

A little history about our songs:

◆ **“S Wonderful”** was introduced in the Broadway musical *Funny Face* (1927) by Adele Astaire and Allen Kearns. The song was included in the 1951 movie *An American in Paris* where it was sung by Gene Kelly and Georges Guétary, as well as in the 1957 American musical film *Funny Face*, in which it was performed by Audrey Hepburn and Fred Astaire and in *Starlift* (1951) by Doris Day. There have been purely instrumental recordings, for example, by Dave Grusin, Ray Conniff, Lee Konitz and Lennie Tristano, Sonny Stitt, and Lionel Hampton with Oscar Peterson. It is sung live by Dean Martin during the opening credits of *Kiss Me, Stupid*.  
 ◆ **“I’ve Got a Crush On You”** is unique among Gershwin compositions in that it was used for two different Broadway productions, *Treasure Girl* (1928), and *Strike Up the Band* (1930).  
 ◆ **“Love Walked In”** was composed in 1930, but the lyrics were not written until 1937, for the movie musical *The Goldwyn Follies* (1938).  
 ◆ **“But Not for Me”** was written for the Gershwin musical *Girl Crazy* (1930) and introduced in the original production by Ginger Rogers. It is also in the 1992 musical based on *Girl Crazy*, *Crazy for You*. Judy Garland sang it in the 1943 film version of *Girl Crazy*. It is also featured in the 1979 Woody Allen movie *Manhattan*, the 1989

Rob Reiner movie *When Harry Met Sally ...* (performed by Harry Connick, Jr.), the 1994 Mike Newell film *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, in the opening scene of the 1998 Bennett Miller documentary *The Cruise*, and in the 2012 anime *Sakamichi no Apollon*. In 2012, it found a home in Act 2, Scene 1 of Joe Pietro’s Broadway musical, *Nice Work If You Can Get It*, featuring the music of George and Ira Gershwin.  
 ◆ **“They Can’t Take That Away from Me”** was introduced by Fred Astaire in the 1937 film *Shall We Dance*. The song is performed by Astaire on the foggy deck of the ferry from New Jersey to Manhattan. It is sung to Ginger Rogers, who remains silent listening throughout. No dance sequence follows, which was unusual for the Astaire-Rogers numbers. Astaire and Rogers did dance to it later in their last movie *The Barkleys of Broadway* (1949) in which they played a married couple with marital issues. The song, in the context of *Shall We Dance*, notes some of the things that Peter (Astaire) will miss about Linda (Rogers). The lyrics include “the way you wear your hat, the way you sip your tea”, and “the way you hold your knife, the way we danced till three.” Each verse is followed by the line “no, no, they can’t take that away from me.” The basic meaning of the song is that even if the lovers part, though physically separated the memories cannot be forced from them.

Thus it is a song of mixed joy and sadness. The verse references the song “The Song is Ended (but the Melody Lingers On)” by Irving Berlin. George Gershwin died two months after the film’s release, and he was posthumously nominated for the Academy Award for Best Original Song at the 1937 Oscars. The song is featured in Kenneth Branagh’s musical version of *Shakespeare’s Love’s Labour’s Lost* (2000), in Stephen Herek’s *Mr. Holland’s Opus* (1995), and in Barry Levinson’s *Rain Man* (1988).  
 ◆ **“Summertime”** is an aria composed by George Gershwin for the 1935 opera *Porgy and Bess*. The lyrics are by DuBose Heyward, the author of the novel *Porgy* on which the opera was based, although the song is also co-credited to Ira Gershwin by ASCAP. The song soon became a popular and much recorded jazz standard, described as “without doubt... one of the finest songs the composer ever wrote ... Gershwin’s highly evocative writing brilliantly mixes elements of jazz and the song styles of negroes in the southeast United States from the early twentieth century.” Composer and lyricist Stephen Sondheim has characterized Heyward’s lyrics for “Summertime” and “My Man’s Gone Now” as “the best lyrics in the musical theater.” The song is recognized as one of the most covered songs in the history of recorded music, with more than 33,000 covers by

groups and solo performers. ♦ **“Isn’t It a Pity?”** was written for the 1933 musical *Pardon My English*. It was introduced by George Givot and Josephine Huston. ♦ **“Soon”** is a 1927 song that was introduced by Helen Gilligan and Jerry Goff in the 1930 revision of the musical *Strike Up the Band*. ♦ **“Long Ago (and Far Away)”** is a popular song from the 1944 Technicolor film musical *Cover Girl* starring Rita Hayworth and Gene Kelly and released by Columbia Pictures. The music was written by Jerome Kern, and the lyrics were written by Ira Gershwin. The song was published in 1944 and sold over 600,000 copies in sheet music in a year. In the film it is sung by Rita Hayworth to Gene Kelly, and later briefly reprised by Jinx Falkenburg. ♦ **“Love Is Here to Stay”** is a popular song and a jazz standard written for the movie *The Goldwyn Follies* (1938) which was released shortly after George Gershwin’s death. It is performed in the film by Kenny Baker. “Love Is Here to Stay” also appeared, perhaps most memorably, in the 1951 MGM picture *An American in Paris*, for which it served as the main theme. It also appeared in 1995’s *Forget Paris* in which it is actually a reference to *An American In Paris*. The song was the last composition George Gershwin completed. Ira Gershwin wrote the words after his brother’s death, giving the song a special poignancy. Originally ti-

tled “It’s Here to Stay” and then “Our Love Is Here to Stay”, the song was finally published as “Love Is Here to Stay”. Ira Gershwin has said that he wanted to change the song’s name back to “Our Love Is Here to Stay” for years, but felt that it wouldn’t be right since the song had already become a standard. The song is emblematic of the Great American Songbook, with both an introductory verse and a chorus. The song is also used in the musical, *The 1940’s Radio Hour*. An instrumental version of the song is heard in some episodes of *The Honeymooners* when Ralph apologizes to Alice. ♦ **“They All Laughed”** was written for the 1937 film *Shall We Dance* where it was introduced by Ginger Rogers as part of a song and dance routine with Fred Astaire. ♦ **“How Long Has This Been Going On?”** was written for the musical *Funny Face* in 1928. It was replaced by “He Loves and She Loves” in *Funny Face*, it was eventually introduced in the musical *Rosalie* (1928) by Bobbe Arnst. ♦ **“It Ain’t Necessarily So”** comes from the Gershwins’ opera *Porgy and Bess* (1935) where it is sung by the character Sportin’ Life, a drug dealer, who expresses his doubt about several statements in the Bible. The role of Sportin’ Life was created by John W. Bubbles. Other notable incarnations of the character include Cab Calloway on stage and Sammy Davis, Jr. in the 1959 film. In the

song, the melody for the words “It ain’t necessarily so” resembles the melody for the words “Bar’chu et adonai ham’vorach”, at the beginning of the aliyah blessing before reading from the Torah. The song has been covered a number of times during the Rock era, most notably in 1965 when The Moody Blues covered the song for their album, *The Magnificent Moodies*; in 1984 the song was released as a single by UK band Bronski Beat from their debut album, *The Age of Consent*; Cher in 1994, Aretha Franklin and Bobby Darin on his 1959 album *That’s All*; Sting even recorded a version of it. Brian Wilson covered this song in his 2010 *Brian Wilson Reimagines Gershwin* album. ♦ **“Someone to Watch Over Me”** is from the musical *Oh, Kay!* (1926), where it was introduced by Gertrude Lawrence. Gershwin originally approached the song as an uptempo jazz tune, but his brother Ira suggested that it might work much better as a ballad, and George ultimately agreed. It has been performed by numerous artists since its debut and is a jazz standard as well as a key work in the Great American Songbook.

(Compiled from Wikipedia and Alexis Gershwin’s personal notebooks.)