

2022 in Review

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All of my reviews for 2022 have officially been archived, meaning I can finally do my Year in Review! 2022 was the first year after the Great Pandemic that theatre in St. Louis went into full swing, musicals especially. St. Louis has always had a thriving musical theatre community and the pandemic has only heightened how important it is to our city. Musical theatre is so intertwined with the history of St. Louis that if I encounter someone who is not a musical fan, I know for a fact that they eventually will be. It's inevitable.

To St. Louis, musical theatre is not just a culmination of pure, unbridled optimism, determination, talent, creativity, and hard work. It's also an art form that uses the emotional storytelling power of music, song, and dance to address and take action on issues that are at the forefront of our social consciousness. Musicals blast through prejudices and challenge preconceptions about the forces that move us: race, religion, politics, and the very nature of life and death. A good musical should leave you a different person than when you found it, even if it just changes one small aspect of your worldview and personal philosophy.

After the pandemic, St. Louis theatre companies have been producing musicals that address just how much the world has changed because of COVID-19, whether it leaves us with hope for a brighter future or with the despair that lets us know we are still far from over this mess. Whatever the case may be, this community still put all their talent, all their effort, and all their insight into these productions – to the point that audiences will be talking about them for years to come.

This down here is a list of the Top 10 Best Musical Productions of 2022, in chronological order:

- Head Over Heels @ New Line Theatre
- Chicago @ The Muny
- Urinetown @ New Line Theatre
- Assassins @ Fly North Theatricals
- Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street @ The Muny
- In the Heights @ Stages St. Louis
- The Color Purple @ The Muny
- The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee @ Stray Dog Theatre
- A Chorus Line @ Stages St. Louis
- Ride the Cyclone @ Stray Dog Theatre

For the last part of my retrospective, I am going to introduce a new feature for Jack Reviews Musicals: the "Hall of Fame." This page is going to list all of the theatre artists whose work has not only appeared in multiple shows in 2022 but whose work has also been highly acclaimed by both critics and audiences. These are the artists where whenever you see their names in my reviews, you know that their work is going to be consistently high quality. I will now leave you with the six Hall of Fame Inductees for 2022. Until next time, *Long Live the Musical!*

Jack Reviews Musicals 2022 Hall of Fame Inductees

Scott Miller – Director

- New Line Theatre: Head Over Heels; Urinetown; Something Rotten!

Tyler Duenow – Lighting Designer

- Stray Dog Theatre: Triassic Parq; The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee; A Little Night Music; Ride the Cyclone

Eileen Engel – Actor / Costume Designer

- Fly North Theatricals: Assassins
- Stray Dog Theatre: Triassic Parq; The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee; A Little Night Music; Ride the Cyclone

Clayton Humburg – Actor

- Stray Dog Theatre: The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee
- New Line Theatre: Head Over Heels; Urinetown; Something Rotten!

Grace Langford – Actor

- New Line Theatre: Head Over Heels; Urinetown
- Stray Dog Theatre: The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee; Ride the Cyclone

Dawn Schmid – Actor

- New Line Theatre: Head Over Heels
- Stray Dog Theatre: Triassic Parq; The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee; A Little Night Music; Ride the Cyclone