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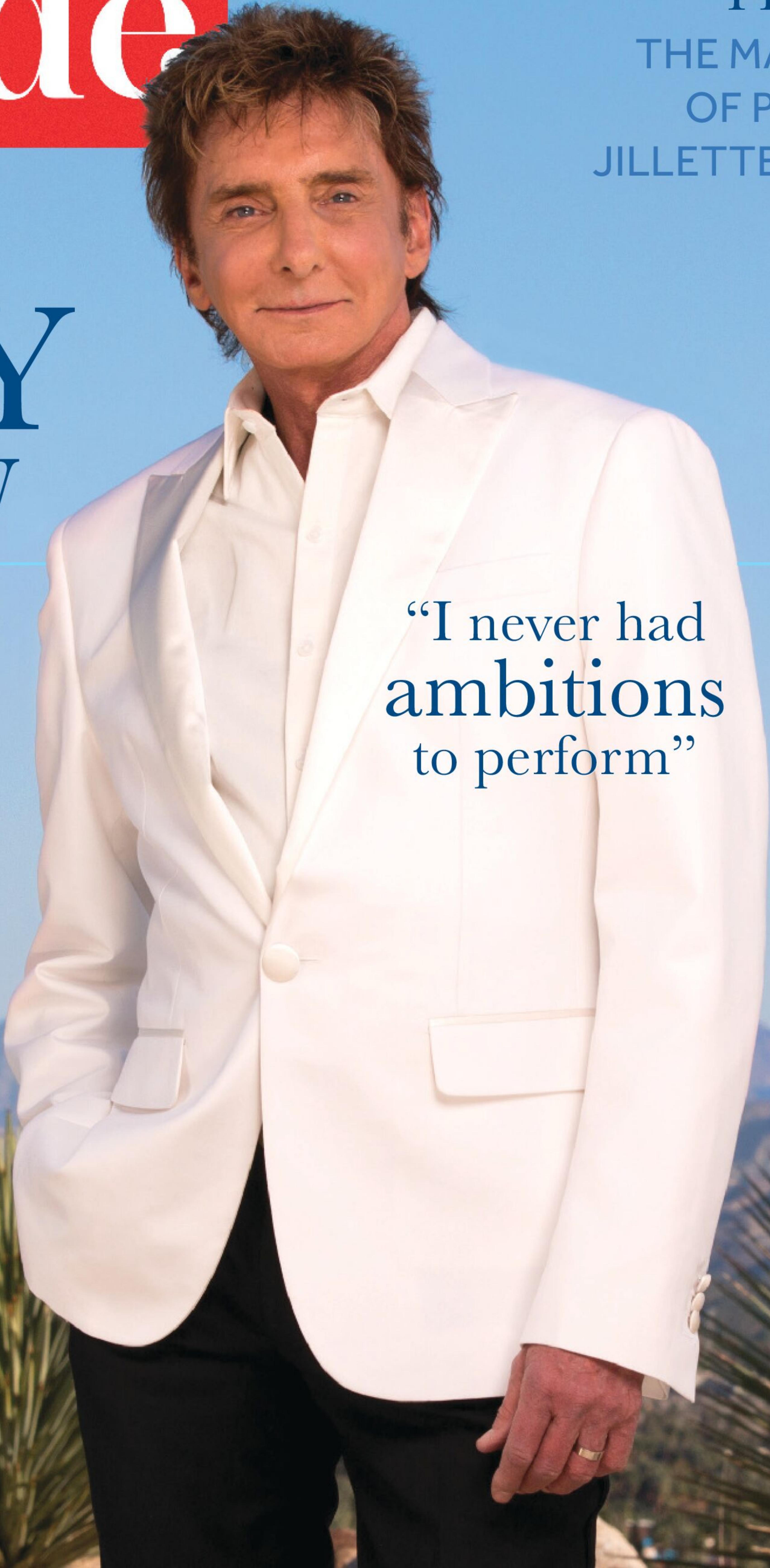
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2023 | PARADE.COM

PLUS
THE MAGIC
OF PENN
JILLETTE, P. 4

BARRY MANILOW

ON HIS BROOKLYN
BOYHOOD, THE STORIES
BEHIND HIS GREATEST
HITS AND HOW HIS
DREAM OF WRITING A
BROADWAY MUSICAL
FINALLY CAME TRUE

“I never had
ambitions
to perform”



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The Parade Don't Miss List

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THE WORLD ACCORDING TO MORGAN FREEMAN

He's been the voice of God in the movies *Bruce Almighty* and *Evan Almighty*, so of course when the producers of *Life on Our Planet* (Oct. 25, Netflix) were looking for someone with an authoritative, commanding voice to narrate the story of life's epic battle to conquer and survive on planet Earth, who better to turn to then, well, the voice of God? *Life on Our Planet* is the story of what happened to 99 percent of earth's former inhabitants, using the latest technology to bring long-extinct creatures back to life. We salute Freeman, 86, here, with a few fun facts about the Oscar-winning actor for *Million Dollar Baby*.

→ Freeman was a mechanic in the United States Air Force, where he rose to the rank of airman first class.

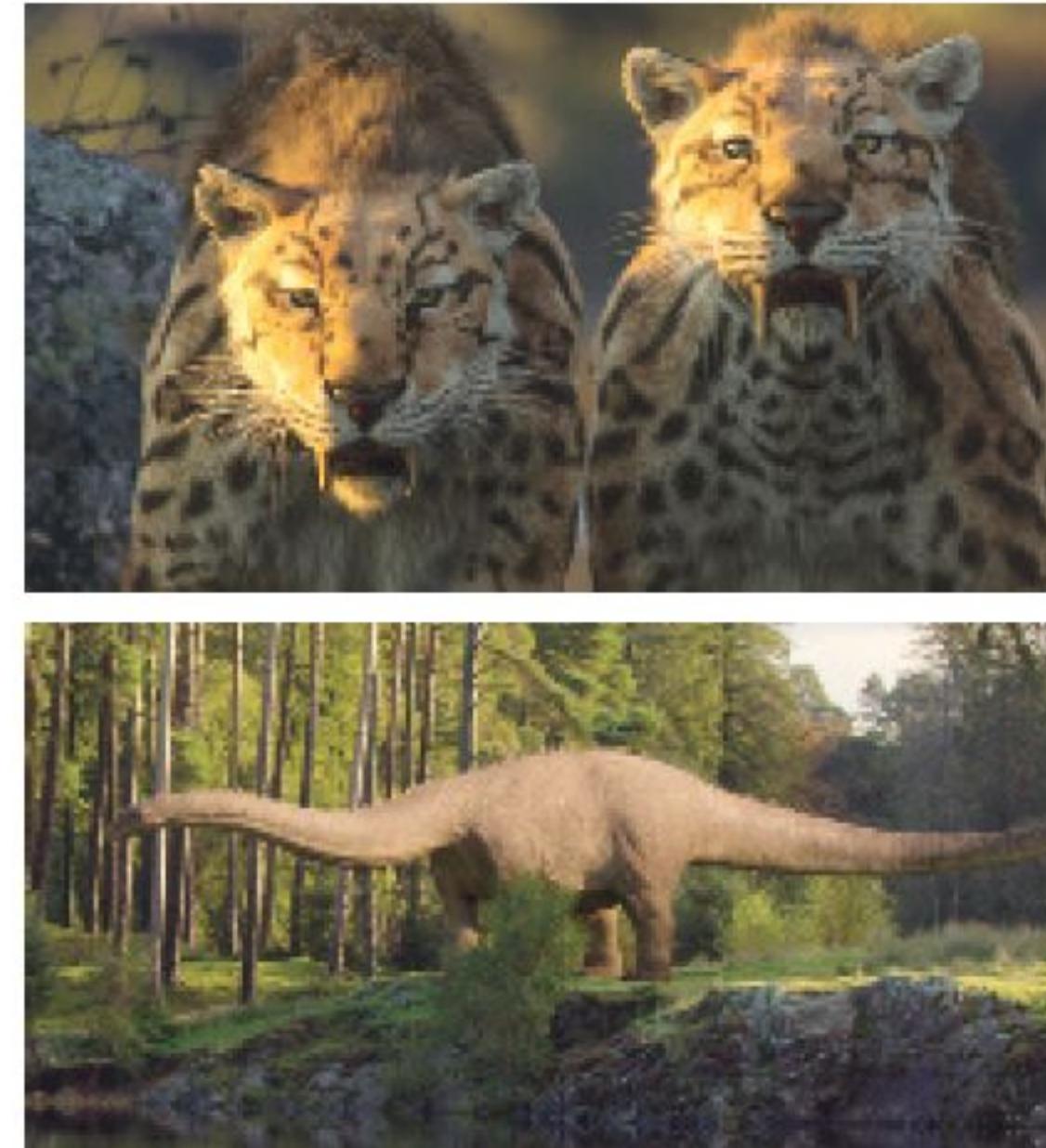
→ He was an extra in 1964's *The Pawnbroker*.

He made his Broadway debut in the musical *Hello, Dolly!* with Pearl Bailey and Cab Calloway.



→ When he won his Oscar, a friend made him a cabinet with a plaque that read: "No Parking. Reserved for Oscar."

→ In 2001, Freeman moved back to Mississippi, where he was raised, to open Ground Zero Blues Club, a music club and restaurant.

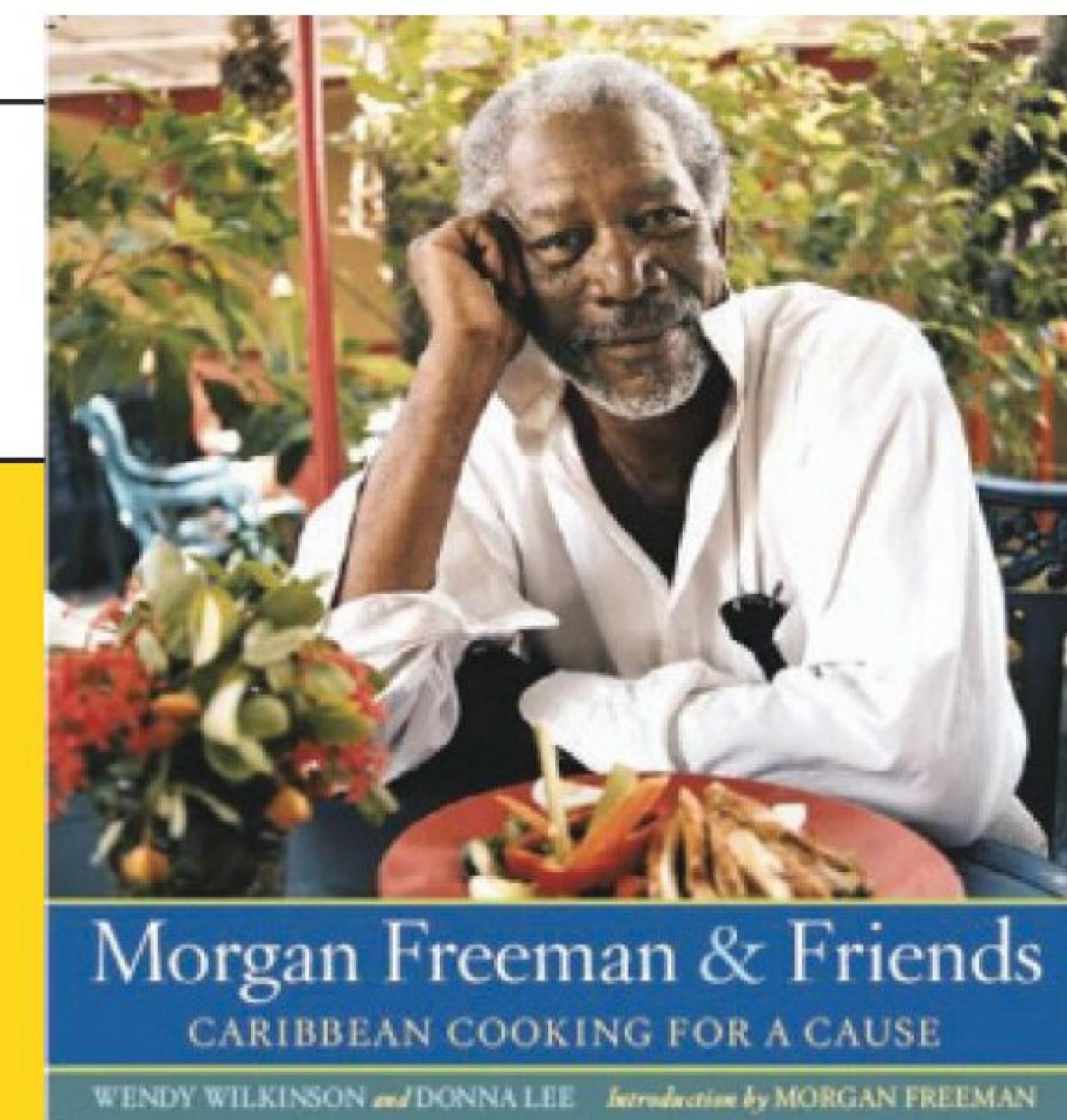


Three of his films are on the American Film Institute's 100 Most Inspiring Movies of All Time: *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Glory* and *The Shawshank Redemption*.



→ Freeman converted his 124-acre ranch in Mississippi into a honeybee sanctuary and has planted bee-friendly plants such as magnolia trees, lavender and clover.

He was awarded a Star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame on March 18, 2003.



Morgan Freeman & Friends
CARIBBEAN COOKING FOR A CAUSE

WENDY WILKINSON and DONNA LEE *Introduction by MORGAN FREEMAN*

He wrote *Morgan Freeman & Friends: Caribbean Cooking for a Cause* and donated proceeds to help rebuild the hurricane-devastated island of Grenada.



WALTER SCOTT'S

Personality



WALTER SCOTT ASKS...

PENN JILLETTÉ

The magician, author and actor, 68, once again will helm *Penn & Teller: Fool Us* (Oct. 27 on The CW)—now in its 10th season—along with his partner, Raymond Teller. The series invites magicians to perform their best trick to try to mislead the two experts. Those who succeed win the right to perform with the duo in their celebrated show at the Rio All-Suite Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas, which has just been extended for three additional years.

Penn & Teller is the longest-running headline act in Las Vegas. To what do you attribute your longevity? I don't have any idea. Teller and I are very rare in show business in that we are more successful than we planned to be, wanted to be, deserved to be. That's very strange. We were happily buckled in to play 100-, 200-hundred seat theaters and do fairs, carnivals and so on. That was our goal and we achieved it. But we took this whimsical try off-Broadway, and then to Broadway. So, we ended up being about an order of magnitude more successful than we aimed at. I think what happened was our love of the show; the fact that we didn't have any ambition for venue or any ambition for success, but all of our ego, all of our love and all of our passion is tied with the show.

We keep doing new shows all the time, which was unheard-of in Vegas. In Vegas, you did a show and you kept it. We change our show; we put a new bit in every month. If you come back every year, you'll see a different Penn & Teller show. I think that base really helped us stay successful.

You've said that it's important for you to do a magic show that's honest and



Jillette,
Brook Burke
and Teller.

has respect for the audience. Has that contributed to your success? That becomes an intellectual, emotional and—I'm using this word with a little bit of hyperbole—moral challenge. Magic shows were always "Here's a quarter and now it's gone. You're an idiot and now it's back. You're a fool. Show's over."

Teller loved magic by the time he was five. I hated magic. When I was in junior high and high school, I was a deep magic hater. It got in the way of me seeing The Who on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. It got in the way of rock 'n' roll on variety shows. And they were always insulting, condescending, tacky and cheesy. I loathed it.

I met Teller, and Teller said this incredible thing, that magic could be an intellectual art form and magic could be respectful. We set out as though we were doing a thesis to see if you could do a magic show that showed no disrespect for the audience.

Keith Richards never comes out on stage and says, "I can play guitar and you can't, ha, ha, ha." The person who came the closest to that was Eddie Van Halen and he always did that with a wink and a smile. Magicians come out all the time and say, "I can do this, ha, ha, ha."

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This has changed completely in the past 20 years. Up until 20 years ago, magicians were all white males and predominantly sexual and social outsiders and outcasts in high school. So that chip on their shoulder stopped the art from being like every other art form is, magnanimous. Even the Sex Pistols were a little magnanimous. Even your hard-core rappers have a certain kind of inclusive quality. That's all we wanted to see in magic. That's it.

In addition to *Fool Us*, America's Got Talent is a TV show that has featured a lot of magicians who end up in Las Vegas. What *America's Got Talent* does—and I'm not showing any disrespect for them, they say this out loud—[is] they watch *Fool Us*, call the people on and say, "Do the exact same thing you did on *Fool Us*." Piff the Magic Dragon started out on *Fool Us* and got a place in Vegas. But that's not really anything to do with *America's Got Talent*. You want to credit Siegfried & Roy and a few other magicians.

Vegas has been the epicenter of magic easily for 45 to 50 years. It has the highest concentration of magic shows in the world. When you have someone who is a successful enough magician to win on *America's Got Talent*, even take *America's Got Talent* out of the equation, they're going to end up in Vegas. The fact that they have their own theaters and do their own full evening shows, that is 100 percent Siegfried & Roy. We did not share taste, we disagreed on everything, but boy I loved them, boy I respected them and boy, we were good friends.

Penn and Teller: *Fool Us* is back for the 10th season. What can we expect this time around? It seems impossible because we're wicked old. This season is the best season we've done, and we have a surprise I contractually cannot talk about. Moxie, my offspring [18-year-old



On the set of *Saturday Night Live*, 1986.

daughter], is on the show this year. Also, the pandemic made the producers broaden their scope and we've brought in some incredible magicians from China and India.

There's also this thing, I guess it took 10 years, but magicians, the really good ones, have started to trust that we have a love and respect for them and will never be unkind. That has brought people who have avoided the show for 10 years thinking that it might be an unpleasant experience to actually come on.

We never know who is going to be on. That wouldn't be fair. We have no idea. When host Brooke Burke did some of the introductions and said the names, our jaws dropped.

You don't know who the acts are until they appear? We can't because otherwise we would have some leg up; it would be unfair. If there's nothing else, our show is almost psychotically fair.

How often do you get fooled by the magicians and do women fool you more than men? It's between 26 to 27 percent. That's slightly by design because the producers like it if one a show more or less fooled us. They look around and pace it in that way.

The gender thing is really interesting. There were no people that didn't look like me in magic in the '90s. When we started *Fool Us*, we said to the producers, we want to be inundated by people

who don't identify as male and by people of color. And if we don't see them every show, we'll get different producers. We need those people on here. Get as many people who don't look like me as you possibly can.

We've been completely successful, but I don't want to take credit because the internet is much more important than that; I love the fact the internet is filled with how to do magic tricks. I love that secrets are given away because that allows people who don't look like me and don't have the right class ring to get into it.

Your book *Random* (2022) is a crime caper about a man who lets the roll of the dice make choices for him. Do you believe in luck? No. There's no such thing. I mean as a force. Now, if you look at the level of success I've had in a colloquial use of the word luck, it's nothing but. I should not be as successful as I am.

You have another book coming out. Is it a novel or nonfiction? It's a novel. Before that it was two books of essays and then books with Teller on magic. I've written two novels now. This one, a very big TV company just bought it, and they want to turn it into a TV show, so I hope so.

Why do you always have one red fingernail? It was a way to mock my mother and became a way to show respect to my mother. When I was young, I was a juggling. I was pretty good. I was doing shows all the time. My mother saw me doing these shows and she said if people are looking at your hands all the time, which they are, you should make your hands look nice. She of course meant wash your hands once in a while, you filthy teenager. I took her nail polish and put it on one finger. I kept that to mock her.

I should add in there, I was and am a real mama's boy. I was closer to my mom than anybody in the world. **P**

The Parade Don't Miss List

FINGERNAILS
(IN SELECT THEATERS AND STREAMING GLOBALLY ON APPLE TV+ ON NOV. 3)



Can love be measured and predicted? That's the premise of this comedy-drama in which Anna (**Jessie Buckley**) and Ryan (**Jeremy Allen White**) have found "true love" through a controversial new technology predicting successful matches using the subjects' fingernails. Anna is not so sure.

"This is a beautiful story with a distinct comic tone that I hope gets people talking and thinking about the nature and possibilities of love," says Riz Ahmed, 40, who plays Amir, the man who actually may be Anna's true love. "'Would you take the test?' the film asks. How far would you go to put your own love to the test? Couples are supposed to be learning from him, but Amir is at the institute to try and find love himself—or at least try and understand what love is," says Ahmed.

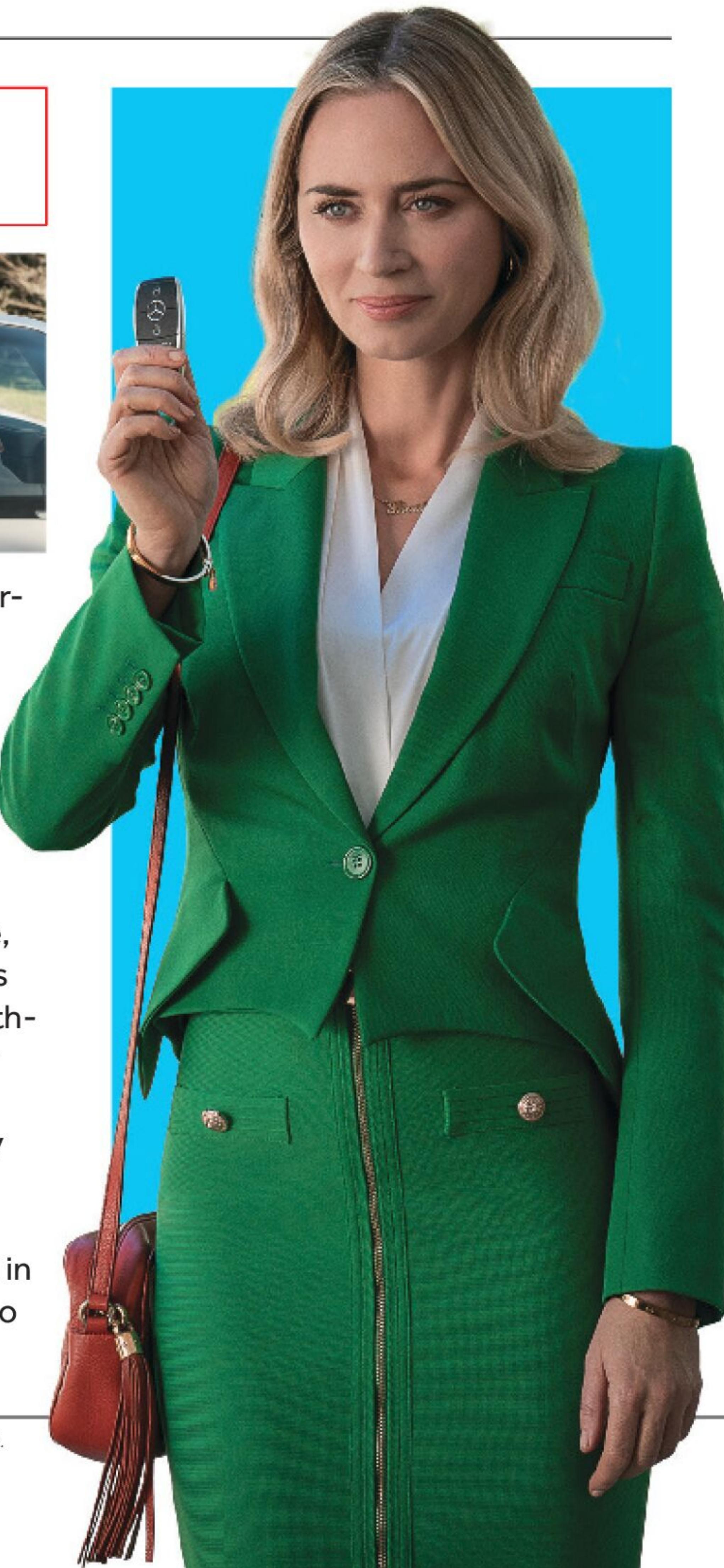
"He's been heartbroken so many times through failed relationships and he's hiding the fact that he's never received a positive test. His solution is to try and crack

the formula behind love, to see up close and personal what love is."

PAIN HUSTLERS
(OCT. 27 ON NETFLIX)

Catherine O'Hara makes the jump from her Emmy-winning role as Moira Rose on *Schitt's Creek* to this pharmaceutical drama. It's the story of Liza Drake (**Emily Blunt**), a blue-collar, single mother who has lost her job and is desperate for an income to help pay medical costs for her daughter's (Chloe Coleman) condition when she has a chance meeting with pharmaceutical sales rep Pete Brenner (Chris Evans). She turns her life around by becoming a sales rep for Zanna Therapeutics, not realizing that the company is involved in a dangerous racketeering scheme.

O'Hara plays Liza's money-hungry mother, Jackie Drake, who follows her daughter onto the Zanna sales team, and is another source of difficulties for Liza. "I see Jackie as a mother and grandmother who just wants to stay in her daughter and granddaughter's lives," O'Hara, 69, says. "I had some really great scenes with Emily and Chloe. I love those family scenes. In one day, we went from a horrible, will-we-ever-be-able-to-repair-our-relationship fight to relaxing on a couch talking about UTIs. We actually cried and laughed, all in one day. And what more could I ask for with Emily Blunt, who I really adore?"



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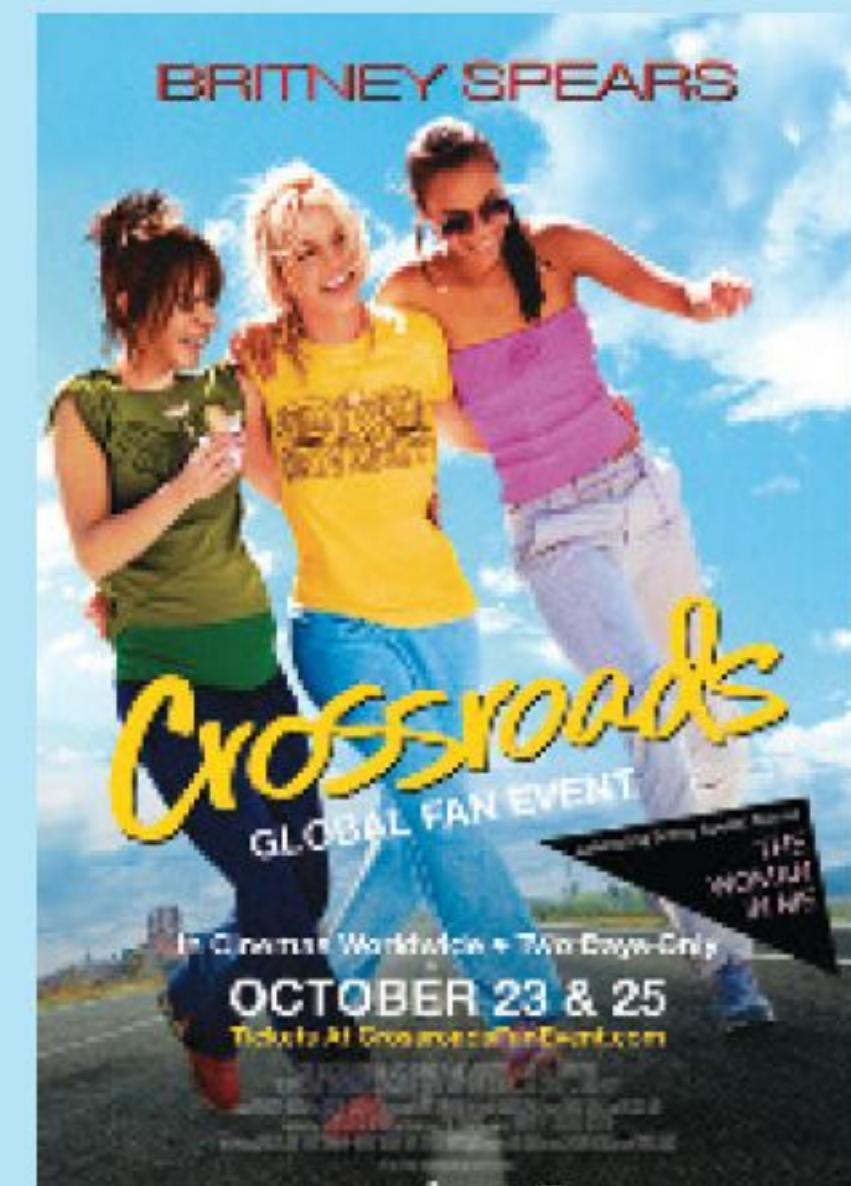
STAR WATCH

JOHN STAMOS

(*Fuller House*) has a memoir, *If You Would Have Told Me*, coming out Oct. 24.



ZOE SALDAÑA, BRITNEY SPEARS and TARYN MAN-NING play childhood friends who take a cross-country trip in *Crossroads*, opening Oct. 23.



Remember **ROBERT PILATUS** and **FABRICE MOR-VAN**? The documentary, *Milli Vanilli*, explores the duo's rise and scandalous fall, premiering Oct. 24.



*Interviews conducted before the SAG-AFTRA strike.

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THE FUTURE OF JACK REACHER

Coauthors Lee and Andrew Child on the latest exploits of everyone's favorite crime-fighter—on the page and on screen. **BY ELIZABETH HELD**

For more than 25 years, Lee Child has thrilled readers with the exploits of Jack Reacher, a former major in the U.S. Army Military Police Corps who now lives off the grid righting wrongs and investigating crimes. In 2020, Lee, who will be 69 this month, announced plans to retire and hand off the series to his brother, Andrew, after they cowrote four books. Their final joint book in the series, *The Secret*, (Delacourt Press, \$21, amazon.com), comes out Oct. 24. Lee and Andrew, 55, spoke with *Parade* about the latest Reacher installment, writing together and their future plans.

What's Reacher up to in *The Secret*?

Lee: The first thing to mention is this is a prequel—set in a previous period when Reacher was still in the military. Independently, we'd both been obsessed with news from Russia of these mysterious occurrences where well-dressed men were suddenly accidentally falling from windows. We had to use that.

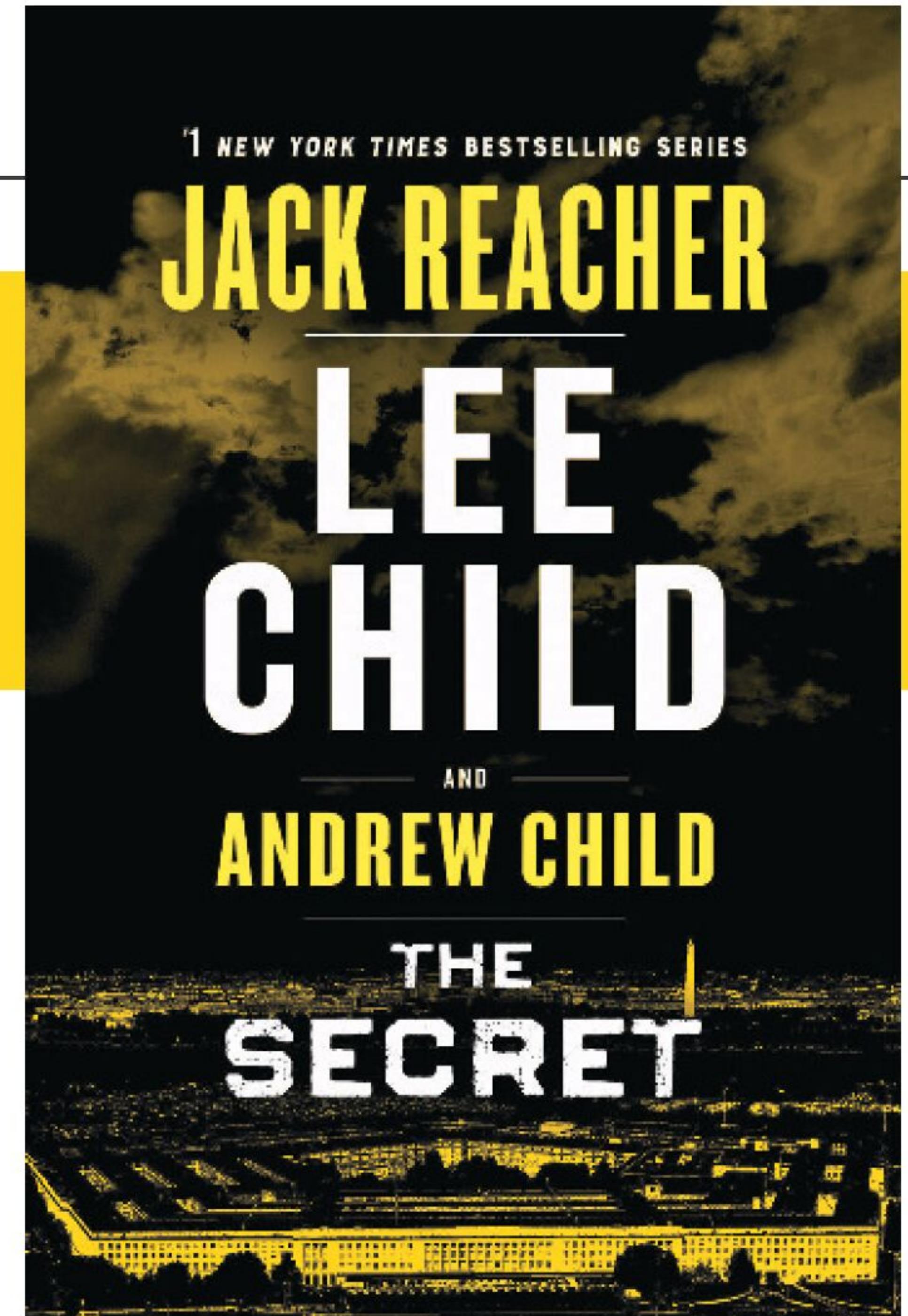
Andrew: We thought, from a dramatic point of view, it was more exciting to follow not only Reacher, but whoever was responsible for these deaths and watch one victim after another get picked off in these bizarre ways. We wanted to make it a cat-and-mouse game. It turned out to be a lot of fun figuring all that out.

What's it like to write together?

Lee: It's weird. In general, writing is an individual thing. The biggest worry I had starting this collaboration was, *How is it going to work?* Because Andrew is my younger brother, and he grew up with a certain hierarchy. That disappeared quick. He speaks out when he needs to. It surprised me that we worked as well together as we did. It was a four-book transition, and *The Secret* is the fourth of those four. I'm sad that period is over now, and Andrew will be striking out on his own. The last four years have been good fun.

Andrew: When we agreed to do it, there was an empty silence because we said we would do this thing, but we had no idea how to do it. We had to figure it out twice because we got a system running at the beginning of *The Sentinel*, which was the first of the four. Lee has this superstition about starting each Reacher book on September 1st. So, we started September 1, 2019, worked up till Christmas, and then the pandemic hit, so we could no longer travel and meet in the same place.

Once we weren't physically in the same room, we would email back and forth.



We had the same experience the reader has—a page with words on it, and the words are either good or not. It was a positive thing in terms of efficiency and writing the best product we could.

What can you share about the Amazon adaptation, *Reacher*?

Lee: The second season is all finished and will launch in December. I loved the first season—I thought it was great. I was worried that the second season wouldn't be as good. I identified the thing that worried me most was the supporting cast. Alan Ritchson as Reacher is fabulous, as is Maria Sten, who's returning as Frances Neagley.

I didn't see how the supporting cast could be as great as in season one. But they're all great. Season two is fully formed, with real, living, breathing people.

Reacher narrates some of the books, while there's an outside narrator for others. How do you choose what the right approach is?

Lee: The first book is in the first person, and then there's a sequence of several books in the third person. There are many reasons for that. I remember thinking, "Writers can

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for our film adaptation picks.

get stereotyped," so I wanted to make a big difference between my first and second books. The character would be the same, and the background would be the same, but the narration would be different. It gave me the space to roam around without breaking out of what I led the reader to expect.

Andrew: For me, it was always about the different kinds of suspense you can generate depending on whether you're going with first person or third. The first person is great for surprises because you can't tell the reader that there's a

bad guy waiting around the corner waiting to leave. It's a surprise. With the third person, you build that tension because the reader knows there's an ambush.

Reacher feels a bit timeless. He hitch-hikes. He doesn't have ID. How does writing Reacher now compare to writing him in the '90s?

Lee: That's germane to the collaboration. Everything I do as a writer is based on how I feel as a reader. Reacher is somewhat behind the curve with technology because the reader doesn't need

to feel ignorant. If the reader knows more about tech than the character, that's a helpful situation.

But over the 25 years that I did it, he got so out of date. It was getting grotesque. That was one specific conversation Andrew and I had when we started this collaboration. One of the things that I wanted was to have Andrew—who knows more about technology than I do—drag Reacher into the future a little bit. At least, let's get him comfortable in the 20th century.

Andrew: It wasn't that Reacher was going to suddenly become a little more comfortable with technology because he had been comfortable in earlier books. It drifted out of focus.

What struck me was if you make it so Reacher can't use technology, like a cell phone, that suggests he's stupid. And Reacher is not stupid. The more pertinent point is that Reacher could use any of these machines if he saw the point, but he doesn't. I think that's refreshing to readers because, in the current world, everywhere you go, people are looking at their phones.

Lee, any big retirement plans?

So far, retirement is a bit theoretical. I seem to be busier than ever. During the pandemic, I started to do a lot of Zoom events because I wanted to support bookstores. I'm still doing quite a few, so retirement has been super slow motion.

The only thing I've ever resented about being a writer is how much time it takes away from being a reader. So, all I want to do is lose myself in the world of somebody else's story. That is going to be my retirement. I have a sofa that is eight feet long; I will lie on it and read all day long.

Andrew, did you continue the tradition and start a new book on September 1?
Yes! The *Reacher* that will come out next year is already started. **P**



Andrew and Lee Child

HE WRITES THE SONGS



Hitmaker BARRY MANILOW

reveals the stories behind his greatest hits—from “Mandy” to “It’s a Miracle”—and how his dream of writing a Broadway musical finally came true.

BY NEIL POND

COVER BY RICHARD MCCLAREN; OPENER BY LISA BOEHM

Barry Manilow doesn't need much downtime.

“I never sleep,” he says. “I get four hours a night. That's all I really need. It's been that way for years.”

That's not surprising, perhaps, for a guy from the city that's said to never sleep, a place that's running full throttle all the time. “When you start out in New York, you're always a New Yorker,” he says, admitting it's true even though he's lived on the West Coast for more than two decades. “I just have a lot of energy; I talk fast, I think fast. Maybe it's because New Yorkers are always moving, scrambling to get a seat on the subway or something.”

He's not scrambling these days for many subway seats, especially in Palm Springs, Calif., the Sonoran Desert town where he's talking with *Parade* from the recording studio of his home. “It's very hot, but it's beautiful,” he says, turning his gaze to a nearby window. “Blue skies and mountains and lots of palm trees.” As he speaks, his two beloved Labrador Retrievers, Jake and Abbey, bark for his attention.

All those non-sleeping hours over all the decades and all that Big-Apple energy have given Manilow, who recently turned 80, more time to enjoy the scenery, love on his dogs—and mostly, make more music. In his durable career as a singing, songwriting, hitmaking master showman, he's chalked up sales of some 85 million albums and released nearly 60 singles, including a bucketful that were No. 1, Top 10 and Top 40 radio hits, including “Mandy,” “Looks Like We Made It,” “It's a Miracle,” “I Write the Songs,” “Can't Smile Without

You” and “Copacabana.” He's been honored with nearly every award possible, including a Grammy, a Tony and an Emmy (actually, two of them). And he was even nominated for an Oscar, for “Ready to Take a Chance Again,” a song he performed for the soundtrack of the 1978 Chevy Chase/Goldie Hawn comedy *Foul Play*. *Billboard* magazine has called him the No. 1 Adult Contemporary entertainer of all time.

Since 1974, he's hit the charts with 25 different songs. On TV, he's hosted nearly 20 prime-time specials; he played himself in episodes of *Murphy Brown*, *Will & Grace* and *Ally McBeal*, and starred in a movie based on “Copacabana,” his biggest hit. Somewhere in there, he transitioned from showbiz success to entertainment icon, becoming an enduring emblem of dependably mellow, infectiously pleasing music that now continues into the 21st century (his songs are so mellow, authorities in one Australian town played them on speakers to deter gangs from gathering).

Despite Manilow's wide-ranging success, a particular lifelong goal has been out of his reach, until now. Later this year, he'll finally see the opening of a Broadway musical—his Broadway musical. *Harmony*, in previews now and set to raise the curtain Nov. 13 at the Ethel Barrymore Theater, is based on the true story of The Comedian Harmonists, a wisecracking singing group in Germany prior to World War II—when the Nazi regime made life much more difficult for the act's Jewish members.

“They were like The Manhattan Transfer meets the Marx Brothers,” says Manilow, the composer and arranger of the music for the production, along with longtime songwriting collaborator, Bruce Sussman, who wrote the lyrics. The Broadway opening has been a long time coming, he says, noting that he and Sussman began the project 25 years ago. *Harmony* eventually played around the country, but it wasn't until now that it reached New York City's legendary theater district—with a full cast and a Tony-winning director, Warren Carlyle, attached.

continued on page 12

"I've been on Broadway twice," Manilow says. "But always as a performer; this is the first time as a composer of a bigger musical, and it's been one of my dreams to do that. Having *Harmony* open on Broadway is going to be the highlight of my career."

SHOW-TUNE ROOTS

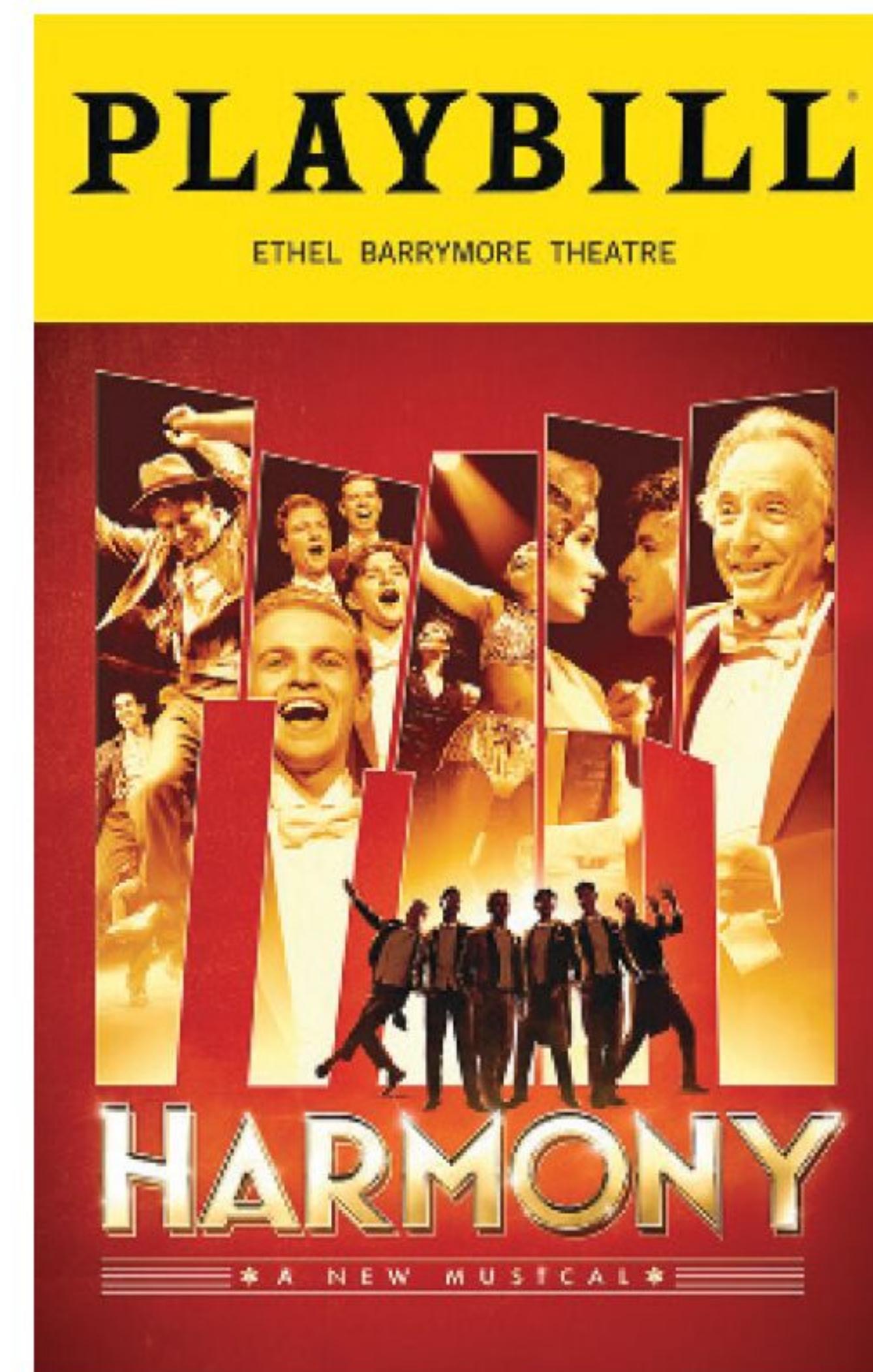
Composing music for the Broadway show brought him full circle to his childhood. Manilow was born Barry Pincus in 1943 and grew up in a working-class section of Brooklyn, a place where "everyone was poor," he says. (He changed his name to Manilow, his mother's maiden name, after his father left and she remarried.) An accordion, then a miniature piano awakened his musical talent, which was later fueled by his stepfather's record collection, heavy with Broadway soundtracks like *Oklahoma!*, *Brigadoon* and *Carousel*. Those big, splashy show tunes shaped his earliest musical instincts. "What was on the radio was junk," he says, "compared to everything else I loved."

He was voted "Most Musical" in his senior class at Brooklyn's Eastern District High School, and after graduation, he married his high-school sweetheart, Susan Deixler. They split after a year, and the marriage was annulled. In the breakup and division of property, Manilow made sure he got the piano.

After attending The Juilliard School for performing arts, he worked as a pianist for Broadway rehearsals, then was hired to write, sing and record commercial jingles. Before America knew his name, they heard him crooning on the radio and TV about State Farm Insurance ("Like a good neighbor..."), bandages ("I am stuck on Band-Aid..."), McDonald's ("You deserve a break today...") and other products. He learned early how to make a good song: "It's got to be catchy enough to get on the radio, catchy enough for people to remember."

Then he met Bette Midler in the early stages of her ascension to stardom. She hired the young piano-pounding prodigy as her accompanist, bandleader and producer for her breakthrough album, *The Divine Miss M*, and her tour. When Manilow got an offer to record an album on his own, it surprised them both. "I called Bette and said, 'I think I just got a record deal...'" he says. "She said, 'Doing what?' I said, 'Singing.' She said, 'But you don't sing!' I said, 'I know! But they think I do.'"

His first album, *Barry Manilow*, in 1973, was a bit of a flop. "It sold, like, five copies," Manilow says; actually, it was about 35,000, but still a



Manilow's musical, *Harmony*, is now playing on Broadway

BARRY'S BEST

What's your favorite dessert? I don't eat a lot, but I like banana cream pie.



Favorite member of The Monkees? Davy Jones

Words to live by? "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." If the world lived by that, there would be no wars, and everybody would be happy.

Drink you would order at the Copacabana? One of those crazy drinks with cherries and flambé and a little umbrella.

TV show you recently enjoyed? *Heartstopper* (Netflix coming-of-age series about two young men finding love).

Teenage movie star crush? Judy Garland.

I wish I were ____ More patient.



Fast food you find hard to resist? Kentucky Fried Chicken.

What do you think about country music? I saw the CMA Awards, and every song was about beer, a bar, drinking or getting drunk at a bar.

Something from childhood you still have? The spinet [his first piano]. It's in the warehouse somewhere.



Last book you read? *Whalefall* [Daniel Krauss' modern-day novel about a man swallowed by a whale.] I ordered it after seeing it in the Sunday *New York Times*.

Perfect pizza? As long as it's pepperoni, I'm a happy guy.



Above: Manilow with Bette Midler, and with Donna Summer and Elton John.
Below: receiving the key to the Las Vegas Strip, and with his husband, Garry Kief.



commercial disappointment. “There were some very nice songs on there. But it was kind of a relief. I could go back to doing what I really wanted to do, which was *not* singing.” Yes, one of the most successful of all singing stars admits he felt out of his league as a headliner, behind a microphone, in front of audiences. Remarkably, he still does. “I never had ambitions to perform,” he says. “It surprises me to this day that I’m still doing it, because I don’t think of myself as a singer or a performer. I’m a *musician*. And performing and singing—it’s always a surprise that anybody likes it.”

Soon he found out a *lot* of people were liking it. In 1974, his second album, *Barry Manilow II*, provided a breakout smash with “Mandy.” Having a hit record was life-changing; the newfound fame came crashing so hard and fast that he tried disguising himself to avoid the crush of fans. “I put cotton in my mouth, like Marlon Brando” in *The Godfather*, he says. But people recognized him anyway. “They thought I’d had dental work.”

And the rest is musical history: a long stand of radio hits, worldwide acclaim, five decades of recording and performing. The improbability isn’t lost on him today—that a Brooklyn kid with an accordion could go from a tiny tenement apartment to become a world-famous superstar. How did *that* happen?

“Beats the sh-- out me,” he says with a chuckle, adding he’s never been one to dwell on the past, or question how or why. “I don’t think like that. I just think about the next thing,” he says. “There’s always the next thing with me; I’ve always got two or three projects in the pipeline. And it’s always been like that.”

Another thing he’s always done is give back. He’s never forgotten those early days of barely getting by when his family scraped to afford to buy him an accordion, then a tiny piano. For most of his career, he’s helped youth and leaders pump up their musical programs, with concerts this summer again raising money for deserving music teachers and schools. The Manilow Music Project has been generating funding since 2008 “to keep dreams alive one instrument at a time.”

“As a performer, you give back,” he says. “I gave back as much as I could as soon as I started making some money. And I still do.”

After this summer’s tour dates, he headed to Las Vegas, as he’s done for the past 14 years, and where he’s bigger—and even busier—than Elvis. Manilow’s long-term residency at the Westgate Las Vegas Resort & Casino on the world-famous Vegas strip, unfailingly attracts sellout crowds of die-hard “Fanilows.” The hotel has a different name now, but he plays the same room where the King held court in the 1970s—and where Manilow recently broke Presley’s previous record of 636 performances.

BIGGER THAN ELVIS?

Earlier this year, he was honored by the esteemed New York Pops in a special black-tie event for the organization’s 40th anniversary, and he got rave reviews for his five nights of shows, with a 50-piece orchestra, at Radio City Music Hall this summer. He marked his 80th birthday at one of his shows by wobbling onstage with a walker—a joke about becoming a newly minted octogenarian—as fans showered him with robust birthday greetings. The birthday blowout was planned by Manilow’s longtime manager, Garry Kief. They’ve been together now for 45 years and were officially married in 2014; Manilow didn’t officially “come out” as gay until a few years later, in a 2017 cover story for *People*. “He’s such a good guy and he’s so smart,” he says of Kief. “He takes good care of me. I’m a really lucky guy.”

He knows he’s lucky, too, to have not just stayed afloat over the decades, but to have thrived. In addition to *Harmony* opening in New York —“It’s going to be the most exciting night of my life”—Manilow has finished recording a new batch of songs for an upcoming album and will release four new seasonal tunes in December. With all of his projects over the years, he just hopes people say, “He made me feel good,” he says. “That’s what I would like.”

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THE STORIES BEHIND HIS SONGS

“SWEETWATER JONES” (1973)

WRITTEN BY BARRY MANILOW

One of the first of Manilow's original songs he ever recorded and released, it was a standout cut on his very first album, *Barry Manilow*, making a favorable impression with reviewers. The industry publication *Radio & Records* noted its “Elton John-ish” vibe, about a young man leaving his former life and heading to the country, bidding goodbye to “the old grindstone” of New York City. “I don't know why I wrote that song,” says Manilow, who admits he never really dreamed, musically or otherwise, about trading city life for the sticks. “But it has a great little honky-tonk feel to it. I've always liked it.”

“MANDY” (1974)

WRITTEN BY SCOTT ENGLISH AND RICHARD KERR

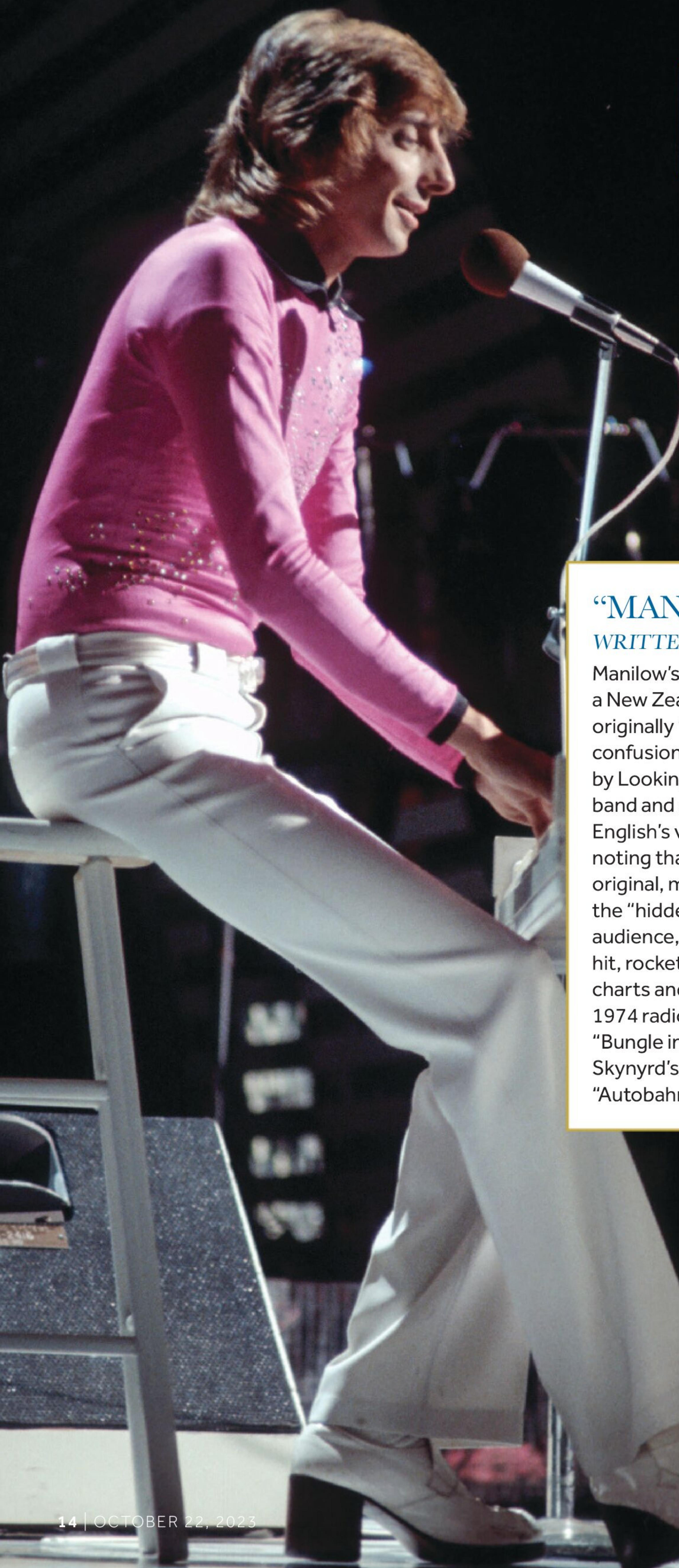
Manilow's breakout hit had previously been recorded by Bunny Walters, a New Zealand singer, and by Scott English, its cowriter. And “Mandy” was originally “Brandy.” Manilow changed the name—and the title—to avoid confusion with another recent radio smash, “Brandy (You're a Fine Girl)” by Looking Glass. He recorded his vocal and piano part in one take, with a band and small orchestra added later. “I found the love song hiding inside English's version,” Manilow says, noting that he softened up the original, more rockin' version. And the “hidden” love song found a huge audience, becoming his first No. 1 hit, rocketing its sweet way up the charts and through the crowded 1974 radio maze of Jethro Tull's “Bungle in the Jungle,” Lynyrd Skynyrd's “Call Me the Breeze” and “Autobahn” by Kraftwerk.



“IT'S A MIRACLE” (1974)

WRITTEN BY BARRY MANILOW AND MARTY PANZER

Panzer, Manilow's first songwriting partner, would later team with him for more than two dozen other songs, including the hits “Even Now” and “This One's for You.” This song—about an entertainer on the road who has sorely missed his lover—marks Manilow's first (partially) self-written hit, and he's used it for years to kick off his concerts. “It's the greatest opening song ever,” he says. “I've tried other songs to open my shows with, and they just don't work as well.” It hit No. 1 in April 1975.



"COULD IT BE MAGIC" (1975)

WRITTEN BY ADRIENNE ANDERSON AND BARRY MANILOW

"One of my proudest moments," says Manilow of the song that started as a riff on a classical prelude by Frédéric Chopin, with lyrics added later by Anderson, who would also become a frequent collaborator. Manilow recorded it initially in the early '70s when he was part of a band of studio musicians called Featherbed, produced by Tony ("Knock Three Times") Orlando. But he didn't much care for Orlando's arrangement, a bubble-gummy track accented with a clanging cowbell, and the Featherbed version didn't take wing. Manilow was later able to refashion the song the way he'd intended it, as an intense, eight-minute opus of impassioned longing, for his first album. But it languished there as a mostly undiscovered gem until it was rereleased to much greater acclaim three years later, in 1975, on his second LP, *Barry Manilow II*. Before releasing it as a single, the record company chopped it down into a three-minute alternative version to make it more palatable for airplay. When DJs started spinning the shorter version, spurred by calls from fans who loved it on his first album, it became Manilow's third Top 10 hit. And the song had legs: Disco diva Donna Summer made it into a dance hit in 1976, and the British band Take That had a version in the '90s that won them an award as the British single of the year. It's been used in TV shows including *Doctor Who* and *Moonlighting*, and in the movie *Looking for Mr. Goodbar*. "I'm pretty proud of that young kid who wrote 'Could It Be Magic,'" says Manilow.

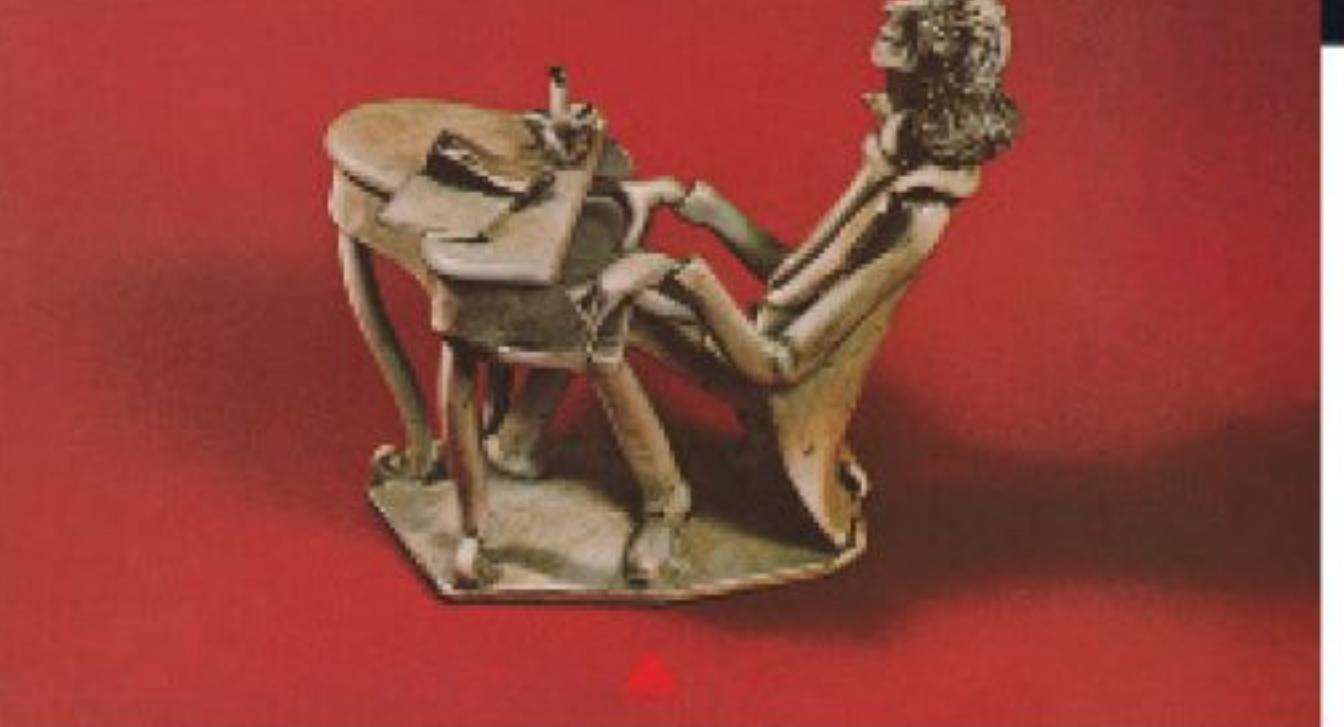
"I WRITE THE SONGS" (1975)

WRITTEN BY BRUCE JOHNSTON

Yes, Manilow proclaims "I write the songs that make the whole world sing..." Only he *didn't* write this song, just as he didn't write several of his big hits, which he's spent a lot of breath explaining over the years. This song came from Bruce Johnston, a member of the Beach Boys, and was previously recorded by Captain & Tennille and David (*The Partridge Family*) Cassidy. When Manilow's producer, Clive Davis, presented the song to him, he resisted. "I said, 'I can't do that. People are going to think I'm bragging about how I write all the songs in the world.'" But as he studied the lyrics, he understood that "it's really an anthem to the spirit of music." It became Manilow's third No. 1 hit and won Johnston a Grammy in 1977, beating out Neal Sedaka's "Breaking Up is Hard to Do," the Starland Vocal Band's "Afternoon Delight" and Gordon Lightfoot's "The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald."



BARRY MANILOW
Tryin' To Get The Feeling



"TRYIN' TO GET THE FEELING AGAIN" (1975)

WRITTEN BY DAVID POMERANZ

Writer Pomeranz originally recorded this ballad, inspired by the emotions of a stressful time in his marriage. "I'm glad David still talks to me and forgives me," says Manilow, "because I rearranged his whole song. It's one of my favorite records that I've ever made." Manilow's changes include making one part of the song its repeating chorus and hook ("I've been up, down, tryin' to get the feelin' again"). "That's the way I heard it," he says.

"THIS ONE'S FOR YOU" (1976)

BY BARRY MANILOW AND MARTY PANZER

Marty Panzer's second hit with Manilow was the title track of his fourth solo album and became his fifth No. 1 single on the Adult Contemporary chart. "When Marty brought me the lyric and read it to me, it was like a poem." The opening line, "This one'll never sell," set up the achingly personal-sounding story—about a guy singing his heart out for an old flame, knowing that his very special song won't be a radio hit but hoping his old lover will somehow hear it regardless ("where ever you are"). But listeners were sold on the song and it helped the album go platinum, passing one million in sales, in January of the following year.

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"LOOKS LIKE WE MADE IT" (1977)

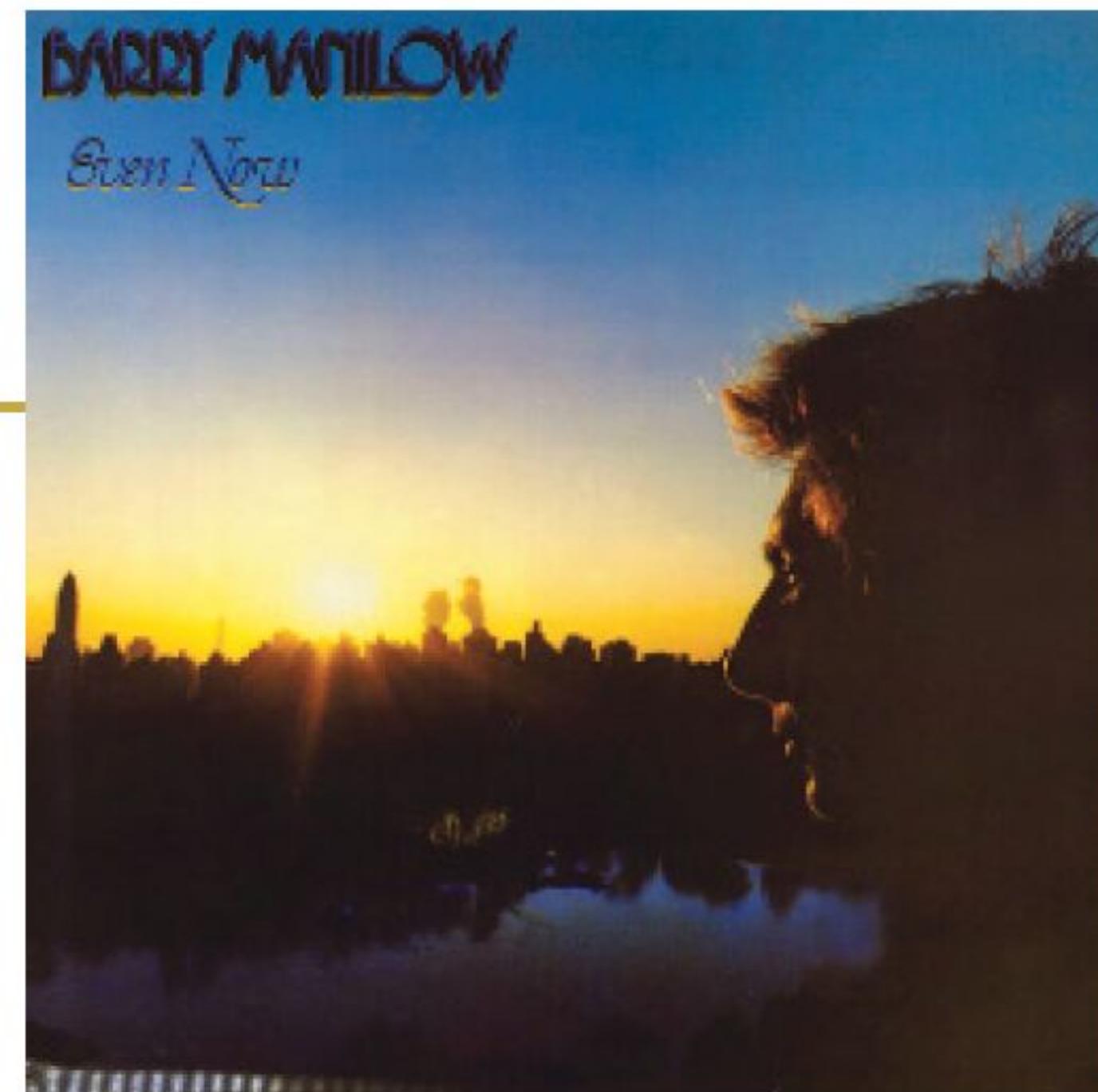
WRITTEN BY RICHARD KERR AND WILL JENNINGS

One of his most misunderstood songs, Manilow points out that "Looks Like We Made It" is "a very sad tale of breaking up, and yet people use it as an anthem, like, at graduation: *Looks like we made it!*" What the singer of the song has "made it" to, however, is the bittersweet end of a relationship, mulling over how he and his ex have both moved on to other lovers and other things. "People just don't listen to words," says Manilow. The song was used in an episode of *Friends* when Ross spends a reunion day with his former pet monkey. It ended Manilow's five-year run of No. 1 *Billboard* singles on the publication's Hot 100 chart.

"CAN'T SMILE WITHOUT YOU" (1978)

WRITTEN BY CHRISTIAN ARNOLD, DAVID MARTIN AND GEOFF MORROW

British singer-songwriter Martin got the idea from a greeting card with a frown and a teardrop on the cover, and words that became the title of this No. 1 Adult Contemporary hit. The tune he fashioned with his writing partners was initially recorded by The Carpenters and Engelbert Humperdinck. But it didn't become a radio hit until Manilow vamped up its "simple" melody, making it "like a happy vaudeville song, with a top hat and cane," he says, and giving the tune four key changes and a big, rousing, razzmatazz singalong ending. Of all his concert numbers, he notes, "this is one that audiences love the most."



"COPACABANA (AT THE COPA)" (1978)

WRITTEN BY BARRY MANILOW, JACK FELDMAN AND BRUCE SUSSMAN

"'Copa' wasn't supposed to be a hit," says Manilow. "Bruce and I wrote it as the novelty cut" for his *Even Now* album. Set in the famous New York nightclub of the title, it's about a showgirl, Lola, her boyfriend, Tony, and a raucous night that turns tragic. "It's a full story in three verses," says Manilow, as Tony is shot (and dies), Lola goes insane, 30 years fly by...and the song remains peppy and upbeat, part of its frivolity and "novelty." The record label execs scratched their heads over what kind of song it was meant to be, and ultimately didn't think it could be a hit, either. But as more and more listeners called radio stations to request it from the album, "Copa" became yet another Top 10 hit, earning Manilow his only Grammy, in 1979, for Best Male Pop Vocal Performance. And the song, ironically, would turn out to be perhaps his most successful single of all time, and certainly his most widely known. It earned him his first gold certification for a single that he wrote or co-wrote. It's been used in TV episodes of *Friends*, *Glee*, *ER*, *Sex and the City* and *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*, and in the movies *Despicable Me*, *Pretty in Pink* and *Foul Play*. "Out of all the songs I've recorded, it's what people know best," he says. "That's the one."

Ask Marilyn

BY MARILYN VOS SAVANT



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Dear Marilyn,

When I attend a classical music concert, I see that the conductor arrives on stage and shakes hands with the concertmaster before he does anything more. Why does this ritual exist?

—Wendell Driggers, Reston, Virginia

Ah, 'tis the season for classical music! Symphony orchestras have many formalities that delight—and occasionally perplex—their audiences. They are all part of the refinement of classical music itself, so they're a fitting accompaniment to the complexities of the compositions.

The tradition you mention has its roots in the days before orchestras were led by conductors. Before then, the concertmaster, usually the most skilled musician in the violin section, led the orchestra. (Other musicians also filled this role.) So, a modern conductor shakes hands with the concertmaster to "take over" the lead.

Speaking of the intricacy of classical music, I once attended a performance of the New York Philharmonic to hear them play selections of especially loved themes from movies, accompanied by scenes from the films. I expected that with a symphony orchestra performing the works, they would be even better. Was I ever wrong! Although they were enhanced by the live performance, fine musicians had already performed them for the films, so the selections were as pleasing as they were at the theater, but they sounded mostly the same—not better. Then I realized that they lacked the stunning complexity of those classical music scores composed in bygone eras. Back then, movies didn't exist. The music itself was everything. It had to capture the listeners and transport them to fabulous places entirely on its own. What a feat! No wonder it has lasted so long.

CLASSIC
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JULY 16, 2006

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anaclandaacel?

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Find solutions
to Marilyn's puzzles and this week's Numbrix on the next page!

SOLUTIONS

THE ACE EQUATION

Answer for what crime
anaclandaaacel suggests:
Assault and battery!



A salt (NaCl, sodium chloride)
and battery (AAA cell).



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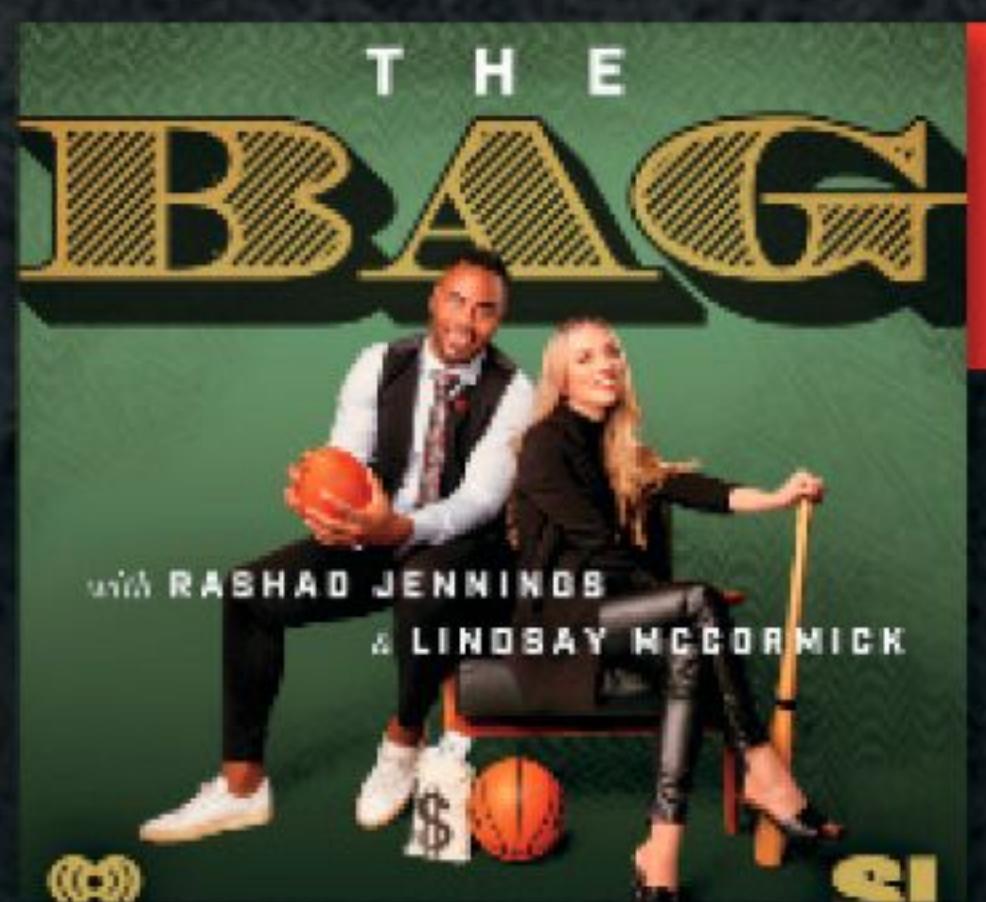
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