

HEARING DOUBLE: CURTAINS

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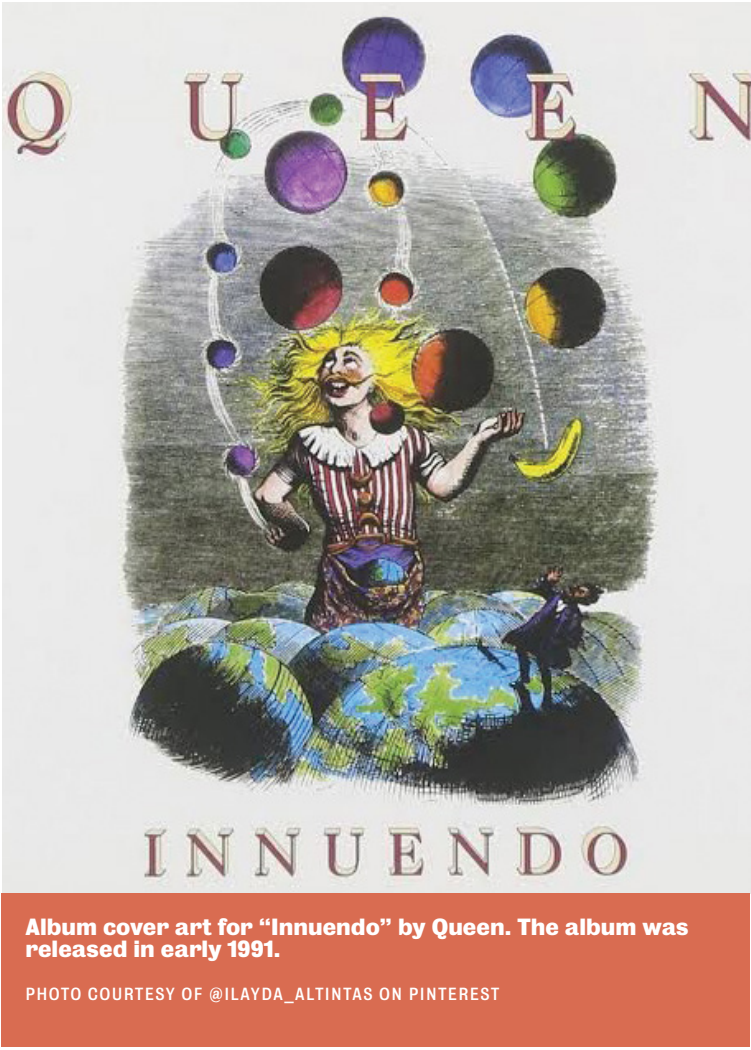
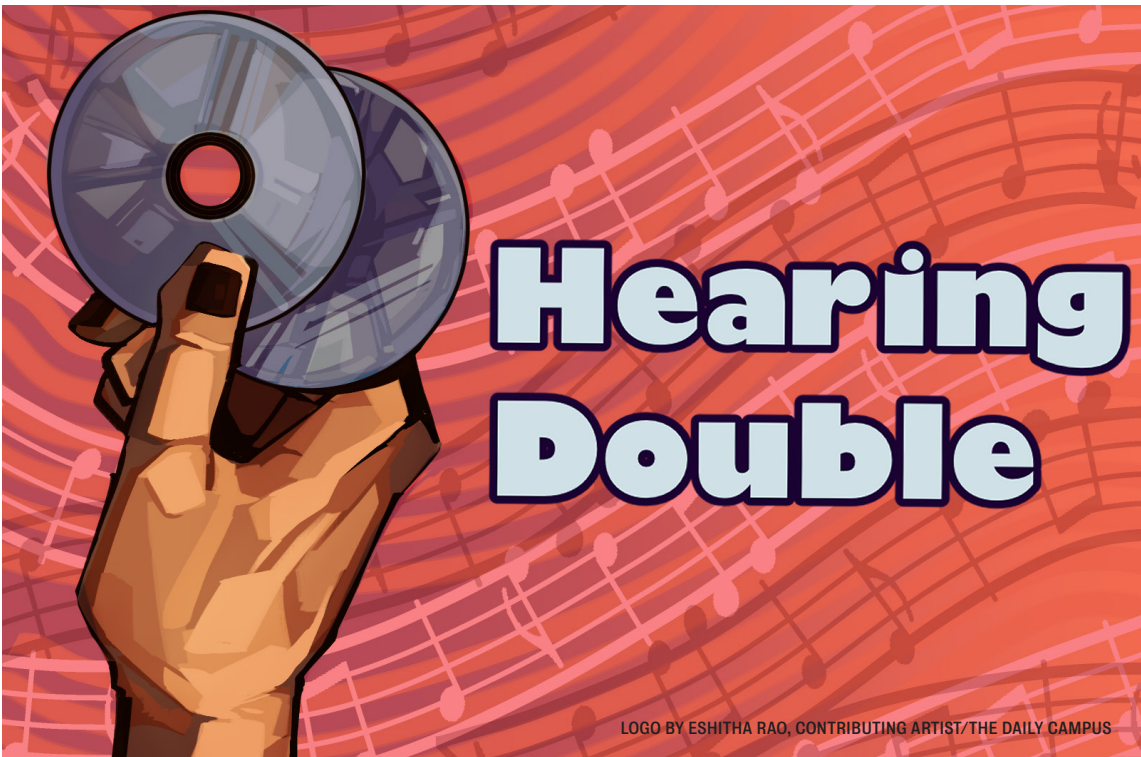
Hello, and welcome to Hearing Double, where I compare and contrast two unrelated songs of the same title and decide which title does the most justice!

This week, we're taking the final bow with "The Show Must Go On" by Leo Sayer or Queen.

Leo Sayer released "The Show Must Go On" in 1973. The song opens with "Entry of the

Gladiators," the song that you would hear if I told you to imagine a circus clown. It immediately sets up the song as a satire of looking back at bad choices and seeing oneself as a laughable circus performer, which is only reinforced by Sayer referencing "an enormous crowd of people," "walking on a high wire" and trying to escape a "masquerade."

The lyrics are self-critical, remembering the mistakes and selfishness of the speaker. However, the chorus ends with



a mission: "I won't let the show go on." Sayer is painting a picture of someone who aimed for performative success and failed. Now, he is trying to get away from the circus he was stuck in and live a more genuine life.

The music is cheerful, underscored with short beats and a fun banjo part. Combined with Sayer's powerful, raspy voice, which can swing between sounding desperate and determined, the song manages to capture the feeling of being down in the dumps but also knowing what you have to do to get back up.

"The Show Must Go On" by Queen is easily one of their most heartbreaking tracks. Released in 1991 on their album "Innuendo," the song is a tribute to Freddie Mercury's strength throughout his struggle with AIDS. As the title indicates, it is a powerful ballad about termination through pain.

The lyrics are truly heartbreaking, with the verses wondering "what are we living for" and "does anybody want to take it anymore?" The chorus breaks into a powerful, impassioned declaration that even though "inside, my heart is breaking, [...] my smile still stays on."

The song is not subtle about what it's referring to, with Mercury even saying, "I'll soon be turning round the corner." It's absolutely haunting to hear the voice of a man who knows he will die soon, but Mercury giving his all to the performance makes the song an absolute masterpiece. Mercury even references his own legacy in the bridge, where he says "fairy tales of yesterday grow but never die. / I can fly, my friends."

The music itself leans into the bold drama of the song, with dark orchestral strings haunting the background while lead guitarist Brian May pours his soul into the guitar riffs. The entire song exudes the determination and willpower that it took Mercury to perform at this point in his life.

Although Sayer involves a lot of fun musical elements in his song about dusting yourself off and pushing on, nothing can hold a candle to Queen's tribute to its own lead singer. Mercury gives the performance of a lifetime and shows his love to the audience, the band and music itself.

Thank you for joining me for Hearing Double this year! I hope you had as much fun reading it as I did writing it.

Winner: Queen

Page to Stage go 'Into the Woods'

by Ayyan Tamjeed
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University of Connecticut students gathered into the Student Union Theatre to watch Page to Stage Productions' rendition of "Into the Woods." The musical, created by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine, was directed by Isabella Crawford, with two showings held at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Sunday, April 26.

The first act intertwined famous characters from four fairy tales, "Cinderella," "Jack and the Beanstalk," "Rapunzel" and "Little Red Riding Hood," into a Baker (Billy Lipinski) and his Wife's (Marina Syed) quest to begin a family. The plot is driven by the couple's adventures in getting four magic items so a witch (Bella Mercado) can lift a curse off them, with one item from each fairy tale.

The second act culminates in the death of the Giantess who came down to earth in an act of revenge for her husband who died in Jack's yard, but throughout we see each character dealing with new gripes and struggling with how to continue onwards after they reached their happily ever after.

Muntasir Hussain, a sixth-semester computer science major, watched the show with a friend and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

"I just happened to tag along for the fun of it and ended up striking gold, like the gold chest in Fortnite meme," Hussain said. He mentioned that he appreciated how songs from the first act returned in the sec-

ond.

"I liked how the music kept coming back in different ways later," Hussain said. "Which made it feel like everything was connected instead of random."

Billy Lipinski, a sixth-semester political science and public administration double major, said the Baker was a dream role for him, thanks to his mom and aunt's involvement in musical theater; his mother once played the Baker's Wife.

"They showed me this show, and I fell in love with it," Lipinski said. "From that moment on, I wanted to play the Baker so badly."

Lipinski did a lot of research into his character, looking into past performances of the Baker in previous productions, but he also appreciated the efforts of Crawford in helping him get into character.

"She [Crawford] did an excellent job of working with us to figure out who our characters were throughout the process," he said.

Working with this cast was a dream for Lipinski, and he said it was "my favorite cast that I've had in college theater."

"I think everyone just really knew their characters and really wanted to put on a good performance," Lipinski said. "Because, I mean, you're only as strong as your weakest link and we didn't have any."

One of the songs Lipinski liked performing was "No One Is Alone," as it let him probe his character and perform with Greg Mercado, who played Jack.

"Getting to do that with him [Mercado] and kind of explore

our characters in that scene together at the end of the show, was really a treat," he said. "Greg, who played Jack, is so great, he is such a talented kid."

Lipinski said he hopes the audience will learn more about how to empathize with others, and how actions can have consequences.

"I guess the big takeaway is to just put yourself in the other person's shoes and remember that it's not just about you. It's about everyone going through things all at once," Lipinski said.

Hussain said he liked the idea of community that the show promoted.

"The idea that 'no one is alone' shows that you need other people to get through difficult situations," Hussain said.

Page to Stage Productions

Into the Woods

Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim
Book by James Lapine
Originally Directed on Broadway by James Lapine
Orchestrations by Jonathan Tunick

Sunday
4/26 at
2pm &
7pm

Student
Union
Theater

Student
Ticket: \$5
Non-student
Ticket: \$15

A flyer for UConn's 'Page to Stage' production of "Into the Woods." The production took place in the Student Union Theater on Sunday.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @UCONNPGTOSTAGE ON INSTAGRAM