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Some Enchanted Evenings: The Glittering Life And Times Of Mary Martin



Synopsis

Mary Martin was one of the greatest stars of her day. Growing up in Texas, she was married early to Benjamin Hagman and gave birth to her first child, Larry Hagman. She was divorced even more quickly. Martin left little Larry with her parents and took off for Hollywood. She didn't make a dent in the movie industry and was lured to New York where she found herself auditioning for Cole Porter and his new show "Leave It to Me!". After she sang the bawdy "My Heart Belongs to Daddy", she ended up on the cover of Life magazine. Six years later, she became the Toast of Broadway when she starred in "South Pacific". After that, she flew as "Peter Pan", yodeled in "The Sound of Music", took "Hello, Dolly!" on the road and shared a four-poster with Robert Preston in "I Do! I Do!". Her personal life was just as interesting: In NYC, she met and married Richard Halliday, a closeted upper-class homosexual who adored her, Broadway and interior decorating (though probably not in that order). They were a powerful twosome. There were rumors about Martin, too, being in a lesbian relationship with both Janet Gaynor and Jean Arthur. Peopled with legends like Ethel Merman, Ezio Pinza, Noel Coward and a starry cast of thousands, David Kaufman's "Some Enchanted Evenings" is the delectable story of the one and only Mary Martin, a woman who described herself as a chicken farmer from Texas only to become Peter Pan and capture America's heart.

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Customer Reviews

"Kaufman comes up with a solid, valuable portrait of one of the 20th century's most memorable actresses." - Washington Post "Reveals a much more complex

and even baffling figure than Martin herself gave us in her memoir. A lively story, filled with amusing details. *Wall Street Journal* "Probing, compassionate, revelatory." *USA Today* "Kaufman's treatment of Martin is evenhanded as she exposes her weaknesses and strengths to shed important new light on one of American musical theater's most revered stars." *Booklist* "Warm and well-researched." The author deftly summarizes her career and personal history. *Kirkus Reviews* "Glittering is the operative word. Martin was a thoroughly captivating performer for her entire lengthy career and Kaufman's work does right by her." *Library Journal* "Arguably the most exhaustively researched treatise ever compiled regarding Broadway and Hollywood legend Mary Martin." Insights into the changing nature of Broadway over the course of Martin's lengthy career make this an intriguing read. *Publisher's Weekly*

DAVID KAUFMAN is the bestselling author of *Doris Day: The Untold Story of the Girl Next Door* as well as a long-time theater critic and contributor to *The New York Times*, *The Nation*, and *Vanity Fair*. He lives in New York City.

The Hallidays — both of them — were really very unpleasant people; at least that is the way Kaufman portrays them. Seems like everyone on Broadway or in Hollywood is gay, especially the women. The book has been badly edited with many typos and repeated information. But reading about all the shows and backstage goings-on are a lot of fun.

loved mary matins story

Expertly detailed yet you only learn what Mary Martin did without learning who she really was.

A fascinating, jaw dropping story about a great lady of the THEATER!!

Wonderful, correct information.

Mary Martin was the grand dame of the American musical theatre. She originated the famous roles of Ensign Nellie Forbush in Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein's musical, "South Pacific," on

Broadway. She made her debut with the song, "My Heart Belongs to Daddy," in the Cole Porter musical, "Leave It To Me!," on Broadway. She became a Broadway darling overnight. She was a contract player in Hollywood to somewhat disappointment and returned to New York City. The book chronicles her early life in Texas as the daughter of a lawyer, Preston, and stage mother/music teacher Juanita. She was more of tomboy and enjoyed playing around with boys. She could sing and dance but acting was a challenge. She started a dance school and went to Hollywood and later to New York City. Mary Martin might be better known as the mother of Larry Hagman (J.R. Ewing's Dallas) but she was far better known as a Broadway darling of the musical. She was young and naive when she married and became a mother to Larry. Her own mother took over Larry's upbringing to his twelfth year. Larry understood that his parents were young at the time of his birth. Mary Martin became a household name for her performances on Broadway than her film career. Perhaps, it was destiny and she preferred the stage to screen anyway. She has played Annie Oakley in "Annie Get Your Gun;" Maria Von Trapp in "The Sound of Music;" the title role in "Peter Pan;" Ensign Nellie Forbush in "South Pacific;" and more. Whenever Mary played a role, it became solely hers. She enchanted and entertained the crowds with sheer delight, love, passion, and joy. Her personal life is as colorful as her professional life. Her close friendship with Janet Gaynor, a Hollywood actress, raised eyebrows and rumors about their relationship. Her marriage to Richard Halliday produced a daughter Heller but was turbulent and troubled. Mary Martin was awarded the Kennedy Center Honors for her lifetime achievement to the performing arts. The highest honor bestowed upon performers and artists in America by the President. If you enjoy reading about American theatre history especially musicals, you should read this splendid and well-researched autobiography about Mary Martin, the simple Texas girl, who won the hearts on Broadway in New York City and the world. I recently listened to the audio recording of her "Annie Get Your Gun," where she was flawless, delightful, and enchanting all the way through.

I remember seeing Mary Martin in the annual TV broadcast of "Peter Pan" when I was a child. Years later, I saw her in person in "I Do, I Do" on Broadway. And, of course, I have listened to the original Broadway cast recordings of "South Pacific" and "The Sound of Music" many times. So I was interested in learning more about this performer. Author Kaufman covers her long career starting with her Broadway debut in "Leave It to Me," in which she introduced the song "My Heart Belongs to Daddy." He traces her non-spectacular stint in

Hollywood musicals during the late 30s and 40s, several well-received television specials in the 1950s, and her later Broadway successes (ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“*The Sound of Music*ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“) and failures (ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“*Jennie*ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“). The first couple of chapters deal with MartinÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã â„¢s life in Texas before she entered show business, and are covered with just enough detail to set the stage for the meat of the book, which is MartinÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã â„¢s stage career. I especially enjoyed reading about her lesser-known Broadway shows, such as *ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“One Touch of Venus*ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“ and *ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“Lute Song*.ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“ Though she didnÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã â„¢t originate the roles, she appeared in two other hits, *ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“Annie Get Your Gun*ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“ and *ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“Hello, Dolly!*ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“ Along with Ethel Merman, Mary Martin was one of the biggest stars of Broadway for decades. The section on her TV career was particularly informative. I knew about *ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“Peter Pan*,ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“ which she originally performed on Broadway. But she also did a 90-minute special with Noel Coward (ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“*Together With Music*ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“), sang a medley of Broadway standards with Ethel Merman (ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“*The Ford 50th Anniversary Show*ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“), and hosted *ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“* along with Groucho Marx, Jack Benny, Ed Sullivan, and Edgar Bergen *ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“* broadcast on all four TV networks of the time, Dumont, CBS, NBC and ABC. Overall, *ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“Some Enchanting Evenings*ÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã Å“ provides an enjoyable journey through MartinÃƒÂ¢Ã ¬Ã â„¢s extensive career as well as a behind-the-scenes look into mid-20th century Broadway. The book has an acknowledgements section and a bibliography but, unfortunately, there is no index. This made it difficult to locate a particular reference quickly.

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