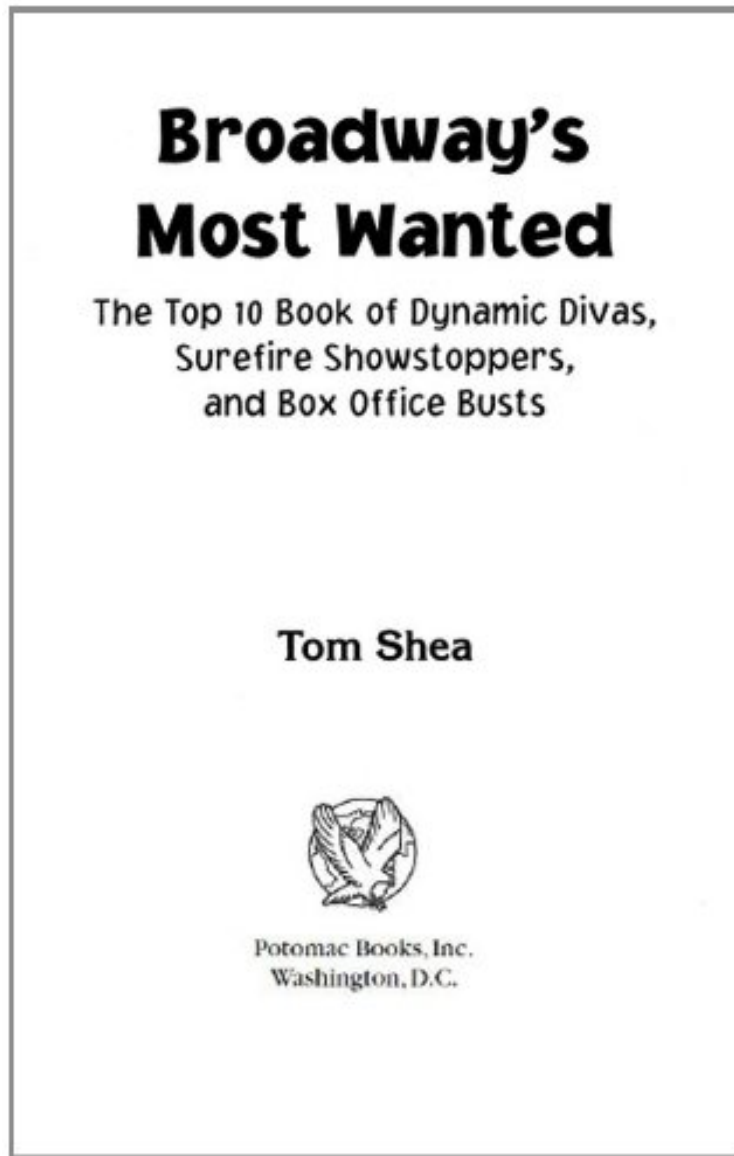


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## **Broadway's Most Wantedtrade;: The Top 10 Book of Dynamic Divas, Surefire Showstoppers, and Box-Office Busts**

*Tom Shea*

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**Tom Shea : Broadway's Most Wantedtrade;: The Top 10 Book of Dynamic Divas, Surefire Showstoppers, and Box-Office Busts** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Broadway's Most Wantedtrade;: The Top 10 Book of Dynamic Divas, Surefire Showstoppers, and Box-Office Busts:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fun little bookBy Russell J. SandersBroadwaysquo;s Most Wanted,

by Tom Shea, is part of a series of "books on various subjects. This one, as the title implies, is a book of lists of Broadway musicals. The lists are varied, covering such far-ranging topics as shows based on Shakespeare to shows with small casts to shows parodied on television. It is a fun book of trivia, and because of its format, one could keep it nearby and just read a few lists when the desire hit, rather than reading the book from cover to cover. Being a Broadway buff and somewhat of a musical theater trivia expert, I truly only found two errors in the book (and bear in mind that there may be others that I didn't catch.) In a minor slip, Shea says that the Dolly Parton song "I Will Always Love You" was written for the movie version of *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*. While the song was indeed used in the movie, Dolly had written many years earlier, and it had been her signature for years. The other error is more egregious. On a list of shows that are about other entertainment genres, Shea lists the musical *The Red Shoes*. Here he says it was based on the film *Ninotchka*. That musical, however, the one based on *Ninotchka*, was Cole Porter's *Silk Stockings*. The rest of the info given seems to be about *The Red Shoes*, but I couldn't trust it. It is sad that an editing error mars this book. When I see errors of this nature, I have to wonder if the rest of the book is factual. I truly believe this one is, however. While I had tons of fun reading the lists, and Shea is obviously a lover of musical theater, I did find that far too many times he used individual shows in multiple lists. I understand he was fitting shows into categories, but with well over a hundred years' worth of Broadway, I would think he could have found enough material to not have to repeat. I got tired of seeing descriptions of Mel Brooks' *The Producers*, of the show *The Golden Apple* (who even remembers that one? Well, I do, but Broadway loco) and a few others. And another drawback is that this is not a new book. It was published in 2004, so shows since then don't appear and statistics on long runs and such are out of date. That being said, for theater nuts like me, this book not only expands our knowledge, but it entertains by placing shows in categories we might not have thought to place them in.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Cute Premise, but....By Natmama  
The book was a serious disappointment. Except in the "busts" category, the author equates big ticket sales with "best." Yes, Broadway is a business, and yes, box office is important. But some big sellers have been mediocre artistically, and some flops have been important. He talks about some of the latter, it's true - but the overall feeling of the book is to show the biggest and shiniest. Also, how could anyone write such a book and not include, even once, the names Lerner and Loewe (there is one mention of *My Fair Lady*, but without naming its creators)? Many other omissions - too many to list, in fact. I found the book seriously flawed. There are lots of better books on Broadway. And if you want to read about flops, get *"Not Since Carrie"*.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Interesting but...By Catherine Goltz  
Good book of interesting facts but many errors. For example Inspector Javert is not the principal villain in *Les Miserables* though it's a common mistake people tend to make. Contains many obscure shows, including several regional productions and shows that never made it to Broadway.

It's not just a street anymore; it's a genre of its own, and it's celebrated in Tom Shea's *Broadway's Most Wanted: The Top 10 Book of Dynamic Divas, Surefire Showstoppers, and Box-Office Busts*. Part of Potomac's popular *Most Wanted* series, *Broadway's Most Wanted* sings the praises of musical theater with a dash of whimsy thrown in. Shea honors those who have made musical theater what it is today—the good, the bad, and the ugly. Oh, the ugly! When a show hits gold, the world's a wonderful place, but a bomb is just as precious and enjoyable in its own perverse way. With more than forty top-ten lists packed full of fun and facts, Shea shows you the best—and worst—that Broadway, off-Broadway, and the rest of the musical theater has to offer. So while you learn about the amazing people behind the hit *Bye Bye Birdie*, including the incomparable Chita Rivera, you'll also read about the ill-fated and laughable *Bring Back Birdie*, which quickly indicated why Broadway doesn't do sequels (especially twenty years after the original). While chuckling over how Jimmy Durante and Ethel Merman bickered over top billing for 1936's *Red, Hot, and Blue*—with the comical result of their names being written diagonally, crossing in an X—you'll also find praise for Paul Ford, Stephen Sondheim's rehearsal pianist, who helps the legendary composer bring his music to life. Musicals run the gamut of topics, and Shea waxes melodic on political, western, rock and roll, and comic-book musicals, plus so much more. They say the neon lights are bright on Broadway; Tom Shea shines just as brightly with *Broadway's Most Wanted: The Top 10 Book of Dynamic Divas, Surefire Showstoppers, and Box-Office Busts*.

About the Author Tom Shea is an accomplished singer and actor and, to his knowledge, the only person to have appeared in *The Golden Apple*; *Lady in the Dark*; *One Touch of Venus*; *Knickerbocker Holiday*; *Utopia, Ltd.*; and *The Grand Duke*. He lives in Chicago.