

My Fair Lady Encyclopedia Article

My Fair Lady by George Cukor

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My Fair Lady

My Fair Lady, written by Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe was one of the most popular musical play of the 1950s. Its initial New York run, which began on March 15, 1956, lasted six and a half years for a total of 2,717 performances. The story of phonetician Henry Higgins, who transforms the Cockney flower girl Eliza Doolittle into a society lady through teaching her correct speech, was based on the George Bernard Shaw play *Pygmalion* and included such musical numbers as "I Could Have Danced All Night," "On the Street Where You Live," "The Rain in Spain," and "Get Me to the Church on Time."

British actors Rex Harrison and Julie Andrews created the roles of Higgins and Doolittle, Andrews in her American debut. The musical won Tony Awards for best musical, actor (Harrison), and director (Moss Hart). The 1964 film version starred Rex Harrison and Audrey Hepburn, whose vocals were dubbed by Marni Nixon. The film won Academy Awards for best picture, actor (Harrison), score, and costume design.

Further Reading:

Block, Geoffrey. *Enchanted Evenings: The Broadway Musical from Show Boat to Sondheim*. New York and Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997.

Harrison, Rex. *Rex: An Autobiography*. New York, William Morrow, 1974.

Lerner, Alan J. *The Street Where I Live*. New York, W. W. Norton, 1970.