Unit Three: Song Types in the Musical Theatre

Ballade

Usually a solo song, it tends to focus more on the emotion of a moment and the lyric guides the rhythm and melody in terms of expression. Examples include the following:

* ***Spring Awakening***: Mama Who Bore Me
* ***South Pacific***: Some Enchanted Evening

Rhythm/Up-tempo *or* Charm Song

Usually, a song that has a steady rhythm underneath that moves it along at a moderate tempo. Examples include the following:

* ***In The Heights***: Champagne
* ***The Most Happy Fella***: Happy To Make Your Acquaintance

Comedy Song

A song where the lyrics are the dominant element, and the humor of the song guides the rhythmic progress. Examples include the following:

* ***Legally Blonde***: Positive
* ***How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying***: Cinderella, Darling

Musical Scene

A song which encompasses the action of a whole scene. Examples include the following:

* ***Avenue Q***: If You Were Gay
* ***I Can Get It For You Wholesale***: Miss Marmelstein

Large Ensemble Number

A potential fifth kind of category to consider is the large ensemble number which potentially combines all different kinds of writing for multiple voices we have discussed. Examples include the following:

* ***Urinetown***: Urinetown
* ***My Fair Lady***: With A Little Bit of Luck