

Enchanted Evenings: The Broadway Musical from 'Show Boat' to Sondheim and Lloyd Webber

By Geoffrey Holden Block

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This new second edition of *Enchanted Evenings* offers theater lovers an illuminating behind-the-scenes tour of some of America's best loved, most admired, and most enduring musicals.
Readers will find such all-time favorites as *Show Boat, Carousel, Kiss Me, Kate, Guys and Dolls, My Fair Lady, West Side Story, Sweeney Todd, Sunday in the Park with George*, and *Phantom of the Opera*. Geoffrey Block provides a documentary history of each of the musicals, showing how each work took shape and revealing, at the same time, how the American musical evolved from the 1920s to today, both on stage and on screen. The book's particular focus is on the *music*, offering a wealth of detail about how librettist, lyricist, composer, and director work together to shape the piece. Block also includes trenchant social commentary and lively backstage anecdotes. Jerome Kern, Cole Porter, the Gershwins, Rodgers and Hart, Kurt Weill, Rodgers and Hammerstein, Lerner and Loewe, Frank Loesser, Leonard Bernstein, Stephen Sondheim, Andrew Lloyd Webber, and other luminaries emerge as hardworking craftsmen under enormous pressure to sell tickets without compromising their dramatic vision. The second edition includes a greatly expanded chapter on Sondheim, a new chapter on Lloyd Webber, and two new chapters on the film adaptations of the main musicals featured in the text (including such hard to find films as the original 1936 version of *Anything Goes* and the 1959 film adaptation of *Porgy and Bess*). Packed with information, including a complete discography and plot synopses and song-by-song scenic outlines for each of the fourteen shows, *Enchanted Evenings* is an essential reference as well as a riveting history.

"A solid and fascinating work that should become a model of how to investigate and report on the evolution of a musical. Block's research is persuasive and his writing vivid. . . Indispensable for anyone who cares to know more about Broadway musicals than *Playbill* can provide."
--Steven Bach, *The Los Angeles Times Book Review*

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Editorial Review

Review

"*Enchanted Evenings* is a superb read." --Theatermania.com

"I can't think of another book, on any subject, in which the author shows such firm control over his materials, in this case scholarly as well as journalistic writing on the Broadway musical, reviews of shows, correspondence, the music itself, and archival materials of various sorts relating to the early stages of creation. *Enchanted Evenings* is fascinating, original, compelling."--Charles Hamm, Professor Emeritus of Music, Dartmouth College, and author, *Irving Berlin: 1907-1914*

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"Some of the smartest commentary available about American musical theater"--Joel E. Siegel, *The Washington Post*

About the Author
Geoffrey Block, Distinguished Professor of Music History at the University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, Washington, is the author of Ives: "Concord" Sonata (Cambridge, 1996) and Richard Rodgers, the inaugural volume of the Yale Broadway Masters series, for which he serves as general editor. He is also the editor of The Richard Rodgers Reader (Oxford, 2002) and the Series Editor for Oxford's new Broadway Legacies.

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