

Gershwin brothers to be honored at Kingsbury

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U students are too young to appreciate the musical genius of brothers George and Ira Gershwin. Popular in the musical world nearly 100 years ago, their music is not even played on any oldies stations. More likely, it is heard on an old record player.

This does not mean it is not worth listening to, which students can see at “Here to Stay: The Gershwin Concert Experience.”

Going back to the time of vaudeville — a variety show that traveled from town to town and was popular from 1880 to about 1930 — the Gershwins’ pieces will transport students back to early America when a soda cost a nickel and life was slower.

Ira and George Gershwin were born in the late 1890s in Brooklyn, N.Y. As the brothers grew up, they became the dominant Broadway songwriters, George getting his start on the famous Tin Pan Alley.

Possibly their most famous work is the Broadway musical “Porgy and Bess.” This American opera about a crippled beggar, Porgy, and his love for Bess is still played on the stage. The sultry song, “Summertime,” is still covered by singers today, a testament to the Gershwin’s timeless talent.



George Gershwin

Blending a style of jazz, French and classical music, the Gershwins’ compositions sweep the listener along. The Gershwins’ composed orchestral music is light and robust and keeps the listener engaged. Their solo piano pieces are jazzy and fun to dance to and sing along. The music covers the range of the keyboard with a loud, romping style that will make the listener want to tap their toes and not keep still.

Kingsbury Hall is the perfect venue to experience Gershwin music. With its lofty ceilings and expansive stage, the music can reach its full potential in the space provided. The audience will be sharing in a show that will showcase singers, tap dancers and, of course, the piano music itself.

The concert will also feature rarely seen photos, home videos and stories of the Gershwin brothers for those musical history buffs in the audience and anyone who is interested in a piece of Americana.

The pianist playing the concert is Kevin Cole, nicknamed “America’s Pianist.” The Gershwin family considers Cole to be the best interpreter of George Gershwin’s compositions they have heard thus far.

If you are interested in the musical style of the 1920s and ’30s, or just looking for an entertaining time, make sure not to miss “The Gershwin Concert Experience,” playing Saturday at 7:30 p.m.

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