“We’ve got magic to do, just for you.”

Pippin: Opening number

Pippin taps into something haunting, beautiful and unexpected through great music, inventive choreography and the essence of music theatre – which is storytelling. Although this is a storybook tale, Pippin and his father Charlemagne, are fictional characters derived from two real-life individuals of the early Middle Ages. In our story, a performance troupe, led by a charismatic Leading Player, tells the story of a young prince’s search to find meaning in his life.

Pippin seeks the answers in the glories of battlefield, the temptations of the flesh and the intrigues of political power. After deposing his father, King Charlemagne the Great, Pippin realizes his mistake, and begs the Leading Player to bring his father back to life, and she obliges.

When Pippin falls in love with Catherine, a widow with a young son, he struggles to decide whether he should settle down and pursue a peaceful life or continue his quest. He eventually learns that happiness lies not in extraordinary endeavors, but rather in the ordinary moments that happen every day.

Pippin is an unforgettable, iconic musical that has inspired generations of theatregoers. With a memorable score by Stephen Schwartz, who also composed Wicked and Godspell, this five-time Tony Award-winning Broadway show follows Pippin’s search to find his place in the world. The beautiful score includes such songs as Magic to Do, Corner of the Sky, No Time at All and Morning Glow.

Pippin is delightful and vibrant with exciting choreography by Christal Wagner and an amazingly energetic cast who will jump through hoops for you, literally.

“We’re excited to kick off our new season with Pippin because it is about the magic of theatre and the magic we find in ourselves,” said Skylight artistic director Ray Jivoff. “It is a reminder that the simplest aspects of our lives are often the most important.”
Stephen Schwartz: Music and Lyrics

Stephen Schwartz (above) was born in New York City in 1948. He studied piano and composition at the Juilliard School of Music while in high school and graduated from Carnegie Mellon University with a B.F.A. in Drama.

He began his career in New York City, working as a producer for RCA Records. His first major credit was the title song for the play Butterflies are Free, also used in the movie version.

In 1971, he wrote the music and lyrics for Godspell, for which he won several awards, including two Grammys. That same year, he collaborated with Leonard Bernstein on the English texts for Bernstein's Mass, which opened the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.

The next year, he wrote the music and lyrics for Pippin, and two years later, The Magic Show. By 1974, at age 26, Schwartz had three hit musicals running on Broadway -- Godspell, Pippin and The Magic Show.

He had a bit of a commercial slump in 1976 with The Baker's Wife, which closed before reaching Broadway after an out-of-town tryout. He then contributed four songs to the musical version of Studs Terkel's Working, which he also adapted and directed.

Next came a one-act musical for children, Captain Louie, and a children's book, The Perfect Peach. He then wrote lyrics to Charles Strouse's music for Rags, and music and lyrics for Children of Eden.

He collaborated with composer Alan Menken on the scores for the Disney animated features: Pocahontas (1995), for which he received two Academy Awards and a Grammy and The Hunchback of Notre Dame (1998) was also Oscar-nominated. He provided songs for Dreamworks' first animated feature, The Prince of Egypt, and won another Academy Award for the song, When You Believe. In 2007, he again collaborated with Menken on the songs for Disney's Enchanted.

Schwartz's return to Broadway came in 2003, with the Tony Award winning Wicked, the "real" story behind The Wizard of Oz. While various aspects of the show won Tony awards, Schwartz himself failed to win for composition.

On March 23, 2006, the Broadway production of Wicked passed the 1,000 performance mark, making Schwartz one of four composers (Andrew Lloyd Webber, Jerry Herman, and Richard Rodgers) to have three shows reach that mark on Broadway. (His other two were Pippin and The Magic Show).

His first opera, Séance on a Wet Afternoon, premiered at Opera Santa Barbara in the fall of 2009 and was produced by the New York City Opera.

Schwartz has received three Academy Awards, four Grammy Awards, four Drama Desk Awards, and in 2015 he received the Isabelle Stevenson Tony Award for his commitment to helping artists and cultivating new talent. He has been inducted into the Theatre Hall of Fame and the Songwriters Hall of Fame. A book about his career, Defying Gravity, by Carol de Giere was published by Applause Books.

He continues to be active in film and theater and under the auspices of the ASCAP Foundation, he runs musical theatre workshops in New York and Los Angeles and serves on the ASCAP board.
Bob Fosse directed and choreographed the original Broadway production of *Pippin* in 1972. He is credited with shaping the show into the dark and dance-driven production familiar to audiences today.

Bob Fosse forever changed the way audiences viewed dance on stage and in film. Visionary, intense and incredibly driven, his work was provocative, entertaining and unlike anything ever before seen. He revolutionized musicals with his distinct style of dance, characterized by tilted bowler hats, isolated movements, splayed fingers and turned-in knees and toes.

Bob Fosse was born in Chicago in 1927. He developed an early interest in dance, and by his teens, he was dancing in local nightclubs and burlesque houses. The tawdry atmosphere at these theaters inspired the element of his work for which he is most famous—using the erotic display of the body as a critique of the manipulative nature of entertainment.

In 1947, after a two-year tour of duty in the Navy entertaining troops, he moved to New York City, formed a dance team with his first wife, Mary Ann Niles, and performed on television and the musical stage.

Fosse went to Hollywood to work at MGM in 1953. Among the three movies he made was *Kiss Me, Kate*, in which he choreographed and danced a short but brilliant sequence. That brought him to the attention of two of Broadway’s most powerful producers, George Abbott and Jerome Robbins.

Fosse returned to New York, with a new wife, actress and dancer Joan McCracken, and Abbott hired him to choreograph *The Pajama Game* (1954). Fosse’s signature style won him a Tony Award®, his first of eight, for Best Choreography.

*Damn Yankees* followed in 1955, winning Fosse his second Tony and an opportunity to work with the great Broadway dancer, Gwen Verdon, who would become his third and last wife. They married in 1960 and had a daughter, Nicole.

Now hugely successful, Fosse was both director and choreographer for *Redhead*, starring Gwen Verdon. The show won Tonys in 1959 for Best Musical, Best Actor (Richard Kiley), Best Actress (Verdon) and Best Choreography (Fosse).

He was “musical stage director” for Frank Loesser’s *How to Succeed in Business without Really Trying* (1961), which won seven Tony Awards, including Best Musical, along with a Pulitzer Prize.

In 1962, Fosse choreographed and directed *Little Me*, starring Sid Caesar followed by *Sweet Charity* (1966), starring Gwen Verdon. He also directed the 1969 film version starring Shirley MacLaine.

In 1973, Fosse became the only director to win a Tony, an Oscar and an Emmy in a single year. The awards were for *Pippin*, which won five Tonys, two for Fosse as director and as choreographer; the film of *Cabaret* won eight Academy Awards, including one for Fosse as Best Director and he won two Emmy Awards (Direction and Choreography) for the television special, *Liza with a Z*.

In 1975, Gwen Verdon returned to Broadway in *Chicago*, with Fosse as writer, director and choreographer. One week into rehearsals for the show, Fosse had a heart attack and underwent bypass surgery. When *Chicago* opened, it was only moderately successful, being overshadowed by the mega-hit, *A Chorus Line*.

After directing and choreographing the revue *Dancin’* (1978), winning his seventh Tony for Choreography, Fosse directed the autobiographical film, *All That Jazz* (1979), which centers on his 1975 heart attack.

In September 1987, Fosse and assistant-director Gwen Verdon, were in rehearsal for a revival of *Sweet Charity* at the National Theatre in Washington, D.C. On opening night, Fosse had a massive heart attack and died in Verdon’s arms.

In a presentation on Fosse at the International Musical Film Festival in South Korea, David Pendleton said: “The world of Bob Fosse is perhaps most of all a world in tension: spectacular pleasure versus cynicism, exploitation, alienation and hypocrisy. Lying at the heart of his work, that tension was Fosse’s ongoing, evolving comment on the postwar US of the 1960s and 70s.”
Act I

The show begins with the Leading Player and the rest of the troupe welcoming the audience (*Magic to Do*). The players introduce the story of Pippin, first son of Charlemagne, (called Charles in the show,) who is searching for existential fulfillment. Pippin's story begins as he graduates from university and explains to his teachers that he intends to live an extraordinary life (*Corner of the Sky*).

Pippin returns and sees his father dealing harshly with nobles, soldiers and citizens. Charles and Lewis are planning a battle against the Visigoths, and Pippin begs to join them to prove himself. Charles reluctantly agrees and then explains his philosophy of war and the battle plan to his men (*War is a Science*).

As the battle begins, the Leading Player re-enters to glorify warfare and violence as the troupe engages in battle (*Glory*). Pippin is horrified by the carnage of war and refuses to join in the victory celebration.

The Leading Player describes Pippin's dilemma as he travels through the countryside (*Simple Joys*). Pippin arrives at his exiled grandmother Berthe's estate. She encourages Pippin to stop worrying so much and embrace life (*No Time at All*).

Pippin takes her advice to enjoy the sensual side of life (*With You*). While he initially enjoys the endless erotic encounters, he soon realizes that relationships without love are meaningless and leave you "empty and unfulfilled."

Pippin realizes that his father Charles is a corrupt, uneducated tyrant. The Leading Player encourages Pippin to fight this tyranny, and Pippin plans a revolution. Fastrada encourages Pippin to revolt against his father, in hopes that her son Lewis would become king (*Spread a Little Sunshine*). Pippin falls victim to her plot, and as Charles is praying at Arles, Pippin assassinates him, and becomes the new king (*Morning Glow*). The Leading Player announces the intermission.

Costumes designed by Karin Kopischke
Act II

Act 2 begins with King Pippin trying to make everyone happy. He realizes it is impossible and begs the Leading Player to bring his slain father back to life. The Leading Player agrees and Charles is resurrected. Pippin feels defeated and directionless and the Leading Player tries to inspire him (On the Right Track). After experimenting with art and religion, and finding no satisfaction, he falls into a depression and collapses on the side of the road.

Catherine, a widow and single mother, finds him and takes him back to her farm to nurse him back to health. (And There He Was). When Pippin regains consciousness, she introduces herself to him (Kind of Woman). At first, Pippin has no interest in Catherine or her son Theo. He thinks he is above manual labor like milking cows (Extraordinary).

Eventually, he tries to comfort Theo over the death of his pet duck, (Prayer for a Duck) and begins to have real feelings for Catherine (Love Song). But, as time goes by, Pippin is compelled to leave the estate to continue searching for his purpose. Catherine is heartbroken (I Guess I’ll Miss the Man).

Finding himself alone on stage, Pippin is soon surrounded by the Leading Player and the troupe. They encourage Pippin to execute the most perfect act in their repertoire: The Finale, which is to leap from the highest height into the fire below. The Leading Player explains that “in that flame, you’ll become a glorious synthesis of life and death.”

Pippin is reluctant, but the Leading Player seems to convince him, saying “you’re an extraordinary human being, with extraordinary aspirations and dreams. You deserve an extraordinary climax…You will burn in our memories forever!” (Finale).

When Catherine and Theo appear, Pippin realizes that the widow's home was the only place where he was truly happy (Magic Shows and Miracles). Having experimented with every possible path to fulfillment, he now understands that maybe the most fulfilling road of all is a modest, ordinary life. He concludes that, while "settling down" may at times be mundane and boring, “if [he’s] never tied to anything, [he'll] never be free.” The Leading Player becomes furious and stops the show, telling the rest of the troupe and the orchestra to pack up and leave Pippin, Catherine, and her son alone on an empty stage.
Charlemagne, or Charles I, was born around 742. His exact birthplace is unknown, but historians suggest Liege in present-day Belgium.

Charlemagne was the son of Bertrada of Laon (d.783) and Pepin the Short (d.768), who became king of the Franks in 751. After Pepin’s death in 768, the Frankish kingdom was divided between Charlemagne and his younger brother Carloman (751-771). After Carloman’s death, Charlemagne became the sole ruler and king in 776.

Once in power, Charlemagne sought to unite all the Germanic peoples into one kingdom, and convert his subjects to Christianity. To fulfill this mission, he spent the majority of his reign engaged in military campaigns.

Soon after becoming king, he conquered the Lombards (in present-day northern Italy), the Avars (in modern-day Austria and Hungary) and Bavaria, among others. Charlemagne established the Carolingian Empire which united Western Europe for the first time since the Roman Empire.

Charlemagne waged a bloody, three-decades-long series of battles against the Saxons, a Germanic tribe of pagan worshippers, and earned a reputation for ruthlessness. In 782, Charlemagne reportedly ordered the slaughter of some 4,500 Saxons and forced the Saxons to convert to Christianity. He declared that anyone who didn’t get baptized or follow other Christian traditions be put to death.

In his role as a zealous defender of Christianity, Charlemagne gave money and land to the Christian church and protected the popes. As a way to acknowledge Charlemagne’s relationship with the church, Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne emperor of the Romans on December 25, 800, at St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome.

As emperor, Charlemagne proved to be a talented diplomat and able administrator of the vast area he controlled. He promoted education and encouraged the Carolingian Renaissance, a period of renewed emphasis on scholarship and culture, along with economic and religious reforms.

Charlemagne had multiple wives and mistresses and perhaps as many as 18 children. He was reportedly a devoted father, who encouraged his children’s education. In 813, Charlemagne crowned his son Louis the Pious (778-840), king of Aquitaine, as co-emperor.

Louis became sole emperor when Charlemagne died, in January 814, ending his reign of more than four decades. At the time of his death, his empire encompassed much of Western Europe. Charlemagne was buried at the cathedral in Aachen.

In the ensuing decades, his empire was divided up among his heirs, and by the late 800s, it had dissolved. Nevertheless, Charlemagne became a legendary figure endowed with mythical qualities.
The musical Pippin borrows loosely from the story of Pippin, the son of Charlemagne, the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. Charlemagne's stature during the latter-eighth century was exceeded only by the Pope's. Pippin's characters were based primarily on the legends of historical figures from medieval Western Europe. The youthful lead only vaguely resembled a prince of the Frankish Empire (actually named Pepin) who was the son of Charlemagne. Pippin's grandmother, Bertrada ("Berthe Greatfoot"), is also portrayed in the show.

Charlemagne actually had two sons named Pepin! The first son, known as "Pepin the Hunchback," was sired in Charlemagne's earliest union with Himiltrude, thirteen-year-old daughter of a Lombard king. As mentioned in the show, he did suffer from a spinal deformity, hence the nickname.

In Pippin, the prince is convinced by others to murder his father, an act founded in historical fact. In 792 A.D., several out-of-favor courtiers capitalized on Pepin's envy of his stepbrothers, persuading him to participate in a botched coup d'état.

At the end of the play, we see him with a family of his own. The play adds the theme of fulfillment to the true story of Pippin: most things he encounters in the life of the play fulfill him only temporarily. He carries on the search for happiness throughout three-fourths of the show, concluding that life's true joy is only experienced through a deeper sense of love.

Pippin is led through a series of experiences throughout the journey of the play reminiscent of the late-medieval morality drama Everyman. Sent on a visit with manifestations representing all of mortal life's weaknesses, Everyman learns through his humbling adventure that Pride, Strength, Knowledge, Fellowship, the Four Wits, and other manifest human qualities are at best fleeting, and they will not take him where he ultimately wants to be (in heaven). Mortals can only be turned asunder when they misplace their faith and trust in these things.

Pippin is tempted by greed, lust, gluttony and other temptations, which leads him to the realization that, ultimately, none of them will bring him happiness. In the end, Pippin grows up. As the curtain falls, he understands that the rewards which can be claimed by those who shun darkness might well be life's best.
Stephen Schwartz was a student at Carnegie Mellon University and wrote *Pippin* in 1967 as a show for the Scotch 'n' Soda club, which produces an original musical every year.

“A friend, Ron Strauss, had seen a paragraph in a history textbook about the son of Charlemagne launching a revolution against his father, and he had begun writing a musical about the idea,” Schwartz said. “We decided to collaborate, thinking it would be fun to do something like a musical *Lion in Winter*, with lots of court intrigue and crackling dialogue. Our show was entitled *Pippin, Pippin.*”

Schwartz explained that over time, the characters became less realistic and more caricature-like interpretations of the historical figures they represent. After he graduated, he continued to work on the show. He acquired an agent, who began to take him around to audition the show for producers and he found a book writer, Roger O. Hirson. The show gradually became an allegory of a young man in search of himself, reflecting Schwartz’s own search as a man in his early 20s.

After a few turn-downs by directors, Bob Fosse agreed to direct it. “Bob, of course, not only added the brilliant choreography to the show, but he helped to make the story darker and more sophisticated.” Fosse added deeper struggles to Pippin’ life and drew inspiration from burlesque shows, vaudeville, and even soap operas to cultivate into the more daring show Skylight audiences will see.

The magic and wonder of Schwartz and Hirson’s show is still very much present, but amplified by Fosse’s direction and choreography. The end product is not naïve as Fosse originally felt it was, but dark and mysterious. This tone shift actually relates more to the original story of Charlemagne and Pippin as it is a story of jealousy, power, sensuality, and death.

In ways, the show was also influenced by being written in the Vietnam War era. This is evident in the anti-war sequence of the show as well as Pippin taking his father’s place as king and putting his own principles into practice. The entire show, of course, was not written to be a reaction to the Vietnam War, but instead a culminating of history and what were then current events. When the show was revived on Broadway in 2013, the new version expanded further to incorporate commentary on the then current political climate and religious issues. All of this inspiration created a show that is timeless and relevant in any era.


You may not know his name, but you certainly know his work. Dramatist and screenwriter Roger O. Hirson (1926) has contributed extensively to television series and episodes since the 1950s. He has written for programs such as *The Kraft Television Theater, Goodyear Television Playhouse, Philco Television Playhouse*, *Studio One*. He also wrote *A Woman Named Jackie*, which won an Emmy in 1992 for Outstanding Miniseries.

He has also written several screenplays, including *Bridge at Remagen* (1969), *Demon Seed* (1977), and the teleplay for *The Christmas Carol*, starring George C. Scott (1984).

His Broadway efforts include the book for the musical, *Walking Happy* (1966), with music by Jimmy Van Heusen and lyrics by Sammy Cahn, based on the play *Hobson’s Choice* by Harold Brighouse. It was nominated for six Tony Awards, including Best Musical.

*Pippin* was his only collaboration with Stephen Schwartz, and it turned out to be Hirson’s last musical. However, *Pippin* was the beginning of a long Hirson/Schwartz friendship, including many highly competitive but friendly bridge games.