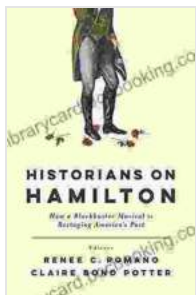


# How Musicals Are Restaging America's Past

In recent years, there has been a resurgence of interest in musicals that tell stories about American history. From "Hamilton" to "The Prom," these musicals have captivated audiences with their catchy tunes, memorable characters, and thought-provoking storylines.

But these musicals are not merely entertaining diversions. They are also powerful tools for understanding our past and its continuing legacy. By revisiting historical events through the lens of music, these musicals can help us to see them in a new light and to better understand their impact on our present.



## Historians on Hamilton: How a Blockbuster Musical Is Restaging America's Past by Claire Bond Potter

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 23166 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 409 pages  
Screen Reader : Supported



One of the most striking things about these musicals is their ability to humanize historical figures. In "Hamilton," for example, we see Alexander Hamilton not as the stuffy Founding Father of history books, but as a flawed and complex man with ambitions, dreams, and fears. This

humanization makes it easier for us to connect with these figures and to understand their motivations.

Another important aspect of these musicals is their focus on diversity. In "The Prom," for example, we see a group of Broadway stars who travel to a small town to support a lesbian student who is banned from attending her prom. This musical challenges traditional notions of gender and sexuality, and it shows that everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.

Of course, these musicals are not without their critics. Some have argued that they are too simplistic or that they whitewash history. However, these criticisms miss the point. These musicals are not meant to be definitive accounts of history. Rather, they are creative interpretations that can help us to think about the past in new ways.

Ultimately, the value of these musicals lies in their ability to spark dialogue and inspire thought. They can help us to see the past in a new light, to understand its continuing legacy, and to envision a more just and equitable future.

**Here are some specific examples of how musicals have used music to restage America's past:**

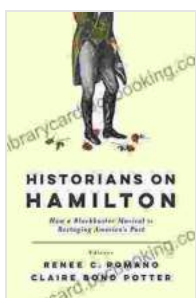
**"Hamilton"** uses hip-hop and R&B to tell the story of Alexander Hamilton, one of the Founding Fathers of the United States. The musical humanizes Hamilton and makes him relatable to modern audiences. It also challenges traditional notions of race and class, and it shows that America was founded on a promise of equality that has yet to be fully realized.

**"The Prom"** uses Broadway show tunes to tell the story of a group of Broadway stars who travel to a small town to support a lesbian student who is banned from attending her prom. The musical celebrates diversity and inclusion, and it shows that everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.

**"Dear Evan Hansen"** uses contemporary pop music to tell the story of a high school student who creates a fake online relationship with a girl who has died. The musical explores themes of grief, loss, and identity. It also shows how social media can be used to connect people and to create a sense of community.

These are just a few examples of how musicals are using music to restage America's past. These musicals are not only entertaining, but they are also thought-provoking and educational. They can help us to see the past in a new light, to understand its continuing legacy, and to envision a more just and equitable future.

As we grapple with the challenges of the present, it is more important than ever to understand our past. Musicals can be a powerful tool for helping us to do this. By revisiting historical events through the lens of music, these musicals can help us to see them in a new light and to better understand their impact on our present.



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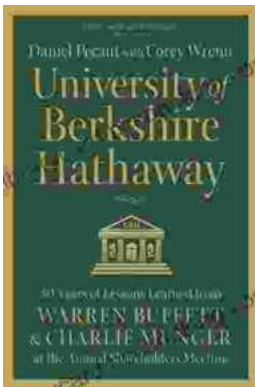
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