



Hamilton Show

by Mike Cohen, with files from Alexandra Cohen

Blockbuster Tony Award winning musical Hamilton breaks boundaries and poses questions

Hamilton is without a doubt the biggest theatrical juggernaut to hit Broadway. It was recently nominated for a record-breaking 16 Tony Awards, winning 11 including Best Musical at the award ceremony in June. The cast album, which includes an amalgamation of many current musical styles, hit number one on iTunes and was ranked the second best album of 2015 by Billboard.com.

Tickets are already sold out until May 2017 at the Richard Rogers Theatre at 226 West 46th Street, with an open-ended run now underway in Chicago. The national tour is set to begin in San Francisco in March.

So what is this show that has every celebrity and talk show host buzzing? Inspired by the biography "Alexander Hamilton" by Ron

Chernow, with book, music, and lyrics by Lin-Manuel Miranda and direction by Thomas Kail, Hamilton tells the story of the man on America's ten-dollar bill, "the ten-dollar founding father without a father." An orphan immigrant with a talent for writing, Hamilton lived a full and dramatic life, playing a major role in the American Revolution and acting as the first Treasury Secretary of the United States. In hindsight, a hip-hop musical seems like the perfect way to tell his story.

The show opens with the song "Alexander Hamilton," which tells of Hamilton's upbringing in the Caribbean and his arrival in New York City, summarizing the first 100 pages or so of Chernow's biography. It quickly becomes clear that hip-hop truly is the only style that can adequately showcase Hamilton's genius and gift with words.

As the show has been running for well over a year at this point, many cast-members have decided to move forward, leaving room for a new cast of talented actors to take their places. While the original cast is incredibly talented, as evidenced by their multiple Tony Award wins, the show is special enough that it stands on its own and doesn't rely on any one actor to carry it forward.

Javier Muñoz, our new Hamilton, is not really a rookie to the role. In fact, he was Miranda's alternate; performing the role two shows a week for the past year.

The show breaks boundaries and poses questions relevant both to Hamilton's story and to modern day. At a time when Hollywood's diversity has been under fire, Hamilton features people of color as America's founding mothers and fathers. At a time when the debate on gender equality is escalating, Miranda features and empowers the women often forgotten by history. Do we place enough value on immigrants and their potential to shape our countries? Do our history books always give us the full, unbiased story? ■

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