



## Modern [Dance] Musicals

### Are dances on tiny stages set to music from big Broadway musicals a new subgenre?

Every once in awhile, an idea surfaces that cannot be passed up. Doug Elkins' idea to create his version of the timeless classic, *The Sound of Music*, was one of those which put DanceNOW on a path to commission a trilogy of Modern [Dance] Musicals for its Dancemopolitan series.

### Fraulein Maria: Choreographed by Doug Elkins

As much visceral pleasure as it's possible to have in a theater. - The NY Times Arts & Leisure Critics Pick of the Year

An overwhelming success since it was piloted in 2005 at Joe's Pub at The Public Theater, where it ran for four years, *Fräulein Maria* received five-star press and media coverage, touching the hearts of every single audience member, young and old, from varied socioeconomic environments, who has had the opportunity to see it. Commissioned by Lincoln Center Out-of-Doors, Elkins and theater directors, Barbara Karger and Michael Preston, in collaboration with DanceNOW [NYC], expanded the celebrated work for Damrosch Park's Family Day at Lincoln Center in August 2008. In December 2008, in celebration of Joe's Pub's 10th Anniversary season, *Fräulein Maria* returned for a final two-week run at the pub before taking off on tour across the country as an independent project.

### ShowDown: Choreographed by David Parker

When the piece ends, with a group reprise of "There's No Business Like Show Business," it's over too soon. And then it isn't. Mr. Parker appears and, with Jeffrey Kazin, offers a "bonus track" – a marvelous rendition of "Old-Fashioned Wedding," complete with tap routine. Then you really don't want it to be over. And it is. - The NY Times

On the heels of the success of Elkins' *Fraulein*, DanceNOW commissioned David Parker to develop his version of *Annie Get Your Gun*. In June, 2008 DanceNOW presented ShowDown, David Parker and The Bang Group's new dance set to many of the songs featured in the score of Irving Berlin's music comedy classic, *Annie Get Your Gun*. Working with a series of beautiful recordings made by Judy Garland and Howard Keel for the 1949 MGM film version of the Broadway show (with Garland eventually replaced by Betty Hutton), ShowDown took the songs out of their original narrative context and places them in a wholly contemporary, choreographic world. ShowDown returned by critical demand to the pub in June 2009, and is currently touring the country with The Bang Group.

### The WHIZ: Emerald City: Choreographed by Nicholas Leichter with Monstah Black

Nick Leichter and Monstah Black brought it Home – as in there's no place like it – in DanceNOW's most recent full-length modern dance musical, *The Whiz*. From the moment Monstah begins his R&B crooning in full-blown afro wig, complete with hair pick, a soulful tone is set and we know we're getting the goods in this 70s-to-2010 mashup.

After their inspired debut of *You Can't Win Brand New Day Medley* at the 2009 Dancemopolitan Modern [Dance] Musical series, DanceNOW invited Nicholas Leichter and Monstah Black to expand their piece into a full-evening work. Using music reconstructed from *The Wiz* and some added selections, *THE WHIZ* reimagined New York's underground communities through song, dance, and Prince-esque extravaganzardry. *THE WHIZ: Emerald City* was expanded for Abrons Art Center as well as Lincoln Center is launching on a seven city tour across the country.

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