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INTRODUCTION TO "IN PERFORMANCE"
SUNDAY, MARCH 8, 1987

-- WELCOME TO IN PERFORMANCE AT THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE SECOND IN OUR SERIES: "A TRIBUTE TO AMERICAN MUSIC." TONIGHT, WE HAVE A WONDERFUL CAST WHO WILL PRESENT "AN EVENING OF RODGERS AND HART."

-- FIFTY YEARS AGO, THE MUSICAL THEATER IN THIS COUNTRY WAS EXPERIENCING A KIND OF "GOLDEN AGE." EVERYTHING SEEMED TO BE CHANGING QUICKLY, AND WHAT WAS EMERGING WAS A NEW KIND OF ENTERTAINMENT. VAUDEVILLE WAS FADING, REVUES WERE BECOMING MORE AWARE

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OF PLOT LINES, AND GREAT SONGS WERE BEING WRITTEN BY MEN AND WOMEN WHO SEEMED TO HAVE FOUND A NEW VOICE.

-- RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS GOLDEN AGE WAS THE TEAM OF RICHARD RODGERS AND LORENZ HART. THEIR MUSICALS CAUGHT THE NEW SPIRIT -- THE GIRL FRIEND, A CONNECTICUT YANKEE, ON YOUR TOES, BABES IN ARMS, THE BCYS FROM SYRACUSE, PAL JOEY. THE LIST GOES ON AND ON.

-- LARRY HART WAS THE UNDISPUTED MASTER OF THE WITTY LYRIC,

AND INCIDENTALLY, THE FIRST LYRICIST TO SHARE EQUAL BILLING WITH THE COMPOSER. AND RICHARD RODGERS WAS AN ENDLESS SOURCE OF BEAUTIFUL MUSIC -- ONE OF HIS CONTEMPORARIES SAID, "IT'S AS IF HE SAT THERE AND GOD JUST PCURED IT THROUGH HIM."

-- BROADWAY WAS FINDING A NEW ENERGY TOO. A SUCCESSFUL TEAM COULD HAVE TWO OR THREE HIT SHOWS AT A TIME. A SHOW DIDN'T LIVE OR DIE ON "RAVES" OR "FORGET IT" NOTICES -- IT COULD PLAY A HUNDRED OR SO PERFORMANCES, PAY BACK ITS COSTS AND BE RESPECTFULLY RETIRED.



-- YES, FIFTY YEARS AGO THE BROADWAY MUSICAL WHICH AMERICANS CAME TO KNOW AND LOVE WAS IN FULL FLOWER. AND RODGERS AND HART WERE MAGICAL NAMES. TONIGHT, WE ARE GOING TO HEAR A LITTLE OF THAT MAGIC. ONLY A FRACTION, BUT WHAT A FRACTION!

-- AND NOW, I AM PLEASED TO INTRODUCE MARVIN HAMLISCH, COMPOSER, PERFORMER, MASTER OF CEREMONIES FOR THIS CURRENT SERIES, AND OUR MUSIC DIRECTOR FOR "AN EVENING OF RODGERS AND HART."

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