

ONCE ON THIS ISLAND

As a violent thunderstorm rages, a group of peasant island storytellers gathers around a frightened young girl to comfort her. They enact for her the story of Ti Moune, an orphan girl who is saved from a flood by the gods. An old couple finds little Ti Moune in a tree and chooses to raise her as their own daughter. As she grows into a beautiful young woman, she longs to experience things beyond the poor village where she lives. The gods of love, water, earth, and death hear her prayer and, wondering whether love can conquer death, they devise a plan to grant the girl what she desires. Agwe, the god of water, sends a storm that causes Daniel, a young man from the wealthy side of the island, to crash his car. Ti Moune comes to Daniel's rescue and saves him from Papa Ge, the god of death, by making a promise: Ti Moune will trade her life for Daniel's. The young man returns to his family's estate and Ti Moune follows to nurse him back to health. They fall in love, but Ti Moune's happiness is short-lived, for she discovers that Daniel is engaged to a beautiful girl named Andrea. The marriage was pre-arranged when he was a child and Daniel realizes that he must honor the traditions of his social class, so he rejects Ti Moune. Papa Ge appears and instead of taking her life, he offers Ti Moune a choice: he will free her from her promise if she kills Daniel. Ti Moune refuses and surrenders herself to Papa Ge, proving that love is stronger than death. Crying tears of compassion, the gods bless Ti Moune and transform her into a tree that grows outside the gates of Daniel's estate and watches over him for his lifetime.

LYNN AHRENS and STEPHEN FLAHERTY

Born in New York in 1948, lyricist Lynn Ahrens did not initially pursue a career in musical theatre. After she received a degree in journalism from Syracuse University, she spent several years in the advertising industry. During this time, she experienced success as a contributing songwriter to the classic *Schoolhouse Rocks!* animated children's series. Ahrens formed her own production company in 1978 and created a series of educational programs for children, which garnered her recognition and awards. Four years later, she auditioned for a BMI Musical Theatre Workshop, which brought her together with future writing partner, Stephen Flaherty.

Unlike Ahrens, Stephen Flaherty grew up participating in music. Born in 1960 in Pittsburgh, he developed an ardent interest in musical theatre and began composing as a teenager. Following his graduation from the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music in 1982, he moved to New York City. Because his mentor, Lehman Engel, was a founder and director of the BMI Workshop, Flaherty enrolled. There he met Lynn Ahrens and they began collaborating in 1983, with Ahrens as lyricist and Flaherty writing the music.

Their first effort, which was performed only in a workshop setting, gained the attention of a director from Playwrights Horizons; by 1988, *Lucky Stiff* premiered. A musical farce based on the book *The Man Who Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo*, the show closed after six weeks. Their next musical, *Once On This Island*, met with greater success. Also based on a novel (Rosa Guy's *My Love, My Love*), the show had at its center an emotional story of love and social classes. It moved to Broadway and earned Ahrens and Flaherty significant recognition as a writing team. Although *My Favorite Year* in 1992 was a failure at the box office, their reputation was unaffected and along with ten other writing teams, they were selected to submit four songs for consideration for a new show called *Ragtime*. Ahrens and Flaherty completed the songs in less than two weeks and were selected to write the entire score. Hollywood also took notice, and the pair was chosen to write songs for an animated film, *Anastasia*. Since 2000, their Broadway and Off-Broadway offerings have been as stylistically diverse as *Seussical: The Musical*, *A Man of No Importance*, and *Dessa Rose*.

Background information by Brian Fisher.

from the musical "Once On This Island"

THE HUMAN HEART

for S.A.B. voices and piano
with optional SoundTrax CD*

Arranged by
ANDY BECK

Lyrics by **LYNN AHRENS**
Music by **STEPHEN FLAHERTY**

Ballad, with a groove (♩ = ca. 72)

SOPRANO
ALTO

BARITONE

Ballad, with a groove (♩ = ca. 72)

PIANO

5 SOLO

p

The cour-age of__ a

p

Ah

p

Ah

* Also available for S.A.T.B. (28737) and S.S.A. (28739).
SoundTrax CD available (28740).

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To purchase a full-length performance recording of this piece, go to alfred.com/downloads

9

dream - er, _____ the in - no - cence_ of _____

13

_____ youth, _____ the fail - ures and _____ the

17

fool - ish - ness _____ that

20

lead us to the truth; _____ *cresc.* (end solo)

cresc.

23 SOPRANO *mf* 25 *decresc.*
ALTO the hopes that make us hap - py, *decresc.*
BARITONE *mf* *decresc.*

mf *decresc.*

26 the hopes that don't come
mp

mp

29 true, and all the love that
mp

mp

33

ev - er was, I

36

see this all in you. I see this all in you.

cresc.

40

41

You are part,

mf

mf

44

part of the hu - man heart.

48

You are part

You are part

You are part you are part

52

decresc.

to - night.

decresc.

decresc.

55 SOPRANO

57

mp

Ah

ALTO

mp

3

Of all who took the jour - ney

BARITONE

mp

Ah

mp

59

Ah

and man - aged to en - dure,

Ah

63

Ah

the ones who knew such ten-der-ness,

Ah

This system contains four staves of music. The top staff is a vocal line with a long note followed by a melodic phrase. The second staff is a vocal line with lyrics. The third staff is a vocal line with a long note. The fourth staff is a piano accompaniment with chords and a melodic line.

67

the ones who felt so sure;

Ah

This system contains four staves of music. The top staff is a vocal line with a long note. The second staff is a vocal line with lyrics. The third staff is a vocal line with a long note. The fourth staff is a piano accompaniment with chords and a melodic line.

71 S.

73

A. the ones who came be-fore you, _____

B. _____ the

74

_____ the oth - ers yet _____ to

ones who came be - fore you, _____

come, _____ and

the oth - ers yet _____ to come, and

80

those who you will teach it to,

83

and those you learned it from.

cresc.

and

cresc.

86

those you learned it from.

mf

You are part,

mf

mf

89

part of the hu - man

93

heart.

You are part,

97

You are part.

You are part.

you are part.

100

f
 This is the gift I give:

f

104

through your love you'll live for -

107

ev - er. You are part,

mp

mp



111

part of the hu - man

115

heart.

You are part,

119

You are part

You are part

you are part

122

to - night,

Musical score for measures 122-125. It features a vocal line with lyrics "to - night," and a piano accompaniment. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The piano part includes chords and melodic lines in both hands.

126

to - night.

Musical score for measures 126-128. It continues the vocal line with lyrics "to - night." and the piano accompaniment. The key signature remains two sharps.

129

molto rit. *slowly*
p

Part of the hu - man heart.

p

molto rit. *slowly* (slow roll)
p

Musical score for measures 129-132. It features a vocal line with lyrics "Part of the hu - man heart." and a piano accompaniment. The tempo markings are *molto rit.* and *slowly*. The piano part includes chords and melodic lines in both hands. The key signature remains two sharps.

8^{vb}

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