

April 20, 1956

Mr. Ira Gershwin
1021 N. Roxbury Drive
Beverly Hills, Calif.

Dear Mr. Gershwin:

I have just finished David Ewen's book, and feel that I'd like to write and tell you how much I enjoyed it.

It is the first comprehensive biography of your brother I ever read. While the writer's style was, in my opinion, not uniformly adequate for the importance of his subject-matter, at the same time it displayed a warmth and affection for your brother and for all the members of your family, which was really quite moving.

Moreover, Mr. Ewen introduced to his readers much about your own activities as a lyricist, with which I, for one, was unacquainted.

Now, I want to ask you for some help.

Is there any music publishing house which can furnish me with a bibliography of published songs with Ira Gershwin lyrics?

My collection is sadly deficient in these, except where you and your brother collaborated. If there were a source which could supply some comprehensive list of pieces where you collaborated with other musicians, I should like to use it and seek for as many such items as can be located.

Any names you can give me, or suggestions you can make, would be very much appreciated.

Hoping to have the pleasure of seeing you and Mrs. Gershwin again some day, I am,

Sincerely yours,

Lester S. Levy

LSL...LRS

IRA GERSHWIN
1021 NORTH ROXBURY DRIVE
BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA

April 28, 1956

Dear Mr. Levy:

I'm flattered to know you think there might exist an I.G. bibliography. But I'm afraid there's no such thing around. My secretary feels one ought to be made up and I'll probably give him the green light this summer. Meanwhile I attach a list he's just typed in answer to your request. Let me know if this is what you require.

Glad you liked the Even book. Like you, I too have some reservations but, on the whole, believe a pretty good job was done.

On and off I'm busy preparing a book of lyrics. I'll probably take me the rest of the year to select the ones I think would look well in print, and to write appropriate notes about them. (Good excuse too for not taking on any new jobs.)

With good wishes and best regards,

Ira Gershwin

There exists no bibliography of the published songs of Ira Gershwin. The following shows contained songs by Ira Gershwin, set to music other than George Gershwin's.

Two Little Girls in Blue (1921) 7 songs with Youmans
Be Yourself (1924) 3 songs with Gensler & Schwarzwald
Americana (1926) 2 songs with Charig
That's a Good Girl (1928) 4 songs with Charig & Meyer (London)
Sweet and Low (1930-1931) 3 songs with Meyer, Charig & Warren
Life Begins at 8:40 (1934) 5 songs with Arlen

The above songs may be obtained from the Music Publishers Holding Corporation or their subsidiaries.

Ziegfeld Follies of 1936 (1936) 6 songs with Duke
Lady in the Dark (1940) complete score with Weill
North Star (1943) 3 songs with Copeland
Cover Girl (1944) 5 songs with Kern
Where Do We Go from Here? (1945) 4 songs with Weill
The Firebrand of Florence (1945) 4 songs with Weill
Park Avenue (1946) 3 songs with Schwartz

The above songs may be obtained from Chappell and Company, or their subsidiaries.

The Barkleys of Broadway (1949) 3 songs with Warren
Give a Girl a Break (1953) 3 songs with Lane

The above songs may be obtained from the Metro Group of publishers.

A Star Is Born (1954) complete score with Arlen
The Country Girl (1954) 2 songs with Arlen

The above songs may be obtained from the Edwin H. Morris Company.

There are besides these songs, a number of individual ones which have been interpolated into other shows, but no list has been compiled of them.

May 1, 1956

Mr. Ira Gershwin
1021 N. Roxbury Drive
Beverly Hills, Calif.

Dear Mr. Gershwin:

Thanks a lot for your letter of April 28th.

I appreciate very much your sending me the list of shows compiled by your secretary. I am glad to say I already have a number of the songs you did for these shows, but am missing a great many more, so I will now go to work on them.

I am delighted to learn that you are working on a book of lyrics. It ought to be a lot of fun (for the purchaser, I mean), and I do hope it will have a wide distribution.

With all good wishes to you and Mrs. Gershwin,

Sincerely yours,

Lester S. Levy

LSL...LRS