

# CULMINATING EXPERIENCE

## **UNDERSTANDING TIN PAN ALLEY**

A Glimpse Into the Golden Age of Songwriting with  
the Big Five American Songwriters Composing  
Hundreds of New Songs Every Year.

**Jesse Boere**

Master of Music Candidate  
Contemporary Performance

# TIN PAN ALLEY



# THE BIG FIVE

Jerome Kern (1885-1945)

Irving Berlin (1888-1989)

Cole Porter (1891-1964)

George Gershwin (1898-1937)

Richard Rodgers (1902-1979)

**> 4500 songs**

# Jerome Kern



# Jerome Kern

All The Things You Are  
Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man  
Dearly Beloved  
A Fine Romance  
I'm Old Fashioned  
I've Told Ev'ry Little Star



Look for the Silver Lining  
Pick Yourself Up  
The Song Is You  
Sunny  
The Way You Look Tonight  
Yesterdays

# Irving Berlin



# Irving Berlin

Blue Skies  
Change Partners  
Cheek to Cheek  
God Bless America  
How Deep is the Ocean?  
I Love a Piano



Let's Face the Music and Dance  
Puttin' on the Ritz  
Say it With Music  
The Song Is Ended  
What'll I Do  
White Christmas

# Cole Porter





# Cole Porter

All of You  
Anything Goes  
Easy to Love  
From This Moment On  
I Get a Kick out of You  
I Love Paris  
I've Got You Under My Skin



Just One of Those Things  
Let's Do It, Let's Fall in Love  
Love for Sale  
My Heart Belongs to Daddy  
Night and Day  
What Is This Thing Called Love  
You'd Be So Nice to Come Home To

# George Gershwin



# George Gershwin

A Foggy Day  
But Not for Me  
Embraceable You  
Fascinating Rhythm  
I've Got a Crush on You  
Let's Call the Whole Thing Off  
Love Is Here to Stay



Nice Work If You Can Get It  
Oh, Lady Be Good  
'S Wonderful  
Someone to Watch over Me  
Strike Up the Band  
The Man I love  
They Can't Take That Away from Me

# Richard Rodgers



# Richard Rodgers

Blue Moon  
Edelweiss  
Favourite Things  
Have You Met Miss Jones?  
Isn't It Romantic  
It Might as Well Be Spring  
It Never Entered My Mind



The Lady Is a Tramp  
My Funny valentine  
My Romance  
Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'  
Spring Is Here  
With a Song in My Heart  
You'll Never Walk Alone

# Nine rules of songwriting

(According to Irving Berlin):

1. The melody should be within the range of most singers
2. The title should be attention-getting and, in addition, repeated within the body of the song
3. The song should be “sexless”: able to be sung by men and women
4. The song requires “heart interest”
5. And at the same time, it should be “original in idea, words, and music
6. “Stick to nature,” advised Berlin in his pragmatic way. “Not nature in a visionary abstract way, but nature as demonstrated in homely, concrete, everyday manifestations.
7. Sprinkle the lyrics with “open vowels” so that it will be euphonious.
8. Make the song as simple as possible
9. “The song writer must look upon his work as a business, that is, to make a success of it, he must work and work, and then WORK

**Source: The American Magazine**

# “Tin Pan Alley Style”

308.  
(BALLAD)

## MY FUNNY VALENTINE

- RODGERS / HART

C-      C-(maj7)      C-7      C-b

Ab maj7      F-7      D-7 b5      G7 b9

# Thirty-two-bar form

- Often referred to as the AABA form
- Most commonly used until verse-chorus started dominating
- Each chorus made up of four 8-bar sections
- First A introduces principle melody; repeated in second A
- The “middle-8”: different key than the home key or modulates within.
- Melody is significantly different; lyrics too.
- Last A usually repetition of first A’s (back in home key)



# A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A melody is a beautiful thing!

A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A

...

...

...

...

A

...

...

...

...

B

...

...

...

...

A

...

...

...

A melody is a beautiful thing!

A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A

...  
...  
...

Oh, how I want to sing!

A

...  
...  
...  
...

B

...  
...  
...  
...

A

...  
...  
...

A melody is a beautiful thing!

A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A

...

...

...

Oh, how I want to sing!

A

...

...

...

A melody is a beautiful thing!

B

...

...

...

...

A

...

...

...

A melody is a beautiful thing!

A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A

...

...

...

Oh, how I want to sing!

A

A

A

C

A

...

...

...

A melody is a beautiful thing!

B

B

B

C

B

...

...

...

...

A

...

...

...

A melody is a beautiful thing!

A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A

...

...

...

Oh, how I want to sing!

A

A

A

C

DESCRIPTIVE

A

...

...

...

A melody is a beautiful thing!

B

B

B

C

B

...

...

...

...

A

...

...

...

A melody is a beautiful thing!

A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A

...  
...  
...  
Oh, how I want to sing!

A  
A  
A  
C

DESCRIPTIVE

A

...  
...  
...  
A melody is a beautiful thing!

B  
B  
B  
C

REVEAL

B

...  
...  
...  
...

A

...  
...  
...  
A melody is a beautiful thing!



A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A

She moves around with grace and flair  
With golden head band in her hair  
And flies so swiftly through the air  
Oh, how I want to sing!

A  
A  
A  
C

DESCRIPTIVE

A

...  
...  
...  
A melody is a beautiful thing!

B  
B  
B  
C

REVEAL

B

...  
...  
...  
...

A

...  
...  
...  
A melody is a beautiful thing!

A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A

She moves around with grace and flair A  
With golden head band in her hair A  
And flies so swiftly through the air A  
Oh, how I want to sing! C

DESCRIPTIVE

A

I will not forget her once B  
In my mind it'll stick months B  
Through my lungs and throat it runs B  
A melody is a beautiful thing! C

REVEAL

B

...  
...  
...  
...

A

...  
...  
...  
A melody is a beautiful thing!

A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A

She moves around with grace and flair A  
With golden head band in her hair A  
And flies so swiftly through the air A  
Oh, how I want to sing! C

DESCRIPTIVE

A

I will not forget her once B  
In my mind it'll stick months B  
Through my lungs and throat it runs B  
A melody is a beautiful thing! C

REVEAL

B

She kisses me most passionately  
We live our lives in harmony

...

...

...

...

...

A melody is a beautiful thing!

A

A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A

She moves around with grace and flair A  
With golden head band in her hair A  
And flies so swiftly through the air A  
Oh, how I want to sing! C

DESCRIPTIVE

A

I will not forget her once B  
In my mind it'll stick months B  
Through my lungs and throat it runs B  
A melody is a beautiful thing! C

REVEAL

B

She kisses me most passionately ---  
We live our lives in harmony A  
A

A

...  
...  
...  
...  
...  
A melody is a beautiful thing!

A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A

She moves around with grace and flair A  
With golden head band in her hair A  
And flies so swiftly through the air A  
Oh, how I want to sing! C

A

I will not forget her once B  
In my mind it'll stick months B  
Through my lungs and throat it runs B  
A melody is a beautiful thing! C

B

She kisses me most passionately A  
We live our lives in harmony A  
... B  
... C

A

...  
...  
...  
A melody is a beautiful thing!

DESCRIPTIVE

REVEAL

A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A

She moves around with grace and flair A  
With golden head band in her hair A  
And flies so swiftly through the air A  
Oh, how I want to sing! C

DESCRIPTIVE

A

I will not forget her once B  
In my mind it'll stick months B  
Through my lungs and throat it runs B  
A melody is a beautiful thing! C

REVEAL

B

She kisses me most passionately ---  
We live our lives in harmony A  
Still sometimes we get lost, but then B  
We find our way back home C

A

...  
...  
...  
A melody is a beautiful thing!

A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A

She moves around with grace and flair A  
With golden head band in her hair A  
And flies so swiftly through the air A  
Oh, how I want to sing! C

DESCRIPTIVE

A

I will not forget her once B  
In my mind it'll stick months B  
Through my lungs and throat it runs B  
A melody is a beautiful thing! C

REVEAL

B

She kisses me most passionately ---  
We live our lives in harmony A  
Still sometimes we get lost, but then B  
We find our way back home C

UNBALANCED

A

...  
...  
...  
A melody is a beautiful thing!

A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A

She moves around with grace and flair A  
With golden head band in her hair A  
And flies so swiftly through the air A  
Oh, how I want to sing! C

DESCRIPTIVE

A

I will not forget her once B  
In my mind it'll stick months B  
Through my lungs and throat it runs B  
A melody is a beautiful thing! C

REVEAL

B

She kisses me most passionately A  
We live our lives in harmony A  
Still sometimes we get lost, but then B  
We find our way back home C

UNBALANCED

A

...  
...  
...  
A melody is a beautiful thing!





A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A

She moves around with grace and flair A  
With golden head band in her hair A  
And flies so swiftly through the air A  
Oh, how I want to sing! C

DESCRIPTIVE

A

I will not forget her once B  
In my mind it'll stick months B  
Through my lungs and throat it runs B  
A melody is a beautiful thing! C

REVEAL

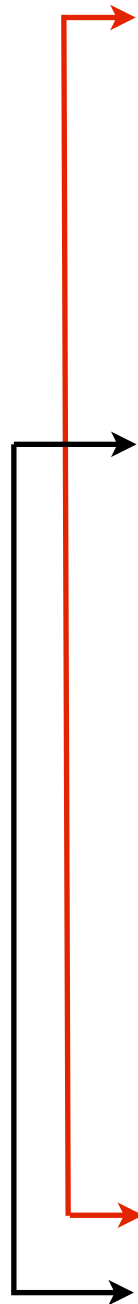
B

She kisses me most passionately --  
We live our lives in harmony A  
Still sometimes we get lost, but then B  
We find our way back home C

UNBALANCED

A

...  
...  
Oh, how I want to sing!  
A melody is a beautiful thing!



A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A

She moves around with grace and flair A  
With golden head band in her hair A  
And flies so swiftly through the air A  
Oh, how I want to sing! C

DESCRIPTIVE

A

I will not forget her once B  
In my mind it'll stick months B  
Through my lungs and throat it runs B  
A melody is a beautiful thing! C

REVEAL

B

She kisses me most passionately A  
We live our lives in harmony A  
Still sometimes we get lost, but then B  
We find our way back home C

UNBALANCED

A

...  
...  
Oh, how I want to sing! B  
A melody is a beautiful thing! B

A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A

She moves around with grace and flair A  
With golden head band in her hair A  
And flies so swiftly through the air A  
Oh, how I want to sing! C

DESCRIPTIVE

A

I will not forget her once B  
In my mind it'll stick months B  
Through my lungs and throat it runs B  
A melody is a beautiful thing! C

REVEAL

B

She kisses me most passionately A  
We live our lives in harmony A  
Still sometimes we get lost, but then B  
We find our way back home C

UNBALANCED

A

... A  
... A  
Oh, how I want to sing! B  
A melody is a beautiful thing! B

A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A

She moves around with grace and flair A  
With golden head band in her hair A  
And flies so swiftly through the air A  
Oh, how I want to sing! C

A

I will not forget her once B  
In my mind it'll stick months B  
Through my lungs and throat it runs B  
A melody is a beautiful thing! C

B

She kisses me most passionately A  
We live our lives in harmony A  
Still sometimes we get lost, but then B  
We find our way back home C

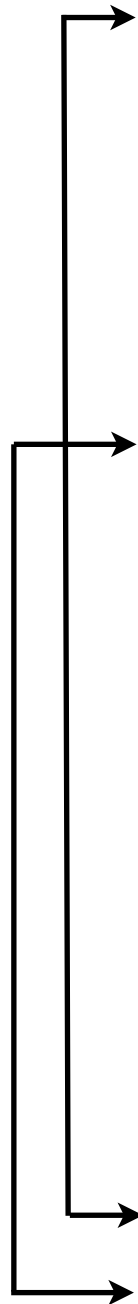
A

No, nothing can compare to her A  
She is the queen of song for sure! A  
Oh, how I want to sing! B  
A melody is a beautiful thing! B

DESCRIPTIVE

REVEAL

UNBALANCED



A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A

She moves around with grace and flair A  
With golden head band in her hair A  
And flies so swiftly through the air A  
Oh, how I want to sing! C

DESCRIPTIVE

A

I will not forget her once B  
In my mind it'll stick months B  
Through my lungs and throat it runs B  
A melody is a beautiful thing! C

REVEAL

B

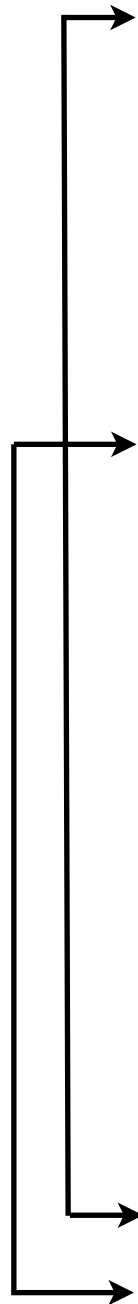
She kisses me most passionately --  
We live our lives in harmony A  
Still sometimes we get lost, but then B  
We find our way back home C

UNBALANCED

A

No, nothing can compare to her --  
She is the queen of song for sure! A  
Oh, how I want to sing! B  
A melody is a beautiful thing! B

MESSAGE



A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

A

She moves around with grace and flair A  
With golden head band in her hair A  
And flies so swiftly through the air A  
Oh, how I want to sing! C

DESCRIPTIVE

A

I will not forget her once B  
In my mind it'll stick months B  
Through my lungs and throat it runs B  
A melody is a beautiful thing! C

REVEAL

B

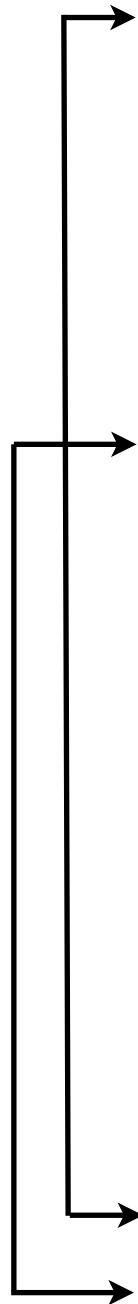
She kisses me most passionately A  
We live our lives in harmony A  
Still sometimes we get lost, but then B  
We find our way back home C

UNBALANCED

A

No, nothing can compare to her A  
She is the queen of song for sure! A  
Oh, how I want to sing! B  
A melody is a beautiful thing! B

MESSAGE



# A MELODY IS A BEAUTIFUL THING

JESSE BOERE

*MEDIUM SWING*

**A'** C C<sup>m</sup>A<sup>7</sup> C<sup>6</sup> C F<sup>#</sup>Ø<sup>7</sup> F<sup>m</sup>A<sup>7</sup> D<sup>m</sup><sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup>



SHE MOVES A-ROUND WITH GRACE AND FLAIR\_ WITH GOL-DEN HEAD-BAND IN HER HAIR\_ AND

5 G<sup>7</sup> E<sup>7</sup>/G<sup>#</sup> A<sup>m</sup><sup>7</sup> D<sup>7</sup> D<sup>m</sup><sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup>




FLIES SO SWIFT-LY THROUGH THE AIR\_ OH HOW I WANT TO SING!

**A''** C C<sup>m</sup>A<sup>7</sup> C<sup>6</sup> C F<sup>#</sup>Ø<sup>7</sup> F<sup>m</sup>A<sup>7</sup> D<sup>m</sup><sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup>



FLIES SO SWIFT - LY THROUGH THE AIR OH HOW I WANT TO SING!

**A''** 9 C C<sup>m</sup>AJ7 C<sup>6</sup> C F#<sup>o</sup>7 F<sup>m</sup>AJ7 D<sup>m</sup>7 G7



I WILL NOT FOR - GET IT ONCE IN MY MIND IT WILL STICK FOR MONTHS.

13 G7 E7/G# Am7 D7 D<sup>m</sup>7 G7 C<sup>6</sup> B<sup>b</sup>m7 Eb7



THROUGH MY LUNGS AND THROAT IT RUNS A MEL - O DY IS A BEAU - TI - FUL THING. SHE

**B** 17 A<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup><sub>7</sub> A<sup>b</sup>/C D<sup>b</sup>m A<sup>i</sup>7 A<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup><sub>7</sub> A<sup>b</sup>/C D<sup>b</sup>m A<sup>i</sup>7



THROUGH MY LUNGS AND THROAT IT RUNS A MEL - O DY IS A BEAU - TI - FUL THING. SHE



THROUGH MY LUNGS AND THROAT IT RUNS\_ A MEL - O DY IS A BEAU - TI - FUL THING. SHE

**B** 17  $A^b$   $B^b m^7$   $A^b/C$   $D^b m^7 A^j 7$   $A^b$   $B^b m^7$   $A^b/C$   $D^b m^7 A^j 7$

KIS - SES ME MOST PAS - 'SINATE - LY\_ WE LIVE OUR LIVES IN HAR - MO - NY.\_ AND

21  $C^\# m^9$   $F^\# 7$   $B^m A^j 7$   $D^7$   $D^m 7$   $G^7$

SOME - TIMES WE GET LOST BUT THEN\_ WE FIND OUR WAY BACK HOME. NO,

**A'''** 25  $C$   $C^m A^j 7$   $C^6$   $C$   $C^\# 7$   $C^m A^j 7$   $D^m 7$   $C^7$

SOME - TIMES WE GET LOST BUT THEN\_ WE FIND OUR WAY BACK HOME. NO,

**A'''** 25 C C<sup>m</sup>AJ7 C<sup>6</sup> C F#<sup>ø</sup>7 F<sup>m</sup>AJ7 D<sup>m</sup>7 G7

NOTH - ING CAN COM - PARE TO HER\_ SHE IS THE QUEEN OF SONG FOR SURE\_ OH

29 G7 E7/G# A<sup>m</sup>7 D7 D<sup>m</sup>7 G7 C<sup>6</sup> ( D<sup>m</sup>7 G7 )

HOW I WANT TO SING! A MEL - O DY IS A BEAU - TI - FUL THING!

BLAME IT ON MY CURIOSITY

By Jesse Boere

A	Tell me, how do green beans grow	A
	I just really want to know	A
	I'll read about it endlessly	B
	Blame it on my curiosity	B
--		--
A	Where do you live, what kind of flowers you like?	A
	Do you drive or do you ride your bike?	A
	What's the kinda thing in life you're looking for?	B
	Your glass of red is empty, would you fancy some more?	B
--		--
B	I'll remember everything	A
	Our nine-week anniversary, that kinda thing	A
	Your mother's maiden name, she'll ask me how I knew	B
	I'll say I'm mighty curious, I just asked you	B
--		--
A	Tell me baby, what's your favorite food	A
	Not for nothing, what gets you in the mood?	A
	Now if you think that I am being too rude, pardon me	B
	Blame it on my curiosity	B

I CAN LOOK YOU IN THE EYES

By Jesse Boere

A

I can look you in the eyes A  
When I listen to you speak B  
I can look you in the eyes A  
When I feel mighty weak B  
I can look you in the eyes A  
In moment, of silence C  
I can look you in the eyes A  
Like tigers, like lions C

--

B

Oh, how I'm lost in space, slow-motion B  
In the blue-green skies a rising sun I see C  
I can look you in the eyes A  
Why can I look you in the eyes? A  
Because you are the one for me C

Form:  
Cole Porter - I Love Paris

# I HAVE TO LIVE LIFE ON MY OWN

By Jesse Boere

A

I've been alone  
I feel it now  
I'm at this place where the doors are locked somehow

A

You were the key  
You'd save the day  
You could unlock the very doors that paved the way

B

For a world with just a hint of make-believe  
Just enough to feel alive and without grief

A

A

It's time to go  
It's time to leave  
Time to move on and stop being so naive

A

We had our days  
We spend it well  
Though, now that it's gone it feels like someone cast a spell

B

Over me and over everything I see  
It's like love itself is madly judging me

A

C

I thought that I was doing quite alright  
Now I know I have never had to fight  
I knew you would always be  
My protection for eternity

B

A

But we had our time  
I have to go  
I have to live life on my own

A

Form:

One For My Baby - Harold Arlen & Johnny Mercer

MY GIRLFRIEND DOESN'T DRINK BEER

By Jesse Boere

A

She is perfect in every way  
That's what I thought three hours ago  
That's when I sighed and suddenly knew  
It is not just a particular brew

A  
B  
C  
C

--

A

Should I be happy or should I be sad  
Some might think that I am being a little mad  
Still it's true, the fact's really clear  
My girlfriend doesn't drink beer

A  
A  
B  
B

--

B

I know it's not rare to be  
Appreciative of other spirits you see  
But I will never split or share with you  
That liquid gold that breathes comradery

A  
A  
B  
A

--

A

I just had thirteen in a row  
It's not the end of the world, I know  
Still I shed a little tear, when I found out right here  
My girlfriend doesn't drink beer

A  
A  
B  
B

SPRING AIN'T WHAT IT USED TO BE

By Jesse Boere

A

Spring ain't what it used to be  
Birds haven't been themselves

A

Snow keeps falling down on my face  
The April days want something else

B

I can't wait for the sun to appear in my eyes  
No one but me can see that you are spring in disguise

A

You are not who you used to be  
Spring, won't you try

A ←  
B  
↓  
C  
B  
--  
B  
B  
↓  
A ←  
B

Form (20-bar):

After You've Gone - Henry Creamer & Turner Layton

TAKE IT (OR LEAVE IT)

By Jesse Boere

**A**

Take it or leave it  
What are you waiting for  
Take it or leave it  
I won't be waiting anymore

A  
B  
A  
B  
--

**B**

When the heat slips away  
Reality will be here to stay  
And darling, that will be the day  
You lost your chance with me

A  
A  
A  
B  
--

**A**

Take it or leave it  
Stop dodging arrows if you care  
Take it or leave it  
Don't regret it, don't you dare

A  
B  
A  
B  
--

**B**

I don't dream about you  
Cause I don't sleep, no, not without you  
Take it or leave it, you better believe it  
I'll make sure that all your dreams come true

A  
A  
B  
A



YOU'RE NOT A MILLIONAIRE?!

By Jesse Boere

A

No, you didn't win the lottery!  
It's just a scam, it's trickery  
There is no prize, no golden tree  
You're not a millionaire!

A  
A  
A  
D

A

If you'll insist you'll soon find out  
Who are your friends and who to doubt  
As long as you won't say out loud  
You're not as rich as Fred Astaire

B  
B  
B  
D

B

How are you doing, how have you been?  
Remember when we were nineteen  
It's not much; at least for you, I mean  
You're loaded now, it's only fair

C  
C  
C  
D

A

No, I didn't win the lottery!  
It's just a scam, it's trickery  
There is no prize, no golden tree  
I'm not a millionaire!

A  
A  
A  
D

**What have I learned?**  
**What's next?**