

Anna Held and the Birth of Ziegfeld Broadway



Anna Held and the Birth of Ziegfeld's Broadway

by Eve Golden

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

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Anna Held was one of the most popular and successful actresses and singers on Broadway in the early 20th century. With her stunning beauty, magnetic personality, and incredible talent, she captivated audiences and helped launch the career of Florenz Ziegfeld, the man who would become known as the "Father of American Musical Theater."

Held was born in Warsaw, Poland, in 1872. Her father was a successful merchant, and her mother was a talented musician. Held began taking music and dance lessons at an early age, and by the time she was a teenager, she was performing in local theater productions. In 1896, she made her Broadway debut in the musical comedy *A Stranger in New York*. The show was a huge success, and Held quickly became one of the most popular actresses on Broadway.

In 1903, Held met Florenz Ziegfeld, a young impresario who was just starting out in the theater business. Ziegfeld was immediately smitten with Held, and he began to book her in his own productions. In 1907, Ziegfeld produced the musical comedy *Follies*, which starred Held and featured a cast of beautiful showgirls. *Follies* was a huge success, and it helped to establish Ziegfeld as a major force in the theater world.

Held continued to star in Ziegfeld's productions throughout the 1910s and 1920s. She was known for her glamorous costumes, her risqué dance routines, and her ability to connect with audiences. Held was also a talented comedienne, and she often brought down the house with her witty remarks.

In addition to her work on Broadway, Held also appeared in a number of films. She made her film debut in 1915 in the movie *Madame Butterfly*. Held went on to star in a number of other films, including *The Masked Ball* (1917), *Salome* (1918), and *The Greatest Show on Earth* (1952).

Held retired from the stage in 1930, but she continued to make occasional appearances on Broadway and in films. She died in New York City in 1953 at the age of 81.

Anna Held was one of the most influential figures in the history of Broadway. She helped to popularize the musical comedy genre, and she played a major role in the development of Ziegfeld's *Follies*. Held was a true star, and her legacy continues to inspire performers and audiences today.

Image Gallery





Anna Held and Florenz Ziegfeld in a publicity photo from the 1910s.



Anna Held in a scene from the film *Madame Butterfly*.



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