



# Colored Lights: Forty Years of Words and Music, Show Biz, Collaboration, and All That Jazz

*John Kander, Fred Ebb, Greg Lawrence*

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Composer John Kander and lyricist Fred Ebb are the longest-running song-writing partnership in Broadway history, having first joined forces in 1962. The creators of such groundbreaking musicals as *Chicago*, *Cabaret*, and *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, Kander and Ebb have helped to push American musical theater in a more daring direction, both musically and dramatically. Their impact on individual performers has been great as well, starting with the handpicked star of their first musical: an untested nineteen-year-old named Liza Minnelli (who writes of this experience in her introduction).

*Colored Lights* covers the major shows of Kander and Ebb's partnership, from *Flora, the Red Menace* (starring a then-unknown Liza) to *The Visit*, their newest show, which is set to star another Kander and Ebb favorite, Chita Rivera. The pages and musicals in between reveal what has made theirs such an important and long-lived musical partnership--and one so valued by the artists they have worked with. In recounting the genesis and controversies of *Cabaret*, reflecting on the superstar mentality of such artists as Frank Sinatra and Barbra Streisand, and recalling their work with Bob Fosse on *Chicago* (as well as their thoughts on the Oscar-winning film version), John Kander and Fred Ebb provide a history not only of their own lives but also of the American musical theater of the late twentieth century.

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