***Smash*** is an American [musical](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Musical_theatre#Development_of_musical_comedy) [drama](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drama) series, revolving around the creation of a new [Broadway musical](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Broadway_theatre).

The series is broadcast in the United States on [NBC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NBC), and is a production of [DreamWorks Television](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/DreamWorks_Television). It premiered on February 6, 2012.[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-0) On March 22, 2012, NBC renewed *Smash* for a second season,[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-1) which will air as a [midseason replacement](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Midseason_replacement) in the [2012–13 United States television season](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2012%E2%80%9313_United_States_network_television_schedule).[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-2)

The show was created by [Theresa Rebeck](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theresa_Rebeck) and has [Steven Spielberg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steven_Spielberg) as one of the executive producers.

The show revolves around a group of characters creating new [Broadway musicals](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Broadway_musical), where everyone must balance his or her often chaotic personal life with the all-consuming demands of life in the theater. The series features original music by composers [Marc Shaiman](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marc_Shaiman) and [Scott Wittman](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scott_Wittman).

In the first season, Julia and Tom, a Broadway songwriter and composer team come up with the idea of a new musical based on the life of [Marilyn Monroe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marilyn_Monroe),

### Conception

Development began in 2009 at [Showtime](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Showtime_(TV_channel)) by then-Showtime entertainment president [Robert Greenblatt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Greenblatt) and [Steven Spielberg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steven_Spielberg), from an idea by Spielberg, who had been working on the concept for years.[[26]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-showspielteam-25) The original concept was that each season would follow the production of a new musical; if any of them were "stage-worthy", Spielberg would make them into actual Broadway musicals.[[27]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-concept-26) The series was mainly inspired by [*The West Wing*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_West_Wing_(TV_series)) and [*Upstairs, Downstairs*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Upstairs,_Downstairs), but also [Garson Kanin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Garson_Kanin)'s 1982 novel, *Smash*.[[27]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-concept-26) Greenblatt then brought the project with him to [NBC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NBC) when he was made NBC Entertainment president in January 2011. [Theresa Rebeck](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theresa_Rebeck) wrote the pilot script and is series creator.[[27]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-concept-26) Executive producers [Craig Zadan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Craig_Zadan) and [Neil Meron](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neil_Meron) suggested Rebeck for the series to Spielberg and Greenblatt.[[27]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-concept-26) NBC ordered production of a pilot in January 2011 for the [2011–12 television season](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2011%E2%80%9312_United_States_network_television_schedule).[[28]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-pilotordered-27)

[Michael Mayer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Mayer_(director)) directed the pilot episode, with Spielberg serving as an executive producer.[[29]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-nbcups-28) It has been reported that the pilot cost $7.5 million to produce.[[27]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-concept-26)[[30]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-pilotcost-29) On May 11, 2011, NBC picked the project up to series. When the network announced its 2011–12 schedule on May 15, 2011, the series was slated to premiere in mid-season.[[29]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-nbcups-28) NBC opted to hold the show for mid-season in order to pair it up with the hit reality show [*The Voice*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Voice_(U.S._TV_series)) on Monday nights.[[31]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-pairing-30) On August 1, 2011, it was announced that show's series premiere date would be February 6, 2012, the night after [Super Bowl XLVI](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Super_Bowl_XLVI), with heavy promotion through early winter on many of the network's properties before the premiere.[[32]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-31)[[33]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-32) At the NBC Press Tour, it was announced that *Smash* would have 15 episodes produced for the first season to coincide with *The Voice*.[[34]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-33)

**Critical reception**

The pilot of *Smash* received positive reviews from television critics, but the critical response turned negative as the first season went on.

Review aggregator [Metacritic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metacritic), which assigns a normalized rating out of 100 of reviews from mainstream critics, calculated a score of 79 based on 32 reviews.[[40]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-39) Maureen Ryan of [*The Huffington Post*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Huffington_Post) called it one of the strongest new shows of the season.[[41]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-40) Another *Huffington Post* writer Karen Ocamb praised the writing and the creativity of the series.[[42]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-huffington-41) Mary McNamara of the [*Los Angeles Times*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Los_Angeles_Times) called the show a "triumph" and also went on to say that the creator Theresa Rebeck as well as her team, "have managed to capture the grand and sweeping gesture that is musical theater and inject it with the immediate intimacy of television."[[43]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-42) David Wiegand of [*The San Francisco Chronicle*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_San_Francisco_Chronicle), gave the program a rave review and said that, "[It's so] good you can't help wondering why no one thought of it before, a compelling mix of credible real-life melodrama with a fictionalized approximation of what it takes to get a Broadway show from the idea stage to opening night."[[44]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-43) Tim Goodman from [*The Hollywood Reporter*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Hollywood_Reporter) called the pilot episode "Excellent, a bar-raiser for broadcast networks" and called it superior to [*Glee*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glee_(TV_series)).[[45]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-thr-44) He also praised writing and acting for the series, comparing it to the quality of a [cable television series](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cable_television).[[45]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-thr-44) Matt Mitovich of [TVLine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TVLine) called the cast "pretty damn perfect" and complimented the musical numbers.[[46]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-tvline-45) Robert Bianco of [*USA Today*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USA_Today) gave the show three and a half out of four stars and wrote, "Unless you're allergic to musicals in general and Broadway in particular, you should find that a compelling central story, a strong cast, an out-of-the-procedural-mold premise and some rousing, roof-raising numbers more than compensate for any lingering problems."[[47]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-46)

However, the critical reception for subsequent episodes was less enthusiastic. Chris Harnick of *The Huffington Post* wrote, "How has the rest of Season 1 been so far? Not so phenomenal. That's not to say it has been downright terrible -- there have been some highly entertaining moments -- but it certainly hasn't been goosebumps-inducing, like the final moments of Episode 1, set to "[Let Me Be Your Star](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Let_Me_Be_Your_Star).""[[48]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-47) Kevin Fallon summed up the response in [*The Atlantic*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Atlantic), writing that "there's been an almost visceral reaction to how rapidly and sharply the show's quality has dipped, and just how much promise *Smash* has thwarted...In other words: It's *bad.*" Fallon cites other critics in demonstrating the general acceptance of this opinion.[[49]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smash_(TV_series)#cite_note-48)

# Smash: it's Glee with added sex and glamour



Smash: Katharine McPhee as Karen Cartwright and Megan Hilty as Ivy Lynn, contenders for the role of Marilyn Monroe in the show's fictional 'Marilyn: the Musical'.

By Jane Mulkerrins

We’re watching the filming of *Smash*, the new television show that’s been dubbed “the grown-up *Glee*”. Comparisons with the teen sensation are inevitable, given *Smash*’s lung-busting vocals and high-kicking choreography, but the comedy drama, which shimmies onto British screens courtesy of Sky Atlantic next week, has more in common with more classic shows-within-shows, such as *A Chorus Line*, or even *Kiss Me Kate*. It is certainly “grown-up” – there’s plenty of sex to break up the singing, thanks to the many “showmances”, the intense affairs that blossom backstage among the fictional cast and crew.



The cast of smash

**Plot before cash-in**

[Smash](http://www.guardian.co.uk/tv-and-radio/smash) is a clever conceit: a musical within a TV drama, where the theatrical production may end up on Broadway but the television story comes first. In [Glee](http://www.guardian.co.uk/tv-and-radio/glee), it often feels like the writers work in reverse. They once wrote a plot around Katy Perry's Last Friday Night (TGIF). It wasn't a great plot.

**Slow it down**

Glee's target teen audience are like drunken butterflies from all that online multitasking and sexting, which may explain the hyper pace. There are only three punchlines in the Smash pilot – but at least they're comprehensible.