

ON WITH THE SHOW!
BALL STATE UNIVERSITY SINGERS FROM BEGINNING TO END

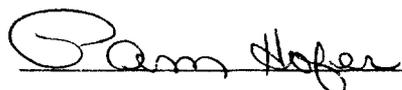
AN HONORS THESIS (HONORS 499)

by

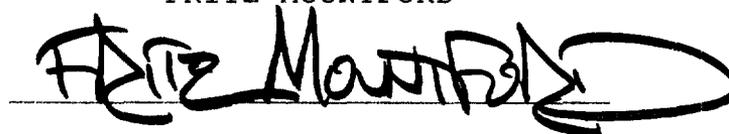
KRISTI STUCKWISCH AND ROBERT KAISER

THESIS ADVISORS

PAM HOFER

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BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

MUNCIE, INDIANA

MAY 1992

EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE MAY 1992

SpCo"
2/11
1996
2002

ABSTRACT

Through this project, we hope to provide insight on the internal workings of the Ball State University Singers. There are many aspects of production that take place behind the scenes, which are never seen from an auditorium chair.

Promotions, public relations, costumes, choreography, stage preparation and musical orchestrations are a few of the backstage facets of putting together a show that we would like to explore.

We want to promote the artistic credibility of this dynamic group, that exemplifies professionalism in its quality entertainment.

This promotional videotape will encompass all aspects of "The Show" from beginning to end. Now...

On With the Show!

Producing a promotional videotape for the Ball State University Singers seemed to be the best way we could leave part of ourselves to a place that had given us so much. When we first conceived the video, we contacted Mr. Mountford, the director of the University Singers, to find out the need and feasibility for such a promotional tool. After discussing the idea with Mr. Mountford, we knew that this was the project we wanted to pursue for our thesis.

We then set out to find mentors to guide us through the project. Robert asked Ms. Pamela Hofer, a telecommunications professor with experience in writing scripts for corporate video, to be his supervisor. Kristi asked Mr. Mountford, of the school of music. By using mentors with expertise in these different areas, we felt our chances of producing a higher quality video would be bettered; Ms. Hofer would be able to advise us on the technical side of the production aspects, and Mr. Mountford would be able to provide assistance in suggesting the content that a "performer" would want to see. We found this to be very beneficial in helping us present the group in a professional manner in every aspect of production.

With the fall semester starting, our compilation of video footage began. Video tapes of University Singers Spectacular shows and other historical shows were collected and previewed. New footage of cast shows and activities was also collected. Video equipment from the Ball State University Telecommunications department and Super VHS videotapes, purchased from International Television Association (ITVA), were used. With permission and a signature from his mentor, Robert checked in and out all equipment used. Getting permission to use needed equipment and editing space is probably the first step in producing a tape such as this.

It is very important to keep an accurate "shot sheet," a record of what video footage is where on the tape. (see Table 1) Doing this enabled us to quickly find any shot that we wanted at any time, without having to watch six hours of tape. Taking the time to keep this sheet up to date will save time in the long run.

Creating an outline of what we wanted in our video became our next primary goal. On October 31, our project got off the ground, as we created an outline of our ideas. Creating an underlying theme for the video was a difficult thing to do, but after numerous ideas were debated, we finally decided on the Broadway theme and the showcasing of the backstage happenings. We then proceeded to write our abstract and cover sheet for approval by our mentors.

Before the outline was fully developed, we discussed our target audience. We wanted to develop a promotional tool that could reach people who had and had not heard about the Ball State University Singers. However, after realizing that this would be a large task to develop properly, we decided to focus our target audience even more narrowly to reach the group of people who had heard of the organization, that needed more in-depth information about various aspects of the group. We feel that the ideal target group is one of high school show choir teachers who are interested in having the group perform at their school or who have students interested in auditioning for the group, but who do not have all of the answers to the question, "What do the University Singers do?" We feel that this video holds the viewer's hand and imaginatively guides him or her through a typical University Singers' show day.

Our first rough outline contained information on the history of the group, vocal rehearsals and music, expectations of and information on Mr. Mountford, band rehearsals, production staffs, call times, bus loadings, eating, set-up, pre-show happenings, the fire-up, performance footage, recap of events, tear down, and reloading. Our target time was to be around 20 minutes. After hours of refocusing, narrowing down our target audience, and condensing our information to keep the interest of our audience, another rough draft outline was agreed upon and drawn up.

With this information in hand, we met with Mr. Mountford on November 6, 1991, to get his criticisms and ideas on whether or not we were headed in the right direction. Several questions about our target audience and other possible footage ideas came up during our meeting. Great consideration for the ideas was taken as we revised our outline yet another time. (see Table 2)

January and February were vital months for our project's development, because we knew that almost all of our footage needed to be collected and ready to be put together if our project was to be ready before the school year was out.

On January 8, 1992, it all began. From that day on, we lived, breathed, and sang, about the tape that would be the first of its kind for the University Singers! Script sections were divided between the two of us and written, so an accurate idea of what types of video footage could be put with the script sections, and what video clips were still needed. (see Table 3) Six minutes of script was developed for the video. After reviewing the script, we decided that 15 minutes was a more realistic length for the project. We also felt this length was more appropriate for the attention span of the viewers. Much to our surprise, more work and time was going to be put into this project than anything else in our college careers.

Our first two editing sessions took three hours each. With many video tapes in hand, we designated a "FINAL CUTS" tape, and reduced all of our pertinent, usable video footage onto that tape. As more footage was taken, we placed it onto this tape. A second SVHS tape was purchased from ITVA and designated as the "MASTER COPY."

Twenty minutes of "black" was laid down on the "MASTER COPY" tape before any footage was transferred over to it, from the "FINAL CUTS" tape to allow us to edit. Black, in simplified terms, allowed us to make edits and keep the audio and video synchronized. As we started laying down our final footage, a glitch was found in our black tape track, so we had to re-lay our "black" and re-do all of our previous editing. The phrase "we have to re-do everything again--two or three times" became our theme.

Robert's voice was used for the narration. Again, several hours were spent marking the script for emphasis and phrasing, laying down the track, and re-laying the track two more times, before the final copy of the narration was completed.

Our tape was going to have live performance music under the narration in most sections of the video, so we needed to use two different audio tracks to create this effect. Narration was put on track one, and performance and background sound was put on track two. Once again, our theme song was played, as we re-did sections of our tape. Having to work in three different studios created a problem with our audio tracks, because the channel feeds in one of the studios was reversed from the other two. Narration and background music had to be deleted and then placed on the correct track. This was another problem that we came across late in our project, causing some time delays.

Michael Hughes helped us create the logo design on Cubi-com graphics computers, and transfer it from a photograph, to computer information, to the video tape. This part of the project might have been one of the most tedious, in that much time and patience had to be taken while creating the logo.

Our first thought was to have the logo swirl out toward the viewer. However, after trying different effects with the logo, the bursting-circle effect was agreed upon and used. The narration heard during the logo's appearance was added later.

Our next big task was to shoot the opening scene for our video. We contacted Debbie Komisky at the Muncie Civic Theatre to arrange times to do a video shoot with their marquee. We explained our project and ideas to her and received much support and cooperation. Once again, we had to set up three separate shooting times before actually getting it done, because of the weather and other Muncie Civic activities.

On February 19, 1992, we spent four and one half hours setting up and shooting the opening scene from different angles, using different ideas. To go along with the opening "Broadway Baby" tune, we tried to give the opening scene a Broadway flavor. The Muncie Civic Theatre may be a good contact when wanting to do student work of this type.

Several days of intense video shooting was done by both Robert and Kristi, resulting in quality footage for the final product. One trip, on January 31, 1992, with the University Singers, gave Kristi a chance to tape a lot of the behind-the-stage happenings and preparations. The entire day, from approximately 7:00 AM to 2:30 AM the next morning, was spent taking footage on the daily activities conducted by the University Singers on the day of a show. During the University Singers' spring break tour to Europe, Robert had the opportunity to tape six hours of footage for the project, in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein.

By mid-March, most of our footage was laid down, and our target deadline of having our project done for review by our mentors on April 13, 1992, was drawing near. By April 13th, all of our video footage and narration had been laid down on our "MASTER COPY," with the exception of one section of narration and the credits. We rescheduled our viewing session to April 20, 1992, and worked on these final sections. Mary Sipes in the University Media Services Editing Lab helped us complete one final section and learn how to use the Abner editing unit.

Developing the rolling credits sections was our last big task. A list of everyone we wished to thank and acknowledge was created (see Table 4) and taken to Bracken Library's Video Information System center (lower level), along with our "MASTER COPY" tape. Bill Blevins was an undergraduate working in the center who assisted us in the production of our credits. After an hour, the credits section of the tape was beautifully executed and laid down on the "MASTER COPY."

As we finished up our final sections and previewed the tape, we could hardly contain what excitement, relief, joy, and astonishment we felt. We could hardly believe that the tape was actually done. After 163 hours of work, our dream had become a reality and we were pleased with the professional quality of the tape we had created.

A videoshowing for Ms. Hofer led to a minor revision of resetting the narration volume level a little higher throughout the entire tape. Even with this minor revision needed, she still enjoyed our product. A later viewing for Mr. Mountford was scheduled.

Many long hours of work on the project have challenged us, frustrated us, and taught us more about production and technology than we ever thought we could learn.

Not only have we accomplished what we set out to do, but confirmed the idea that the Senior Honors 499 project is the most personally satisfying course any student can take. Not only have we grown together professionally as a team of producers but have grown together personally as friends.

When recommending helpful ideas for others who want to produce a professional-quality tape such as ours, we want to say this--"Start early and set a time line for yourself!" Allow a full year for the project and start compiling footage as soon as possible. Set goals in writing and make contacts early. After we set in writing our goal date for having a finished product, our focus on when we needed to work and how often became more clear. Keeping in constant contact with your mentors and with the group you are working with are definite musts. It is important to maintain good rapport with your subject group. With Robert being Company Manager of the group this year and Kristi being a past member, this was not a difficult job.

We would have to say that above and beyond everything else when doing a tape like this, is to do it with someone you work well with and on some thing or some group that you enjoy being around and working with. We feel that this is crucial to enjoying what you are doing.

We both have enjoyed working with the cast of the Ball State University Singers this year. Because we enjoyed what we were doing so much we did not realize how much time we actually spent on this project. It is amazing how 163 hours can fly when you are having fun! It is only now with our project completed and our graduation approaching that we realize, for us, finally... It's Show Time!

Table 1
PERFORMANCE FOOTAGE

| <u>MASTER COPY TAPE</u> | <u>IN</u> | <u>OUT</u> | <u>LENGTH</u> |
|-------------------------|-----------|------------|---------------|
| Baby I'm a Star | 6:4 | 7:49 | 1:00 |
| Under the Sea | 10:19 | 10:57 | :40 |
| America | 21:04 | 24:40 | :36 |
| Can't Stop | 12:28 | 12:47 | :20 |
| Baby I'm a Star | 8:21 | 9:14 | :54 |
| | | | |
| <u>FINAL CUTS TAPE</u> | <u>IN</u> | <u>OUT</u> | <u>LENGTH</u> |
| Baby I'm a Star | 14:45 | 15:47 | 1:00 |
| Under the Sea | 18:16 | 18:55 | :40 |
| America | 29:02 | 29:38 | :36 |
| Can't Stop | 20:25 | 20:45 | :20 |
| Baby I'm a Star | 16:18 | 17:12 | :54 |

Table 1 (Cont'd)

SHOT SHEET

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Baby I'm a Star | .10 | 2.38 |
| Heaven Hop | 2.38 | 2.54 |
| Band / Saints | 2.54 | 3.30 |
| Under the Sea | 3.31 | 4.22 |
| Vogue | 4.22 | 5.50 |
| Can't Stop | 5.50 | 6.13 |
| Tom-Rainbow | 6.13 | 9.05 |
| Broadway Baby | 9.05 | 11.12 |
| One Night Only | 11.12 | 12.55 |
| America-Bows | 12.55 | 16.07 |
| Somebody Lives.../ Angie's hands | 16.07 | 16.37 |
| Somebody Lives/ Greg-Band | 16.37 | 17.19 |
| Brad on Bass | 17.19 | 17.25 |
| Getting in makeup | 17.25 | 17.41 |
| Santa Claus is.../ On television | 17.41 | 18.17 |
| Santa Claus is.../ In Studio | 18.17 | 18.45 |
| Red Skelton | 18.45 | 19.18 |
| Mr. Mountford/ Choral Reh. | 19.18 | 19.42 |
| Rehearsals | 19.42 | 22.04 |
| Band Rehearsing | 22.04 | 23.42 |
| Merkel on Bone | 23.42 | 24.07 |
| Production Mtg. | 24.07 | 24.21 |
| Set up | 24.21 | 25.06 |
| Stage Lights/Legs | 25.06 | 25.20 |
| Shenendoah | 25.53 | 26.23 |
| Spectacular | 26.23 | 27.10 |
| Set Painting | 27.10 | 27.45 |
| MU 123 | 27.45 | 28.11 |
| Singers Sign | 28.11 | 28.15 |
| Packing equipment | 28.15 | 28.31 |
| Displays-Cindy | 28.31 | 28.43 |
| Loading the Truck | 28.43 | 29.02 |
| Ladies Arriving | 29.02 | 29.20 |
| People Working | 29.20 | 29.45 |
| Steve & Mike in Office | 29.45 | 30.00 |
| Truck Logo | 30.00 | 30.14 |
| McDonalds-Unldg | 30.42 | 31.00 |
| McDonalds-Inside | 31.00 | 31.08 |
| McDonalds-Eating | 31.08 | 34.33 |
| McDonalds Sign | 34.33 | 31.50 |
| Bckstg Perspective | 31.50 | 32.41 |
| Setting the Stage | 32.41 | 35.25 |

Table 1 (Cont'd)

SHOT SHEET

| | | |
|--------------------|-------|-------|
| Don-Soundboard | 35.25 | 35.47 |
| Running Positions | 35.47 | 37.24 |
| Don/Rob-Soundbrd. | 37.24 | 38.23 |
| Clearing the Stage | 38.23 | 40.00 |
| Last Minute Reh. | | |
| In Costume | 40.00 | 40.33 |
| Fire Up | 40.33 | 42.33 |
| People Stretching | 42.33 | 42.40 |
| Don's Trick | 42.40 | 42.47 |
| Where's the Party | 42.48 | 43.09 |
| Curtain Ups | 43.09 | 44.40 |
| Marquee Openers | 44.40 | 45.57 |
| Salvaged Cuts | 45.57 | 47.30 |
| Audio-Narration | 47.30 | 53.49 |
| Logo VO's | 53.49 | |

Table 2

Script Outline

Night-time street scene

Marquee With Broadway Baby Playing

"Broadway Baby"

- I. Introduction of Group Under "Broadway Baby"
- II. Vocal Rehearsal and Music
- III. Band Rehearsal
- IV. Smaller Organizations, Production Teams, & Social
- V. Call Time & Loading Set Onto Truck
- VI. Bus Loading and McDonald's
- VII. Set-Up and Sound Check
- VIII. Fire-Up
- IX. Performance Footage
- X. Recap With "Baby I'm a Star"
- XI. Credits With "Somewhere Over The Rainbow"

TABLE 3

HONORS 499; ROBERT KAISER AND KRISTI STUCKWISCH
SCRIPT ROUGH DRAFT

BILLBOARD: SINGERS'
LOGO OVER BLACK.

MUSIC: ("BROADWAY BABY" UP)

FADE TO LIT THEATRE
MARQUEE: "BROADWAY BABY
STARRING THE..."

OTHER SIDE OF
MARQUEE: "BALL STATE
UNIVERSITY SINGERS."

FS THEATRE DOORS OPENING.

^W
(Energy)

VO: The houselights dim./

FADE INTO PERFORMANCE OF
"BROADWAY BABY." (punch the title) →

the curtain rises./ and the
Ball State University Singers
burst onstage in a fun-filled
kaleidoscope of America's
favorite songs.

FOOTAGE OF OLD UNIVERSITY
SINGERS GROUP.

Since 1964, the University
Singers' audience has come to
expect an exciting, high
quality musical variety show.

"HEAVEN HOP."

Students from all fields of
study ~~come~~ together ~~to~~ form
America's number one collegiate
entertainment group.

For these instrumentalists,
singers, and dancers,
presenting the onstage part of
their show is only the tip of
the iceberg.

REHEARSAL.

Offstage, before the show, and
backstage during the show, they
are involved in other highly
developed and specialized roles
to ensure that "the show must
go on."

PRODUCTION MEETING.

Planning, promotion, logistics,
and communication; not to
mention rehearsals, travel,
set-up, and strike, are all
crucial to the success of the
onstage show. //

TABLE 3 (CONT'D)

FS STAGE AND CURTAIN.
LIGHTS GO UP AS CURTAIN
RISES.

Let's start/with the house
lights up/and step behind the
curtain to see how the onstage
magic is created.//

FS VOCAL REHEARSAL.

It is in vocal rehearsals that
the notes, words, and voices
are blended into beautiful music.//

FOOTAGE OF DIFFERENT
PERFORMANCE STYLES.

Something that has always set
the University Singers apart
from other performance groups/
is their ability to perform a
variety of musical styles./
The vocal flexibility of the
group allows them to perform
anything from a current top 40
hit/to a country ballad.

SHENENDOAH FOOTAGE.

Whatever they may be singing/
you can be sure that each song
has been carefully broken down
and analyzed/with the ear of
the audience in mind.//

SHENENDOAH.

AUDIO OF SHENENDOAH UP.

BAND FEATURE.

The Ball State University
Singers band is unique from
any other ensemble at Ball
State/in that it is the only
group that gets to perform
entertainment-style music./

BAND REHEARSAL.

The band spends some time
practicing without the glee
club//arranging parts and
adjusting tempos and dynamics/
before the two groups combine
for a full-cast rehearsal./

CU TROMBONE PLAYER.

The band has been comprised of
many different instruments
over the years./

FS BASS PLAYER.

from guitars and banjos in the
group's earliest days./

MCU SYNTHESIZER RACK.

to the most up-to-date
keyboard synthesizers./

COSTUME MAINTENANCE.

Outside of rehearsals/ the
back stage duties of each
member

TABLE 3 (CONT'D)

HONORS 499; ROBERT KAISER AND KRISTI STUCKWISCH
SCRIPT ROUGH DRAFT

| | |
|--|---|
| | go even further. / Production staffs. / comprised entirely of the student cast members. / take care of cleaning and maintaining the costumes. / |
| GRADUATE ASSISTANT WORKING IN OFFICE. | publicity and public relations around the Muncie community and Ball State campus. / |
| EUROPE FOOTAGE. | travel arrangements / for spring break and other tours. / |
| FS SET MAINTENANCE. | maintenance and care of the set and technical equipment / |
| CHOREOGRAPHY REHEARSAL. | choreography and helping with special <u>guest</u> choreographers-- |
| MS COMPUTER DESK. | even the group's secretarial work. / |
| PRODUCTION MEETING. | A graduate assistant meets with the staff each week / to discuss progress reports. / But, not all of the behind-the-stage activities are work-related / |
| * GROUP IN VOLLEYBALL GAME. | A social chairman / helps the group form personal bonds / by organizing recreational activities, social outings, and parties. / Each year / a new Singers " <u>Family</u> " is created. / |
| CHARITY VIDEO FOOTAGE. 17:37:10 | The group takes their work seriously. / but they don't take themselves too seriously. / They operate with the idea that they can't create fun for the audience if they can't find fun in their own roles. / whatever they may be. // |
| * PERFORMANCE FOOTAGE. | The show has already begun // |
| FREEZE FRAME. | SFX: (NEEDLE SLIDING ACROSS RECORD.) |
| | But the curtain won't go up for eight more hours. / |
| EMPTY REHEARSAL ROOM. | Tonight's show begins back here. / in the rehearsal room |

TABLE 3 (CONT'D)

HONORS 499; ROBERT KAISER AND KRISTI STUCKWISCH
SCRIPT ROUGH DRAFT

where the cast meets to prepare for the day ahead. /

VARIOUS SHOTS OF CAST ARRIVING. The men arrive in a coat and tie, and the ladies in nice dresses. / Travel attire is the University Singers' offstage costume, and the Singers' look is sure to be noticed. /

EQUIPMENT CHECK. The set and technical equipment are now ready to be checked. /

LS EQUIPMENT BEING LOADED WITH LOGO ON TRUCK. and then carefully loaded into the University Singers' truck. /

LS CAST BOARDING BUS. The cast will travel by way of bus, / and bus time is free time. /

LS CAST WALKING INTO RESTAURANT. Of course they all look forward to eating on the road. / And, with the exception of performing, the University Singers spend most of their time. /

PAN TO MCDONALD'S SIGN. here. //

LS STAGE LIGHTS AND CURTAINS. The hours before the show are the most ~~crucial and~~ valuable ~~hours~~ for ensuring a successful onstage performance. /

* CAST SETTING UP, LOOKING FROM BACK OF STAGE TO AUDITORIUM. The behind-the-curtain scene must be set, before the audience arrives. /

VARIOUS SHOTS OF STAGE PREPARATION. Setting up the stage, / checking microphones, and amplifier levels, / taping down electrical cords, and running through stage positions, / are a few of the many preparations done in this time period. /

The technical crew continues working on the finishing touches, /

* OS GIRLS GETTING MADE-UP IN MIRRORS. and as hours turn into minutes before the show, / the performers leave the stage to get ready.

TABLE 3 (CONT'D)

HONORS 499; ROBERT KAISER AND KRISTI STUCKWISCH
SCRIPT ROUGH DRAFT

VARIOUS SHOTS OF CAST
WARMING UP.

(EXPECTANTLY) Every member of the cast knows that the time spent in rehearsal, / all the press releases, / the costume, set, and sound checks, / as well as every other behind-the-scene preparation, is about to pay off.

FS FIRE UP.

(INCREASED INTENSITY)
With just minutes left before curtain, / the cast and crew gather together to get fired up for the show. / At the fire-up, thoughts are collected, / nerves are settled, / and everyone gives the performance their full attention. Because, right now, // its show time!

(SOUNDBITE OF FIRE-UP CHEER.)

THREE TO FIVE MINUTES
OF PERFORMANCE FOOTAGE.



"BABY I'M A STAR"
FOOTAGE.

(AUDIO UP AND UNDER.)
(PROUDLY) No amount of publicity, flash, or noise / can equal what the name, / Ball State University Singers, / instantly communicates to the people around the state of Indiana. / Quality is evident in the organization's administration, public relations, group image, rehearsals, and of course, / their performances. / Since the very first rehearsal in 1964, / the cast and crew of the University Singers, / have kept alive the dream of making people smile, / by making every aspect of their show the best that it can be, / from beginning, / (PAUSE) to end.

(AUDIENCE APPLAUSE UP.)

"SOMEWHERE OVER THE
RAINBOW" FOOTAGE AS
CREDITS ROLL.

Table 4

CREDITS

This Promotional Video Was Written And Produced
In Its Entirety by

Kristi Stuckwisch & Robert Kaiser

A special thank you to the 1991-1992 cast
of the Ball State University Singers:

Jana Allen
Bryan Ames
Andy Anderson
Eric Appleby
Karina Bondar
Steve Clarke
Tom Cox
Don Dornick
Laura Emmert
Eli Flake
Kevin Flannigan
J.T. Fletcher
Mary Beth Frantz
Holly Fries
Greg Galbreath
Dean Goedde
Jennifer Havens
Scott Helms
Michael Hoagland
Jason Johnson
Robert Kaiser
David Lewis
Jill Lewis
Scott Merkel
Nathan Miley
Robb Mills
Abie Perkins
Marc Pinchouck
Joel Pritsch
Cindy Radicker
Angie Resler
Tony Rhode
Anne Steele
Ellen Tescher
Brad Wadkins
Kurt Weimer
Jeff Wein

TABLE 4 (CONT'D)

Also To...
The 90-91 Spring Show Cast
The 25th Anniversary Cast
The 1986 Cast
The 1978 Spectacular Cast

Thank you also to those who provided
invaluable assistance in the production
of this promotional video:

Pam Hofer
Fritz Mountford
Michael Hughes
Mary Sipes
Bill Blevins