



## New York's Yiddish Theater: From the Bowery to Broadway

By Edna Nahshon, Museum of the City of New York

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**New York's Yiddish Theater: From the Bowery to Broadway** By Edna Nahshon, Museum of the City of New York

In the early decades of the twentieth century, a vibrant theatrical culture took shape on New York City's Lower East Side. Original dramas, comedies, musicals, and vaudeville, along with sophisticated productions of Shakespeare, Ibsen, and Chekhov, were innovatively staged for crowds that rivaled the scene on Broadway. While these productions were in Yiddish and catered to Eastern European Jewish audiences (the largest immigrant group in the city at the time), their artistic and aesthetic creations and their play with politics and history came to influence all facets of the American stage. Vividly illustrated and with contributions from leading historians and critics, this history recounts in absorbing detail the heyday of "Yiddish Broadway" and its vital contribution to American Jewish life and its crossover to American culture. Performances grappled with Jewish nationalism, labor relations, women's rights, religious observance, acculturation, and assimilation. They reflected a range of genres, from tear-jerkers to experimental theater, and introduced American audiences to avant-garde dramatic technique. The artists who came of age in this environment include Stella Adler, Eddie Cantor, Jerry Lewis, Sophie Tucker, Mel Brooks, and Joan Rivers. The story of the Yiddish theater is therefore a tale of creativity and legacy, immigrants who in the process of becoming Americans had an enormous impact on the country's cultural and artistic landscape. From the Bowery to Broadway is a companion to an exhibition at the Museum of the City of New York scheduled for February 2016.

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- Rank: #1745649 in eBooks
- Published on: 2016-02-02
- Released on: 2016-02-02
- Format: Kindle eBook

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

A witty and absorbing demonstration of the interplay of minority and mainstream?with the minority culture here being of outsize influence over the larger culture of Broadway, Hollywood, and America. (*Kirkus Reviews*)

The many photos of famous actors and comics, old posters, packed theaters, and stage scenes balance out the richly sourced text, making this a visually lively, comprehensive, and accessible addition to any collection on theater or Jewish American history and heritage. (*Booklist*)

A comprehensive... readable and lavishly illustrated history of the Yiddish Theater.... This essential book is an important addition to library collections focusing on theater, pop culture, and Jewish studies. (*Library Journal (starred review)*)

A tribute in scholarly scrapbook form to a dramatic phenomenon that acculturated immigrant Jews and left a legacy often defined as New York humor. (Sam Roberts *The New York Times*)

[A] scholarly scrapbook full of vivid illustrations that buttress essays from leading critics and historians. (*Haaretz*)

A richly-illustrated approachable work about the Lower East Side's entertainment legacy. (*Southern Jewish Life*)

[A] marvelous book. (Norman J. Fedder *Jewish Book Council*)

A comprehensive guide.... the book is as entertaining as New York's once-thriving Yiddish theater. (Robert A. Cohn *St. Louis Jewish Light*)

Anyone interested in Yiddish New York will want to read *New York's Yiddish Theater*. Theater buffs will be delighted to learn the connections between Yiddish theater and the American stage. The book is also highly recommended for anyone interested in American Jewish history. (Rabbi Rachel Esserman *The Reporter*)

*New York's Yiddish Theater* serves as an excellent history through images, together with illuminating essays. . . . This welcome publication also fills a long-felt need for an illustrated history of an important chapter in the city's musical life. (Michael Ochs *Notes: the Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association*)

Prodigiously illustrated. . . . This indispensable book is a fun read, easy to browse through, get lost in. It is no dry academic treatise, but a generous yet scholarly account of a now-vanished era of popular Yiddish culture. Highly recommended. (Richard C. Norton *Operetta Research Center*)

#### About the Author

Edna Nahshon is professor of theater and drama at the Jewish Theological Seminary and senior associate at Oxford University's Center for Hebrew and Jewish Studies. She is the author of *Jews and Theater in an Intercultural Context* and *Jewish Theatre: A Global View*, and the editor of *From the Ghetto to the Melting*

*Pot: Israel Zangwill's Jewish Plays.*

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#### **Dawn Hicks:**

As people who live in typically the modest era should be update about what going on or details even knowledge to make these individuals keep up with the era which can be always change and progress. Some of you maybe will certainly update themselves by looking at books. It is a good choice for you but the problems coming to anyone is you don't know what one you should start with. This New York's Yiddish Theater: From the Bowery to Broadway is our recommendation so you keep up with the world. Why, because this book serves what you want and want in this era.

#### **Royce Britton:**

The e-book untitled New York's Yiddish Theater: From the Bowery to Broadway is the guide that recommended to you to learn. You can see the quality of the guide content that will be shown to you actually. The language that author use to explained their way of doing something is easily to understand. The article writer was did a lot of exploration when write the book, so the information that they share for your requirements is absolutely accurate. You also will get the e-book of New York's Yiddish Theater: From the Bowery to Broadway from the publisher to make you a lot more enjoy free time.

#### **Melissa Fanning:**

New York's Yiddish Theater: From the Bowery to Broadway can be one of your basic books that are good idea. Many of us recommend that straight away because this book has good vocabulary that may increase your knowledge in vocabulary, easy to understand, bit entertaining but nonetheless delivering the information. The article writer giving his/her effort to set every word into satisfaction arrangement in writing New York's Yiddish Theater: From the Bowery to Broadway although doesn't forget the main place, giving the reader the hottest as well as based confirm resource details that maybe you can be certainly one of it. This great information can certainly drawn you into brand new stage of crucial thinking.

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