

In December 1983 - January 1984 the first session of Librettist workshops with Musial Theatre Works, took place. It was headed by Tony Stemac with Mark Herko as dramaturge. For the first session from over 400 hundred submissions, nation wide, both DRAGON MYTH and SACHARINE were chosen as two of the twenty scripts selected for their development seminar.

The Wisdoms Child NEW YORK GUIDE

Thru June 3



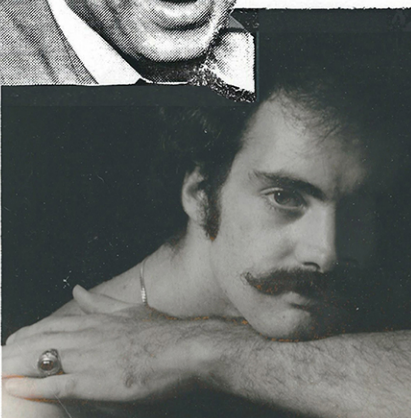
Jose Freilla Composer/Singer



Bob Brooker
Singer/
Music Director
& Arranger

Entertaining:
The Essence of Caring
Part 2 See inside...

Robert Cabell
Musical Comedy Writer, Composer & Lyricist



New York's Classified Guide To Jobs • Events • Services

Cherishing the muse:

Conversations with Nancy Milano

Par. 2
This is the second in a series of live interviews with creators and re-creators of communicative dreams. The first part appeared in last week's edition.

JOSE FREILLA, a tenor whose most recent album, *Unico & Romantico* consists solely of his own songs, now is concentrating his energies on composition. (This dialogue took place in Spanish).

You come from the Dominican Republic?
Yes.

When was it that you knew that music was something special in your life?
When I was about seven or eight. I began to sing and earned prizes for this in school.

Did you sing anywhere else besides school?
I sang on a radio station, and the public liked it. Later on, I went to the capital, Santo Domingo where I received a scholarship at a music school. But I couldn't study there more than a year because the political situation was so volatile that opportunities for study kept changing. So I just continued studying music privately until I left for the United States.

What did you do musically when you came to New York?
I worked with Latin cultural organizations as a producer and singer. And I gave several concerts in auditoriums such as Carnegie Recital Hall and Cami Hall, singing classical and operatic music, and my own songs as well.

And you continued your music studies here?
To this day, I am absorbed in learning more about composition, harmony and orchestration, so that someday I will be able to write in larger forms.

When did you write your first composition, and what was it about?
I was fifteen, and it was about the moon. I remember standing in the moonlight, inspired by it. And then I wrote

another soon afterwards. And from that time on I never stopped composing.

What are your current artistic goals?
I want to compose music which is more profound, more artistic.

Do you mean classical music?
I don't use the term 'classical,' but rather 'artistic,' because I don't believe in the distinction between classical and popular music. Music is music. The distinction is given by the listener: The music of Bach, Handel, Beethoven—all this was popular in its day. Only now is it 'considered' classical.

What do you mean by 'profound'?
I want to transport the listener to a higher plane. To approach nearer to God, and in that way to separate ourselves from life's desolations. You can use music to elevate the soul, you can use it to destroy it. Certain types of music inspire one to be happy, to help others, other types stimulate dancing, while others stimulate you erotically.

The lyrics of some of the songs of your recent album, "Jose Freilla—Unico y Romantico" illustrate this spirituality which you seem to be striving for. With your permission, I would like to quote, in translation from the Spanish, the lyrics of one:

The earth was a haven of peace
When the first man awoke from his slumber
With him came envy and selfishness
To fill our world with sorrow

The earth once more will have peace
When the last evil man with all his vices,
His disasters, his falsehoods and his
soul's misery
Disintegrate in the earth.

With love you can change the world
Leaving behind all your vice and egoism
With love you can change the world
This world, which asks for your love.

Would you say these words represent your philosophy?
Yes. I dream of the day when we can live in harmony, with ourselves, with each other. This is my dream of paradise.

ROBERT CABELL

When did you first feel the stirrings of theatrical ambition?
I can't ever remember not feeling them.

You're originally from Oregon, aren't you?
Yes, though for a while when I was in grade school we lived in California. They had state-wide competitions in gymnastics there, and I was good, and for three years I taught and competed throughout California. Which no doubt helped when I became a dancer.

You are also quite accomplished as a singer. How did this begin?
I had been teaching myself to play the guitar, and then my grandmother, whom I loved dearly, died. That inspired me to write songs and get more involved with music. In junior high I sang in choir, everybody liked my voice, and I did talent shows at the school. Somebody from Vista heard me and organized a music appreciation tour for me. I toured all through the Northwest doing concerts for children—you know how they go into schools with oboes and things? They got me in with guitars and folk music to get kids interested in studying guitar or voice. I was in "Hello, Dolly!" in summer stock at 14, and all through high school I had leads in school plays. After graduation I heard about a film they were casting in Florida, so I went down, but production was postponed. I needed a job and wound up with the Asolo Repertory Company, the state repertory company in Florida. I was also in a PBS bicentennial special called "The Patriots," and went from that into "Pajama Game," in which I started in the chorus and ended not only singing, but dancing and eventually taking over a featured role. I've co-choreographed "Oklahoma!" for Peter Palmer, directed and choreographed a club act for Tommy Sands, played the tailor in "Fiddler on the Roof," and was featured in "Irma La Douce." Then I became very ill and the doctors said I had to stop performing for awhile. So I moved to New York—that was in 1978—to write musicals.

What have you written?
I've done the book, lyrics and music for three shows: two large-scale musicals: "Dragon Myth" and "Saccharine," and another intimate one, "Pageant." Parts of them have been shown at Lincoln Center and generated a lot of interest. But everyone wanted one to be mounted fully so they could see it, because producers no longer develop properties of unknown musical comedy writers. First you must have a name and track record, and then they do a workshop of it or take it to Podunk. Unfortunately, my first two shows were meant for Broadway, they're too big and complicated for off-off Broadway productions. "Pageant," however, is a viable off-off Broadway musical. I'm also now with this marvelous new Musical Theater Works Program, which has just started, set up by people like Charles Willard, Frances Dougherty and Anthony Stimmack, and supported by the Schubert organization and William M. Morris, among others. We meet every Saturday and they do readings on Mondays.

and lectures Tuesdays. Pros like Gwen Verdon, Sheldon Harnick and Jerry Herman have lectured to us. We also analyze what makes a musical work, the anatomy of a hit.

There are life-force characters which bring energy and a credo to a show, characters like King Arthur in "Camelot," Harold Hill in "The Music Man," Dolly, Mame and Zorba. Because you go to a musical to be energized, to come away with intense emotions. Besides the life-force characters there are need characters.

Can you give me an example?
While Tevya, exemplifying tradition, is the life-force character in "Fiddler," his daughters, who need love, and want to go against tradition by selecting their own mates, rather than abiding by the choice of the matchmaker, are need characters. The play is about this conflict.

Fascinating. Can you tell us more about the activities of the Musical Theater Works Program?
Besides analysis of musicals, we have readings of our own works, do re-writes, then a staged reading, with music, of five or six musicals of ours, and finally a full-blown production to which important people in the business will be invited. I'm enormously grateful for this fantastic program, because an unknown writer can feel very lost in this town. Really, before this program, there has been nowhere for us to go. Nobody wants to hear from you unless you're famous, or have a star who will do your property.

So what is the answer?
This program is the first step, and a vital one. And then, hopefully, I'll luck out. Get it the way I've always wanted to. Because I'm good. I've just been trying to find that chance to show it.

The Last Word

BY RUTH LAST

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EGG: Elizabeth Geyer Gottlieb
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1984 April 7th - June 14th the Second Librettist workshop with Musical Theater Works - both musicals SACCHARINE and DRAGON MYTH - were selected as part of seven scripts for the 2nd development seminar.

1984 Fall SACCHARINE is one of three scripts asked back for the 3rd and last development seminar.

Throughout these three workshops I was tutored and advised by the best of Broadway. Specifically Bernard Jacobs president of the Schubert Theaters. The legendary Bob Fosse & Broadway Show doctor Merwyn Nelson. Having my music critique by composers Jerry Herman, Jule Styne, Librettist Sheldon Harnick, and composer librettist teams such as Cander & Ebb, Schmidt & Jones, and many, many more.

Bernard Jacobs said to me your books is great, your songs are good but your shows are too big and nobody knows who you are. Go write a six person one set show Off-Off Broadway and make a name for yourself. Then we might raise some money for Sacchein.

Fosse said - take this material and put these women in burlesque style corsets and rhinestones and let them just be women.

Mervyn Nelson took me under his wing and became my personal coach and mentor.