

The Key Factors Movie Musical Success

The Key Factors Movie Musical Success Have you ever wondered why one movie musical receives critical acclaim and maybe even an Academy Award and another movie based on an equally good Broadway musical ends up on a studio shelf, rarely seen after its initial release? There are several key factors that lead to a quality movie musical. These factors include a strong story line and well-written screenplay, quality music, great casting, and effective direction. Great choreography is often a plus but a movie musical, unlike a Broadway musical, can be a quality movie without elaborate dances. In this article, I compare two movie musicals based on successful Lerner and Loewe Broadway musicals -- "My Fair Lady" and "Camelot" -- and I discuss why "My Fair Lady" was an acclaimed, award-winning movie that is still viewed and loved by millions of people and why "Camelot" has become a mostly forgotten film.

Both plays were successes on Broadway, although "My Fair Lady" did receive more praises than "Camelot" and it ran for a significantly longer time. Nevertheless, "Camelot" had a healthy initial Broadway run and both plays have had three short-run revivals on Broadway. Also, both plays earned Tony awards for their male leads and Tony nominations for Julie Andrews, the leading female star in both plays. Yet, the movies based on the plays had vastly different outcomes, with "My Fair Lady" garnering eight Academy Awards, including Best Picture and Best Actor, and Camelot earning only three minor awards. So, where did "Camelot," the movie, go wrong?