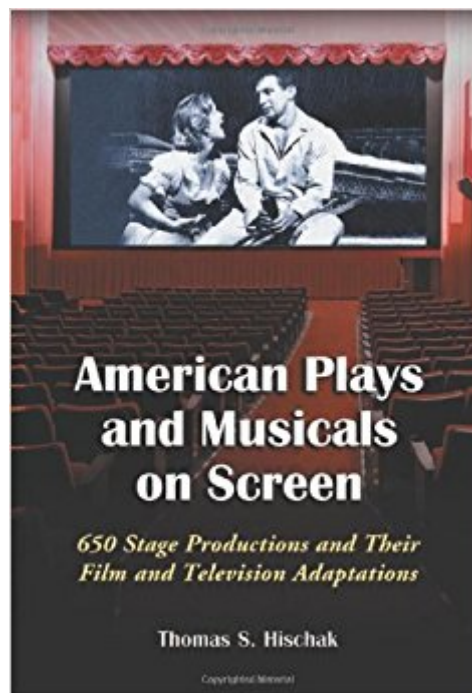




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American Plays And Musicals On Screen: 650 Stage Productions And Their Film And Television Adaptations



Synopsis

As the popularity of film grew and audiences demanded longer stories, Hollywood began borrowing plots as well as actors and directors from Broadway - some of these play-to-films were triumphs and others were inexplicable duds. This reference work is an annotated guide to American stage productions remade for film and television, with works ranging from late 19th-century American plays and musicals, through silent and sound films, to made-for-video productions by PBS, A&E, HBO, and others. Each alphabetically listed entry provides complete credits for the play or musical: date, theatre, playwright, cast (with characters) and crew, length of run, along with choreographer, song titles, and authors of the score where available. The screen versions follow, listing alternate titles, date, studio, screenwriter, cast (with characters), director, and producer. Each entry concludes with detailed commentary on the productions; it describes what changes occurred between the formats, determines the strengths and weaknesses of each, judges the success of the transition, and describes how the end product was received. A bibliography and name and title indexes complete this cross-referenced work.

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Customer Reviews

Hischak has compiled information on 650 plays and musicals from the "pre-Civil War years to the end of the twentieth century" that have been made into films, from *East Lynne*, the 1863 melodrama that spawned several film versions from 1916 to 1982, to the 2002 movie *Chicago*, the latest adaptation of a comedy first staged in 1926. He tried to be comprehensive but notes in his preface

that it is not possible to list every play that has been made into a movie or television production. The plays represented here are American, though foreign films made from these plays are noted. Each play has an entry that begins with its original New York production date and theater. There is a brief cast list, with the names of the producer, director, and playwright. Each movie developed from the play is listed with production date and studio, major actors, director, producer, and screenwriter. This information is followed by a critique of the play and subsequent movie or television productions. Each critique provides a bit of the plot but not a full synopsis because that is not the purpose of this work. Rather, the critique is meant to discuss whether or not the play transitioned well into film or television. Hirschak says in the preface that each critique is meant to be a "consensus of opinions" rather than his own personal opinion. Entries are listed alphabetically by title. Each takes up less than a page, with about three entries per page. Cross-references help steer the reader when the movie titles and play titles vary. For example, the cross-reference to the movie title *About Last Night* refers to the play title *Sexual Perversity in Chicago*. The volume contains a bibliography as well as a very detailed name index and title index. This would be a worthy addition to the performing arts collection in an academic or large public library. Jennifer Dawson

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"Detailed...a worthy addition." --Booklist
"A welcome compilation of plays...rare foray...recommended." --Choice
"Very readable...a definite tool for both theater and screen media historians...a delight to read." --American Reference Books Annual

--This text refers to the Paperback edition.

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