Ragni, Gerome (1942-1991), and James Rado (1939-) Encyclopedia Article

Ragni, Gerome (1942-1991), and James Rado (1939-)

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The collaborative theatrical team of Gerome Ragni and James Rado created *Hair* (1967), the first rock musical on Broadway. *Hair* was a milestone for musical theater as an art form: experimental in nature, controversial in its subject matter and presentation. It was the first Broadway show to display totally nude performers, and to have a truly racially integrated cast. Supported by composer Galt MacDermot's rock music score, *Hair* celebrated the 1960s hippie lifestyle and examined the concerns of America's youth at that time—anti-war beliefs, sexual freedoms, drug use, and the search for community. Though the show remained Ragni and Rado's only major success, it was a substantial one. *Hair* became wildly popular, even spawning a film version a decade later, and became the only show that fully embodied the youthful energy of the 1960s.

Further Reading:

Davis, Lorrie, and Rachel Gallagher. *Letting down My Hair: Two Years with the Love Rock Tribe—From Dawning to Downing of Aquarius.* New York, Arthur Fields Books, 1973.

Horn, Barbara Lee. *The Age of Hair: Evolution and Impact of Broadway's First Rock Musical.* New York, Greenwood Press, 1991.