



Broadway Musicals: A Hundred Year History

David H. Lewis

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Musicals have been a major part of American theater for many years, and nowhere have they been more loved and celebrated than Broadway, the theater capital of the world. The music of such composers as Rodgers and Hammerstein, Berlin, the Gershwin brothers, Lerner and Loewe, Steven Sondheim, and Andrew Lloyd Webber continues to run through people's minds, and such productions as South Pacific, Cats, My Fair Lady, The Phantom of the Opera, Guys and Dolls, Rent, and West Side Story remain at the top of Broadway's most popular productions.

This book is a survey of Broadway musicals all through the 20th century, from the Tin Pan Alley-driven comedy works of the early part of the century, to the integrated musical plays that flourished in the heyday years of midcentury, and to the rock era, concept musicals, and the arrival of British mega-musicals late in the century. It also profiles some of the theater world's leading composers, writers, and directors, considers some of the most unforgettable and forgettable shows, illustrates the elusive fragility of the libretto, explains the compensating nature of production elements, and examines representative shows from every decade. An extensive discography offers a brief critique of over 300 show cast albums.

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