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SURFING THE WAVES OF POPULAR CULTURE
BY MICHAEL GILTZ & FRIENDS

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Bad News For Broadway: Record Box Office

Why is a record box office bad news for Broadway? Because it came at a terrible price. [Broadway's box office is hitting \\$900 million in 2006.](#) But attendance is down. How'd they do that? Rising ticket prices of course. \$110 was just an idea one year ago. Now it's the standard top price. And that Variety story I linked to only hints at the worst trend: premium ticket prices. \$110 isn't the top price on Broadway. Not even close. If you want GOOD seats, you're going to pay \$150, \$200, \$250 or even \$300 for a Friday or Saturday night show. This isn't via a ticket broker or scalper. This is at the box office, where anyone who wants to pay a mere \$110 for their seat better be buying a ticket eight months in advance. In fact, I spent much of this year trying to buy tickets for friends at least six months in advance and could find NOTHING for show after show. If I wanted to pay \$250, I could have bought a ticket for that weekend though. This is a poisonous, terrible trend. People ready to pay what they think is the top price -- a very expensive \$110 -- will find out again and again that tickets for good seats at the top shows simply aren't available unless you're planning a year in advance. Broadway is making it IMPOSSIBLE for people to go to the theater regularly, the way they do in London. And what kid is going to discover Broadway at those prices? People have been decrying the end of Broadway for many years of course. Broadway isn't going anywhere. Neither is opera. But when was the last time a regular Joe went to the opera? That's exactly what is happening to Broadway. It's becoming the sole province of the super-rich and insiders. Only tourists going to the same four or five mega-shows ("Wicked," "The Lion King," "The Color Purple") keep them running. New Yorkers going to the theater for fun the way others go to a movie? Good luck.

POSTED BY MICHAEL IN NEW YORK AT 1:09 PM



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