



Proudly Present



# Bock to Harnick



*Composing the score to Fiddler on the Roof*

Over four hours of never-before released private recordings  
chronicling the composing process of Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick  
as they create Fiddler on the Roof

## Jerry Bock

Jerry Bock, composer; born New Haven, November 23, 1928; Student, University of Wisconsin (1945-49), L.H.D. (hon.), 1985. **WRITER:** score for college musical *Big as Life*, 1948; songs for TV show *Admiral Broadway Revue*, also *Show of Shows*, 1949-51; songs for *Wonders of Manhattan* (honorable mention Cannes Film Festival 1956). **COMPOSER:** music for Broadway show *Catch a Star*, 1955, *Mr. Wonderful*, 1956, (collaborated with Sheldon Harnick on) *The Body Beautiful*, 1958, *Fiorello!*, 1959 (Pulitzer prize, Drama Critics award, Antoinette Perry award), *Tenderloin*, 1960, *She Loves Me*, 1963, *Fiddler on the Roof*, 1964, *The Apple Tree*, 1966, *The Rothschilds*; *Fiddler on the Roof*, 1964, won nine Tony awards including Best Musical of the Year. Recipient of the Johnny Mercer award Songwriters Hall of Fame in 1990 and named to Theatre Hall of Fame in 1990. Composed the score for the film, *A Stranger Among Us*; wrote words and music for *Pinocchio*, *Land of Broken Toys*, and *A Show of Hands* for The Children's Theatre Festival, University of Houston, 2000-2006; Emmy Award 2010 Best Original Song.



## Sheldon Harnick

Sheldon Harnick was born and raised in Chicago. After serving in the army, he earned a Bachelor of Music degree from the Northwestern University School of Music in 1949. His first song in a Broadway show, "The Boston Beguine" for *New Faces* of 1952, introduced theatergoers to the wry, subtle humor and deft wordplay indicative of a Harnick lyric. Over the next several years he contributed lyrics or whole songs to such vintage revues as *John Murray Anderson's Almanac*, *The Shoe-string Revue* and *The Littlest Revue*. While the first Bock & Harnick musical, *The Body Beautiful* in 1958 showed promise, it was their second musical, *Fiorello!*, in 1959, that put the team on the map. Their musical biography of New York City's legendary mayor earned the Tony Award, Pulitzer Prize and New York Drama Critics' Circle Award. Their next musical, *Tenderloin* (1960), set in the seamy Tenderloin, was followed by *She Loves Me* (1963), which beguiled audiences with its Central European charm and operetta elegance. In 1964 Bock & Harnick, working with director-choreographer Jerome Robbins and book writer Joseph Stein, created *Fiddler on the Roof*. After *Fiddler*, the Bock & Harnick collaboration went on to include such versatile fare as *The Apple Tree* (1966), followed by *The Rothschilds* in 1970. In addition to his Tonys, Pulitzers and Grammys, his many other honors include The Johnny Mercer Award presented by the Songwriters Hall of Fame, the Marc Blizstein Memorial Award for achievement in the creation of opera librettos, presented by the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, and Honorary Doctorates of Humane Letters awarded by Illinois Wesleyan University, and Muskingum College.



# Seedlings to Sunflowers

When my partner Ira Yuspeh told me he had an archive of over 100 hours of Jerry Bock Demos (or “seeds” as he called them) I literally almost fainted. To me, this discovery was as monumental as any paleological discovery in Africa, because here were the very beginnings of *Fiddler*. In fact, before it was even called Fiddler! Jerry would play his melodic seeds, sometimes snatches of songs, sometimes the full song and send this (recorded on an old Wollensak reel to reel) to Sheldon who would then pick the tunes that appealed to him and write the words. Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick worked this way for over thirty years. I remember an old TV show called “You Were There,” where actors (in front of cheesy sets) would re-enact historical moments—the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the sinking of the Titanic—and a reporter in modern dress would narrate the scene. But this Bock to Harnick archive is much more than that. This is real. We are there in Jerry’s studio hearing him play a tune that “might be good” and everyone in the world knows it will become “Sunrise, Sunset.” We experience these seeds exactly how Sheldon experienced them, even before Harold Prince or Jerome Robbins had heard them.

This recording is divided into Five Categories:

**PART ONE Seedlings to Sunflowers** These are the seeds Jerry sent Sheldon of songs that became standards. Following the seeds are the original Demos that Jerry and Sheldon made for the show.

**PART TWO Wonder of Wonders** These are more seeds and Demos of songs which are in the show, but we didn’t have the all of “seed/Demos” to align the two. Things to listen for: Jerry almost forgetting the melody to what would become “If I Were a Rich Man,” and the unused verse to “Now I Have Everything” that was obviously originally intended for Motel.

**PART THREE A Distant Land** Here are Demos and seeds of songs that did not make it to the original show. Hear the song that was written for Tevye before “Rich Man.”

**PART FOUR Here's to Another Day** To me, this is the most exciting section: 33 never before heard “songs” by Jerry Bock that for some reason, not only never made it to the show, but Sheldon never added a lyric.

**PART FIVE A Matchless Match** I interviewed Sheldon specifically for the release of these tapes. I thought I knew all the behind the scene stories, but I sat in there in amazement as Sheldon revealed gem after gem.

This release was produced for anyone who loves Musical Theater, who loves great songs, who loves Fiddler, who loves backstage stories, so in other words, everyone. Enjoy! **GR**

# Tracks

## **PART ONE** Seedlings to Sunflowers

1. JB discovers “Sunrise, Sunset” 3:52
2. “Sunrise, Sunset” Show Demo JB&SH 3:25
3. JB discovers “Sabbath Prayer” 3:09
4. “Sabbath Prayer” Prayer Show Demo JB&SH 2:31
5. JB discovers “Fruma Sarah” 1:15
6. JB talking about “Fruma Sarah” 0:34
7. JB discovering “The Dream” Part 1 2:41
8. “Dream Sequence” Show Demo JB&SH 6:07
9. JB discovers “Far From the Home I Love” (up-tempo) 1:42
10. JB sings “Far From the Home I Love” (up-tempo/no lyrics) 1:19
11. “Far From the Home I Love” Show Demo JB&SH 2:49

## **PART TWO** Wonder of Wonders

12. JB discovers “If I Were A Rich Man” 5:36
13. “Tradition” Early Show Demo 5:15
14. “Tradition (starting in the middle) Early Show Demo 2:57
15. “Now I Have Everything” Show Demo JB&SH 2:16
16. “To Life Show” Demo JB&SH 3:25

## **PART THREE** A Distant Land

17. JB discovers “Letter from America” 2:05
18. “The Little Town Where Papa Came From”/  
“Tradition” Demo 4:02

19. “Papa Help Me Show” Demo JB&SH 1:47
20. Tzeitel's Song Show Demo JB&SH 1:43
21. “Haven't Missed A Sabbath Yet” Show Demo JB&SH 4:20
22. “Haven't missed A Sabbath Yet” Early Show Demo JB&SH 3:55
23. “Haven't Missed” additional verse Show Demo JB&SH 0:35
24. “That’s Life” Seed 1:47
25. “That’s Life” Show Demo JB&SH 3:28
26. Tevye Tries to Pray/”Listen To Me Papa” Show Demo JB&SH 5:04
27. “To Marry for Love” Show Demo JB&SH 2:04
28. Yente's Song 5:10
29. JB redoes Yente's Song 4:39

## **PART FOUR** Here's to Another Day

30. Fiddler Seed No. 1 4:51
31. Fiddler Seed No. 2 Plaintive Ballade 4:54
32. Fiddler Seed No. 3 (almost “Sabbath Prayer”) 3:08
33. Fiddler Seed No. 4 3:57
34. Fiddler Seed No. 5 3:02
35. Fiddler Seed No. 6 3:13
36. Fiddler Seed No. 7 4:09
37. JB talks about Seed No. 8 0:48
38. Fiddler Seed No. 9 for the Tailor? 4:31
39. Fiddler Seed No. 9 response 0:22

**PART FOUR Here's to Another Day** (continued)

- 40. Fiddler Seed No. 10 extended ballad 5:35
- 41. Response to Seed No. 10 2:46
- 42. Fiddler Seed No. 11 2:41
- 43. Fiddler Seed No. 12 4:14
- 44. Fiddler Seed No. 13 3:12
- 45. Fiddler Seed No. 14 Russian/Gypsy Melody 3:13
- 46. Fiddler Seed No. 15 2:11
- 47. Fiddler Seed No. 15 piano version 2:09
- 48. Response to No. 15 0:41
- 49. Fiddler Seed No. 16 "Strange Tape" 3:51
- 50. Response to Seed No. 16 "ugly!" 0:22
- 51. Fiddler Seed No. 17 Hungarian/Czech 4:46
- 52. Fiddler Seed No. 18 Ballad 4:26
- 53. Fiddler Seed No. 19 "seven part chorus" 1:09
- 54. Theme One of Seed No. 19 2:57
- 55. Fiddler Seed No. 19 Pulse 1:01
- 56. Fiddler Seed No. 20 "strange intrigue" 1:56
- 57. Vocalized Seed No. 20 2:07

- 58. Fiddler Seed No. 21 Gypsy Travesty 2:57
- 59. Response to Seed No. 21 "Tenderloin" 0:44
- 60. Fiddler Seed No. 22 Searching for a ballad 3:36
- 61. Fiddler Seed No. 23 Happy Ending 2:18
- 62. Fiddler Seed No. 24 expanding the range 3:36
- 63. Fiddler Seed No. 25 March feel 3:39
- 64. Fiddler Seed No. 26 2:57
- 65. Fiddler Seed No. 27 (lusher/more theatrical) 6:11
- 66. Fiddler Seed No. 28 (folk album) 4:04
- 67. Fiddler Seed No. 29 Russian Easter 2:54
- 68. Fiddler Seed No. 30 Fyedka? 2:26
- 69. Response to No. 30 via Patti 1:10
- 70. Patti's responses (opening) 2:46
- 71. Patti's thought continued 3:57
- 72. Fiddler Seed No. 31 0:37
- 73. Fiddler Seed No. 32 (mother/daughter duet) 7:22
- 74. Fiddler Seed No. 33 (very positive) 3:50

**PART FIVE A Matchless Match**

- 75. Sheldon Harnick /Glen Roven Interview 24:50

# If Music Is...

When I heard the brilliant composer Jerry Bock had died, I made my own private listening memorial: I programmed a play list of his songs on my iPod—"I Love A Cop," "Politics and Poker," "What Makes Me Love Him?" "Will He Like Me?" "Vanilla Ice Cream" and of course the entire score to Fiddler. What joy he gave me, and I know he will continue to give me long into the future.

With no personal stories to tell about Bock, I choose here instead to concentrate on his music; and not just on any song, but one of the great theater songs of all time, "If I Were a Rich Man."

(And for those of you who've already listened to Bock play his first draft on the piano and completely forget the tune, aren't we lucky he remembered it!)

What glorious music it is:

The melody on the words "If I were a rich man," outlines a falling fifth: the "if" down to a "man." A fifth is the distance of five steps from a C to a G going up; to hear it in your head, think of the opening statement of the Star Wars theme. That fifth goes up, but this fifth goes down. Instead of hurdling towards outer space, this falling fifth bears the weight of the world, the falling world, the tired world of a dairyman as he sings.

Then comes the quasi-Hasidic Jewish riff, the Daidle-deedle section. Zero Motel, and most subsequent Tevyes, have had great fun playing around with this section, but what I find wonderful is that after the tired, world-weary falling fifth, the music starts to climb upwards. Slowly, cautiously, but ever upward to heaven. Yet, the journey is not a pleasant one. Just before the melody would reach its destination, it falls into a bluesy note called a seventh. That gives the whole melodic line its color, and because it's only a seventh and not the eighth, which would be an octave and feel resolved, the listeners feels the yearning. Bernstein used that interval

of a seventh to great success (as did Beethoven!) in the song "Somewhere." That "a" in the lyric "There's a place for us" is set on the seventh, the note of the blues, the note of pain.

A note about the accompaniment, or the harmony: the song starts out in a lilting Broadway "four" feel, everything major, sunny, just a poor dairyman dreaming his little dream. But then five bars in, instead of coming back to the jaunty major, Bock slips into a minor mode ("All day long I'd biddy-biddy-bum"). Everything about the harmony suggests we should simply stay in the major mode, but no, this is where the master composer shines: he surprises us. It is, as Bernstein used to say, completely surprising and yet, completely inevitable.

But quick as you can say, "Sounds crazy, no?" we're back to major, the second "A" section, the repeat of the tune with the lyric, "Wouldn't have to work hard." All sunny again. As if nothing happened. But of course, at the end of the phrase, Bock slips back to the minor; but then the music instantly "rights" itself and goes back to the major. Major, minor, major, minor. Unsettling to say the least. How strange the change from major to minor, indeed.

Now we arrive at the bridge, or the release, the part of the song that's a contrasting part to the first statement of the song. Lo and behold, the minor mode wasn't a little hiccup at all. This release section is about as minor as it gets. What I like even more about the harmony here is the melody. Tevye wants his dream so badly and sees it so clearly, there is virtually no movement in the melody at all! It's as if he has parked himself firmly in the future and not even a Pogrom can pry him from his place. "Big tall house with rooms by the dozen" and "Right in the middle of the town," are virtually only two pitches with some embellishments. That's a far cry (and a sublime aural relief) from the falling fifth and the outlined seventh of the opening.

### If Music Is... (continued)

So, here we have this minor-sounding section and then he repeats it, three times. But the third time—wait for it—miracle of miracles, it's in major! "I'd fill my yard with ducks and turkeys and geese, etc.," is the same minor release turned on its head by being major. Is it because Tevye is taking his fantasy even further, this dream of wealth becoming more and more a reality in his mind and thus more and more major?

But no. At "squawking just as noisily as they can," the song returns to minor and the first complete section of the song finishes in a minor mode.

Now two questions arise: can the lay audience hear this the first time, or even the 100th time they hear the song? Of course not. But it's all there in the music and adds to the depth, the breadth and the genius of the piece, a reason why Bock's music appeals to both the lay audience and the sophisticated listener.

Question two: did Bock put all this in, or was it an unconscious accident? Answer: it doesn't matter. It's there, and as Freud said, "There are no accidents." Although he probably wasn't talking about Musical Theater.

The next part of the song proceeds as one might expect, a direct repeat of the two "A" sections and the release, but of course, with additional verses of brilliant Harnick lyrics. A bit of an aside about Broadway lyricists and style: I would say that in 90% of the operas written between 1600 and 1800, when the "song" style operas were in fashion, if there was a musical repeat of whole sections, and there often were, the lyric would also repeat. The melody would be ornamented but the same words would be sung, which led to a stagnant dramatic line, no matter how gorgeous the tune. It's a particular Broadway invention to change the lyric the second time, thankfully, and move the plot forward to keep the audience interested even as the music repeats. (Another aside: I've worked with a few play directors who are attempting their first musicals. Every one of them

insists upon trying to cut out second "A" sections of songs, even WITH a new lyric. It's epidemic. Play directors can't understand the value of the repeated chorus. As Yenta would say, "Oy!")

On to my favorite part of the song:

We've heard two very complete sections. The song could end here. It would be fine as is, or maybe Bock could have added a coda. But nothing in the previous sections prepares the audience for what happens now.

Suddenly, the entire rhythm of the song breaks down. No more jaunty, Broadway lilting four, no more subtle playing with major, minor, or falling fifths. There's a completely new section. It's almost as if the music (and Tevye) is falling prostrate on the floor, begging God to listen.

This is an out-and-out operatic recitative in the middle of a Broadway "want" song. Only Tevye, with his relationship to God, could command this kind of music. And only a great composer like Bock could write it. First we get two measures of stentorian eight notes with a little trill added at the end, Tevye walking into the center of town holding court. Now, listen to the bass line after "fawn on me." With every chord the bass line plummets another step, as if Tevye's power is filtering through every corner of his little shtetl. Another little Kelzmeric cadenza tops off this section. This writing is truly amazing, a combination of Mozart recitative and Richard Strauss harmonies.

Just when we're exhausted from the ingenuity, and we figure we're about to return to the beginning sections, there is another surprise. With "And it won't make one bit of difference" we are not at the expected first bit of the song but smack-dab back in the release, the third section of the release at that, the major section. Surprising but inevitable. As Tevye sings about his great wish to sit in the "synagogue and pray," the music is the gorgeous section of the release in the major mode.

### **If Music Is...** (continued)

What is next? Well, finally, we are back to home base, back to where we've started. The music returns to the opening statement, falling fifth and cantorial chant. In four minutes or so we've explored every aspect of Tevye's character. And all through music. No wonder this song is such a joy for performer and audience alike.

Of course, given Bock's brilliance, he has one more trick up his sleeve. Instead of ending the song, he takes the penultimate phrase of the song, "Lord, who made the lion and the lamb," and repeats it.

Three times. A final prayer, perhaps? A final nod to the minor mode? But this time, the minor is really hitting home because it's so aggressively repetitive. The rhythm stops, the chords sustain, Tevye insists, cajoles, pleads. What's next?

Why, a jaunty, Broadway refrain in major for the final note and ride-out. The major mode has triumphed, Tevye has had his apotheosis and we're right back to where we started. But what a journey courtesy of Mr. Bock and Mr. Harnick. *Gratias.* **GLEN ROVEN**

**Total Time 4:10:49**

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