

- HAMILTON IS A MASTERPIECE
- FANS MOURN DAVID BOWIE

CULTURE

EL GATO • FRIDAY, JANUARY 22, 2016 • LOS GATOS HIGH SCHOOL • WWW.ELGATONEWS.COM

HAMILTON BLOWS AUDIENCES AWAY

by Lark Breen
Culture Editor

As a student in Mr. Rudolph's rigorous AP US History class, I am eager to use any tool that helps me remember the intricate past of our country. Last fall, I discovered Hamilton, the ingenious hip-hop musical about the "ten dollar founding father" Alexander Hamilton. Written by Lin-Manuel Miranda, who also wrote the Tony Award-winning musical In the Heights, Hamilton is a groundbreaking portrayal of one of the lesser-known founding fathers.

I have not been to New York to see the musical, unfortunately. Equally unfortunate is the fact that the show, which made its Broadway debut at the Richard Rogers Theater on Aug. 6, 2015, is sold out for months to come. However, the cast recording is available on iTunes, Spotify, and most other music sites. The soundtrack includes Cabinet meetings staged as rap battles, a British-invasion-pop-style series of songs portraying King George III as a bitter ex-lover, and the rapid-fire rap Guns and Ships, performed in a near-flawless French accent. The recording leaves listeners in distraught tears, (see It's Quiet Uptown,) which begs the question: what happens to the audience experiencing the actual show?



courtesy wikimedia commons

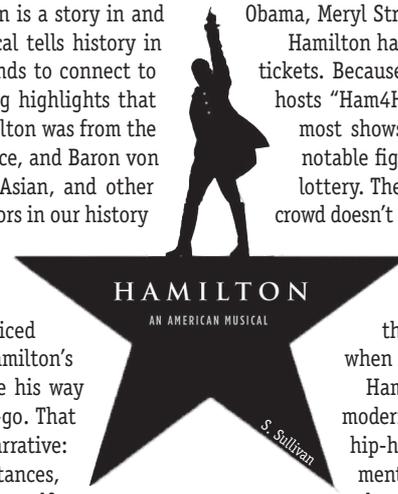
The multi-faceted, multi-racial cast of Hamilton is a story in and of itself. By casting people of all races, the musical tells history in a modern way, allowing people of many backgrounds to connect to the story on a new level. Additionally, the casting highlights that many of America's founders were immigrants: Hamilton was from the Caribbean, the Marquis de Lafayette was from France, and Baron von Steuben was from Prussia. The casting of black, Asian, and other minority actors brings attention to these two factors in our history and our present society.

Ron Chernow's 2004 biography of Alexander Hamilton inspired the musical. Miranda explains that as he was reading, he noticed hip-hop analogies laced throughout Hamilton's experiences. "This is a guy who wrote his way out of his circumstances from the get-go. That is part and parcel with the hip-hop narrative: writing your way out of your circumstances, writing the future you want to see for yourself. This is a guy who wrote at 14, 'I wish there was a war.' It doesn't get more hip-hop than that," Miranda points out. Theater critics and audiences alike have branded Miranda a genius. Among those who have praised the show are Barack

Obama, Meryl Streep, Dick Cheney, Beyoncé, and many more.

Hamilton has made more than 53 million dollars in advance tickets. Because the shows have sold out so quickly, Miranda hosts "Ham4Ham," a ten dollar lottery for tickets, prior to most shows. Miranda assembles cast members and other notable figures to entertain the people hoping to win the lottery. The goal of the performances is to ensure that the crowd doesn't go away empty-handed after an hour on the cold New York City streets. As of January, Ham4Ham has gone digital until the weather improves, allowing the tech crew to improve the audio and crowd control for the sidewalk show when it resumes.

Hamilton has changed the way people approach modern musical theater and even how some perceive hip-hop music. This innovative take on a small segment of history is an important breakthrough in theater, and in my own personal journey to success on the APUSH test. If you find yourself with 2 hours and 45 minutes to dedicate to listening to the cast recording, I strongly encourage you to try it out. (Sources: New York Times, Rolling Stone, CBS)



S. Sullivan

Sherlock returns

by Sophie Comeau
Web Editor

On Fri., Jan. 1, 2016, one of the most acclaimed shows on television returned: Sherlock. The Abominable Bride was highly anticipated by Sherlock fans all around the world. This episode was branded a "Christmas Special," even though it was released on New Year's Day rather than on Christmas. Warning: the rest of this article contains spoilers regarding The Abominable Bride and other Sherlock episodes.

The Abominable Bride is not like the previous nine episodes of Sherlock. The difference is that it does not take place in modern times; it takes place in the 19th Century. The same actors still play the classic roles; the only change is that they are all living in the 1800s.

The story follows Sherlock and Dr. Watson (Benedict Cumberbatch and Martin Freeman) as they try to figure out how a woman (the Abominable Bride, Emilia Ricoletti) who is identified as dead continues to come back and kill people. This stumps Sherlock, and as he is figuring the case out, in typical Sherlock fashion, a wrench is thrown into the plot line.



The story then flashes forward to present day. The last episode finished with Sherlock on a plane to Russia when Moriarty returns. It is revealed that this whole 19th Century part is only happening in Sherlock's "mind palace." Nevertheless, the show switches back and forth

between present day on the plane and Sherlock fighting Moriarty in the 1800s.

Then, Sherlock makes a discovery about Emilia Ricoletti and Moriarty, and in another classic Sherlock move, the show ends on a cliffhanger. The beloved show will not return again until 2017.



photos courtesy wikimedia commons

Reactions to the episode have been mixed. Many people were disappointed by the case that the show was centered around. Some disliked the fear factor that went along with The Abominable Bride, claiming that they watch Sherlock to be mystified and intrigued, not to be scared. Some suspect that the creators, Mark Gatiss and Steven Moffat, are running out of ideas.

Others think that this episode was more of a way to appease Sherlock fans so they wouldn't have to wait until 2017 for the next season. Still others blame the episode's mediocrity on the fact that the cast and crew threw it together hastily for fans. Some argue that this was a way to link the original Sherlock with the modern interpretation and that The Abominable Bride served as a bridge into the next season so the story can get off to a running start.

Nonetheless, Sherlock fans were generally pleased to have something to hold them over until the debut of the fourth season in 2017. (Sources: The Nation, The Verge)

Golden Globes award talent

by Sophie Domengeaux
News Editor

On the evening on Jan. 10, a wide array of actors and actresses gathered in Beverly Hills to celebrate and recognize those who delivered outstanding performances in the television and cinema of 2015. The 73rd Golden Globes kicked off with host Ricky Gervais mocking several celebrities with humorous and possibly offensive comments. Gervais even took a jab at one of Hollywood's favorite actresses, Jennifer Lawrence, and her demands for women to receive equal pay in Hollywood, jeering "she received overwhelming support from people everywhere. There were marches on the street with nurses and factory workers saying, 'How the hell can a 25-year-old live on 52 million dollars?!'" Later that night, J-Law was again featured when the Hollywood Foreign Press Association awarded her the Best Performance by an Actress in a Motion Picture - Musical or Comedy for her role in Joy.

Other noteworthy award winners included an Oscar hopeful, The Revenant's Leonardo DiCaprio, who won Best Performance by an Actor in a Motion Picture - Drama; American Horror Story's Lady Gaga won Best Performance by an Actress in a Limited Series; and The Martian's Matt Damon won Best Performance by an Actor in a Motion Picture - Musical or Comedy. Perhaps the most celebrated win of the night was Sylvester Stallone taking home his first Golden Globe after four decades of acting. The Creed star won Best Supporting Actor in a Film and received a standing ovation during his acceptance speech. The emotional Stallone thanked his "imaginary friend Rocky Balboa for being the best friend [he's] ever had." Some stars delivered



photos courtesy wikimedia commons

soundbites during their acceptance speeches as well, specifically Empire star Taraji Henson. Upon winning the award for Best Performance by an Actress in a Drama Television Series, Henson walked to the stage and started thanking her colleagues, mentors, family, and friends. When it came time for her speech to end, Henson humorously remarked "Please wrap? Wait a minute, I waited 20 years for this. You gon' wait." The comment went viral, taking over Vine and Twitter within minutes. Leonardo DiCaprio went viral on Vine as well in his side-eye glance at Lady Gaga, who brushed past him on her way to accept her Golden Globe, causing the Titanic star to jump in his seat, and then, with raised eyebrows and wide eyes, give a shocked face. The viral Vine's caption is as hilarious as the face itself: "Watch Leonardo DiCaprio react to a woman older than 25."

The evening celebrated the wonderful performances of 2015 and made us look forward to the television and films coming this year. The 73rd Golden Globes will be an event to remember for years to come. (Sources: Hollywood Foreign Press Association, Rolling Stone, USA Today, Vulture)



Scan the QR code to read about this year's Academy Award nominations and more web-exclusive articles on elgatonews.com.

Netflix introduces new titles to the online queue

by Olivia Hill
Humor Editor

Netflix continually uploads new television series and movies to its streaming service, and with the start of the new year, there are many big additions. Whether it's a witty indie flick or the most recent season of a hit show, there's something for everyone. Here's a look at Netflix's newest updates:

The Overnight (2015): This overnight cult classic is a sex comedy starring Adam Scott, Taylor Schilling, and Jason Schwartzman. When a new-to-Los-Angeles couple attempts to find friends, they end up having increasingly wild and hilarious encounters with a zany couple during a family playdate. The film received positive reviews from critics and has been commended by many for featuring male nudity, a rarity on screen.

Tangerine (2015): With a low budget and limited release, the iPhone-shot phenomenon that is Tangerine came as a surprise to most. The "dramedy" follows a transgender sex worker after she is released from a short stint in jail and begins dealing with rejection from her boyfriend. Despite the dark, convention-shattering nature of the film, it remains funny and exuberant.

Bring It On: In It to Win It (2007): The fourth installment of the Bring It On series stars Ashley Benson and Cassie Scerbo as the captains of two rival cheerleading squads at camp. The teams fight incessantly, but teamwork and love might just bring them together in this West Side Story-inspired masterpiece.



courtesy wikimedia commons

Making a Murderer (2015): This 10 hour documentary follows the life and trial of Steven Avery, a Wisconsin man who was imprisoned for 18 years for a crime he didn't commit and is later accused of murder. The story is riveting and leaves its audience divided over Avery's guilt, rivaling the popularity of the podcast Serial in the true crime genre. The series has experienced considerable controversy, but the filmmakers

say they aren't finished telling Avery's story.

Chelsea Does (2016): This Netflix production stars Chelsea Handler as she deals with topics such as marriage, drugs, racism, and the Silicon Valley in her new four part documentary series. Alongside her are Willie Nelson and Al Sharpton; fans of Handler are already celebrating that "Chelsea's back."

Parks and Recreation (2009): The seventh and final season of the wildly popular sitcom is finally on Netflix streaming. The 13 episode conclusion to the goofy political comedy is set three years in the future, giving fans a heartwarming and hilarious ending.

Fuller House (2016): Set to debut as a Netflix original series, Fuller House is the sequel of the beloved 1987-1995 sitcom Full House. Almost all of the original cast is set to reprise their roles, either as a recurring character or as a special guest star. The series will take place in San Francisco in the same house as the original series, this time with DJ Tanner as the mother of the home as opposed to her father, Danny Tanner, as the patriarch. All grown up, DJ moves in with her sister Stephanie and best friend Kimmy as the three raise DJ and Kimmy's children. The series is set to premiere on Feb. 27. (Sources: Nylon Magazine, Digital Trends, Entertainment Weekly)