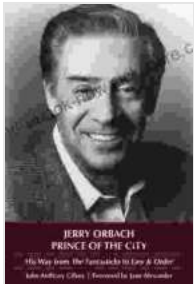


# His Way from "The Fantasticks" to "Law & Order": A Journey of Adaptation



## Jerry Orbach, Prince of the City: His Way from "The Fantasticks" to "Law and Order": His Way from The Fantasticks to Law and Order (Applause Books)

by John Anthony Gilvey

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

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Tom Cruise, a Hollywood icon known for his versatility and magnetic screen presence, has played a multitude of unforgettable roles throughout his illustrious career. Among his most notable performances are two vastly different characters: the enigmatic and lyrical Mute from the classic musical "The Fantasticks" (1994) and the steely-eyed and pragmatic Detective Lieutenant Frank Cosgrove in the crime drama series "Law & Order" (1990-2010).

The journey from the whimsical world of musical theatre to the gritty streets of New York City is akin to a transformative odyssey, showcasing Cruise's exceptional range and ability to embody characters that are worlds apart. This essay delves into the intricacies of Cruise's approach to character

portrayal, examining the challenges and rewards he faced in adapting these beloved fictional characters for the silver screen.

## **From The Fantasticks to Law & Order: The Mute and Detective Cosgrove**



In "The Fantasticks," Cruise plays The Mute, a mysterious and poetic wanderer who serves as a narrator and guide in this whimsical and poignant tale of love and longing. The Mute possesses a haunting gaze and a lyrical voice, conveying his thoughts and emotions through song and spoken word. Cruise's performance in this role is both ethereal and grounded, capturing the otherworldly nature of the character while also imbuing him with a palpable humanity.



Cruise's Detective Cosgrove in "Law & Order" epitomizes the no-nonsense and stoic detective.

In stark contrast, Detective Cosgrove in "Law & Order" is a hardened and cynical detective lieutenant who navigates the complexities of the criminal justice system. Cosgrove is a master of deduction, possessing a sharp wit and an unwavering commitment to justice. Cruise's portrayal of Cosgrove is

nuanced and compelling, capturing the character's tough exterior while also hinting at a vulnerability beneath the surface.

## **The Challenges of Adaptation**

Adapting beloved fictional characters for the screen presents a unique set of challenges for actors. Cruise faced several obstacles in his journey from The Mute to Detective Cosgrove:

- **Capturing the Essence of the Character:** The Mute and Detective Cosgrove are radically different characters with distinct personalities, motivations, and backgrounds. Cruise had to immerse himself in the source material and find ways to embody the essence of each character while also bringing his own unique interpretation to the role.
- **Maintaining Fidelity to the Original:** "The Fantasticks" and "Law & Order" have devoted fan bases who hold the original characters in high esteem. Cruise had to walk a fine line between staying faithful to the established characterization and bringing his own perspective to the role.
- **Translating the Characters to a New Medium:** The characters of The Mute and Detective Cosgrove were originally conceived for different mediums—musical theatre and television, respectively. Cruise had to adapt his performance to suit the unique demands of each medium while ensuring that the characters retained their authenticity.

## **The Rewards of Transformation**

Despite the challenges, Cruise's adaptations of The Mute and Detective Cosgrove were met with widespread critical acclaim and popular success. This is a testament to his extraordinary talent and dedication to his craft.

Here are some of the rewards that Cruise gained from this transformational journey:

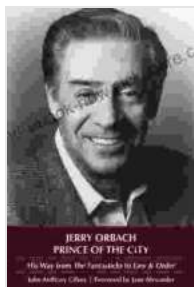
- **Expanded Range:** By playing two such contrasting characters, Cruise demonstrated his remarkable range and versatility as an actor. He proved his ability to convincingly inhabit both fantastical and realistic worlds, showcasing his mastery over different genres and character types.
- **Critical Recognition:** Cruise's performances in both "The Fantasticks" and "Law & Order" earned him critical recognition and accolades. He received praise for his nuanced characterization, technical prowess, and ability to bring life to beloved fictional characters.
- **Audience Appreciation:** Both "The Fantasticks" and "Law & Order" have amassed loyal audiences who appreciate Cruise's portrayal of The Mute and Detective Cosgrove. His performances have resonated with viewers, solidifying his status as a beloved and respected actor.

Tom Cruise's journey from The Mute to Detective Cosgrove is a testament to his exceptional talent as an actor and his deep commitment to his craft. Through his transformative performances, he has breathed new life into beloved fictional characters, staying true to their essence while also bringing his own unique interpretation to the role. Cruise's ability to traverse such vastly different characters with equal conviction is a true testament to his versatility and his unwavering pursuit of excellence.

As he continues his illustrious career, it will be fascinating to witness the new characters that Cruise will embody and the transformative journeys that he will undertake. One thing is certain: with his passion for storytelling

and his exceptional talent, Cruise will captivate audiences for many years to come.

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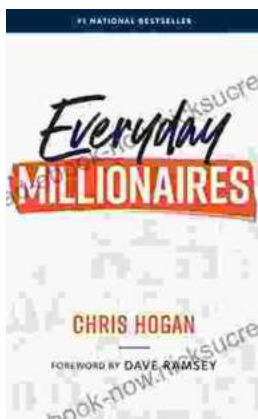


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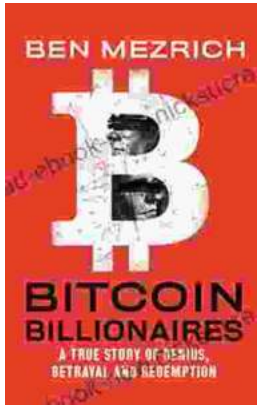
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