

Chicago

The Show

The story of Roxie Hart, a married chorus girl who murders her unfaithful lover, is based on Maurine Dallas Watkins's 1926 play of the same name. A flashy lawyer, Billy Flynn, helps Roxie avoid prison time, and she ends up headlining in vaudeville with Velma Kelly, who also has a tarnished reputation. The show was first billed as *Chicago: A Musical Vaudeville* with an emcee introducing each song or dance as if it were a part of a variety show evening, thus conveying the plot through a series of vaudeville acts. The revival is called *Chicago: The Musical*. A film version was released in 2002 in which the vaudeville acts were shown as Roxie Hart's fantasies.

The Authors

Music by John Kander; Lyrics by Fred Ebb; Book by Fred Ebb and Bob Fosse

New York Runs

June 3, 1975–August 27, 1997: 46th Street Theatre
November 14, 1996–present: Richard Rodgers Theatre (11/14/96–2/9/97); Shubert Theatre (2/11/1997–1/26/2003); Ambassador Theatre (1/29/03–present)

The Songs

“And All That Jazz”

Velma Kelly (originally played by Chita Rivera, then by Bebe Neuwirth in the revival, and by Catherine Zeta-Jones in the movie) opens the show with “And All That Jazz,” setting the tone for the raunchily entertaining evening to come. It is a homage to the well-known speakeasy performer Texas Guinan.

Song Type

standard Broadway/up-tempo

Suggested 16-Bar Cuts for Auditions

m. 5 through m. 18 + m. 39 (singing “all” instead of “do” on the C₄ through m. 42 (first beat)

“When You’re Good to Mama”

“When You’re Good to Mama” is sung by the corrupt prison matron “Mama” Morton (originally played by Mary McCarty, then played by Marcia Lewis in the revival, and Queen Latifah in the film). Morton sings here about the benefits her female inmates can gain by colluding with her, and double entendres insinuate Mama’s sexual leanings.

Song Type

standard Broadway/character song/up-tempo

Suggested 16-Bar Cuts for Auditions

m. 17 through m. 33

m. 35 (with pickup) through m. 48 + m. 63 through m. 66 + m. 70

Closer Than Ever

The Show

Maltby and Shire created a series of story songs based on a conception of Steven Scott Smith. There is no dialogue in this four-person show, which is a musical revue that deals with the life choices we all have to make.

The Author

Music by David Shire; Lyrics by Richard Maltby, Jr

New York Run

October 17, 1989–July 1, 1990: Cherry Lane Theatre

The Songs

“Life Story”

In “Life Story,” a liberated baby boomer looks back at her life and the prices she paid for individuality and independence. (This song was sung by Lynn Wintersteller in the original production.)

Song Type

contemporary musical theatre/ballad

Suggested 16-Bar Cut for Auditions

m. 122 (with pickups) through m. 138 (the pianist should end with an A_b chord after m. 138)

