

**Rhapsody In Blue II**

**Lead: On February 12, 1924 at Aeolian Hall in New York City, a handsome 25-year-old composer strode to the piano and began to play. The audience was entranced.**

**Intro: A Moment In Time with Dan Roberts.**

**Content: The program had been long and rather dreary to the crowd of the city's elite gathered to hear Paul Whiteman lead his orchestra in an "Experiment in Modern Music." Yet the reaction to George Gershwin's work of classical jazz, "Rhapsody in Blue," was immediate and positive. Since he had emerged as a major**

**player in New York theater circles during the First World War, Gershwin had been something of an enigma.**

**Take “Lady, Be Good!” for instance. It was produced the same year as “Rhapsody” and was the first successful collaboration with his lyricist brother Ira Gershwin. It reflected their attempt not to just insert a group of unrelated songs into the story, which was common on Broadway at the time, but also to actually make the music an integral part of the plot. Gershwin's music was sophisticated and risky. He pushed musical theater into new regions of achievement, which was the problem for some of the critics. They didn't know what to make of Gershwin. His**

**form, structure and syncopated rhythms eluded conventional categories. By the time he produced Porgy and Bess in 1935, he was helping to expand the boundaries of music--new, exuberant, 100% American and wholly Gershwin. George Gershwin died after a brain tumor operation at the age of 37.**

**The producer of A Moment In Time is Steve Clark. At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.**

#### **Resources**

**Peyser, Joan. The Memory of All That: The Life of George Gershwin New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, c1993.**

**Rosenberg, Deena, Fascinating Rhythm : The Collaboration of George and Ira Gershwin. New York, NY Dutton Publishing Company, 1991.**

**Schwartz, Charles. Gershwin, His life and Music.  
Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1973.**

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