You Are Too Beautiful

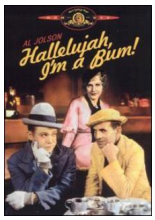
It's hard for most of today's audience to imagine why **Al Jolson** was once considered the world's greatest entertainer. Having taken a successful gamble by experimenting with sound in *The Jazz Singer* (Warner Bros. 1927), he took another chance six years later with *Hallelujah I'm a Bum* (GB: *Hallelujah I'm a Tramp*) and flopped.

You Are Too Beautiful

Jolson plays a genial hobo who wanders happily around Central Park, neither seeking nor accepting honest employment. He is imbued with a sense of responsibility when he rescues pretty Madge Evans from committing suicide. Evans, suffering from amnesia, falls in love with Jolson, completely forgetting her "regular" beau, mayor Frank Morgan.

Al Jolson

This is a charming film, with many attributes that make it commendable. Al Jolson's voice and singing are simply wonderful and this movie is good enough to see for the songs alone. The songs are snappy and cheery and if you'd like to be introduced to the famous Al Jolson, this is a good choice.



Hallelujah I'm a Bum, poster

Rodgers music and Hart's lyrics are splendid, making this one of the most original, best written original musicals of all time. While the film features "songs," it also features dialog that is spoken to a beat and to a musical background. This film was an experiment in something the producers call "rhyming dialog". Today it would be called rap. Audiences didn't really take to it in 1933, but today's audience would probably appreciate it more.

Al Jolson and Madge Evans

Rodgers and Hart wrote two songs in addition to the rhyming dialog, the title song and **"You Are Too Beautiful".**
The latter is a nice romantic ballad that Jolson delivers well. Later on in the 1940s both Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra had primo versions of this song as well.

Rodgers and Hart

You Are Too Beautiful introduced by Al Jolson in the 1933 is known to jazz fans from the treatment by Johnny Hartman and John Coltrane of 30 years later.

Bing Crosby - You Are Too Beautiful

It is a unique musical for its time, and a welcome addition to Jolson's work. Certainly well worth viewing. But it still saddens me: if only Jolson could have made more films like this one.

Hallelujah I'm a Bum, frame

You Are Too Beautiful

You are too beautiful, my dear, to be true And I am too drunk with beauty Drunk with a feeling that the arms that possess you Really caress you too You are too beautiful for one man alone For one lucky fool to be with When there are other men With eyes of their own to see with Love can not stand sharing Not if one cares You will be comparing My every kiss with theirs You know I care and I'll be faithful to you Not through a sense of duty You are too beautiful And I am too drunk with beauty Like all fools I believe what I want to believe My foolish heart can see what foolish hearts can see I thought I'd found a miracle, I thought that you adored me But it was not a miracle it was merely a mirage before me You are too beautiful, my dear, to be true And I am too drunk with beauty Drunk with a feeling that my arms that possess you Really caress you too You are too beautiful for one man alone For one lucky fool to be with When there are other men With eyes of their own to see with Love can not stand sharing Not if one cares You will be comparing My every kiss with theirs You know I care and I'll be faithful to you Not through a sense of duty You are too beautiful And I am too drunk with beauty

Al Jolson