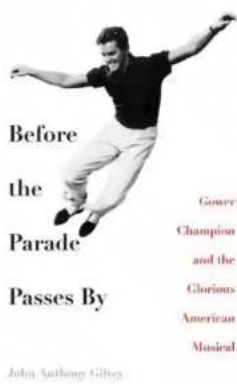


Before The Parade Passes By: A Spectacle of Joy and Inspiration

Picturesque floats, lively music, and a sea of colorful costumes – these are just some of the things that come to mind when we think about parades. And one particular tune that perfectly captures the essence of a parade is the iconic Broadway song, "Before The Parade Passes By" from the hit musical *Hello, Dolly!*



The power of parades lies not just in their vibrant visual display, but also in the emotions they evoke and the messages they convey. They have been a part of human culture for centuries, serving as a means of celebration, expression, and even protest. Before the parade passes by, let's dive into the fascinating world of parades and explore what makes them such mesmerizing spectacles.



Before the Parade Passes By: Gower Champion and the Glorious American Musical

by John Anthony Gilvey (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 1616 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 397 pages



The Historical Roots of Parades

Parades have a rich history that dates back to ancient civilizations. In Ancient Egypt, for example, parades were held to honor pharaohs and reinforce their authority. The Romans also embraced the tradition, organizing grand processions to commemorate military victories and other significant events. These early parades not only showcased military might but also reaffirmed social hierarchy and reinforced cultural values.

As time went on, parades became more ingrained in religious ceremonies and cultural traditions. They were often associated with seasonal festivities, harvest celebrations, and religious processions. The Carnival of Venice, a festival featuring elaborate masks and costumes, became a famous parade-like event that attracted people from all walks of life.

Parades as Celebrations

In modern times, parades have transformed into joyous celebrations that bring communities together. Whether it's the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New

York City or the colorful Carnival parades in Rio de Janeiro, these events create a sense of unity and collective happiness.

Parades often function as cultural showcases, allowing various ethnic groups to display their unique traditions and customs. They provide an opportunity for individuals to proudly represent their heritage, fostering a sense of belonging and acceptance. In multi-cultural societies, parades become a symbol of diversity, promoting understanding and appreciation for different cultures.



Parades as Expressions of Creativity

Parades are also a canvas for artistic expression, where creativity shines through in every colorful float and intricate costume. They serve as platforms for artists, designers, and performers to showcase their talents, pushing boundaries and enchanting audiences.

From the highly anticipated parades of Disneyland and World Disney World, known for their whimsical floats and enchanting characters, to the extravagant parades of major cities during festive seasons, artistic craftsmanship is consistently showcased. The elaborate designs, attention to detail, and mesmerizing performances captivate spectators and transport them to a world of imagination.

Parades as Catalysts for Change

Parades have always been a powerful tool for social and political movements. They provide a platform for collective voices, enabling individuals to express their opinions and advocate for change. During the civil rights movement in the United States, parades became a means of peaceful protest, with marches demanding equality and justice for all.

Even today, parades remain an important medium for raising social awareness and empowering marginalized communities. Pride parades around the world, for example, celebrate gender equality and LGBTQ+ rights, serving as a symbol of acceptance and inclusivity.



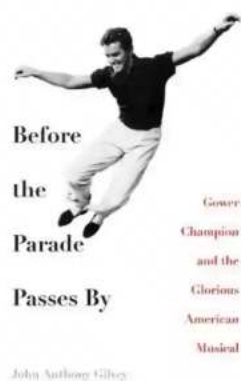
Before The Parade Passes By: A Call to Action

Just like the lyrics of the famous Broadway song, "Before The Parade Passes By," parades remind us to seize the moment and not let opportunities slip away. They encourage us to be present in the here and now, basking in the exhilaration and joy that these spectacular events offer.

Parades are not merely spectacles to be observed; they are invitations to participate, engage, and celebrate life. So, before the parade passes by, immerse yourself in its grandeur, embrace the diversity, appreciate the creativity, and stand up for what you believe in.

Let the vibrant colors, infectious music, and electrifying energy of a parade inspire you to embrace life's mesmerizing moments. Before the parade passes by,

remember to march to the beat of your own drum!



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During the Golden Age of the Broadway musical, few director-choreographers could infuse a new musical with dance and movement in quite the way Gower Champion could. From his earliest Broadway success with *Bye Bye Birdie* to his triumphant and bittersweet valedictory, *42nd Street*, musicals directed by Champion filled the proscenium with life. At their best, they touched the heart and stirred the soul with a skillful blend of elegance and American showmanship.

He began his career as one-half of "America's Youngest Dance Team" with Jeanne Tyler and later teamed with his wife, dance partner, and longtime collaborator, Marge Champion. This romantic ballroom duo danced across America in the smartest clubs and onto the television screen, performing story dances that captivated the country. They ultimately took their talent to Hollywood, where they starred in the 1951 remake of *Show Boat*, *Lovely to Look At*, and other films. But Broadway always called to Champion, and in 1959 he was tapped to direct *Bye Bye Birdie*. The rest is history.

In shows like *Birdie*, *Carnival*, *Hello, Dolly!*, *I Do! I Do!*, *Sugar*, and *42nd Street*, luminaries such as Chita Rivera, Dick Van Dyke, Carol Channing, Mary Martin, Robert Preston, Tony Roberts, Robert Morse, Tammy Grimes, and Jerry Orbach brought Champion's creative vision to life. Working with composers and writers like Jerry Herman, Michael Stewart, Charles Strouse, Lee Adams, and Bob Merrill, he streamlined the musical making it flow effortlessly with song and dance from start to finish.

John Gilvey has spoken with many of the people who worked with Champion, and in *Before the Parade Passes By* he tells the life story of this most American of Broadway musical director-choreographers from his early days dancing with Marge to his final days spent meticulously honing the visual magic of *42nd Street*. *Before the Parade Passes By* is the life story of one man who personified the glory of the Broadway musical right up until the moment of his untimely death. When the curtain fell to thunderous applause on the opening night of *42nd Street*, August 25, 1980, legendary impresario David Merrick came forward, silenced the audience, and announced that Champion had died that morning. As eminent theatre critic Ethan Mordden has firmly put it, "the Golden Age was over."

Though the Golden Age of the Broadway musical is over, John Gilvey brings it to life again by telling the story of Gower Champion, one of its most passionate and creative legends.



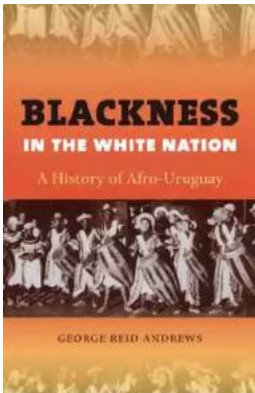
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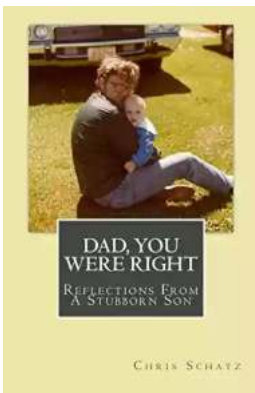
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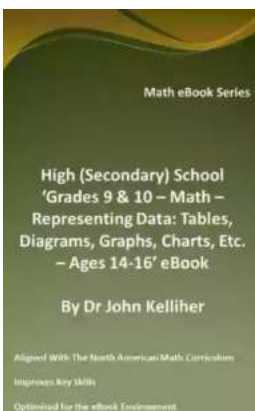
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