

Biography for Richard Glazier

pianist-narrator

Richard Glazier is one of today's foremost interpreters of the American Popular Songbook and probably most closely associated with music of George and Ira Gershwin. According to Michael Feinstein, "Richard Glazier has Gershwin in his soul." And *Clavier Magazine* wrote of him, "Gershwin's piano music has found an exquisite voice in Richard Glazier."

Trained in the classics, Glazier earned Bachelor's and Master's degrees in piano performance from Indiana University School of Music and a Doctorate of Musical Arts from the Cleveland Institute of Music. He made formal classical debuts in New York, Boston, Los Angeles and Rome, and won several major international piano competitions including the Pro Musicis Award and National Federation of Music Clubs Grand Prize.

In 1996, in celebration of the George and Ira Gershwin's Centennial, he began performing a one-man, multimedia concert program entitled Gershwin-Remembrance and Discovery. He added a second program to his repertoire with Ragtime & Romance-The Music of Joplin and Gershwin. A third concert program, A Salute to the Hollywood Musical, features songs written for musical films by a wide range of composers. For the 2004-05 season Glazier premiered Hooray for Love-The Music of Harold Arlen in celebration of Arlen's Centennial.

Glazier has performed in nearly every state of the union, bringing audiences not only the music of the Golden Age of American Popular Song, but fascinating commentary about the composers of the era as well. Weaving stories, film clips and piano performances, Glazier's programs are entertaining, educational and inspiring. For some of his audience, Glazier brings back fond memories, for others he gives an exciting glimpse of our musical heritage.

Glazier's love for this music and the era in which it was written dates back to his first encounter with George Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue. Glazier remembers, "I was 9 years old and one day I was rummaging through my Aunt Esther's record cabinet when I found an old 78 rpm recording of Rhapsody in Blue played by Oscar Levant with Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. She played it for me and I was hooked. I wanted to know everything about George Gershwin so she took me to the library, where we checked out books and sheet music---everything we could get our hands on about the George and his lyricist brother Ira and their era. She even suggested I write a fan letter to Ira Gershwin. Amazingly, he answered and we began a three-year correspondence. In 1975, when I was 12 years old, he invited me to his Beverly Hills home. We spent many hours together and this brilliant man of Arts and Letters, America's best known lyricist, could not have been nicer to me or more encouraging. In my concerts I always tell the story of meeting Ira because it literally changed the course of my life. Since we met, and it's been more than 30 years ago now, I can honestly say that not a day has gone by that I have not either discussed, played or studied the music of George and Ira Gershwin. I feel a very strong connection to them and through them to the other great composers and lyricists of their era. It gives me enormous pleasure to tell their stories and play their music for audiences everywhere."



Richard Glazier is a Steinway artist.