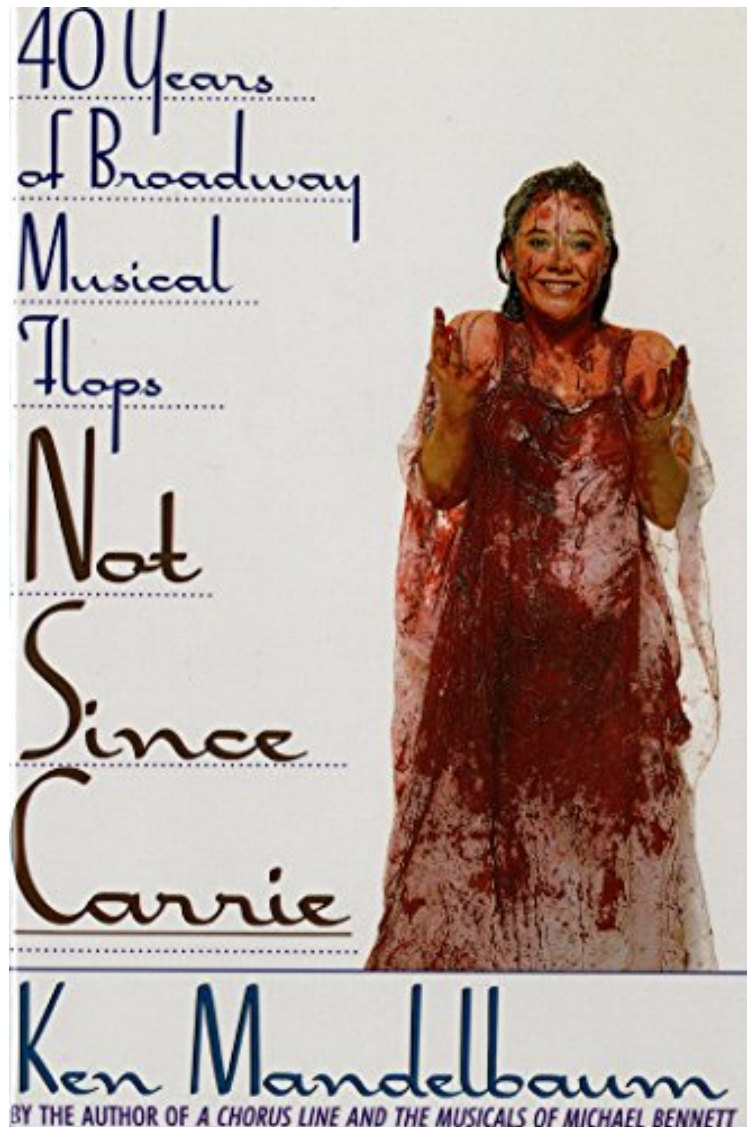


(Download free ebook) Not Since Carrie: Forty Years of Broadway Musical Flops

Not Since Carrie: Forty Years of Broadway Musical Flops

Ken Mandelbaum

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Ken Mandelbaum : Not Since Carrie: Forty Years of Broadway Musical Flops before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Not Since Carrie: Forty Years of Broadway Musical Flops:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Please, Ken, can we get an update? By Neurasthenic Many books critique and mock failed movies. Since the advent of the VHS player, it has been relatively easy for reviewers to find copies of the bad movies, and readers will generally be familiar with the actors and directors being made fun of. With live theater, this doesn't really hold. Once a play has failed, there's no way to watch it again. Even cast albums won't exist for many failures. A few decades later, few if any readers will have any familiarity the the producer, director,

choreographer or stars of what was once the biggest failure of the year. This book has effectively three sections. There is a long catalog of failed productions, a few paragraphs of discussion going to each. This seeks to be encyclopedic, and it's about as much fun to read as an encyclopedia. For the reasons discussed above, most readers won't have heard of most of the shows, and the information that Mandelbaum provides is pretty dry. The second section of the book analyzes characteristics shared by many failed musicals (shows based on popular movies that did not improve on the movies, for example). This section will be of broader appeal. Finally, he gives a detailed account of the development and collapse of the musical *Carrie*, arguing that it should be regarded as the archetypal Broadway failure. This section will be fun for everybody, I think. Mandelbaum is unafraid of assigning blame for failure, or for calling out successful portions of otherwise failed productions. You can feel him rooting for some of the productions to succeed, and he calls for a half dozen flopped shows to be revived. Having finished reading the book, I find myself disappointed never to have seen *Drat! The Cat!* for example. The book ends in 1990 I hope Mandelbaum will someday update the text to include more recent flops. *The Red Shoes?* *Cyrano, the Musical?* *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson?* I'd love to read Mandelbaum's take on all of them. I've given the book four stars, but its value depends on what kind of theater-goer you are. For a casual fan of theater, this book is worth only two or three stars. For a great fan, the book is an easy five.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Loved this book!
By D-Ellen
If you are a musical theatre fan AT ALL, this book has to be part of your collection. It appears exhaustive in its research and the author has an unabashed love of theatre. It covers a lot of ground and at times I wished that it could linger over the postmortems longer, but the subject matter is broad and better to have a few pages on *Holly Golightly* than nothing. Illuminating and full of color.

4 of 6 people found the following review helpful. AN ABSOLUTE MUST FOR BROADWAY MUSICAL LOVERS
By Julio Lopez
If you think you're a Broadway musical lover and you haven't got this encyclopedia of flops, don't call yourself a musical fan. It's absolutely essential to read it, and more than once. The book is accurate and full of engrossing details; it's rich in photographs of shows, playbills and interpreters; it's written in a very simple way which makes it entertaining and fast reading. However, humor (quite black, sometimes) is its most conspicuous characteristic. As I often read in subways and buses, I've sometimes felt quite embarrassed because I burst out laughing so loud. Somehow you may feel sorry for all those creators who thought they were coming out with a work of art but became the greatest turkeys of all times instead. Some other times you'll feel sad to know that some real good musicals with wonderful scores such as *RAGS*, *CARMELINA* or *THE BAKER'S WIFE* couldn't make it in the Big Apple. For sure, you'll get double pleasure if you have ever listened to some of the musicals cited in the book, although many of them did not even reach the recording stage. No doubt about it: it's a fascinating, hilarious and amazing chronicle on musical disasters that you can't miss and that you'll read thoroughly in one single day: you simply can't put it down.

Not Since Carrie is Ken Mandelbaum's brilliant survey of Broadway's biggest flops. This highly readable and entertaining book highlights almost 200 musicals created between 1950 and 1990, framed around the notorious musical adaptation of *Carrie*, and examines the reasons for their failure. "Essential and hilarious," raves *The New Yorker*, and *The New York Times* calls the book "A must-read."

From *Library Journal* While ample material on hit Broadway musicals is readily available, detailed critical information on musical flops has been difficult to come by. Mandelbaum's ("A Chorus Line" and the Musical of Michael Bennett, *LJ* 6/15/89) informative and entertaining survey of almost 200 musical flops from 1950 to 1990 fills the void admirably. Framed by the 1988 megaflop *Carrie*, which theater buffs still speak of in hushed tones, the shows are presented thematically rather than chronologically, thus better underscoring the reasons for failure. While Mandelbaum can be scathing about mediocre material, he carefully analyzes each show, pointing out both problems and strengths, and demonstrates a keen insight into Broadway musical history. Brief synopses and fascinating backstage gossip combine with intelligent criticism and well-chosen illustrations to make this study a required addition to all theater collections. Highly recommended. - Eric W. Johnson, Teikyo Post Univ. Lib., Waterbury, Ct. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Highly readable...strong opinions backed up by solid judgment. Mr. Mandelbaum has seen nearly everything and is not easily taken in....Justified affection for worthy scenes, wisely tempered by shrewd analysis...Mr. Mandelbaum has a very good ear that leads him to champion scores that have had smaller cult followings...As befits the subject, *Not Since Carrie* is full of entertaining backstage reportage...The illustrations are also fun and wittily chosen, whether embarrassing production photos or sadly hopeful posters and advertising."--Frank Rich, *The New York Times/WQXR* "A must-read."--Alex Witchel, *The New York Times* "Best theater book of 1991...breathtaking research and pointed, but not cruel, wit."--David Patrick Stearns, *USA Today* "Of all the theater books I've come across lately, none has entertained me more than Ken Mandelbaum's *Not Since Carrie*, a lively, illustrated account of forty years of Broadway musical flops."--Doug Watt, *New York Daily News* "An enormously amusing read...I cannot recall enjoying a theatre book as much as *Not Since Carrie* in a long time."--Hap Erstein, *The Washington Times* "The book we have all been waiting for. Not only does [Mandelbaum] identify more than two hundred flops by name, he analyzes each and every one of them at some length and misses very little in the way of backstage intrigue. Mandelbaum's chapter "Don't Let This Happen to You" could double as a primer for people

who write musicals or aspire to write them. Fascinating book, this-- most definitely not a flop. It practically reads itself. And just chockful of stuff that's hard to find elsewhere."--Nels Nelson, Philadelphia Daily News"Essential and hilarious."--The New Yorker