

SKYDANCE
TELEVISION



**SKYDANCE TELEVISION PARTNERS WITH THE RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN ORGANIZATION
AND CONCORD TO PRODUCE ORIGINAL SERIES BASED ON HIT BROADWAY MUSICAL
*OKLAHOMA!***

First-Ever Television Series Development Deal for Rodgers & Hammerstein Legacy Title

John Lee Hancock and Bekah Brunstetter Attached to Create Modern-Day Adaptation

Santa Monica, CA – April 16, 2019 – Skydance Television today announced that it has partnered with The Rodgers & Hammerstein Organization and Concord to develop an original television series inspired by the hit Broadway musical *Oklahoma!* The present-day series written by John Lee Hancock (*The Blind Side*, *The Highwaymen*) and Bekah Brunstetter (*This is Us*, *American Gods*) will be set in America’s heartland and include music by the legendary team of Rodgers & Hammerstein, reimagined for a contemporary audience, in addition to new music to support the story.

“Oklahoma!’s artistically revolutionary position in American culture has both kept it at the forefront of theatrical performances and allowed for various new innovations. This first-time ever television series will expand on the life of this remarkably resilient show,” said Ted Chapin, Chief Creative Officer, The Rodgers & Hammerstein Organization, a Concord company.

John Lee Hancock will also direct the first episode and serve as executive producer of the series alongside Brunstetter and fellow executive producers Ted Chapin of The Rodgers & Hammerstein Organization; Sophia Dilley of Concord; and David Ellison, Dana Goldberg and Marcy Ross of Skydance Television. Bill Bost, Senior Vice President of Television will oversee the project for Skydance.

“Oklahoma! is one of the greatest musicals of all time, and we’re honored The Rodgers & Hammerstein Organization and Concord have entrusted us to produce this ambitious television series,” commented Marcy Ross, President, Skydance Television. “Skydance has found the perfect architects to create this world with John Lee Hancock and Bekah Brunstetter, who will honor the spirit of the original show while creating a unique and contemporary story.”

“We are thrilled to be working with such great partners at Skydance Television and with the talented John Lee Hancock and Bekah Brunstetter to envision a new world that pulls from the rich characters and stories in *Oklahoma!*,” stated Sophia Dilley, Vice President Film & Television Development and Production, Concord.

Oklahoma! is the first musical written by the team of composer Richard Rodgers and librettist/lyricist Oscar Hammerstein II. The musical is based on Lynn Riggs’ 1931 play, *Green*

Grow the Lilacs. Set in farm country outside the town of Claremore, Indian Territory, in 1906, it tells the story of farm girl Laurey Williams and her courtship by two rival suitors. The original Broadway production opened on March 31, 1943. It was a box-office smash and ran for an unprecedented 2,212 performances, later enjoying award-winning revivals, national tours, foreign productions and an Academy Award-winning 1955 film adaptation. Following a fall 2018 run at Brooklyn's St. Ann's Warehouse, a 75th anniversary staging of *Oklahoma!* opened on April 7th on Broadway at the Circle in the Square Theatre. The Rodgers and Hammerstein Organization was acquired by Concord in July 2017.

Director, writer and producer John Lee Hancock has established himself as a distinctive voice in filmmaking with his ability to tell extraordinary stories on screen. Most recently, Hancock directed *The Highwaymen*, starring Woody Harrelson and Kevin Costner which opened in theaters on March 15, 2019 and debuted on Netflix on March 29, 2019. Hancock wrote and directed the celebrated feature *The Blind Side* which was nominated for two Academy Awards, including Best Picture, and garnered Sandra Bullock the Best Actress statuette for her portrayal of Leanne Tuohy. Hancock also directed *The Founder*, *Saving Mr. Banks* and *The Rookie*. Hancock's other credits include: *Snow White and the Huntsman*, which he co-wrote with Evan Daugherty and Hossein Amini; *The Alamo*, which he directed and co-wrote with Les Bohem and Stephen Gaghan; *My Dog Skip* for which he served as a producer; he wrote the screenplay for *A Perfect World*; adapted the book "Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil" for film; and he wrote and directed his film debut *Hard Time Romance*.

Bekah Brunstetter is an Emmy®-nominated television writer and playwright. Her previous television credits include *This is Us*, *American Gods* and *Switched at Birth*. Her plays include *The Cake* (The Echo Theater; The Geffen, Manhattan Theater Club), *Going to a Place where you already Are* (South Coast Repertory), *The Oregon Trail* (Portland Center Stage, O'Neill Playwrights Conference; Flying V), *Be A Good Little Widow* (Ars Nova) and *Oohrah!* (The Atlantic Theater). She is an alumni of the CTG Writers Group, Primary Stages Writer's group, Ars Nova Play Group, The Playwright's Realm and the Women's Project Lab. She is a founding member of The Kilroys, an advocacy group dedicated to achieving gender parity in the theater. She received a Bachelor's of Arts degree from UNC Chapel Hill and MFA in Dramatic Writing from the New School for Drama.

About Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II

After long and highly distinguished careers with other collaborators, Richard Rodgers (Composer, 1902-1979) and Oscar Hammerstein II (Librettist/Lyricist, 1895-1960) joined forces in 1943 to create the most successful partnership in American Musical Theatre. Prior to joining forces, Rodgers collaborated with lyricist Lorenz Hart on musical comedies that epitomized wit and sophistication (*Pal Joey*, *On Your Toes*, *Babes In Arms*, and more), while Hammerstein brought new life to operetta and created the classic *Show Boat* with Jerome Kern. *Oklahoma!*, the first Rodgers & Hammerstein musical, introduced an integrated form that became known as "the musical play." Their shows that followed included *Carousel*, *South Pacific*, *The King and I*, and *The Sound of Music*. Collectively, the Rodgers & Hammerstein musicals have earned Tony, Oscar, GRAMMY, Emmy, Pulitzer, and Olivier Awards.

About Concord

Concord is the independent, worldwide leader in the development, management and acquisition of sound recordings, music publishing and theatrical performance rights. Concord has offices in Los Angeles, New York, Nashville, London, Berlin and Miami and operates via three primary operating divisions:

Concord Recorded Music is comprised of five active labels across many musical genres: *Concord Records*, *Fantasy Records*, *Fearless Records*, *Loma Vista Recordings* and *Rounder Records*. Concord is also home to the #1 kids' music brand, *KIDZ BOP*.

The company's historical labels are managed by its *Craft Recordings* team, and include such storied imprints as Fania, Fantasy, Independiente, Milestone, Musart, Nitro, Pablo, Prestige, Riverside, Savoy, Specialty, Stax, Telarc, Varèse Sarabande, Vee-Jay and Wind-up. Concord's master recording portfolio contains more than 12,000 active albums and includes no less than 271 Grammy® winners (representing approximately 6.2% of all the GRAMMYS® ever awarded) and over 400 gold, platinum, multi-platinum and diamond RIAA certifications across 215 titles.

Concord Music Publishing represents more than 390,000 copyrighted works spanning all musical genres and including many of the world's most celebrated compositions by its most legendary creators. Concord Music Publishing is also home to a diverse group of contemporary songwriters and composers creating important and commercially-successful new songs and musical works. *Boosey & Hawkes*, the world's leading classical music publisher, and *The Rodgers & Hammerstein Organization* are also business units of Concord Music Publishing.

Concord Theatricals is the world's most significant theatrical agency, comprised of *R&H Theatricals*, *The Musical Company*, *Tams-Witmark* and *Samuel French*. Concord Theatricals is the only firm that provides truly comprehensive services to the creators and producers of plays and musicals under a single banner, including theatrical licensing, music publishing, script publishing, cast recording and first-class production.

Concord's newly formed Film & TV Development and Production division is responsible for developing original, musically-driven long form content to support Concord's vast library of assets. The department works collaboratively with all business units under the Concord umbrella and leverages internal resources to produce innovative content. This growing division aims to be a quality strategic partner for any group seeking to produce musically-driven narratives.

Concord is a private company funded by long-term institutional capital and members of Concord's management team. At the forefront of intellectual property valuation, acquisition and utilization, the Concord investment underscores the partners' belief in the lasting and appreciating global value of superior original creative content.

About Skydance Television

Skydance Media is the diversified media company founded by David Ellison in 2010 to create high-quality, event-level entertainment for global audiences. Skydance Television, the rapidly growing and critically acclaimed television division launched in 2013, is now a leading supplier of premium scripted content to broadcast, cable, and digital platforms. Its diverse slate of original series

currently includes two Emmy-nominated series, *Grace and Frankie* and *Altered Carbon* on Netflix, *Condor* on AT&T Audience Network, *Tom Clancy's Jack Ryan* on Amazon and *Foundation* on Apple TV+.

Skydance Public Relations:

Dawn Lach

dlach@skydance.com

424.291.3483