

Cy Coleman

SONGWRITER SHOWCASE SERIES

When you and were babes... Remember ? . Jove, Carolyn

Cy Coleman piano and vocals, unless otherwise indicated

POP SONG

1. WHY TRY TO CHANGE ME NOW? 2:32 (lyric by Joseph A. McCarthy, Jr.)

The Ziegfeld Follies of 1956 (lyric by McCarthy)

2. THE LADY IS INDISPOSED 2:39

The Wonderful O (lyrics by Carolyn Leigh)

3. LITTLE WHAT IF, LITTLE WHAT COULD BE 2:40

Wildcat (lyrics by Leigh; performed by Coleman and Leigh)

- 4. HEY. LOOK ME OVER! 2:32
- FAR AWAY FROM HOME/ANGELINA (cut) 4:33 5.

Little Me (lyrics by Leigh; performed by Coleman and Leigh)

- 6. BEAL LIVE GIBL 3:12
- I'VE GOT YOUR NUMBER 2:25 7.
- ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE TRACKS 1:44 8.
- HERE'S TO US 2:48 9.

POP SONGS

- 10. I'LL BE COMING BACK 2:44 (lyric by Al Stillman)
- 11. THE LAARGE DAARK AARDVARK SONG 1:57 (lyric by Allan Sherman)

Sweet Charity (lyrics by Dorothy Fields)

- 12. I'M THE BRAVEST INDIVIDUAL 2:11
- 13. THE RHYTHM OF LIFE 2:22
- 14. PINK TAFFETA SAMPLE SIZE 10 (unused) 3:05
- 15. POOR EVERYBODY ELSE (cut) 2:39
- 16. I'LL TAKE ANY MAN (unused) 1:15

POP SONG

17. I'M SERVING OUT A HEAVY SENTENCE LOVING YOU 2:55

(lyric by Floyd Huddleston; performed by Nanci Adams)

Eleanor (lyrics by Fields)

18. IF THERE WERE MORE PEOPLE LIKE YOU 2:19

Seesaw (Ivrics by Fields)

- 19. LOVABLE LUNATIC 2:53
- 20. WE'VE GOT IT 2:57
- 21. NOBODY DOES IT LIKE ME 2:23

Atlantic City (lyrics by Christopher Gore)

22. ON THE DAY YOU LEAVE ME 3:27

POP SONG

23. SOME KIND OF MUSIC 3:56 (lyric by Leigh)

Home Again. Home Again (lyrics by Barbara Fried)

- 24. AMERICA IS BATHED IN SUNLIGHT 3:27
- 25. THE WAY I SEE IT 3:24

Barnum (Ivrics by Michael Stewart)

26. THE COLORS OF MY LIFE 4:22

Welcome to the Club / Exactly Like You (lyrics by Coleman and A.E. Hotchner; performed by Coleman and Hotchner)

- 27. SOUTHERN COMFORT 3:42
- 28. AT MY SIDE 2:08

Photo: Cy Coleman and Carolyn Leigh

YOU FASCINATE ME SO

By now Cy Coleman's songs are part of our musical DNA. Mention titles like "Witchcraft," "The Best Is Yet to Come" or "If My Friends Could See Me Now," and people immediately hear them in their minds.

The songwriter's name, however, isn't as well-known. Born Seymour Kaufman in the Bronx in 1929, he began his career as a performer—a child prodigy and wizard at the piano before he was even in grade school. He moved into the realm of jazz and pop music as his teens turned into his 20s, and by the time he was entering his 30s, Cy was writing for the Broadway stage, ultimately winning Tony Awards for *On the Twentieth Century, City of Angels* and *The Will Rogers Follies.*

Even as he enjoyed such success as a songwriter, though, Cy never lost the urge to perform, and with this album compiled from demo recordings he made over the years, you'll get to sample his work as both a composer and a pianist-singer. Along the way, you'll get to rediscover a host of songs you already know, a few more that have been forgotten over the years, and even a few that, until this release, have never been heard publicly.

THE SONGS

POP SONG

1. WHY TRY TO CHANGE ME NOW? (1952, lyric by Joseph A. McCarthy, Jr.)—Cy and Joseph McCarthy were brought together by music publisher Jack Robbins. This early effort made its way to Frank Sinatra, who recorded it as he was unhappily ending his association with Columbia Records. It was one of the last four songs that he waxed for the label, all of them seemingly intended to hint at his dissatisfaction with the company. This tune, for instance, was paired with "The Birth of the Blues."

The Ziegfeld Follies of 1956 (1956)

This show attempted to revive the tradition of the opulent revues Florenz Ziegfeld presented during the first quarter of the 20th century. Headlined by Tallulah Bankhead, the production failed to impress critics, closing in Philadelphia during the second stop on its out-of-town tryout.

2. **THE LADY IS INDISPOSED** (lyric by McCarthy)—This song would have represented Cy's second tune to reach Broadway following "Tin Pan Alley" in *John Murray Anderson's Almanac*. In the production, it was delivered by blues singer Mae Brown as a jaded society type who had decided to forego male company for an evening. Among the ensemble members who performed the number alongside Barnes were Julie Newmar, Larry Kert and Jay Harnick.

The Wonderful O (1958, lyrics by Carolyn Leigh)

Cy and Carolyn Leigh completed an entire score for this adaptation of James Thurber's novella for young people about a pair of pirates who impose martial law on a small island, banning all words and objects that contain the letter "o." But after the team completed their work, the project stalled and they moved on to other shows. *Wonderful O* remained a favorite of Cy's throughout his life. As late as 1981, he was attempting to secure the rights to the book so that the musical could reach the stage.

3. LITTLE WHAT IF, LITTLE WHAT COULD BE—Cy's fondness for this song is evident in the number of ways he would use it or attempt to use it throughout his career. It was almost included as part of the score for his first Broadway musical, *Wildcat*; it turned up in the short-lived 1983 revue *Shecago*; and ultimately it received its first recording in 1996 courtesy of Randy Graff.

Wildcat (1960, lyrics by Leigh)

After many false starts on other projects, Coleman and Leigh—along with a luminous star, Lucille Ball—together made their Broadway debut. *Wildcat* was a highly anticipated production, but beset by poor reviews and Ball's health issues, it racked up just 171 performances. The show did, however, firmly establish the composer and lyricist as accomplished writers for the stage.

4. **HEY, LOOK ME OVER!**—Cy readily admitted to facing writer's block when it came time to write the opening number for a show, and in this case, the stakes were high because the song would introduce superstar Ball to Broadway. He actually started the melody to this tune as a joke after Leigh suggested he write something without thinking about who would be singing it.

5. FAR AWAY FROM HOME / ANGELINA-

These songs, written for the primary and secondary male characters in the show and designed to be delivered in counterpoint, were cut from *Wildcat* after its Philadelphia opening. In their place came a more straightforward number for the male lead (Keith Andes), "You've Come Home."

Little Me (1962, lyrics by Leigh)

For his second Broadway outing, Cy found himself again crafting a musical around a noted television comedian, Sid Caesar—a performer who admitted to having an aversion to lyrics. But the task didn't faze the songwriters, and they developed a buoyant score filled with some of their most memorable tunes (although many were for performers other than the show's star).

6. **REAL LIVE GIRL**—This wisp of a waltz was originally intended as a solo for Caesar, but during the show's tryout in Philadelphia, it became apparent that the musical needed a NOW APPEARING NIGHTLY Limited engagemen





new number for the first act finale. The idea of using the song as an ensemble number as well was broached at the 11th hour, and after being hastily choreographed as one, it turned into a highlight of the show.

7. I'VE GOT YOUR NUMBER—By all accounts choreographer Bob Fosse cast dancer Swen Swenson specifically so that he could dance a sizzling striptease in the middle of the first act of *Little Me*. The combination of the Coleman-Leigh tune, Fosse's routine and Swenson's performance turned the number into a showstopper that was enough to convince Caesar that "The people aren't coming to see me. They're coming to see Swenson."

8. **ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE TRACKS**—This song for the younger incarnation of the show's heroine (Virginia Martin) had an unremarkable history until the original London production of *Little Me*, which featured a heavily Anglicized book. The producer wanted the lyric for this tune changed, and Leigh refused—for a while. She ultimately agreed that it could be performed as "At the Very Top of the Hill," but never recorded that way.

9. **HERE'S TO US**—This song, delivered late in the show by the older incarnation of the heroine (Nancy Andrews), enjoyed moderate success when first heard. But in 1969 it earned its place in pop-culture history when it was played at the beginning of Judy Garland's funeral. Apparently "Here's to Us" was one of her favorite songs.

POP SONGS

10. I'LL BE COMING BACK (1964, lyric by Al Stillman)—Throughout his career, Cy liked to collaborate with many lyricists. Not much is known about the Coleman-Stillman duo, which resulted in this (and one other) unrecorded song. What's interesting about the team's work on "I'll Be Coming Back" is that it foreshadows the marriage of jazz and comedy that would be featured so prominently in one of Cy's shows 25 years later, *City of Angels*.

11. **THE LAARGE DAARK AARDVARK SONG** (1965, lyric by Allan Sherman)—Here is one of two songs that Cy wrote with Sherman, best known for "Hello Muddah, Hello Faddah." The "Aardvark" tune, complete with Chipmunk-like vocals, was released as a single in late 1965, paired with "The Drinking Man's Diet." The 45 spent five weeks on Billboard's Top 40 chart, peaking at 21.

Sweet Charity (1966, lyrics by Dorothy Fields)

After the breakup of the Coleman-Leigh partnership, Cy asked Dorothy Fields—the 58-yearold lyricist of such standards as "I Can't Give You Anything but Love" and "I'm in the Mood for Love"—whether she'd like to work with him. Her response was an immediate "Yes," and when director-choreographer Bob Fosse approached Cy about working on a musical adaptation of Fellini's film *Nights of Cabiria*, Cy felt he'd found the right project to embark on with this stellar wordsmith, 25 years his senior.

12. I'M THE BRAVEST INDIVIDUAL—This song came into the show after librettist Neil Simon decided to incorporate his own experience being stuck in an elevator into the show, giving the eponymous heroine (Gwen Verdon) and her soon-to-be boyfriend, Oscar (John McMartin), a chance to bond comically and with a modicum of mutual attraction.

13. **THE RHYTHM OF LIFE**—Cy knew that the second-act opening number wasn't working, so he sat down with Fields to write a replacement. He once recalled how director-choreographer Bob Fosse resisted the new creation; it wasn't until Cy threatened to abandon the show that Fosse started to stage it.

14. **PINK TAFFETA SAMPLE SIZE 10**—This is one of the first cut songs from the score. The number was intended for a scene that Fosse had adapted directly from the source film: one in which the heroine regressed to her childhood courtesy of a carnival hypnotist. Despite its deletion, the song has lived on, thanks to recordings by such performers as Mimi Hines (on Harbinger Records) and Sylvia Syms.

15. **POOR EVERYBODY ELSE**—This number came toward the end of *Charity* as she realized that the man she loved had also fallen for her. It was performed in Philadelphia but then cut, because the vocal demands of the show were proving to be too much for Verdon. The song would reach Broadway in another Coleman-Fields show, *Seesaw*, and the number that replaced it would become a Coleman-Fields classic, "I'm a Brass Band."

16. I'LL TAKE ANY MAN—There's no indication of how this song, preserved on an early demo disc from Cy's company, Notable Records, would have fit into the script. It seems to have been intended as a comic romance song for Charity and perhaps Oscar.



With Dorothy Fields

POP SONG

17. I'M SERVING OUT A HEAVY SENTENCE LOVING YOU (1966, lyric by Floyd Huddleston)—Pop music was changing profoundly in the 1960s, but Cy adapted without missing a beat, as evidenced not only by the mod sounds in *Sweet Charity*, but also in this collaboration with Floyd Huddleston, a friend throughout Cy's life. He would ultimately turn to Huddleston's wife, Nanci Adams, for assistance during the filming of *Sweet Charity*. She was hired to contract the studio singers who provided vocals during the movie's opening and closing moments.

Eleanor (1970-71, lyrics by Fields) Cy once complained that this unproduced bio-musical about the early life of a future First Lady contained "the

best score I ever wrote that no one will ever hear." It's not strictly true as many of the songs, including this one, would surface in later shows.

18. IF THERE WERE MORE PEOPLE LIKE YOU—At one point, this number was meant to be the title song for *Eleanor*. It was eventually interpolated into the next musical Cy wrote with Fields, *Seesaw*, but the song never reached Broadway. It was cut from *Seesaw* during its troubled out-of-town tryout.

Seesaw (1973, lyrics by Fields)

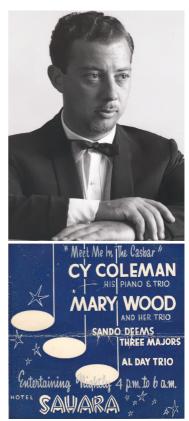
Cy's first taste of overhauling a show from top to bottom came with this adaptation of William Gibson's two-character play, *Two for the Seesaw*. During its Detroit tryout, *Seesaw* gained a new

director-choreographer, Michael Bennett, and a new leading lady, Michele Lee, who replaced Lainie Kazan.

19. LOVABLE LUNATIC —With Seesaw, the Coleman-Fields team returned to their Sweet Charity dynamic: a slightly off-kilter woman, Gittel Mosca, falls for a more straight-laced man, Jerry Ryan. This song summed up Jerry's feelings about Gittel after their first night together. Like many of the demo recordings for this show, Cy's rendition indicates how he was actively working to make the score sound like the music of the day.

20. **WE'VE GOT IT**—The show's male lead, Ken Howard, remembered that this song, delivered in a hospital room at the top of the show's second act, wasn't landing with audiences. The original staging included Jerry dancing with Gittel, who was recovering from an operation. When Neil Simon began advising the creative team on how to fix the show, he explained why: audiences were "worried about the stitches." Once the song became a solo for Jerry, it stopped the show. Howard said that such advice was an "example of how brilliant Neil was."

21. **NOBODY DOES IT LIKE ME**—Cy, suffering from London flu, wrote this number in Detroit as a replacement for "Big Fat Heart," a song that had been once intended for *Sweet Charity*. With this number, the writers were able to redefine the way audiences first met Gittel. Instead of being a victim of her own goodness, she was a woman



who, though unlucky in love, could look at her situation with a sense of humor (albeit a wryly self-deprecating one).

Atlantic City (1976-77, lyrics by Christopher Gore)

This musical about the decaying seaside resort never made it to production. Cy started work on it in the mid-1970s with Christopher Gore several years before Gore won acclaim for the screenplay of *Fame*. By the early 1980s, it had a book writer (Jack Heifner, who had written *Vanities*), and Bob Fosse was set to stage it. Eventually, though, the project was abandoned.

22. **ON THE DAY YOU LEAVE ME**—Cy had hoped to make a two-LP concept album of this musical to help jump-start its path to the stage. The recording never materialized, but the composer did get Tony Bennett to record this number on his 1986 album, *The Art of Excellence*. Cy remained quite fond of the score; he included this poignant tune, along with two others from the show, on his last studio recording, *It Started with a Dream* (2001).

POP SONG

23. **SOME KIND OF MUSIC** (circa 1976, lyric by Leigh)—In the early 1970s, Cy reteamed with Carolyn Leigh, and one of their efforts was recorded by The Mills Brothers as they neared 50 years in show business. This tune comes from the same period, but it doesn't sound as though it was written for that group. What is clear, however, is that composer and lyricist shared a creative spark that refused to die, even after a much-publicized rift in the early 1960s.

Home Again, Home Again (1979, lyrics by Barbara Fried)

This musical based on Russell Baker's "Observer" columns in *The New York Times* had a stormy out-of-town tryout and never made it to Broadway. The show, perhaps the most experimental of Cy's musicals, told the story of a man's life against the backdrop of the devolution of the American Dream.

24. **AMERICA IS BATHED IN SUNLIGHT**—The show's opening number evoked the kind of music played at the dawn of the 20th century. Cy's ever-so-sweet melody is beautifully matched by Barbara Fried's lyric, which begins with sepia-toned imagery and then turns sardonic. This bracing dichotomy infused the entire show.

25. **THE WAY I SEE IT**—This number, delivered by the wife of the show's central character, enjoyed a moment in the national spotlight in 1980. Bea Arthur—then married to the show's director, Gene Saks—performed it on a television special that also included another Coleman number, "Ev'rybody Today Is Turning On," from *I Love My Wife*.

Barnum (1980, lyrics by Michael Stewart)

This hit musical biography of the circus impresario resurrected Cy after the failure of *Home Again* and marked his first foray into the arena of Broadway producing.

26. **THE COLORS OF MY LIFE**—Cy would often look back fondly on the weeks leading up to *Sweet Charity*, when more than a dozen singles from the score flooded the market. He never stopped trying to get singles from his shows, even as the music industry increasingly rejected Broadway. This song generated his last string of pop recordings—by artists ranging from Perry Como to Teresa Brewer.

Welcome to the Club/Exactly Like You (1989 and 1998-99, lyrics by Coleman and A.E. Hotchner) *Welcome to the Club*, a musical set in an alimony jail, survived a mere two weeks on Broadway in early 1989. Nearly 10 years later the writers, working with director Patricia Birch, repurposed some of the songs for a musical that looked at the war between the sexes in a more contemporary and user-friendly way. The new show, however, didn't inspire a markedly different response from critics.

27. **SOUTHERN COMFORT**—For a man who was classically trained and later schooled through his work in the worlds of jazz and Broadway, Cy had a remarkable facility for the country-western genre, as demonstrated in this number written for a character who is a star in that field.

28. **AT MY SIDE**—Like "Southern Comfort," this song was used in both versions of the musical. Listening to its pleasant and instantly memorable melody, it's easy to understand Cy's quip about reusing it: "I'm not going to throw out a good ballad that works. What am I, a fool?"

ANDY PROPST is author of the Cy Coleman biography, You Fascinate Me So: The Life and Times of Cy Coleman (Applause Theatre & Cinema Books/Hal Leonard).

PRODUCED BY Ken Bloom

RESTORATION AND MASTERING ENGINEER Peter Millrose, Millrose Music

HARBINGER RECORDS IS A DIVISION OF THE MUSICAL THEATER PROJECT

For Harbinger Records: Ken Bloom and Bill Rudman, Co-Founders

For TMTP: Bill Rudman, Artistic Director; Heather Meeker, Executive Director

CD Package Design: LuAnn Graffeo-Blonkowski / 64 Second Design

SPECIAL THANKS: Shelby Coleman for her enthusiastic support of this project. Damon Booth at Notable Music, who kindly supplied much of the material for this recording. Andy Propst for his insightful liner notes. Wes Seeley of Hal Leonard/Applause books. And for additional help in amassing these recordings: James Gavin, Kenneth Kantor, Darrel Karl, Daniel Langan, Richard C. Norton, Robert Sixsmith, Richard Tay and Andrew Wilkinson.

MORE CY COLEMAN ON HARBINGER



Sara Zahn: Witchcraft, The Lyrics of Carolyn Leigh—The acclaimed pop/jazz vocalist presents a songbook celebrating the work of the master lyricist, and Rex Reed calls it "a miracle." Leigh worked with some of the great theater composers including Cy Coleman, Jule Styne, Morton Gould and Harold Arlen. Zahn has appeared at Rainbow and Stars, Michael's Pub, the Rainbow Room and other top clubs across the country. As a bonus, she offers nine previously unrecorded Leigh songs. And Broadway's Lewis Cleale duets with Zahn on two numbers.

OTHER TITLES IN HARBINGER'S SONGWRITER SHOWCASE SERIES

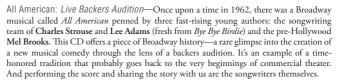


Noël Coward Sings Sail Away—This album is an essential tribute to the great songwriter/ performer, featuring historically important (and hugely entertaining) recordings that have never before been heard. The major portion of the disc comprises **Noël Coward** singing his score for the American musical *Sail Away*, including many songs cut prior to the Broadway opening. In addition: Extremely rare recordings Coward made in 1944 in Calcutta, India! The CD also includes excerpts from the demo of the unproduced show *Later Than Spring*, the first version of what would become *Sail Away*.









Richard Rodgers: Command Performance—In the 1920s the young turk Richard Rodgers, who was already reinventing American musical comedy, recorded sparkling piano rolls showcasing Rodgers & Hart songs. All 14 are featured in this prestigious album, hailed by Gramophone as "a release musical theater mavens will treasure." In addition to the rolls, the CD features Rodgers's demos from the 1934 film musical Mississippi (the composer's only recorded vocals); a priceless 1937 radio appearance in which Rodgers is joined by Lorenz Hart, Don Ameche and Charlie McCarthy; and other rare recordings of the composer at the piano or conducting his music. Annotators include Wiliam Bolcom, Michael Feinstein, Hugh Martin and Ted Chapin, president of Rodgers & Hammerstein.

Hugh Martin: Hidden Treasures—Produced by musical theater authorities Ken Bloom and Bill Rudman, this fascinating set spotlighting a true innovator for Broadway and Hollywood is supplemented by an 88-page booklet with articles on Martin's protean gifts. His admirer Stephen Sondheim provides the Foreword; Mark Eden Horowitz, a senior music specialist at the Library of Congress, writes about Martin as composer and vocal arranger; Sheldon Harnick (*Fiddler on the Roof, She Loves Me*) discusses the work of his fellow lyricist; Michael Feinstein comments on Martin as a fellow vocalist (the two collaborated on a Martin songbook CD in 1992); Ted Chapin talks about the influence of Martin's mentor, Richard Rodgers; and Terry O'Donnell, Martin's music editor for the last 18 years of his life, offers a vivid picture of the songwriter's working process.



Sheldon Harnick: Hidden Treasures—In this historic release, the great lyricist of Fiddler on the Roof. She Loves Me and the Pulitzer Prize-winning Fiorello⁴ shares with musical theater fans 53 of his "Hidden Treasures": rarely (and in some cases, never-before-) heard songs from 17 musicals, with many songs performed by Harnick himself and his late composerpartner Jerry Bock. Harbinger Records producers Ken Bloom and Bill Rudman worked closely with Harnick for two years on this project. The deluxe package includes a 60-page booklet with extensive notes by Harnick and a Foreword by Broadway producer Harold Prince, who comments: "This magnificent set is testimony to Sheldon's extraordinary gifts, and to his place in the pantheon of Broadway musical creators."

YOU FASCINATE ME SO

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CY COLEMAN



YOU FASCINATE ME SO

Rare recordings performed mostly by Cy Coleman, piano and vocals

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- 2. THE LADY IS INDISPOSED
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