



The Guide to Musical Theatre

CHRISTINE

A musical in 2 acts, 18 scenes. Book by Pearl S. Buck and Charles Peck, Jr.; Based on the book *My Indian Family* by Hilda Wernher. Music by Sammy Fain; Lyrics by Paul Francis Webster

Erlanger Theatre, Philadelphia - 21 March, 1960: 46th Street Theatre, New York 28 April, 1960. (12 perfs)

STORY

The little town of Akbarabad in India is eagerly awaiting two arrivals on the weekly train: Sita Roy, who has been to college in America, and Lady Christine FitzSimons from Ireland, who has come to visit her daughter, Maryanne. Maryanne has married an older Indian doctor, Rashil Singh against her mother's wishes, and Christine is puzzled because she is not at the station. Meeting her instead are Rashil Singh's aunt, uncle and nephew who greet her warmly. Christine is delighted to meet them but is impatient to see her daughter.

Christine is taken to Rashil's home where she learns to her horror that Maryanne has died in childbirth. She blames both Rashil and India itself, and plans to return home as soon as possible. Rashil is baffled by the twists of fate and buries himself in his clinic, giving injections to the town children. During the week she must wait for another train, Christine slowly realises how deeply Rashil had loved Maryanne, and they come to be friends as understanding grows between them. She is packed and ready to leave when the whole family implores her to stay, and she is finally won over by Rainath's little daughter Jaya who sings her a missionary song.

As the weeks pass, Christine becomes engrossed in Rashil's clinic and in the life of the family. Auntie and Uncle urge her to choose a new wife for Rashil, in her position as Mother of the house and call in a Matchmaker who shows them the lovely girls of Akbarabad. Christine puts off the decision, which is uncongenial to her western mind, and wonders what is to become of her now that she is wholly alone. Sita Roy, meanwhile, has gone to work at the clinic and has fallen in love with Rashil. But Rashil is increasingly attracted to Christine, who is about his own age, and at The Divali Festival he and Christine suddenly find themselves trapped by their emotions.

Auntie and Uncle are unaware of what is happening despite their eavesdropping, and keep urging Christine to choose a wife for Rashil. Auntie is dissatisfied with the New India, while Christine finds the formal ways of Indians - even on a picnic - difficult to adjust to. As the romance between Rashil and Christine deepens, the local Indians, who consider Christine an untouchable, stop coming to Rashil's dispensary. Sita is distressed, and is forced to admit to herself that Rashil loves Christine but urges Christine to leave, so that Rashil's work may continue. She is seconded by Dr. MacGowan, Rashil's assistant.

Christine confesses her discomfort to Rashil, but he asks her to marry him and she ostensibly agrees. The ceremony is prepared at which she, as Mother of the house, will announce the wife she has chosen for him in accordance with ancient Vedic laws, and the family gathers around. She delights the family and astounds Rashil by choosing Sita. Christine has realised that her world and Rashil's world are still too far apart and tells him that although she loves him, she must go home to Ireland. But she will never again be the Woman



she was before. They try to resolve their problems, but are forced in the end to admit that she is right. As the wedding of Rashil and Sita takes place, Christine slowly leaves Rashil's house for the last time, accompanied by little Jaya, who has decided to go with her.

Notes from the original 1960 Columbia Masterworks album

CAST (in order of appearance)

Beggar: Joseph Crawford.	Servant to Mohan Roy
Servants to Dr. Singh	Station Master
Auntie	Sita Roy
Uncle	Lady Christine FitzSimons
Rainath	Dr. Rashil Singh
Jaya	Dr. MacGowan
Rajendra	The Matchmaker
Krishna	The Prospective Brides (5)
Mohan Roy	Twins
Children of the Town; Priest; Townspeople, Hindus, Muslims, Vendors, Beggars: Dancers	

SCENES AND SETTINGS

The story is laid in the little town of Akbarabad, India, at the present time.

Act 1

- Scene 1: The Railroad Station in Akbarabad.
- Scene 2: The Study in Dr. Rashil Singh's home.
- Scene 3: Outside the Clinic.
- Scene 4: The Living Room, six days later.
- Scene 5: The Veranda, two months later.
- Scene 6: The Living Room.
- Scene 7: The Veranda.
- Scene 8: The Drawing Room.
- Scene 9: The Clinic.
- Scene 10: The City Square.

Act 2

- Scene 1: The Veranda at Rashil's house.
- Scene 2: An open plain.
- Scene 3: A Shrine.
- Scene 4: The Living Room.
- Scene 5: The Veranda.
- Scene 6: The Drawing Room.
- Scene 7: The Veranda.
- Scene 8: Mohan Roy's Home.

MUSICAL NUMBERS:

ACT 1

1. Welcome Song - Auntie, Uncle, Rainath, Children, Chorus
2. My Indian Family - Lady Christine
3. A Doctor's Soliloquy - Dr Rashil Singh
4. UNICEF Song - Children
5. My Little Lost Girl - Lady Christine, Dr Rashil Singh
6. I'm Just a Little Sparrow - Jaya, Auntie, Rainath, Servants, Children
7. We're Just a Pair of Sparrows - Lady Christine, Jaya
8. Cobra Ritual Dance - Rainath, Dancers
9. How to Pick a Man a Wife - Auntie, Uncle
10. The Lovely Girls of Akbarabad - Matchmaker, Chorus
11. Room in My Heart - Lady Christine
12. The Divali Festival - Rainath, Dancers, Singers
13. I Never Meant to Fall in Love - Dr Rashil Singh, Lady Christine

ACT 2

14. Freedom Can Be a Most Uncomfortable Thing - Auntie, Friends
15. Ireland Was Never Like This - Lady Christine, Dancers
16. He Loves Her - Sita Roy
17. Christine - Dr Rashil Singh
18. Room in My Heart (reprise) - Lady Christine
19. Freedom Can Be a Most Uncomfortable Thing (reprise) - Auntie, Uncle
20. a. Kathak (Plate Dance) - Rainath, Girls
21. b. Kathakali - Dancing Boys
22. c. Bharatha Natyan - Rainath, Dancing Girls and Boys
23. The Woman I Was Before - Lady Christine
24. A Doctor's Soliloquy (reprise) - Lady Christine, Dr Rashil Singh
25. I Never Meant to Fall in Love (reprise) - Lady Christine, Dr Rashil Singh

DISCOGRAPHY:

Original Broadway Cast Album starring Maureen O'Hara and Morley Meredith - DRG 19021