

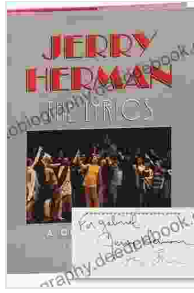
# Jerry Herman: The Lyrics That Illuminated Broadway and Beyond

Prologue: A Prelude to a Lyrical Legacy



**Jerry Herman: The Lyrics** by Jerry Herman

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5



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Jerry Herman, the legendary lyricist and composer, emerged from humble beginnings in New York City's Lower East Side in 1931. His early life was marked by the Great Depression and World War II, yet within the confines of his modest home, Herman discovered solace and escape in the world of music.

## **Chapter 1: The Birth of a Lyricist**

Herman's passion for music blossomed at an early age. He immersed himself in the works of Rodgers and Hammerstein, and the infectious melodies of Broadway shows ignited a spark within him. As a teenager, he began writing his own songs, honing his craft and discovering his unique lyrical voice.

## **Chapter 2: Broadway Breakthroughs**

In 1954, Herman made his Broadway debut as a composer and lyricist for the revue "Small Wonder." While the show had a short run, it showcased Herman's undeniable talent and led to his first major hit, "Milk and Honey" (1961). This musical comedy, set in Israel, featured memorable songs such

as "Shalom" and "Try to Remember," which became anthem-like expressions of hope and friendship.

### **Chapter 3: "Hello, Dolly!" and International Acclaim**

Herman's breakout moment came in 1964 with the premiere of "Hello, Dolly!" This Tony Award-winning musical comedy became one of Broadway's most enduring hits, running for over 2,800 performances. Its infectious score included the timeless classics "Hello, Dolly!" "Put on Your Sunday Clothes," and "Before the Parade Passes By," which captured the vibrant spirit of New York City and the indomitable spirit of its heroine, Dolly Levi.

### **Chapter 4: The "Mame" Musical and a Hollywood Adventure**

Herman's success continued with the musical "Mame" (1966), which starred Angela Lansbury as the flamboyant and eccentric Mame Dennis. The show's poignant and humorous score included "Open a New Window," "If He Walked into My Life," and "Bosom Buddies," further solidifying Herman's reputation as a master of emotional and uplifting storytelling.

In 1969, Herman made his foray into Hollywood, collaborating with the legendary composer John Williams on the score for the animated film "Dear World." The film's soundtrack featured the Oscar-nominated "Come Saturday Morning," adding another layer to Herman's multifaceted career.

### **Chapter 5: Later Works and Continuing Legacy**

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Herman continued to write for Broadway, with notable works such as "The Grand Tour" (1979) and "La Cage aux Folles" (1983). These musicals demonstrated his versatility and ability to explore different themes and genres.

In 1984, Herman was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame, a testament to his enduring contributions to American music. His songs have been performed by countless artists worldwide, and his musicals continue to be revived and adapted for new audiences.

## **Chapter 6: The Essence of Jerry Herman's Lyrics**

Jerry Herman's lyrics stand apart for their warmth, optimism, and humor. He had a remarkable ability to capture the human condition, exploring themes of love, loss, and the indomitable spirit. His songs often evoked a sense of nostalgia and longing, while also celebrating the joy and beauty of life.

## **Chapter 7: Reflections and Inspirations**

Herman was heavily influenced by the music of his childhood, particularly the Yiddish folk songs and Broadway musicals of the 1930s and 1940s. The rhythms and melodies of his own songs often paid homage to these early inspirations.

Herman also drew inspiration from his own personal experiences. The heartbreak and isolation he witnessed during World War II informed his desire to create music that brought joy and hope to others.

## **Chapter 8: Legacy and Lasting Impact**

Jerry Herman passed away in 2019 at the age of 88, leaving behind a legacy that continues to touch and inspire generations of music lovers. His musicals and songs have become an integral part of American culture, uplifting spirits and creating lasting memories.

## **Epilogue: The Melody Lingers On**

As the curtain falls on Jerry Herman's extraordinary career, the melodies he created continue to resonate in the hearts of all who have been touched by his music. His lyrics will forever be a testament to the power of human emotion and the transformative magic that theater and music can bring to our lives.



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