

Gershwin
and friends

January 27 - February 12, 2012

This production is generously sponsored by



UNITED PERFORMING ARTS FUND

Enlighten is funded in part by the



— POTAWATOMI BINGO CASINO —

Don't Miss Our 9th annual
HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL CELEBRATION
Tuesday, May 22, 2012

AUDIENCE GUIDE

Research/Writing by Justine Leonard
for ENLIGHTEN,
Skylight Music Theatre's
Education Program

Edited by Ray Jivoff
414-299-4965
rayj@skylightopera.com
www.skylightopera.com

GERSHWIN AND FRIENDS is a joyful celebration of four of American's greatest popular composers: George Gershwin, Harold Arlen, Duke Ellington and Fats Waller. Each created distinctive music that represented the tempo and mood of their era; yet it is timeless and remains a vibrant and vital ingredient in the culture of modern music.

In the history of American music, George Gershwin is indisputably a giant. He composed music for Broadway, Hollywood and the classical concert hall, as well as popular songs that brought his work to an even wider audience. He wrote most of his vocal and theatrical works, including more than a dozen Broadway shows, in collaboration with his elder brother, lyricist Ira Gershwin. "The Gershwin legacy is extraordinary because George Gershwin died in 1937, but his music is as fresh and vital today as when he originally created it," said Michael Feinstein, singer, pianist and music revivalist.

His obituary in The New York Times on July 11, 1937 reported: "He said what he wanted to do the most was interpret the soul of the American people. While he won the plaudits of the musical elite... he set the nation laughing at the foibles of his government, but in a more serious mood he wrote music the great conductors were glad to present...Gershwin was a child of the twenties, the Age of Jazz. He was to music what F. Scott Fitzgerald was to prose."

George Gershwin was born Jacob Gershowitz in New York on September 26, 1898 to Russian-Jewish immigrant parents. He first displayed an interest in music at the age of ten. His parents had bought a piano so that his older brother, Ira, could take lessons. But to their surprise, and Ira's relief, it was George who played it. When he was thirteen, he began studying with a teacher who recognized his talent and introduced him to piano works ranging from Bach to Chopin to Debussy.

At the age of fifteen, George left school and found his first job as a "song plugger" at a publishing firm on New York City's Tin Pan Alley. He was seventeen when he published his first song, *When You Want 'Em, You Can't Get 'Em, When You've Got 'Em, You Don't Want 'Em*, which earned him \$5. He moved on to recording and arranging piano rolls under his own name and pseudonyms including Fred Murtha and Bert Wynn.

In 1919, at the age of twenty, he wrote *LA, LA, LUCILLE*, his first complete Broadway musical, with lyrics by Arthur Jackson and Buddy DeSylva. The next year, his song *Swanee*, with lyrics by Irving Caesar, was introduced by the great Al Jolson in *SINBAD* and became a tremendous hit.

From 1920 to 1924, Gershwin supplied producer George White with songs for use in his immensely popular *GEORGE WHITE SCANDALS* series. The first hit the Gershwin brothers wrote as a team was *I'll Build A Stairway to Paradise*, written for the *SCANDALS OF 1922*. As part of another one of the *SCANDALS*, Gershwin worked with lyricist Buddy DeSylva on the experimental one-act jazz opera *BLUE MONDAY*. Set in Harlem, it is widely regarded as a forerunner to the groundbreaking *PORGY AND BESS*.

During the 1920s and 1930s he wrote one brilliant musical after another with his brother Ira as lyricist. *LADY BE GOOD* (1924) was written for the brother and



The Gershwin Brothers by Al Hirschfeld



sister act of Fred and Adele Astaire and included the great standard *Fascinating Rhythm*. This was followed by *OH, KAY!* (1926) starring Gertrude Lawrence with a score that included *Someone to Watch Over Me* and *Clap Yo' Hands*.

FUNNY FACE (1927) also featured Fred and Adele Astaire and the score included ' *S Wonderful* and *My One and Only*. *STRIKE UP THE BAND* (1927) was a musical satire of war and included *Soon* and *I've Got A Crush on You*. Gershwin modified the lyrics of the title song and gifted it to UCLA as a football fight song, *Strike Up The Band for UCLA*.

GIRL CRAZY (1930) featured soon-to-be-movie-star Ginger Rogers and introduced Ethel Merman to Broadway,



singing the standard *I Got Rhythm*. Other classic songs in the score are *Embraceable You*, *But Not For Me* and *Bidin' My Time*. The orchestra for *GIRL CRAZY* included jazz greats Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller, Red Nichols, Gene Krupa, Jack Teagarden and Jimmy Dorsey.

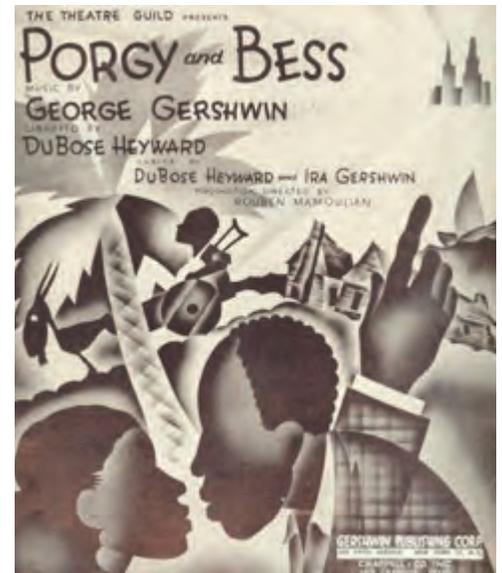
OF THEE I SING (1931), a political satire, made stage history by becoming the first musical comedy to win a Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Along with the title song, the score also featured *Who Cares?*.

In 1924, Gershwin composed his first major classical work, *RHAPSODY IN BLUE*, for orchestra and piano. It was premiered by Paul Whiteman's concert band in New York. The title reflects its free, rhapsodic form and blues flavor. It is not true jazz, though it employs jazz-like rhythms and melodies and the orchestration suggests the distinctive sounds of jazz. There are three main sections and a coda; the extended piano solos in the main sections reflect Gershwin's own dazzling pianism and his genius as an improviser. *RHAPSODY IN BLUE* opens with a now-famous clarinet solo that starts from a low trill, climbs the scale, and then slides up to a high 'wailing' tone. The blues-like opening theme, which grows out of the clarinet slide, is marked by the syncopations so typical of Gershwin's style.

He gave the first performance of his *CONCERTO IN F* at Carnegie Hall in 1925 and traveled to Europe, meeting composers Maurice Ravel and Igor Stravinsky in Paris. Part of his symphonic poem, *AN AMERICAN IN PARIS* (1928) was composed on one of these visits.

Gershwin was influenced by French composers of the early twentieth century including Maurice Ravel, who was impressed with Gershwin's abilities. The orchestrations in Gershwin's symphonic works bear similarities to Ravel's; Likewise, Ravel's two piano concertos display Gershwin's influence. Gershwin asked to study with Ravel. When Ravel heard how much Gershwin earned, he replied with words to the effect of, "You should give me lessons."

His most ambitious work was *PORGY AND BESS* (1935). Gershwin called it a "folk opera," and it is now regarded as one of the most important American



operas of the twentieth century. Based on the 1925 novel *PORGY* by DuBose Heyward, the action is set in the fictional all-black neighborhood of Catfish Row in Charleston, South Carolina.

PORGY AND BESS contains some of Gershwin's most sophisticated music, including a fugue, a passacaglia, the use of atonality, polytonality and polyrhythm, and a tone row. Even the "set numbers," for example, *Summertime*, *I Got Plenty o' Nuttin'* and *It Ain't Necessarily So*, are some of the most refined and ingenious of Gershwin's output.

Unfortunately, *PORGY AND BESS* became popular only after Gershwin's death in 1937. From the very beginning, it was considered an American classic even if critics couldn't quite figure out how to evaluate it. Was it opera, or was it simply an ambitious Broadway musical? "It crossed the barriers," said theater historian Robert Kimball. "It wasn't a musical and it wasn't a drama. It elicited response from both music and drama critics. But the work has always been outside category." Today, *PORGY AND BESS* represents the best efforts to reflect a minority culture in American life and is the most successful opera ever written by an American composer.

George and Ira moved to Hollywood in 1930 to compose scores and songs for movies. Their first movie was *THE KING OF JAZZ*, which featured Bing Crosby and included *Rhapsody in Blue*. This was followed by *DELICIOUS* (1931), starring Janet Gaynor. The movie featured *Blah, Blah, Blah*, a charming love song that satirizes the maudlin lyrics of popular songs.

SHALL WE DANCE (1937) is the seventh of the ten Astaire-Rogers musical comedy films. In a major coup for RKO, this was the Gershwin's first Hollywood musical. The score included *Slap That Bass*, *They All Laughed*, *Let's Call the Whole Thing Off* and *They Can't Take That Away From Me*, which was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Original Song. Sadly, the nomination was posthumous as Gershwin died two months after the film's release.

Other movies with Gershwin scores are *A DAMSEL IN DISTRESS* (1937), which included *Nice Work If You Can Get It* and *A Foggy Day* and *THE GOLDWYN FOLLIES* (1938), which included the Gershwin's last song, *Our Love Is Here to Stay*.

Gershwin was outgoing, athletic and a talented painter. Some of his works were placed on exhibition. And he was an enthusiastic collector of art objects. His apartment in New York contained many notable works.

He was also irresistible to women. He once commented "Why should I limit myself to only one woman when I can have as many women as I want?" Gershwin had a ten-year affair with composer Kay Swift and frequently consulted her about his music, though the two never married.



Brothers George and Ira Gershwin

His musical OH, KAY! was named for her. After Gershwin died, Swift arranged some of his music, transcribed some of his recordings and collaborated with his brother Ira on several projects.

George Gershwin's life was tragically short. Early in 1937, he began to complain of blinding headaches. When he started to forget portions of his compositions while performing them, friends and family encouraged him to see a physician. Doctors discovered he had a malignant brain tumor. He was just 38 years old when he died on July 11, 1937. On hearing the news of his death, writer John O'Hara said, "George Gershwin died on July 11, 1937, but I don't have to believe it if I don't want to."

What set Gershwin apart was his ability to manipulate forms of music into his own unique voice. He took the jazz he discovered in black music into the mainstream by splicing its rhythms and tonality with that of the popular songs of his era. Although he would seldom make grand statements about his music, he believed that "true music must reflect the thought and aspirations of the people and time. My people are Americans. My time is today."

References Wikipedia, PBS, New York Times.

Ira Gershwin (1896 – 1983), born Israel Gershowitz, collaborated with his younger brother George to create some of the most memorable music of the 20th century. The success of the brothers has often overshadowed the role that Ira played. However, his mastery of songwriting continued after the early death of George. He wrote with other composers including Jerome Kern (*COVER GIRL - Long Ago and Far Away*); Kurt Weill (*LADY IN THE DARK - My Ship*); and Harold Arlen (*A STAR IS BORN - The Man That Got Away*). His book, *LYRICS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS* (1959), is an important source for studying the art of the lyricist.

Ira was shy in his youth, and spent much of his time reading. While his younger brother began composing in Tin Pan Alley from the age of eighteen, Ira worked as a cashier in his father's Turkish baths. It was not until 1921 that Ira became involved in the music business when he wrote the lyrics for *TWO LITTLE GIRLS IN BLUE* under the pseudonym "Arthur Francis," with Vincent Youmans.

Once the brothers joined together in 1927, they became one of the most influential forces in the history of American Musical Theatre. Following his brother's sudden death, Ira waited nearly three years before writing again.

Over the next fourteen years, Gershwin continued to write the lyrics for many film scores and a few Broadway shows. But the failure of *PARK AVENUE* in 1946, a "smart" show about divorce, co-written with composer Arthur Schwartz, was his farewell to Broadway. In 1947, he took eleven songs George had written but never used, provided them with new lyrics, and incorporated them into the Betty Grable film, *THE SHOCKING MISS PILGRIM*.

Singer Michael Feinstein worked for Gershwin in the lyricist's later years, helping him with his archive. Several lost musical treasures were unearthed during this period, and Feinstein performed some of the material.

Ira Gershwin died peacefully in his Beverly Hills home in 1983 at age 86. He was survived only by his widow, Lenor Strunsky Gershwin.

Duke Ellington (1899-1974) : The Sophisticated Gentleman of American Music



Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington is a major figure in the history of jazz. He is recognized as the composer of over 1,000 works, as a pianist and big band leader. Ellington's music blends various genres, including blues, gospel and classical. His career spanned more than 50 years and included leading his orchestra, composing an inexhaustible songbook and composing scores for movies and stage musicals. His inventive use of the orchestra, eloquence and extraordinary charisma elevated jazz to an art form on a par with other traditional genres of music.

Ellington was born in 1899 in Washington, D.C. and grew up in a middle-class family that encouraged his interests in the fine arts. His mother surrounded him with dignified women to reinforce his manners and teach him to live elegantly. Ellington's childhood friends noticed that his casual, offhand manner, his easy grace, and his dapper dress gave him the bearing of a young nobleman and began calling him Duke.

He began studying piano at age seven. He also became engrossed in studying art during his high-school years, and actually turned down a scholarship to the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York. Inspired by ragtime artists, he began to perform professionally at age 17.

In 1923, Ellington moved to New York City where he worked in Broadway nightclubs leading a sextet that grew into

a 10-piece ensemble. The unique, blues-based melodies, the harsh, vocalized sounds of his trumpeter, Bubber Miley, who used a plunger "wa-wa" mute and the distinctive sounds of trombonist Joe "Tricky Sam" Nanton, who played muted "growl" sounds, all influenced Ellington's early "jungle style."

Extended engagements at The Cotton Club in Harlem (1927-32, 1937-38) led to Ellington enlarging his band to 14 musicians and expanding his compositional scope. He selected his musicians for their expressive individuality, and several members of his ensemble were themselves important jazz artists. With these exceptional musicians, Ellington made hundreds of recordings, appeared in films, on radio and toured extensively.

The expertise of his ensemble allowed Ellington to break away from conventional band scoring. Instead, he used new harmonies to blend his musicians' individual sounds. He illuminated subtle moods with ingenious combinations of instruments; among the most famous examples is *Mood Indigo*, composed for muted trumpet, unmuted trombone and low-register clarinet. In 1931, Ellington began to create extended works including *CREOLE RHAPSODY*, *REMINISCING IN TEMPO* and *DIMINUENDO IN BLUE/ CRESCENDO IN BLUE*.

A high point in Ellington's career came in the early 1940s, when he composed several masterworks in which successions of soloists are accompanied by diverse ensemble colors. The variety and ingenuity of these works, all made for three-minute, 78-rpm records, are extraordinary.



Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn



By then Billy Strayhorn, composer of what would become the band's theme song, *Take the 'A' Train*, had become Ellington's composing-arranging partner. The young pianist and composer auditioned for Ellington in 1938 and was hired on the spot. The partnership between these two immensely talented musicians would continue for the next twenty-five years.

Musically, Ellington granted Strayhorn enormous autonomy. The men's rapport was so strong that Ellington allowed Strayhorn to finish writing some of his uncompleted songs and most observers have a hard time telling where Duke's work ends and Strayhorn's begins.

Ellington never paid Strayhorn a salary; he simply took charge of all Strayhorn's financial affairs, paying for housing, food, wardrobe and living expenses. Strayhorn was openly homosexual in an era when social bias forced many men and women to keep their sexual identities secret. Ellington simply accepted him as he was. As Ellington described him, "Billy Strayhorn was my right arm, my left arm, all the eyes in the back of my head, my brain waves in his head, and his in mine."

Not limiting himself to jazz innovation, Ellington also wrote such great popular songs as *Sophisticated Lady*, *Rocks in My Bed*, *Satin Doll*, *Don't Get Around Much Any More*, *Prelude to a Kiss*, *9in My Solitude* and *I Let a Song Go Out of My Heart*.

During these years Ellington explored the possibilities of composing jazz within classical forms. His musical suite **BLACK, BROWN AND BEIGE** (1943), a portrayal of African-American history, was the first in a series of suites he composed, usually consisting of pieces linked by subject matter. It was followed by **LIBERIAN SUITE** (1947), **A DRUM IS A WOMAN** (1956), created for a television production, **SUCH SWEET THUNDER** (1957), impressions of Shakespeare's scenes and characters, **FAR EAST SUITE** (1964) and **TOGO BRAVA SUITE** (1971).

Ellington wrote motion picture scores for **THE ASPHALT JUNGLE** (1950) and **ANATOMY OF A MURDER** (1959) and composed for the ballet and theatre including, at the height of the Civil Rights Movement, **MY PEOPLE** (1964), a show celebrating African-American life. He also composed three pieces of sacred music: **IN THE BEGINNING GOD** (1965), **SECOND SACRED CONCERT** (1968) and **THIRD SACRED CONCERT** (1973).

Although Ellington's compositional interests and ambitions changed over the decades, his melodic, harmonic and rhythmic characteristics were for the most part fixed by the late 1930s, when he was a star of the swing era. Ellington's stylistic qualities were shared by Strayhorn, who increasingly participated in composing and orchestrating music for the Ellington band.



**COTTON CLUB ADVERTISEMENT
1937**

Ellington's sense of musical drama and of his players' special talents and his wide range of moods were rare indeed. Not least of the band's appeal was Ellington himself. An elegant man, he maintained a regal manner as he led the band and charmed audiences with his suave humor. His gift of melody and his mastery of textures, rhythms and compositional forms translated his often subtle and complex perceptions into a body of music unequalled in jazz history.

His career spanned more than half a century--most of the documented history of jazz. Ellington's autobiography, **MUSIC IS MY MISTRESS**, was published in 1973. He led the band until his death in 1974.

Ellington was the recipient of numerous Grammy Awards throughout his career, was awarded the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 1966 and the Springarn Medal from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). He received many other awards including the United States Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1969 and the Legion of Honor by France in 1973, the highest civilian honors in each country. He was also elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters.

He died of lung cancer in New York on May 24, 1974, a month after his 75th birthday. His reputation increased after his death and the Pulitzer Prize Board bestowed him with a special posthumous honor in 1999.

Copyright © 1994-2008 Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.



HAROLD ARLEN: Happy with the Blues



Harold Arlen, one of the greatest American composers, wrote extraordinarily complex melodies and harmonies that have had lasting appeal. Soft-spoken and retiring, Arlen was less well known than the other giants of the great days of popular song, but his music has become part of popular culture. His compositions have always been popular with jazz musicians because of his facility of incorporating a blues feeling into the conventional American popular song.

"The distinctive Arlen touch," New York Times critic John S. Wilson wrote in 1978, "was the jazz-based, blues-rooted quality of his music. Such songs as *Stormy Weather* and *Blues in the Night* place him alongside Duke Ellington rather than Richard Rodgers or Irving Berlin."

Though he is best known for composing *Over the Rainbow* for the film THE WIZARD OF OZ, his list of hits and accomplishments is amazing. He wrote over 400 songs for Broadway and film and countless artists have recorded his songs. Arlen even made recordings as a performer, among them sessions with Duke Ellington and Barbra Streisand.

Arlen was born Hyman Arluck in 1905 in Buffalo, New York, the child of a Jewish cantor. By age seven, he was singing in his father's synagogue and by fifteen he had become a professional pianist and entertainer. In his late teens he organized a trio which made its way to New York City.

In Manhattan, Arlen worked as a singer, pianist and arranger with dance bands. By 1929, he realized that his original

goal of a singing career, with all the auditioning and harsh competition was "something my temperament couldn't take." So he switched to composing, collaborating with Ted Koehler on *Get Happy*, Arlen's first hit song.

From 1930 to 1934, Arlen and Koehler wrote music for two shows a year for The Cotton Club, a popular night club in Harlem. Their hits included *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, *I've Got the World On A String*, *Let's Fall in Love* and *Stormy Weather*, which was a show-stopper when Ethel Waters, bathed in blue light, sang it at The Cotton Club.

In 1937, Arlen married beautiful model Anya Taranda over the objection of both of their parents; she was Gentile and he Jewish, but it turned out to be a lifelong love affair of inseparable devotion. Arlen spent much of his life in Manhattan and Hollywood, and on both coasts he cut a dapper figure, sometimes sporting a cane as well as a flower in his lapel.



Much of Arlen's composing was done for movies, including the classic WIZARD OF OZ (1939). Though he and lyricist E.Y. "Yip" Harburg were given only two months to write it, they produced an enduring score including *Over the Rainbow*, which won the Academy Award for Best Original Song. It was also named the Number One Song of the Century by the Recording Industry Association of America and the National Endowment of the Arts.

Arlen's other film work includes RIO RITA (1942), CABIN IN THE SKY (1943), and THE COUNTRY GIRL (1954). He composed two songs which bookend Judy Garland's movie career, first as an innocent girl with *Over the Rainbow* and then as a world-weary, band singer with *The Man That Got Away*, written with Ira Gershwin for the 1954 movie A STAR IS BORN.

In the 1940s, he teamed up with lyricist Johnny Mercer, and continued to write hit songs like *Blues in the Night*, *That Old Black Magic*, *Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate the Positive*, *Any Place I Hang My Hat Is Home*, *One for My Baby (and One More for the Road)*, *My Shining Hour* and *Come Rain or Come Shine*.

He also wrote music for Broadway shows including BLOOMER GIRL (1944), ST. LOUIS WOMAN (1946), HOUSE OF FLOWERS (1954) with Truman Capote and JAMAICA (1957). In 1961 he wrote the music for GAY PURR-EE, a cartoon about singing cats in Paris starring Judy Garland and Robert Goulet. His BLUES OPERA SUITE premiered in Minneapolis in 1957 and was later performed by Andre Kostelanetz at Carnegie Hall with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra.

Sadly, the latter years of Harold's life were not spent basking in the glory of his success. He was distraught when he lost his beloved wife and after her death, he seemed to lose interest in life. The man who loved to socialize withdrew from friends and even family and rarely went out. On April 23, 1986, Harold Arlen succumbed to cancer. He died quietly at home with family in his apartment on Central Park West in New York City. He was 81 years old.



Fats Waller: One of the Jazz Greats

Fats Waller was born Thomas Wright Waller in New York City on May 21, 1904. He is one of the greatest of all jazz pianists and was a gifted songwriter. He was the youngest of four children born to Adeline Locket Waller and the Reverend Edward Martin Waller. His father hoped he would follow in his footsteps as a churchman, but instead Fats became famous as a jazz pianist, organist, composer, singer and comic.

He learned how to play the organ in church with his mother, who gave him a background in classical music. Later in his career, he occasionally performed Bach organ pieces for small groups. His first musical experience was playing harmonium for his father's Abyssinian Baptist Church when he was ten years old. At the age of fourteen he was playing the organ at Harlem's Lincoln Theater and within twelve months he had composed his first rag. The music that Fats picked up around Harlem was viewed by his father as "music from the Devil's workshop."

Waller became a prize pupil of the greatest of the stride pianists, James P. Johnson, who wrote *Charleston* and *If I Could Be With You One Hour Tonight*. Johnson perfected the stride piano style which brought a new role to the left hand in piano playing. No longer would it just keep the beat; it would have equal power so treble, bass, baritone and soprano keys would all work together.

In October of 1922, Waller made his recording debut as a soloist for Okeh Records with *Muscle Shoals Blues* and *Birmingham Blues*. In 1923, Waller's *Wild Cat Blues* and *Squeeze Me*



established his reputation as a composer of material for other artists. About that same time, he began his radio career on station WHN in New York. Waller continued to broadcast as a singer and soloist throughout his life, including the long-running FATS WALLER'S RHYTHM CLUB and MOON RIVER (on which he played organ).

He was one of the most popular performers of his era, finding critical and commercial success at home and in Europe. He was also a prolific songwriter and many songs he wrote or co-wrote are still popular, such as *Keepin' Out of Mischief Now* (1932), *Ain't Misbehavin* (1929), *I've Got a Feeling I'm Falling* (1929) and *Honeysuckle Rose* (1929).

From 1930 to 1943, Fats made over five hundred recordings, toured extensively and appeared on numerous radio broadcasts and Hollywood feature films. He copyrighted over four hundred songs, many co-written with his closest collaborator, Tin Pan Alley lyricist Andy Razaf.

For the hit Broadway show HOT CHOCOLATES, he and Razaf wrote (*What Did I Do to Be So*) *Black and Blue* (1929), which became a hit for both Ethel Waters and Louis Armstrong. This searing treatment of racism refutes the early criticism of Waller that his work was "shallow entertainment".

In 1938, Waller undertook a European tour, which in 1939 was terminated by the outbreak of World War II. But while in Britain, he recorded his LONDON SUITE, an extended series of six related pieces for solo piano: PICCADILLY, CHELSEA, SOHO, BOND STREET, LIMEHOUSE and WHITE CHAPEL. It is Waller's longest composition and represents his aspirations to be a serious composer rather than just the author of a string of hits.

The touring, constant overeating and overdrinking and the nervous strain of many years of legal trouble over alimony payments all took their toll and his health began to break down. He took ill and died of pneumonia while traveling to New York by train on December 15, 1943. After Waller's death, Razaf described his partner as "a man who made the piano sing...both big in body and in mind...a bubbling bundle of joy."



Recordings of Fats Waller were inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame, and a special Grammy Award was established in 1973 to honor recordings that are at least 25 years old and that have "qualitative or historical significance." The Tony Award-winning Broadway musical revue AIN'T MISBEHAVIN' showcasing Waller tunes, was produced on Broadway in 1978 and 1988.

Andy Razaf

(1895–1973), born Andreamentania Paul Razafkeriefo, was a composer, poet and lyricist. Razaf, a descendant of the royal family of Madagascar, was involved with many of the biggest hit songs and shows in early American popular music. He collaborated with composers Eubie Blake and Fats Waller, writing the lyrics for major shows in the '20s and '30s including KEEP SHUFFLIN', HOT CHOCOLATES and BLACKBIRDS OF 1930s. Among his best-known Waller collaborations are *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Honeysuckle Rose*, *Keepin' Out of Mischief Now* and *The Joint Is Jumpin'*.



Drop Me Off in Harlem



Legendary Harlem is easy to find. The Manhattan neighborhood is located north of Central Park at 110th Street and bordered on the North by 155th Street. Harlem's chief artery is 125th Street, popularly called the "Main Stem."

Harlem's history dates back to 1658 when Peter Stuyvesant, Dutch Governor of New Netherland, established the settlement of Nieuw Haarlem. In 1664, the English took control and anglicized the name to Harlem. During the Revolution, George Washington, retreating from Long Island, regrouped and fought the Battle of Harlem Heights.

Harlem belonged to the descendants of Dutch, French and English settlers, who oversaw its transition from an isolated village to an upper-middle-class suburb. Through the 18th century, Harlem was a farming and pastoral area. In the 19th century, it became a fashionable residential district with many houses used as summer retreats. Apartment houses were built during the building boom of the 1880s. High rates of vacancy following the panic of 1893 led property owners to rent to blacks. But despite its well-known reputation as the cultural capital of black America, Harlem had few black residents until a wave of white

flight produced its remarkable transition at the beginning of the 20th century.

By WWI, much of Harlem was firmly established as a black residential and commercial area. After the war it became the center of the creative literary development called the "Harlem Renaissance." Leading figures included author and activist Langston Hughes, James Weldon Johnson (*GOD'S TROMBONES*, 1927) and Alain L. Locke (*THE NEW NEGRO*, 1925). This movement changed the character of black literature and stimulated a new confidence and racial pride.

Harlem had its heyday in the 1920s and 30s. Its booming nightclub scene began to draw the attention of wealthy whites, eager to experience Harlem's excitement. Variety wrote, "Harlem's night life now surpasses that of Broadway. From midnight until dawn it is a seething cauldron of Nubian mirth and hilarity."

For white downtowners, Harlem's clubs offered a thrill beyond the color line, skirting the ban of prohibition, offering booze to white "slummers" and curiosity seekers. Ironically, some clubs had a Jim Crow policy that allowed black performers but excluded blacks as customers.

No club in Harlem was more popular and glamorous than The Cotton Club, which featured many of the greatest African American entertainers of the era, such as Cab Calloway, Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong and Billie Holiday. Just as famous was The Savoy, the community's biggest and most beautiful ballroom. It covered a whole city block, employed two bands at once so that the music never stopped, and was so popular with dancers that its maple-and-mahogany floor had to be replaced every three years.

The onset of the Great Depression, coupled with the end of Prohibition in 1933, marked the end of the Harlem Renaissance. From the 1930s to the 1960s, Harlem's declining social conditions gave the neighborhood a sensationalist and decidedly negative reputation.

Harlem began to see rapid gentrification in the late 1990s. This was driven by changing government policies, including fierce crime fighting and an effort to develop the retail corridor. The number of housing units increased and property values in Central Harlem rose nearly 300% during the 1990s. Harlem is once again the place to be.