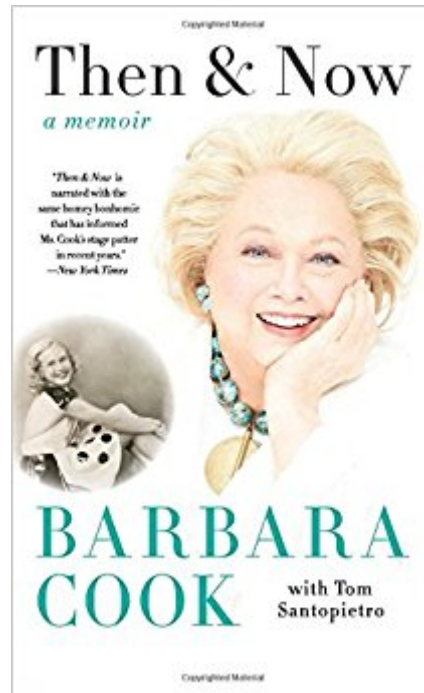




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# Then And Now: A Memoir



## Synopsis

One of the greatest American singers and actresses of her generation looks back on a magical and turbulent life spanning a half century of theatrical history from the golden age of the Broadway musical to the present day. A legend of the American theater, Barbara Cook burst upon the scene to become Broadway's leading ingénue in roles such as Cunegonde in Leonard Bernstein's *Candide*, Amalia Balash in Jerry Bock's *She Loves Me*, and her career-defining, Tony-winning role as the original Marian the librarian in Meredith Willson's *The Music Man*. But in the late 1960s, Barbara's extraordinary talent onstage was threatened by debilitating depression and alcoholism that forced her to step away from the limelight and out of the public life. Emerging from the shadows in the early 1970s, Barbara reinvented herself as the country's leading concert and cabaret artist, performing the songs of Stephen Sondheim and other masters, while establishing a reputation as one of the greatest and most acclaimed interpreters of the American songbook. Taking us deep into her life and career, from her childhood in the South to the Great White Way, *Then and Now* candidly and poignantly describes both her personal difficulties and the legendary triumphs, detailing the extraordinary working relationships she shared with many of the key composers, musicians, actors and performers of the late twentieth century, among them Sondheim, Leonard Bernstein, Elaine Stritch, and Robert Preston. Hailed by the *Financial Times* of London as "the greatest singer in the world", *Then and Now* but preferring to think of herself as "a work in progress", Barbara Cook here delivers a powerful, personal tale of pain and triumph, as straight forward, *Then and Now* unflinchingly honest, and open hearted as her singing.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Then and Now is narrated with the same homey bonhomie that has informed Ms. Cook’s stage patter in recent years.” (New York Times) “Theater rats will savor Ms. Cook’s account of her *Candide* audition in front of the show’s composer, Leonard Bernstein . . . It’s clear in every word she sings that her wisdom is deep and hard-won.” (Wall Street Journal) “It’s all here in Cook’s memoir. Great theater, great people, not so great people, alcoholism, compulsive eating, an affair with actor Arthur Hill when they were both married to other people; the great love of the lady’s life. A second career in cabaret that continues into her ninth decade.” (WOSU/NPR News and Classical Music) “And what a story it is, told in a bright, refreshing and brutally honest voice, in a manner that you would expect from Barbara Cook.” Get yourself a copy of *Then & Now* now and plunge into it, giving yourself breaks here and there to listen to Barbara singing.” (Huffington Post)

A legend of the American theater, Barbara Cook burst upon the scene to become Broadway’s leading ingénue in roles such as Cunegonde in Leonard Bernstein’s *Candide*, Amalia Balash in Jerry Bock’s *She Loves Me*, and her career-defining, Tony-winning role as the original Marian the librarian in Meredith Willson’s *The Music Man*. But in the late 1960s, Barbara’s extraordinary talent onstage was threatened by debilitating depression and alcoholism that forced her to step away from the limelight and out of public life. Emerging from the shadows in the early 1970s, Barbara reinvented herself as the country’s leading concert and cabaret artist, performing the songs of Stephen Sondheim and other masters, while establishing a reputation as one of the greatest and most acclaimed interpreters of the American songbook. Taking us deep into her life and career, from her childhood in the South to the Great White Way, *Then & Now* candidly and poignantly describes both her personal difficulties and legendary triumphs, detailing the extraordinary working relationships she shared with many of the key composers, musicians, actors, and performers of the late twentieth century, among them Sondheim, Leonard Bernstein, Elaine Stritch, and Robert Preston. Barbara Cook delivers a powerful, personal tale of pain and triumph as straightforward, unflinchingly honest, and openhearted as her singing.

This is an unique life story, it is written in Barbara's own style and in her authentic voice. Tom Santopietro was like a great musical director; he assisted but he was not intrusive. Much of her story was familiar to me, but still this autobiography is riveting. It is a great visit into her history and person. This book is touching, inspiring, and also at times somewhat surprising. This is a great memoir written by a great singing actress and person. As much as I like Barbara as an artist, I like her even more as a person. Barbara still considers herself at almost 89 to be a 'work in progress', and this memoir supports her statement. Highly recommended!

A great, in depth view of one of America's best female "crooners" of the Great American Songbook. Beautifully described her life from early success, a period of eating and drinking problems, then back up as a Cabaret singer

I have always loved and admired Barbara Cook. This book gives honest and fascinating insights into her life and talent and her views of life. The book reads easily and the ultimate message is uplifting and enlightening.

Reading this book is like spending a couple of hours with a legend. It is written in a chatty style that reflects to personality of this amazing woman.

Barbara Cook has always been one of my favorites. A very frank memoir that illustrates the down to earth person she really is. I enjoyed getting to know so much more about her personal life.

Having been a Broadway gypsy during the 1960's, considered the Golden Age of Musical Theatre, I thoroughly enjoyed Ms Cook's candid, poignant and engaging account of her life's journey in that milieu. Having studied acting with her former husband, David Le Grant, made her story all the more personal for me. Having seen her concerts at Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center, it was wonderful to learn of her in such a personal way. Recommended for anyone who appreciates the musical theatre and values such an exceptional artist.

I love Barbara Cook, so anything about her is fine by me. The book is ok, but the subject makes it!! A very fast read.

Very revealing account of the highs and lows of one of the greatest singers of Broadway and the Great American Songbook.

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