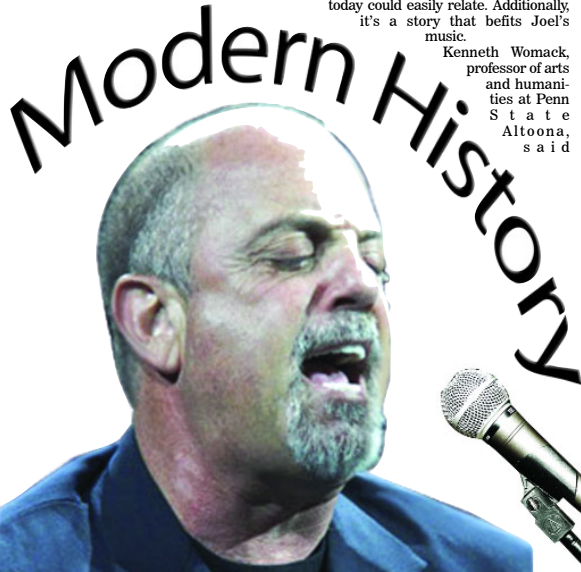


Little Rock, Pasternak, Mickey Mantle, Kerouac, Sputnik...



Edsel is a no-go, U2, Syngman Rhee, payola and Kennedy...Birth Control, Ho Chi Minh, Richard Nixon back again, Wheel of Fortune, Sally Ride...Hypodermics on the shores



# 'Movin' Out' pays tribute to Billy Joel, chronicles Americans' coming of age

**By Laura McCann**  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER | lmc5040@psu.edu

Whether you're an uptown girl or a piano man, you won't have to go to extremes to find a show for yourself this weekend. *Movin' Out*, an American tale set to the music of one of the nation's most "American" artists, is coming to Eisenhower Auditorium.

With Tony Award-winning choreography by Twyla Tharp, *Movin' Out* features 24 signature songs by Billy Joel as it follows five lifelong friends from Long Island through their experiences during the Vietnam War that turn their world upside down.

It's an American story; one with which the parents of many college students today could easily relate. Additionally, it's a story that befits Joel's music.

Kenneth Womack, professor of arts and humanities at Penn State Altoona, said:

"For the entirety of his career [Joel] has been distinctly an American pop artist," Womack said. "His career is like the history of American pop music. He has gone through the phases — straight rock to '60s pop and R&B to smooth, easy listening to a new wave experimentation."

Karolina Blonski, the dancer who plays Judy, said the show is referred to as a "rock ballet" — the story is told through the movement of the dancers' bodies. Most of the choreography has a jazzy feel, she said, that is very modern and sharp.

"[*Movin' Out*] is very different from any other musical. We call it a rock ballet. There is no dialogue; only a seven-piece band above us playing and singing the music while we tell the story through dance," Blonski said.

Amy Katz, publicist for the tour, said the "American experience" of growing up on Long Island during the war doesn't mean the show will only touch those with heritage stateside.

"What we see them experience are issues that we experience today," Katz said. "If you take the American out, the issues you are left with are very uni-

versal at heart: pain, love, redemption."

Having debuted in October 2002, *Movin' Out* is coming to the Center for the Performing Arts (CPA) as a part of the Broadway series.

Laura Sullivan, marketing and communication director for CPA, said it is always looking for new Broadway shows to bring to State College.

"We especially wanted to get this show because of its popularity. It also hasn't been in the area before, and I think the connection to Joel will really help to bring people," Sullivan said.

"The main character in the show is the piano man telling the story, but sorry, it's not going to be Billy Joel," Sullivan said. "The show is so physically demanding that there are actually two complete sets of casts in case they have to switch day to day."

Blonski credits the show's success to its originality. She said it is the first of its kind to attract large audiences.

"It's completely different and it's working so well. I think it was genius of Tharp to take characters out of [Joel's] songs and build a story around them," Blonski said. "And it appeals to all types of audiences whether you love dancing or you are a lifelong fan of Billy Joel's. It's a story about love, friendship and forgiveness with a happy ending."

Lauren Thumm (senior-nursing) said growing up, she was a fan of Joel, and her

interest in the show stems from her lifelong interest in the choreography.

She is attending the show with her Interfraternity/Panhellenic Dance Marathon (Thon) group, the Student Nursing Association of Pennsylvania, and its Thon family, whose child has grown up a dancer.

"I heard the choreography is awesome," Thumm said. "I love the dancing aspect of musicals, which I share with our Thon child. She loves dancing and even after she was diagnosed, she continued to attend dance class, so this is a great opportunity to enjoy the show together."

Womack said the mixing of the two genres, popular music and musical theater, works perfectly with Joel's music.

"It's a marriage made in heaven, almost," Womack said. "Joel's songs are about three minutes long, which is the perfect length to fit the genre of musical theatre. It's not too drawn out to lose the attention of the audience."

Sara Ross (junior-nursing) said her decision to attend the show was a spontaneous one, adding that she hopes her interest in Billy Joel and the show will increase after seeing the performance.

"I thought I might as well live it up and see the show since you're only at Penn State for four years," Ross said, adding that performing in 13 musicals through-

out middle school and high school made her understand the hard work theater requires.

Blonski described the show's costuming as intense.

"I personally have 10 costume changes, which seems like a lot; but the ensemble of boys and girls have almost 20," Blonski said. "It looks collected on stage, but backstage everyone is running around."

Sullivan said ticket sales have been very "brisk," with sales moving quickly since Christmas.

"We got it on a weekend, which is great," Sullivan said. "I think after Friday's show people will be talking and more will come on Saturday. I would advise everyone to call in advance instead of waiting for tickets."

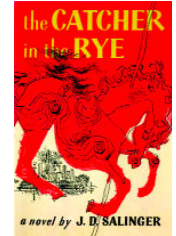
**If you go**

**What:** *Movin' Out*

**When:** 8 p.m. Friday, 2 and 8 p.m. Saturday

**Where:** Eisenhower Auditorium

**Details:** Tickets are \$38 and \$44 for University Park students, \$48 and \$54 for adults and \$43 and \$49 for showgoers 18 and younger.



Joe McCarthy, Richard Nixon, Studebaker..... Marilyn Monroe, Rosenbergs...H-Bomb, Panmunjom...and The Catcher in the Rye...Stalin

Campanella, Communist Bloc, Roy Cohn, Juan Peron, Toscanini, Dancron...Einstein...Kruschev, Princess Grace