

DORIS FISHER

1915 - 2003

Queen of the Jukebox

Doris Fisher was brought up in a household that was ripe with musical creativity. Her father, Fred Fisher, practically ruled Tin Pan Alley in the 20's, writing hit after hit, "**Chicago (That Toddlin' Town)**", "**Your Feet's Too Big**", "**I'd Rather Be Blue Over You (Than Be Happy With Someone Else)**", "**When I Get You Alone Tonight**", and "**Peg O' My Heart**". His presence in the Brill Building was the source of many a film caricature (usually the emotional, heavily accented German song publisher with the soft heart) and even a highly entertaining, although wildly inaccurate Hollywood biopic *Oh You Beautiful Doll*.

Both of Doris' brothers also wrote and plugged songs: Dan's "**Good Morning Heartache**" and Marvin's "**When Sunny Gets Blue**" are each unforgettable contributions to the Great American Songbook.

"Feisty, tenacious and talented" as Michael Feinstein called her, Doris Fisher entered the world of show business as a singer who also loved to write songs. Determined to make her own way without cashing in on her famous name, she began performing under the pseudonym Penny Wise, and appearing on many radio broadcasts with Count Basie and Eddie Duchin. Later she struck out on her own as bandleader "Penny Wise and Her Wise Guys".

Ms. Fisher placed one of the little ditties she was always tinkering with, "**Tutti Frutti**," with guitarist Slim Gaillard. This unlikely hit (unrelated to Little Richard's later version) led her to team up with her lyricist father in 1940 on "**Whispering Grass**," which became a huge hit for the vocal group the Ink Spots.

It's said that she met lyricist Allen Roberts in 1944 in an elevator in the Brill Building; that fortuitous ride began a deeply productive partnership. Together they wrote "**Angelina**" and "**Zooma Zooma**" (Louis Prima), "**Good Good Good**" (Bing Crosby & the Andrews Sisters), "**I Wish**" (Mills Brothers) "**Into Each Life Some Rain Must Fall**" (Ella Fitzgerald), "**Invitation to the Blues**" (Ella Mae Morse, Anita Ellis), "**That Ole Devil Called Love**" (Billie Holliday, Billy Eckstine), "**You Always Hurt the One You Love**" (Mills Brothers, Spike Jones, Connie Francis), and "**Tired**" and "**That's Good Enough for Me**" (Pearl Bailey). Each of these songs dominated the hit parade for years, earning her the moniker "Queen of the Jukebox".

Doris Fisher came to Hollywood in 1945 under contract to Columbia Records and wrote the music for many films, including *Gilda*, which featured Rita Hayworth singing “**Put the Blame on Mame**” in a sultry performance that made her an enormous star. Additional films to which Fisher and Roberts contributed are *Down To Earth*, *The Lady From Shanghai*, *Singin’ In The Corn*, *Strawberry Roan*, *Dead Reckoning*, *The Thrill Of Brazil*, and *The Corpse Came C.O.D.*

Doris Fisher married in 1947 and moved to Detroit. Later she lived in Los Angeles, pursuing a side interest of fashion and design that won her the respect of many. In fact, she helped to furnish the White House during the Kennedy Administration. She lived to be eighty-seven.

Sources:

Los Angeles Times, Dennis McClellan, 2003

ASCAP Songwriters Guild, www.ascap.com/press/2003/dorisyfisher

Doris Fisher, IMDb Mini Biography, Hup234!

www.allmusic.com (Doris Fisher)

Yours For a Song: The Women of Tin Pan Alley, (DVD) American Masters 1983,

On The Sunny Side of the Street: The Life and Times of Dorothy Fields, Deborah Grace Winer, 1997

Suggested Listening:

“**That Ole Devil Called Love**” - Billie Holliday, Alison Moyet

“**Tired**” and “**That’s Good Enough For Me**” – Pearl Bailey

“**Tampico**” – Stan Kenton and June Christy

“**Invitation to the Blues**” – Ella Mae Morse

“**Angelina**” – Louis Prima

“**Into Each Life Some Rain Must Fall**” - Ink Spots and Ella Fitzgerald



“You Always Hurt the One You Love” – Mills Brothers, but don’t miss the Spike Jones version!