

Curtain Up!

A BROADWAY MATINEE



January 17, 2021

Photo: Alicia Johnson

Curtain Up! A Broadway Matinee

Sunday, January 17, 2021 • 3:00PM

WTVP World 47.3

Peoria Symphony Orchestra
George Stelluto · conductor
Michelle Areyzaga · soprano

Curtain Up!	Bob Krogstad (1951-2015)
I Feel Pretty from West Side Story	Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)
Somewhere from West Side Story	
A Little Bit in Love from Wonderful Town	
Take Care of This House from 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue	
A Change in Me from Beauty and the Beast	Alan Menken (b. 1949)
I'll Follow My Secret Heart from Conversation Piece	Noël Coward (1899-1973)
Beauty and the Beast Overture	Alan Menken arr. M. Kosarin
The Song is You from Music in the Air	Jerome Kern (1885-1945)
Think of Me from The Phantom of the Opera	Andrew Lloyd Webber (b. 1948)
Art is Calling for Me from The Enchantress	Victor Herbert (1859-1924)
Selections from Les Misérables	Claude-Michel Schönberg (b. 1944) arr. R. Lowden
Love Walked In from The Goldwyn Follies	George Gershwin (1898-1937)
I Get a Kick Out of You from Anything Goes	Cole Porter (1891-1964)
Three Preludes	George Gershwin
Wishing You were Somehow Here Again from The Phantom of the Opera	Andrew Lloyd Webber
I Could Have Danced All Night from My Fair Lady	Frederick Loewe (1901-1988)

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WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO A FANTASTIC
PSO SEASON!

THE KIDDER MUSIC FAMILY



Peoria Symphony Orchestra

January 17, 2021

Violin 1

Marcia Henry
Liebenow,
concertmaster

Violin 2

Molly Wilson,
acting principal
The Frederick
Family Endowment

Viola

Rebecca Boelzner,
acting principal
Sharon and John
Amdall Endowment

Cello

Kathleen Long,
acting principal
Parker Endowment
in memory of H. H. Block

Bass

Austin Vawter,
principal
Peoria Symphony Guild
and Friends Endowment
in memory of
Norbert Cieslewicz

Flute

Yukie Ota,
guest principal
Augusta Foundation
Endowment in the
name of E.C. Heidrich
Denise Cooksey

Oboe

Alex Liedtke,
principal
Mrs. Thomas Foster
Endowment

Clarinet

Roger Garrett,
principal
Eric Ginsberg

Bassoon

Michael Dicker,
principal
Ben Roidl-Ward

Horn

Renee Vogen,
guest principal
Mrs. Trenchard French
Endowment
Dawn Clark

Trumpet

Sarah Carrillo,
principal
David Nakazono

Trombone

Stephen Parsons,
acting principal
Corey Sansolo

Percussion

Kevin Nichols,
acting principal
Endowment in memory
of Jane and William
Reid and Carolyn
Reid Sisney

Piano

Patrick Godon,
guest principal
Warren Webber
Endowment



Maestro's Message

From traveling shows in Colonial America to today's high-tech productions, there has always existed a tension between artful aspiration and mere entertainment with regard to theater revenue. Now, Broadway cannot be blamed for its mercenary tendencies, because there has never been a time that the opera and ballet worlds did not suffer from similar motivations (outside the realms of royal or governmental patronage). Every composer of opera or ballet has wished for "a hit" that would solidify their career, their bank account, or both. Even the "March King" himself, John Phillip Sousa, sought after and achieved hits on Broadway. It is curious that Broadway productions are considered commercial endeavors and are even planned as such, when opera and ballet "non-profit" productions are not. Perhaps that is changing, and possibly not for the good. Whether from a hit or flop, however, there are definitely artful Broadway songs, as touching and compelling as art-songs. And just like opera arias, the public does have its favorites. Is the public's judgement any better or worse than the "experts" when it comes to what's good in Broadway music? That is a loaded question that would take a book to answer, or a long, long conversation over a beer sometime. Does Disney make a beer? Anyway, I hope you enjoy this selection of Broadway works chosen from hits and flops and everything in between. The PSO's 2020-2021 Artist-in-Residence, soprano Michelle Areyzaga, and I worked hard to bring you a mix of popular favorites and lesser-known gems. —G. Stelluto

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Written by J. Michael Allsen, edited by Mae Gilliland Wright © 2020

In this midwinter program, the Peoria Symphony Orchestra takes you on a trip to Broadway, with music from stage and movie musicals spanning over a century. Our Artist-in-Residence, soprano Michelle Areyzaga, will display her musical and stylistic range in a wide variety of Broadway songs. Successful Broadway shows usually begin with an exciting "curtain-raiser," and this program opens with *Curtain Up!* This fast-paced medley includes music from several shows: "There's No Business Like Show Business" (from *Annie Get Your Gun*), the threatening main theme from *Phantom of the Opera*, "One" (from *A Chorus Line*), "Don't Rain on My Parade" (Barbara Steisand's hit from *Funny Girl*), "If He Walked into My Life" (from *Mame*), and "Everything's Coming Up Roses" (forever linked with Broadway belter Ethel Merman in the show *Gypsy*).



Our first set of songs comes from **Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)**. Bernstein, one of the central figures in 20th-century American music, could have been successful in any one of several musical careers: on Broadway, as a classical composer, as a concert pianist, as a conductor, or as an educator. Instead, Bernstein chose to be *all* of these things... and to do all of them magnificently! His Broadway

masterpiece is *West Side Story* (1957), a collaboration with lyricist Stephen Sondheim and choreographer Jerome Robbins. The show is an "updated" version of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* tragedy, set not in

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16th-century Verona, but in 1950s New York City. The lovers in *West Side Story* are a Puerto Rican girl named Maria, and a Polish-American boy named Tony. In place of warring Montagues and Capulets, there are two rival gangs fighting for territory. The Sharks are recent Puerto Rican immigrants, and the Jets are an "American" gang, primarily Tony's Polish-American buddies. Maria's song "I Feel Pretty" comes from the beginning of Act II, as she sings cheerfully about her new-found love, unaware of the tragedy that has already begun: Tony has just killed her brother Bernardo. Bernstein's 1953 hit *Wonderful Town*, was a more typically lighthearted Broadway musical comedy. The plot centers on two sisters from Ohio who arrive in New York's Greenwich Village, with Eileen determined to become an actor, and her sister Ruth an aspiring writer. Eileen's breezy "A Little Bit in Love" is sung as she realizes she just might be falling for Frank, a clerk at Walgreen's who already loves her (and who has been giving her free lunches every day!). The 1976 musical *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue* was one of Bernstein's very few Broadway failures. It was a collaboration between Bernstein and legendary lyricist Alan Jay Lerner. The two had been classmates at Harvard in the 1930s and remained good friends. In 1972 Lerner approached Bernstein with a concept for an innovative show in which a single pair of actors would play a series of American Presidents—from George Washington to Theodore Roosevelt—and their wives. Bernstein and Lerner thoroughly enjoyed working together, but by the time the show opened in May 1976, it had grown into an unwieldy, four-hour behemoth. It closed, humiliatingly, after only seven performances. Despite the fact that it was one of his worst Broadway flops, *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue* contains some wonderful music, including "Take Care of This House." Abigail Adams, the very first First Lady to live in the White House, sings this fervent song—really a love song to White House itself and its meaning to the nation. Incidentally, in 1997, much of the 1976 show's music was revived in a successful recording titled *A White House Cantata*... giving Bernstein and Lerner a bit of posthumous redemption.

Victor Hugo's 1862 novel *Les Misérables* tells the story of Jean Valjean, a French peasant living in the years leading up to the 1832 revolution, and his search for redemption. The famous musical adaptation was created by lyricist Alain Boublil and composer **Claude-Michel Schönberg (b. 1944)**. Initially produced as an album in 1980, it opened later that year as a wildly successful live production in Paris. The English-language production opened first in London in 1985, and on Broadway in 1987. The Broadway production was a phenomenal success, running until 2003, and was successfully revived on Broadway twice after that. "*Les Miz*" is still a phenomenon today, in continuous tours. Arranger Bob Lowden's *Selections from Les Misérables* includes five songs from the show, beginning with "At the End of the Day," an agitated and vaguely threatening crowd scene from near the beginning of the show. The rousing anthem "Do You Hear the People Sing?" is sung from the barricades of the 1832 revolution, and then again as the show's finale. The heartbreaking "I Dreamed A Dream" was a feature for the character Fantine, a young woman forced into prostitution. "Master of the House" is a sarcastic drinking song led by the corrupt innkeeper Thénardières. The closing selection, "On My Own," is a song of unrequited love by Eponine, the daughter of Thénardières.



Our next vocal set begins with a song from the very early days of the Broadway musical. The immigrant **Victor Herbert (1859-1924)** was initially successful in the United States as a cellist. He later became one of America's leading band and orchestra conductors, and a very successful composer. Like many of his stage works, Herbert's *The Enchantress* (1911) blends elements of European-style operetta and lighter American musical comedy. Set

in the fictional country of Zergovia, it has a convoluted plot centered around the crown prince, the plotters who want to get rid of him, and the princesses and various other ladies who want to marry him. "Art is Calling for Me" is sung by one of the princesses, who tries to capture the prince's eye by hinting that what she *really* wants to be is an opera singer ("I want to be a prima donna donna donna...").

The song is a hilarious take on operatic singing. Witty and urbane **Jerome Kern (1885-1945)** created some of America's finest Broadway musicals. "The Song is You," written with lyricist Oscar Hammerstein, originally appeared in their 1932 musical *Music in the Air*. This wistful song, sung in the show by opera composer Bruno Mahler, quickly became a standard, and was later recorded by Frank Sinatra, Doris Day, and many others. British playwright, composer, actor, and singer **Noël Coward (1899-1973)** worked primarily in England, but was also a success in the United States. His "romantic comedy with music" *Conversation Piece* opened on both London's West End and Broadway in 1934. Set in early 19th-century England, it focuses



IN 2012, PHANTOM BECAME THE FIRST BROADWAY MUSICAL TO RUN 10,000 PERFORMANCES, AND IT IS BY FAR THE LONGEST-RUNNING MUSICAL ON BROADWAY.

on the story of Melanie, who is desperately in love with her protector, an émigré French duke. Melanie sings the lilting waltz "I'll Follow My Secret Love" to express her longing.

Disney unsuccessfully attempted in both the 1930s and 1950s to adapt the French fairytale *Beauty and the Beast* as an animated film, but in 1991 they got it right. That year, *Beauty and the Beast* was a huge hit, and it remains one of the most successful of all feature-length animated films. The movie inspired an equally successful Broadway musical in 1994, and a "live action" movie version in 2017. A large part of the success of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* was the music of **Alan Menken (b. 1949)**. The brief *Beauty and the Beast Overture* brings together several of Menken's songs from the film: "Belle," "Gaston," "The Mob Song," "How Does a Moment Last Forever," "Beauty and the Beast (Tale as Old as Time)," and "Evermore." Ms. Areyzaga then sings *A Change in Me*, written by Menken and lyricist Tim Rice for the stage musical. The song was reportedly written in 1998 to convince R&B star Toni Braxton to take over the role of Belle on Broadway. (Though Braxton was only in the role for a few months, the song remains a regular part of the musical.) In "A Change in Me," sung by Belle in Act II, she reflects on her new, deeper outlook on life since she has been imprisoned by the Beast.



The 1910 French novel *The Phantom of the Opera* by Gaston Leroux is part of the rich romantic literature set in the grand space of the Paris Opéra. It tells the story of Christine, a young opera singer and the mysterious and grotesque Phantom who lives in the tunnels and sewers that run under the huge opera house. It had already inspired several movies and one earlier musical version when **Andrew Lloyd Webber (b. 1948)** adapted it as a musical in 1986. It was a hit in its London opening, and became a nearly-permanent fixture on Broadway when it opened there in 1988. In 2012, *Phantom* became the first Broadway musical to run 10,000 performances, and it is by far the longest-running musical on Broadway. The song "Think of Me" in Christine's breakout moment: an unknown, she suddenly finds herself singing a lead role. The song begins hesitantly but swells into a soaring





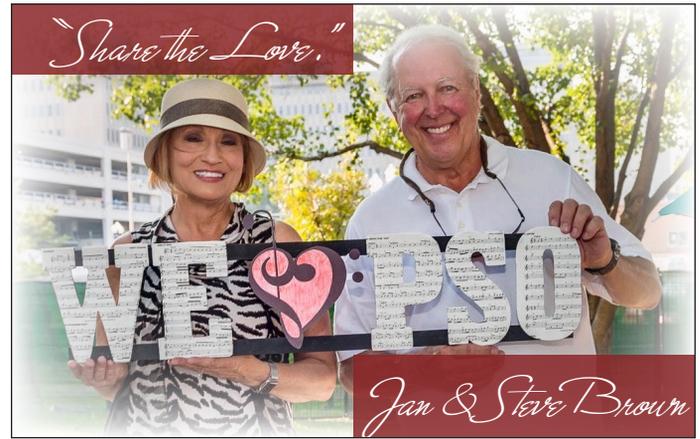
operatic aria. Christine sings the moving “Wishing You Were Somehow Here Again” as a tribute to her deceased father.

No American composer was more successful in incorporating the blues and jazz in classical compositions than **George Gershwin (1898-1937)**. Gershwin was a successful writer of pop songs and Broadway hits, but beginning with *Rhapsody in Blue* in 1924, he

also gained a reputation writing what he referred to as “serious” music: a whole series of jazz-influenced classical works that remain standards today. Arranger Jerry Brubaker’s *Gershwin by George!* brings together several of Gershwin’s songs and classical works: “Strike Up the Band,” “I Got Rhythm,” “Embraceable You,” an excerpt from *An American in Paris*, *Prelude II*, “Summertime,” and selections from *Rhapsody in Blue*. Gershwin and his lyricist brother Ira wrote the song “For You, For Me, Forevermore” in 1936 or 1937, but it never found its way into one of their shows. However, in 1946, nine years after George’s death, Ira was assembling a set of their songs for a Hollywood movie musical, *The Shocking Miss Pilgrim*, and remembered this “lost” song. The lush, romantic “For You, For Me, Forevermore” became the concluding love duet for the movie’s two stars, Betty Grable and Dick Haymes.

Our final vocal selection is by the suave and sophisticated **Cole Porter (1891-1964)**. His musical *Anything Goes* was a minor Broadway hit in 1934. It had a silly and overcomplicated plot; Porter himself described the show as “a mess.” The story, set partly on an ocean liner, focuses on the character Billy, who stows away hoping to meet a mysterious woman he has fallen for—as it turns out, she is an heiress who is already engaged to a rather

dreary English nobleman. Along the way Billy disguises himself in increasingly ridiculous ways... before finally getting the girl in the end, of course! The show was designed as a star vehicle for singer Ethel Merman, who played the role of Billy’s friend Reno Sweeney, a former preacher turned nightclub singer. Despite its ludicrous plot,



the show included some truly great songs, including “I Get a Kick Out of You.” This is sung by Reno near the beginning of the show. Though Billy sees her as a friend, the song makes it clear that Reno is just a bit in love with him.

Our closer is a medley of music from a more recent Broadway hit, *Wicked* (2003). **Stephen Schwartz (b. 1948)** wrote the music for this show, which was based upon Gregory Maguire’s 1995 fantasy novel. This is an imaginative and sometimes disturbing retelling of L. Frank Baum’s children’s story *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, centered on the relationship between Elphaba (who becomes the Wicked Witch of the West) and Glinda (Glinda the Good Witch). In *Highlights from Wicked*, arranger Ted Ricketts begins with “No One Mourns the Wicked,” Glinda’s song from the beginning of the show. (*Wicked* begins with Elphaba’s death, and the rest of the show is an extended flashback.) Elphaba’s “The Wizard and I” expresses her naïve hope that the Wizard will recognize her potential and help her through her troubles. The light “Dancing Through Life” is sung by the irresponsible Prince Fiyero. Glinda’s “Popular” is her attempt to improve the awkward Elphaba with a little “self-help” advice. The sweeping “Defying Gravity” is Elphaba’s triumphant conclusion to the first act. ♦




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