# The American Popular Ballad of the Golden Era, 1924-1950: A Study in Musical Design

*Allen Forte*

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In this pathbreaking book, Allen Forte uses modern analytical procedures to explore the large repertoire of beautiful love songs written during the heyday of American musical theater, the Big Bands, and Tin Pan Alley. Covering the work of such songwriters as Jerome Kern, Irving Berlin, Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Richard Rodgers, and Harold Arlen, he seeks to illuminate this extraordinary music indigenous to America by revealing its deeper organizational characteristics. In so doing, he aims to establish it as a unique corpus of music that deserves more intensive study and appreciation by scholars and connoisseurs in the broader fields of American popular music and jazz.

Expressing much of the traditional tonality associated with European music in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the love songs of the Golden Age are shown to draw on a rich variety of elements--popular harmony, idiomatic lyric-writing, and Afro-American dance rhythms. His analyses of such songs as "Embraceable You" or "Yesterdays" in particular exemplify his ability to convey the sublime, unpretentious simplicity of this great music.

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