

Put A Dime In the Jukebox

It may cost more nowadays to play a song on a jukebox (think the last time I played one it cost a quarter). Which brings me to another trend in musical theatre of the past few years: the jukebox musical. These are shows which include songs from artists from other genres: country, pop, rock and roll, etc. Music from artists such as Elvis Presley, Billy Joel, Patsy Cline, Frankie Valli and the 4 Seasons, the Beach Boys, and Johnny Cash have each had their music be the focal point of stage shows. [*Smokey Joe's Cafe*](#) was a Broadway hit which brought the Mike Stoller and Jerry Lieber songbook to the stage. Songs such as "Jailhouse Rock," "Yakety Yak," "Charlie Brown," and 36 others are the focal point of the musical revue.

An attempt was made to set the tunes of Elvis Presley to an original story. *All Shook Up* probably would have done better if it had something to do with the king of rock and roll or at least staged one of his better movies (many of which are better left forgotten).

Perhaps the best known jukebox musical is *Jersey Boys*. The turbulent history of the 1960s pop music group Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons is told through many of its greatest hits ("Big Girls Don't Cry," "Sherry," "Walk Like A Man," and several others. *Jersey Boys* was the recipient of four 2006 Tony Awards; is still playing strong at the August Wilson Theatre on Broadway; and has touring companies throughout the U.S. and other countries, including Australia.

So.... the next time you are playing a game and the question is asked; "What kind of music makes you want to get up and sing?" be careful. Broadway music may now have more than one meaning.