



John Pizzarelli



Shirley Andress



Dick Hyman



Ian Whitcomb

Show Tunes

**Oregon Festival of American Music
opens the great American Songbook.**

The Oregon Festival of American Music has spent more than a decade proving that American composers have nothing to be ashamed of in their contributions to the world's orchestral, folk and chamber music. Yet history will credit 20th century American music most for three interrelated innovations: jazz, musicals and popular song. Starting last year, OFAM began exploring show tunes and musicals in a big way, starting at the top with delicious Gershwin extravaganzas. This summer, along with Frank Loesser's popular musical, *Guys and Dolls*, OFAM presents the music of some of history's greatest songwriters from the amazing eruption of popular song in the 1930s, which fueled the jazz explosion of the next two decades and still radiates today; to cite just a few examples: last month at Luna, techno-chanteuse Joy Askew winningly set Cole Porter's "I've Got You Under My Skin" and "I Get a Kick Out of You" to an electro beat, and a new Harold Arlen tribute album features Blondie's Debbie Harry, Rufus Wainwright, and other contemporary singers.

The festival kicks off on Thursday, August 7 at the Hult Center with music made famous by Fred Astaire, whose acclaim as a suave dancer has obscured the fact that his movies introduced so many songs that became classics: Irving Berlin's "Cheek to Cheek," "Let's Face the Music and Dance"

and "Change Partners," Dorothy Fields and Jerome Kern's sublime "The Way You Look Tonight," and many more. Never the most powerful of vocalists, Astaire had a rare gift for conveying character songs' vulnerability and nuance. They'll be performed by the OFAM jazz orchestra led by pianist Dick Hyman and the great clarinetist Ken Peplowski, whose deep experience in this repertoire prevents OFAM from being just another nostalgia trip.



Rita Moreno