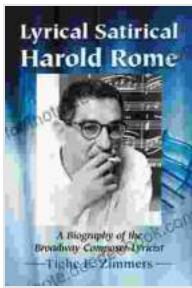


Broadway Composer and Lyricist: A Detailed Biography

Broadway composer and lyricist Stephen Sondheim is one of the most celebrated figures in American musical theater. His work has won him numerous awards, including eight Tony Awards, a Pulitzer Prize, and an Academy Award. Sondheim's musicals are known for their sophisticated lyrics, complex harmonies, and innovative storytelling.



Lyrical Satirical Harold Rome: A Biography of the Broadway Composer-Lyricist by Tighe E. Zimmers

★★★★☆ 4.1 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 32597 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 272 pages



Early Life and Education

Stephen Joshua Sondheim was born on March 22, 1930, in New York City. His father, Herbert Sondheim, was a dress manufacturer, and his mother, Janet Fox, was a painter. Sondheim showed an early interest in music, and he began taking piano lessons at the age of seven. He also sang in the choir at his synagogue.

In 1946, Sondheim entered Williams College, where he studied music and English. He also wrote for the college newspaper and the literary magazine. While at Williams, Sondheim met Oscar Hammerstein II, who became his mentor and friend. Hammerstein encouraged Sondheim to pursue a career in musical theater.

Early Career

After graduating from Williams College in 1950, Sondheim moved to New York City. He worked as a rehearsal pianist for the Broadway musical *South Pacific* and as a vocal coach for the Metropolitan Opera. In 1953, Sondheim wrote his first musical, *Saturday Night*, with lyrics by Julius Epstein. The musical was not a success, but it did catch the attention of Leonard Bernstein, who invited Sondheim to collaborate on the Broadway musical *West Side Story*.

West Side Story was a huge success, and it established Sondheim as a major talent in musical theater. Sondheim went on to write a number of other successful musicals, including *Gypsy* (1959), *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (1962), and *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (1979).

Later Career

In the 1980s and 1990s, Sondheim continued to write musicals, including *Sunday in the Park with George* (1984), *Into the Woods* (1987), and *Passion* (1994). He also wrote songs for the films *Dick Tracy* (1990) and *Reds* (1981).

In 2008, Sondheim was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom. He is the only living composer to have received this honor.

Legacy

Stephen Sondheim is one of the most important figures in American musical theater. His work has had a profound impact on the genre, and he has inspired generations of composers and lyricists. Sondheim's musicals are known for their sophisticated lyrics, complex harmonies, and innovative storytelling. They are also known for their humor, wit, and insight into the human condition.

Sondheim's work will continue to be performed and enjoyed for many years to come. He is a true master of musical theater, and his legacy will live on long after he is gone.

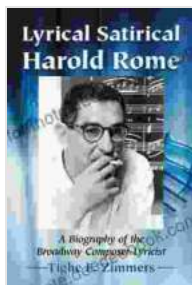
Selected Works

- *Saturday Night* (1954)
- *West Side Story* (1957)
- *Gypsy* (1959)
- *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (1962)
- *Company* (1970)
- *Follies* (1971)
- *A Little Night Music* (1973)
- *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (1979)
- *Merrily We Roll Along* (1981)
- *Sunday in the Park with George* (1984)
- *Into the Woods* (1987)

- *Assassins* (1990)
- *Passion* (1994)
- *Move On* (2007)

Awards and Honors

- 8 Tony Awards
- Pulitzer Prize for Drama
- Academy Award for Best Original Song
- Presidential Medal of Freedom

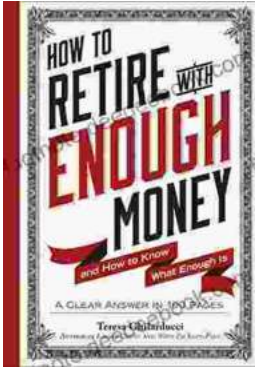


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