

FOREWORD

An ingénue is broadly defined as a fairly innocent, pretty young woman. It is as common in theatre as any character type, with roots that go back to the Greeks. Such characters abound in Shakespeare. And the tradition is by no means over. Ingénue characters can be constantly spotted in movies and on television as well as in plays and musicals. On the musical stage such characters have roots in the soubrettes and romantic leads of opera, or in the leading female roles in French operettas by Offenbach, English operettas by Gilbert and Sullivan, in zarzuelas, or in Viennese operettas.

Some ingénue characters are static throughout a story, with no fundamental transformation. Others go through some struggle or crisis and evolve to more worldliness. Ingénues can be single or married young women. Some are quite serious by temperament; some are mischievous; others show a more comic or flirtatious side. Ingénues can be light characters who simply grace the story with their presence and charm, or they can be more complex young women who show deeper emotions. But they always retain an essentially lyrical, feminine quality.

In musical theatre traditions the ingénue is typically a soprano (although it does happen that ingénues are occasionally belters). This collection is a sampling of soprano songs from many ingénue roles. Among the most famous are Kim MacAfee in *Bye Bye Birdie*, Guenevere in *Camelot*, Julie Jordan in *Carousel*, the title character in *Cinderella*, Luisa in *The Fantasticks*, Sarah Brown in *Guys and Dolls*, Cosette in *Les Misérables*, Marion Paroo in *The Music Man*, Eliza Doolittle in *My Fair Lady*, Laurey in *Oklahoma!*, Christine Daaé in *The Phantom of the Opera*, Magnolia Ravenal in *Show Boat*, Maria (and Liesel too) in *The Sound of Music*, Maria in *West Side Story*, and Amalia in *She Loves Me*. In this revised edition contemporary ingénue songs have been added from *The Light in the Piazza*, *The Little Mermaid: The Broadway Musical*, *School of Rock* and *Little Women*.

There have been many well-known ingénue sopranos on Broadway and in movie musicals. To name a few: Julie Andrews, Barbara Cook, Shirley Jones, Jane Powell, Kathryn Grayson, Deanna Durbin, Rebecca Luker, Sarah Brightman, Kristin Chenoweth, and Kelli O'Hara.

Contrary to popular belief, portraying an ingénue is not necessarily easy on stage. It can be much easier as an actress to play a character with more edge, or more idiosyncrasies to hide behind. The eternal challenge is how to find an interesting way to play an ingénue, or sing such a character's song, so that the result is not standard-issue bland, but has some spark of life and individuality.

In other words, portraying an ingénue in song requires all the same creative imagination and investigation as any other acting assignment. Using her song as a guide, you must find her spirit and the details that make her unique.

Do you have an ingénue inside you, to breathe new life into these wonderful songs? You don't have to wonder "Wouldn't It Be Lovely." Just choose a song and begin to "Make Believe."

Richard Walters
editor

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* This song, recorded by Kristin Chenoweth on *Let Yourself Go*, is not from a show.

THE BROADWAY *Ingénue*

Another Suitcase in Another Hall

The Beauty Is

Beyond My Wildest Dreams

The Girl in I4 G

Goodnight, My Someone

Here at Horace Green

Home

How Lovely to Be a Woman

I Could Have Danced All Night

I Feel Pretty

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