

songs of al jolson

Songs of Al Jolson

Al Jolson, often hailed as "The World's Greatest Entertainer," left an indelible mark on the history of American music and entertainment. His songs have transcended generations, capturing the spirit of the early 20th century and shaping the landscape of popular music. Known for his energetic performances, charismatic stage presence, and pioneering use of sound in film, Jolson's repertoire remains influential today. In this comprehensive guide, we will explore the most iconic songs of Al Jolson, their historical significance, and their enduring legacy.

Introduction to Al Jolson and His Musical Legacy

Al Jolson was born Asa Yoelson in 1886 in what is now Lithuania. Immigrating to the United States as a child, he rose to fame in the early 1900s and became a household name through his performances on stage, in recordings, and in films. His innovative approach to entertainment combined singing, acting, and comedy, making him one of the first multimedia stars of his era.

Jolson's influence extends beyond his performances; he popularized the use of blackface in minstrel shows, a controversial aspect of his career that is now viewed critically but was part of the entertainment landscape of his time. Despite this, his musical contributions, especially his recordings of classic songs, continue to be celebrated.

Notable Songs of Al Jolson

Al Jolson's extensive catalog includes numerous hits that have become standards in American music. Here are some of his most notable songs:

1. "Swanee"

- Released: 1919

- Significance: This song is perhaps Jolson's most famous hit, written by George Gershwin and Irving Caesar. Its upbeat tempo and nostalgic lyrics about the American South became a signature piece for Jolson.

- Legacy: "Swanee" helped catapult Jolson to national fame and has been covered by countless artists since.

2. "My Mammy"

- Released: 1918
- Significance: An emotional ballad that became one of Jolson's signature songs, expressing deep longing and affection.
- Lyrics play a vital role in capturing the immigrant experience and the universal theme of yearning for loved ones.

3. "April Showers"

- Released: 1921
- Significance: A hopeful and uplifting song about overcoming difficulties, often associated with Jolson's performances.
- Cultural Impact: This song became a popular standard and has been used in various films and media.

4. "Toot, Toot, Tootsie! (Goo, Goo, Goo)"

- Released: 1919
- Significance: A playful, energetic tune that showcases Jolson's lively performance style.
- Notability: It became a popular dance craze and remains a fun piece in Jolson's repertoire.

5. "Rock-a-Bye Your Baby with a Dixie Melody"

- Released: 1918
- Significance: A cheerful lullaby that captures Jolson's ability to blend humor and sentimentality.
- Popularity: This song became a staple in Jolson's performances and recordings.

6. "I'm Sitting on Top of the World"

- Released: 1925
- Significance: A jazz standard that Jolson popularized, reflecting his versatility across musical styles.
- Features: Its lively rhythm and joyful lyrics make it a timeless piece.

7. "California, Here I Come"

- Released: 1921
- Significance: An optimistic ode to the West Coast, capturing the adventurous spirit of the era.

- Cultural Impact: A song associated with migration and hope, often linked to the American Dream.

The Significance of Jolson's Songs in American Culture

Al Jolson's songs are more than mere entertainment; they are cultural artifacts that reflect the social and historical context of their time. His music played a crucial role in shaping early American popular culture and influenced subsequent generations of performers.

1. Reflection of Immigrant Experiences

Many of Jolson's songs express themes of longing, hope, and perseverance, resonating with the immigrant communities he represented. His heartfelt renditions of songs like "My Mammy" evoke the emotional landscape of those seeking a new life in America.

2. Pioneering Sound in Film

Jolson's performance in the landmark film *The Jazz Singer* (1927), featuring the song "My Mammy," revolutionized entertainment by introducing synchronized sound to movies. This event marked the beginning of the "talkie" era and cemented the importance of songs in cinematic storytelling.

3. Influence on Future Artists

Many artists who followed, including Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby, and Dean Martin, drew inspiration from Jolson's dynamic vocal style and theatrical presentation. His energetic stage persona set a standard for American entertainment.

Al Jolson's Impact on Music and Entertainment

1. Innovator in Performance Style

Jolson's lively, charismatic performances combined singing, acting, and comedy, creating a comprehensive entertainment experience. His use of expressive gestures and facial expressions made his performances memorable.

2. Recording Legacy

His early recordings helped popularize the phonograph and recorded music, making his songs accessible to a broad audience.

3. Controversial Legacy

While Jolson's contributions to entertainment are celebrated, his use of blackface has become a point of controversy. Modern perspectives recognize the offensive nature of such performances, but they are also acknowledged as part of the historical context.

Legacy and Modern Recognition

Despite the complexities surrounding his career, Al Jolson's songs continue to be celebrated through various mediums:

- Reissues of classic recordings and compilations
- References in films and documentaries about early American entertainment
- Tributes and performances by contemporary artists
- Academic studies on his influence and cultural significance

His songs remain a testament to a transformative period in American music history and serve as a reminder of the evolving nature of entertainment.

Conclusion

The songs of Al Jolson are timeless pieces that encapsulate the spirit of an era marked by innovation, cultural change, and the pursuit of the American Dream. From the infectious "Swanee" to the heartfelt "My Mammy," his repertoire showcases a versatile artist who helped shape the landscape of popular music and film. While his legacy is complex, his musical contributions continue to resonate, inspiring new generations and preserving his place in the annals of entertainment history.

Further Listening and Resources

- Listen to Jolson's classic recordings on streaming platforms
- Explore documentaries about his life and career
- Read biographies such as *Jolson: The Legend Continues* by Peter Coles
- Visit archives and museums dedicated to early American entertainment

By understanding the songs of Al Jolson, enthusiasts can appreciate the roots of modern entertainment and the enduring power of music to tell stories, evoke emotions, and unite audiences across generations.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who was Al Jolson and why is he considered a legendary figure in music history?

Al Jolson was a pioneering American singer, actor, and performer known for his powerful voice and charismatic stage presence. Often called 'The World's Greatest Entertainer,' he played a significant role in popularizing jazz and vaudeville, and his performances in the early 20th century left a lasting legacy in American music history.

What is Al Jolson's most famous song?

Al Jolson's most famous song is 'Swanee,' which became a huge hit in 1919 and is considered one of his signature performances. The song helped catapult his career and remains closely associated with his legacy.

How did Al Jolson influence the development of musical theater and film?

Al Jolson was a pioneer in integrating singing and acting, contributing to the evolution of musical theater and the musical film genre. His performance in 'The Jazz Singer' (1927), the first feature-length motion picture with synchronized dialogue, marked a milestone in the transition from silent films to 'talkies.'

Are any of Al Jolson's songs still popular today?

While his music is less mainstream now, some of Al Jolson's songs like 'Swanee' and 'My Mammy' remain iconic and are still performed and referenced in historical contexts, tribute performances, and nostalgic media.

What is the significance of 'My Mammy' in Al Jolson's career?

'My Mammy' is one of Jolson's most beloved songs, showcasing his emotional singing style. It became a cultural hit and is often associated with his performances, symbolizing his connection to themes of family and nostalgia.

How did Al Jolson's performances reflect the entertainment culture of his era?

Al Jolson's energetic and charismatic performances epitomized the vaudeville and early Broadway entertainment style, blending comedy, singing, and acting to captivate diverse audiences during the early 20th century.

What controversies are associated with Al Jolson and his legacy?

Al Jolson's legacy is complex due to his use of blackface in performances, which is now widely recognized as racist and offensive. While he was a product of his time, modern audiences critique his blackface performances as problematic and racial insensitivity.

Have any modern artists covered songs originally performed by Al Jolson?

Yes, several artists and tribute performers have covered Jolson's songs over the years, aiming to honor his contributions to music and theater. However, contemporary performances often contextualize his work within its historical period due to its controversial aspects.

What is the historical significance of Al Jolson's performance in 'The Jazz Singer'?

Al Jolson's role in 'The Jazz Singer' (1927) is historically significant as it marked the first feature film with synchronized sound, revolutionizing the film industry and ushering in the era of talkies, transforming entertainment forever.

Additional Resources

Songs of Al Jolson: A Timeless Legacy of Jazz and Broadway

Al Jolson, often hailed as "The World's Greatest Entertainer," holds a monumental place in the history of American music and entertainment. His songs, characterized by powerful vocals, emotional depth, and a pioneering spirit, have left an indelible mark on the development of jazz, musical theater, and popular culture. This review delves into the rich tapestry of Jolson's musical repertoire, exploring his most iconic

songs, their historical significance, stylistic features, and enduring influence.

Introduction to Al Jolson and His Musical Significance

Al Jolson was born Asa Yoelson in 1886 in present-day Lithuania and immigrated to the United States as a child. Rising from humble beginnings, he became a Broadway star and a film icon, known for his charismatic stage presence and groundbreaking use of blackface minstrelsy, which, while controversial today, was a reflection of its time and contributed to his fame.

Jolson's contribution to music is vast, but he is most celebrated for his ability to combine heartfelt emotion with a dynamic vocal style. His songs often bridged the gap between vaudeville, jazz, and musical comedy, making him a versatile and influential figure.

Iconic Songs of Al Jolson

Al Jolson's discography includes hundreds of recordings, but certain songs stand out as emblematic of his style and era. Here are some of his most enduring and influential works:

"Swanee" (1919)

- Overview: Composed by George Gershwin with lyrics by Irving Caesar, "Swanee" became Jolson's signature song and a massive hit.
- Significance: It catapulted Jolson to stardom and is often considered one of the earliest examples of a song that became a cultural phenomenon.
- Stylistic Features:
 - Jolson's exuberant vocal delivery
 - Use of expressive, declamatory singing
 - Incorporation of jazz-inflected phrasing
- Legacy: "Swanee" is credited with popularizing jazz-influenced vocal styles in mainstream American music.

"My Mammy" (1918)

- Overview: Written by Walter Donaldson and Sam M. Lewis, this sentimental ballad became one of Jolson's most beloved songs.
- Themes:
 - Nostalgia for home and maternal love
 - Emotional appeal rooted in personal and cultural identity
- Performance Style:
 - Jolson's heartfelt delivery made the song resonate deeply with audiences
 - His use of vibrato and expressive phrasing heightened its emotional impact
- Cultural Impact: Became an anthem for many Jewish and immigrant families in America.

"April Showers" (1921)

- Overview: Composed by Louis Silvers with lyrics by B.G. DeSylva, this song captures the optimism and hope of spring.
- Features:
 - Bright, cheerful melody
 - Jolson's lively vocal style emphasized the song's uplifting spirit
- Legacy:
 - Popularized in Jolson's performances and recordings
 - Became a standard in American musical repertoire

"Toot, Toot, Tootsie! (Gimme Some Skoots!)" (1919)

- Overview: An upbeat, comic song written by Gus Kahn, Dan Russo, and Ernie Erdman.
- Characteristics:
 - Catchy, playful lyrics
 - Jolson's theatrical delivery infused with humor
- Impact:
 - Showcased Jolson's comedic talents
 - Became a dance and novelty hit

"Rock-a-Bye Your Baby with a Dixie Melody" (1918)

- Overview: Written by Jean Schwartz, Sam M. Lewis, and Joe Young.
- Significance:
 - One of Jolson's early hits, emphasizing his ability to blend sentimental ballads with lively rhythms.

- Features:
- A lullaby with an upbeat twist
- Jolson's dynamic vocals brought a new level of expressiveness to popular music

Stylistic Elements and Performance Style

Al Jolson's songs are distinguished not only by their melodies but also by his unique vocal and theatrical approach. Analyzing his style reveals several key elements:

Vocal Technique

- **Powerful Voice:** Jolson could project with tremendous strength, capable of filling large theaters without amplification.
- **Expressiveness:** His use of vibrato, dynamic contrasts, and emotional phrasing added depth to his performances.
- **Versatility:** He seamlessly transitioned between comedic, sentimental, and dramatic singing styles.

Performance Style

- **Theatrical Presence:** Jolson's stage persona was charismatic and energetic, often involving exaggerated gestures and facial expressions.
- **Blackface Minstrelsy:** Controversial today, Jolson's use of blackface was a reflection of the entertainment conventions of the early 20th century but remains a complex aspect of his legacy.
- **Audience Engagement:** Jolson was known for his direct connection with audiences, often breaking the fourth wall and encouraging participation.

Innovations and Pioneering Aspects

- **Use of Microphone:** Jolson was among the first to utilize the microphone effectively, allowing for more nuanced vocal performances.
- **Integration of Jazz and Popular Music:** His recordings and stage acts incorporated jazz elements, influencing future performers.
- **Cross-Media Success:** Jolson's songs gained popularity through stage shows, recordings, and films, notably in "The Jazz Singer" (1927), the first synchronized sound feature.

Historical Context and Cultural Impact

Understanding Jolson's songs requires appreciating the broader cultural and historical landscape of early 20th-century America.

The Jazz Age and Roaring Twenties

- Jolson's music epitomized the lively spirit of the 1920s, blending traditional vaudeville with emerging jazz influences.
- His energetic performances helped popularize jazz and swing rhythms among mainstream audiences.

Immigration and Cultural Identity

- As an immigrant and a member of the Jewish community, Jolson's songs often reflected themes of nostalgia, hope, and cultural pride.
- "My Mammy" and other songs resonated with immigrant communities, serving as symbols of cultural identity and belonging.

Impact on Musical Theater and Film

- Jolson's success paved the way for future musical stars and the integration of song into narrative storytelling.
- His role in "The Jazz Singer" marked the beginning of the talkie era, revolutionizing cinema.

Controversy and Legacy

- His use of blackface remains a sensitive aspect of his legacy, prompting ongoing discussions about historical context versus cultural appropriation.
- Despite this, his musical innovations and showmanship continue to influence generations of performers.

Enduring Influence and Modern Perspectives

Al Jolson's songs continue to resonate today, both for their historical importance and their musical excellence.

Influence on Future Artists

- Jolson's expressive vocal style influenced singers like Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra, and Dean Martin.
- His integration of jazz and popular music laid groundwork for future crossover successes.

Modern Reinterpretations

- Contemporary artists and tribute acts often revisit Jolson's songs, sometimes recontextualizing them within modern sensibilities.
- Discussions around his legacy have prompted critical reflection on the racial aspects of his performances.

Preservation and Recognition

- Many of Jolson's recordings have been preserved through remastering and digital archiving.
- His contributions are recognized in the Smithsonian and other cultural institutions as foundational to American entertainment history.

Conclusion: The Lasting Echo of Jolson's Songs

Al Jolson's songs are more than mere melodies; they are a window into a transformative era of American entertainment. His ability to evoke emotion, his pioneering spirit, and his influence across multiple media have cemented his place as a legendary figure. While some aspects of his performance style are viewed critically today, the artistry and cultural impact of his songs remain undeniable.

Through "Swanee," "My Mammy," and other classics, Jolson's voice continues to echo in the halls of musical history, reminding us of the power of performance to unite, uplift, and inspire across generations. His songs serve as a testament to the vibrant, complex tapestry of American cultural history—an enduring legacy of innovation, emotion, and showmanship.

Songs Of Al Jolson

songs of al jolson: *The Music Men* Richard Grudens, 1998 As a companion to *The Best Damn Trumpet Player* and *The Song Stars*, this is the last of a trilogy, with a foreword by Bob Hope, explores the world of male vocalists. Richard Grudens initiates a retrospective tribute to the early singers Al Jolson and Bing Crosby, Fats Waller and Nat King Cole. His heart-warming interviews or vignettes with living-legend artists, Frank Sinatra, Jack Jones, Vic Damone, Steve Lawrence, Tony Martin, Johnny Mathis, Guy Mitchell, Eddie Fisher, Andy Williams and Don Cornell are revealing, anecdotal gems. And who could forget Dick Haymes, The Ink Spots, Ray Eberle and Bob Eberly, and Billy Eckstine. Features: Donald Mills and the Mills Brothers, Sam Arlen talks of his father, Harold Arlen, and a look at Lou Lanza, Philadelphia's new singing star. The author provides a special insight into the lives of the Music Men and provides over 60 exceptional photographs to enrich your reading pleasure.

songs of al jolson: The Singer and His Songs Deke Rivers, 2010-05-12 The first time Chris Wild sees an electric guitar, it is as if he has found a long-lost friend. As soon as he touches the smooth surface of the guitar and his fingers wrap around its neck, his life changes forever. It is the mid-1950s in Australia when Chris realizes he possesses a musical gift and joins the teenage band, the Offenders never realizing he has just embarked on a life-spanning career. Forced to leave the Offenders behind when his family emigrates to Canada, Chris never hears that their first single has become an Australian chart-topping hit. In Canada, Chris receives no support for his musical talents and reluctantly studies to become an architectural technician. While assisting with the design of a recording studio, his innate musical gift is revealed during a solo midnight session overheard by the studio executives. Suddenly, Chris is launched back into the musical world and into a life of stardom. As he inspires thousands all over the world with his new album, Chris's old girlfriend from Australia resurfaces and he must determine how to reconcile his original muse, April, with his new lover, Sarah. Fate can be capricious, especially when someone lives in two different worlds.

songs of al jolson: *The Best Songs Of 1920* Donny Bosselman, 2016-12-20 This book is meant to introduce you to some of the best songs to come out in the year 1920. Hopefully, after reading about these songs and artists, you will go out and listen to them discovering new music you love in the process. While doing research for this book, I was able to discover many new tracks that have become personal favorites myself. The songs are listed in order by the artist that recorded them. To put this list together I pulled from several Greatest songs ever lists from varying genres, as well as my own personal preferences.

songs of al jolson: *AFI Catalog of Motion Pictures Produced in the United States* American Film Institute, 1971

songs of al jolson: Music of the First World War Don Tyler, 2016-03-21 This book discusses WWI-era music in a historical context, explaining music's importance at home and abroad during WWI as well as examining what music was being sung, played, and danced to during the years prior to America's involvement in the Great War. Why was music so important to soldiers abroad during World War I? What role did music—ranging from classical to theater music, rags, and early jazz—play on the American homefront? *Music of the First World War* explores the tremendous importance of music during the years of the Great War—when communication technologies were extremely limited and music often took the place of connecting directly with loved ones or reminiscing via recorded images. The book's chapters cover music's contribution to the war effort; the variety of war-related songs, popular hits, and top recording artists of the war years; the music of Broadway shows and other theater productions; and important composers and lyricists. The author also explores the development of the fledgling recording industry at this time.

songs of al jolson: The Complete Book of 1910s Broadway Musicals Dan Dietz, 2021-05-26 The 1910s shaped the future of the American musical. While many shows of the decade were imports of European operettas, and even original Broadway musicals were influenced by continental

productions, the musicals of the 1910s found their own American voice. In *The Complete Book of 1910s Broadway Musicals*, Dan Dietz covers all 312 musicals that opened on Broadway during this decade. Among the shows discussed are *The Balkan Princess*, *The Kiss Waltz*, *Naughty Marietta*, *The Firefly*, *Very Good Eddie*, *Leave It to Jane*, *Watch Your Step*, *See America First*, and *La-La-Lucille*. Dietz places each musical in its historical context, including the women's suffrage movement and the decade's defining historical event, World War I. Each entry features the following: Plot summary, Cast members, Creative team, including writers, lyricists, composers, directors, choreographers, and producers, Opening and closing dates, Number of performances, Critical commentary, Musical numbers and the performers who introduced the songs. Numerous appendixes include a chronology, discography, filmography, Gilbert and Sullivan productions, Princess Theatre musicals, musicals with World War I themes, and published scripts, making this book a comprehensive and significant resource. *The Complete Book of 1910s Broadway Musicals* will captivate and inform scholars, historians, and casual fans about this influential decade in musical theatre history.

songs of al jolson: *Movie Song Catalog* Ruth Benjamin, Arthur Rosenblatt, 2024-10-17 This is an exhaustive reference volume to the thousands of songs, songwriters and performers in 1,460 American and British films (musical and nonmusical) since the advent of the talkie in 1928. Listed alphabetically by film title, each entry provides full production information on the movie, including the country of origin, year of release, running time, director, musical director, musical score, studio, producer, orchestra or bands featured, music backup, vocalist, (dubber who sang on the soundtrack), and performers. Each song title in the main entry is followed by the name of the performer, lyricist, composer, and, when appropriate, arranger.

songs of al jolson: *Hit Songs, 1900-1955* Don Tyler, 2007-04-16 This is a chronology of the most famous songs from the years before rock 'n' roll. The top hits for each year are described, including vital information such as song origin, artist(s), and chart information. For many songs, the author includes any web or library holdings of sheet music covers, musical scores, and free audio files. An extensive collection of biographical sketches follows, providing performing credits, relevant professional awards, and brief biographies for hundreds of the era's most popular performers, lyricists, and composers. Includes an alphabetical song index and bibliography.

songs of al jolson: *Encyclopedia of Great Popular Song Recordings* Steve Sullivan, 2013-10-04 From John Philip Sousa to Green Day, from Scott Joplin to Kanye West, from Stephen Foster to Coldplay, *The Encyclopedia of Great Popular Song Recordings*, Volumes 1 and 2 covers the vast scope of its subject with virtually unprecedented breadth and depth. Approximately 1,000 key song recordings from 1889 to the present are explored in full, unveiling the stories behind the songs, the recordings, the performers, and the songwriters. Beginning the journey in the era of Victorian parlor balladry, brass bands, and ragtime with the advent of the record industry, readers witness the birth of the blues and the dawn of jazz in the 1910s and the emergence of country music on record and the shift from acoustic to electrical recording in the 1920s. The odyssey continues through the Swing Era of the 1930s; rhythm & blues, bluegrass, and bebop in the 1940s; the rock & roll revolution of the 1950s; modern soul, the British invasion, and the folk-rock movement of the 1960s; and finally into the modern era through the musical streams of disco, punk, grunge, hip-hop, and contemporary dance-pop. Sullivan, however, also takes critical detours by extending the coverage to genres neglected in pop music histories, from ethnic and world music, the gospel recording of both black and white artists, and lesser-known traditional folk tunes that reach back hundreds of years. This book is ideal for anyone who truly loves popular music in all of its glorious variety, and anyone wishing to learn more about the roots of virtually all the music we hear today. Popular music fans, as well as scholars of recording history and technology and students of the intersections between music and cultural history will all find this book to be informative and interesting.

songs of al jolson: *The Complete Book of 1920s Broadway Musicals* Dan Dietz, 2019-04-10 During the Twenties, the Great White Way roared with nearly 300 book musicals. Luminaries who wrote for Broadway during this decade included Irving Berlin, George M. Cohan, Rudolf Friml, George Gershwin, Oscar Hammerstein II, Lorenz Hart, Jerome Kern, Cole Porter, Richard Rodgers,

Sigmund Romberg, and Vincent Youmans, and the era's stars included Eddie Cantor, Al Jolson, Ruby Keeler, and Marilyn Miller. Light-hearted Cinderella musicals dominated these years with such hits as Kern's long-running *Sally*, along with romantic operettas that dealt with princes and princesses in disguise. Plots about bootleggers and Prohibition abounded, but there were also serious musicals, including Kern and Hammerstein's masterpiece *Show Boat*. In *The Complete Book of 1920s Broadway Musicals*, Dan Dietz examines in detail every book musical that opened on Broadway during the years 1920-1929. The book discusses the era's major successes as well as its forgotten failures. The hits include *A Connecticut Yankee*; *Hit the Deck!*; *No, No, Nanette*; *Rose-Marie*; *Show Boat*; *The Student Prince*; *The Vagabond King*; and *Whoopee*, as well as ambitious failures, including *Deep River*; *Rainbow*; and Rodgers' daring *Chee-Chee*. Each entry contains the following information: Plot summary Cast members Names of creative personnel, including book writers, lyricists, composers, directors, choreographers, producers, and musical directors Opening and closing dates Number of performances Plot summary Critical commentary Musical numbers and names of the performers who introduced the songs Production data, including information about tryouts Source material Details about London productions Besides separate entries for each production, the book offers numerous appendixes, including ones which cover other shows produced during the decade (revues, plays with music, miscellaneous musical presentations, and a selected list of pre-Broadway closings). Other appendixes include a discography, filmography, a list of published scripts, and a list of black-themed musicals. This book contains a wealth of information and provides a comprehensive view of each show. *The Complete Book of 1920s Broadway Musicals* will be of use to scholars, historians, and casual fans of one of the greatest decades in the history of musical theatre.

songs of al jolson: A Song in the Dark Richard Barrios, 1995 Chronicling the early musical film years from 1926 to 1934, *A Song in the Dark* offers a fascinating look at these innovative films, the product of much of the major experimentation that went on during the development of sound technology. The triumphs, disasters and offscreen intrigue of this era form a remarkable story of this vital and unique film history.

songs of al jolson: Music of the Postwar Era Don Tyler, 2007-11-30 At the end of WWII, themes in music shifted from soldiers' experiences at war to coming home, marrying their sweethearts, and returning to civilian life. The music itself also shifted, with crooners such as Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra replacing the Big Bands of years past. Country music, jazz, and gospel continued to evolve, and rhythm and blues and the new rock and roll were also popular during this time. Music is not created without being influenced by the political events and societal changes of its time, and the Music of the Postwar Era is no exception. *includes combined musical charts for the years 1945-1959 *approximately 20 black and white images of the singers and musicians who represent the era's music

songs of al jolson: The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess Robin Thompson, 2010-11 (Amadeus). In 1935 George Gershwin continued the melding of theatrical, classical, and jazz idioms he began with *Rhapsody in Blue*, bringing DuBose Heyward's novel and play *Porgy* to the musical stage with *Porgy and Bess*. Collaborating with his brother Ira and Heyward, Gershwin created what was deemed at the time a folk opera a work that over the years has passed through cycles of praise and criticism, finally achieving recognition as a great American theatrical achievement and inclusion in the repertoire of opera companies around the world. In this lavishly illustrated 75th anniversary volume, created with the participation of the Gershwin estate, opera producer and author Robin Thompson recounts the history of *Porgy and Bess* as he looks at the various interpretations of the work and the many layers of meaning to be found in the story of the crippled Porgy, the conflicted and vulnerable Bess, the dope peddler Sportin' Life, and the other residents of Catfish Row. Packed with unique, rarely seen archival photographs and documents associated with the production, *Porgy and Bess* commemorates this uniquely American blending of musical, ethnic, and creative styles and the people, the performers, and the times that produced it.

songs of al jolson: The Singing Entertainer Cort Casady, John Davidson, A fantastic reference

book for all future and presently performing professionals. Contains helpful information about preparing your act, performing, vocal stamina and fatigue, selling yourself and making money!

songs of al jolson: *The Encyclopedia of Vaudeville* Anthony Slide, 2012-03-12 The Encyclopedia of Vaudeville provides a unique record of what was once America's preeminent form of popular entertainment from the late 1800s through the early 1930s. It includes entries not only on the entertainers themselves, but also on those who worked behind the scenes, the theatres, genres, and historical terms. Entries on individual vaudevillians include biographical information, samplings of routines and, often, commentary by the performers. Many former vaudevillians were interviewed for the book, including Milton Berle, Block and Sully, Kitty Doner, Fifi D'Orsay, Nick Lucas, Ken Murray, Fayard Nicholas, Olga Petrova, Rose Marie, Arthur Tracy, and Rudy Vallee. Where appropriate, entries also include bibliographies. The volume concludes with a guide to vaudeville resources and a general bibliography. Aside from its reference value, with its more than five hundred entries, The Encyclopedia of Vaudeville discusses the careers of the famous and the forgotten. Many of the vaudevillians here, including Jack Benny, George Burns and Gracie Allen, Jimmy Durante, W. C. Fields, Bert Lahr, and Mae West, are familiar names today, thanks to their continuing careers on screen. At the same time, and given equal coverage, are forgotten acts: legendary female impersonators Bert Savoy and Jay Brennan, the vulgar Eva Tanguay with her billing as "The I Don't Care Girl," male impersonator Kitty Doner, and a host of "freak" acts.

songs of al jolson: *Music in the USA* Judith Tick, Paul Beaudoin, 2008-09-26 Music in the USA: A Documentary Companion charts a path through American music and musical life using as guides the words of composers, performers, writers and the rest of us ordinary folks who sing, dance, and listen. The anthology of primary sources contains about 160 selections from 1540 to 2000. Sometimes the sources are classics in the literature around American music, for example, the Preface to the Bay Psalm Book, excerpts from Slave Songs of the United States, and Charles Ives extolling Emerson. But many other selections offer uncommon sources, including a satirical story about a Yankee music teacher; various columns from 19th-century German American newspapers; the memoirs of a 19th-century diva; Lottie Joplin remembering her husband Scott; a little-known reflection of Copland about Stravinsky; an interview with Muddy Waters from the Chicago Defender; a letter from Woody Guthrie on the spunkfire attitude of a folk song; a press release from the Country Music Association; and the Congressional testimony around Napster. Sidebar entries occasionally bring a topic or an idea into the present, acknowledging the extent to which revivals of many kinds of music play a role in American contemporary culture. This book focuses on the connections between theory and practice to enrich our understanding of the diversity of American musical experiences. Designed especially to accompany college courses which survey American music as a whole, the book is also relevant to courses in American history and American Studies.

songs of al jolson: *Top Popular Music of the Early 20th Century: 1900 - 1949 -- Rankings, Artists & Links* Wayne Cottrell, 2019-04-13 This book features by-decade rankings of music singles and albums, in six different genres, covering the first half of the 20th century. The decade of the 1890s is also included. The rankings pertain to U.S. music charts, wherein a typical week's chart would be based on sales, radio airplays, jukebox plays, and-or a combination of one or more of these. The genres include children's, classical, country, instrumental, popular, and rhythm & blues music. Short biographies on a selection of artists are located throughout the book. The artists index includes some vital statistics.

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songs of al jolson: *Historical Dictionary of Old Time Radio* Robert C. Reinehr, Jon D. Swartz, 2007-11-12 The term Old Time Radio refers to the relatively brief period from 1926, when the National Broadcasting Company first began network broadcasting, until approximately 1960, when television became the dominant communication medium in the United States. During this time, radio was as popular and ubiquitous as television is today. It was amazingly varied in the types of programming it offered; many characters and programs were so popular that virtually everyone was familiar with them. Even today, recorded versions of these programs are still extremely popular and

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