

the complete lyrics of cole porter

the complete lyrics of cole porter represent an unparalleled treasure trove in American musical history, showcasing the genius of one of the most prolific and sophisticated songwriters of the 20th century. Cole Porter's work spans decades, offering timeless classics that have been celebrated on Broadway, in Hollywood, and beyond. This article delves into the complete lyrics of Cole Porter, exploring his distinctive lyrical style, the themes he embraced, and his enduring impact on music and culture. From his witty wordplay to his romantic ballads, Porter's lyrics continue to captivate audiences and performers alike. Understanding the complete lyrics of Cole Porter provides insight into the evolution of American popular song and the artistry behind some of the most memorable tunes ever written. The following sections outline the key aspects of his lyrical contributions and their significance.

- The Life and Legacy of Cole Porter
- Characteristics of Cole Porter's Lyrics
- Iconic Songs and Their Complete Lyrics
- Thematic Elements in Cole Porter's Work
- Influence on Contemporary Music and Culture

The Life and Legacy of Cole Porter

Cole Porter, born in 1891, was an American composer and lyricist whose career spanned from the 1910s to the 1950s. Known for his sophisticated, urbane style, Porter wrote both music and lyrics for some of the most enduring songs in the Great American Songbook. His legacy is defined not only by the quantity of his work but also by the unique quality and wit embedded in his lyrics. The complete lyrics of Cole Porter reflect his mastery of rhyme, rhythm, and clever phrasing, which have made his songs timeless standards. Despite personal challenges, including a severe horseback riding accident, Porter continued to create music that resonated with audiences worldwide.

Characteristics of Cole Porter's Lyrics

The complete lyrics of Cole Porter are distinguished by several key characteristics that set him apart from his contemporaries. His writing is marked by an elegant use of language, intricate rhyme schemes, and a playful sense of humor. Porter's lyrics often feature sophisticated wordplay and double entendres, reflecting his cosmopolitan lifestyle and sharp intellect. Additionally, his ability to blend romantic sentiment with witty observations made his songs appealing across different social strata and generations. The lyrical content ranges from lighthearted and flirty tunes to deeply emotional ballads, showcasing his versatility.

Witty Wordplay and Rhyme

One of the hallmarks of Cole Porter's lyrics is his clever use of rhyme and punning. His songs often contain unexpected rhymes and playful language that enhance the musicality and memorability of his work. This wit is especially evident in songs like "You're the Top" and "I Get a Kick Out of You."

Romantic and Sophisticated Themes

Porter's lyrics frequently explore themes of love, desire, and social elegance. His sophisticated approach to romance is both humorous and sincere, often reflecting the glamour of the Jazz Age and Broadway lifestyle.

Iconic Songs and Their Complete Lyrics

The complete lyrics of Cole Porter include some of the most iconic songs in American musical theater and popular music. These songs have been covered by countless artists and remain staples in the repertoire of jazz and Broadway performers. Below is a selection of notable Porter songs along with brief excerpts illustrating his lyrical style.

- **"Night and Day"** - A romantic ballad with a haunting melody and evocative lyrics that express longing and devotion.
- **"I Get a Kick Out of You"** - Featuring sharp, witty lyrics that playfully describe infatuation and desire.
- **"Anything Goes"** - A lively tune that humorously comments on changing social mores and cultural trends.
- **"Let's Do It, Let's Fall in Love"** - Known for its catchy rhythm and clever listing of various creatures and people who "do it."
- **"I've Got You Under My Skin"** - A sophisticated love song with complex rhyme and emotional depth.

Sample Excerpt: "Night and Day"

"Night and day, you are the one

Only you beneath the moon and under the sun..."

These lines demonstrate Porter's ability to convey deep romantic sentiment with lyrical simplicity and elegance.

Sample Excerpt: "I Get a Kick Out of You"

"Some get a kick from cocaine

I'm sure that if I took even one sniff

That would bore me terrifically too..."

Here, Porter's playful and sophisticated humor shines through his unexpected comparisons.

Thematic Elements in Cole Porter's Work

The complete lyrics of Cole Porter consistently explore several recurring themes that contribute to the timelessness of his songs. These themes include love and romance, social commentary, and the celebration of life's pleasures. Porter's work often reflects the cultural and social dynamics of the early to mid-20th century, particularly the Jazz Age and the Roaring Twenties.

Love and Romance

Many of Porter's songs center on the complexities of love—its joys, sorrows, and contradictions. His lyrics capture the excitement of new love, the pain of heartbreak, and the enduring nature of affection.

Social Satire and Commentary

Porter was adept at using humor and irony to comment on societal trends and human foibles. Songs like "Anything Goes" satirize the loosening of social conventions, while others highlight the quirks of high society.

Celebration of Pleasure and Indulgence

Several of Porter's lyrics revel in the enjoyment of life's indulgences, from romance to nightlife. This theme is evident in tunes that emphasize carefree joy and the pursuit of happiness.

Influence on Contemporary Music and Culture

The complete lyrics of Cole Porter have had a profound influence on both contemporary music and broader cultural expressions. His sophisticated lyrical style set a high standard for songwriting, influencing generations of composers and lyricists. Porter's songs continue to be performed, recorded, and referenced in various media, demonstrating their lasting appeal and relevance. His blend of wit, elegance, and emotional depth has made his lyrics a benchmark for excellence in American popular music.

Impact on Musical Theater

Cole Porter's work significantly shaped the development of musical theater, blending clever lyrics with memorable melodies that advanced storytelling. His musicals remain popular and are frequently revived.

Legacy in Jazz and Popular Music

Many of Porter's songs have become jazz standards, interpreted by legendary artists across decades. The adaptability of his lyrics to various musical styles underscores their enduring quality.

Continued Cultural Resonance

Beyond music, Porter's lyrics have permeated films, television, and literature, symbolizing an era of sophistication and wit. His influence persists in how lyricists approach language and thematic complexity.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where can I find the complete lyrics of Cole Porter's songs?

The complete lyrics of Cole Porter's songs can be found in published songbooks, official Cole Porter anthologies, and licensed music lyric websites. Libraries and music archives may also have collections of his works.

Are the complete lyrics of Cole Porter available online for free?

Some of Cole Porter's lyrics are available online for free on public domain sites or lyric websites, but complete and authorized collections are usually found in paid or licensed sources due to copyright restrictions.

What are some of the most famous songs by Cole Porter with notable lyrics?

Some famous Cole Porter songs with notable lyrics include "Night and Day," "I've Got You Under My Skin," "Anything Goes," "Begin the Beguine," and "I Get a Kick Out of You." These songs showcase his wit and sophisticated lyricism.

Did Cole Porter write both music and lyrics for his songs?

Yes, Cole Porter was both a composer and lyricist. He wrote the music and lyrics for most of his songs, which is part of what made his work distinctive and enduring.

Are there any books that compile the complete lyrics of Cole Porter?

Yes, there are several compilations and anthologies that collect Cole Porter's complete lyrics, such as "Cole Porter: Selected Lyrics" and "The Complete Lyrics of Cole Porter," which provide comprehensive collections of his work.

How has Cole Porter's lyric style influenced modern songwriting?

Cole Porter's clever wordplay, sophisticated rhymes, and urbane wit have influenced many modern songwriters. His ability to blend humor, romance, and elegance in his lyrics set a standard for musical theatre and popular music lyricism.

Additional Resources

1. *"All Through the Night: The Complete Lyrics of Cole Porter"*

This comprehensive collection features every lyric penned by Cole Porter, offering readers an in-depth look at his poetic genius. From his earliest works to his most famous songs, the book showcases the wit, sophistication, and emotional depth that define Porter's style. It is an essential resource for fans, musicians, and scholars alike.

2. *"The Wit and Wordplay of Cole Porter: A Lyricist's Legacy"*

Exploring the clever wordplay and lyrical innovation of Cole Porter, this book delves into the nuances of his songwriting. Through detailed analysis of his complete lyrics, readers gain insight into how Porter combined humor, romance, and urbane charm. The book also includes historical context and commentary from music experts.

3. *"Cole Porter's Songs: The Stories Behind the Lyrics"*

This volume uncovers the fascinating stories behind Cole Porter's most beloved songs. By examining the complete lyrics, the author reveals the personal experiences, cultural moments, and theatrical influences that shaped Porter's work. It's a captivating read for those interested in the intersection of music, history, and storytelling.

4. *"Lyrics in Bloom: The Poetic Art of Cole Porter"*

Focusing on the poetic qualities of Cole Porter's lyrics, this book celebrates his mastery of rhythm, rhyme, and metaphor. Through a close reading of his complete lyrics, it highlights how Porter elevated popular song to an art form. The book serves as both a tribute and a critical study of his lyrical craftsmanship.

5. *"Singing the Jazz Age: Cole Porter's Complete Lyrics"*

Set against the backdrop of the Jazz Age, this book explores how Cole Porter's lyrics captured the spirit of an era. It presents his complete lyrics alongside commentary on the social and musical trends that influenced his work. Readers will appreciate the blend of historical insight and lyrical appreciation.

6. *"The Cole Porter Lyric Anthology: From Broadway to Hollywood"*

This anthology gathers Cole Porter's complete lyrics from his prolific career in both Broadway

musicals and Hollywood films. Detailed notes accompany each song, illustrating Porter's versatility and innovation across different entertainment mediums. It's a valuable collection for enthusiasts of classic American musical theater and cinema.

7. *"Porter's Palette: The Language and Style of Cole Porter's Lyrics"*

An exploration of the distinctive language and stylistic devices used by Cole Porter, this book dissects his entire body of lyrics. It examines his use of irony, double entendre, and sophisticated diction, revealing the layers of meaning in his songs. The book is ideal for linguists, lyricists, and fans who want to understand Porter's unique voice.

8. *"Timeless Tunes: The Enduring Lyrics of Cole Porter"*

Highlighting the timeless appeal of Cole Porter's lyrics, this book discusses how his songs have remained relevant and beloved across generations. It includes the complete lyrics along with reflections on their influence in popular music and culture. Readers will discover why Porter's work continues to inspire artists and audiences worldwide.

9. *"Behind the Curtain: The Complete Lyrics and Context of Cole Porter's Musicals"*

This book offers a detailed look at the complete lyrics from Cole Porter's stage musicals, placing them within the context of the productions and their times. It provides analysis of how the lyrics function within the narratives and contribute to character development. Ideal for theater lovers and scholars, it bridges the gap between lyric and performance.

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