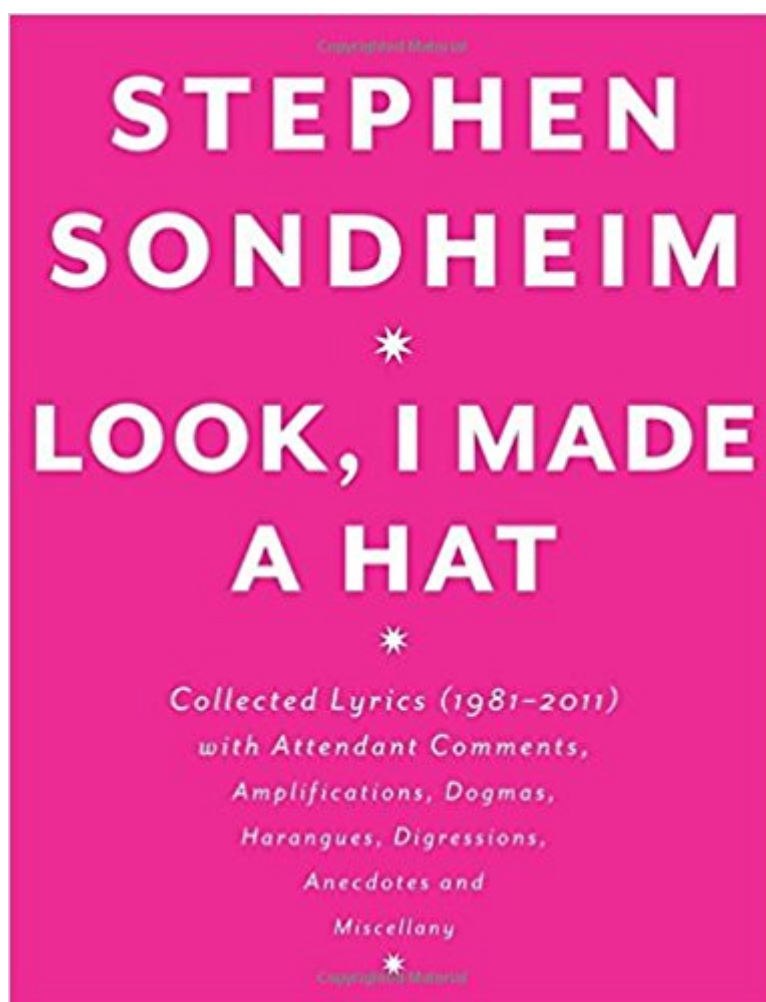


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Look, I Made A Hat: Collected Lyrics (1981-2011) With Attendant Comments, Amplifications, Dogmas, Harangues, Digressions, Anecdotes And Miscellany





Synopsis

After his acclaimed and best-selling *Finishing the Hat* (named one of the New York Times 10 Best Books of 2010), Stephen Sondheim returns with the second volume of his collected lyrics, *Look, I Made a Hat*, giving us another remarkable glimpse into the brilliant mind of this living legend, and his life—his work. Picking up where he left off in *Finishing the Hat*, Sondheim gives us all the lyrics, along with excluded songs and early drafts, of the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Sunday in the Park with George*, *Into the Woods*, *Assassins* and *Passion*. Here, too, is an in-depth look at the evolution of *Wise Guys*, which subsequently was transformed into *Bounce* and eventually became *Road Show*. Sondheim takes us through his contributions to both television and film, some of which may surprise you, and covers plenty of never-before-seen material from unproduced projects as well. There are abundant anecdotes about his many collaborations, and readers are treated to rare personal material in this volume, as Sondheim includes songs culled from commissions, parodies and personal special occasions over the years—such as a hilarious song for Leonard Bernstein's seventieth birthday. As he did in the previous volume, Sondheim richly annotates his lyrics with invaluable advice on songwriting, discussions of theater history and the state of the industry today, and exacting dissections of his work, both the successes and the failures. Filled with even more behind-the-scenes photographs and illustrations from Sondheim's original manuscripts, *Look, I Made a Hat* is fascinating, devourable and essential reading for any fan of the theater or this great man's work.

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Customer Reviews

“Sondheim is a national treasure, a giant in the world of musical theater who changed the structure and sound of the form in 20th-century masterpieces. Speaking of heaven, though, here’s Look, I Made a Hat, the second part of Sondheim’s two-volume collection of lyrics, this one spanning 1981-2011, with additional bits and pieces. Talmudically thorough and devilishly diverting with what the author refers to as attendant comments, amplifications, dogmas, harangues, digressions, anecdotes, and miscellany, the book is divine. It’s also even more magnanimously authoritative than the first book. The handsomely designed book, like the first volume, contains illuminating reproductions of pages from the author’s beloved legal pads on which he works out rhyme schemes, as well as annotated scripts and pages of musical notations. And the second volume is brimming with a word Sondheim would probably dismiss as infelicitous – with precise, vigorous, instructive, sharp-tongued, and often very funny comments. Look, I Made a Hat, together with Finishing the Hat, makes an enormously satisfying journal by one of the great theatrical minds of our time, a guide and touchstone for who knows how many future great theatrical minds. A Lisa Schwarzbaum, Entertainment Weekly

“While the book technically covers Mr. Sondheim’s output from 1981 to the present, aficionados will delight in all the bits and bobs from early in his career that Mr. Sondheim didn’t make room for in the first volume . . . The extensive miscellany also includes a drawerful of lyrics Mr. Sondheim wrote as birthday gifts for friends like Harold Prince, Mary Rodgers and Leonard Bernstein. One of the choicest pleasures of the first volume was in Mr. Sondheim’s sharp-minded analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of musical theater lyricists from the past. He’s covered most of that territory already, so the new book features essays on Awards and Their Uselessness and Critics and Their Uses – a savory reading. Charles Isherwood, New York Times

Stephen Sondheim has written award-winning music and lyrics for theater, film and television. He is also the coauthor of the film *The Last of Sheila* and the play *Getting Away with Murder*. Sondheim is on the council of the Dramatists Guild of America, having served as its president from 1973 to 1981. He lives in New York City.

If you agree with Tom Lehrer that Stephen Sondheim is the best lyricist of the 20th Century (I do but I would remove the temporal limitation), then these two books are an absolute must. It’s very

interesting to see how Sondheim's lyrics have grown in sophistication from the days of *West Side Story* to his later works, such as *A Little Night Music*. The man is a genius, and these two volumes attest to it.

If you want in-depth insight into Sondheim's writing process, you need this book. If you enjoy Sondheim's shows, you need this book. If you enjoy musical theater and want to know more about it, you need this book. Buy this book. Sondheim details the writing process for his later shows and it is a thrill to read. There are not only pictures of him and the cast, but of his own manuscripts! If only every great artist would put together a book describing their process. But they don't, so take the wonderful opportunity here to learn!

The ultimate master class in lyric-writing, from the best musical theatre writer of all time. Not only do you get the full librettos for each of Sondheim's brilliant shows, along with revisions, alternate/cut numbers, etc., but brilliant asides by the man himself, including personal observations, recollections and annotations to the lyrics make this set absolutely indispensable for any lover of musical theatre or potential lyricists out there. Not to be missed.

A real treat for those who enjoy Sondheim's lyrics. A look into the creative process embellished with entertaining show biz stories. The large format of the book provides space for reproductions of the composer/lyricist's notebook pages with corrections and alternative lyrics. Production and rehearsal photos abound, as well as programs.

I love these two books. They are very thorough and helpful to the writer of music. There's an abundance of examples on tremendous songs and the evaluation of these songs is priceless. I encourage all writers of music to read these two books. This truly explains the art of writing music.

One of the best books for musical theatre lovers. This book will enhance your experience and appreciation for theatre. After seeing Stephen Sondheim's shows many times, this book will give a whole new perspective and more insight into the process.

Fascinating look at Sondheim's lyrics and his philosophy about theater and lyric writing -- who his big influences were, etc. If you are a Sondheim fan, or like or write musicals, you'll probably find it very interesting. I think it's relatively difficult to get these two books in a slip jacket -- Vol 1 and Vol 2

did not come out at the same time -- so I'm glad I bought this particular product, with the slipcase.

This book was exactly what I was looking for. It provides fantastic insights on Stephen Sondheim's works on all his musicals/collaborations. The reason I only gave it 4 stars is because I wish the book provided more information about his musical thought process, i.e. how he approaches different keys, chord progressions, if he prefers writing lyrics first vs. music first, if he struggled to marriage the two together, how involved the writers (such as James Lapine) were in the song-writing process, etc. I will still be going back to purchase the other volume.

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