

recorded successfully by Cliff Edwards and also by two other vocal stars of the day, Nick Lucas and Annette Hanshaw.

The Freed/Brown catalog of songs was custom made for escaping the effects of the Depression. Brown's sunny melodies and Freed's optimistic lyrics made no mention of anything but lighthearted problems. Unlike Depression-era songs such as "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime," they never even hinted at the misery most Americans were experiencing during the 1930s. Even Jack Yellen and Milton Ager's jaunty hit "Happy Days Are Here Again" referred to "cloudy gray times." A Freed and Brown song was marked by sprightly tunes and lyrics sprinkled with references to rainbows, romance, and a world of carefree good cheer. In a Freed/Brown song, the Depression simply did not exist.

In 1933, Bing Crosby was a contract player for Paramount Pictures, but was permitted to appear in the M-G-M musical *Going Hollywood* after its star, Marion Davies, convinced her boyfriend, William Randolph Hearst, to pull the necessary strings. In the story, Crosby plays a radio crooner (not a difficult stretch), while Davies's character is a love-struck French teacher. Crosby's earnest rendition of "Temptation" was transformed into one of the most successful parodies of all time in 1947, when comedian

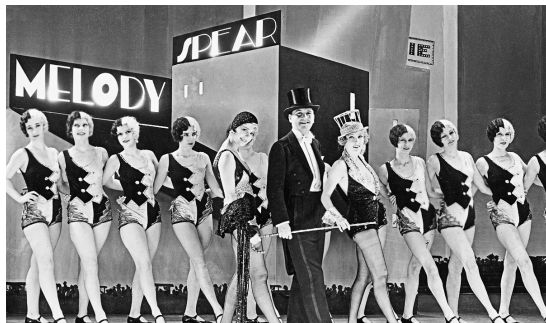


Red Ingle and singer Jo Stafford (using the pseudonym "Cinderella G. Stump") turned Freed and Brown's seductive song into a hillbilly romp titled "Tim-Tay-Shun."

The *Broadway Melody* series was revived in 1936 to feature M-G-M's newest arrival, a talented 23-year-old dancer named Eleanor Powell. The success of *Broadway Melody of 1936* and other films starring Powell helped save M-G-M from a Depression-era threat of bankruptcy. In that film, Freed and Brown contributed the song "I've Got a Feelin' You're Foolin'," which was sung by Robert Taylor and

June Knight. The next year, Powell starred in a sequel to *Broadway Melody of 1936*, titled *Born to Dance*, in which her co-star was James Stewart. This film introduced a score by Cole Porter (1891–1964) that included two of his most popular standards, "I've Got You Under My Skin" and "Easy to Love," the latter, a song that had been cut from the film "*Anything Goes*" because it did not suit the voice of William Glaxton. The song was placed in *Born in Dance* to be sung by Stewart, an actor who was decidedly not a singer. (Porter himself described Stewart's voice as being "far from well.")

The Great Ziegfeld was a lavish musical focusing on the life of the great theater impresario Florenz Ziegfeld. The film was as bodacious as Ziegfeld's own productions, starring William Powell, and having a score consisting chiefly of songs from Ziegfeld's glory days of the teens and 1920s. An iconic moment in cinematic history occurs when bit player Stanley Morner (who would later become better known as Dennis Morgan) performs Irving Berlin's "A Pretty Girl Is Like a Melody," the camera ascending an enormous rotating spiral staircase that was adorned by extravagantly coiffed chorus girls. (Morgan's voice was overdubbed by studio tenor Allan Jones.) The song was originally performed by John Steel in the



M-G-M beat other studios to the punch with the first "all talking, all singing, all dancing" screen musical, **The Broadway Melody** (1929). The title song featured Anita Page, Charles King, and Bessie Love with a line of voluptuous chorines.

A Song is Born: One afternoon in 1929, Nacio Herb Brown approached songwriting partner Arthur Freed with a new melody he had composed for a coloratura voice, the song harboring plenty of classical trills. Freed later recalled: "All I could think of was that a vamp in the bass and a few minor changes would give it the zip for some new lyrics I'd written." Hence "Singin' in the Rain." (Photo: Brown [seated] and Freed pose to promote their new song, with the help of starlet Sally Starr's girlish charms. Note that the songwriters were not dampened by the water spray; the effect was actually etched onto the negative of the finished photo.)



Left: Bing Crosby plays a dreamy crooner and Marion Davies plays an avid fan who masquerades as a maid in **Going Hollywood** (1933).



James Stewart romances Eleanor Powell with Cole Porter's "Easy to Love" from **Born to Dance** (1936).

**DEAR MR. GABLE/
YOU MADE ME LOVE YOU**

(I Didn't Want to Do It)

featured in “Broadway Melody of 1938”

YOU MADE ME LOVE YOU

Words by Joe McCarthy

Music by James V. Monaco

DEAR MR. GABLE

Words and Music by Roger Edens

Arranged by Dan Coates

Freely

C B+ Gm/B \flat B+ C B+

2

Dear *mp* Mis - ter Ga - ble, I am writ - ing this to you and I hope that you will read it so you

3 2 1 2

with pedal

4 Gm/B \flat C7 F Fm C/E Cm/E \flat

1 2 1

know my heart beats like a ham - mer and I stut - ter and I stam - mer ev - 'ry

1 2 3 1 2 3

7 Dm7 G7 Em7(\flat 5) A D7

3

time I see you at the pic - ture show. I guess I'm just an - oth - er fan of yours

1 2 3 1 2 3

Lively, but not rushed

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THERE'S NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOW BUSINESS

from "Annie Get Your Gun"

Words and Music by Irving Berlin

Arranged by Dan Coates

Brightly

Em⁷ Eb⁷ Dm⁷ G⁷ C

1. There's

no no no bus - 'ness like
 no no no bus - 'ness like
 no no no bus - 'ness like

mf f

1 3 1 5

5 C⁶ Cmaj⁷ Fm/G

2 3

show show show bus - 'ness like
 show show show bus - 'ness like
 show show show bus - 'ness like

no no no bus - 'ness I
 no no no bus - 'ness I
 no no no bus - 'ness I

9 C G⁷

1 4 1

know. know. know. Ev - 'ry - thing a - bout it is ap -
 know. You get word be - fore the show has
 know. Trav - 'ling thru the coun - try will be

4 1 2 5

13 C⁶ G⁷

1 4 1

peal - ing. Ev - 'ry - thing the traf - fic will al -
 start - ed. that your fav - 'rite un - cle died at
 thrill - ing. Stand - ing out in front on op - n'ing

THE TROLLEY SONG

from "Meet Me in St. Louis"

Words and Music by
Hugh Martin and Ralph Blane
Arranged by Dan Coates

Brightly

Fmaj7 **F6** **Fmaj7** **F6**

f

2

5 **Fmaj7** **F6** **Fmaj7** **F6**

1. "Clang, clang,
2. "Chug, chug,"

mf

clang, clang,
chug, chug,

clang," went the
chug," went the

trol - ley.
mo - tor.

9 **Fmaj7** **F6** **Gm7** **C7**

"Ding, ding,
"Bump, bump,

ding," went the
bump," went the

bell.
brake.

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