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National Jerome Kern Day, 1985

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Musical theater is an American art form that has been part of our lives for over a century. The songs are a true expression of the era in which they were written, but they also evoke something eternal in the American ethos—echoing our joy in good years, reflecting our sadness in difficult ones, and lifting our spirits in times of challenge.

Jerome D. Kern, one of the founding fathers of the American musical theater, whose centenary we observe this year, is widely honored for his many contributions to this uniquely American art form. His prodigious body of work—over 1,000 songs and 108 complete scores for Broadway shows and Hollywood films—forms a major part of the core of musical theater as we know it in America and as it has spread throughout the world.

Jerome Kern is remembered for individual songs, such as "Lovely to Look At," "They Didn't Believe Me," "All the Things You Are," and "Look for the Silver Lining," as well as entire film and stage scores, most notably the classic *Show Boat*.

He collaborated with other great talents like Oscar Hammerstein II, Johnny Mercer, and Ira Gershwin and wrote with the elegance, wit, and sophistication that characterize the best American popular music. He was esteemed by his peers, who twice voted to honor him with Academy Awards—for "The Way You Look Tonight" and "The Last Time I Saw Paris." New generations of audiences of all ages and backgrounds have taken his melodies to heart and given them a permanent place in our American musical heritage.

In recognition of the many contributions of Jerome Kern in enriching the American musical theater and in celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of his birth, the Congress, by House Joint Resolution 583, has designated January 27, 1985, as "National Jerome Kern Day."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim January 27, 1985, as National Jerome Kern Day. I encourage the people of the United States to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities throughout the country, and in particular, by enjoying the music of this renowned American composer.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-third day of January, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and ninth.

Ronald Reagan