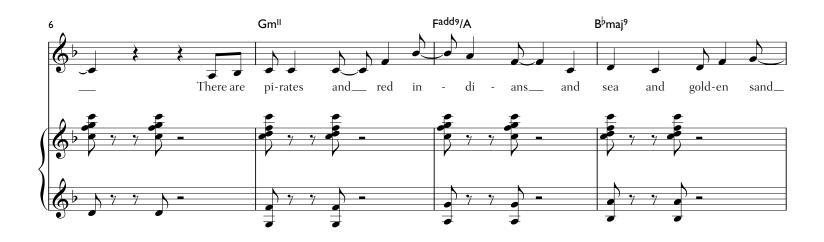
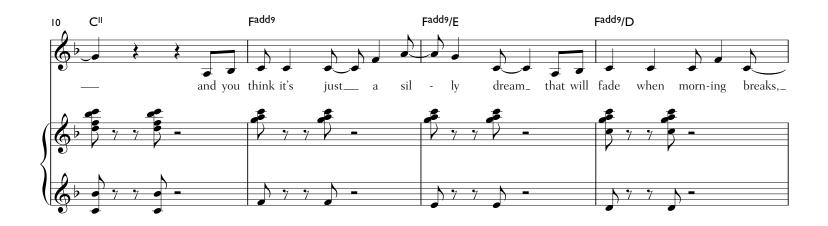
# A PLACE CALLED NEVERLAND

MUSIC BY JIMMY JEWELL LYRICS BY NICK STIMSON











#### **WORDS AND MUSIC BY RICHARD M SHERMAN AND ROBERT B SHERMAN**



## **ALONE IN THE UNIVERSE**

### **SEUSSICAL THE MUSICAL**

#### **BACKGROUND**

Seussical is a musical inspired by the popular children's books by Dr Seuss, particularly *Horton Hears a Who!* The show opened on Broadway in 2000, followed by a shorter and simpler Off-Broadway revival in 2007. A cut-down one-act 'Theatre for Young Audience' version has also proved popular.

Kind-hearted Horton the elephant discovers a tiny planet in a speck of dust, inhabited by microscopic beings called 'Whos'. Horton promises to protect the planet and puts it in a clover plant for safety. But of course all the other jungle animals just laugh at him and think he's mad. Meanwhile Jo-Jo, an inhabitant of the planet, echoes his thoughts.

#### **PERFORMANCE NOTES**

Horton, outcast and alone, is sitting by a flower which — as only he knows — contains a tiny planet. The situation is a very odd one, but you have to perform this song with absolute seriousness. Always remember that, no matter what anyone else may say, this is very important and *you are right*. Notice how Horton constantly draws a very clear distinction between himself (I've done this, I've got that) and the other animals (let them laugh, they don't know). Use this contrast to drive the song forward: let their stupidity and ignorance give you renewed self-belief. Being 'alone in the universe' isn't necessarily a bad thing — it's what makes you unique and 'gives you wings'.

The lyrics take Horton from a very small, specific spot in the jungle to wonderful imagined worlds both large and small. Experiment with staging to find ways of conveying this sense of space and potential to the audience. How much movement is necessary? How little? Does the fact that Horton is an elephant influence your physical performance?

#### **SINGING TIPS**

This song is great for trying out different dynamics. There's some repetition in the tune and the words, and it really adds to a performance if repeated phrases can be varied.

Practise some scales, up and down, singing quietly, loudly, or going from quiet to loud or loud to quiet. Do you find that you naturally tend to get quieter as you sing down a scale? Notice that many of the phrases in this song are descending phrases. Don't let the last part of the phrase disappear, especially if you're singing softly.

One extra thing to take care of here is that you don't let the words run into each other too much. For example, make sure you sing 'I'm alone' and not 'I malone', and 'They all' and not 'They yall'.

#### **BEYOND THE SONG**

When *Seussical* was first performed, critics weren't sure whether the show was aimed at children or adults. What do you think are the essential components of a children's show? Which of these might adults most enjoy?