

This is easy, this sweet cacophony - it's like shooting fish in a cyclone

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## Special Swingers' Edition



The last time a nightingale sang in Berkeley Square may well have been in 1684 – diarist John Evelyn writes “I went to advise and give directions about the building two streets in Berkeley Gardens... I could not but deplore that sweet place... should be so much straightened and turned into tenements”. The

nightingale prefers a more rural environment.

More than 250 years later, in the summer of 1939, Londoners were preparing for war. In April the government introduced conscription for 250,000 men over the age of twenty. Thousands of women had signed up for work in factories and on the land, releasing men for service in the armed forces. In the expectation that the Germans would launch a gas attack, gas masks had been issued to the populace and buildings were fortified with sandbags.

London was no place for nightingales!

*A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square* was written – and premiered – in the French fishing village of Le Lavendou, with lyrics by Eric Maschwitz and music by Manning Sherwin. When Maschwitz sang the song in a local wine bar, with Sherwin on the piano and the local saxophonist, nobody was particularly impressed, but it soon became one of the most popular songs in Britain.

Of course the nightingale in the song didn't exist, nor were the two lovers dining at the Ritz. It's a song about the meeting of two lovers, and this was their fantasy:

*That certain night, the night we met,  
There was magic abroad in the air,  
There were angels dining at the Ritz  
And a nightingale sang in Berkeley Square.*

Music became a means of escaping, if only momentarily, from the grim reality of war. It's songs like this, now evergreens, that we'll be sharing with you in *Swing Over the Pacific*.

### Here's looking at you kid...

*As Time Goes By* was written by Herman Hupfeld in 1931, and became a hit in 1942, when Humphrey Bogart didn't say 'Play it again, Sam' in the classic movie *Casablanca*.



Albert Einstein first visited New York in 1921. He returned in 1930 and attended a performance of *Carmen*, where he was cheered by the audience. He was given the keys to the city and was acknowledged by

cheering crowds wherever he went.

In California he met Charlie Chaplin, and they became close friends. Chaplin's wife Elsa tells about the time Einstein conceived his theory of relativity. During breakfast one morning, he seemed lost in thought and ignored his food. She asked him if something was bothering him. He sat down at his piano and started playing. He continued playing and writing notes for half an hour, then went upstairs to his study, where he remained for two weeks, with Elsa bringing up his food. At the end of the two weeks he came downstairs with two sheets of paper bearing his theory.

And what does all that have to do with Bogart, Ingrid Bergman and Dooley Wilson (Sam), who played *As Time Goes By*?

In the original version, the first verse of the song referred to Einstein's concept of time as a fourth dimension:

*This day and age we're living in  
Gives cause for apprehension  
With speed and new invention  
And things like fourth dimension.  
Yet we get a trifle weary  
With Mr. Einstein's theory.*

This introduction was left out of the film, and has been ever since. But if you've seen the movie, this is the scene that is totally memorable:

*Ilsa: Play it once, Sam, for old times' sake.  
Sam: I don't know what you mean, Miss Ilsa.  
Ilsa: (whispered) Play it, Sam. Play 'As Time Goes By.'*

### I'll be looking at the moon...

*I'll Be Seeing You*, with music by Sammy Fain and lyrics by Irving Kahal was published in 1938. It became an anthem for soldiers serving overseas, both British and American.



Those familiar with Mahler may note a resemblance between the song's opening lines and the theme of the last movement of his *Third Symphony*.

Sammy Fain never regarded it as his best song. "It caught on toward the end of 1943, I would say," he said. "And it just kept going. Soldiers and sailors would come up to me all the time and tell me it was their favorite song."

Bing Crosby had the big hit with it - Number One in 1944 - but it was probably Tommy Dorsey's recording, featuring a young Frank Sinatra, that most captured the mood of the times.

Some years later, the Starr Report on President Clinton's high crimes and misdemeanours quoted a letter from Miss Monica Lewinsky: *When I was hiding out in your office, I noticed you had the new Sarah McLachlan CD. I have it, too, and it's wonderful. Whenever I listen to song #5 I think of you. That song and Billie Holiday's version of I'll Be Seeing You are guaranteed to put me to tears when it comes to you!*

### A place where people go to dance the night away

That's *Tuxedo Junction* - a centre of nightlife for African Americans from the 1920s through the 1950s. The song was a hit for jazz trumpeter Erskine Hawkins in 1939, although it's most popular version is probably by Glenn Miller - in 1940 his recording sold 115,000 copies in its first week.

It was popular with GIs - great music for dancing. Yes, there will be room for you to swing along with the music in the Great Hall on August 2.

### She's the toast of Kalamazoo

In 1942 Mack Gordon and Harry Warren produced a song that captured the longing of a soldier for his girl back in Kalamazoo. Recorded by the Glenn Miller Orchestra, it was on the charts for 20 weeks and was nominated for an Academy Award for best song. It put Kalamazoo on the map.

The city chose a 19 year old local girl, Sara Woolley, as "The girl from Kalamazoo". Her picture and story were published in newspapers, and she became a celebrity. She received mail from her fans, including admiring servicemen, and made many public appearances to sell war bonds and to promote Kalamazoo.



The song was featured in the 1942 film *Orchestra Wives*, which also included a dance sequence by the Nicholas Brothers, which has to be seen to be believed. You can find it on the internet.

### When you're feelin' blue...

In 1939 Johnny Mercer was a singer with the Benny Goodman Band, and by the early 1940s he was popular enough to have his own radio show, *Johnny Mercer's Music Shop*. He was also an accomplished composer.

He wrote the words and music of *Dream* in 1944 as a theme for his radio show, and it's now a jazz standard, recorded by great singers including Frank Sinatra and Roy Orbison.

In 1942 Mercer co-founded Capitol Records and became Capitol's first President and chief talent scout. Soon, he had signed up such performers as Stan Kenton, Nat "King" Cole, Jo Stafford, and Margaret Whiting, and by 1946 Capitol accounted for one sixth of all records sold in the U.S.

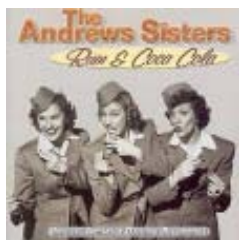
### Since the Yankee come to Trinidad

In 1943 Morey Amsterdam visited the island of Trinidad, where the number one hit was a calypso tune originally composed by Lord Invader and Lionel Belasco. When the song was published in the USA, Amsterdam was listed as the lyricist.



Amsterdam claimed never to have heard the song during the month he spent on the island, but the lyrics to his version are clearly based on the Lord Invader version, with the music and chorus being virtually identical. In 1948, Lord Invader was awarded \$150,000 for copyright infringement, although Amsterdam was allowed to retain copyright.

Lord Invader describes his inspiration for the song: “I was traveling on a bus and I happened to see the G.I.s in the American social invasion in the West Indies, Trinidad. You know the girls used to get the candies and stuff like that, and they go to the canteens with the boys and so on, have fun. So I noticed since the G.I.s came over there, they really generally chase with soda, ordinary soda, but their chaser was Rum and Coke. They drink rum, and they like Coca-Cola as a chaser, so I studied that as an idea of a song”. He lamented that the US soldiers were debauching local women.



The Andrews Sisters' recording of *Rum and Coca Cola* was the top single of 1945 in the United States – not without controversy. It was banned by network radio stations, supposedly because it mentioned an alcoholic

beverage, and mentioned a commercial product by name and could be construed as free advertising when broadcast.

Maxine Andrews recalled, “The rhythm was what attracted the Andrews Sisters to Rum and Coca-Cola. We never thought of the lyric. The lyric was there, it was cute, but we didn't think of what it meant; but at that time, nobody else would think of it either, because we weren't as morally open as we are today and so, a lot of stuff—really, no excuses—just went over our heads.”

**I'm goin' to wash that man  
right out of my hair**

If *Rum and Coca Cola* was controversial, *South Pacific* was even more so, especially in the American South. It was based on two stories involving racism and interracial relationships: Nellie, who is from Little Rock, has trouble accepting that the man she loves was previously married to a Polynesian, and Lieutenant Cable can't marry the Polynesian woman he's fallen in love with because their relationship would never be accepted back home in the United States. Two Georgian legislators attempted to have the song *You've Got To Be Carefully Taught* banned on the basis that it “contained an underlying philosophy

inspired by Moscow”, and a desire to maintain their ‘pure blood lines’ in the South.

Mary Martin was in the original cast. She recalls first hearing Oscar Hammerstein sing *I'm in love with a wonderful guy* – “in his darling, darling voice... And I realised he expected me to sing 26 words in one breath... I sang it at the top of my voice, and when I finished I fell off the piano bench, because I was all in when I got to the end. And Richard Rogers turned and looked at me on the floor and said ‘That's exactly what I want. Never do it differently. We must feel you couldn't squeeze out another sound’”.



There was a staging problem in early performances. Mary Martin thought it would be a good idea if she actually washed her hair on stage. The audience loved it, but were ignoring the song. So Josh Logan suggested that she sing the song first, then wash her hair – Mary Martin washed her hair onstage eight times a week for three and a half years, and apparently loved doing it.

*South Pacific* opened at the Majestic Theatre in New York on April 7 1949, and went on to gross \$2,635,000, a record for the time.

**Music is how I live, why I live and  
how I will be remembered.**



These were the last words of Duke Ellington before he died in 1974. More than 12,000 people attended his funeral.

Ellington began playing professionally when he was 17, and during the 1920s became a band leader performing in Broadway nightclubs. His fame rose to great heights in the 1940s when he composed several masterworks. Some of his most popular songs included *It Don't Mean a Thing if It Ain't Got That Swing* and *Satin Doll*.

In 1951 Columbia Records released a new recording by the Duke – *Masterpieces by*

*Ellington* – which many critics regard as his best. The record featured compositions from the 1930s, recorded in 1950. It took advantage of German magnetic tape technology brought back to the USA after WWII, and the new medium of 12 inch LP records.

The tapes were capable of absorbing wide dynamic range and the full spectrum of frequencies- before this records were cut straight to wax or disc.

The old 78rpm records held only three or four minutes of music, the new LPs could hold 20 minutes a side. Rather than use this extra capacity to pack in more songs, Ellington recorded much longer arrangements – a 15 minute *Mood Indigo*, an 11 minute *Sophisticated Lady*, an 8 minute *Solitude*.

If you want to hear these longer versions, you'll have to buy the CD, but the choir will enjoy presenting a medley of some of the Duke's great jazz standards.

### The song that started it all



Duke Ellington pioneered new technologies, Bill Haley and his Comets broke down the barriers that prevented most from enjoying rock and roll music. It wasn't the first rock and roll record, it wasn't even the first R&R song to become a number one hit, but it was *Rock*

*Around the Clock* that finally opened the floodgates.

Initially the record sold about 75,000 copies – a moderate success. Then MGM was looking for a song to reflect the spirit of teenage rebellion in a new movie called *Blackboard Jungle*. When the movie was completed in the spring of 1955, the song was grafted over the opening credits and the rest, as they say, is Rock and Roll.

It is estimated “Rock Around the Clock” has been performed by at least 10,000 different artists since 1953. Don't miss the opportunity to hear the choir make that 10,001.

### There's more...

Glenn Miller, Benny Goodman, Count Basie were some of the musicians; *In the Mood*, *Chattanooga Choo Choo*, *String of Pearls* were some of the

songs that characterised this era. Who better to present them than The Dungeon Big Band.

The band takes its name from the Newcastle jazz venue, Dungeon Jazz, co-ordinated by Rod Barnes since 1977. The band's premiere performance was in May 2004, now the band, consisting of local musicians, plays at festivals, dances and conferences throughout the state.

It's not very often that you get to hear great jazz combined with a full choir, but this is your chance! It's exciting for all of us - the band and the choir have worked together in some of our most popular concerts in 2008, 2009 and 2010.

### Frequently asked questions

Q. Will dancing be allowed?

A. Allowed? Of course it will! In fact it will be encouraged. There will be plenty of room to dance. Bring your dancing shoes, join in the fun.

### Special Screening



This is the story of Stet, an angry young orphan who is sent to a boys' choir school following the death of his mother. He finds himself in a battle of wills with the choir master, who sees in Seth a unique talent.

*From start to finish, the music is breathtaking – it provides the heart of the story... in equal measure haunting and uplifting... the beautiful music of Boy Choir is what lingers long after the credits roll.* – Chas Kasselmann.

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Contact Pat Oliver at [patandalol@hotmail.com](mailto:patandalol@hotmail.com) or phone 4951 1607 to purchase tickets.

Proceeds will assist the Newcastle University Choir to stage upcoming concerts.

*Cacophony* is edited by Peter McCloy on behalf of the Newcastle University Choir, who do not necessarily share the views of the editor. To contribute or to communicate, email us at [newsletter@newcastleuniversitychoir.com](mailto:newsletter@newcastleuniversitychoir.com)

For more about Newcastle University Choir, go to [www.newcastleuniversitychoir.com](http://www.newcastleuniversitychoir.com)

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