

ERIC SANDERS

SONGS
ARRANGED BY DOMINIC DOUTNEY

RCM Editions

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MUSIC, MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

This edition has been prepared for the research project 'Music, Migration and Mobility - The Legacy of Migrant Musicians from Nazi Europe in Britain', a performance-led and multi-disciplinary project that aimed to better understand the significance of migration and mobility for music. Funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) from 2019-2023, the project brought together an international team of musicians, archival researchers, musicologists and geographers for one of the biggest practice-led research projects at the RCM to date. The project studied the mobile lives, artistic products and impact on British culture of musicians who came from Nazi-ruled Europe during the 1930s and '40s. The project also probed the practical challenges of performing and mediating the largely unknown body of works by these musicians, doing so through a series of open rehearsal workshops, public performances and recordings involving RCM students and staff.

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A special thank you to Eric's sons Paul and Richard for kindly giving permission to make the songs available.

A special thanks to Katalin Tünde Huber, Waltraud Denhardt Herzog and the team of the Austrian Cultural Forum London, for introducing us to Eric.

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The Songs of Eric Sanders (1919-2021)

by Norbert Meyn



Eric Sanders in London in March 2020, Foto: Norbert Meyn

1. Introduction

Eric Sanders was born in a Jewish family in Vienna in 1919 as Erich Ignatz Schwarz. Erich received music lessons throughout his childhood and began to write songs with notable success. By the age of 17, he had written a musical play called 'Rhythmus'. The show was accepted by the Theater an der Wien to be developed and performed with his name on the bill, and some of his songs were due to be published by Doblinger, a leading firm. However, persecuted by the Nazis because of their Jewish heritage, Erich and his family were forced to flee in 1938, and his dream of a career as a professional songwriter was shattered. Shortly before leaving Vienna, Erich went to collect his manuscripts from Doblinger.¹

Erich's mother had spent the First World War with her relations in Britain, and their previous connections helped them to find somewhere to stay. Erich anglicized his name to Eric Sanders and joined the British army to fight against the Nazis. He first joined the pioneer corps and then the Special Operations Executive (SOE). He was trained to fight behind enemy lines and stationed in Italy. After the war he returned to Austria and Germany as a translator for the British authorities, but he would never consider returning to live in Austria at the time.² During teacher training he met his future wife Margaret, a fellow student. They settled in London and had two children, Paul and Richard. Eric became a much-loved teacher, working for many years at North Paddington School, as well as an active member of the Labour Party. It was not until much later that he became reconciled with Austria and received Austrian citizenship and the Austrian Cross of Honour for Science and Art.

¹ Eric Sanders, Secret Operations, autobiography published by Historyweb limited (ISBN 978095618310), 66/67.

² Interview with Eric on August 5, 2021, audio file, time code 1.01

2. The background of Eric's English songs and our journey from manuscript to arrangement and recording

Eric Sanders was introduced to me in late 2019, around the time of his 100th birthday, by Katalin Tünde Huber, who was then Director of the Austrian Cultural Forum in London. The Royal College of Music had just started the large AHRC-funded research project 'Music, Migration and Mobility' - The Legacy of Migrant Musicians from Nazi Europe in Britain at the Royal College of Music in which the ACF was a partner. Eric was one of very few remaining first-generation émigrés in London. I first met Eric at one of his favourite local restaurants in South London, El Chico's in Norbury, in mid-December 2019, only a few days after his big birthday, and heard the story of the songs he wrote after his emigration to Britain.

During his time as a soldier in the 1940s, Eric played the piano in bands and bars, getting to know many popular wartime songs such as "We'll meet again" (sung by Dame Vera Lynn). While playing the greatest hits of the time he also wrote songs himself, in a similar, popular style, reminiscent of Cole Porter or George Gershwin, for example. He also wrote the English texts himself, showing his impressive command of the language. He was a brilliant word smith and referred to himself as a 'melody man', confident in his ability to write a popular tune.³ Sadly Eric never had the opportunity to formally study composition and harmony. Instead he taught himself as far as possible and used some sample chord progressions he had found to help him devise simple accompaniments which he could play, without ever writing them down.⁴ Therefor the manuscripts of his songs almost always contain only the melody and the text. Occasionally some simple chords are written in, and in a few cases they are written out for the pianist, but in general the songs needed further harmonisation before they could be performed by somebody else. This may be a reason why his attempts to get his songs published failed. Even the songs that were accepted by the Theater and der Wien before his forced emigration had been harmonised by a professional arranger.

He continued to write songs in the 1950ies, for example for his wife Margaret and some of his students at an adult education school. In the 1960ies, Eric realised that the style of popular songs had changed, making it less likely that anyone would be interested. He said that what made him stop was the new fashion of teenage songs in which it was quite common to use the same line 7 or 8 times.⁵ However, he continued to perform his songs himself on occasion and derived much joy from playing the piano well into his nineties.

³ Eric referred to himself as a melody man in our Interview in January 2021 (audio file), time code 01.00

⁴ Interview with Eric Sanders, January 2021 (audio file), time code 26.30.

⁵ Interview with Eric Sanders, January 2021 (audio file), time code 00.15



One of Eric's manuscripts, with simple chords written above the melody

In early March 2020, a few weeks after the first meeting and just before the beginning of the Covid 19 pandemic, I visited Eric at his home, this time together with Michael Haas from ExilArte in Vienna (where the manuscripts of Erics songs are now part of the archival collections). Eric kindly gave permission for his manuscripts to be photographed, with a view to performing them as part of the Music, Migration and Mobility project. They were like a window into his past life, and, alongside his autobiographies and interviews he gave, could help us to understand his experience as a refugee and immigrant in Britain.

Most of the songs were notated only as a melody with a text, few had some chords written above, a handful had a simple piano accompaniment. During the first lockdown, I began to play and sing through some of the songs at home, admiring their wonderful quality and spirit. Then, in summer 2020, I asked RCM student composer Niklas Melcher to add simple chords to some of the songs, which enabled me to improvise an accompaniment and sing them to some of my colleagues over Zoom. Encouraged by their reactions I began looking for someone who could make arrangements of the songs and write proper piano accompaniments. I am grateful to the RCM's Head of Piano Vanessa Latarche for introducing me to Dominic Doutney, who was studying for his artist diploma as a pianist at the time. Dominic began to work on a selection of songs for both male and female voice, and with some advice from the RCM's Jazz Professor Mark Armstrong we developed a fresh and accessible style of accompaniment that would place the songs recognisably in their period of conception, the 1940s and 50s.

In January 2021 we were ready to present some of Dominic's musical ideas to Eric and met him on Zoom (he was 101 by then). Eric really appreciated the sophisticated harmonies and jazzy feel Dominic brought to his songs, and he even offered to write

a couple of new lines for a song (Rhythm of London) where a bridge section was needed. We were joined by mezzo-soprano Esme Bronwen-Smith, who had learned some of the songs written for a female singer.

Then, in July 2021, as soon as pandemic restrictions allowed, we rehearsed and recorded 15 songs in a small private studio north of London.



Dominic Doutney and Esme Bronwen-Smith during a recording session in July 2021 Foto: Christopher Gould

The recordings were edited, and on August 5, 2021, after further pandemic restrictions had been relaxed, Dominic and I were able to meet Eric at his home. We played most of the recording to him and, with his kind permission, recorded his memories as he spoke about the songs after hearing them.⁶ It was a memorable occasion for us and sadly the last time we saw him. He passed away on August 30.

Eric's truly inspirational love for life, music and people lives on in his songs. They are a window into a time of great upheaval when a kind gesture, a personal encounter, and an opportunity to dance and enjoy was cherished as something worth living and fighting for. They also reflect Eric's mobile life between Britain and central Europe during and after the war and his experience as new citizen of Britain, finding a new identity and embracing the building of a more just democracy after the war with enthusiasm. The title of his German autobiography - 'Emigration ins Leben' (emigration into life) captures this optimism. But on the other hand, as Eric said during our last meeting, the experience of what the Nazis did in Vienna also cast a shadow over his life. The fact that despite this he was able to remain so positive, and ultimately prepared to re-engage with Austria and his love for his home city, Vienna, in later life, is perhaps his most humbling achievement.

⁶ The recording has been preserved as an oral history interview and can be requested through the RCM Library



From left: Dominic Doutney, Eric Sanders and Norbert Meyn, August 5, 2021 Foto: Norbert Meyn

3. Eric's memories about individual songs

More than 70 years after writing them, Eric understandably could not always remember the exact circumstances under which his songs were written. However, he shared with us some memories about specific songs, which I would like to pass on here.

Little Coffee Bar

This song was one of Eric's favourites. When he taught at the Hammersmith Day College in the early 1950's) he was also a passionate footballer, and once a week joined in a football match arranged by the P.E. teacher. They became friends and went out together. One of the coffe bars they went to had a cellar where one could sit on the floor (covered with straw, or similar) and some of the guests took turns in performing with instruments (mostly guitars) and singing. The bar upstairs was cosy and had a very pleasant staff. Eric wrote this tune in memory of it, and while the words do not describe it correctly in detail, they reflect Eric's liking for it.'⁷ In a subsequent meeting Eric also mentioned that he may have been inspired to write it by a Viennese Schlager, In einem kleinen Cafe in Hernals (which mentions an English Waltz).⁸

Come back to Soho (dedicated To Margaret with Love)

Margaret was Eric's wife. During the war, in the Army, he was stationed outside Weymouth, where he was working in the woods with the Royal Engineers at the sawmill and cutting trees for the war effort. Studying for a Pitman's correspondence course for the London University matriculation at that time, he was inspired to sign on a list on the company office notice board. It stated that after the war there would be a shortage of teachers. He was offered a place at the Emergency Teachers Training College in Weymouth at the seaside. 'Emergency' because it was a 13

⁷ Email received from Eric on January 2, 2021

⁸ Final meeting recording, time code 4.30

months' course instead of two years. The students were a great mix of ages and background, there was even a group of nuns. Margaret was one of the students. They both attended the Social Study course together. They both enjoyed dancing, and as their friendship grew he wrote a waltz: "Today the World is a wonderful song" for her, invited her to a boat ride on the sea and sang it to her. When they were married, Eric wrote several songs for her birthdays. 'Come back to Soho' was written after Eric and Margaret had attended a show in Soho which Margaret liked a lot.⁹

Crash! Bang!

We do not know anything about the conception of this song, however, it is worth mentioning that it does make a reference to the 'independent air' of the man of Monte-Carlo, who appears in the popular British music hall song 'The man who broke the bank at Monte-Carlo'.

Fallen in Love am I

This song was inspired by a holiday encounter when Margaret and Eric visited Germany, most likely the city of Wiesbaden. The couple made the acquaintance in the hotel of a young woman (or rather she theirs) who joined them on several occasions in and out of the hotel. She wanted to practice her English. It was really quite good but she occasionally made mistakes and spoke quite loudly. Eric wrote the song back home when he and Margaret remembered the holiday.'10

Wiener Schnitzel

This tune was written with a singing TV chef in mind, in the hope he might be interested in it. Sadly Eric could not remember if he ever sent it to him, it is likely that his programme had ceased by the time the song was finished.¹¹

I shall never forget Vienna

In 1955, Eric was teaching at a day college whose students, all teenagers, were already at work and sent by their employers one day a week to continue their general education. In July that year he organised a trip to Vienna for some 20 of the mixed students. It was a great experience for them, the programme included the Vienna Woods a Hungarian restaurant, a Danube trip and the Prater, a famous amusement park. Eric had a small accordion and the group sometimes settled somewhere for a sing-song. Before they left Vienna, they watched the departure of the British occupation army, which had been very popular with the Viennese. When they were in the train back to London, Eric learned that two of the girls in the party, had met and gone out with two British soldiers of the occupation army and were very happy as well as unhappy. Within the first half hour of the journey he wrote this song.

⁹ Email received from Eric on January 2, 2021

¹⁰ Email received from Eric on January 2, 2021

¹¹ Email received from Eric on January 2, 2021

He then walked through the carriages which his group occupied. When he played it to these two girls they broke into tears. Eric called this a never forgotten memory. What is striking is that the song could just as well be about Eric's own sense of loss, having been forced to flee and having lost his dream of becoming a professional musician.

Bring meine Grüße nach Wien

Eric wrote this song a few years after his arrival in Britain. He said he realised to his surprise that he missed his home city of Vienna, despite his strong feelings about the Austrians after his experience of antisemitism and Nazi persecution.¹³

4. Story Maps with recordings

During the AHRC project 'Music, Migration and Mobility', Research Associate Michael Holden at Royal Holloway University of London created a series of interactive story maps about Eric Sanders. They include recordings of Eric's songs based on this edition. We encourage you to explore them here: https://www.rcm.ac.uk/singingasong/storymaps/

The maps are based on a series of interviews conducted in spring 2021 by researcher Bernadette Edtmaier on behalf of the **Austrian Cultural Forum**, **London**, which can be accessed **at the Austrian Media Library**. These maps are predominantly based on Eric Sanders's memories, although they are augmented throughout with references to relevant historical context and other details. In presenting memories, these storymaps represent an example of a kind of vicarious, or imaginary mobility, in which Sanders recalls the places of his past and the journeys he has made.



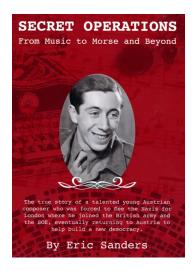
Screenshot from Eric Sanders Memory Map by Michael Holden

¹² Email received from Eric on Sept 29, 2020

¹³ Interview with Eric on August 5, 2021, audio file, time code 1.01

5. Further Reading – Autobiographies

Eric wrote two autobiographies, one in English and one in German.





- 1: Eric Sanders, Secret Operations, autobiography published by Historyweb limited (ISBN 978095618310)
- 2: Eric Sanders, Emigration ins Leben, Wien-London und nicht mehr retour, herausgegeben von Peter Pirker, Czernin Verlag, Wien, https://www.czernin-verlag.com/buch/emigration-ins-leben

Interdisciplinary Research about Music, Migration and Mobility

The interactions between Eric Sanders and the project team of the Music, Migration and Mobility project became an important part of our interdisciplinary research. Developing arrangements and performances of Eric's songs in the context of his life story and identity as a former refugee, teacher and campaigner for the Labour party helped us to reflect on the hidden links between music, identity and place. By foregrounding Eric's migration and mobility, particularly between Austria and Britain, we hope to inspire a fresh look at his musical output, which reflects this mobility far more than his geographical or cultural belonging to a single national culture.

For further information please see:

Meyn, Norbert, Peter Adey, and Nils Grosch. "Foregrounding Mobility Rather than Belonging: A Conceptual Framework for Engaging with Music Shaped by Transnational Migration." *Acta Musicologica* 95, no. 1 (2023): 4–20.

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LITTLE COFFEE BAR















CRASH! BANG!

















COME BACK TO SOHO

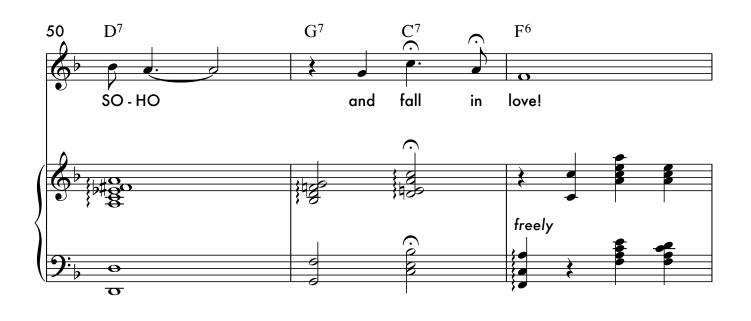
To Margaret with love 25th June, 1958

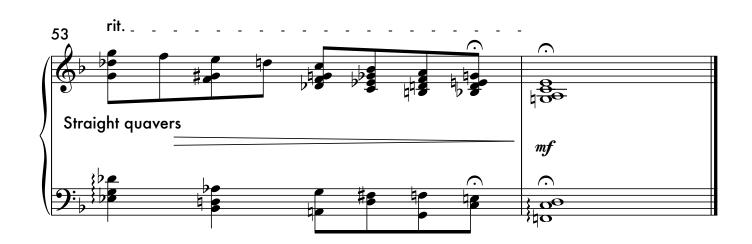








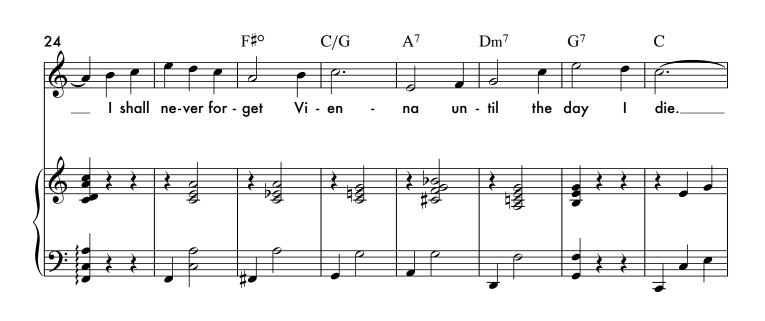


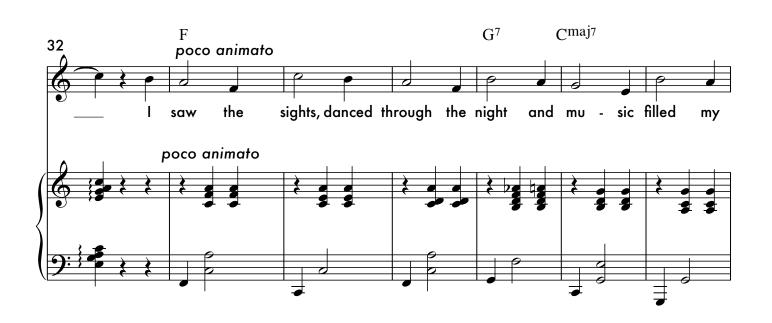


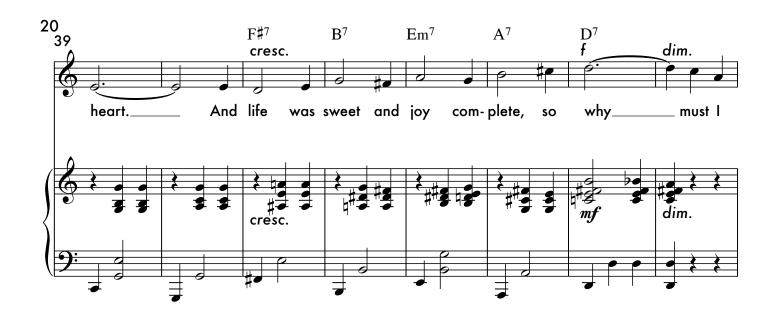
I SHALL NEVER FORGET VIENNA

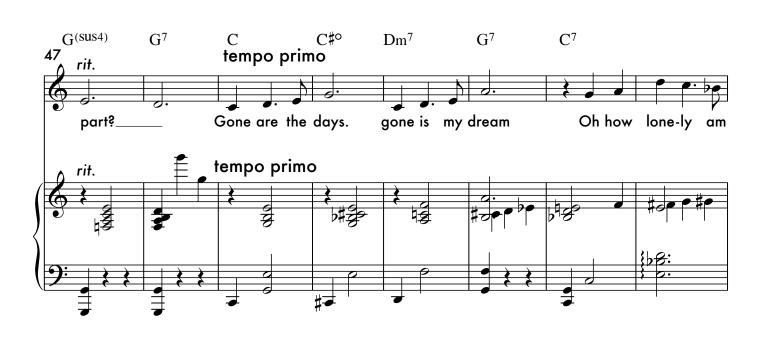






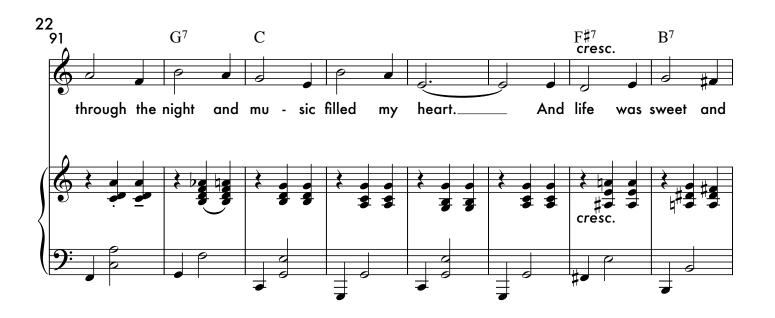


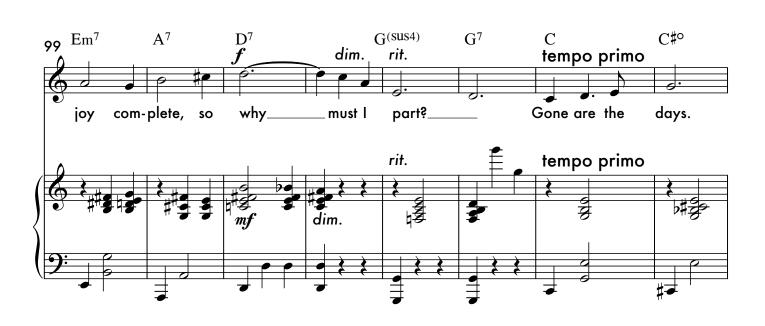


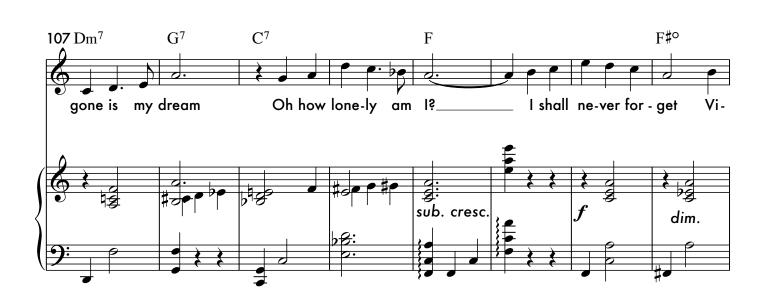














A HOPE AND A DREAM







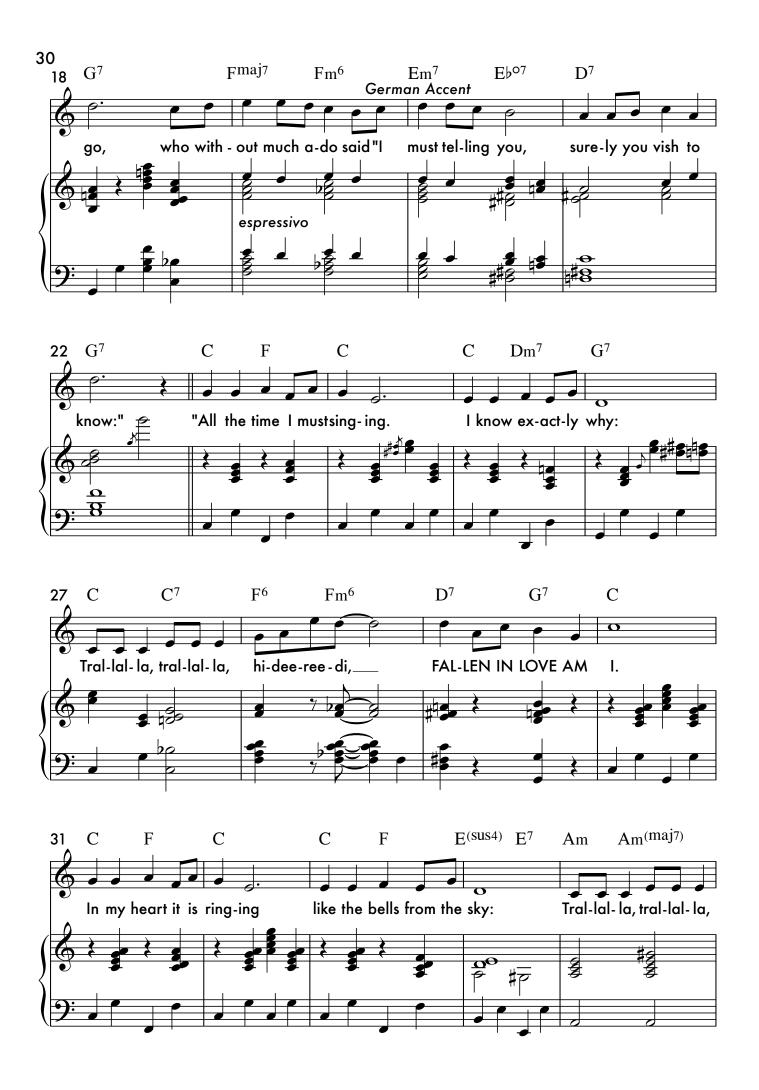






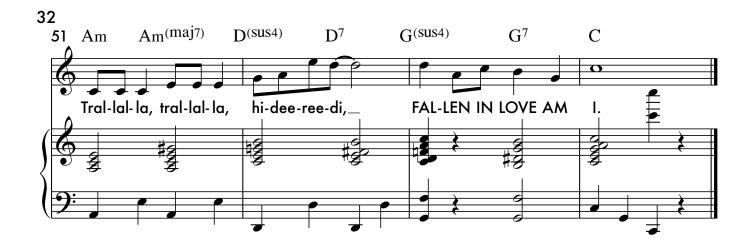
FALLEN IN LOVE AM I











DARK AND BEAUTIFUL STRANGER





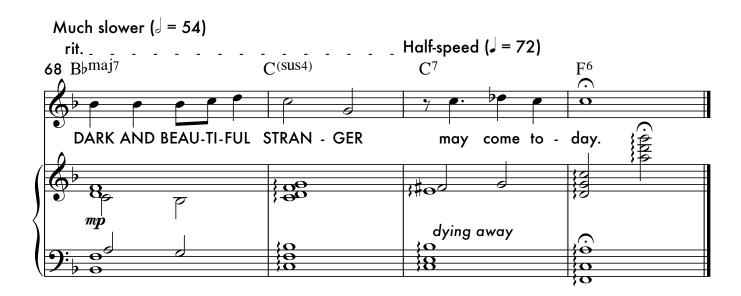








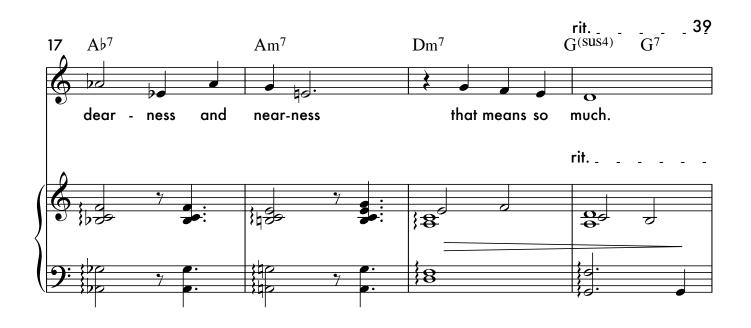


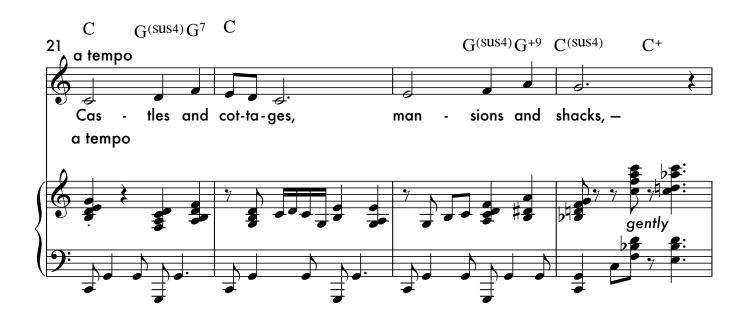


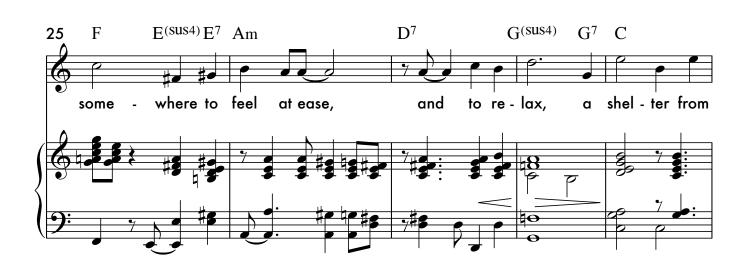
HOME WITH THE FAMILY

Suitable for Miss Vera Lynn.









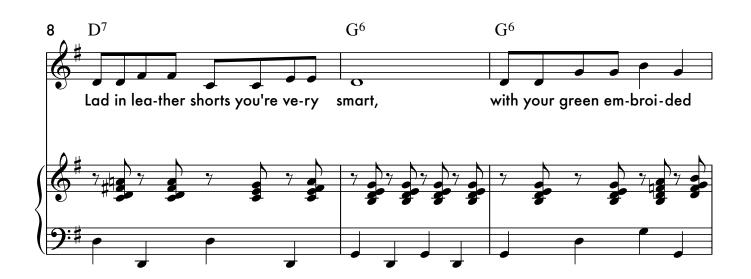


LEDERHOSEN BUBI

(pronounced: laydahozen Booby)



















MEMORIES LAST FOREVER













ADOLF, WE COME!

















MY BABY

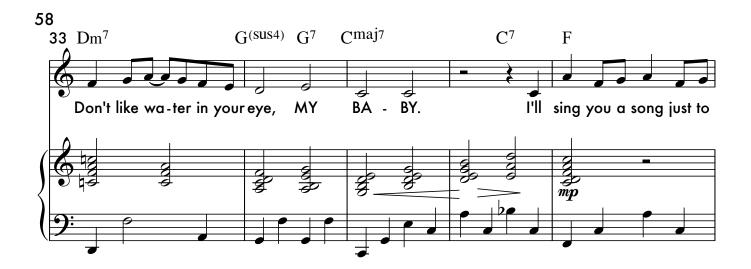
Eric Sanders, arr. Dominic Doutney Moderato ф Ф Ф 0 0 \boldsymbol{p} Cmaj7 Am^7 Dm^7 G^7 5 Time has come for you, my ba - by get in-to your lit - tle bed. Cmaj7 Am^{7} Dm^7 G^7 Come, ba by, and rest your lit-tle cur - ly head! my } o 13 Cmaj⁷ G^7 Am^7 Dm^7 day, dear, You have had a bu-sy play-ing with your toys all day.

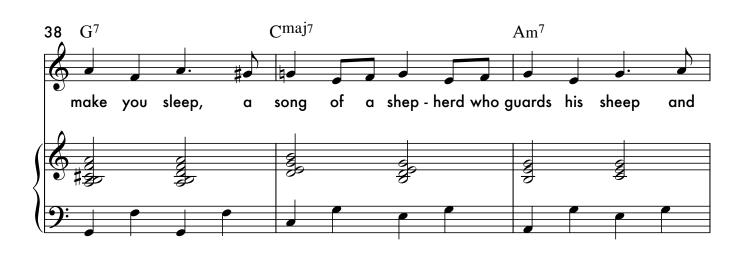
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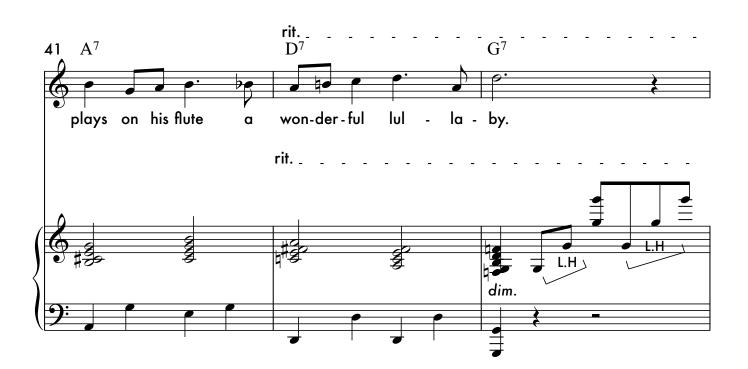
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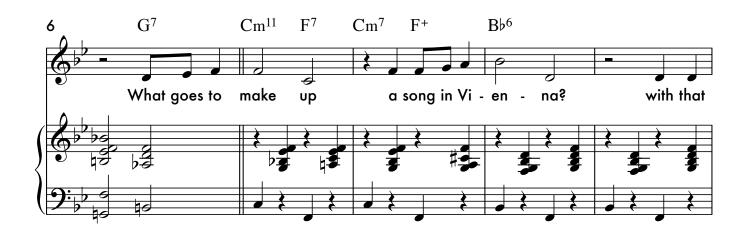


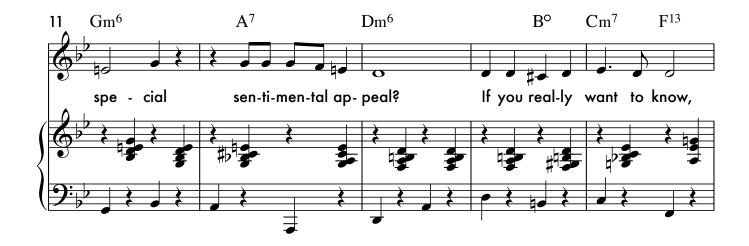
VIENNA-SONG

Foxtrot-Tempo (not strict) = 64

Eric Sanders, arr. Dominic Doutney







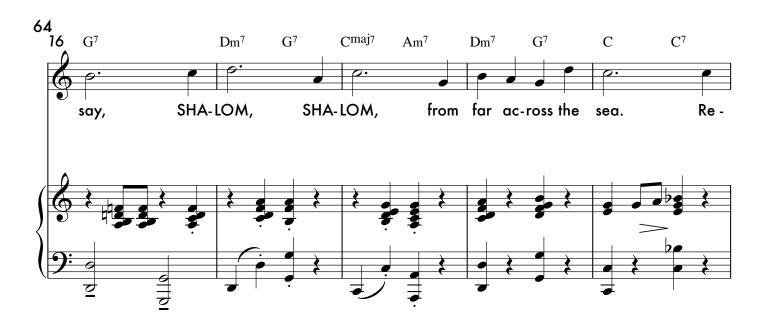


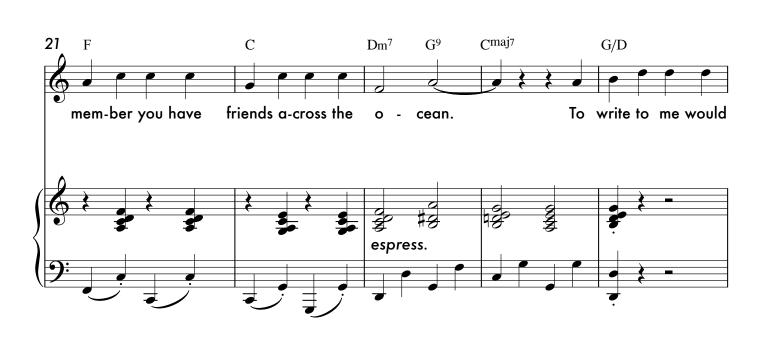


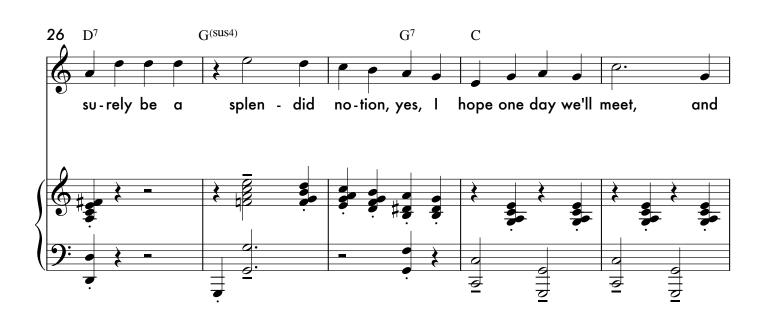


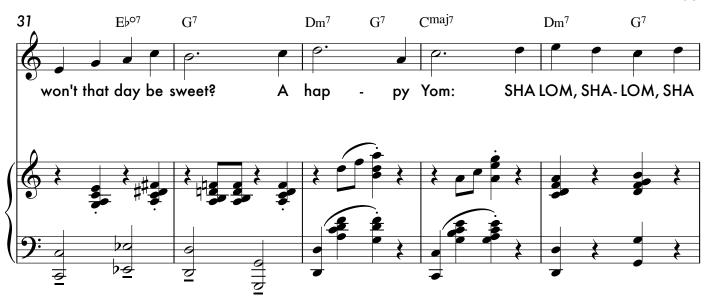
SHALOM, SHALOM





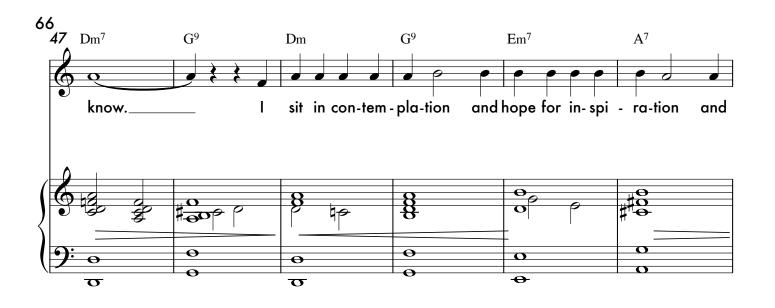




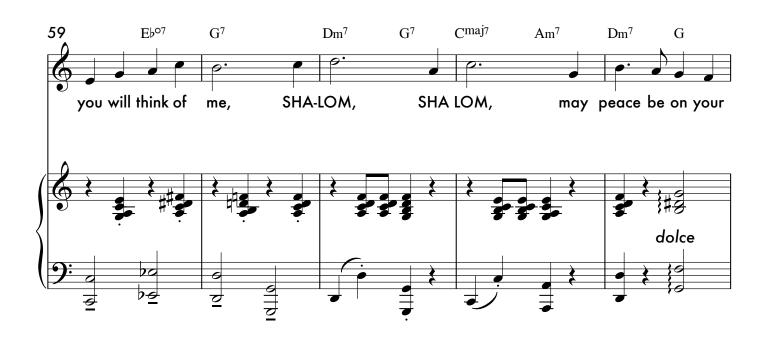










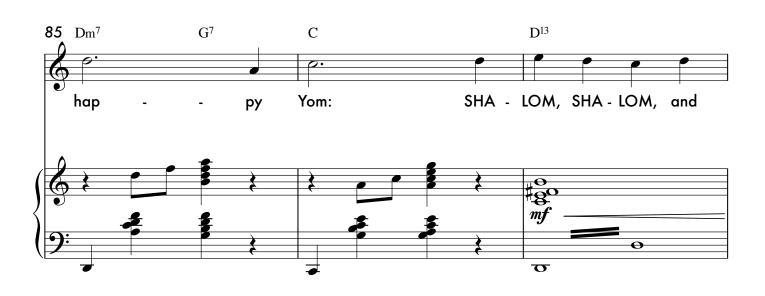


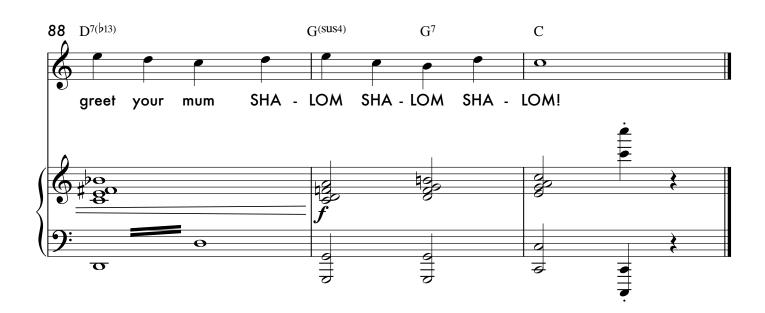












WIENER SCHNITZEL

In the style of a Viennese Waltz J. = 60 Eric Sanders, arr. Dominic Doutney Here's a \mathbb{C}^7 C ci - pe from Vi of the dish that en na re F G⁷/F love best. called is lt Wie a ner mf

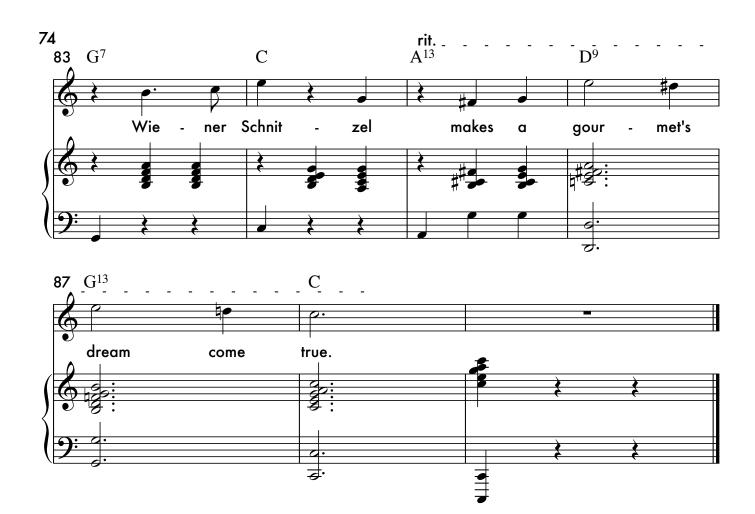












THE RHYTHM OF LONDON















BRING MEINE GRÜßE NACH WIEN

Eric Sanders, arr. Dominic Doutney



