

Class Observations of Kevin Halpin by Thomas Hischak

I attended 50 minutes of Kevin Halpin's Acting II class on Wednesday, October 10 in the Lab Theatre, the middle section of a two-hour class time. There were seven students present and they did three acting exercises during the time I visited.

The first was a character exercise in which a real or fictional character was known by all the students except one who asked a series of questions about personality traits in order to guess who the unknown person was. It is a mental and imagination exercise rather than a physical one so the students were seated on the floor with the instructor in a circle. The others students tried to answer questions about the unknown person relying not on physical or factual descriptions but on character traits.

After a few physical exercises the second activity began. It involved both physical and mental processes as a selected student was put into a circle and the rest of the class confronted her, each as a specific character who wanted something from her. It was an improvisation exercise but also one that forced the center person to deal with confrontation. She was hounded by a street person, a grandmother, a lost tourist, a belligerent ex-friend, etc. The exercise forced the students to literally be on their toes as the instructor signaled when each person should enter the circle and confront the person with a new plan of attack.

The third exercise I observed was about the status position between two characters. The instructor selected two students, gave them general characters and a situation to play then had the two improv a scene, the one trying to maintain the status of control over the other. This situation concerned an elder sister arguing to her younger sibling that she ought to be given a room of her own. It is a difficult exercise because the actors must try not to lower themselves to become equal with the person they are confronting and avoid a one-on-one equal argument.

All of these exercises were very familiar to the students and the instructor did not need to explain them to the class ahead of time. He simply stated which exercise was going to be done next, presented the students with the necessary information, gave them time to concentrate and plan some ideas in their heads, then began. He did not interrupt the first two exercises, forcing the students to continually keep on their toes. The third exercise was not going as well so he stopped it a few times, gave some specific directions or suggestions, then continued it.

Not only did the instructor not need to fully explain the exercises, there also seemed to be an accepted shorthand kind of communication used that is common in acting classes as the students become more aware of each other, the instructor and the nature of the class. Kevin did not need to speak much at the beginning of each exercise but after each was over he discussed it in detail, going over each student's part in the activity.

The atmosphere of the class is informal but quiet and attentive when the students are not performing. An acting class, especially at the second level, involves a certain amount of trust between instructor and students (and among the students themselves). In fact, I often felt like an intruder as I watched. Kevin and the students did not acknowledge my presence but I know my being there did affect the activities going on. It was not a matter of nervousness of being watched but an awkward feeling knowing that a stranger, one not part of the tightly-knit group, was present and had not earned that trust.

Some of the students seemed a bit sluggish at first (it was a warm afternoon) but Kevin made efforts to keep the class lively and engaged each student. There were no passive members of the class (except myself), which is as it should be.

Class observations (continued)

On Thursday, October 11, I attended 25 minutes of Kevin Halpin's musical theatre performance class in the Main Theatre, the first section of a two-hour class. The class began with vocal and some physical warm-ups. Two students were present, as well as the class pianist Mike Yowhan, and I observed one student, Steve Zygo, perform his prepared song and the subsequent criticism and reworking of it by the instructor.

Since this class is about performing a musical theatre song as a character in a story, the instruction dealt with both singing techniques as well as character and acting challenges. The student's performance was well prepared in terms of singing it and knowing the lyrics, but much about the character and how the song might progress hadn't been thought out yet by the student. After allowing him to go through the whole song without interruption, the instructor discussed what did and did not work, giving such specific directions as when to breathe, which vowels to hold on to and which ones to accent. Kevin then gave suggestions for building the character which was too vague at this point, asking to whom he is talking/singing to, what does he hope to accomplish by expressing himself, etc. He suggested a physical activity (tossing an imaginary basketball into a hoop) to give the actor something concrete to do as he expressed his sense of victory. The student then repeated the song, this time being stopped by the instructor at various points for further comments or suggestions.

Although the performance was far from flawless, the instructor was able to criticize and build confidence at the same time. He found things to praise but he also pointed out things that were not there or were not clear. A noticeable improvement came with each repetition of the performance.

The Main Theatre was very noisy during the class. The motorized door between the shop and the stage was broken and stuck open so all the construction sounds from the shop were very loud. Neither instructor nor student seemed particularly thrown by the commotion though I found it very distracting and hard to hear both Kevin and Steve at times. How desperately we need an acting studio!

This class requires a lot of on-your-feet teaching that often cannot be prepared because one doesn't know what will be taught until after the performance is done and you must react to it. It also requires a lot of one-on-one teaching, the rest of the class observing while the instructor works with one student. Yet it should not be taught as a private lesson because there is a great deal to be learned by watching the talents and mistakes of others. Kevin seemed to handle the situation well and there seemed to be a genuine hope for improvement on everyone's part.



Rehearsal Observation of Kevin Halpin by Thomas Hischak

I observed sections of two rehearsals of the musical play *Gypsy* on Monday, October 15, a day during October break in which selected cast members were called for the afternoon and/or the evening.

During the 40 minutes I watched during the afternoon, the director, Kevin Halpin, was working on character study for the two principal roles: Mama Rose (Crista Johnson) and Herbie (Justin Amellio). The scene being worked on, their first in the play, involved both a dialogue scene and a song. The musical director, David Neal, accompanied the actors and offered a few notes but the rehearsal seemed to concentrate on the acting aspect of the scene.

Being fairly late in the rehearsal process, the two students knew their lines, blocking, and song well. The director was able to work with them on the scene, asking questions, making suggestions, even giving them an improv assignment to help them explore their characters and the relationship between them. Since it is the initial meeting of the two characters in the plot, it was very important that the relationship be clear and focused. By the end of the twenty-five minutes or so, the scene had come a long way. (I saw the scene again that night and the difference was very noticeable.)

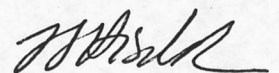
The two actresses playing Louise and June (Adair Thompson and Sarah Downs) arrived at the scheduled time and the rehearsal concentrated on their song "If Momma Was Married" for the twenty minutes more that I watched. Again the performers knew the song and the blocking well but it needed polishing. The director's goal was to instill more humor and affection in the song/scene and again an improv exercise was suggested to warm up the performers and develop a sense of entertaining each other that is important to the scene.

I returned for 40 minutes of the evening rehearsal in which the director was polishing another scene and song involving Crista, this time with Mark Cerosaletti playing her father. Again, the scene was technically there but needed interp direction and some polishing of the blocking. (Since Dr. Neal was rehearsing with the orchestra that night, the rehearsal pianist Mike Yowhan was at the piano.)

This was followed by a number featuring two children (Aisling Halpin and Christine Foster) who play young June and Louise. Their song "Mama's Talking Soft" was run, reworked and re-run. It was then combined with the scene rehearsed earlier in the day and the result was very encouraging.

During all the rehearsal time I observed, the director moved from watching the scene from the house then going on stage to work with the actors. Very little choreography was employed in the scenes I observed so the director was able to concentrate on coaching the acting and singing. We was patient and enthusiastic throughout. The actors not only paid attention to him but seemed to take what he said to heart. Each repetition brought new things; nothing was repeated without specific directions or suggestions made first.

What I saw was only a tiny portion of this huge show but I could see the improvement and progress made during the rehearsal time. Kevin appears to have a good working relationship with the cast members I observed. They know, understand and trust him. Everyone is working hard but I detect no weariness or disgruntled attitude from anyone. It is clearly an efficient, educational and rewarding rehearsal atmosphere.



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Dr. Karen Bals, Chair
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Prof. Tom Hischak, Chair
Performing Arts Personnel Steering Committee

FROM: Dr. Karen Zimmerman, Chair
Performing Arts Department

DATE: December 4, 2001

RE: Classroom Observations of Kevin Halpin

I attended two of Kevin Halpin's classes: THT 230 (Musical Theatre Performance) on October 18, and THT 223 (Dance for the Theatre) on October 24.

In Halpin's Dance for the Theatre class, he spent the first forty-five minutes of class taking the students through a very carefully planned warm-up, doing stretches of the various body parts, calisthenics, etc. As this series of exercises increased in difficulty, Halpin was constantly moving among the members of the class, correcting postures, positions, and generally making sure that all of the students were doing the exercises correctly, ensuring that the chance of injury was minimal. After the students were sufficiently warmed up, he then taught a new dance combination, which built upon a series of steps that the students had already learned. (I was only able to stay for the first hour of the class.) I was impressed with Halpin's command of his art, and also by the physical capabilities of his students. I remember all too well the shortcomings of our students in the not-so-distant past when they were called upon to dance during a production. Their progress is truly impressive. I also appreciated Halpin's choice of music, which perfectly matched the exercises.

I also attended the second hour of Halpin's THT 230 class. The purpose of this class is not to teach vocal technique (although basic aspects of this were covered), but to teach the students how to convey the emotional content of a particular song through their expression, vocal intensity, and movement. The primary goal of this class session was to show the students how to analyze the text and the music in order to make their portrayal convincing to an audience. During the class, in which Halpin worked with two different students, he worked with one on her breath support (the exercise he used engendered an immediate improvement), and worked with both in expanding their emotional range while singing. He was always completely supportive of the students, but still insisted on their complete commitment to the exercise. It should be noted that the terminology used in this course is very different than what is used in music theory. For instance, a "beat" does not refer to a rhythmic aspect, but is actually a corruption of the word "bit." Halpin

ended the class by explaining in detail the class's assignment: "The Two," which is an exercise designed to engage individuals both internally and through physical movement.

In both class sessions, Halpin continually manifested his complete mastery of the subject matter and rapport with the students. When he needed to wheedle and/or cajole a reluctant or insecure student, he did so in a totally non-threatening manner. It is readily apparent that his students trust and respect him.

Cc: Kevin Halpin

■ *Department of Performing Arts*
Ruth E. Dowd Fine Arts Center

TO: Department Personnel Committee

FROM: Edward Moore, Assistant Professor of Music

DATE: October 17, 2001

RE: Classroom Observations of Kevin Halpin

On Wednesday October 17, I observed the Theatre Dance class taught by Professor Kevin Halpin. I arrived at the class at 9:05am. The class began at 9:10. There were seven students in attendance.

Professor Halpin led the class in stretching exercises beginning from the standing position. The music Halpin selected for this exercise was quite calm and soothing, very appropriate for warm-ups. Halpin gave vocal instructions as he led the students through their exercises.

Some of the students carried on conversations as they proceeded with their stretches. Prof. Halpin gently directed them to stop talking and to concentrate on their exercises.

As Prof. Halpin led the dancers through a series of "contraction and relaxation" exercises on the floor, Halpin changed the music to that of a livelier selection. Halpin's choice of music was appropriate for each exercise. When on occasion certain music was not appropriate, the instructor immediately made a change in selection in a way as not to interrupt the exercises. The music tended to coincide with the range in difficulty of the exercises. The selections of music ranged from easy-listening show tunes, to alternative dance music.

Towards the end of my visit to the class, the dancers had gone through several exercises ranging from easy to quite difficult followed by a brief "cool down" period. Halpin then stopped the music and demonstrated a rather difficult movement and then instructed and guided each student through the movement.

Prof. Halpin is obviously a talented dancer and instructor. The class was well organized and was run in a logical fashion. Halpin seemed to have a good rapport with his students. The students in turn seemed to trust and respect Halpin's guidance as a dance instructor.

In all, I found this class to be an enjoyable experience.



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26 X 2001

Observation of Kevin Halpin: Theatre Dance and Acting II

I attended Professor Halpin's Theatre Dance class on 10 October. At 9:10 am three students (out of the seven enrolled) were in attendance. A few minutes later Halpin arrived and began opening stretching exercises which increased in vigor and tempo at a gradual pace. At 9:27 two more students (J and C well-known music theatre majors) arrived and joined the group. Some of the exercises I recognized from yoga and other basic exercise programs such as sauna session. At 10 am Halpin began some work demonstrating and drilling a dance combination. A friendly, casual atmosphere typical and appropriate for the setting exists in this class. Halpin knows his students quite well and it is clear that he is aware of what they are capable of doing physically. I noted that J and C were the least experienced movers in the class.

Later that day, I attended Acting II. At 12:40 three students were in the lab theatre. A few minutes later, three more students appeared and the students began to set up some floor mats. Halpin arrived shortly and directed a relaxation exercise as students laid on their backs on the floor mats. Halpin asked the students to imagine a small white spot in the distance and asked them to imagine the spot getting brighter and growing until it enveloped them in its whiteness. This line of suggestion continued with color and movement imagery so the students could enter the fantasy journey. At 1:02 the exercise ended and students sat up on their mats and formed a circle to share their journey and fantasy stories.

The next exercise was a game called "essence". Halpin asked a student to choose a class member to characterize. The other class members asked questions like, "If this person was a piece of furniture, what would he/she be?" After five or six questions, the mystery student was revealed and Halpin offered some analysis of the answers to the questions that revealed the identity of the person. Another circle was formed for some physical exercises and there were hugs all the way around. This was followed by an exercise known as the "hassle circle" where a central character is approached by the others who make various demands or requests. The interaction is orchestrated by Halpin who walks around the outside of the circle and cues the participants when to enter the conflicted scene. After the exercise Halpin advised the students that "It's not about being entertaining or charming; it's about being in the moment." Two other activities, a status game and a script exercise rounded out the class.

From these two classes and what I have noted in previous observations, I'm satisfied that Halpin is a skilled director and dancer and that he is preparing his students to be versatile, if not immediately virtuosic, on a stage. My only negative observation is that he arrived late to both sessions.

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TO: Department of Performing Arts Personnel Committee
DATE: 10 October, 2001

On Tuesday, October 9, 2001, I observed Prof. Kevin Halpin's Musical Theatre Performance class, being held in the main theater. There were five students in attendance, but only four participated. I arrived at 9:50 because I had been substituting for another colleague from 8:30 to 9:45. The class was already in progress when I arrived. (I left at 11:00 to hear an audition, twenty minutes before the scheduled end of the period.)

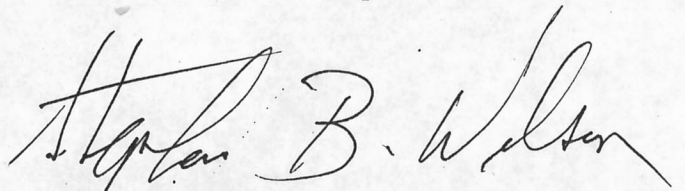
One student was on stage, while the instructor and the other members of the class were seated in the audience. The student began an elaborate recitation of the text of a song by Cole Porter, "All of You." A piano was prominently placed in the orchestra pit between the stage and the audience, but it was not being used. In fact, there was no music heard for the entire hour that I listened.

Apparently, the lesson for the day was interpreting the lyric of a song, conjuring scenarios that might result in the text under study (no other text was heard during the entire hour). Each student was expected to respond to his/her classmate's "performance" with a possible scenario that might have been in the mind of the performer. Each student was expected to do the exercise more than once (in one case, three times) in order either to improve or to make the scenario more apparent by his/her presentation.

After appearing to exhaust the possibilities of this text, the instructor turned, not to another lyric, but to the *first portion* of the same text. The students did essentially the same procedure as above but with only a few lines of the song.

While this approach to a song lyric may yield a wide range of fanciful ideas that display the students' fertile imaginations, my concern is that the results are completely unrelated to the composer's intent for the song. Instructions were given to "take your time," when the pace of the recitations was already painfully slow. There was no sense whatsoever that the text had come from a song, and no preparation for returning it to its original context. Rhymes were ignored. Terms such as "beat" and "stanza" were used in ways that were antithetical to music, even though the text was originally conceived and presented by the composer in a song. My sense was that the long stretches of time between phrases in the spoken delivery would work against the rhythmic structure of the music when the lyric was returned to its musical context. All but one of the students seemed uncomfortable with the exercise throughout the hour that I observed. The one exception was the student who returned the lyric to its original meaning: a tongue-in-cheek sexual metaphor.

My feeling is that the exhaustive analysis of the possibilities of text as pursued in this class is a valid exercise for actors, but the material used should be taken from a non-musical source, or steps should be taken to restore the text to its musical context before the period concludes.



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TO: Department of Performing Arts Personnel Committee

DATE: October 18, 2001

On Thursday, October 11, I observed the Musical Theatre Performance class taught by Kevin Halpin. The class was scheduled for 9:20-11:20 in the theater. I arrived at 9:21 and found one student and the instructor present. After a few moments, the pianist arrived and seated himself at the instrument, and class began. By this point one more student had arrived.

The first activity was the warm-up, both physical and vocal. Breathing exercises, massaging of jaw, neck, and face and stretching were done. The first vocal warm-up consisted of a 5-tone descending major scale on a hum, which was changed to various syllables. There were also ascending and descending arpeggios, sliding out of an "ng" sound into an "ah" while descending an octave, and short but active repetitive syllables on an ascending and descending third.

The instructor did attempt to offer advice on staying free and trying to avoid tension, but the advice was not taken. After general admonitions to avoid such tension, each exercise was sung. As the students started in their lower range, all went well, but as they rose into the higher register, each became noticeable tighter, especially the male student. The instructor said only "good." Also, there seemed to be no monitoring of pitch, which remained a problem throughout the warm-up for the male student.

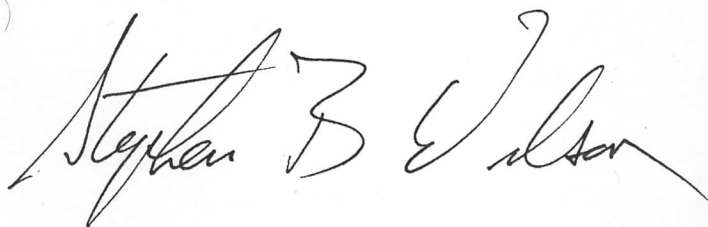
After the conclusion of the warm-up, the format changed. Each student in turn took the stage and sang a song s/he had prepared, accompanied by the pianist. The instructor waited until the song had been completed, then offered his criticism. Following the initial performance, repetitions of portions of the song took place, with the instructor stopping the student more often to deal with individual problems. (No attempt was made to involve the listening student in the activity, nor did s/he seem to feel comfortable offering a reaction.) the song. While there were a few technical suggestions made, the goal of this portion of the class seems to have been to help the students discover the most appropriate "scenario" for their mental approach to the song, along the lines of the work done two days earlier in this same class.

I left the class at 10:45 in order to hear a previously-scheduled audition.

I have concerns about not what went on in this class, but about what did not happen. The chosen warm-up would have been effective at another time of day, but not

at 9:20 a.m. Professional voice teacher knows that warm-ups early in the morning must proceed more slowly, must expand the range of the voice more slowly, and must spend more time on lighter, high-placed exercises than at later times of the day. There must be more time spent awakening the body before the voice is asked to perform (the male student admitted to having just gotten up 15 minutes before the class began!). Also, there was not enough practical, concrete advice of a technical nature offered to these two students. There were a number of suggestions about breath, but no actual exercises to help the students achieve the desired goal. The habit of initiating the vocalization of words beginning with a vowel by producing a harsh glottal attack is a severe problem in the male singer, but the issue was never addressed. Pitch problems were cited once or twice, but only in passing, and no advice was offered to either student as to how to support the tone and render pitch accurately.

After having witnessed the running of this class in two different formats (the other was seen on Tuesday, October 9, and a separate observation has been submitted for inclusion in this dossier), I feel that we are not offering our students the best opportunity to benefit from a class of this sort. It should be team taught by a theater professional such as Mr. Halpin and by a professional musician, preferably someone trained to teach singing. In its present configuration, the musical component of Musical Theatre Performance is not getting its due. I commend Mr. Halpin's efforts in reminding the students to concern themselves with technique, but it is apparent that he cannot tackle those problems adequately.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Stephen B. Wilson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "S" and "W".

Classroom Observation

I attended about forty minutes of Kevin's Halpin's acting class on audition techniques on Thursday, October 5.

The class is not a large one (about ten students and I believe all enrolled were present) and, the course being a specialty for those wishing to go beyond the basic levels of acting, the students were, for the most part, more experienced and dedicated than your average participant. It also seemed that all the students knew each other very well, either from the class itself (now five weeks into the semester) or from outside activities, probably *Cabaret* rehearsals. This made for a very informal setting and a few times Kevin had to get the students back on track after someone allowed the discussion to segue into different areas.

During the section I observed, six students performed their audition pieces without interruption. Then there was discussion and comments made after some of them. All of the pieces were critiqued on paper by Kevin but comments were made vocally by himself and others between each presentation.

Kevin seemed concerned about both practical things (move the chair into place before you introduce yourself, keep your introduction short and engaging, etc.) and conceptual aspects (who are you talking to in this speech? why are you telling them? what is a more interesting choice to make regarding this monologue? etc.) He never directly told them what to do or provided answers to the questions he posed, but rather helped the student arrive at his/her own possibilities or conclusions.

The atmosphere of the class was relaxed and informal yet when each student did his/her monologue, the feeling was one of serious concentration on the part of the performer and the students watching. The group was supportive to each other, perhaps not critical enough (a common problem in acting classes), so it was Kevin's job to point out weaknesses and question aspects of the performance.

All in all, it appeared to be an enjoyable and effective class, well prepared (by both students and instructor) and engaging.



Thomas Hischak

Rehearsal Observation

I attended an hour of rehearsal of *Cabaret* on Tuesday evening, October 3, in the Dowd Fine Arts Theatre.

I caught the rehearsal mid-evening so I joined the company in the middle of working on polishing one of the dance numbers. For this section, the director-choreographer Kevin Halpin was "cleaning up" the choreography in the finale of the opening number with two of the leading characters (Sally and the Emcee) and eight Kit Kat dancers. Although there was a rehearsal pianist and the musical director on hand, the emphasis for this section of the rehearsal was not on singing but on dancing (though the cast did sing when parts of the number were run).

As always, I am in awe at the amount of time choreography takes up. I watched as forty minutes were spent on the last ten measures of the song! The dance was polished, tweaked, and refined by Kevin with some help from his assistant, Cindy Halpin. Also the dance captain, a student in the cast, often left the "line" to observe and confer with the Halpins. Once the finale was in good shape, the cast took a ten-minute break. When they returned it was the dance captain's job to run the number again and take notes while Kevin worked with other actors on a scene in the Lab Theatre.

All theatre is a team effort, and none more so than musicals. I felt this cast and its directors all worked together with no concern about rank or job description. The director took suggestions from the cast members and they felt free in expressing to him any difficulty they had doing the dance and asked for suggestions on how to solve them. I was particularly pleased to see that the dancers showed the same kind of rapport and respect for the student dance captain as they had earlier with the director. The main concern of everyone seemed to be to produce the best possible show. It was apparent that it was no one person's responsibility to make it good; it was everyone's job.

Since it was rather later in the rehearsal process (about four weeks), I found that the director and the cast had strong and accurate means of communication. He was able to use technical terms and they immediately understood him. No time was wasted in lengthy talk or explanations because everyone seemed to be speaking the same language. I know this did not come easily. Some of it can be credited to the dance classes but I think much of it has grown out of the past four weeks of rehearsals.

Kevin seems firm, decisive, efficient in working with students on dance. He works harder than any cast member, never sitting back and watching but always participating, joining the group, standing back to observe a few moments, then rejoining them. The rehearsal atmosphere is businesslike but not stuffy or joyless. The cast had been dancing for nearly two hours when I arrived but the rehearsal seemed to be paced well enough so that the dancers could still find the energy and enthusiasm to keep working. Also, everyone seemed to understand what was trying to be accomplished and no one seemed to be bidding their time or looking at their watch. I find this somewhat remarkable considering this cast rehearses about 27 hours a week!

Although I did not get to observe any character work or non-musical blocking this time around, I felt that the section of the rehearsal I saw was a good indication of Kevin Halpin's ability to work effectively and productively with students. The results on stage during the performances often prove this to be so but it was interesting to see the process in rehearsal.



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TO: Department of Performing Arts Personnel Steering Committee
DATE: October 2, 2000
RE: Kevin Halpin's Rehearsal Observation

On Tuesday, September 26, I attended the first hour of Kevin Halpin's rehearsal for *Cabaret*. Participating in that rehearsal were 7 students (dancers), the production's pianist/music director, the assistant choreographer, and Mr. Halpin.

As I entered the theater, Mr. Halpin and his music director were on stage engaged in what seemed to be a difference of opinion about the allocation of funds for the production. From the back row of the theater I heard Mr. Halpin say something about taking money from the orchestra budget. Though I did not hear much of the rest of the exchange, I definitely heard him say in strong terms "We're way over budget!" I found that an unusual thing to say in front of members of the cast.

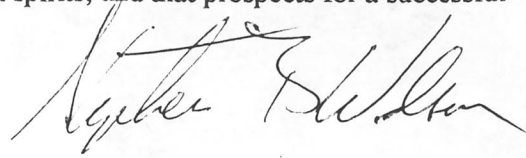
At 7:05 the rehearsal began. Mr. Halpin called the dancers to the stage and, without a warmup, proceeded to begin to teach them the choreography for one of the musical numbers, "Kick Line NO. 1," from early in the second act. He positioned them in place and demonstrated the steps in 8- or 16-measure units. His presentation of the material was clear and was easily imitated by the dancers. He then stepped downstage and allowed his assistant choreographer to drill the dancers as he watched. This was the basic method of instruction for the full hour.

There were several positive aspects to this rehearsal. Mr. Halpin presented the material clearly and the students responded well, even enthusiastically. Throughout the hour there was a mixture of humor and hard work that showed that Mr. Halpin has a good rapport with the cast and that they respond well to him. On one occasion, the steps that Mr. Halpin had planned seemed not to work as well as he had expected. He quickly changed his mind and re-did the section without losing valuable time.

There were a few aspects of the rehearsal that I found surprising, however. I was unsure why Mr. Halpin would remove himself from the teaching process by handing the dancers over to the assistant choreographer. She appeared not to have learned the steps in advance, with the result that she made many errors in the sequence, and on several occasions she had to be corrected by the students themselves. Also, she was taking the drill process so slowly (i.e., rehearsing at a significantly slower tempo than the music required) that when the pianist played periodically from the score in the correct tempo, the dancers were hopelessly lost. To Mr. Halpin's credit, he did say from time to time, "Honey, the music goes faster," but his assistant continued to disregard that comment.

One other moment caused me to raise an eyebrow. Just before I left, Mr. Halpin taught the dancers some steps that, when the music was played, left them mystified. It turned out, as he rightfully admitted to the students, he had just given them choreography to music that did not exist. I found myself wondering how well he knew the show's score.

In all though, I felt the rehearsal suggests that the cast members are enthusiastic, that Mr. Halpin approaches his rehearsal with energy and good spirits, and that prospects for a successful production are good.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Halpin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "K" and a long, sweeping underline.

XC: Kevin Halpin