

NEWSLETTER

INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN AMERICAN MUSIC

Department of Music, Brooklyn College of the City University of New York - H. Wiley Hitchcock, Director

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SALUTING ELLIOTT CARTER ON HIS SEVENTIETH

Elliott Carter's seventieth birthday, December 11th, is just around the corner as this is being written. We welcome the opportunity to wish him many happy returns of the day and to signal it by reacting to the book of his critical articles, essays, lectures, and other prose that came out about a year ago, from Indiana University Press, as *The Writings of Elliott Carter*. Ably edited by Else Stone and Kurt Stone (the latter an editor of Carter's music for a number of years, at Associated Music Publishers), the volume is a substantial one, almost 400 pages long, and it is a remarkable record of a sensitive, cultivated, articulate American composer's reactions to his musical world.

That musical world, as revealed in Carter's published writings, has been one circling around the new-music scene, specifically the American new-music scene. Not that Carter is unconcerned with other aspects of contemporary life or with other musics: he has obviously read and listened and experienced omnivorously ever since his undergraduate years as an English Literature major at Harvard and his three years of study, slightly later, with Nadia Boulanger in Paris (and we might recall that his first teaching position, at St. John's College in Annapolis, 1940-44, saw him instructing not only in music but in mathematics and Greek). However, Carter's public persona as a writer has been (to borrow from the subtitle of his book) that of "An American Composer [Looking] at Modern Music," particularly during the decade of 1937-46, when he was contributing criticism regularly to *Modern Music*. (Thereafter he tended to write more and more about his own music.)

We were reminded in reading Carter's writings—re-reading, rather, all of a piece, what we had read in single installments over the years—of some remarks made about him by the British critic Andrew Porter, in *The New Yorker* of 3 February 1973. Stating flatly that "internationally, Elliott Carter, born in 1908, is now America's most famous living composer," Porter sought to explain why:

He unites two qualities that, particularly in their combination, strike a European as especially American: a breadth and range of cultural experience (not only musical), evinced in his education, his writings, and his compositions, that can make many otherwise comparable European creators seem nationalist, even local, and a "ruggedness" of artistic temperament, a heroism most conveniently termed Ivesian, which, when all the worlds of music lie known and open to him, leads him to choose and pursue his own unfaltering path—not blinkered but with a full, commanding view over the paths that others are taking.

The combination of these two qualities informs Carter's writings as it does his music. Only a person with great "breadth and range of cultural experience" and an Ivesian ruggedness of temperament might have dared, in the 1960s, to take publicly this unfashionably conservative but deeply felt stance (in a radio broadcast on "The Composer's Choices"): "It was and still is but dimly realized by the public that the great compositions fundamental to the art were not things easily or cheaply produced, but were the result of human beliefs, of commonly shared moral and esthetic values, of orderly, logical thought, and of the practical musical experiences of generations." Or to move beyond technical explication of his own music and reveal an awareness of the world at large (and indeed his own wish to be at one with it) by writing, apropos of his Variations for Orchestra, "By these and other devices, I have tried to give musical expression to experiences anyone living today must have when confronted by so many remarkable examples of unexpected types of changes and relationships of character, uncovered in the human sphere by psychologists and novelists, in the life cycle of insects and certain marine animals by biologists, indeed in every domain of science and art."

But such statements as these, beyond those two qualities adduced by Andrew Porter, have yet another: a kind of magisterial tone not uncommon in Carter's writings (nor, for that matter, in his music). "Magisterial" has to do with mastery, and Carter is all for mastery—of calling and craft, of self and substance. It is composers whom he sees as magisterial in this sense for whom he has the greatest sympathy and respect: some of them are Stravinsky, Copland, Ravel, Fauré, Piston, Riegger, Wolpe, Sessions. Despite his frequent references to Schoenberg, Carter seems never to have really admitted him to this canon—at least, not in his writings. And Charles Ives, to whom Carter is avowedly and affectionately indebted for so much, has consistently been a problematic figure for him. The "vision and challenge" of Ives (Carter's words, in the title of a 1944 article) have come persistently into conflict with Carter's esthetic, and he has wrestled, in print, with that conflict no fewer than ten times between 1939 and 1975, when he wrote a candidly summary piece, "Documents of a Friendship with Ives."

(continued on p. 12)

MEMORIES OF MINNEAPOLIS

The American-music entries in the American Musicological Society's annual conference in Minneapolis 19-22 October covered such diverse topics as the John Becker-Ezra Pound correspondence, Stephen Foster's borrowings from himself, the German-American *Sängerfest*, and a new evaluation of *Porgy and Bess*. In addition there was a dynamic session devoted to Jazz and Popular music. Don Gillespie of C.F. Peters Corp., known for his studies on John Becker, gave a concise account of the letters between that unlikely pair, John Becker and Ezra Pound, showing that Becker's combative stance as a musical crusader may have been spurred by Pound's writings.

While Michael Leavitt (Great Neck, NY) presented interesting illustrations of Foster's self-borrowings, his attempt to prove certain stylistic hallmarks suffered from lack of sound statistical evidence. Edward Wolf (West Liberty State College) illuminated a little-known part of nineteenth-century musical life in German-American communities with a model presentation (by slides and handouts) of the popular annual *Sängerfeste* based on newspaper accounts. Finally, Lawrence Starr (U. of Washington), an admittedly late-blooming fan of Gershwin, shared his delight in and his critical evaluation of *Porgy and Bess*, concluding that its success as an opera came from Gershwin's knowledge of the Broadway theater. Both he and his respondent, Richard Crawford (U. of Michigan), pointed out that American music must be judged for what it is, not for what it is not.

Jazz and Popular Music was the subject of a session sponsored by the Society for Music Theory, meeting jointly with AMS. This turned out to be one of the liveliest and most delightful sessions of the conference—a pleasant relief from some of the other dry (though brilliant) presentations. Peter Winkler (SUNY at Stony Brook) found, with the help of Schenker analysis, the roots of Billy Strayhorn's 1940 *Passion Flower* in *Careless Love* and many gospel tunes. Then, after a thorough briefing by James McCalla (U. of Virginia) on the irregular structure of *Bessie's Lament: The Young Woman's Blues*, Jerry Dean, a rangy cowboy from the University of Texas at Austin, in Frank Zappa T-shirt, stomped through a paper on "The Evolution of Metric Asymmetry in Rock Music," supplying plenty of band music and a handout of suggested rock records for use in teaching rhythms. The handout also contained some Jerry Dean jokes. (Sample: "Doctor, there's an invisible man in the waiting room." "Tell him I can't see him.")

The next AMS conference will be held in New York City at the Biltmore Hotel, 1-4 November 1979. Abstracts for papers and proposals for sessions should be sent to Professor Leeman L. Perkins, Department of Music, Dodge Hall 703, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027, by 1 February 1979.



Music and Musical Life in America

Victor Herbert

A Life in Music

by *Edward N. Waters*

The definitive biography of America's operetta king, cello virtuoso, and conductor of the Pittsburgh Symphony—by the former chief of the Library of Congress Music Division. (New York, 1955). xiii + 653 pp., \$35.00

History of the Handel and Haydn Society of Boston

with new tables of contents by
Judith Tick

Volume I: 1815–1890

by *Charles C. Perkins*
and *John S. Dwight*

Volume II: 1890–1933

by *William F. Bradbury* and *Courtenay Guild*

With programs and descriptions of concerts, festivals, meetings, and rehearsals, these volumes chronicle the growth of an important preservation society which established an American choral music tradition. Volume II covers the society's many premieres of major American works by Parker, Beach, Chadwick, and others, including a large selection of contemporary critical notices. (Boston, 1883-93, 1911-34). Vol. I: xxvii + 641 pp., \$35.00. Vol. II: x + 387 pp., 32 illus., \$29.50

Early Histories of the New York Philharmonic

The Philharmonic Society of New York
by *Henry Krehbiel*

The Philharmonic Society of New York and its 75th Anniversary

by *James Gibbons Huneker*

The Philharmonic-Symphony Society of New York:

Its First Hundred Years

by *John Erskine*

with a new introduction by *Howard Shanet*

Collected for the first time are three histories which document the oldest American instrumental performance group and New York's developing musical life. (London, 1842, 1917, New York, 1943). 183 + 130 + vii + 168 pp., 15 photographs, \$35.00

The Boston Symphony Orchestra 1881-1931

by *Mark Antony de Wolfe Howe*

Henry Lee Higginson founded the Boston Symphony on exclusively Germanic models. In this definitive history of its first 50 years, Howe recounts the orchestra's growth from that repertoire to one more international in scope—including premieres of Debussy, Stravinsky, and modern American works—under the far-sighted leadership of Pierre Monteux and Serge Koussevitzky. (Boston, 1931). vii + 272 pp., \$25.00

Symphony Hall, Boston

by *H. Earle Johnson*

Since 1900, most of Boston's large cultural and social events have occurred in Symphony Hall, from the Boston Symphony and other concert artists to political rallies, cooking demonstrations, and auto and fashion shows. Thus, in reviewing the history of this celebrated hall, H. Earle Johnson provides a life-and-times of the city itself. There is a detailed account of the orchestra's public reception and behind-the-scenes managerial decisions, as well as a complete list of its repertoire to 1950. (Boston, 1950). vii + 431 pp., \$27.50

DA CAPO PRESS

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ORCHESTRA OF NEW YORK

Back in the '30s it was the WPA and the Federal Music Project; today it's CETA, the Comprehensive Employment Training Act. Just as the artists and musicians found employment during the Depression thanks to the Works Progress Administration, so today creative artists of a variety of talents are funded by the U.S. Department of Labor. One of the happy outcomes of the new program is the Orchestra of New York, an ensemble of twenty professional musicians who perform in a variety of urban settings throughout the five boroughs. Directed by Paul Dunkel, the conductor of, among other groups, the American Symphony and Speculum Musicae, and administered by Maurice Edwards and the Brooklyn Philharmonia, the Orchestra of New York has presented over 125 concerts since its foundation in January 1978. It will go wherever it is invited and its programs are free at community centers, libraries, hospitals, penal institutions, senior citizen facilities, and schools, as well as in traditional concert halls.

As spelled out in its purposes, the group takes pride in "providing musical enrichment for people who could not otherwise experience the joy of hearing a first-class orchestra in person." As a public service organization as well as a highly skilled chamber orchestra, it prefers to premiere works by New York composers, while encouraging and inspiring young musicians.

The orchestra will appear in November and December at churches in the New York area, where they will perform Bach's Cantata No. 55 and the Fauré Requiem with the Boys Choir of Harlem.

As with any government-funded program, CETA has its detractors. Probably the Federal Music Project also had its critics, although today the work by the WPA-sponsored artists and musicians is recognized as a rich contribution to America's artistic history. At the moment, the Orchestra of New York is unsure of its future, waiting for news of refunding, so it can continue its work.

NEW RRAM EDITIONS

Alexander Reinagle's *Philadelphia Sonatas* and O'Keeffe and Shield's *The Poor Soldier* are the latest volumes to be published by A-R Editions in the RECENT RESEARCHES IN AMERICAN MUSIC series. The Reinagle volume (No. 5 in the series) has been edited by Robert Hopkins of Youngstown State University and includes an extensive preface about the composer and the music and a chronology of Reinagle's known works. In the *empfindsamer Stil* of C.P.E. Bach, with whom Reinagle was acquainted, the four keyboard sonatas, never before published integrally, were written soon after Reinagle's arrival in Philadelphia in 1783 and as such have the distinction of being the first piano sonatas written in this country.

John O'Keeffe and William Shield wrote their comic opera *The Poor Soldier* in 1783; it became a wildly popular "after-piece" in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, in both Britain and the U.S.A. For this edition (No. 6 in the RRAM series), editors William Brasmer and William Osborne of Denson University have worked from material in five scores and fourteen libretti. In their preface they discuss the stage history of the work and the various sources used.

Each RRAM volume is listed at \$15.95; to order individual volumes or to place standing orders for the complete series, write to A-R Editions, 315 West Gorham St., Madison, WI 53703.

AMERICA FIRST

The John F. Kennedy Center-Rockefeller Foundation International Competitions for Excellence in the Performance of American Music (what a title!) recently awarded prizes for the first year's contest: pianists Bradford Gowen of Bethesda, MD, 1st place; Donna Coleman of Rochester, NY, 2nd place; and Robert Weirich of New Orleans, LA, 3rd place. The competition (to be given in three three-year cycles of piano, voice, and strings) has as its major goal the stimulation of performance of American music. As one of the judges, pianist Robert Black, reports, "There is no question but that the contest generated a tremendous surge of recitals, as pianists learned the music and prepared for the competition." Preliminary rounds were held in five different cities (New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Washington DC, and Vienna, Austria). The competition was not limited to Americans, but the recitals had to include three or more 20th-century American works (85 minutes). Of the 140 pianists who applied, 89 or 90 were heard by the judges (those for the finals on 16-17 September were Black, Beveridge Webster, Ulysses Kay, William Masselos, Rodion Shchedrin from Russia, Toru Takemitsu from Japan, and John Ogdon from Great Britain). The winner played the following American works: Aaron Copland's Piano Sonata, George Perle's Etudes, Samuel Adler's *Canto VIII*, Robert Evett's *Chaconne*, Wendell Keeney's Sonatina, and Henry Cowell's *The Banshee* and *Exultation*. The most frequently selected compositions, according to Black (who is also director of the New York New Music Ensemble), were Copland's Piano Sonata and Piano Variations, George Crumb's *Makrokosmos*, David del Tredici's *Fantasy Pieces*, and Ben Weber's *Fantasia*.

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MEMORIAL MATTERS

Musician and historian Dan Morgenstern will be I.S.A.M.'s Senior Research Fellow and Visiting Professor at Brooklyn College during the Spring 1979 term. A former editor-in-chief of *Metronome Jazz Magazine* and *Down Beat*, Morgenstern has produced jazz concerts at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City and the Newport Jazz Festival and, since 1976, has been director of the Institute of Jazz Studies at Rutgers University. His writings include the book *Jazz People* (1976) and numerous articles in American, British, and Japanese musical journals. In his position as visiting professor in the Department of Music, he will conduct a combined undergraduate and graduate course on Studies in Jazz History; as I.S.A.M. Fellow he will present two lectures to the college community.

Irving Lowens, internationally known historian of American music, music critic, and 1975-76 Senior Research Fellow at I.S.A.M., has been appointed dean of the Peabody Conservatory of Music. Lowens, who was chief music critic of *The Washington Star* for 18 years, was the first librarian specializing in phonorecords to be engaged by the Library of Congress and later served that institution as assistant head of the Music Division's reference section. Lowens's book *Music and Musicians in Early America* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1964) has long been recognized as a major contribution to the field. His most recent book, *Music in America and American Music: Two Views of the Scene* (I.S.A.M. Monograph No. 8, 1978), includes a bibliography of his writings.

* * HAPPY HOLIDAYS * *

Three new I.S.A.M. monographs (Nos. 9, 10, and 11) may now be ordered. Monograph No. 9, *Two Men for Modern Music* by Vivian Perlis, is based on lectures Perlis gave as 1976-77 Senior Research Fellow at I.S.A.M. and tells the story of contributions to contemporary music by E. Robert Schmitz, founder of the Pro-Musica Society, and Herman Langinger, engraver of most of the scores for Henry Cowell's New Music Editions. The publication contains many hitherto unpublished photographs of Schmitz, Langinger, Prokofiev, Ravel, and others.

Soon to be published is Richard Stanislaw's *Checklist of Four-Staff Shape-Note Tunebooks* (Monograph No. 10). The monograph, listing over 300 shape-note tunebooks popular in the United States during the ante-bellum period, should be a welcome addition to early American music research, since it offers, in addition to the tunebook entries, an extensive bibliography and chronological summary.

Papers by Elliott Carter, Chou Wen-chung, and Robert P. Morgan will be included in I.S.A.M.'s Monograph No. 11, *The New World of Edgard Varèse*. A compilation of the papers and discussion from a Varèse Symposium held at the City University of New York Graduate Center in April 1977, the monograph (available in February) will be edited by Sherman Van Solkema, Varèse scholar, Professor of Music at Brooklyn College, and moderator of the symposium. Carter's contribution is "On Edgard Varèse," Chou's paper is "Tonisation: The Function of Timbre in Its Formal and Temporal Organization," and Morgan's work is "Notes on Varèse's Rhythm."

To order these (and other monographs) please use the inserts in the publication folder.

Eight Urban Musical Cultures

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cities as Madras, Tehran, San Francisco, and Freetown. Nettl's introduction surveys the history of the field, its theoretical framework, the reasons for its uneven development, and its importance to future research. \$15.00.

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From time to time I.S.A.M. gets excerpts of his various works-in-progress from Peter Garland, young California composer and writer, and editor of SOUNDINGS. He has been living in Mexico for some months now, and recently he sent us an account of a small-town fiesta that was so lively and evocative we asked his permission to print extracts from it.



The Fiesta of Candelaria in Tocuaro, Michoacán . . .

. . . the largest of the year for this small town of perhaps sixty houses. People here had been talking to us of it since December, and by mid-January anticipations were already high, and preparations beginning. The official beginning of the fiesta was Wednesday night, February 1; but things really commenced a fortnight before, when there was a collection raised in town for decorating the church. That was a preview of things to come, smaller in scale—musically, and in terms of participation.

That morning we'd heard firecrackers exploding and the church bell ringing. A little after mid-day, deciding to go visit a friend, we ran smack into a procession that was then stopped at his house. (Chance plays such tricks on one constantly in Mexico, where so much of life is still on the streets, and a sense of community still exists.) A dozen or more men, as many women, and lots of children. A man, already drunk, sees us, walks over, arm extended, grabs me. "Hello, my friend," he says in English, a thick, drunken accent, and we're in the procession (we never did make it over to our friend's that day).

There are three musicians with the procession, all wearing ponchos and hats, and with dark, swarthy faces—a father and his two sons. One son plays a drum, the others play chirimias, occasionally switching to bamboo flutes. They're from a village on the other side of the lake Cucuchucu. (The name is one of the more staggering here; another tongue-twister is Erongaricuaro, further down the road, along the lake.) Warm toothy smiles—it is a fiesta, after all, and booze is offered at each house the procession visits: aguardiente, or fresh-made pulque, in plastic buckets. The musicians stay pretty sober, though, only occasionally sampling fresh pulque, obviously savoring it. The music they play is strident, with the double-reed chirimias, often microtonal, heterophonic, both melodic instruments working at the same tune, the drum keeping up the pace in a vigorous *ostinato* accompaniment.

A week later, a Saturday again, a young couple is married here in town, and at the house of the groom there is a big party, with a small brass band from the nearby village of Ajuno. Another prelude to the fiesta . . . The band is not very polished, but plays well, with a lot of spirit. There is lots of dancing, especially the zapateados, performed with hands held behind one's back, while the feet tap to the music—in what precise step I have yet to figure out. Absolutely delicious mole sauce over chicken is served to everyone, plus soup and *corundas* (the Michoacán version of tamales—corn meal, but without a meat-sauce stuffing, cooked in corn husks, looking like small misshapen balls, and fluffy and delicious warm). Beer, too; and, as that runs out, the bottles of aguardiente, cane liquor, start appearing. Shots are passed around, the music seems to sound louder, faster, more in rhythm with one's pulse and that of the party—both of which are picking up—dancing, standing around, smoking cigarettes, talking with the men. Eventually someone passes by with a bottle. The band starts in on another number. . . .

At this wedding we observed one of the most unusual customs we'd yet seen in Mexico. The party was going along at a brisk, intoxicated pace, when all of a sudden, the band was gone! And people were streaming out of the house, into the street. The totally puzzled looks hadn't yet left our faces when we heard the music again—this time, two or three blocks away, and approaching. People around us were smiling at our confusion, when around the corner, and illuminated by a solitary street lamp, came half the party whirling and dancing back to the house, the men and most of the women carrying aguardiente bottles, which they shook and swayed around with as if they were dance partners. The women who didn't have bottles held the ends of their *rebozos* in either hand, and flailed them about as they turned, danced, and skipped to the house. Behind them marched the band. Thus they all re-entered the party, and the band continued to play, while this strange bacchanalian dance continued in the center of the patio; men, women, *rebozos*, and bottles whirling about. "It's to go out and attract more people to the party," explains someone, as the bottle passes by. . . .

Wednesday night, February 1, the fiesta begins. Around 8:30 that evening the brass band is heard, playing at the house of one of the encargeros. (There are four for each year's fiesta who are "encharged" with financing it all—the brass band alone costs 13,000 pesos.) The first fireworks. . . .

Then, the next morning, the band is up and marching in the streets, with lots of bombs exploding. In a big crescendo they approach and pass our house—firecrackers sound like they are exploding in the very patio—as we lie in bed.

Towards six there's a service in the church, while the band stands around outside in the yard, occasionally playing a tune, oblivious to what is going on in the church. When the service ends, the town and band line up in a courtyard to one side of the church, for the dances of the pastores and masked clowns. The pastorela dancers are all village children around fourteen years old, four pairs of boys and girls, dressed all in white, holding large eight-foot staffs covered with Christmas tinsel and plastic flowers, until they resemble bushy, multi-colored trees. A seven-year-old, Modesto, is dressed as an angel, with wings, crown, and machete. As he is the most "angelic"-looking child in the village anyway, the costume looks hilarious and appropriate. He stands at the head of the lines of pastores (shepherds—though the children bear no resemblance), who face each other in two rows (male-female); and he has to stand like that, all through the fiesta, while they dance. As the music starts and the pastores commence the slow, almost solemn, dance steps, the masked dancers, in groups of two or three, or singly, begin to run, walk, or tumble over each other into the dance area. There are wood-choppers, old men (viejitos), three or four boys (muchachos), one woman (in drag), and three devils with beautifully painted, elaborate masks and black costumes decorated with paint and trinkets. And not to be outdone in devilry and burlesque is the priest! He comes in wearing an old man's mask, but with a brown monk's cassock, hooded, and with a rope around his waist. He carries a long staff, which he alternately leans on to walk or uses as a hobby-horse!

The dancing in the courtyard of the church lasts for a half-hour, then everyone—dancers, band, and onlookers—shifts to the basketball court which, in this small town, serves also as the plaza. The band is playing—alternately slow, almost at times nostalgically sad pastorela dances, then faster, whirling melodies primarily for the masked clowns. All this while they have been tumbling, dancing, attacking each other, creating a scene of havoc and chaos. Some of the masks, especially the devils, are absolutely stunning, a whirling kaleidoscope of colors, grimacing faces, horns, crowns on their heads of tin, mirrors, tinsel. The old-men masks, with their pink faces and frozen smiles, seem entirely convincing and alive, as they never had when hanging on a wall. The dancer in drag flutters his/her handkerchief, flirts with some viejitos, jumps on others. Everyone is knocking each other down. The priest waltzes with the devil. . . .

We were regaled with food and drink everywhere we went, for the fiesta was also a time to prepare special meals, invite friends over to eat, or family who had come back to the village—many from Mexico City, where they work in factories—especially for these five days. Plus all the relatives and friends who live far away, some in remoter villages along the lake not yet accessible by road, who come to visit at this time. So in all the houses there are many reunions and much feasting, and the population of the village swells.

The next day, Friday, begin the processions from house to house; the band, the pastorela dancers, one encargero or several, plus an audience that varies in size from day to day. The first thing we hear in the morning, while we're still in bed, are the firecrackers exploding and the sound of the band approaching in the street. They march and play awhile (no dancers) and then retire to an encargero's house for breakfast. Later in the morning, we join the procession, now with the pastorela dancers, the same ones as the previous night. They're playing at a house down the block. At the next house, as they're playing the slow, repetitive pastorela dances, the first masked clowns join the procession—yelling, running, dancing, strutting, hitting each other. Within ten minutes all the rest from the night before are whirling about the patios, and in their rowdiness wreaking havoc on people's gardens, as they trample chamomile and mint plants, fall on bushes. Thus it continues, from house to house. Last, but not least, enters the priest, galloping about on his staff/hobby-horse. Now with the solemn pastorela music alternates the raucous, fast masked burlesque.

That evening there's eating, drinking, and dancing at the encargero's house. Then, sometime around 10:00 or so, everyone leaves the house and the fiesta moves once again to the basketball court, where other people from the village are assembling too. In forty-five minutes everyone, plus all the guests, relatives, and friends, is there; and stacked in one corner by an adjacent building are baskets and baskets of bread and big ollas of sweet atole, brought in by various women. (To supply all this is the responsibility of the four encargeros.) This is one of the largest gatherings of the fiesta, and everyone is served two big slices of the bread plus a glass-size olla full to the brim with atole. To serve it all takes almost a half-hour. Meanwhile the band plays, as it has been doing since Wednesday night—two full days of music now. It's truly a remarkable scene: everyone gathered together, drinking their atole and munching bread, or saving a piece to take home. Afterward there's a little bit of dancing, twenty or so couples, and things break up sometime around 1:00, though by that time many have left. . . .





The next two days, Saturday and Sunday, are the highlight of the fiesta. On both days there is haripeo, or bull-riding, in a corral out among the cornfields. More people will flock in from the neighboring villages to watch the bulls, and to party. . . . The day starts out once again with the band and firecrackers; and after breakfast the pastorela dances and the procession from house to house begin again. By now the band has become pretty bored with playing the same three or four songs over and over again. The way they split up in the patio and garden actually spreads them out into two, or even sometimes three, groups, and the degree of precision and involvement falls off, at times almost falls apart, achieving a heterophonic Ivesian quality. This in itself becomes very interesting and amusing. At our neighbors' house, the first masked clowns (still wreaking havoc) burst into the dancing; and by the time they're at our house, they're once again all assembled—tumbling, babbling. Susan has a camera, so they all keep entreating her to take their picture, posing and grunting "Oh how beautiful I am!" The whole group posed in several hilarious tableaux, though they can hardly keep still long enough, from pushing, poking, falling, insulting one another, for Susan to take any shots. Alberta, our "grandmother," hates all the ruckus and noise—says it used to be different, now the people "have no shame"—and complains that they'll trample her garden (which they do). I don't see her in the crowd, so I tell myself she must have run away and hidden. Since by this time we've become quite friendly with the band, they play an encore of fast dances for the clowns. (Afterwards, we were told that they played the extra music for us, because we're musicians too.) After what seems like forty-five minutes to an hour, they all troop out of the house and move on. . . .

The scene inside the corral is busy and hilarious; Vaqueros are riding about on horses, holding lassoes, some of them clutching bottles, some swaying drunkenly on their mounts. Six or eight men are walking about on foot, with bottles, or their ponchos in their hands to use as capes. More people continue to flock to the haripeo, and soon the surrounding rocky slopes are filled. Lots of drinking up there, too. The first bull is chased into the ring from the adjoining smaller corral, where there are about nine more, all huge, mean-looking. It takes a while for the cowboys to bring the bull down; the band keeps playing to maintain the excitement, and there is an announcer speaking through a hand-held mike.



. . . Some [of the bulls are] more ferocious than others; one rider falls off; occasionally a drunk stumbles into the ring wanting to participate and is patiently coaxed out; another has to be carried off, falls, and nearly gets hit by the bull. The band, seated on rocks amidst cactus and scrub brush, plays pretty loosely. Since a pop conjunto will be playing at the dance that night, they'll be off for the first time since Wednesday. Many have been accepting the drinks offered to them all day, and several are very drunk, the tuba player especially—his face looks bloated, his eyes vacant, as he sits on a rock, enveloped in his tuba. The announcer says, "Now, let's give a hand to the fine musicians from Cheranastico . . ." The band laughs sarcastically; the tuba player states emphatically, with a serious, drunken smile, "Tenemos el derecho de emborracharse!" ["We have the right to get drunk!"] Five minutes later, I look over, and he is no longer there. Passed out in the bushes. His tuba rests against a rock. . . .

Sunday morning, the girls have their turn at being the masked devils and clowns. As the band plays and the pastorelas dance, all the girls who are going to dance assemble at one house, where they change clothes, are costumed and masked. . . .

Again that afternoon there is bull-riding. This time the bulls are "better," meaner than the day before. As before, the bottle is passed around inside and outside the corral, and drunks wander into the ring, whence they are dragged out by friends. One passed out inside the bulls' corral, is dragged away from the gate; otherwise he might easily have been trampled. . . .

Later, the day after the fiesta, I heard some amusing stories about some of those who got bombed and passed out up at the bullring. One woke up after dark and made it as far as the churchyard, where he passed out again. He again woke up, this time in the middle of the night—looked around him, saw the church looming up over him lying there on the ground, saw the graves around him in the churchyard, and thought, "Oh my God! I've died!"

Another man, who lives close by, fell off his seat at the haripeo and landed in the ring, flat on his butt, yet with his bottle still in hand—fractured a bone. And there were also two people killed who were drinking in the nearby town of Erongaricuaró. But that's nothing: once, when on the toilet seat, I was reading the pieces of newspaper these people use for toilet paper—over fifty dead in the Christmas and New Year fiestas in Guatemala! Death by fiesta!

Again, after the bullfights, the band returns to the basketball court (today the tuba player is pretty sober, though he looked terrible in the morning), where they play while couples dance. This is the home stretch of the fiesta for them; after four solid days of music, plus Wednesday night, they are completely exhausted. . . . We bring out our cassette recorder; and, after four days of talking and sharing drinks and food, they play their best for us—as well as they'd played Thursday, perhaps even better. Some of the dancers and onlookers seem surprised at how "hot" the band suddenly is. Back to an encargero's house for dinner, and more music and dancing there; then once again to the basketball court, for the last live music and dancing of the fiesta. We record some more. . . .

We take our leave of the band; and eventually, after midnight, they're all piled in the back of the truck, canvas separating them from the night air, for the cold three-hour drive back home. Some of the aguardiente bottles that the younger players have tucked away under their jackets will probably be used to keep warm.

To conclude, a brief analysis/look at the fiesta as a staged public performance (which it certainly was) and at its structure as such. This may serve to re-emphasize the prodigious scope and diversity—musical and theatrical—of those five and a half days, and the events preceding them. Seen in such an overview, it is rather amazing:

There were two brass bands (one from nearby Ajuno at the wedding, the other from Cheranastico in the Sierra, at the fiesta). Plus the "antiguo style" music of the Cucuchuchu musicians, chirimias and drum. Plus a modern pop conjunto from Zacapu. Furthermore, within the brass-band musics themselves, there were many styles and forms, both "traditional" and modern: sones, abajeños, waltzes, the pastorela dances, the zapateados, cumbias. Finally, during the fiesta there was on-off continuous music for sixteen hours or more each day! Not to mention the churchbells and firecrackers!

There were at least four different styles of dancing: (1) the stylized formal pastorelas; (2) the anarchic, style-less, masked burlesques; (3) the zapateado style dancing and other traditional mestizo forms; and (4) the modern, rock 'n' roll, cumbia style (with both the young and some middle-aged couples).

As for theater there were: (1) the processions from house to house, through the streets; (2) the pastorela dancers/angels, in their costumes and dances; (3) the masked chaos (3 days men; 1 day women); (4) the haripeo, or bull-riding, perhaps the climax of the entire fiesta; (5) the basketball games.

And, finally, there were what could only be termed "events," in that there was no audience as such—everyone was both spectator and participant: (1) the atole-and-bread ceremony on Friday night—to us, one of the most remarkable events of all; (2) the "paracua," where the four encargeros-to-be volunteer themselves, and the bread and sugar is exhibited and given to them; (3) the feasting and drinking and partying—these should not be discounted. Each day, at the encargero's house, the meals were indeed "public": anyone who came would be feasted with food and drink. Plus the forty or fifty pigs slaughtered, and all the feasts in the homes. And last but not least, the drunks (twenty-six bottles of aguardiente—80 proof!—were consumed on Thursday afternoon alone at the encargero's house), who all through the fiesta were themselves an intoxicated spectacle, and who continually added touches of humor and surrealism to it all.



Which leads directly to my last remarks about the fiesta: namely, that indescribable energy, exuberance, and intoxication in the air, twenty-four hours a day, for five days. The people here have to work hard and constantly to live—and for five days, four of their own treat the entire village to a larger-than-daily-life experience of boundless generosity, magnificence of gesture: culturally 100% satisfying music, theater, dance, anarchic humor, and poetry in the streets. For five days, an entire town, plus almost as many friends, gets high, and stays at that level. Euphoria: you woke up breathing it in the morning, and went to bed laughing about it at night. Susan summed it up simply, saying it was a time she wished "would never end. . . ."

Peter Garland
Tocuaro, Michoacán
February-March 1978

COLLECTOR'S ITEMS

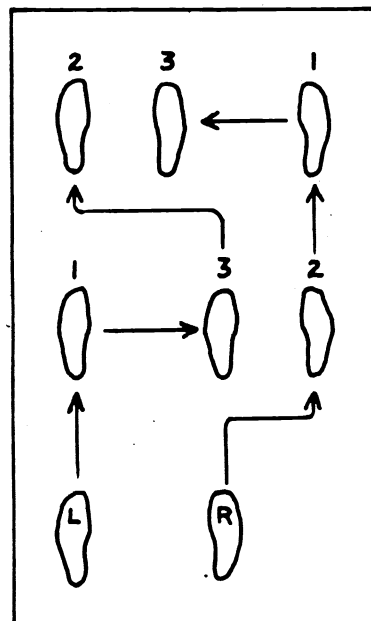
Four superb new releases from the Smithsonian Collection have arrived: two from the American Musical Theater Series—*Oh, Kay!* (R011), by George and Ira Gershwin, and *Souvenirs of Hot Chocolates* (R012)—and two others—*The Biggest Little Band* (R013), a two-record set of John Kirby's Sextet 1937-41, and what is billed as "the littlest big band," *The Orchestrion, the Magnificent Music Machine* (N005). Besides providing quality reproductions of golden oldies, the Smithsonian has, as usual, supplied illuminating liner notes.

The reconstruction of the 1926 production of *Oh, Kay!* features, among other treasures, some marvelous solos by Gershwin and Gertrude Lawrence's lovely performance of *Someone to Watch over Me*. Wayne Shirley, music librarian at the Library of Congress, discusses the original production and the music in his comprehensive notes. Dan Morgenstern, of the Rutgers Jazz Institute, prefaces his notes to *Hot Chocolates* with a brief but apt outline of the theatrical development of black Americans from the 1890 *Creole Show* to *Porgy and Bess*. *Souvenirs of Hot Chocolates* is notable for its "Fats Waller piano solos of *Sweet Savannah Sue* and *Ain't Misbehavin'* as well as Louis Armstrong's recordings of the same songs.

On *The Biggest Little Band*, J.R. Taylor, Director of the Smithsonian's Oral History Program, traces Kirby's rise from the Onyx Club days on 52nd Street to the Ambassador East Hotel in Chicago, and from Buster Bailey's original jazz compositions like *Afternoon in Africa* to *Jumpin' in the Pump Room* and the later Kirby specialties of "jazzin' the classics." Finally, there is the Orchestrion, that miracle machine which performs in the Smithsonian's 1876 Centennial Exhibition. On the record it plays everything from George Root's *Tramp, Tramp, Tramp* to Offenbach's *Orphée aux enfers*, sounding at times like an organ, at times like a band, and at times just like its own growly self. Q. David Bowers, author of the *Encyclopedia of Automatic Music Instruments*, and Brock Holmes of the Smithsonian explain how it's done—with bellows, pipes, and perforated rolls, not mirrors! Wayne Shirley, however, has the last word: "... the sight of the orchestrion giving it all to the final Can-Can—a sight we can't, alas, package along with the orchestrion's sound—makes the passivity of your average synthesizer seem just a bit routine." Order from the Smithsonian Collection, P.O. Box 10230, Des Moines, IA 50336; \$9.99 for the Kirby album; others, \$6.99 each.

From Rochester comes the welcome news that no less than fifteen recordings by the Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson have been re-released. These were originally distributed by Mercury Records and feature works performed at the annual Festival of American Music and American Composers Concerts in Rochester during the years when Hanson was director of the Eastman school. As a record of work produced by conservative American composers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the group of discs holds considerable historical interest. Included, for example, are Carpenter's *Adventures in a Perambulator* (ERA 1009), Hanson's *Merry Mount Suite* (ERA 1005), Taylor's *Through the Looking Glass* (ERA 1008), and many more. There are also some novelties, e.g. *Music for Quiet Listening: Winners of the Edward B. Benjamin Award for Restful Music*. For information on ordering, write Carl Fischer, Inc., ERA Recordings, 62 Cooper Square, New York, NY 10003; recordings are \$5.98 each or \$20.00 for any 5 recordings.

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SPIN-OFFS

Besides their high quality discs of new music, CRI is now engaged in reissuing earlier recordings in their American Historic series. Recently they re-released some of the New Music Quarterly Recordings which were originally made in the '30s and early '40s. Yankee Music (CRI 390) contains some of NMQR's most historic and best offerings; engineer David Hancock is to be congratulated on restoring the sound.

Ives's *General William Booth Enters Into Heaven*, sung by Radiana Pazmor, was originally issued in 1935. Pazmor, who premiered the song in San Francisco in 1933, here gives a strong performance of Ives's dramatic setting of the Vachel Lindsay poem. Six other songs by Ives—*Charlie Rutlage, Evening, Resolution, Ann Street, Two Little Flowers*, and *The Greatest Man*—sung by baritone Mordecai Bauman in an original 1938 recording, are beautifully done and display Ives's varied styles. On the same record, Joseph Szigeti's performance of Ives's Fourth Violin Sonata, recorded in 1942, is interesting, if breathless. Other works on the disc are Quincy Porter's Suite for viola alone, recorded in 1939 by the composer, and Richard Donovan's Serenade for oboe, violin, viola, and cello, also recorded in 1939. Both are well-crafted and attractive compositions by two American composers nowadays seldom performed.

Helen Sive did the liner notes (which, to be accurate, should be corrected to read that New Music Quarterly Recordings started in 1934 and ceased production in 1949; also that the publishing arm of New Music began in 1927 and was absorbed by the Theodore Presser Company in 1959).

Back in the 1920s, when to be American and up-to-date meant incorporating jazz into serious music, Louis Gruenberg's *The Daniel Jazz* was all the rage. It got two performances by the League of Composers (premiered in 1925 and played again in 1929), and it was chosen to represent American music at the Venice Festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music in 1925. When it received its "western premiere" at a New Music Society concert in San Francisco in 1933, a critic remarked that its reception "was such as to encourage the performers to repeat it. Very few walked out." Now that it has been recorded by William Lewis, tenor, and the Kohon Ensemble of New York, we can judge for ourselves what all the shouting was about. It turns out to be a blockbuster of a song based on Vachel Lindsay's poem *Daniel*, a close cousin to Ives's setting of another Lindsay poem, *General William Booth Enters Into Heaven*. The text is partly declaimed, partly sung, in keeping with the gospel intent of the poem. The instrumental accompaniment, while harmonically tame, shows a relationship to jazz more by its textures than by melodic or rhythmic jazz motives. At times it is busy, providing counterpoint to the voice; at times its tremolos underscore the dramatic action. On the flip side are Gruenberg's *Five Variations on a Popular Theme*, written for the twentieth anniversary of the League of Composers in 1942—a sober-sided composition for string quartet, even though Gruenberg himself considered it frivolous since, after all, the theme he chose was *How Dry I Am*. The record number is LTG 0100; order from Cinectics, Record Division, 9304 Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210; \$5.95 (inc. postage).

THE HYMN SOCIETY OF AMERICA

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Henry Cowell's tour de force, his *Quartet Romantic*, Wallingford Riegger's lively *Wind Quintet*, John Becker's polyrhythmic *The Abongo*, and Ruth Crawford Seeger's *Three Songs* are the four unusual and stimulating offerings on New World Records 285. In what could be labeled "Roots of the Avant Garde," each reflects traces of modernism recognizable in later twentieth-century styles. Cowell's atonal quartet was written in 1915-17 to illustrate his theories on the relationship of rhythms to overtones. Although considered unplayable in Cowell's day, the *Speculum Musicae* group performs it here with the aid of earphones through which they can hear their own individual click tape of the basic beat. Riegger's *Wind Quintet*, written much later (in 1952), illustrates the dry, severe style of the fifties with a witty rhythmic emphasis. Becker's *Abongo* (composed in 1933) is a primitive all-percussion piece—possibly inspired by Varèse's *Ionisation* but not as subtle. (Eric Salzman, in *Stereo Review*, November 1978, describes it as "heavy-footed, and nothing if not persistent.") The Crawford Seeger songs, to poems by Carl Sandburg, are characterized by wide leaps which alternate with a declaimed vocal style against two instrumental ostinati—memorable settings of three striking images. The excellent liner notes by Alfred Frankenstein not only describe the music but add new dimensions as he relates his personal experiences with the composers.

Sorry. On the top sellers' list of recordings from CRI (I.S.A.M. Newsletter VII/2), we neglected to include the title of the flip side of the recording in fourth place. On the reverse of George Crumb's *Black Angels* are the Sixth Quartet and Sonatina for Violin and Piano by Charles William Jones.

—From "Milford," in *Ananias Davison, KENTUCKY HARMONY (1816)*, p. 61.

If angels sung a Saviour's birth, If angels sung a Saviour's birth, On that auspicious morn,
If angels sung a Saviour's, Saviour's birth, on that auspicious morn,
If angels sung a Saviour's birth, If angels sung a Saviour's, Saviour's birth, on that auspicious morn, We've

AMERICAN WOMEN . . .

American Women Composers, Inc. is a new organization spawned by the International Women's Year of 1975 and the U.S. Bicentennial of 1976. A non-profit corporation to help alleviate the discrimination women composers and performers have experienced in the musical world of the United States, AWC has launched an ambitious program to help women get their musical works published, performed, broadcast, and recorded. Under its president and founder Tommie Ewert Carl, the organization is also establishing a library of scores (autograph manuscripts where possible), tapes and discs which will become a permanent archive for works of women.

Membership now numbers seventy-eight composers, one ensemble, two honorary members (deceased), and three performers. The organization serves many more, however: over three hundred women living and composing in the United States receive their quarterly AWC News free of charge.

. . . COMPOSING

Last spring, the corporation was granted tax-exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service—an important step forward, since the group can now embark on a fund-raising drive, soliciting grants from foundations and gifts from private individuals. Funds will be used for operating costs and an active recording and publishing project for which AWC will bear the full cost of production, labelling, pressing, distribution, and advertising. These services will be available to members and non-members of the organization on an equal basis.

There are several categories of membership: regular, \$25; senior composers, \$10; student, associate, and performer members, \$15. For more information write to Tommie Ewert Carl, American Women Composers, Inc., 6192 Oxon Hill Road, Suite No. 406, Washington, DC 20021.

FROM UME AND AMC

Two rich sources of information on American music are available now in microfiche from University Music Editions: a complete run of Dwight's *Journal of Music* (Boston, 1852-1881) and the first reprint edition of the proceedings of the Music Teachers National Association (1876-1950). Dwight's *Journal* brings to life the fascinating nineteenth-century musical world when Henriette Sontag and Jenny Lind ruled the American concert stages and correspondents from abroad sent word of Clara Schumann's recitals and Franz Liszt's "new music." The microfiche reprint of all forty-one volumes is \$225.00. The MTNA proceedings contain over 2000 papers given at annual meetings by such notables as O.G. Sonneck, Charles Seeger, Otto Kinkeldey, Gilbert Chase, Waldo S. Pratt, and many others. The pre-publication price is \$790; full price (after November) \$869. The index (500 pages) can also be purchased in book form for \$30.00. Order from University Music Editions, P.O. Box 192, Fort George Station, New York, NY 10040.

Chamber Music, the second volume in the American Music Center Library series (the first was *Choral and Vocal Works*) lists 3,226 works on deposit at the Center, ranging from solo instrumental pieces to those requiring two or more voices with five or more players. Karen McNerney Famera, the compiler (and librarian at AMC) has provided a comprehensive introduction, explaining the format, and an index of composers' names (with dates) for cross-referencing. Another recent publication from AMC is a list of *Compositions, Libretti, and Translations* supported by the Composer/Librettist program of the National Endowment for the Arts and deposited at AMC. To order, write the American Music Center, 250 W. 57th St., Suite 626-7, New York, NY 10019. *Chamber Music* is \$7.50 (\$5.00 for AMC members). *Compositions, Libretti, and Translations* is free.

NEW AND NOTE-WORTHY

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The first biography in English of the prolific Czech composer and the first sustained analysis of his musical development and achievement.

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ELLIOTT CARTER

(continued from p. 1)

Some words of Carter on Roger Sessions are particularly relevant here. Writing in 1940 about an all-Sessions concert, Carter said of Sessions that

. . . during his whole life as a composer, [he] has shunned the easy effect and the immediate appeal, has fought to keep his music honest, serious, conscientious to the limit of his power . . . His development has been by conquest and mastery of the whole art rather than by the cultivation of personal manner. . . Certainly his music is not easy, even for the musician. But no one can fail to be impressed by the strong, stubborn conviction and the musicianship. . . Sessions is unique in American music, and yet his intransigent rigor is certainly familiar to us as a native quality: his devotion to high standards and ideals is typical of our best. . .

Note the key words in that passage: honest, serious, conscientious; conquest and mastery; strong, stubborn conviction; musicianship; intransigent rigor; high standards and ideals. These are Carter's words about Sessions, but could we find better ones to apply to Carter himself?

NEWS AND INFORMATION

Yankee Sing. Sacred Harp singing is alive and well in, of all places, Lexington, Massachusetts. At least, so it seems from reports about the third annual New England Sacred Harp Singing held last 29-30 September. Sponsored by the Greater Boston Folk Song Society, Wesleyan University, and the New England Shape-Note Singing Convention, the old fashioned sing was held at the Town Hall in Lexington. Singers from the sponsoring organizations were joined by the Word of Mouth Chorus and traditional Sacred Harp singers from Alabama and Georgia. For information on next year's "Big Sing" contact Ken Estin, New England Shape-Note Singing Convention, Suite 674, 102 Charles St., Boston, MA 02114.

A sound proposal. If you go to Washington this year, stop in at the exhibition entitled *The Harmonious Craft: American Musical Instruments* at the Renwick Gallery of the National Collection of Fine Arts (Smithsonian Institution) 29 September 1978 to 5 August 1979. On display are more than 100 beautifully handcrafted contemporary objects—violins, bagpipes, lutes, guitars, dulcimers, clavichords, whistles, recorders, tambourines, an organ, and a harp. Among the more unusual works are a ceramic drum, echo chasers, a stringed instrument made from a crutch, ocarinas, a glass harmonica, a cow's jawbone with electronic parts that make beeping sounds, an instrument made from an armadillo shell, and a wooden calliope that plays when a glass marble is inserted into its carved mouth. Instruments were selected on the basis of design, workmanship, and musical performance.

Love in the Grove. In case you haven't heard, publication of *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* has been delayed, and it will not be available until late 1979. Difficulties related to the new computer technology have apparently held up production. According to a recent progress report from Editor Stanley Sadie, however, it may be that more than technical problems are at fault: no less than four marriages have resulted from the close Anglo-American co-operation on the encyclopedia.

Sonneck soon. The subject is mostly jazz, and the place New Orleans, for the next annual conference of the Sonneck Society, 9-11 February 1979. Besides the society's sessions, to be held at Tulane University, there will be two joint sessions with the Music Library Association, also meeting in New Orleans that week. Additional plans call for a concert of nineteenth-century New Orleans religious music, a tour of the Louisiana State museum, and a concert by the New Orleans Ragtime Orchestra and creole singers.

A second look. Acknowledgement, a little late but still sincere, of two items in *The Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress* (January 1978): Gillian Anderson's perceptive article on William Billings, and Jon Newsom's delightful caricature portrait of same. In "Eighteenth-Century Evaluations of William Billings: A Reappraisal," Anderson makes a convincing case that Billings was a victim of a class bias which colored contemporary judgment of his music. Jon Newsom, in his caricature, has deftly drawn the composer as he might have looked leading his singers—"a singular man, of moderate size, short of one leg, with one eye."

Live from Baltimore. The Peabody Conservatory of Music in Baltimore has scheduled an ambitious and imaginative series of lectures for the 1978-79 season. Entitled "Music in American Life," the series will bring to Peabody some of the world's leading composers, musicologists, and performers to discuss past developments and influences which affect today's music. The programs (twenty-seven in all) will be given free on Wednesdays at noon (with a few evening events): several will feature performances by Conservatory faculty and student illustrating the lectures. Among the more intriguing topics will be Hugo Weisgall's "The Retreat in Our New Music: Where and Why," Julius Rudel's "45 New American Operas Viewed Retrospectively," Shirley Fleming's "The Strange History of the Music Magazine in America," and Nicolas Slonimsky's "Famous and Infamous American Composers." Other participants will include Donald J. Grout, Eileen Farrell, Boris Schwarz, William Austin, Lukas Foss, Igor Kipnis, Nicholas Temperley, Robert Hall Lewis, Peter Herman Adler, Ernst Krenek, Theodore Antoniou, Victor Yellin, Antal Dorati, Virgil Thomson, and Howard Shanet.

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