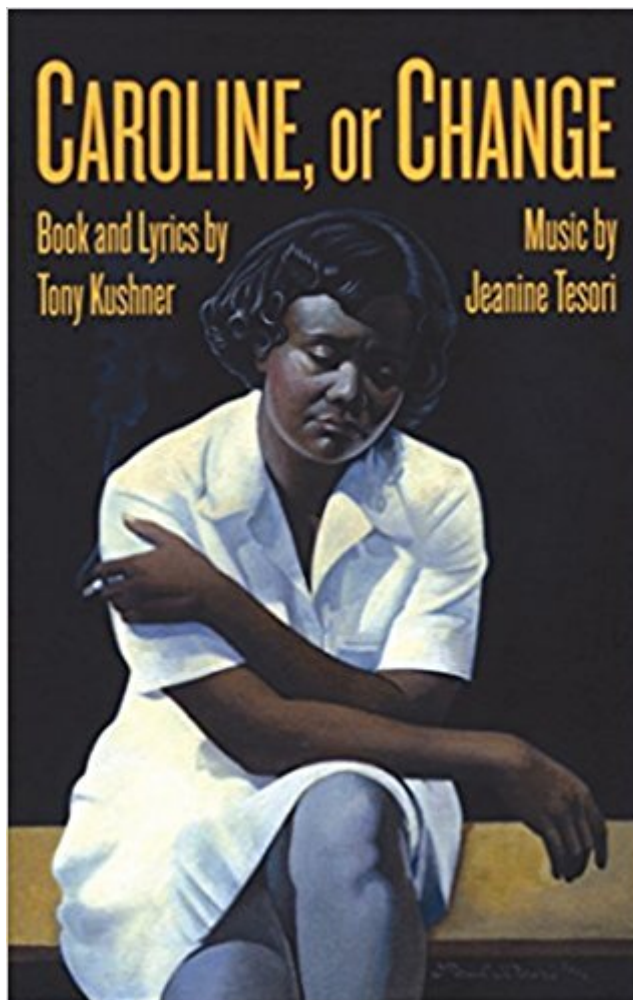




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# Caroline, Or Change



## Synopsis

Caroline is a breakthrough; a story so grounded in the ordinary details of life that it almost seems to have discovered a new genre. • Richard Zoglin, Time; Acute, smart and witty: a telling snapshot focusing with sharp clarity on characters captured at a fraught turning point in history; a culture's and a family's. • Charles Isherwood, Variety; Thrilling. You've never seen anything quite like Caroline, or Change and likely won't again anytime soon. There's never a moment that the part-pop, part-opera, part-musical-theater score Jeanine Tesori has conjured up doesn't ideally match Tony Kushner's meticulously chosen words with clarion precision. • Matthew Murray, talkinbroadway.com; A monumental achievement in American musical theater. Joyful, wholly successful, immensely moving, told with abundant wit and generosity of heart. • John Helipern, New York Observer

Louisiana, 1963: A nation reeling from the burgeoning Civil Rights Movement and the Kennedy assassination. Caroline, a black maid, and Noah, the son of the Jewish family she works for, struggle to find an identity for their friendship after Noah's stepmother, unable to give Caroline a raise, tells Caroline that she may keep the money Noah leaves in his pockets. Through their intimate story, this beautiful musical portrays the changing rhythms of a nation. Tony Kushner and composer Jeanine Tesori have created a story that addresses contemporary questions of culture, community, race and class through the lens and musical pulse of the 1960s. Tony Kushner's plays include *Angels in America*; *Hydriotaphia, or the Death of Dr. Brown*; *The Illusion*, adapted from the play by Pierre Corneille; *Slavs!*; *A Bright Room Called Day*; *Homebody/Kabul*; *Caroline, or Change*, a musical with composer Jeanine Tesori; and *The Intelligent Homosexual's Guide to Capitalism and Socialism with a Key to the Scriptures*. He wrote the screenplays for Mike Nichols's film of *Angels in America* and for Steven Spielberg's *Munich* and *Lincoln*. His books include *The Art of Maurice Sendak: 1980 to the Present*; *Brundibar*, with illustrations by Maurice Sendak; and *Wrestling with Zion: Progressive Jewish-American Responses to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, co-edited with Alisa Solomon. Among many honors, Kushner is the recipient of a Pulitzer Prize, two Tony Awards, three Obie Awards, two Evening Standard Awards, an Olivier Award, an Emmy Award, two Oscar nominations, and the Steinberg Distinguished Playwright Award. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. In 2012, he was awarded a National Medal of Arts by President Barack Obama. He lives in Manhattan with his husband, Mark Harris. Jeanine Tesori composed the scores for Tony Award-winning musicals *Thoroughly Modern Millie* and *Shrek the Musical* as well as *Violet* and *Caroline, or Change*. She is the recipient of multiple Drama Desk and Obie Awards, and her film composition credits include

Nights in Rodanthe, Winds of Change, Show Business, and Wrestling With Angels.

## Book Information

Paperback: 128 pages

Publisher: Theatre Communications Group; 1st edition (September 1, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1559362480

ISBN-13: 978-1559362481

Product Dimensions: 5.4 x 0.4 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 6 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #272,079 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #131 in Books > Arts &

Photography > Performing Arts > Theater > Broadway & Musicals #156 in Books > Arts &

Photography > Music > Musical Genres > Musicals #690 in Books > Literature & Fiction >

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## Customer Reviews

“The first great piece of musical theater of the 21st century. Both musically and lyrically, this is every bit as smart as Sondheim and every bit as emotionally compelling as Rodgers and

Hammerstein.”  
—Ed Siegel, Boston Globe  
“An extraordinary new musical. Perhaps no one short of the author of *Angels in America* could pull this off. As when the angel crashes into Prior Walter’s bedroom, you feel that mixture of terror and rapture that arrives on those rare occasions in theater and in life when you genuinely don’t know what’s going to happen next.”

—Frank Rich, New York Times  
“Manna from heaven. Caroline is, like *Angels in America*, ultimately a celebration of human fortitude, of the vast resources of love and hope that allow people of all backgrounds and belief systems to transcend hatred and despair.”

—Elysa Gardner, USA Today  
“Groundbreaking, daring, beautiful and profoundly humane.”

—Adam Feldman, Time Out New York  
“Beautiful. A landmark, certainly one of the most significant musicals to reach the New York stage in recent years. It’s almost unheard of nowadays for musicals to get to the emotional core of anything. In *Caroline, or Change*, Kushner and Tesori give us heart aplenty.”

—Peter Marks, Washington Post  
“A high point in my theater-going experience. Simple and profound, ravishing and revolutionary.”

—John Lahr, New Yorker  
“A shining moment in American culture...Even by Kushner’s standards, the gentle masterpiece that is *Caroline, or Change* comes as a breathtaking surprise. Kushner and Tesori may not trip off the

tongue like Rodgers and Hammerstein or Lerner and Loewe, but this team's first joint effort is the stuff of genius. Timeless, devastating; a play like no other. • Octavio Roca, Miami Herald; Caroline demands your attention and a deep emotional investment. The rewards, however, are rich. • Melissa Bernardo, Entertainment Weekly; A towering and, I believe, historic musical. There is nothing quite like Caroline, or Change in the American musical-theater canon. Tony Kushner's first musical possesses the theatricality, rich language and fascinating tangle of ideas that we have come to expect from him. • Damien Jacques, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel; Positively brilliant. • Plain Dealer; A show that really does have the power to change the cultural landscape. • Matt Wolf, Guardian; Miraculous. Let's get it over with and call Caroline, or Change a masterpiece. • Lawson Taitte, Dallas Morning News; Uncompromising and profound, Caroline, or Change may well prove a turning point in musical theater history. • Anne Marie Welsh, San Diego Union-Tribune; When Caroline burns brightest, no other show surpasses its conviction, or the depths of its concerns: emotional, political and spiritual alike. • Jeremy McCarter, New York Sun; A thoughtful, gracefully crafted musical-drama that sincerely involves characters, not cartoons. • Michael Sommers, Star-Ledger; Unique and thrilling, funny and joyous, emotionally overwhelming. It's Kushner at his best. • David Cuthbert, Times-Picayune; Intelligent and affecting; a blend of spunk, soul, rage and redemption that features some of Kushner's most ingratiating writing. • Eric Grode, [broadway.com](#); Creative, exciting and refreshingly original. Tony Kushner and Jeanine Tesori have written a full-fledged opera, and a remarkable one. • Brooke Pierce, [theatermania.com](#); Kushner's libretto is artfully crafted, his ability to capture the nuances of his characters is unparalleled and in Caroline, Or Change he creates people who seem to have sprung fully formed from the pages of the script. • [broadwayworld.com](#) • The first great piece of musical theater of the 21st century. Both musically and lyrically, this is every bit as smart as Sondheim and every bit as emotionally compelling as Rodgers and Hammerstein. • Ed Siegel, Boston Globe • An extraordinary new musical. Perhaps no one short of the author of Angels in America could pull this off. As when the angel crashes into Prior Walter's bedroom, you feel that mixture of terror and rapture that arrives on those rare occasions in theater and in life when you genuinely don't know what's going to happen next. • Frank Rich, New York Times • Manna from heaven. Caroline is, like Angels in America, ultimately a celebration of human fortitude, of the vast resources of love and hope that allow people of all backgrounds and belief systems to transcend hatred and despair. • Elysa Gardner, USA Today • Groundbreaking,

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Caroline, Or Change is a musical that makes you think. It's not a show that you leave feeling good about yourself. Tony Kushner's book concerns itself with Caroline, a Jewish family's black maid, and the way that she affects and is affected by her employers, the Gelmans -- primarily with Noah, their only child. Usually, when an established playwright writes a book for a musical, they try to show off their skill as a playwright at the expense of the real centerpiece of the show, the score. This was especially a temptation here, because Caroline, Or Change is pretty much an opera. It's almost entirely sung-through -- think Les Miserables without the melodramatic operetta elements. Happily, Kushner does not give in, turning out a book that should have won the Tony. Because of its operatic qualities, it would be best if the reader was familiar with the score. One of the show's highlights is "Lot's Wife" possibly the best eleven o'clock number since "Rose's Turn" in Gypsy. In the seven-minute tour-de-force, Caroline goes from anger and self-condemnation to defiance to sadness and defeat. I could go on, but I don't want to give the whole play away. Basically, buy this book!

Read just because I'm a fan of Mr Kushner. But it needs all the flesh on these bones. Someday I'll see it.

Received in good order. Thanks.

This book came in as I had expected it too be as well as on time! Very happy with this purchase!!

Excellent play. I'm anxious to see it at the Guthrie this month. Prejudice, ignorance of those in charge, insight of maid.

Let me say, I am a huge fan of Kushner's work, he is one of the most creative of his generation in theater. This story resonates with me because my mother grew up in Lake Charles and she was in high school when this story takes place, I love the fact Tony used Lake Charles, it's such a quintessential southern city, and it's perfect for the story he tells. I grew up in the south, but really am too young to have experienced the civil rights movement and I only know Lake Charles as a lovely city, with friendly people, that is very peaceful. The story as told is riveting, and the musical score is perfect, you feel transported to 63 southern Louisiana and you feel the strain on Caroline and the times she lives in, Kushner said that the lady he based Caroline on is alive and well in Lake Charles, I'm glad she lived to see Lake Charles as well as the South change, it may not be all the way there, but man has it come a long way in short time, believe me. The stage show is showing in Houston right now, and Kushner said this is the closest it's gotten to Lake Charles..let's hope it makes it at some point to the city that inspired it.

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