

Richard Fawkes

The History of the Musical

Read by **Kim Criswell**

The musical is one of the great art forms of the 20th century. *Showboat*, *Anything Goes*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Oklahoma!*, *West Side Story*, *The Sound of Music*, *Oliver*, *Cabaret* – one masterpiece after another packed the theatres on Broadway, in London's West End and around the world. And it made a successful transfer to the cinema. A truly popular art, the musical closely reflected society and its needs – sometimes providing a message and often providing a much-needed romantic escape.

Richard Fawkes traces the development of the musical, from its origins in European light opera and operetta to its transformation in the hands of the great American song composers and lyricists – among them Jerome Kern, Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Rodgers and Hammerstein, Lerner and Loewe. The talent of Lloyd Webber and Sondheim has assured that in the 21st century, it is as lively as ever.

The History of The Musical is presented by the vivacious singer Kim Criswell, who starred in *Cats*, sang on Broadway, won awards for her recordings and has lived and breathed the musical since she was a young girl.

It is an enthralling story – and it is told with nearly 100 famous musical extracts.



Kim Criswell is one of the most exciting performers of our time. She has appeared extensively in musicals on Broadway, Los Angeles and London's West End. She won a Helen Hayes Award for *Side by Side* by Sondheim and an Olivier nomination for *Annie Get Your Gun*. She has made over 25 recordings including *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Wonderful Town* (with Simon Rattle), *The Lorelei*, *Anything Goes*, *On the Town*, *The Slow Drag* and her TER solo album *Back to Before*. Her recital duo with Wayne Marshall is internationally acclaimed through performances throughout Europe including La Scala, Milan.

"An enjoyable stroll down Broadway and 'the West End' of London, this audiobook traces the development of musical theatre. Strong, clear narration from Kim Criswell and well-selected excerpts from the various shows enhance the overall impact. This all-round quality production will have you humming for days."

AUDIOFILE

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4
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