

The Great American Songbook

I like a Gershwin tune; how about you?

Our goal is to explore and enjoy the Great American Songbook, the canon of the most important and influential American popular songs and jazz standards from the early 20th century.

Moderator:	Nancy Clune
Co-moderator	Ruthie Kosiorek
Date and Time:	Wednesday 10:00 AM -Noon 10 weeks, starting February 21, 2018
Format:	Seminar
Location:	Amherst Women's Club, Amherst

Description: “Sometimes I wonder why I spend the lonely night dreaming of a song....”

If this lyric and others, with their corresponding melodies, make you want to get up and sing, this is the seminar for you. Otherwise known as “standards,” the Great American Songbook is the term for the impressive catalog of popular songs by composers and lyricists performed by Big Band singers, piano players, crooners, chanteuses, and on Broadway and in Hollywood films from the early part of the Twentieth Century until today.

Practitioners of the craft include George and Ira Gershwin, Cole Porter, Hoagy Carmichael, Johnny Mercer, Dorothy Fields, Duke Ellington, and many more. A list of artists will be provided by the Moderators.

The moderators invite participants to share their music collections and collective memories of the composers and performers who contributed to The Great American Songbook. The final class will be a possible field trip to a Big Band performance at Northampton's Union Station.

Role of participants: Participants will prepare and deliver an approximately 30-minute presentation on the work of an individual composer, lyricist, or team. They will then lead the group discussion following their presentation.

Topics include: biographical information, career path, the composer's inspirations and influences, how the artist contributed to the canon, what makes the songs distinctive, who performed the songs, who interpreted them, and whether the material has held up over time. Additional subjects may be provided by the Moderators.

Resources: Materials in all formats are available at local libraries and bookstores. The Moderators will provide a list of recommended sources.

About the Moderators: Nancy Hayes Clune was raised by a father who taught her everything she knows about The Great American Songbook. Ruthie Kosiorek is a longtime member of the South Hadley Chorale and plays the piano.

Maximum number of participants: 18 **Emeriti accepted:** yes

Course# 18SGA