



Musical Worlds of Lerner and Loewe

Gene Lees



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Lyricist Alan Jay Lerner (1918–86) and composer Frederick Loewe (1901–88) wrote some of the most successful musical shows on Broadway and in motion-picture history: *Brigadoon, My Fair Lady, Camelot, Gigi,* and *Paint Your Wagon.* They worked with stars such as Rex Harrison, Julie Andrews, Richard Burton, Audrey Hepburn, Louis Jourdan, and Robert Goulet.

Lerner was raised on Park Avenue, attended Choate and Harvard, lost sight in one eye from a boxing injury, and was legendary for his eight marriages and countless affairs on the side. Loewe was born in Berlin and in 1925 came to New York, where he played piano in silent-movie theaters. After a brief career as a boxer and then as a Montana cowboy, he returned to New York and to songwriting.

In *The Musical Worlds of Lerner and Loewe*, Gene Lees has fashioned a readable, in-depth portrait of two creative talents: how they met and joined forces to create some of the finest musical theater, and also how marriages, legendary affairs, addictions, and backstage friction affected their art in many surprising ways. (09/15/2005)

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