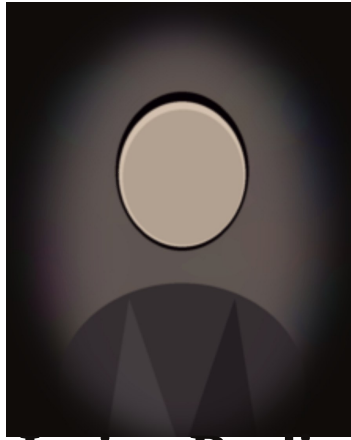




Irving Berlin

May 11, 1888 - September 22, 1989

New York, New York

Irving Berlin - born Israel Beilin in Imperial Russia, American songwriter whose catalog helped define twentieth-century popular song - died in his sleep at his home on Beekman Place in New York City on September 22, 1989. He was one hundred and one. Born May 11, 1888, he arrived in New York as a child, worked Lower East Side odd jobs, and taught himself piano in a key that kept transposing magic within reach of a largely untrained hand.

"Alexander's Ragtime Band," "White Christmas," "God Bless America," "There's No Business Like Show Business," and hundreds more made him both a Tin Pan Alley craftsman and a national soundtrack. He wrote for Broadway and Hollywood, kept ownership of his publishing when peers signed theirs away, and lived long enough to hear his wartime and holiday standards become civic ritual. Friends remembered a private man who rarely sought the spotlight his songs never left.

A century of American life passed through his melody lines - immigration, two world wars, the rise of radio and film musicals. Beekman Place was a quiet final address for a composer who had soundtracked parades and living rooms alike.

He died in New York on September 22, 1989. Choirs and orchestras still open folders stamped with his name every December and every Fourth of July.

Berlin's gift was democratic melody - tunes ordinary people could sing on first hearing and never quite forget. Notice Nearby keeps the death date so September 22 remembers the immigrant songwriter who gave America

some of its most durable songs.

Services

Died in New York City, September 22, 1989. Songwriter of White Christmas, God Bless America, and hundreds of standards; buried at Woodlawn Cemetery, Bronx.

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