

“Clothing the Next Generation of Actors”

**Jennifer Hudson,
Providence School of Jacksonville**

Who am I?

- Choral Director (2 middle school choirs, 1 high school)
- Speech & Theatre teacher (middle and high school)





Who am I ALSO?

-Director of school-wide Spring Musical



Why am I here doing this presentation?

1. I received a generic email at the end of the school year from FCIS about applying for a grant. Knowing it was the end of the school year and no one was probably reading this email, I decided my chances were probably good. So I wrote an essay, got a signature from my Headmaster, and applied that day for the Dewitt E. & Vera M. Hooker Fellowship Grant.
2. I tied for first place!
3. I received \$2,500 from FCIS for my theatre costume project!

What is this presentation about?

Description:

“Since many schools have very limited options for their school-wide musical, I propose that theatre departments start openly sharing their theatrical resources in order to become a close-knit community that partners together to provide excellent tools for other schools in need.”

So, I've realized a few things by being a Christian Theatre teacher...

1. It's hard. Get used to leaving school when it's dark.
2. It's challenging to present a *quality* theatre work that is readily accepted by the theatre community as "real".
3. It's expensive to do it right, and that it's worth doing.
4. We just can't do certain shows. Nope. We just can't.
5. Most Christian schools are bound to end up doing the same shows because of content, talent and budget.

So, what constitutes an acceptable Christian show?

1. Appropriate Content: no profanity, sexual situations, drug use, alcohol tolerance, physical violence, 20 more things...
2. Good roles for Leads, Supporting AND the Ensemble.
3. Applicable, teachable scenarios for both cast and crew.
4. Marketability to a live faith-based audience.
5. Student and Director enjoyment!



So, how many shows in the musical world does that leave us able to use?

The reality is that writers today are not rapidly producing quality shows that can be performed by Christian actors for a faith-based community.

The shows we usually perform are older, “classic” shows,

....or Disney.



Little Women

2015

The Sound of Music

2017

The Music Man

2019

2016

Mary Poppins

2018

Rodgers & Hammerstein's
Cinderella

History of Providence Musicals

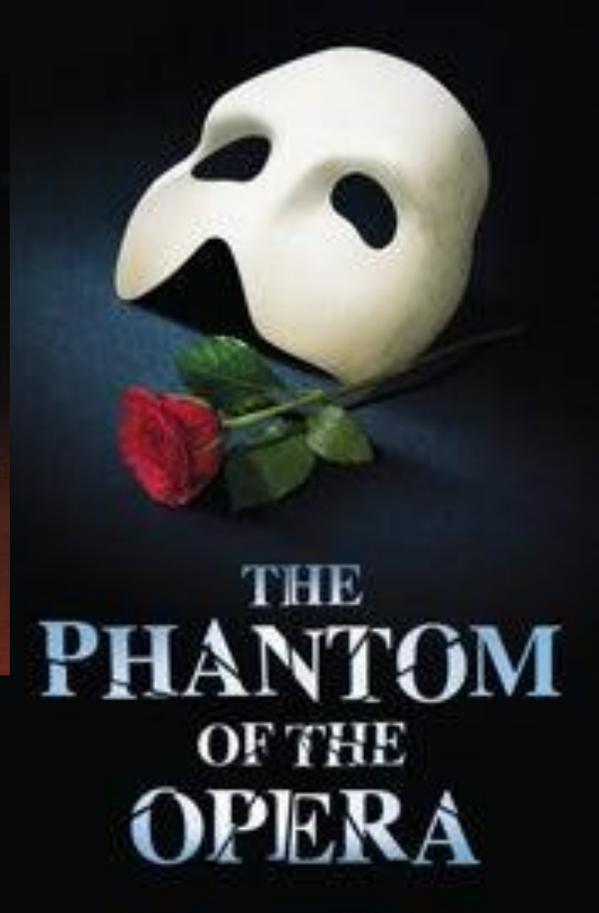
“The Last Five Years”

Our Space

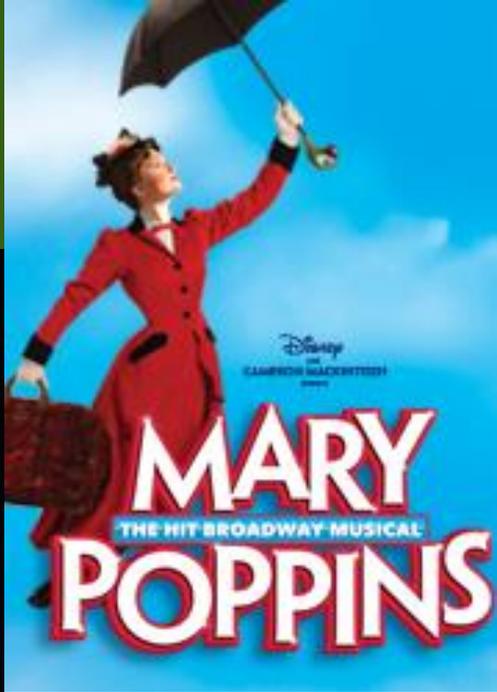
- 2,400 seat Auditorium
- Functions as a Church on Sundays and Wednesdays
- No wing space
- Carpeted stage
- 30 degree fan angle
- No orchestra pit
- 3 days to tech show
- 65' stage playing area
- Rent all audio and lighting needs

But we do it every year!





UPPERCALIFRAGILISTIC
EXPIALIDOCIOUS



PROVIDENCE SCHOOL
20TH ANNIVERSARY PRESENTATION

The SOUND of MUSIC

Music by RICHARD RODGERS • Lyrics by OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN II
Book by HOWARD LINDSAY and RUSSEL CROUSE
Suggested by "The Trapp Family Singers"
by Maria Augusta Trapp



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7 PM

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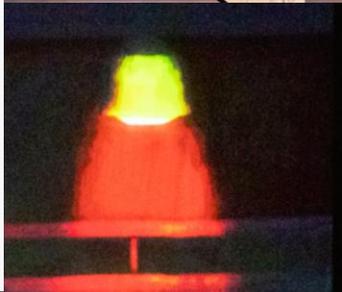


RODGERS + HAMMERSTEIN'S
CINDERELLA





THE MUSIC MAN





SINGIN' IN THE RAIN



This entire project is a direct result of a theatre teacher named Peter Nason of Gulf Middle School.





Gulf Middle School was doing *The Sound of Music* soon. He had seen my pics on Facebook and he reached out to me as a total stranger...

Peter asked me if I would consider renting him my costumes for his school production...



His theatre program had recently exploded with kids, and he was very short on costumes. He needed a lot of pieces, and soon. So, I asked him what his costume budget was for the almost 200 pieces I was asked to rent out to him..



He responded:
“ \$400.00 ”

My INITIAL thought process:

- Maria's wedding dress alone cost \$400.00.
...I guess I can loan him that one piece?
- I could easily rent this show out for \$4,000.00.
- I don't want middle schoolers messing up MY stuff.

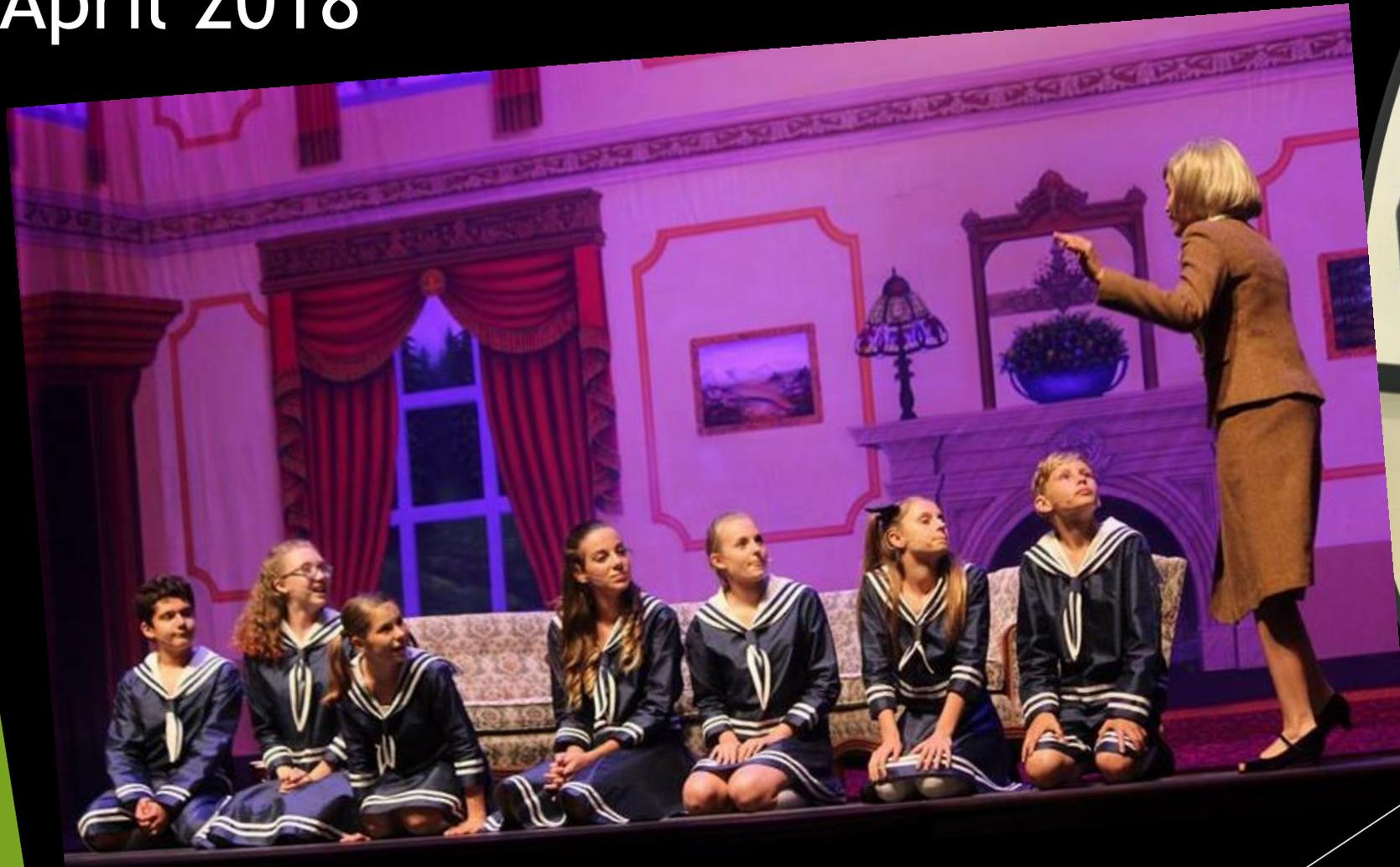


My ENDING thought process:

- He told me everyone in his cast is on a free lunch program. These kids literally have nothing.
- His students have never worn handmade costumes.
- He is trying to do the same thing I am.
- He needs help if he's going to do it.
- He asked *me* for help.



The Sound of Music
Gulf Middle School, Tampa
April 2018



The Sound of Music Gulf Middle School, Tampa



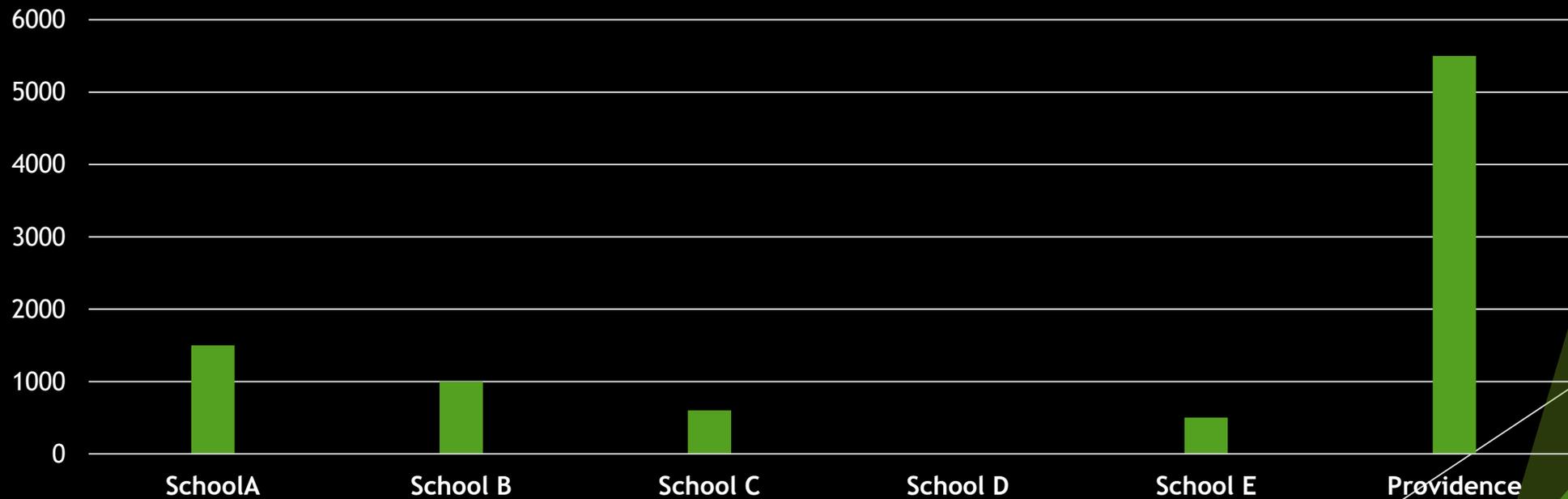
This experience sparked me to find out how many other teachers are teaching with a limited budget.

So naturally, I turned to my favorite resource:



My Poll of High School Theatre Teachers

Costume Budget Analysis per show



Desperate comments from theatre colleagues:

“I pay out of my pocket until I raise enough donations to turn in receipts.”

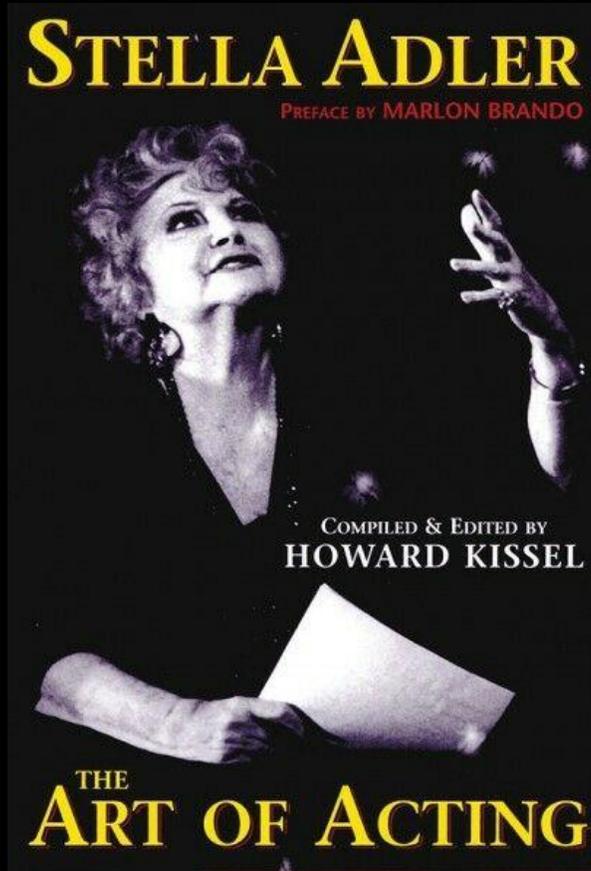
“No budget for costumes. We have to borrow from other local theatres.”

“A pulled together look helps build respect for the program, and I really can’t imagine the cost of renting for each person in a show multiple costumes, but I guess some schools do have huge budgets.”

“We are starting to repeat shows.”

“My mother-in-law has a costume shop in her basement.”

“Jennifer, a costume is just a piece of fabric.”



“Your costume must feed you...
What you put on is going to be
part of you. Live in it. Marry it.
Don't cheapen yourself by
cheapening your costume.”

- Stella Adler

Know your people.

Trust God to meet your needs.

Meet my amazing seamstress,
Beverly Goldstein.



The Golden Needle

What actually happens when we share resources?

- You develop relationships with strangers.
- You build each other up by encouragement.
- You are a helper to those in need.
- You save colleagues time and money.
- You have more resources now available to you.
- You model Christ likeness by sharing.
- You receive a blessing by being one.

What does the Bible say about sharing?

Luke 6:38 “Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

Proverbs 19:17 “Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and He will reward them for what they have done.”

Proverbs 31:20 “She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy.”

Philippians 2:3-4 “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others.”

Hebrews 13:16 “And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.”

What have I done to start implementing my grant?

Future Projects already out on loan:

University of North Florida, Jacksonville

-*A Midsummer Night's Dream*

-*The Sound of Music*

Players by the Sea Theatre, Jacksonville

-*A Christmas Carol*

Anne of Green Gables

Trinity Christian Academy, Jacksonville

November 2019



Anne of Green Gables Trinity Christian Academy, Jacksonville



How many of us are Peter?

You have not
because you ask not.



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