

BRAINSTORM
RECORDS



Maureen Taylor

Cosmic Connections

The Lyrics of Michael Colby

Musical Direction by Seth Weinstein

“The vocalist is a chameleon: classically trained soprano but fully capable of getting down and dirty in her lower range – she can be sexy, wry and innocent all at the same time.”

– Bart Greenberg, *NiteLifeExchange.com*

- 1 **More Than Meets the Eye** (*Dangerous*; John C. Introcaso*)
- 2 **I Know Everybody's Business** (*Delphi or Bust*; Gerald Jay Markoe/Astromusic*)
- 3 **Where Can I Go?** (Peter Millrose*)
- 4 **How Do You Make Magic?** (*Mrs. McThing*; Jack Urbont/Urbont Music^o)
- 5 **All I Need** (*Boynton Beach Club*; Ned Paul Ginsburg/NYLA Music^o)
- 6 **My Song** (Peter Millrose*)
- 7 **Keep It Low** (*Charlotte Sweet*; Gerald Jay Markoe/Astromusic*)
- 8 **Takin' On the Town** (*Boynton Beach Club*; Ned Paul Ginsburg/NYLA Music^o)
& **A Little Love in Big Manhattan** (*The First Family of Second Avenue*; Artie Bressler)
- 9 **A Daughter of Valentine's Day** (*Charlotte Sweet*; Gerald Jay Markoe/Astromusic*)
- 10 **Funny Bunny** (Gerald Jay Markoe/Astromusic*)
- 11 **Christmas Ev'ry Day** (Joseph Thalken*)
- 12 **A New Beginning** (*Boynton Beach Club*; Ned Paul Ginsburg/NYLA Music^o)
- 13 **Better Late Than Never** (*Great Big River*; Jack Urbont/Urbont Music^o)
- 14 **Let Go** (*The Human Heart*; Steven Silverstein*)
- 15 **Slumming** (*Mrs. McThing*; Jack Urbont/Urbont Music^o)
- 16 **Stars in My Eyes** (*Tales of Tinseltown*; Paul Katz/Great Ears Music*)
- 17 **I Just Know** (Sheldon Levin)
- 18 **Better Late Than Never Reprise** (Jack Urbont/Urbont Music^o)
- 19 **My Song Reprise** (Peter Millrose*)

* - ASCAP ^o - BMI



Notes from Maureen

I'm an Aquarius who loves to inspire, share and uplift – preferably with the songs of a contemporary lyricist. Come along as I connect the dots on this rather eccentric journey of *Cosmic Connections: The Lyrics of Michael Colby*.



More Than Meets the Eye

I first met Michael Colby (a Scorpio) at The Salon, an open mic held on Sundays in the lobby of the legendary Algonquin Hotel in NYC. Michael's grandparents owned the hotel for 40plus years. Michael is a story-song boy and I am a story-song gal. We both grew up in Long Island, attended Northwestern University, and cherish memorable adventures inspired by music.

Cabaret – Michael's all-time favorite musical. (No, he didn't write it and I wasn't in it.) I did work at a restaurant (aptly called Apropos) where Joel Grey was a regular while performing as the MC in *Cabaret* in Philadelphia. Oh, and Michael Colby's initials? Convenient. I guess you could say that he's the "silent" MC of this show.

The not-so-silent MC in Michael's life was his Aunt Cyd (actually, she was more of a psychic). She told him, "When they are saying your name and singing your lyrics, please tell them I predicted it." I think Aunt Cyd and I would have gotten along famously!

I Know Everybody's Business

When I was 20 I went to see a psychic, and she told me, "Honey, your life really won't start until you're in your 40s." Seriously?!

Where Can I Go?

I needed guidance. But this time, I sidestepped the psychic and went straight to my Mom. She said, "Honey, it's a big book. There are a lot of chapters. Some

people are for the chapters, some are for the book - but they all have something to contribute. READ!"

How Do You Make Magic? All I Need

"This" keeps happening - I keep attracting the same type of guy! They're all tall, dark, handsome, passionate - really, they're all practically perfect... OK, they're all practically divorced... and their last names always end in a vowel! Well, they all have a zest for life. They all want to love and be loved. And at the very least, they can all cook - what have I got to lose?

My Song

This could be my own personal autobiography. Still searching for love and life advice, I went back to that psychic. She said, "40, remember? Honey, you still have SO much time. Enjoy the journey. Keep it light, keep it luscious, keep it low..."

Keep It Low

I was an opera singer transitioning into musical theater. Colleagues encouraged me to show off my sassy, brassy side. Vocally, they wanted me to channel my inner Bea Arthur...and when Julie Andrews came out, they never quite knew how to cast me.

Applause – another of Michael's favorite musicals. (No, he didn't write it and I wasn't in it.) Michael's all-time favorite movie is *All About Eve*, on which the musical *Applause* is based. He saw the show 3 times!

I have always been fascinated by Lauren Bacall. I'm intrigued by her smoky, sultry voice – and I really love her motto: "As long as I'm breathing, I might as well experience everything."

And I did!

I lived in Hong Kong, sang opera in Italy, played Madame Giry in *The Phantom of the Opera* in Switzerland, sang with Van Morrison in a little pub in Dublin, sang at an open mic in Wales with the retired national rugby team, sang with the amazing "Panto Queens" in Brighton and even did a comic book musical in London, *The Ultimate Man*.

And with the help of a friend, I was finally introduced to a man whose name did **not** end in a vowel. This relationship felt right. And I finally had a "Significant Other" to celebrate the holidays with.

A Daughter of Valentine's Day

Charlotte Sweet was nominated for three Drama Desk Awards! Charlotte's birthday was, of course, Valentine's Day. I've often wondered if all the relationship "hiccups" I experienced were because my birthday is February 16th – two days **after** Valentine's Day!

Funny Bunny

The holidays mean food. Michael and I both love Caesar salad, rice pudding, fried chicken, iced tea, and – of all things, white chocolate! Mary Chase,

"Taylor's interpretations are so insightful and so well realized that she makes it all land."

– Roy Sander, *BistroAwards.com*

And, wouldn't you know, I come to find out that Michael Colby's three favorite things are theater, monster movies, and comic books. (Monster movies and me, not so much...but hey, two outta three ain't bad!)

It was all exhilarating, educational, exhausting and eventually I came back to New York.

Takin' On the Town & A Little Love in Big Manhattan

Carousel – another of Michael's favorite musicals. (No, he didn't write it and I wasn't in it.) I did move into Shirley Verrett's house while she was performing as Aunt Nettie in *Carousel* on Broadway. We had some fun conversations about opera singers switching to musical theater and some spicy chats about "late bloomer" relationships.

playwright of *Harvey* (only the biggest white bunny rabbit of them all), would always give Michael white chocolate bunnies for Easter!

Christmas Ev'ry Day

My favorite holiday is Christmas. Michael is from a Southern Jewish lineage, which often celebrates both Chanukah AND Christmas. He discussed this with Alfred Uhry (the Jewish writer from Georgia), who wrote *Driving Miss Daisy* – which I **WAS** in!

When Michael was a freshman in college, the Algonquin Hotel became his second home, and he got to truly experience all the glamor and holiday trappings of the hotel. One of his favorite things to do was to lie under the colorfully-lit tree at night, when everyone was asleep, and watch the reflections on the ceiling. Growing up, my family had an aluminum Christmas

tree with a color wheel – and I got to do exactly the same thing!

This song always makes me want to be in a Hallmark Christmas movie. If anyone can make this happen, please let me know. BUCKET LIST!!!

A New Beginning

And finally, the grand-daddy of all holidays, New Year's Eve!

Better Late Than Never

When you have successfully navigated a year of “relationship holidays,” you start thinking about permanent unions. And yes, good things do come to those who wait! Both Michael and I met and married our true loves later in life.

Slumming

Connect the dots – connect the stars. I could write a book, but I don't have to. Michael already has! *The Algonquin Kid* is a delightful read, chock full of historical, literary and musical info that reads like a *People Magazine* you just can't put down!

Stars in My Eyes

There's intuition, psychic guidance, and then there's divine intervention. Many times I have thought about throwing in the professional towel. Inevitably, at these times, the phone will ring and it is Michael Colby. “There's this event happening, would you be willing to sing one of my songs?” It always gets me back on track.

“An evening of Michael Colby's songs performed by Maureen Taylor is an entertainment that stands on its own.”

– Stephen Mosher, *BroadwayWorld.com*

Let Go

In 2005, I FINALLY met Michael Colby, whose lyrics had cosmically designed the roadmap of my life.

We met at the Algonquin Hotel. I sang “It Amazes Me,” a song given to me by Andrea Marcovicci, an exquisite force of nature. She was the first of several significant mentors in my life – ALL phenomenal women who sang at the Algonquin, and who gave me a huge appreciation for storytelling and highlighting the lyric. Thank you, with love and gratitude, to Andrea Marcovicci, Penny Fuller, Betty Buckley and Julie Wilson.

With all this powerful female mentorship, it's interesting that some of the best relationship advice I got came from a male lyricist and a male composer.

I Just Know Better Late Than Never Reprise My Song Reprise

**Thank you, Mr. Michael Colby.
With SO much love!**

 **Maureen Taylor**

“The perfect blendship.”

That’s what Cole Porter wrote to describe a match-up made in Heaven. And that’s exactly how I feel about me and my melodic Muse, Maureen Taylor. I’ve been a longtime admirer of Maureen and her acclaimed cabaret shows, such as her tributes to Lauren Bacall and Bob Merrill. I’m especially impressed by her skill at mining lesser-known gems for all their beauty, hidden facets, and luminosity.

That’s why I was surprised and elated when Maureen proposed performing an evening of my lyrics. With all the possibilities for a tribute, I was honored beyond words that Maureen singled out my work. Then Maureen pointed out a major reason why she chose my work: the many cross-currents in our lives and careers, I leapt at the idea like a pogo stick! Even her choice of a title for her show was perfect: Cosmic Connections. Through my childhood, my great preoccupations were Broadway musicals and DC comic books. And the super-hero with whom I most identified was Cosmic Boy of the Legion of Super Heroes. Now it seems as if the astrological Maureen somehow knew.

Like many of today’s musical theatre writers, I’ve had countless ups and downs – with too many “big breaks” morphing into Sisyphean letdowns. But with Maureen magnificently turning a spotlight on my lyrics, I just know the answer to my song title, “How Do You Make Magic?”



★ **Michael Elihu Colby**

Produced by **Michael Colby**

Co-produced by **Maureen Taylor & Frank Galgano**

Musical Arrangements by **Matt Castle**

Piano and Additional Arrangements by **Seth Weinstein**

Recorded and Mixed by **Peter Millrose (Millrose Music, NYC)**

Mastered by **Jeffrey Lesser**

Artwork and design by **John Narun**

Based on the MAC Award-nominated solo show

Cosmic Connections: The Lyrics of Michael Colby...Mostly

Originally produced by **Maureen Taylor**, directed by **Frank Galgano**, with musical direction and arrangements by **Matt Castle**. Debuted at **Don’t Tell Mama NYC** Nov. 21, 2019.

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