

# Video critique on the play oklahoma



553026Oklahoma Sings The 1999 television London stage production of Oklahoma, directed by Trevor Nunn, breathes contemporary life into a musical theatre production that has been performed on Broadway, off Broadway, in colleges and universities, and in high schools in America and around the world for decades. The difference between the 1999 television stage production and the 1955 film production (1955, Fred Zinneman Director) is that the 1999 production, starring actor and stage performer Hugh Jackman, is entirely stage; not film sets or locations as was the 1955 film version. Herein lies one of the first of several problems with the 1999 production: the stage space did not allow for the robust participation of the supporting cast as is seen in the 1955 film production. In the production's premiere theme song, Oklahoma, the on-stage cast, except Jackman and his bride, played by Josephina Gabrielle, remain seated at the wedding dinner table, smiling, but otherwise uninvolved physically and emotionally, until the end of the number. Not much can be said for the cast's emotional expression while they are chair singing, raising cups without much enthusiasm. When they finally rise and join in, it is a flat effect on the viewer because there continues to be a lack of physical interaction with the song. Jackman's voice is flawless when he sings this theme song, and he radiates in his performance. Unfortunately, his radiance was not contagious among his partner, Gabrielle, or the rest of the cast. This is a failure in Nunn's direction. Other song scenes, like I Can't Say No, have the same brilliance of voice, but not in the performance of the actors. It is as if the cast was unaware of the sense of pride-in-state, and without a sense of the American west in their performance. There were dialogue scenes that were of a high caliber, but this is a musical, and the musical scenes are vital to the overall production, <https://assignbuster.com/video-critique-on-the-play-oklahoma/>

and the performances were sorely lacking. The performers were much more rehearsed in the dialogue scenes than in the musical production scenes. The costumes, important to this production, were dull and uninteresting. For a production that had such highly esteemed performers attached to it, one would think that the costumes would be brighter and more elaborate to convey the happy nature of the production; but here, too, the production failed. The orchestra was flawless, and this cast had the musical expertise and quality it needed to be successful as a musical production. The musical cues were perfection, but, again, the musical performance did not do it justice, because it lacked the forcefulness in the performances rendered. The best that can be said for this production is that the high expectations one would have of Jackman were not a let-down for the audience. A seasoned stage performer, Jackman was excellent, outstanding; but he could not carry this production on his own, and the supporting cast did not pull their weight. With the contemporary look of the performers, the outstanding support of a flawless orchestra, and the talented singers, this production should have been very successful; but it lacked the direction that would resolve the performance problems. Nunn had the tools he needed to make this production great, but it was, in the end, just mediocre. His directing was amateurish at best, and only he, as the director, can be held accountable for the failure of this televised stage production - which, had it been successful, held the promise of many more such productions, opening up the industry to this type of entertainment; but that did not happen. All of these things could be improved upon with better direction and sharper, brighter costumes.

Works Cited Nunn, Trevor (Director). Oklahoma, televised stage production. (English) Long, England. Zinneman, Fred (Director). Oklahoma, motion

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picture musical film. (English) Magna Theatre Corporation and Rogers and Hammerstein Production, USA, 1955.