



The Complete Lyrics of Frank Loesser

Robert Kimball, Steve Nelson

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“Frank Loesser could write authoritatively in virtually any style and, frankly, did,” observed composer-lyricist Maury Yeston. “A genius melodist and a supergenius lyricist, only he would ever rhyme ‘pelts’ with ‘else’ [“Take Back Your Mink”] or ‘India’ with ‘been to ya’ [“They’re Either Too Young or Too Old”] while simultaneously combining a crackling intellect with a heart as big as the moon.”

Frank Loesser—who, like Irving Berlin and Cole Porter, wrote both music and lyrics for his shows—has been called the most versatile of Broadway composers. His five musicals are among Broadway’s most creative and enduring achievements: *Where’s Charley?*, *Guys and Dolls* (for which he won his first Tony Award), *The Most Happy Fella*, *Greenwillow*, and *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* (for which he won both the Tony and the Pulitzer Prize). But well before Loesser wrote his first show, he was known to America for the song hits of his Hollywood career, including the Oscar-winning “Baby, It’s Cold Outside,” “On a Slow Boat to China,” “Two Sleepy People,” “Heart and Soul,” “I Don’t Want to Walk Without You,” and “Spring Will Be a Little Late This Year,” as well as the wartime hit “Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition.”

Robert Kimball and Steve Nelson have gathered lyrics from such varied sources as rare private recordings, the personal files of Frank Loesser, and the archives of various film studios. Here, too, are photographs of the stars who helped make Loesser’s songs famous, such as Bob Hope, Dorothy Lamour, Marlene Dietrich, Ray Bolger, and Betty Hutton. Kimball and Nelson’s research has yielded many previously “lost” lyrics, making it possible for the first time to fully grasp the extent of Frank Loesser’s extraordinary talent.

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