

The Enduring Charm of George Gershwin's "Clara, Clara" from Porgy and Bess

George Gershwin's "Clara, Clara" from Porgy and Bess is a haunting and evocative ballad that has captivated audiences for generations. First performed in 1935, the song has become a staple of the American songbook and has been recorded by countless artists, from jazz legends like Ella Fitzgerald and Miles Davis to classical musicians like Yo-Yo Ma and Renée Fleming.



George Gershwin Clara, Clara (from "Porgy and Bess") for Horn Quartet: arranged by Giovanni Abbiati

by Giovanni Abbiati

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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History and Context

"Clara, Clara" was written in 1934 as part of Gershwin's groundbreaking opera Porgy and Bess. The opera, which tells the story of a group of African Americans living in Charleston, South Carolina, was a major departure from Gershwin's previous work. It was the first American opera to feature an all-black cast, and its music incorporated elements of jazz, blues, and spirituals.

"Clara, Clara" is one of the most famous songs from *Porgy and Bess*. It is a lament sung by the character Clara, a young woman who is in love with Porgy, a crippled beggar. The song expresses Clara's longing for Porgy and her hope that he will return to her.

Musical Analysis

"Clara, Clara" is a beautiful and sophisticated piece of music. The melody is haunting and memorable, and the harmonies are rich and complex. The song is also notable for its use of counterpoint, a technique in which two or more melodies are played simultaneously.

The song is typically performed by a horn quartet, which consists of two trumpets, a horn, and a tuba. The horns play the melody, while the trumpets and tuba provide accompaniment. The horns' rich, mellow sound gives the song a warm and expressive quality.

Significance and Legacy

"Clara, Clara" is an important piece of American music. It is a beautiful and moving song that has touched the hearts of millions of people around the world. The song is also a testament to Gershwin's genius as a composer. He was able to blend elements of jazz, blues, and classical music to create a unique and unforgettable sound.

"Clara, Clara" continues to be performed and recorded by artists of all kinds. The song has been featured in numerous films and television shows, and it has been used as the theme song for the popular PBS series "Masterpiece Theatre."

George Gershwin's "Clara, Clara" from Porgy and Bess is a timeless classic. The song is a beautiful and moving ballad that has captivated audiences for generations. It is a testament to Gershwin's genius as a composer and to the enduring power of American music.



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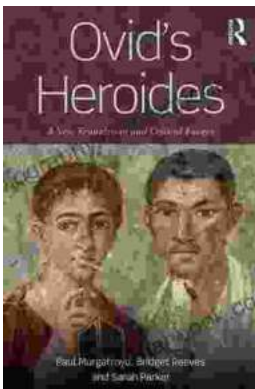
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