



April 21, 2008

Don't let the title turn you off! Yes, we will be performing the Tony Award winning musical, *Urinetown* this summer at **theatre e3**. I have been racking my brain for quite some time to figure out which show would be the best fit for summer 2008, and I truly and honestly believe that this is going to be it!

As you may have heard we were denied the rights to *West Side Story* due to a revival Broadway production that will be having its out-of-town preview in Minneapolis. Unfortunately, this means that there is a blanket "blackout" on anyone receiving the rights to perform *West Side* for about 12 months. And, yes, I petitioned, I emailed, and I asked every possible person (with the exception of the authors of the musical) if there were any way to make this happen. It was a consistent and unanimous "NO."

The entire show is built on paying tribute and satirizing the conventions of musical theater and previous, "classical" shows. There are musical numbers that emulate *Les Miserables*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, and *West Side Story* to name a few.

Urinetown has nothing objectionable in it (the only issue is truly the title which they satirize in the opening number):

Officer Lockstock: But nothing can kill a show like too much exposition

Little Sally: How about bad subject matter?

Officer Lockstock: Well -

Little Sally: Or a bad title, even? That could kill a show pretty good

The basic premise of the show is that there is a 20-year drought that has forced big business to take control over water and now individuals must pay money to do their "private" business and anyone that doesn't . . . is sent to Urinetown (a place full of symbolism . . .that you won't see until Act 2).* There will be big business versus the common people, love between two people of different

classes, a revolution, kidnapping, and the desire to change one's current situation – to, ultimately, do good in this world. These are all wonderful themes for us to examine with our students, and the staff and I are really excited about it.

We are already examining the idea of a recycled art project with Lisa and a "History of Musical Theater" class to expose the students to the conventions of musical theater that we will be satirizing as well as watching the classic shows that will be the inspiration for several production numbers.

The title can be a turn off, but the show will make you laugh, make you think and be SO MUCH FUN!!! I have loved this show since the first time I saw it and have dreamed of directing it and now is the time!

I hope this letter finds you well and please let me know if you have any questions – eric@thetree3.com.

Take care,

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*please see the attached full synopsis