

BEYOND THE SCORE

ISSUE TWELVE



LIFE & LEGACY:
ETHEL MERMAN

A VOICE TO
REMEMBER

PERFORMANCE
PICTURE BOOK:
MOST
MEMORABLE

**THERE'S NO
BUSINESS LIKE
SHOW BUSINESS!**

A CLOSER LOOK AT MUSICAL THEATRE

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LIFE & LEGACY



ETHEL MERMAN

Ethel Zimmermann, later shortened to Merman, was born in Queens, New York. In her youth she would perform locally and in the community. She enjoyed going to vaudeville and movies with her parents, but they never took her to a Broadway show. Ethel loved to sing, but never received any formal training. Ethel's parents didn't think that a life as a performer was suitable, however that wasn't going to stop Ethel. After graduating high school she got an office job and began singing in Manhattan and singing regularly on a New Jersey radio station. Eventually she got a spot to perform at the Palace Theatre where she began working for \$500 a week! Broadway producers saw Ethel's talent and were impressed. They later had her audition for the Gershwin's new musical, *Girl Crazy*, where she got a part. In that musical she sang the Gerswhin song, "I Got Rhythm", which is still well-known today.

A VOICE TO REMEMBER

Other than her spunky personality, her prominent presence on the stage, and her animated acting, Ethel Merman's voice is what made her mark in Broadway history. Unlike other leading ladies at the time who were sopranos, with lyrical and sweet vocal qualities, Merman took an opposite approach and wouldn't back down from her incredible belting voice. Other singers who belted at the time were seen as more blues/jazz singers, but Ethel blazed a trail and made belting a norm on Broadway. Merman broke down barriers of what the stereotypical "leading lady" should be on Broadway through her persona and her voice.

“Ethel, do you know what’s happened? Do you know what you’ve done? You’ve just been made a star!”

Click on Ethel to watch one of her most famous performances,

“There’s No Business Like Show Business.”



George Gerswhin

PERFORMANCE PICTURE BOOK

Most Memorable

Let's take a look at some of Ethel Merman's most memorable and characters.



Dolly

Hello Dolly!, 1970

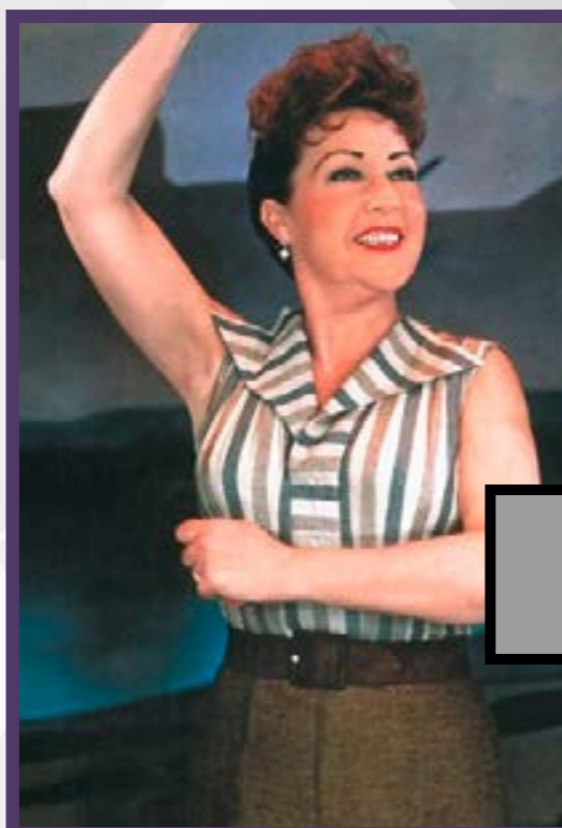


Reno Sweeney

Anything Goes, 1934

Annie Oakley

Annie Get Your Gun, 1946



Rose

Gypsy, 1959

Sally Adams

Call Me Madam, 1950



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