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# Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra

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Summer Pops at the Phil

## Over The Rainbow: Best of Broadway

Saturday 22 June 2019 7.30pm

Judy Garland was one of the greatest stars of the Golden Age of Hollywood, and it's oddly shocking to realise that she could still have been with us today. If so, she would have turned 97 just 12 days ago. In fact, we are paying tribute to a legend on the 50th anniversary of her death.

Garland – her real name was Frances Ethel Gumm – made her stage debut aged two in her parents' theatre in Grand Rapids, Minnesota – she sang 'Jingle Bells'. Her first movie was the 1929 short *The Big Revue*, and in 1939 she starred in *The Wizard of Oz*, taking home a Juvenile Oscar. Her film career included a string of classic musicals, including *Meet Me in St Louis*, *Easter Parade* and *The Pirate*, while *Judgement at Nuremberg* showcased her serious acting skills and *A Star Is Born* (1954 version) gave her the chance to combine music and intense drama in her most iconic adult role, and for which she won a Golden Globe.

Judy also had a remarkable stage, TV and recording career – in 1951 she made a four-month sold out tour of the UK and in 1963 had her own *The Judy Garland Show* for CBS. She made a string of now classic 78s for Decca, and later a series of incomparable LPs for Capitol Records, including *Judy in Love* and *Judy at Carnegie Hall*, for which she won two Grammy Awards. She died in Chelsea exactly 50 years ago today, aged just 47.

Our concert opens with the overture from the musical **Gypsy** by Jule Styne & Stephen Sondheim. Garland missed out on the 1962 film version but did record 'Some People' that same year. Next a **Broadway Medley** will transport you to the glory days of New York's theatreland – see how many of the eight tunes you can name.

**All That Jazz** by John Kander & Fred Ebb takes us straight to Chicago (though they also penned 'New York, New York', which we heard a few minutes ago). **Can You Feel The Love Tonight**, from *The Lion King*, is the sort of emotional number which surely Garland would have revelled in, while **Broadway Baby** from *Follies* takes us back to theatreland and Sondheim. **This Is The Moment** by Frank Wildhorn & Leslie Bricusse comes from the hugely successful yet rarely mentioned *Jekyll & Hyde*.

Judy time again, and **The Man That Got Away** is a classic from *A Star Is Born* which hides its broken heart under a defiant exterior. The song's flipside might well be **You're Nothing Without Me**, a comically narcissistic barnstormer from 80s musical *City of Angels* – though set in Garland's heyday of 1940s LA. Barbra Streisand is forever associated with *Funny Girl*, but Judy made **Don't Rain On My Parade** her own, leaving us a rambunctious live recording made with daughter Liza Minnelli.

It's fair to say that the 1972 musical *Pippin*, though revived several times in recent years, remains relatively unknown. Stephen Schwartz's song **Corner Of The Sky** is a stand out, a big, heartfelt ballad and a number one can only imagine Garland taking to a whole new level. Back to Kander & Ebb, and **Maybe This Time**, one of the definitive numbers from the 1966 Broadway musical *Cabaret*. Lisa's performance in the 1972 film version propelled her to superstardom, winning her the Oscar for Best Actress.

**Luck Be A Lady**, the iconic song from *Guys and Dolls*, is the epitome of Hollywood gangster cool and one of the great numbers in the Sinatra songbook. It takes us into our last song before the interval, Cy Coleman & Dorothy Fields' **The Rhythm Of Life** – from *Sweet Charity* – a showstopping, brash, funny and cynical number of operatic dimensions.

Back refreshed after the break, we launch into part two with the **Judy Garland 1961 Carnegie Hall Overture** – instrumental arrangements of melodies from 'The Trolley Song', 'Over The Rainbow' and 'The Man that Got Away'. Now, *Meet Me In St Louis*, it's time for **The Trolley Song** in full, a number by Hugh Martin & Ralph Blane which can't help but make anyone smile.

**Some Enchanted Evening** might well sum up tonight – but relax as Richard Rodgers & Oscar Hammerstein II transport us to the *South Pacific*. It's not a number Garland recorded, though she did perform 'Wonderful Guy' live, notably at the Met in New York in 1951. Another classic Judy recorded, indeed performed in exhilarating fashion on her own TV show, is **Something's Coming** from Leonard Bernstein & Stephen Sondheim's *West Side Story*.

**The Sound Of Music** remains the ultimate Broadway and Hollywood musical – the film replaced *Gone With The Wind* as the biggest earner to that time, and Rodgers & Hammerstein's title song needs no introduction. If musicals were a country and had a national anthem, this would be it.

**Anything You Can Do**, Irving Berlin's smash from *Annie Get Your Gun*, sounds like a challenge. Unfortunately, it was one Garland was unable to complete. She worked on the 1950 film version for two months and recorded all the songs, but was forced to leave the production due to exhaustion and the stress of the breakup of her marriage to director Vincente Minnelli. **Friendship** from *Anything Goes* by Cole Porter proved an early hit for Judy. She recorded it as a duet with Johnny Mercer back in 1940, with whom she had a brief relationship around the same time.

The 1965 musical *Man Of La Mancha* by Mitch Leigh & Joe Darion gave the world the great standard **The Impossible Dream**. One can only imagine how the song might have resonated with Garland – it's the sort of passionate number on which she thrived.

And so, at last, Harold Arlen & Yip Harburg take us **Over The Rainbow** – Garland's signature song, and one which astonishingly was almost cut from *The Wizard of Oz* to shorten the film. That is, until producer Arthur Freed fought with MGM executives to reinstate it. *Wicked* is, of course, Stephen Schwartz's retelling of the same story from the Wicked Witch of the West's perspective, and **Defying Gravity** is a rousing high energy showstopper.

**I Am What I Am** from Jerry Herman's 1983 musical *La Cage Aux Folles* delivers a resolute statement of identity which would have seemed, in its take-no-prisoners drama, purpose made for Judy. And so we come to the end of the night, and we are **One** with Marvin Hamlisch & Edward Kleban's full cast epic from *A Chorus Line*. All the dreams of musical theatre are here, the hope and heartbreak, the perfect end to the night – and so it brings the show to a thunderous close, and might well bring the house down. Goodnight Judy.

Programme notes by Gary Dalkin © 2019