

ENTERTAINMENT

My Fair Lady subject of author's 22nd book

CHRIS CLAY

cclay@mississauga.net

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You could call Lakeview author Keith Garebian a bit of an expert when it comes to Broadway musicals.

He's penned numerous books about them, including a series of popular "making of" books that detail the production history of musicals such as Gypsy and West Side Story.

He's already penned one of those books about My Fair Lady and the author is back on that musical again with his 22nd book, Lerner and Loewe's My Fair Lady through Routledge.

In the book, Garebian explores the intersection between real life and the characters of the musical's three main players - actors Rex Harrison as Henry Higgins and Julie Andrews as Cockney flowergirl Eliza Doolittle as well as director Moss Hart.

Garebian explores four main themes in the book. Self-doubt is the first and manifests itself in various ways.

For example, Garebian said Harrison wasn't a very good singer and used more of a spoken word technique to perform in the popular musical while Andrews was worried she couldn't nail the part of a Cockney girl or that she wasn't a

very good singer, despite having a lovely voice.

Hart, for example, wasn't sure he could manage the notoriously difficult Harrison or get a young Andrews, who had very little acting experience, to provide a good portrayal of Eliza. He was also reportedly wrestling with questions about his own sexuality.

Some of the other themes he explores include romance, creativity and artistic success.

In fact, Garebian originally proposed a subtitle for the book dubbed Alpha Male, Chaste Diva, Ambiguous Dazzler in reference to Harrison, Andrews and Hart, respectively.

Garebian finds some interesting parallels between the performers and their characters. For example, Andrews, much like Eliza, came from a working class background while Harrison also came from a lower social status and Garebian supposes perhaps that's what drove him to cultivate a persona of an intelligent and cultured man.

The award-winning author plans on releasing a biography on William Hutt next year and has a collection of poetry in the works as well.

For more on the author, visit stageandpage.com.