesque Popular in Britain and US 1830s-1930s

Transforms a lot during those years, long life span.

Uses variety show format: Showgirls, stripping, risqué songs very comedic;

ALSO: political humor, satire, parodies of classics.

NOT family friendly - target audience is men.

English burlesque emphasizes comedy, American emphasizes attractive women. Vaudeville Variety show format with WIDE range of acts.

Comedy, Song/dance, ventriloquism, magic, animals, acrobatics, jugglers, etc.

Drew from many different artistic and cultural traditions.

Very family friendly. Comic opera Also called " operetta," " light opera".

Grew out of Opera Buffa

Opera for audiences of " common people" happy plot, middle class, language was easier,.

Depicts people other than highest nobility, uses vernacular language.

Mostly sung, with short bits of dialogue, it's between musical, and traditional opera.

Lighthearted romances; obstacles are (relatively) easily overcome. English

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comic operatends to focus on comedy, clever word play, intellectual pleasure. European comic operaplots are more sentimental, often set in "exotic" locations. Gilbert and SullivanProduced for middle class audiences, generally premiering at the Savoy Theatre in London.

Wrote fourteen comic operas. Gilbertwrote librettoSullivanwrote musicCommon features of Gilbert and SullivanYoung romantic pair, older comic pair(s).

Two choruses, divided by gender.

Ridiculous solutions to conflict.

Patter song. Gilbert and Sullivan as social satireGently poke fun at institutions/practices of Victorian England.

Elements of comedy of manners.

Goal is to entertain, not create major change.

Maintains strong patriotic elements.

Examples:

Iolanthe: Parlimentary politics

The Mikado: Victorian morality / obsession with purity

Patience: Aesthetics / poetry (esp Oscar Wilde)H. M. S. PinaforeSocial satire:

Title of the opera, Class and romance, Sir Joseph as stand in for First Lord of the Admiralty W. H. Smith

Reinforces status quo: Through Patriotism: " A British Tar" " He is an Englishman" Pinafore in the USFree circulation - no copyright, therefore americans can show it however they want, traditional, gimicks or parodies.

Merchandizing through Sheet music and Other knick knacks.

Shared popular culture common to most citizens therefore the audience could relate.

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Followed with *Pirates of Penzance*, which premiered in US." Works Progress Administration" FDR creates to fund public projects and create employment
The Federal Theatre Project Created as part of WPA.

Hallie Flanagan (1890-1969), director.

Ambitious, wide variety of programs and goals.

\$46 million spent over 4 years. Harry Hopkins, architect of WPA" I am asked whether a theatre subsidized by the government can be kept free from censorship, and I say yes, it is going to be kept free from censorship. What we want is a free, adult, uncensored theatre." FTP Employ artists
goal Employed 12, 700 artists (including actors, directors, designers, stagehands).

Hire only professionals. FTP reach audiences goal Produce theatre relevant to population.

Free and subsidized tickets.

20 million patrons.

42, 000 performances in over 40 states. Locations of FTP Based in Washington and New York

- Regional companies
- Touring productions
- Performances in 40 states
- Performed in theatres, churches, schools

Types of Plays (as listed by Flanagan) FTP Classics

Theatre of entertainment (circus, vaudeville, etc)

Children's theatre

Dance drama

American drama

Living Newspaper

Radio Drama

" Negro" Theatre
Living Newspaper
Purpose: educate audience on one major issue that effect them. -Heavily researched

o Writers include out-of-work journalists

o Precursor to Documentary Theatre, but not verbatim

Non-realistic writing and staging

Example: One Third of a Nation (subject: housing)

Living newspaper characters
" Loudspeaker" / " Voice of the Living Newspaper"

" Little Man"

Historical figures

Generalized citizens
FTP Creating a Shared experience
Stage a show

simultaneously in many cities.

Example: 21 productions of It Can't Happen Here by Sinclair Lewis open on October 27, 1936.

Satire warning about how fascism might take hold in the US.

Adaptation of novel by prominent novelist.

Each production has its own director, designers, etc, so all are different. FTP

Creating New Plays
Funding for artists who take risks, push boundaries

The Cradle Will Rock (1937 musical by Mark Blitzstein)

Non-realistic, didactic. Characters stand in for ideas/professions

The Cradle will rock
By Mark Blitzstein

Mr. Mister, a rich industrialist controls all of " Steeltown, USA" (Newspapers, college, church, artists, doctors). He is challenged by Larry Foreman and the unions.

Production shut down days before it opens on Broadway. Staged anyway

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(starts as concert by Blitzstein, actors join in defiance of union rules).

Problems with FTP
Massive bureaucracy

Fear of communism

Potentially subversive ideas in *The Cradle Will Rock* and *Living Newspapers*

Congress cancels funding in 1939
Book
the spoken dialogue
lyric
the sung

words
libretto
lyrics + book
Score
Lyrics + music played by the

band/orchestra
Choreography/ Choreographer
The dances and the person who

designs and teaches the dances. Early Musicals
Songs inserted into book

without much connection.

Plots tend to be light, romantic comedy.

Showboat

First integrated musical- uses songs to tell story

Deals with serious issues- racism, martial struggles. The book

musical
Ultimate " integrated" musical- every aspect helps tell story.

Dialogue would flow naturally into song. (when too much emotion they would

usually sing; too much to sing they dance)

Often a love story with characters who don't initially like each other. Golden

Age Musical Theatre
World War 2, Cold War.

Musicals are major part of American popular culture.

Most are book musicals at this time.

Generally display optimistic stories with American values and patriotism,

whether or not the play is based in the US.

Cast recordings became very popular.

Focus on woman protagonist. *My Fair Lady*
Example of Golden Age Musical

Theatre based in another country. *Oklahoma!* By Richard Rodgers and Oscar

Hammerstein II.

Based on play *Green Grow the Lilacs* by Lynn Riggs.

Challenged many conventions of musical theatre, first "real" book musical.

Full integration: Book + Songs + Dance
Oklahoma plot
Set in Oklahoma Territory (before statehood).

Love story between Curley (a cowboy) and Laurey (who comes from a farming family).

Action revolves around the lead up to a barn-raising party. "No Legs, no jokes, no chance!" Early reviewer (before Broadway) for Oklahoma!
Dream Ballet
Dance used to show character's inner feelings.

Used in Oklahoma
Concept Musical
Idea rather than story is central.

May be episodic, focus on large ensemble of characters.

Example: *A Chorus Line*. *A Chorus Line*
Focuses on lives of dancers auditioning to be part of a chorus line.

Backstage look at the hard work and individuality of a group that is often in the background and seen as uniform. *Into the Woods*
Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, Book by James Lapine

Characters from Grimm fairytales with addition of Baker and his Wife (new story).
Rock Opera
Rock music, minimal dialogue.

Like rock music, rock operas tend to be transgressive, push boundaries.

Examples: *Hair*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Rent*
Mega Musical
Significant influx of British composers/writers.

Everything is BIG including plots, casts, design.

Example: *Les Miserables*.

Most shows by Andrew Lloyd Webber, including *Cats* (1982) and *Phantom of the Opera* (1986)
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