

Public Law 99-86  
99th Congress

Joint Resolution

Aug. 9, 1985

[H.J. Res. 251]

To provide that a special gold medal honoring George Gershwin be presented to his sister, Frances Gershwin Godowsky, and a special gold medal honoring Ira Gershwin be presented to his widow, Leonore Gershwin, and to provide for the production of bronze duplicates of such medals for sale to the public.

Whereas George and Ira Gershwin, individually and jointly, created music which is undeniably American and which is internationally admired;

Whereas George Gershwin composed works acclaimed both as classical music and as popular music, including "Rhapsody in Blue", "An American in Paris", "Concerto in F", and "Three Preludes for Piano";

Whereas Ira Gershwin won a Pulitzer Prize for the lyrics for "Of Thee I Sing", the first lyricist ever to receive such prize;

Whereas Ira Gershwin composed the lyrics for major Broadway productions, including "A Star is Born", "Lady in the Dark", "The Barkleys of Broadway", and for hit songs, including "I Can't Get Started", "Long Ago and Far Away", and "The Man That Got Away";

Whereas George and Ira Gershwin collaborated to compose the music and lyrics for major Broadway productions, including "Lady Be Good", "Of Thee I Sing", "Strike Up the Band", "Oh Kay!", and "Funny Face";

Whereas George and Ira Gershwin collaborated to produce the opera "Porgy and Bess" and the 50th anniversary of its first performance will occur during 1985;

Whereas George and Ira Gershwin collaborated to compose the music and lyrics for important contributions to the American song, including "I Got Rhythm", "Summertime", "Love is Here to Stay", "Fascinating Rhythm", "Let's Call the Whole Thing Off", "I Got Plenty of Nuttin'", and "Someone to Watch Over Me"; and

Whereas George and Ira Gershwin have made outstanding and invaluable contributions to American music, theatre, and culture: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, That (a) the President of the United States is authorized to present, on behalf of the Congress, to Frances Gershwin Godowsky, the sister of George Gershwin, and to Leonore Gershwin, the widow of Ira Gershwin, gold medals of appropriate design in recognition of George and Ira Gershwin's outstanding and invaluable contributions to American music, theatre and culture. For such purpose, the Secretary of the Treasury is authorized and directed to cause to be struck two gold medals with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions to be determined by the Secretary of the Treasury. There are authorized to be appropriated not to exceed \$18,500 to carry out the provisions of this subsection.

(b) The Secretary of the Treasury may cause duplicates in bronze of such medal to be coined and sold under such regulations as he

may prescribe, at a price sufficient to cover the cost thereof, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, overhead expenses, and the gold medals. The appropriation used to carry out the provisions of subsection (a) shall be reimbursed out of the proceeds of such sales.

SEC. 2. The medals provided for in this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

31 USC 5101  
et seq.

Approved August 9, 1985.

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**LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.J. Res. 251:**

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 131 (1985):

July 15, considered and passed House.

Aug. 1, considered and passed Senate.