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With an ethnographer's eye, Stacy Holman Jones offers us a cultural critique of torch singing--as much more than the familiar tune of a woman's lamenting her own willing deception and passivity. She takes us into the space between music and language, allowing us to view torch singing not only as an expression of burgeoning desire but also of a more firmly resolved resistance and promise of change. An engaging read for performing arts and music professionals, and instructors in mass media and experimental ethnography.

The place of performance in unifying an urban LGBT population of diverse Latin American descent

Provides encyclopedic coverage of female sexuality in 1940s popular culture. Popular culture in the 1940s is organized as patriarchal theater. Men gaze upon, evaluate, and coerce women, who are obliged in their turn to put themselves on sexual display. In such a thoroughly patriarchal society, what happens to female sexual desire? Wolf-Women and Phantom Ladies unearths this female desire by conducting a panoramic survey of 1940s culture that analyzes popular novels, daytime radio serials, magazines and magazine fiction, marital textbooks, Hollywood and educational films, jungle comics, and popular music. In addition to popular works, Steven Dillon discusses many lesser-known texts and artists, including Ella Mae Morse, a key figure in the founding of Capitol Records, and Lisa Ben, creator of the first lesbian magazine in the United States. This exciting book presents a truly capacious understanding of US culture and offers a spectacular array of analyses of how the decade's cultural discourse struggled to define female desire and how so much male literature and filmmaking sought to constrain it. Dillon's study will teach scholars of modern American literature and culture a great deal more about the 1940s than they already know or think they know. It is a brilliant addition to the field. Gordon Hutner, author of *What America Read: Taste, Class, and the Novel, 1920-1960*

"The Wizard is a lovable humbug, an artful salesman who gives his customers something to believe in, even if the thing is known to be pretend. Playing a role, he presents Dorothy's friends with talismans of brains, heart and courage and takes pride in showing them how he accomplished his illusions. Why do Dorothy's friends put their faith in the Wizard's abilities to grant their requests even after he has shown them that he has only been putting on a show? Perhaps his virtuoso performances inspire their own, and ours too. His humbug guides the philosophy of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* and the theatrical style of the first *Oz* musical, the extravaganza of 1902, with implications for "American" performance and participation"--

This handbook is currently in development, with individual articles publishing online in advance of print publication. At this time, we cannot add information about unpublished articles in this handbook, however the table of contents will continue to grow as additional articles pass through the review process and are added to the site. Please note that the online publication date for this handbook is the date that the first article in the title was published online.

Gestures of Music Theater explores examples of Song and Dance as performative gestures that entertain and affect audiences. The chapters interact to reveal the complex energies of performativity. In experiencing these energies, music theatre is revealed as a dynamic accretion of active, complex and dialogical experiences. Broadway musicals are one of America's most beloved art forms and play to millions of people each year. But what do these shows, which are often thought to be just frothy entertainment, really have to say about our country and who we are as a nation? Now in a new second edition, *The Great White Way* is the first book to reveal the racial politics, content, and subtexts that have haunted musicals for almost one hundred years from *Show Boat* (1927) to *Hamilton* (2015). This revised edition includes a new introduction and conclusion, updated chapters, as well as a brand-new chapter that looks at the blockbuster musicals *The Book of Mormon* and *Hamilton*. Musical mirror their time periods and reflect the political and social issues of their day. Warren Hoffman investigates the thematic content of the Broadway musical and considers how musicals work on a structural level, allowing them to simultaneously present and hide their racial agendas in plain view of their audiences. While the musical is informed by the cul-

tural contributions of African Americans and Jewish immigrants, Hoffman argues that ultimately the history of the American musical is the history of white identity in the United States. Presented chronologically, *The Great White Way* shows how perceptions of race altered over time and how musicals dealt with those changes. Hoffman focuses first on shows leading up to and comprising the Golden Age of Broadway (1927-1960s), then turns his attention to the revivals and nostalgic vehicles that defined the final quarter of the twentieth century. He offers entirely new and surprising takes on shows from the American musical canon--*Show Boat* (1927), *Oklahoma!* (1943), *Annie Get Your Gun* (1946), *The Music Man* (1957), *West Side Story* (1957), *A Chorus Line* (1975), and *42nd Street* (1980), among others. In addition to a new chapter on *Hamilton* and *The Book of Mormon*, this revised edition brings *The Great White Way* fully into the twenty-first century with an examination of jukebox musicals and the role of off-Broadway and regional theaters in the development of the American musical. New archival research on the creators who produced and wrote these shows, including Leonard Bernstein, Jerome Robbins, Stephen Sondheim, and Edward Kleban, will have theater fans and scholars rethinking forever how they view this popular American entertainment.

An outpouring of memorial tributes and public expressions of grief followed the death of the Tejana recording artist Selena Quintanilla Pérez in 1995. The Latina superstar was remembered and mourned in documentaries, magazines, websites, monuments, biographies, murals, look-alike contests, musicals, drag shows, and more. Deborah Paredez explores the significance and broader meanings of this posthumous celebration of Selena, which she labels "Selenidad." She considers the performer's career and emergence as an icon within the political and cultural transformations in the United States during the 1990s, a decade that witnessed a "Latin explosion" in culture and commerce alongside a resurgence of anti-immigrant discourse and policy. Paredez argues that Selena's death galvanized Latina/o efforts to publicly mourn collective tragedies (such as the murders of young women along the U.S.-Mexico border) and to envision a brighter future. At the same time, reactions to the star's death catalyzed political jockeying for the Latino vote and corporate attempts to corner the Latino market. Foregrounding the role of performance in the politics of remembering, Paredez unravels the cultural, political, and economic dynamics at work in specific commemorations of Selena. She analyzes Selena's final concert, the controversy surrounding the memorial erected in the star's hometown of Corpus Christi, and the political climate that served as the backdrop to the touring musicals *Selena Forever* and *Selena: A Musical Celebration of Life*. Paredez considers what "becoming" Selena meant to the young Latinas who auditioned for the biopic *Selena*, released in 1997, and she surveys a range of Latina/o queer engagements with Selena, including Latina lesbian readings of the star's death scene and queer Selena drag. *Selenidad* is a provocative exploration of how commemorations of Selena reflected and changed Latinidad.

In the 1930s, Aaron Copland began to write in an accessible style he described as "imposed simplicity." Works like *El Sal?n M?xico*, *Billy the Kid*, *Lincoln Portrait*, and *Appalachian Spring* feature a tuneful idiom that brought the composer unprecedented popular success and came to define an American sound. Yet the cultural substance of that sound--the social and political perspective that might be heard within these familiar pieces--has until now been largely overlooked. While it has long been acknowledged that Copland subscribed to leftwing ideals, *Music for the Common Man* is the first sustained attempt to understand some of Copland's best-known music in the context of leftwing social, political, and cultural currents of the Great Depression and Second World War. Musicologist Elizabeth Crist argues that Copland's politics never merely accorded with mainstream New Deal liberalism, wartime patriotism, and Communist Party aesthetic policy, but advanced a progressive vision of American society and culture. Copland's music can be heard to accord with the political tenets of progressivism in the 1930s and '40s, including a fundamental sensitivity toward those less fortunate, support of multiethnic pluralism, belief in social democracy, and faith that America's past could be put in service of a better future. Crist explores how his works wrestle with the political complexities and cultural contradictions of the era by investing symbols of America--the West, folk song, patriotism, or the people--with progressive social ideals. Much as been written

on the relationship between politics and art in the 1930s and '40s, but very little on concert music of the era. *Music for the Common Man* offers fresh insights on familiar pieces and the political context in which they emerged.

Irving Berlin's songs have been the soundtrack of America for a century, but his most profound contribution to the nation is to Broadway. Award-winning music historian Jeffrey Magee's chronicle of Berlin's theatrical career is the first book to fully consider the songwriter's immeasurable influence on the Great White Way. The musical, whether on stage or screen, is undoubtedly one of the most recognizable musical genres, yet one of the most perplexing. What are its defining features? How does it negotiate multiple socio-cultural-economic spaces? Is it a popular tradition? Is it a commercial enterprise? Is it a sophisticated cultural product and signifier? This research guide includes more than 1,400 annotated entries related to the genre as it appears on stage and screen. It includes reference works, monographs, articles, anthologies, and websites related to the musical. Separate sections are devoted to sub-genres (such as operetta and megamusical), non-English language musical genres in the U.S., traditions outside the U.S., individual shows, creators, performers, and performance. The second edition reflects the notable increase in musical theater scholarship since 2000. In addition to printed materials, it includes multimedia and electronic resources.

Moving across the boundaries of mainstream and experimental circuits, from the affective pleasures of commercially successful shows such as *Calendar Girls* and *Mamma Mia!* to the feminist possibilities of new burlesque and stand-up, this book offers a lucid and accessible account of popular feminisms in contemporary theatre and performance.

The past few decades have seen a remarkable surge in Jewish influences on American culture. Entertainers and artists such as Jerry Seinfeld, Adam Sandler, Allegra Goodman, and Tony Kushner have heralded new waves of television, film, literature, and theater; a major klezmer revival is under way; bagels are now as commonplace as pizza; and kabbalah has become as cool as crystals. Does this broad range of cultural expression accurately reflect what it means to be Jewish in America today? Bringing together fourteen new essays by leading scholars, *You Should See Yourself* examines the fluctuating representations of Jewishness in a variety of areas of popular culture and high art, including literature, the media, film, theater, music, dance, painting, photography, and comedy. Contributors explore the evolution that has taken place within these cultural forms and how we can best explain these changes. Are variations in our understanding of Jewishness the result of general phenomena such as multiculturalism, politics, and postmodernism, or are they the product of more specifically Jewish concerns such as the intermarriage/continuity crisis, religious renewal, and relations between the United States and Israel? Accessible to students and general readers alike, this volume takes an important step toward advancing the discussion of Jewish cultural influences in this country.

This groundbreaking work in gender and performance, with a new introduction and updated bibliography

Publisher Description

Issues of identity have always been central to the American musical in all its guises. Who appears in musicals, who or what they are meant to represent, and how, over time, those representations have been understood and interpreted, provide the very basis for our engagement with the genre. In this third volume of the reissued *Oxford Handbook of the American Musical*, chapters focus on race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality, regional vs. national identity, and the cultural and class significance of the musical itself. As important as the question of who appears in musicals are the questions of who watches and listens to them, and of how specific cultures of reception attend differently to the musical. Chapters thus address cultural codes inherent to the genre, in particular those found in traditional school theater programs.

Approaches country music through an interdisciplinary lens, Features close analyses of gendered and racial disparities in country music, Examines politics of both the performance of country music and the scholarship surrounding it Book jacket.

Over a century after its first stage performance, *Peter Pan* has become deeply embedded in Western popular culture, as an enduring part of childhood memories, in every part of popular media, and in commercial enterprises. Since 2003 the characters from

this story have had a highly visible presence in nearly every genre of popular culture: two major films, a literary sequel to the original adventures, a graphic novel featuring a grown-up Wendy Darling, and an Argentinean novel about a children's book writer inspired by J. M. Barrie. Simultaneously, Barrie surfaced as the subject of two major biographies and a feature film. The engaging essays in *Second Star to the Right* approach Pan from literary, dramatic, film, television, and sociological perspectives and, in the process, analyze his emergence and preservation in the cultural imagination.

First published in 2006. Routledge is an imprint of Taylor & Francis, an Informa company.

This text presents keywords and critical terms that deepen analysis and interpretation of the musical. Taking into account issues of composition, performance, and reception, the book's contributors bring a range of practical and theoretical perspectives to bear on their considerations of American musicals.

The Oxford Handbook of The American Musical offers new and cutting-edge essays on the most important and compelling issues and topics in the growing, interdisciplinary field of musical-theater and film-musical studies. Taking the form of a "keywords" book, it introduces readers to the concepts and terms that define the history of the musical as a genre and that offer ways to reflect on the specific creative choices that shape musicals and their performance on stage and screen. The handbook offers a cross-section of essays written by leading experts in the field, organized within broad conceptual groups, which together capture the breadth, direction, and tone of musicals studies today. Each essay traces the genealogy of the term or issue it addresses, including related issues and controversies, positions and problematizes those issues within larger bodies of scholarship, and provides specific examples drawn from shows and films. Essays both re-examine traditional topics and introduce underexplored areas. Reflecting the concerns of scholars and students alike, the authors emphasize critical and accessible perspectives, and supplement theory with concrete examples that may be accessed through links to the handbook's website. Taking into account issues of composition, performance, and reception, the book's contributors bring a wide range of practical and theoretical perspectives to bear on their considerations of one of America's most lively, enduring artistic traditions. The Oxford Handbook of The American Musical will engage all readers interested in the form, from students to scholars to fans and aficionados, as it analyses the complex relationships among the creators, performers, and audiences who sustain the genre.

When the first edition of *Queering the Pitch* was published in early 1994, it was immediately hailed as a landmark and defining work in the new field of Gay Musicology. In light of the explosion of Gay Musicology since 1994, a new edition of *Queering the Pitch* is timely and needed. In this new work, the editors are including a landmark essay by Philip Brett on Gay Musicology, its history and scope. The essay itself has become a cause celebre, and this will be its first full appearance in print. Along with this new historical essay, the editors are contributing a new introduction that outlines the changes that have occurred over the last decade as Gay Musicology has grown.

Some of the most indelible images of women in recent American film have been of working women fighting for labor reform or to expose corporate corruption. This critical text explores films with female labor activists as main protagonists, illuminating issues of gender and class while depicting the challenges of working class women. Films covered include *Salt of the Earth*, *Pajama Game*, *Union Maids*, *With Babies and Banners*, *Norma Rae*, *Silkwood*, and *Live Nude Girls Unite!* Through comparative analysis, the text examines the responses of these films to the labor and feminist movements of the last half century, and how American cinema has articulated notions of disempowerment, ambivalence and, at times, the resistance of both women and the working class at large.

Provides an international forum where theatrical scholarship and practice can meet.

From Maria in "West Side Story" to Tracy Turnblatt in "Hairspray" and Elphaba in "Wicked," female characters in Broadway musicals have belted and crooned their way into the American psyche. In this lively book, Stacy Wolf illuminates the women of American musical theater—performers, creators, and characters—from the start of the cold war to the present day, creating a new, feminist history of the genre, which finds often overlooked moments of empowerment for female audience members. Moving from decade to decade, Wolf first highlights the assumptions that circulated about gender and sexuality at the time, and then looks at the leading musicals, stressing the key aspects of the plays as they relate to women. The musicals discussed here are among the most beloved in the canon—"West Side Story," "Guys & Dolls," "Cabaret," "Phantom of the Opera," and many others—with special emphasis on the blockbuster "Wicked." Along the way, Wolf demonstrates how the musical since the mid-1940s has actually been dominated by women—women onstage, women in the wings, and women offstage as spectators and fans.

This text examines some of the most important performance in Britain from the mid-1980s into the new millennium. It considers contemporary British theatre in relation to national and suprana-

tional identities, critical concepts like globalisation and diaspora, and contemporary contexts such as the election of New Labour.

Drastic changes in lay religiosity during the High Middle Ages spurred anxiety about women forsaking their secular roles as wives and mothers for religious ones as nuns and beguines. This anxiety and the subsequent need to model an ideal of feminine behavior for the laity is particularly expressed in the German versions of Latin and French narratives. Using thirteenth-century penitentials, monastic exempla, and sermons, Karina Marie Ash clarifies how secular wifehood was recast as a quasi-religious role and, in German epics and romances from the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, how female characters are adapted to promote the salvific nature of worldly love in ways that echo the pastoral reevaluation of women at that time. Then she argues that mid and late thirteenth-century German literature not only reflects this impulse to idealize women's roles in lay society but also to promote an alternative model of femininity that deploys ways of privileging secular roles for women over religious ones. These continuously evolving readaptations of female protagonists across cultures and across centuries reflect fictive solutions for real historical concerns about women that not only complement contemporary pastoral and legal reforms but are also unique to medieval German literature.

The idea of American musical theatre often conjures up images of bright lights and big city, but its lifeblood is found in amateur productions at high schools, community theatres, afterschool programs, summer camps, and dinner theatres. In *Beyond Broadway*, author Stacy Wolf looks at the widespread presence and persistence of musical theatre in U.S. culture, and examines it as a social practice—a live, visceral experience of creating, watching, and listening. Why does local musical theatre flourish in America? Why do so many Americans continue to passionately engage in a century-old artistic practice that requires intense, person-to-person collaboration? And why do audiences still flock to musicals in their hometowns? Touring American elementary schools, a middle school performance festival, afterschool programs, high schools, summer camps, state park outdoor theatres, community theatres, and dinner theatres from California to Tennessee, Wolf illustrates musical theatre's abundance and longevity in the U.S. as a thriving social activity that touches millions of lives.

The Broadway musical has greatly influenced American (and world) culture. Such shows as *Oklahoma!* and *Annie Get Your Gun* are as 'American as apple pie,' while the long runs of imports like *Cats*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, and *Les MisZrables* have broken records. Broadway has produced such cultural icons as Ethel Merman, Yul Brynner, and Julie Andrews, and composers and lyricists such as Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Cole Porter, Richard Rodgers, Oscar Hammerstein, Leonard Bernstein, Stephen Sondheim, Andrew Lloyd Webber, and many others have had their melodies sung on its stages. Visionaries like George Abbott, Agnes de Mille, Jerome Robbins, Bob Fosse, Tommy Tune, and Susan Stroman have brought productions to life through their innovative direction and choreography. Since the latter part of the 19th century, the Broadway musical has remained one of the most popular genres in entertainment and its history is related in detail in *The A to Z of the Broadway Musical*. Through a chronology, an introductory essay, a bibliography, and 900 dictionary entries on Broadway shows, playwrights, directors, producers, designers, and actors, this handy desk reference offers quick information on the many aspects of the Broadway musical.

Derived from the colorful traditions of vaudeville, burlesque, revue, and operetta, the musical has blossomed into America's most popular form of theater. Scott McMillin has developed a fresh aesthetic theory of this underrated art form, exploring the musical as a type of drama deserving the kind of critical and theoretical regard given to Chekhov or opera. Until recently, the musical has been considered either an "integrated" form of theater or an inferior sibling of opera. McMillin demonstrates that neither of these views is accurate, and that the musical holds true to the disjunctive and irreverent forms of popular entertainment from which it arose a century ago. Critics and composers have long held the musical to the standards applied to opera, asserting that each piece should work together to create a seamless drama. But McMillin argues that the musical is a different form of theater, requiring the suspension of the plot for song. The musical's success lies not in the smoothness of unity, but in the crackle of difference. While disparate, the dancing, music, dialogue, and songs combine to explore different aspects of the action and the characters. Discussing composers and writers such as Rodgers and Hammerstein, Stephen Sondheim, Kander and Ebb, Leonard Bernstein, and Jerome Kern, *The Musical as Drama* describes the continuity of this distinctively American dramatic genre, from the shows of the 1920s and 1930s to the musicals of today.

Selected by Choice magazine as an Outstanding Academic Title for 2009 *When Broadway Was the Runway* explores the central and largely unacknowledged role of commercial Broadway theater in the birth of modern American fashion and consumer culture. Long before Hollywood's red carpet spectacles, Broadway theater introduced American women to the latest styles. At the beginning of the twentieth century, theater impresarios captured the imagination of their largely female patrons by transforming the stage into a glorious site of consumer spectacle. Theater historian Marlis

Schweitzer examines how these impresarios presented the dress- es actresses wore onstage, as well as the jewelry and hairstyles they chose, as commodities that were available for purchase in nearby department stores and salons. The *Merry Widow Hat*, designed for the hit operetta of the same name, sparked an international craze, and the dancer Irene Castle became a fashion celebrity when she anticipated the flapper look of the 1920s by nearly a decade. Not only were the latest styles onstage, but advertisements appeared throughout theaters, in programs, and on the curtains, while magazines such as *Vogue* vied for the rights to publish theatrical costume sketches and Harper's *Bazar* enticed readers with photo spreads of actresses in couture. This combination of spectatorship and consumption was a crucial step in the formation of a mass market for consumer goods and the rise of the cult of celebrity. Through historical analysis and dozens of early photographs and illustrations, Schweitzer aims a spotlight at the cultural and economic convergence of the theater and fashion industries in the United States.

Against queer theory's long-suffering romance with mourning and melancholia and a national agenda that urges homosexuals to renounce pleasure if they want to be taken seriously, *Acts of Gaiety* seeks to reanimate notions of "gaiety" as a political value for LGBT activism by recovering earlier mirthful modes of political performance. The book mines the archives of lesbian-feminist activism of the 1960s–70s, highlighting the outrageous gaiety—including camp, kitsch, drag, guerrilla theater, zap actions, rallies, manifestos, pageants, and parades alongside "legitimate theater"—at the center of the social and theatrical performances of the era. Juxtaposing figures such as Valerie Solanas and Jill Johnston with more recent performers and activists including Hothead Paisan, Bitch and Animal, and the Five Lesbian Brothers, Sara Warner shows how reclaiming this largely discarded and disavowed past elucidates possibilities for being and belonging. *Acts of Gaiety* explores the mutually informing histories of gayness as politics and as *joie de vivre*, along with the centrality of liveliness to queer performance and protest.

The Broadway tomboys, rebel nuns, and funny girls, who upset the 1950s gender norms: Mary Martin, Ethel Merman, Julie Andrews, and Barbra Streisand

How can broadcasting help us understanding music and its cultural role, both historically and today? To answer this question, 'Music and the Broadcast Experience' brings together fourteen leading music and media scholars, who explore how music and broadcasting have developed together throughout the twentieth and into the twenty-first centuries.

Since the release of Baz Luhrmann's *Moulin Rouge!* in 2001, the film musical has returned to popularity as one of the most important cinematic genres, a box office hit that appeals to audiences of all ages. Yet the history of the musical on film goes back over seven decades earlier than that, stretching from early examples like *The Jazz Singer* (1927), the first ever film with synchronized sound, through the Astaire-Rogers musicals of the 1930s, the MGM and Warner Brothers extravaganzas of the 1940s and '50s, and the roadshow era of the 1960s. The genre's renaissance with *La La Land* (2016) and *The Greatest Showman* (2017) proves that it remains as appealing as ever, capable of both high critical acclaim and widespread box office success. The Oxford Handbook of the Hollywood Musical, curated by editor Dominic Broomfield-McHugh, reflects and expands on current scholarship on the film musical in a handbook that mixes new discoveries through archival research with new perspectives on familiar titles. It addresses issues such as why audiences accept people bursting into song in musicals; how technology affects the way numbers are staged; and how writers have adapted their material to suit certain stars. It also looks at critical issues such as racism and sexism, and assesses the role and nature of the film musical in the twenty-first century. A remarkable survey at the cutting edge of the field, *The Oxford Handbook of the Hollywood Musical* will be a resource for students and scholars alike for years to come.

What is it about musical theatre that audiences find entertaining? What are the features that lead to its ability to stimulate emotional attachment, to move and to give pleasure? Beginning from the passion musical theatre performances arouse and their ubiquity in London's West End and on Broadway this book explores the ways in which musical theatre reaches out to and involves its audiences. It investigates how pleasure is stimulated by vocal, musical and spectacular performances. Early discussions centre on the construction of the composed text, but then attention is given to performance and audience response. Musical theatre contains disruptions and dissonances in its multiple texts, it allows gaps for audiences to read playfully. This combines with the voluptuous sensations of embodied emotion, contagiously and viscerally shared between audience and stage, and augmented through the presence of voice and music. A number of features are discovered in the construction of musical theatre performance texts that allow them to engage the intense emotional attachment of their audiences and so achieve enormous popularity. In doing this, the book challenges the conception of musical theatre as 'only entertainment'. Entertainment instead becomes a desirable, ephemeral and playful concept.

A Labour Whip once revealed that in their office they sang songs

about certain backbenchers. In the case of the Member for Maryhill, their choice was 'How Do You Solve A Problem Like Maria?' A frank account of fourteen years in Westminster from the rebellious Maria Fyfe - the only female Labour MP in Scotland when she was first elected. Fyfe recounts some of the most significant moments of her political career, from the frustrating and infuriating, to the rewarding and worthwhile. A significant aim of writing this book was to set the record straight on that period in our UK Parliament. Another aim was to encourage interest in a political life when widespread cynicism discourages good people from thinking about it. MARIA FYFE Covering some of the most turbulent years of British and Scottish political history, A Problem Like Maria takes the female's perspective of life as an MP in the male-dominated Westminster. This book reaches the parts of politics some people hope you never reach. The intimidating Maria Fyfe sounds like strong Scottish domestic drama. Edward Pearce, LONDON EVENING STANDARD The terrifying Maria Fyfe stamped in ... her of the sharpened claws. Matthew Parris, THE TIMES An incorrigible Bevanite. THE OBSERVER

With its dynamic choreographies and booming drumbeats, taiko

has gained worldwide popularity since its emergence in 1950s Japan. Harnessed by Japanese Americans in the late 1960s, taiko's sonic largesse and buoyant energy challenged stereotypical images of Asians in America as either model minorities or sinister foreigners. While the majority of North American taiko players are Asian American, over 400 groups now exist across the US and Canada, and players come from a range of backgrounds. Using ethnographic and historical approaches, combined with in-depth performance description and analysis, this book explores the connections between taiko and Asian American cultural politics. Based on original and archival interviews, as well as the author's extensive experience as a taiko player, this book highlights the Midwest as a site for Asian American cultural production and makes embodied experience central to inquiries about identity, including race, gender, and sexuality. The book builds on insights from the fields of dance studies, ethnomusicology, performance studies, queer and feminist theory, and Asian American studies to argue that taiko players from a variety of identity positions perform Asian America on stage, as well as in rehearsals, festivals, schools, and through interactions with audiences. While many taiko players play simply for the love of its dynamism and physi-

cality, this book demonstrates that politics are built into even the most mundane aspects of rehearsing and performing.

Composer John Kander and lyricist Fred Ebb collaborated for more than forty years, longer than any such partnership in Broadway history. Together they wrote over twenty musicals. Their two most successful works, Cabaret and Chicago, had critically acclaimed Broadway revivals and were made into Oscar-winning films. This book, the first study of Kander and Ebb, examines their artistic accomplishments as individuals and as a team. Drawing on personal papers and on numerous interviews, James Leve analyzes the unique nature of this collaboration. Leve discusses their contribution to the concept musical; he examines some of their most popular works including Cabaret, Chicago, and Kiss of the Spider Woman; and he reassesses their flops as well as their incomplete and abandoned projects. Filled with fascinating information, the book is a resource for students of musical theater and lovers of Kander and Ebb's songs and shows.

An eclectic collection of essays on theater and its decline as high-brow culture, under the influence of theme parks and blockbuster movies