

AUTHOR'S NOTES

by Bruce Vilanch

The first time I heard Petula Clark sing “A Sign of the Times,” I asked the guy across the table from me in the dorm cafeteria at Ohio State University, “What show is that from?” He looked at me curiously, and I saw the dawn cross his face as he realized I was not from central Ohio, not an agriculture major, and probably definitely almost certainly the kind of person who goes to see them Eye-talian movies where they print the English across the bottom of the screen. This was the mid-60s. Columbus was not the megalopolis it is today, and *Star Wars* movies are full of subtitles. But for the next few hours, travel back with us to 1965—or, as those kids in *Aladdin* sing, a whole old world. Our show is about a girl—that’s what you called any woman younger than your mother—who decides there is something more than central Ohio and the life preordained for her by fate. She sets out for New York. What she finds there defines her generation. I don’t want to give too much else away. You’ve already parked the car, had a drink, wedged yourself into your seat. All right, you’re thinner than I am, so no wedging was involved. But I can tell you this. When I was around Cindy’s age, Broadway was the serious, non-classical music of the day. Rock was considered fun junk meant to piss off our parents. But I didn’t always hear it that way. A lot of music, and *all* of Petula’s, had a big theatrical feel that made me ask that question over and over: what show is this from? About twenty years later, I revived that question every time I heard anything by ABBA. Someday, somebody will do



an original book musical with all of their tunes. Can’t wait! Meanwhile, we have collected the mid-60s songs that I always felt had Broadway in their DNA and created what I hope is a good way for them to get home. Of course, you will be the judge. What we have here is a mixed marriage and, I hope, one that will last. So sit back, or wedge back, and return with us to an era when nobody texted, tweeted, tinder-ed or tumblr-ed. But a hell of a lot happened. Enjoy!