

KOGER CENTER PRESENTS



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With all the political backstabbing and uproar in the U. S. government these days, the Tony Award winning play "1776" can still draw crowds to hear its musings about the turmoil present in the birth of a nation.

The musical, which is being performed at the Koger Center for the Arts tonight, offers students a chance to see and hear what the Founding Fathers were thinking when they created the Declaration of Independence.

"1776" originally opened on Broadway 30 years ago amid political turmoil. Richard Nixon, Vietnam and the struggle for civil rights were on the mind of almost every American. Americans found themselves separated by generation, race and political philosophy, and the simple word "patriotism" had its meaning split in two.

Then along came a theater piece that dealt with the birth of the United States in story and song. The play portrays the Founding Fathers as real men, and our attempt to separate from Great Britain, as a parliamentary argument waged with all the passion, humor and articulation that real men can show.

The play wound up beating its rivals "Hair" and "Promises, Promises" for both the Tony and New York Drama Critics Circle for best musical.

Based on a book by Peter Stone and with music by Sherman Edwards, the show portrays the long, long assembly of the Second Continental

Congress one spring and summer in Philadelphia. It also accurately creates a sense of the immediate environment of discomfort, personal conflict and overriding frustration that must have been present during those long summer months.

The show addresses these issues in an often corny but always entertaining light, giving life to what is often dryly covered in history classes. Although there are often periods of dialogue without song, Peter Stone turns what is a potentially dry debate into a pleasurable spectator sport.

According to Ron Peirson, director of the Koger Center, says that "It ["1776"] is a painless way to learn history."

"It's a beautiful musical with glorious costumes and sets and a history lesson," and that encourages students and residents to view this play, Pierson said.

According to Pierson, many good seats are still available for tonight's show, and students are encouraged to take advantage of the student rush tickets available before the show. Students can purchase tickets for \$5 with a student ID 30 minutes before the show, and will receive "the next best seats," Pierson said. Show time is 7:30 p.m.



USC's Koger Center for the Arts presents "1776," a Tony-Award-winning musical detailing the events surrounding the meeting of the Second Continental Congress.