



# Harry B. Smith: Dean of American Librettists (Forgotten Stars of the Musical Theatre)

*John Franceschina*

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Harry B. Smith was the most prolific writer of librettos for the American musical theatre in history, with nearly half of his 300 works actually opening in New York City. In addition, Smith was instrumental in adapting and popularizing foreign musicals in America, significantly influencing writing and composing styles of American shows. He worked with every major composer in America between 1880 and 1920, and consequently this examination of his work and process is highly instructive of the history of the American musical.

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