

YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU,
BUT WILL IT BE THERE
WHEN YOU GO?

As you journey into the future, it's almost impossible to know the financial hazards that await. However, the Investment Management Professionals in the Trust Group of Texas Commerce Bank can help identify potential problems before they happen and put you on the right path to financial security.

YOUR GOALS ARE OUR DIRECTION. A Texas Commerce Investment Management Professional will work with you to develop investment strategies that best meet your financial needs. We can design plans that

allow you as much or as little involvement as you desire. After all, your goal—protecting and growing your assets—is our goal too. **ADVICE YOU CAN TAKE TO THE BANK.**

It's in our best interest

to grow your funds because our compensation is based on the size of your assets, not the number of transactions. So, as you succeed, we succeed. For more detailed information, contact the Texas Commerce office nearest you.

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THIRTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

DALLAS THEATER CENTER



Book & Lyrics by
John Jiler
Music & Lyrics by
Ray Leslee

Pop Music in Black and White

John Jiler and Ray Leslee's *capella* musical *Avenue X* reminds us that American popular music has perhaps the richest and most diverse heritage of any national culture's. It also reminds us of the great irony of our American musical legacy in the 20th century: Our various American ethnic groups have been able to transcend their communities through the airwaves, adopting and adapting diverse musical styles to suit their own needs, but this has not translated into racial tolerance and justice in our society. On the positive side, it's been a way of sharing the music with a vast audience; on the negative side, it's made it possible to separate the musical expression from the people who express it. It's become possible to develop a rapport with the music without having to develop any rapport with the culture that produces it. While our musical boundaries, ethnic and racial, have been very fluid, on a person-to-person level the boundaries are much less fluid.

Liking the music and accepting the other race are very separate questions. Just because someone likes listening to records by Duke Ellington or The Supremes doesn't mean that they also develop a different kind of respect or rapport for blacks in general. Doo-wop and rap are excellent examples. In both cases, you have blacks and whites listening to and performing what is essentially the same music, but hating one another; the kids who killed Yusuf Hawkins hung out on street corners listening to rap music on their boomboxes. Perhaps part of the problem is that neither group really understands the historical

roots and context of where the music comes from.

Avenue X depicts the attempt of two singers, one black and one white, to forge a musical partnership, to cross "the color line" in their music, against the pressures of their respective neighborhoods in the Brooklyn summer of 1963. Milton and Pasquale are not the first to try this. There have always been "crossover" artists, performers who had hits with both black and white audiences, as long as there has been popular music. But there have also always been code words to designate music by race, to indicate both who was supposed to listen to the music and who was supposed to play it. In the 20s, black music was openly called "race music." Then in the 40s, "rhythm and blues" was the code phrase to distinguish black, blues-based popular music from "country and western," which also had a strong blues and gospel influence behind it. (Some music historians claim that the term "Rock'n'Roll" was originally coined to get 'white' stations to allow the music of Elvis Presley and others, both black and white, who were essentially playing R&B, on their playlists.) In the 60s, "soul" and "rock" generally let you know whether a performer or group was 'black' or 'white'. Even now, we still use many of those terms in a very mixed bag.

But both black and white musicians continue to borrow ideas from each other. There has always been a much more fluid relationship between musicians, both black and white, behind the scenes than the general public was aware of. The increasing

specialization of playlists on radio stations these days belies the habits of real musicians. This was the case in the 40s with jazz musicians. They couldn't play together on the same bandstand until Benny Goodman and others began integrating their bands with players like Teddy Wilson, but there were always after hours jam sessions and even some recording sessions that were released later. It was also true in Chicago in the 20s. That's how the early white bands learned the music — not just by listening to records, but by playing with black musicians.

Avenue X comes at an excellent time. Many people, including myself, fear that the predictions of the Kerner Commission in the late 60s are coming true; that our country is becoming two nations, separate and unequal. Music cannot change the social realities that continue to fuel and feed the ways we continue to express ourselves culturally. Music can be an excellent device to express the desire for rapport, for understanding. Unfortunately, it cannot make the next step for us; it cannot change the things which keep us separate. We have to do that ourselves.

— Dwight Andrews is Assistant Professor of Music at Emory University and Music Director for all of August Wilson's original productions (*Fences*, *Two Trains Running*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*).

