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# STEPHEN SONDHEIM



**STEPHEN SONDHEIM** wrote the music and lyrics for *Road Show* (2008), *Passion* (1994), *Assassins* (1990), *Into the Woods* (1987), *Sunday in the Park with George* (1984), *Merrily We Roll Along* (1981), *Sweeney Todd* (1979), *Pacific Overtures* (1976), *The Frogs* (1974), *A Little Night Music* (1973), *Follies* (1971, revised in London, 1987), *Company* (1970), *Anyone Can Whistle* (1964), and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (1962), as well as lyrics for *West Side Story* (1957), *Gypsy* (1959), *Do I Hear A Waltz?* (1965), and additional lyrics for *Candide* (1973). *Side by Side by Sondheim* (1976), *Marry Me A Little* (1981), *You're Gonna Love Tomorrow* (1983), *Putting It Together* (1992) and *Sondheim on Sondheim* (2010) are anthologies of this work as a composer and lyricist. For films, he composed the scores of *Stavisky* (1974) and *Reds* (1981) and songs for *Dick Tracy* (1990), for which he won an Academy Award. He also wrote songs for the television production "Evening Primrose" (1966), co-authored the film *The Last of Sheila* (1973) and the play *Getting Away With Murder* (1996), and provided incidental music for the plays *Girls of Summer* (1956), *Invitation to a March* (1961), and *Twigs* (1971). He won Tony Awards for Best Score for a Musical for *Passion*, *Into the Woods*, *Sweeney Todd*, *A Little Night Music*, *Follies*, and *Company*. All of these shows won the New York Drama Critics Circle Award, as did *Pacific Overtures* and *Sunday in the Park with George*, the latter also receiving the Pulitzer Prize for Drama (1985). He received a special 2008 Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Theatre. Mr. Sondheim was born in 1930 and raised in New York City. He graduated from Williams College, winning the Hutchinson Prize for Music Composition, after which he studied theory and composition with Milton Babbitt. He is on the Council of the Dramatists Guild, the national association of playwrights, composers, and lyricists, having served as its president from 1973 to 1981, and in 1983 was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters. In 1990 he was appointed the first Visiting Professor of Contemporary Theatre at Oxford University and in 1993 was a recipient of the Kennedy Center Honors. A Broadway theatre was named for him in 2010.

# PREFACE

Whether a singer chooses to perform a Sondheim song in character in its original scenic context, or chooses instead to perform it with an insightful yet artistically defensible different spin, deliberately independent from a show, without its original character and story, knowing the situational plot and character enveloping a song is crucially important information for study. Besides comprehension of specifics in a lyric and musical/theatrical point of view, such study allows one to investigate and ponder the reason a theater song was written for a particular scene.

Sondheim's songs are so deeply and organically considered regarding character and plot that any singer would be crazy and lazy not to prepare them with the same integrity a dedicated actor brings to working on a scene or monologue. We have provided brief plot notes for songs, and digested information about each show or film, but we encourage further study from other sources.

Some songs or roles fall between Tenor and Baritone in range and tessitura. Some of these "bari-tenor" songs appear in both the Tenor and Baritone/Bass volumes.

To inform the singing actor who is auditioning for a show or preparing to perform a role in one of the stage musicals, most songs are labeled as original show keys (which almost always match the orchestration) or transposed keys. Outside the context of a show, certainly many Sondheim songs may be (and have been) sung by a singer other than the original gender or voice type, and in various keys. For this reason we have included transposed versions of selected songs, almost all which appear in print for the first time in this multi-volume series. Adventurous singing actors may want to investigate songs in volumes different from their own voice type (Soprano, Belter/Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor or Baritone/Bass).

I am greatly indebted to Stephen Sondheim's two volumes of collected lyrics, *Finishing the Hat* and *Look, I Made a Hat*, from which many quotes are taken. (See the Endnotes for specific citations.) Rarely has a writer of any kind provided such thorough documentation, both objective and wonderfully subjective, of his or her own work. I strongly urge singing actors to undertake a close reading of those two volumes.

It is an honor to work with this amazingly varied and accomplished body of theater music of such a consistently high standard. There are more songs from Sondheim's enormous output than could be included. I hope the choices made will be useful to most singers. I would like to thank Stephen Sondheim, Sean Patrick Flahaven, and assistant editor Joel Boyd for invaluable help in the development and preparation of the *Sondheim for Singers* five-volume series.

Richard Walters, editor

# ABOUT THE SHOWS, FILMS, AND SONGS

## CHRONOLOGICALLY

Shows are stage musicals unless otherwise indicated. For stage musicals and films, the date cited is the year of first production or release. For unproduced material, the date cited is the year of composition. Some of the commentaries about the shows and song plot notes were adapted from previously published material by Sean Patrick Flahaven which appears in the various vocal selections of the shows.

### I BELIEVE IN YOU

Television (unproduced), 1956

Half-hour television play by Elaine Carrington (unproduced)

*Song in this collection:*

They Ask Me Why I Believe in You

Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim

**Quotes from Sondheim:**

"I have no idea what the notion was. I've lost the script and forgotten the plot. All I remember is that there was a young couple named Sandy and Jo Ann, and detailed descriptions of food. Many a television show has been built on less."<sup>1</sup>

"Elaine Carrington was the inventor of the soap opera. She was the first practitioner of the five-day-a-week continuing story on radio; it was a show called *Pepper Young's Family*. I went to college with her son, Bob, and by the time I got to meet her she had given up soap operas for more ambitious fields, such as television plays. Having heard some of my songs at Bob's insistence, she asked me if I would like to supply a song for her latest venture. I would and did."<sup>2</sup>

"I had titled the song simply 'I Believe in You,' but because of the popularity of Frank Loesser's song of the same name in *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, I was persuaded by my publisher to change it into the clumsiness above...*I Believe in You* was never produced, but it gave me my first professional opportunity to imitate Harold Arlen's music, so it was a joy. And it's a decent imitation, too."<sup>3</sup>

### A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM

1962

Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim

Book by Burt Shevelove and Larry Gelbart

Based on plays by Plautus

*Songs in this collection:*

Love, I Hear

I'm Calm

*Songs in Original Keys for Tenor  
and  
Other Sondheim Songs in Suitable Keys for Tenor*

**ANYONE CAN WHISTLE**

Anyone Can Whistle  
Everybody Says Don't  
With So Little to Be Sure Of

**COMPANY**

Sorry-Grateful  
Someone Is Waiting  
Marry Me a Little  
Being Alive  
Multitudes of Amys (cut)

**DICK TRACY** (film)

Live Alone and Like It  
What Can You Lose?

**EVENING PRIMROSE** (television)

If You Can Find Me, I'm Here

**FOLLIES**

Beautiful Girls  
The Right Girl  
Buddy's Blues  
(The God-Why-Don't-You-Love-Me Blues)  
Losing My Mind  
That Old Piano Roll (cut)  
Make the Most of Your Music

**THE FROGS**

All Aboard!  
Fear No More

**A FUNNY THING HAPPENED  
ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM**

Love, I Hear  
I'm Calm

**I BELIEVE IN YOU** (television, unproduced)  
They Ask Me Why I Believe in You

**INTO THE WOODS**

Giants in the Sky  
No One Is Alone  
Children Will Listen

**A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC**

Later  
Send in the Clowns

**MERRILY WE ROLL ALONG**

Old Friends  
Not a Day Goes By  
Good Thing Going

**PASSION**

Loving You

**SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE**

Finishing the Hat  
Putting It Together  
Lesson #8

**SWEENEY TODD**

Johanna  
The Contest  
Ladies in Their Sensitivities  
Pretty Women  
Not While I'm Around

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