

Master of Musical Theater

Module 12 of *Music: Under the Hood*

John Hooker
Carnegie Mellon University

Osher Course
August 2017

1

Outline

- Biography of Jerome Kern
- Analysis of *All the Things You Are*

2

Biography

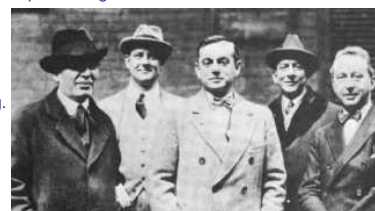
- **Jerome Kern, 1885-1945**
 - **Born to Jewish family in Manhattan**
 - His mother, an accomplished musician, taught him piano and organ.
 - Wrote songs for high school musical in Newark NJ
 - **Dropped out of high school**
 - Father disapproved of his ambition to become a composer.



3

Biography

- **Musical education**
 - **In USA**
 - Studied piano and harmony at New York College of Music
 - Published first piece at age 17.
 - **In Germany**
 - Studied music in Heidelberg.
 - **In England**



M. Gest, P.G. Wodehouse, G. Bolton, R. Comstock, J. Kern in London

Biography

- **Career**
 - **Began in London**
 - Got a contract to write songs for Broadway versions of London shows.
 - Married a British woman and thereafter spent much time in the UK.
 - **Breakthrough in US**
 - Wrote 5 songs for *The Girl from Utah*, which put him in demand by Broadway producers.



Kern at age 33

5

Biography

- **Career**
 - **Showboat**
 - Began collaborating with Oscar Hammerstein in 1925.
 - Wrote *Showboat* with Hammerstein in 1927
 - Everyone thought they were crazy for taking on such a serious theme.
 - But it was a smash hit.
 - **Movies**
 - Wrote scores for several films, particularly after 1935



Hammerstein and Kern

6

Biography

- Career

- Legacy

- Kern wrote songs for over 100 shows
 - Only *Showboat* is regularly performed today.
 - Yet several of his songs became classics.
 - Especially among jazz musicians



7

Biography

- Some famous Kern songs (he wrote 700+)

- *Ol' Man River*, 1927
- *Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man*, 1927
- *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes*, 1933
- *A Fine Romance*, 1936
- *The Way You Look Tonight*, 1936
- *All the Things You Are*, 1939
- *I'm Old Fashioned*, 1942
- *Long Ago and Far Away*, 1944

8

All the Things You Are

- Music by Jerome Kern, lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein

- From Broadway show

- Very Warm for May*, 1939
 - The team's last Broadway show.
 - Song used in other shows and films.
 - Known for its sophisticated use of harmony
 - Performed and arranged by many jazz musicians.



9

[Audio file \(Ella Fitzgerald\)](#)

A₁A₂BA₃ form

Melody

Audio file

Melody is stepwise sequence of 4ths (perfect or augmented)

Modulation to dominant allows stepwise descent to continue

...while entire melody drops a 4th!

D-C-B: descent comes directly from melody!

Transposition to key of G allows D-C-B: to form standard 5-4-3 passing tone in cadence!

Same here, transposed

Transposition to key of E allows repeat starting on final B:

Melody changes here 2-bar extension

Modified melody rises from initial leap to D to form climax.

Harmony

Audio file

Standard vi-ii-V-I progression, but with effective passing tones. Melody establishes tonal center A:

Final leap of augmented 4th in melody strongly suggests modulation to C major.

Smooth transition to dominant due to half-step drop from C^{major}7 to C^{minor}7

Same modulation as before leads to G major

Middle section begins in G and again uses ii-V-I progression

Same progression in E

Crunch! Pivot on G# modulates to C^{aug5}7, which will resolve to F minor, vi in tonic key, and return us to the melody. The G# is respelled to become A^b, 3rd of F minor.

Modified melody allows us to stay in tonic rather than modulate to C major, rounding out the song.

All the Things You Are

- The harmony uses full resources of Western tonal system.
 - Every note of the 12-tone chromatic appears as the root of some chord in the song.
 - In addition, the harmony is simply beautiful and allows for Chopinesque nuance in performance.
 - The harmony is not gratuitous as in many jazz arrangements.
 - It is intimately linked to the melody.

19