

What a Wonderful World

By Dennis Payton Knight

It's an understatement to say the daily news hasn't been so wonderful lately. We read of earthquakes caused by the tensions of nature and the tearing apart of cities under the tensions of human living. And yet the challenge today is to write about what a wonderful world we live in. Fortunately the task is easier, because the subject has been taken up by a multitude of singers and song writers.

*You've made my life so glamorous, you can't blame me for feeling amorous
'S wonderful! 'S marvelous! That you should care for me!*

"S'Wonderful" was written by George and Ira Gershwin for the Broadway Musical *Funny Face* in 1927. It was performed in the play by Adele Astaire, but it has been recorded over the years by many others, including her brother Fred, Ella Fitzgerald and more recently Diana Krall.

*History; biology; science book; the French I took.
But I do know that I love you, and I know that if you love me, too,
What a wonderful world this would be.*

"Wonderful World" was originally written by Lou Adler and Herb Alpert, but Sam Cooke added the finishing lyrical touches, and the trio used the songwriting pseudonym "Barbara Campbell," the name of Cooke's high school sweetheart. Over the years the song has been covered by many artists from Otis Redding to Art Garfunkel.

*Some quiet evening, I sit by your side, and we're lost in a world of our own.
I feel the glow of your arms open love, I'm aware of the treasure that I hold.
And I say to myself "It's wonderful, wonderful, Oh, so wonderful, my love."*

Written by Sherman Edwards and Ben Raleigh in 1957, "Wonderful, Wonderful" is another in that library of Johnny Mathis songs back in the fifties and sixties that wafted from car radios parked at lovers' lookouts in every county in America.

*I hear babies crying, I watch them grow; they'll learn much more than I'll never know,
And I think to myself what a wonderful world.*

"What a Wonderful World", written by Bob Thiele and George Weiss, was recorded by Louis Armstrong very late in his career in 1967. It was hardly a hit in the United States, selling fewer than a thousand copies, but it was a hit in the United Kingdom. It became a standard and was featured in the Robin Williams film, *Good Morning, Vietnam*, at which time it was released again, this time charting high. No other song is more associated with Louis Armstrong, and yet it is a complete departure from the traditional music that made him America's Ambassador of Jazz.

There are many tunes with the word wonderful in their titles. They come in genres from easy listening to country to jazz, but those I mentioned are songs we are all familiar with, standards in our hearts in troubled times to remind us of what a wonderful world we live in.