

CHECK OUT THE BEST THEATER BOOKS OF THE MONTH FOR APRIL 2022

MICHAEL GILTZ | APRIL 19, 2022

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Broadway Direct spotlights the best theater books of the month, just for you.

Offstage Observations: Inside Tales of the Not-So-Legitimate Theatre

By Steven Suskin, forward by Ted Chapin
\$32.95, Applause Books

Playing With Myself

By Randy Rainbow
\$28.99, St. Martin's Press

Everybody's a critic. But of course, a critic is *really* a critic, and here are two of the best.

Steve Suskin is a critic and founding editor of *New York Stage Review*. That's on top of chronicling Broadway in numerous books about theater history, including *Opening Night on Broadway* and *Second Act Trouble*. This memoir captures everything that came before, from the first time a teenage Suskin found himself on a Broadway stage lit only by a ghost light, to his trial-by-fire working for producer David Merrick, on to his own success producing shows such as the perennial *Forever Plaid*. It's a coming-of-age for a theater geek all lovers of Broadway can identify with — even if most of us never actually ended up appearing in an actual Broadway musical.

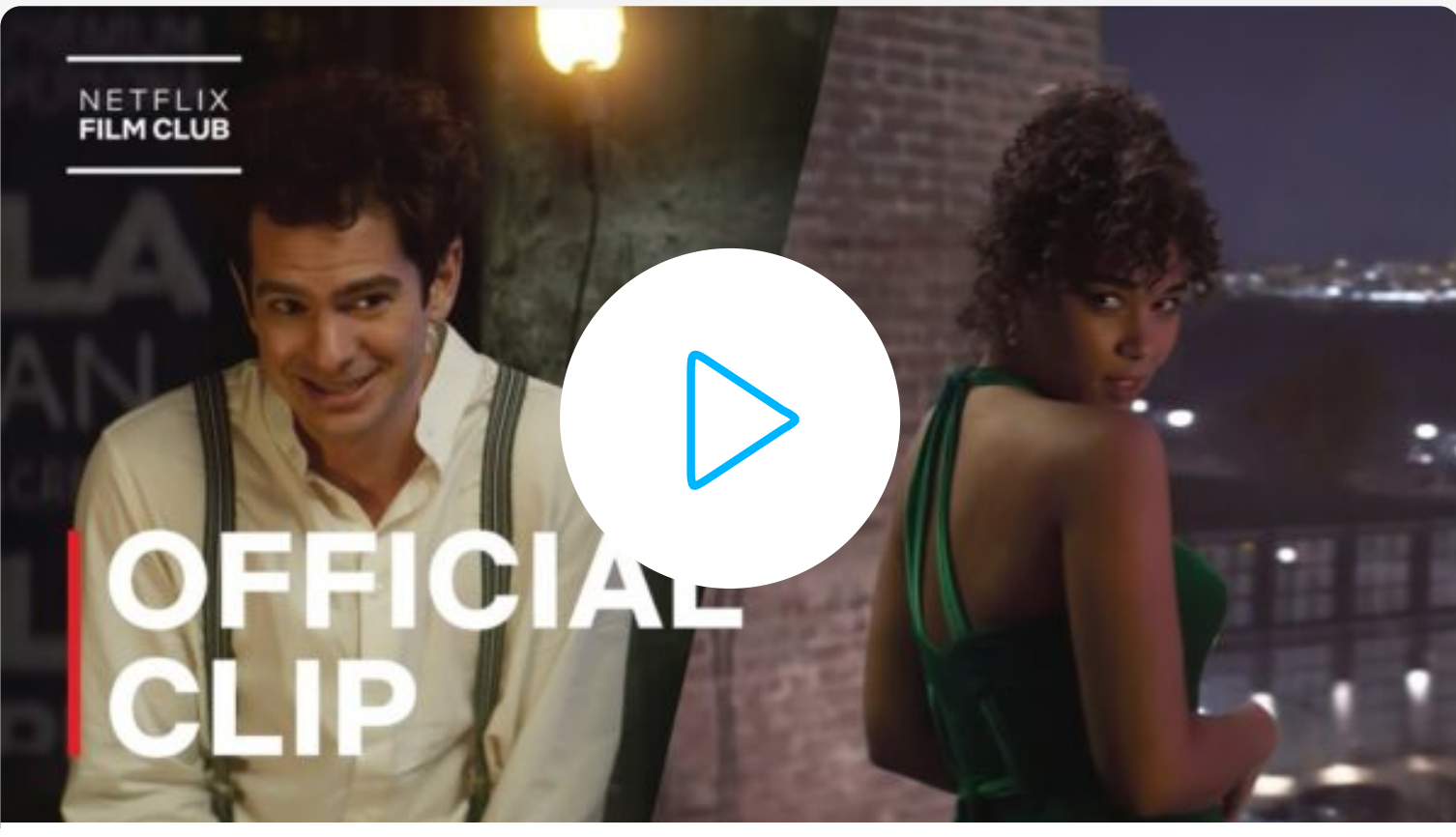
Randy Rainbow doesn't critique Broadway; he loves it unreservedly. But politics? Oh, that's another story! As any theater fan knows, the performer combined his love for theater with his withering critiques of D.C. into a string of hilarious online musical parodies that put the viral in video. After several successful albums, this triple threat adds memoirist to make the actor/singer/songwriter a book writer to boot. Watch out, Sondheim! Rainbow describes taking a purse to second-grade class, getting his first job on Broadway — at Hooters — and generally not fitting in until the whole world discovered his talent. And suddenly, Randy Rainbow fit in everywhere, but especially in the theater world. Sondheim was a fan, as is Patti LuPone and Carol Burnett (which ... duh!) — and us, too, in case you hadn't guessed.

Michael Giltz is the cohost of the weekly entertainment podcast Showbiz Sandbox. He has covered all areas of entertainment as a journalist, critic, feature writer, and analyst, contributing to numerous outlets, including the New York Daily News, New York Post, New York Magazine, the Los Angeles Times, Huffington Post, Entertainment Weekly, and The Advocate. When Michael's not attending the theater, he's reading about it.

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