

You ain't seen nothin' yet: The Al Jolson Project

Singer Larry DeAngelo, interpreter of the Great American Songbook, embarks on his latest project: Covering the long-neglected work of the Jazz Singer, Al Jolson

NASHVILLE, TN, USA, July 2, 2016 / EINPresswire.com/ -- If you occasionally find yourself humming old standards like April Showers and California, Here I Come, maybe you don't need the latest [Larry DeAngelo](#) project.

Despite the resurgence of interest in what DJs call the Great American Songbook, one of that songbook's greatest progenitors has been passed by. Even as pop stars have rushed to market their latest tributes to a musical era before their time, there seems to be a reluctance to touch the music of Al Jolson, arguably the most popular performer of the first half of the last century, and a new generation of listeners is missing out as a result, says the Nashville, TN-based DeAngelo.

"I think it is probably the blackface stuff that has got in the way of a proper recognition for one of the greatest

singers ever," says DeAngelo, whose own songbook offerings have already been spotlighted in his [Night and Day](#) and [Everything Happens to Me](#) releases. "But the more I researched it the more I realized how much material of his is out there and how little it's been covered since Jolson's death in 1950."

Born just over 130 years ago in what is now Lithuania, eight year-old Asa Yoelson arrived in the US in 1894. In the ensuing decades, immigrant Al Jolson helped define what it means to be an American. His starring role in 1927's *The Jazz Singer* (the first full-length "talkie") mesmerized audiences of the day and told a story that in many ways mirrored his biography: The jazz-singing blackface-donning son of a struggling Jewish cantor who strikes out on his own to find the American Dream.

"It may be easy to dismiss Al Jolson as an anachronism, but his story is a complicated one and I think it should be compelling in this time of American history, when there is so much obsessing about race and religion and ethnicity and what it means to be an American," says Entertainment Plus Creations' Ed Zwirn, a freelance writer whose work has appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Post*, *CFO Magazine* and other leading publications. "More importantly, Jolson left us a treasure trove of material, and I know Larry has the pipes to pull it off."

"We plan on launching our shoestring production this summer, when Larry will take on April Showers," says Zwirn. "Our plan is to release this and other Jolson songs and flesh things out as we get more



The two faces of an American icon.

musicians to lay in tracks, culminating in a blockbuster release in time for Christmas.

Musicians and industry professionals interested in participating can get in touch with Larry at epcastle1@earthlink.net.

If you want to receive updates on the Al Jolson project as they become available, contact Ed Zwirn at EZwirn@msn.com.

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