

The Great White Way: Broadway Musicals

Broadway—The **live theatre** presented along and near its namesake New York City street. The street is perfectly oriented from north to south, causing it to be diagonal to every other street near it. Jerome Myers was the first to call it “**The Great White Way**” because it was lit up at night with so many theatre signs. The **Tony Awards** are given annually for achievement in Broadway Theatre. Inspired by the shows and dances he saw, Piet Mondrian painted **Broadway Boogie Woogie** to depict the taxicabs on Broadway. The **West End** is the live theatre district of London comparable to Broadway.

Notes:

West Side Story—Music by **Leonard Bernstein**, lyrics by **Stephen Sondheim**, and book by **Arthur Laurents**. **Jerome Robbins** choreographed *West Side Story* (also *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Gypsy*, and *Fancy Free*). The musical is an adaptation of Shakespeare’s **Romeo and Juliet** set in 1950’s **Manhattan**, and includes the street gangs the **Jets** (blue-collar gang led by Riff) and the **Sharks** (Puerto Rican immigrant gang led by Bernardo). **Tony**, a former Jet, falls in love with **Maria** (of the Sharks). Tony kills Maria’s brother, Bernardo, in a rumble, and Maria’s suitor, Chino, shoots Tony. Officer **Krupke** is the police officer who gets made fun of in the musical.

- Includes the songs: “Tonight” (recreates the balcony scene on a fire escape), “America,” “I Feel Pretty,” “Gee, Officer Krupke,” “Maria,” the “Jet Song,” and “Something’s Coming”
- Notes:

Andrew Lloyd Webber— Andrew Lloyd Webber is an English **composer** and **impresario** (organizer and financier) of musical theatre. *The New York Times* called him “the **most commercially successful composer** in history.” He was **knighted** in 1992 by Elizabeth II. He is best known for composing ***The Phantom of the Opera***, ***Cats***, ***Evita***, ***Jesus Christ Superstar***, ***Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat***, and ***School of Rock***. His other works include ***Starlight Express*** (performed on rollerskates; about an anthropomorphic train named Rusty), ***Love Never Dies*** (sequel to ***Phantom of the Opera***), ***Sunset Boulevard***, and ***The Likes of Us*** (his first collaboration with lyricist Tim Rice).

Notes:

The Phantom of the Opera—Music by **Andrew Lloyd Webber**, lyrics by **Charles Hart/Richard Stilgoe**, book by **Stilgoe/Lloyd Webber**. This musical is currently the **longest-running Broadway show**, with over 10,000 performances. It is based on the 1909 novel of the same name by French author **Gaston Leroux**. The musical opens years after the main story at an auction where a **monkey music box** is sold. The rest of the musical is a flashback. At the **Paris Opera** in 1881, the Phantom lures the lead singer **Christine Daaé** (an understudy for the soprano Carlotta) to his lair under the opera house. The Phantom steals Carlotta’s voice so Christine can have the lead in the opera. The Phantom writes the opera ***Don Juan Triumphant*** and wants Christine to play the lead in it. Despite calling the Phantom her “**Angel of Music**,” Christine falls in love with **Raoul** (the opera house’s new patron and her childhood friend). In

*All musicals detailed in these notes (except *School of Rock*) have film versions available.

revenge, the Phantom drops a **chandelier** during a performance and kidnaps Christine. Raoul saves her, and after the Phantom and Christine kiss, the Phantom disappears, leaving behind only his **white mask**. Madame Giry also appears to help the Phantom. **Love Never Dies** is the sequel that sees the Phantom have escaped to America where he manages a Coney Island amusement park. Actor Michael Crawford originally played the Phantom.

- Includes the songs: “The Music of the Night,” “Angel of Music,” “Masquerade,” “Wishing You Were Somehow Here Again,” “The Point of No Return,” “Don Juan Triumphant,” “Prima Donna,” “Think of Me”
- *Notes:*

Cats—**Andrew Lloyd Webber** wrote the music for this show based on **T.S. Eliot’s *Old Possum’s Book of Practical Cats***. It concerns the **Jellicles**, a tribe of cats who roam London and meet once each year at the Jellicle Ball to see which one of them gets to leave the tribe and go to the Heavenside Layer (Heaven) and be reborn; **Old Deuteronomy**, the leader, chooses **Grizabella** the Glamour Cat after she sings “**Memory**”. The role of Grizabella was first played in the West End by Elaine Paige. Other characters include the **Rum Tum Tugger**, Macavity the Mystery Cat (a criminal who kidnaps Old Deuteronomy), Mr. Mistoffelees (a magician who rescues Old Deuteronomy by making him reappear), Skimbleshanks (the railway cat), Gus (the theatre cat), Rumpleteazer, and Victoria (usually the best dancer). **Cats** is the **fourth-longest-running show in Broadway history** (sixth on the West End).

- Includes the songs: “Memory” (sung by Grizabella), “The Jellicle Ball,” “The Rum Tum Tugger,” “Old Deuteronomy,” “Gus: The Theatre Cat,” “Mr. Mistoffelees,” and “Bustopher Jones”
- *Notes:*

Evita—Music by **Andrew Lloyd Webber**, lyrics and book by **Tim Rice**. The musical **opens in a cinema** with the news that the main character has just died before a requiem is sung for her. **Che Guavara narrates** the life story of **Eva Peron** (called Evita), a singer and film actress who marries Juan Peron. Juan is elected **President of Argentina**, and Eva’s charity work makes her very popular among her people before she dies of cancer at age 33. The second act opens with “**Don’t Cry for Me, Argentina**” and portrays Evita’s “Rainbow Tour” around Europe. It was made into a 1996 film starring Madonna and Antonio Banderas. Actresses who have portrayed Evita include Elaine Paige (West End), Patti LuPone (Broadway), and Madonna (in the film version).

- Includes the songs: “A Cinema in Buenos Aires, 26 July 1952,” “Oh What a Circus,” “On This Night of a Thousand Stars,” “Another Suitcase in Another Hall,” “Don’t Cry for Me Argentina,” “You Must Love Me,” and “And the Money Kept Rolling In”
- *Notes:*

Jesus Christ Superstar—Music by **Andrew Lloyd Webber** and lyrics by **Tim Rice**. This musical started as a **rock opera concept album** before its debut, and it is notable for being **sung-through**, with **no spoken dialogue**. In the week leading up to the crucifixion, **Judas grows angry** with **Christ’s claims of divinity**, and **Mary Magdalene** laments her romantic feelings for Christ. Judas hangs himself, and Christ, though frustrated with God, accepts his fate. In “**Superstar**,” Judas repeatedly asks Jesus, “Do you think you’re what they say you are?”. Jeff Fenholt originated the role of Jesus on Broadway. Other characters include **Pontius Pilate**, and **King Herod**.

- Includes the songs: “Superstar,” “What’s the Buzz?,” “I Don’t Know How to Love Him,” “King Herod’s Song,” “Gethsemane,” “Heaven on Their Minds,” and “Pilate’s Dream”

- *Notes:*

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat—Music by **Andrew Lloyd Webber** and lyrics by **Tim Rice**; this was the **first** Lloyd Webber and Rice musical to be **performed publicly**. Based on the **biblical story of Joseph** in which Joseph is given a **multicolored coat** and is sold into **slavery**; he lands in jail and then interprets the **pharaoh’s dreams**. Joseph’s eleven brothers appear, as do the rich and powerful **Potiphar** and the **Pharaoh**. Joseph sings about rising out of poverty in “**Any Dream Will Do**” and hopes for Israelite land in “**Close Every Door**.”

- Includes the songs: “Any Dream Will Do,” “Close Every Door,” “Joseph’s Dreams,” “Potiphar,” “Pharaoh’s Dream Explained,” and “Those Canaan Days”
- *Notes:*

School of Rock—Music by **Andrew Lloyd Webber**, lyrics by **Glenn Slater**, and book by **Julian Fellowes**. This rock musical is **based** on the 2003 **Jack Black** film of the same name. It tells of out-of-work rock singer/guitarist **Dewey Finn** who pretends to be a **substitute teacher** at **Horace Green**, a prestigious prep school. He forms a band of fifth-graders in an attempt to win the upcoming **Battle of the Bands** concert.

- Includes the songs: “I’m Too Hot for You,” “When I Climb to the Top of Mount Rock,” “Children of Rock,” “Queen of the Night,” “You’re in the Band,” “Stick it to the Man”
- *Notes:*

Rodgers & Hammerstein—Composer **Richard Rodgers** and lyricist-dramatist **Oscar Hammerstein II** were a musical theatre writing team. They began the “**golden age**” of musical theatre in the 1940s and ‘50s. Their successes include **The Sound of Music**, **Oklahoma!**, **The King and I**, **South Pacific**, and **Carousel**. They also created **Cinderella**, a musical written for television based on the fairy tale, and **Flower Drum Song**.

Notes:

The Sound of Music—Music by **Richard Rodgers**, lyrics by **Oscar Hammerstein**, and book by **Howard Lindsay** and **Russel Crouse**; it was the **last musical** written by Rodgers and Hammerstein. It is based on **Maria von Trapp’s** autobiographical book **The Trapp Family Singers** and is widely considered the **most famous musical** of all time. Set in **Austria** on the eve of Anschluss in 1938, **Maria** is a young woman studying to be a **nun** in **Nazi-occupied Austria**. She becomes a **governess** to **Captain Von Trapp’s seven** troublesome **children**. Maria teaches them to sing (“**My Favorite Things**,” “**Do-Re-Mi**”) and she marries Captain Von Trapp. After giving a concert for the Nazis (“**Edelweiss**”), they escape Austria over the Alps (“**Climb Ev’ry Mountain**”). Mary Martin originally played Maria on Broadway while the 1965 film stars **Julie Andrews** in the role.

- Includes the songs “The Sound of Music,” “My Favorite Things,” “Do-Re-Mi,” “Sixteen Going on Seventeen,” “The Lonely Goatherd,” “So Long, Farewell,” “Climb Ev’ry Mountain,” and “Edelweiss”
- *Notes:*

Oklahoma!—Music by **Richard Rodgers** and lyrics and book by **Oscar Hammerstein II**, their **first collaboration**. The musical was based on the **Lynn Riggs play *Green Grow the Lilacs*** and is often considered the **first modern book musical**. On the eve of Oklahoma's statehood, cowboy **Curly McLain** and sinister farmhand **Jud** compete for the love of Aunt Eller's niece, **Laurey**. Jud falls on his own knife after attacking Curly, and Curly and Laurey get married. A subplot concerns Ado Annie, who chooses cowboy Will Parker over the Persian peddler Ali Hakim. *Oklahoma!* was **choreographed by Agnes de Mille**.

- Includes the songs "Oh, What A Beautiful Mornin'," "Oklahoma," "The Surrey With the Fringe On Top," "People Will Say We're In Love," "Poor Jud is Dead," "Kansas City," "All Er Nothin'"
- *Notes:*

The King and I—Music by **Richard Rodgers** and lyrics/book by **Oscar Hammerstein II**. The musical was inspired by **Anna Leonowens' memoirs** and adapted from **Margaret Landon's *Anna and the King of Siam***. Set in **Bangkok** in the 1860s, **Anna Leonowens**, a British schoolteacher, travels to **Siam** (now Thailand) to teach English to **King Mongkut's many children** and wives. Anna's western ways, the looming threat of British rule, and romance between Lun Tha and the concubine **Tuptim** all weigh heavily on the traditional, chauvinistic King. As the King dies, Anna kneels at his side, and the prince abolishes the practice of **kowtowing**. It contains a ballet interpretation of **Uncle Tom's Cabin** titled **Small House of Uncle Thomas**. It was made into an Academy Award-winning 1956 film starring **Yul Brynner** as the king and **Deborah Kerr** as Anna.

- Includes the songs "I Whistle A Happy Tune," "Shall We Dance?," "March of the Siamese Children," "Getting to Know You," "I Have Dreamed"
- *Notes:*

South Pacific—Music by **Richard Rodgers**, lyrics by **Oscar Hammerstein II**, and book by **Joshua Logan**. The musical was adapted from **James Michener's *Tales of the South Pacific***. During the **Pacific Theater of World War II**, **Nellie Forbush** is a U.S. Navy nurse on an island. She falls in love with **Emile de Becque**, a local planter who helps **Lt. Cable** carry out an espionage mission against the Japanese. When Nellie learns that Emile is a widow with 2 half caste kids, she can't accept it. Cable falls in love with a Polynesian girl named Liat. The mission is successful, and Emile and Nellie reunite.

- Includes the songs "There is Nothin' Like A Dame," "Some Enchanted Evening," "Bali Ha'i," "I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Out of My Hair," "Younger Than Springtime"
- *Notes:*

Fiddler on the Roof—Music by **Jerry Bock**, lyrics by **Sheldon Harnick**, and book by **Joseph Stein**. The musical is based on the short story "**Tevey and His Daughters**" by **Sholom Aleichem**. Set in 1905, it takes place in the **Jewish shtetl** (small village) of **Anatevka** in **Russia**. **Tevey** is a lowly Jewish **milkman** ("**If I Were a Rich Man**"), and his daughters are anxious to get married ("**Matchmaker**"). **Tzeitel** marries the tailor **Motel** ("**Sunrise, Sunset**," "The Bottle Dance"), **Hodel** gets engaged to the radical student Perchik, and **Chava** falls in love with a Russian named Fyedka. The families leave their village, Anatevka, after a **pogrom**.

- Includes the songs "Matchmaker," "Sunrise, Sunset," "If I Were A Rich Man," "Far From the Home I Love," "Do You Love Me," "Miracle of Miracles," "Tradition"
- *Notes:*

My Fair Lady—Music by **Frederick Loewe**, lyrics and book by **Alan Jay Lerner**. It is an adaptation of **George Bernard Shaw's play *Pygmalion***. As part of a bet with his friend **Colonel Pickering**, **Henry Higgins** (phonetics **professor**) transforms the **Cockney flower girl Eliza Doolittle** into a proper lady. After Eliza falls for **Freddy Eynsforth-Hill**, Higgins realizes he is in love with Eliza. Eliza returns to Higgins' home at the end. The original London, Broadway, and film versions all starred **Rex Harrison** as Professor Henry Higgins.

- Includes the songs "I Could Have Danced All Night," "The Rain in Spain," "With a Little Bit O' Luck," "Get Me To the Church on Time," "I've Grown Accustomed to Her Face," "Wouldn't It Be Lovely?," and "On the Street Where You Live"
- *Notes:*

Camelot— Music by **Frederick Loewe**, lyrics and book by **Alan Jay Lerner**. It was based on **T.H. White's *The Once And Future King***. The musical deals with the legend of **King Arthur**. Original Broadway cast members include **Richard Burton** as King **Arthur**, **Julie Andrews** and Queen **Guinevere**, **Robert Goulet** as Sir **Lancelot**, **Roddy McDowall** as **Mordred**, and David Hurst as **Merlin**. It was **John F. Kennedy's favorite** musical.

- Includes the songs: "The Simple Joys of Maidenhood," "Camelot," "C'est Moi," "How to Handle a Woman," "If Ever I Would Leave You," "What Do the Simple Folk Do?," and "I Loved You Once in Silence"
- *Notes:*

Brigadoon—Music by **Frederick Loewe** with lyrics and book by **Alan Jay Lerner**. It was inspired by ***Germelshausen***, a German story by **Friedrich Gerstacker**. The musical revolves around two **American tourists** who stumble upon the title **Scottish village** that appears for **only one day every 100 years**. **Tommy**, one of the tourists, falls in love with **Fiona**, a woman from Brigadoon. **Agnes de Mille choreographed *Brigadoon***. A film version starred **Gene Kelly** and **Cyd Charisse**.

- Includes the songs: "Once in the Highlands," "Brigadoon," "Down on MacConnachy Square," "The Heather on the Hill," "Almost Like Being in Love," and "Entrance of the Clans"
- *Notes:*

Paint Your Wagon—Music by **Frederick Loewe**, lyrics and book by **Alan Jay Lerner**. Set during the **Gold Rush** of 1853, it concerns the prospector **Ben Rumson** and his daughter. It was **choreographed by Agnes de Mille**. The film version starred **Lee Marvin**, **Clint Eastwood**, and **Jean Seberg**.

- Includes the songs: "They Call the Wind Maria," "I Talk to the Trees," "Whoop-Ti-Ay!," "How Can I Wait?," "All For Him," and "Hand Me Down That Can O'Beans"
- *Notes:*

Cabaret—Music by **John Kander** and lyrics by **Fred Ebb**. It is based on John Van Druten's play ***I Am A Camera***, which itself was adapted from **Christopher Isherwood's novel *Goodbye to Berlin***. Set in the seedy **Kit-Kat Club** in Weimer **Berlin**, the musical sees the risqué **Master of Ceremonies** preside over the action ("**Wilkommen**"). The British lounge singer **Sally Bowles** falls in love with the American writer **Cliff Bradshaw**, but the two break up as the Nazis come to power. A subplot involves the doomed romance between German boarding house owner **Fraulein Schneider** and her elderly suitor **Her Schultz**, a Jewish fruit vendor. It was adapted into an Academy Award-winning film starring **Liza Minelli** and **Joel Grey**.

- Includes the songs: “Willkommen,” “Tomorrow Belongs to Me,” “Maybe This Time,” “Cabaret,” “Don’t Tell Mama,” and “If You Could See Her (The Gorilla Song)”
- *Notes:*

The Music Man—Music, book, and lyrics by **Meredith Wilson**, based on a story by Wilson and **Franklin Lacey**. In this musical, the swindler “**Professor**” **Harold Hill** is a traveling salesman who visits **River City, Iowa**, in 1912. He tries to con the families of River City by starting a **boy’s band**. While there, he falls in love with the **librarian Marian Paroo**. Harold Hill teaches four bickering businessmen on the **School Board** to sing as a **barbershop quartet** (played in original by the **Buffalo Bills**). Eventually, the scheme is exposed, but the town forgives him.

- Includes the songs: “Seventy-Six Trombones,” “Trouble” (origin of the phrase “trouble in River City), “Shipooopi,” “Marian the Librarian,” “Till There Was You,” “Gary, Indiana,” “Lida Rose,” and “Pickalittle (Talk-a-Little)”
- *Notes:*

Rent—**rock musical** with music, books, and lyrics by **Jonathan Larson**. It was inspired by Giacomo **Puccini’s** opera ***La Boheme***. It tells the story of **impoverished artists** living in the East Village of **New York City** during the **AIDS** crisis circa 1990. It is narrated by filmmaker **Mark Cohen**, whose ex-girlfriend **Maureen** has just left him for a woman (Joanne), and whose recovering heroin addict roommate **Roger** meets the dying stripper **Mimi**. Mark and Roger’s former roommate and itinerant philosopher/hacker Collins comes to town, where he is robbed, then savaged by the **transvestite Angel**, with whom he moves in. Meanwhile, the former fourth roommate of Mark, Roger, and Collins—**Benny**—has married into a wealthy family and bought the building Mark and Roger now live in, from which he wants to **evict** them. It won the **1996 Pulitzer Prize for Drama**.

- Includes the Songs: “Rent,” “One Song Glory,” “Light My Candle,” “Tango: Maureen,” “Another Day,” “La Vie Boheme,” “Seasons of Love”
- *Notes:*

Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street—Music and lyrics by **Stephen Sondheim** and book by **Hugh Wheeler**. It is based on the **Christopher Bond** play of the same name which, in turn, was based on the villainous character of Sweeney Todd in serialized Victorian “**penny dreadfuls**”. The title **barber** returns to London after being unjustly imprisoned for 15 years by the evil **Judge Turpin**, who lusted after Sweeney’s wife. Sweeney’s daughter, **Johanna**, escapes Turpin (her caretaker after Sweeney’s imprisonment) and falls in love with the sailor **Anthony Hope**. Sweeney Todd exacts his vengeance by **murdering his customers** and **baking them** into **Mrs. Lovett’s meat pies**. **Angela Lansbury** originated the role of Mrs. Lovett on Broadway.

- Includes the songs “No Place Like London,” “The Worst Pies In London,” “Epiphany,” “A Little Priest,” “Johanna,” “By the Sea,” and “Not While I’m Around”
- *Notes:*

Les Miserables—Music by **Alain Boublil**, lyrics by **Claude-Michel Schonberg**, and book by **Herbert Kretzmer**. It is based on **Victor Hugo’s Les Miserables**. In this sung-through musical, **Jean Valjean** is convicted of **stealing a loaf of bread** to feed his starving niece. He breaks his parole and is doggedly pursued by **Inspector Javert**. Several years later, the lives of Valjean, his adoptive daughter **Cosette**, her lover **Marius** and his former lover Eponine, and Javert become intertwined on the barricades of an 1832 student rebellion in Paris. It is the **longest-running show on London’s West End**.

- Includes the songs: “I Dreamed a Dream,” “Castle on a Cloud,” “Do You Hear the People Sing?,” “One More Day,” “On My Own,” “Soliloquy (Javert’s Suicide)”, and “Empty Chairs at Empty Tables”
- *Notes:*

<i>Resources for Further Study</i>	<i>Resources to Download/View</i>
<p><i>To continue your study of musicals:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Spotify, Pandora have premade “Musicals” playlists or search for your favorite!</i> ● <i>Youtube has clips from most of the famous songs</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Rent/purchase many movie versions of musicals</i> – <i>Good channel that discusses musical theatre and makes comparisons</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.youtube.com/user/MusicalTheatreMash ● <i>Netflix/Hulu have many movie versions:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Netflix currently has: Grease, Sweeney Todd, Chicago, Carousel, Shrek: The Musical</i> – <i>Hulu currently has: Phantom of the Opera, Funny Girl</i> ● <i>Amazon, Half Price Books, or other used bookstores</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>Great place to buy cheap DVDs of musicals, classic films, or even popular movies</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Link to download this presentation</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – www.tinyurl.com/ACEmusicalspp • <i>Link to download printed study sheet</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – www.tinyurl.com/ACEmusicalsstudy • <i>Link to Youtube playlist</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLYu-HdIELDS7fepjHpO7n184uz_q8_zus