

**PROFESSOR PEDANTO ON
"SOUND OF MUSIC", "MUSIC MAN",
"OKLAHOMA"**

A Radio/Stage play

By

Eric Coble

**PROFESSOR PEDANTO ON
"SOUND OF MUSIC", "MUSIC MAN", "OKLAHOMA"**

RUDMAN

NOW WE WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND A VERY WARM WELCOME TO ONE OF OUR FAVORITE GUESTS HERE ON THE SHOW -- ONE OF THE MOST VOCAL VOICES IN MUSICAL THEATER COMMENTARY TODAY. HE'S HERE TO DISCUSS HIS NEW BOOK: "WITH A SONG IN MY HEART: THE NEW GEO-POLITICAL AND INTER-PSYCHOLOGICAL INDEX OF MUSICAL LITERATURE IN THE CURRENT POST-MODERN ENVIRONMENT: A BRIEF SURVEY." JUST RELEASED FROM A STINT AT OXFORD - PLEASE WELCOME PROFESSOR ERUDITE L. PEDANTO.

PEDANTO

THANK YOU. IT'S AN IMMENSE PLEASURE TO BE HERE.

RUDMAN

NOW, IN YOUR BOOK YOU PRESENT SOME FAIRLY RADICAL INTERPRETATIONS OF DOZENS OF MUSICALS. ONE OF THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL IS YOUR TAKE ON "OKLAHOMA!"

PEDANTO

WELL, I THINK THE FACTS BACK UP MY ASSERTIONS. THEY'RE FAIRLY OBVIOUS, REALLY. IT'S NOT THE SONGWRITERS' FAULTS THAT AUDIENCES FOR THE PAST FIFTY YEARS HAVE BEEN TOO DENSE TO SEE THEM. TAKE "THE SOUND OF MUSIC" FOR EXAMPLE...

RUDMAN

WHERE DO YOU WANT TO TAKE IT?

PEDANTO

WELL, "THE SOUND OF MUSIC" IS FASCINATING ON SEVERAL LEVELS. THERE'S THE FIRST OBVIOUS LEVEL - THE RETELLING OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN STORY.

RUDMAN

THAT'S OBVIOUS?

PEDANTO

TO THE DISCERNING EYE AND EAR. THE WOMAN DRIVEN OUT OF THE RELIGIOUS PARADISE - THE CONVENT, OF COURSE - FINDS A NEW REWARD IN HER FLOCK OF OFFSPRING AND A HUSBAND. TOO OBVIOUS. BUT MORE INTERESTING, I THINK, IS THE VERY CLEAR UNITED NATIONS PROPAGANDA.

RUDMAN

UNITED NATIONS...

PEDANTO

JULIE ANDREWS, PERSONIFYING AMERICA AND ITS BURGEONING ROLE IN EUROPE. IF WE CAN PLAY THAT CLIP, I THINK IT WILL BE INDISPUTABLE.

("DO RE MI" PLAYS - Pedanto BEGINS
SPEAKING ON FADING "SO..")

PEDANTO (CONT'D)

SEE? ISN'T IT OBVIOUS? UNITED NATIONS? NEW WORLD ORDER?

RUDMAN

PERHAPS YOU CAN CLARIFY.

PEDANTO

IF I MUST. "DO - A DEER, A FEMALE DEER." CLEARLY THE PASSIVE QUALITY OF EUROPE PRIOR TO WORLD WAR II. THE FEMININE "YIN" QUALITY OF THE CONTINENT. THEN IN COMES "RE - A DROP OF GOLDEN SUN". THE MASCULINE "YANG" PRESENCE OF AMERICA SHINING LIKE THE SUN. "MI - A NAME I CALL MYSELF". CLEARLY THE SELF-CENTERED NATIONALISM SPLINTERING EUROPE. "FA - A LONG, LONG WAY TO RUN". WELL, OBVIOUSLY, WE'VE A GREAT DISTANCE TO GO TO UNIFY THE CONTINENT. "SO - A NEEDLE PULLING THREAD". THE SEWING TOGETHER OF A QUILT OF PEACE. "LA - A NOTE THAT FOLLOWS SO". THE GETTING INTO LINE, CONFORMING TO THE NORM, AND OF COURSE, LAWS - L.A.W.S. - WILL HAVE TO FOLLOW THE SEWING ACTIVITY. "TE - A DRINK WITH JAM AND BREAD" - A CLEAR REFERENCE TO ENGLAND. "AND THAT WILL BRING US BACK TO DO, OH, OH, OH" "DO" REFERRING THIS TIME, NOT TO FEMALE DEER, BUT TO THE CASH NEEDED TO MOUNT THIS HUGE UNIFICATION. AND THERE YOU ARE. THE WHOLE THING IS A PARABLE FOR WORLD WAR II. RODGERS AND HAMMERSTEIN CLEARLY KNEW THIS AND I THINK THE AUDIENCE SHOULD TOO.

RUDMAN

AND WHAT ABOUT "THE MUSIC MAN". IS THAT ONE REALLY ABOUT THE MAGNA CARTA?

PEDANTO

DON'T BE RIDICULOUS. "MUSIC MAN" IS A RE-EXAMINATION OF IMMANUEL KANT'S "THE CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON".

RUDMAN

OH. OF COURSE.

PEDANTO

WE HAVE MARIAN. THE LIBRARIAN. A SYMBOL OF KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING, YEARNING FOR PURE EXPERIENCE. THE LURE OF HAROLD HILL. BUT WHAT DOES HE OFFER HER? "SEVENTY-SIX TROMBONES" AND POOL CUES. AND WE ALL KNOW WHAT FREUD SAYS ABOUT TROMBONES AND POOL CUES. BUT SHE ACCEPTS IT! IN FACT, IT UNCLOGS HER SINUSES!

RUDMAN

HER SINUSES?

PEDANTO

CAN WE HEAR SHIRLEY JONES, PLEASE?

("TILL THERE WAS YOU" PLAYS - Pedanto
SPEAKS ON FADING "BIRDS...")

PEDANTO (CONT) (CONT'D)

YOU SEE? ONLY AFTER ACCEPTING HIS MALE "YANG"-NESS CAN SHE
HEAR THE BELLS, SEE THE BIRDS, AND SMELL THE MEADOW. HIS
"ID" HAS FREED HER "SUPER-EGO" AND HER SENSES FOLLOW. CLEAR
SINUSES.

RUDMAN

WHO'D HAVE THUNK IT.

PEDANTO

ME. I THUNK IT... THOUGHT IT. BUY MY BOOK - IT'S ALL
DETAILED IN THERE. WITH PHOTOS, GRAPHS, AN INDEX OF PHALLIC
REFERENCES IN "ROSE MARIE". PUBLISHED BY BALLANTINE, \$29.95.

RUDMAN

YES, YES, YES. SO WHAT'S ALL THIS ABOUT "OKLAHOMA"?

PEDANTO

WELL, DON'T YOU WANT TO HEAR ABOUT TEVYE'S OEDIPAL COMPLEX?

RUDMAN

ACTUALLY, NO. PLEASE TELL US ABOUT "OKLAHOMA".

PEDANTO

RIGHT. WELL, FIRST OFF, OBVIOUSLY THE TITLE "OKLAHOMA"
REFERS TO THE ANCIENT KIPALI WORD "OKLEEHOONA", WHICH ROUGHLY
TRANSLATES AS "MY TONGUE IS SWOLLEN" OR "I CAN'T TALK TO
YOU". RODGERS AND HAMMERSTEIN KNEW THIS.

RUDMAN

WHY?

PEDANTO

BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT THE ENTIRE MUSICAL IS ABOUT! A STATE
FULL OF PEOPLE WHO CAN'T COMMUNICATE WITH EACH OTHER! LISTEN
TO THE LYRICS! THEY CAN TALK TO THE LAND - "OKLAHOMA, YOU'RE
OK". BUT CAN THEY SPEAK MEANINGFULLY TO THEIR FELLOW MEN?
NO. IS IT ANY WONDER YOU GET PSYCHOTICS LIKE JUD WANDERING
AROUND WHEN THEY ALL FEEL SO ALIENATED FROM EACH OTHER? IT'S
ONE HUGE DYSFUNCTIONAL STATE!

BILL RUDMAN

WELL. I'M AFRAID THAT'S ALL WE'VE GOT TIME FOR...

PEDANTO

"A BRIGHT GOLDEN HAZE ON THE MEADOW"?? PLEASE! WHAT ABOUT
THE BRIGHT GOLDEN HAZE IN JUD'S HEAD? DON'T THESE PEOPLE
CARE?

RUDMAN
THANK YOU, PROFESSOR PEDANTO.

PEDANTO
MY PLEASURE, I'M SURE. BALLANTINE BOOKS, \$29.95.

(APPLAUSE)