

NEWSLETTER

INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN AMERICAN MUSIC

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

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"Truth is precious, and should be used sparingly"—Mark Twain

ROCK CRITICISM: ITS HISTORY AND IDEOLOGY by John Rockwell

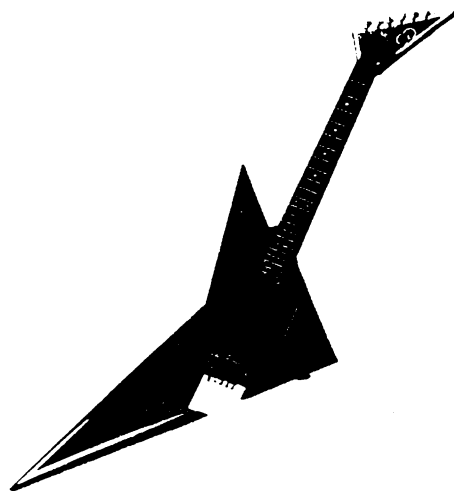
Following are excerpts from an I.S.A.M. monograph-in-progress by Mr. Rockwell, who was Senior Research Fellow of the institute in 1980-81 while working on his book *All American Music: Composition in the Late 20th Century* (1983). A well-known music critic of the *New York Times*, from 1974 to 1980 he was that newspaper's rock critic.

The rise of a self-conscious group of rock critics in the late 1960s, and the maturation of key members of that group through the 1970s and 1980s—a process both reflecting and affecting the music that inspired these critics in the first place—constitute a subject worthy of both chronicling and analysis. The story is hardly just one of a few maverick intellectuals; it is the evolution of a coherent body of ideology and critical practice, and of its place in the larger worlds of music criticism and the intellectual life of the United States. The critics at the center of my study—Lester Bangs, Robert Christgau, Greil Marcus, and Dave Marsh—are harbingers of a new, post-modern, post-leftist ideology that can serve as an antidote to the neo-conservative pessimism and philistinism that have defined recent intellectual discourse in this country.

Any arts criticism draws sustenance from the art it criticizes, and thus its history can only be considered in relation to its subject. Because rock music was born as entertainment, intelligent writing about it becomes even more readily than most criticism a comment on the culture as a whole. Serious rock criticism appeared a decade after the advent of rock and roll itself, at the juncture of its evolution into "rock"; indeed, Christgau has written that "maybe what distinguishes rock from rock and roll is that you write criticism about it."¹

Rock criticism emerged in the mid-'60s, when the "counterculture" became a self-conscious reality. Yet while the notion of a counterculture implies a reaction against the established arts and ways of looking at art, this reaction was in fact articulated by intellectuals many of whom came from well-to-do families or attended prestigious schools. Even if they did neither of those things, they shared in the intellectual fashions of the time: they were hardly simple barbarians, rocking their way to glory. Instead they were deliberate intellectuals and artists, even as they struck out against codified notions of what art was and exalted happy trivia or esthetic revolution.

What concerns me here, then, is an ideology, not reflexive, fan-nish adulation; my interest is *criticism*, not reportage or gush. The ideology was never a simple one, shared unthinkingly by all. There were sharp rifts in the evolution of rock criticism, some of which led to bitter personal conflict. But the leading rock critics knew one another, dedicated their books to one another, and talked over their problems on the telephone. In short, they formed a countercultural community poised to articulate a new synthesis of the basic concerns that have defined American culture from the outset.



There was as much an intellectual community as a musical community. As purveyors of words, all music critics are torn between *Wort* and *Ton*, and often enlivened by the tension. Most rock critics, however, came out of literary rather than musical backgrounds; they studied English or philosophy or sociology in college, not music. Their criticism was thus usually innocent, from a strictly technical standpoint. But it also served to reforge the corroded links between music and a broader humanistic culture—not only that of the other arts but of the society at large. Too much "serious" art-music since the '50s has seemed impossibly esoteric; it has lost the interest not only of the public, but of artists in other fields as well. Rock is anything but esoteric, and rock critics celebrated its revelatory relevance.

Richard Meltzer has drawn a distinction between rock criticism and rock publishing: "What's at stake here is the notion of a HISTORY OF ROCK WRITING only peripherally intertwined with your easily recountable HISTORY OF ROCK PUBLISHING. Very separate stuff," he argued in 1980.² But just as rock music is inseparable from the institutions and culture that gave it birth, so too is rock criticism inextricably bound up with the publications that saw fit to print it. They are different, but criticism must be seen within its proper contexts.

ROCK CRITICISM (continued)

My focus here is American criticism. Rock was born in America, but soon spread to England and the world, and everywhere it has spread, people have written about it. I don't pretend to have read all rock criticism, and certainly not all that from other countries. Some of what foreigners have written—especially British foreigners—will impinge upon this story. But this is a monograph for an Institute for Studies in American Music, and I take my responsibilities literally.

I propose to discuss rock criticism from three perspectives. The first part, History, will consist of a recounting of the genre's evolution, with reference to the principal writers and publications. In the second part, Individuals, I shall provide sketches of four key critics who epitomize the various strands of the rock-critical sensibility. Finally, in part three, Ideology, I shall attempt to generalize a rock-critical ideology, distinguishing between the variants espoused by my central figures but concentrating on what they share. At the end, I shall try to project beyond the current discourse to a world-view that can be extrapolated from rock criticism as it stands today. . . .

* * *

. . . By the mid-1970s, rock was widely believed to be in the grip of a malaise; unsympathetic outsiders confidently pronounced its demise.³ The cause of this crisis, in musical terms, was the rise of a bland, unchallenging, technologically slick kind of rock that came to dominate the airwaves and the sales charts. This in turn was due to the growing hegemony of big business and big record companies, who encouraged a corporate-style rock at odds with the rude, rebellious beginnings of the music. And, to be sure, it had something to do with the United States itself, settling into conservatism after the innovative outburst of the '60s.

But the result, even with the sudden and sharp decline of record sales that afflicted the industry from 1978 on, marked neither the end of rock nor of rock criticism. Instead, we had punk rock, which led to another crisis of confidence within the rock-critical fraternity, and even to deep rifts in Christgau's rock-critic "establishment."

The issue here was that many important rock critics—including three of my four central figures—saw in punk the salvation of rock. But in praising first the New York precursors—the Velvet Underground, the New York Dolls, Patti Smith, Television, Talking Heads, the Ramones, Blondie—then the English punkers (above all the Sex Pistols and the Clash) and finally the myriad American regional punk bands, they courted the charge of elitist marginality. Christgau's annual year-end "Pazz and Jop" critics' poll in the *Village Voice*, which served as a consensus for what he and his minions perceived to be serious rock criticism nationwide, began routinely to champion artists of whom the general public had hardly heard.

The argument against this was as follows: Rock critics have become jaded, snobbish elitists. Their task is to monitor the popular music that is actually popular. Populists might hope that the best would also be the most popular. But a pop critic's

job is to concern himself with what people actually listen to, perhaps to complain about the mechanisms that prevent the best from becoming popular, and to do his best to alert them to more interesting music than what they are hearing. But to go beyond that, to concentrate on esoterica and to reject the mainstream, is to veer into eccentricity or worse—the unconscious absorption of dismissive attitudes that were an original target of rock and rock criticism alike.

To this, the punk rock critics answered: It is not we who have veered away, but rock itself, as a prisoner of business forces inimical to the true rock spirit. Adopting the classic posture of the modernist vanguard, which argues that today's esoterica will be tomorrow's mainstream, these critics argued that they were sowing the seeds for the truly popular music of the next generation.

But some of them went further than that. Believing that distinctions between art and entertainment, at least as traditionally conceived, were hopelessly bound by outmoded prejudices, they welcomed the rise of a rock subgenre almost entirely free from mass commercial pressures. These underground, punk, or new-wave rock bands cultivated the music they as artists wanted to hear, played to small groups of like-minded fans, and founded their own fringe record companies and fanzines to propagate the good news.⁴ Thus they made art—the true contemporary musical art of America today—and the critical task became an artistic one, only marginally related to the commercial mainstream.

In a sense, the controversy recalls the one which disrupted jazz criticism two decades earlier, with the advent of bebop. Richard Goldstein is correct in equating new wave with bebop:⁵ both forms challenged the more comfortable assumptions of established audiences and critics. And yet punk was different, too—in part because it did indeed redefine the mainstream in subsequent years, and in part because it was the best-known, established rock critics who welcomed it.

Insofar as correctness is defined by eventual mass acceptance, those critics were "right." "Pure" punk may have remained marginal, spinning off into mid-'80s "hardcore." But punk eventually did pervade the record and radio business, and punk artists (Talking Heads, Cyndi Lauper), or those with ancestry in that movement (Prince, Madonna), now dominate the charts alongside old stars (The Rolling Stones) and new ones of a more traditional sort (Michael Jackson, Bruce Springsteen). But the punk critics' critics were also correct, in that they had perceived (and bitterly regretted) a permanent split in the old populist assumptions of rock criticism. The critics who concentrated on punk had abandoned the battlefield and found solace on the sidelines. . . .

* * *

. . . By 1985, the year of this writing, rock criticism seemed in far rosier health than pessimists were predicting a decade before. Yes, critics like Dave Marsh⁶ saw gloom and doom as they surveyed the ideological collapse of old magazines like *Roll-*

(continued on page 11)

I.S.A.M. MATTERS

Good Fellowships. This fall's Senior Research Fellow at I.S.A.M., James Lincoln Collier, is not only directing a seminar on Duke Ellington (a book on whom he's working on), he has recently delivered two public lectures on aspects of jazz history. Both might be termed revisionist: each offered a new interpretive historical view. The first was "Debunking a Myth: Were Europeans the First to Discover Jazz?" and the second was "The Formation of Jazz and the White Audience." A taste of the ideas in the lectures can be read in Collier's article "The Faking of Jazz"—that title, of course, a take-off of that of his book *The Making of Jazz*—in *The New Republic* of 18 November. But for the whole story you'll have to wait until I.S.A.M. publishes edited versions of the lectures as a monograph. . . . In the spring semester, Doris J. Dyen will direct an ethnomusicological seminar, "Studies in the Music of American Ethnic Communities," focusing especially on the wide variety of ethnic musics in New York City. . . . The first semester of 1986-87 will see Charles Hamm on campus as Senior Research Fellow, guiding students through a seminar on the music of George Gershwin.

Speaking of Gershwin . . . I.S.A.M. is looking ahead to sponsoring a conference around George Gershwin (and Ira, too) in the spring of 1987, a half-century after the composer's death. The conference is being planned in conjunction with Symphony Space in Manhattan, and one of its extravagant (but free) all-day-and-all-evening-long "Wall to Wall" marathon concerts.

On the Front Burner . . . In production now at I.S.A.M. are three monographs. In probable order of publication, they are Edward A. Berlin's *Reflections and Research on Ragtime*, William Lichtenwanger's monumental catalogue *The Music of Henry Cowell*, and Roger Reynolds's confession—or rather profession—of his ways and means, attitudes and approaches, as a composer, *A Searcher's Path*.

. . . **And Out of the Oven.** Just off the press is Andrew Lamb's *Jerome Kern in Edwardian London* (I.S.A.M. Monograph No. 22), an 85-page study of the composer's early years in Britain, where he had his first great success (and where he met and married an English girl). A centennial tribute, the book is illustrated with uncommon photographs and is heavily documented.

Reprinted . . . **With Something Added.** This newsletter's lead article last spring was Richard Crawford's important statement, "Studying American Music," his valedictory address as outgoing president of the American Musicological Society. I.S.A.M. has reprinted the essay in more permanent form as Special Publication No. 3—and with it a bibliography of Crawford's published writings, a substantial list indeed of American-music studies. The 16-page booklet is available from I.S.A.M. for \$3 if prepaid (\$3.69 otherwise).

R. Allen Lott, research assistant at I.S.A.M., has just defended—successfully, of course!—his dissertation for the Ph.D. in Music at C.U.N.Y. Its subject: *The American Concert Tours of Leopold de Meyer, Henri Herz, and Sigismond Thalberg*. One by-product of his research has recently appeared in *19th-Century Music* (VIII/3): "A Berlioz Premiere in America: Leopold De Meyer and the *Marche d'Isly*."

H. Wiley Hitchcock, director of I.S.A.M., will be on leave from January through May 1985 to take up a Getty Scholarship at the J. Paul Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, in Santa Monica. During his absence the institute will be in the hands of R. Allen Lott, assisted by Carol J. Oja.

"American Music at Brooklyn College" was started at I.S.A.M. this fall as an ongoing series of lectures, films, and concerts designed to bring together American-music enthusiasts. In October, a new documentary film was shown, *Colin McPhee: The Lure of Asian Music*; in November, Senior Research Fellow James Lincoln Collier gave his first I.S.A.M. lecture; and in December Judith Tick, Professor of Music on leave from Brooklyn College, shared her biographical work, in "Ruth Crawford Seeger: The Making of a Composer." . . . The spring 1986 line-up will include: Kay Shelemay (ethnomusicologist at New York University) describing her field work among Syrian Jews in Brooklyn; Adrienne Fried Block (co-author of *Women in American Music*) speaking on "The Second New England School and the Search for a National Style in American Music"; Doris J. Dyen (Senior Research Fellow at I.S.A.M.) reporting on her field work in the south, in "Oral and Written Transmission in Afro-American Shape-Note Singing"; and Peter Dickinson (British composer and specialist in American music) speaking on "The Influence of Afro-American Music on British Composers." Each event will be followed by an informal reception. If you live within hailing distance, we hope you'll plan on attending. Call 718-780-5655 for dates and times.

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BOOK NOOK

Two Beauties. First prize for the most handsomely produced and imaginatively illustrated American-music book in recent months must be shared—by Laurence Libin's gorgeous *American Musical Instruments in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (the Metropolitan Museum with W. W. Norton; 224 pages; \$39.95) and *Music in Colonial Massachusetts 1630-1820, Volume II*, edited by Barbara Lambert (The Colonial Society of Massachusetts; distributed by the University Press of Virginia; liv, 786 pages; \$30).

Libin is curator of musical instruments at the Metropolitan Museum, presiding over a collection of some 4,000 exemplars. Of these, the American-made constitute fewer than five percent. Yet that amounts to a major repository in a country which, for reasons deftly suggested by Philippe de Montebello (director of the Met) in his foreword, has tended to downgrade collecting homemade or native-manufactured musical instruments. And the American-instrument holdings are of rich diversity, reflecting—as Libin points out and his book reveals vividly—many aspects of American life: “immigration and acculturation, nationalism and warfare, handicraft and industry, entertainment and worship, tradition and innovation.” This book can almost serve, in fact, as a stopgap for the comprehensive historical study of American instruments yet to be written. (Libin's introduction includes a valuable sketch towards one.) *American Musical Instruments* is engagingly organized to begin with a chapter on “Noisemakers, Toys, Percussion, and Miscellanea” and end with one on “Keyboards and Automata”; they flank chapters on winds and strings, respectively. And the illustrations! Eighteen large color plates (plus two more on the dust jacket) and almost 300 black-and-whites, of the greatest variety: not only portraits of instruments and details of them but also of makers and their labels, patent drawings, advertisements, representations in paintings—you name it! The book documents the Met's collection fully, including an index of works by accession number, and is itself punctiliously documented (and gracefully written), with a selected but generous bibliography and a careful index.

In May 1973 the Colonial Society of Massachusetts sponsored a conference on colonial music. Volume I of the proceedings appeared in 1980; subtitled “Music in Public Places,” it was a substantial book with essays on country dances, military music, revolutionary/patriotic songs, and music in broadsides. Now Volume II, “Music in Homes and Churches,” has been published, under the editorship (like Volume I) of Barbara Lambert, who was until mid-1984 Keeper of Musical Instruments at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. It is even weightier than the earlier volume and, though not quite as luxuriously illustrated as Laurence Libin's book, has no fewer than 454 illustrations plus a foldout reproduction in color of an 18th-century painting, *A Musical Gathering*, that is the subject of one essay. It also contains four documentary appendices which themselves add up to 300 dense pages. And, although the bulk of the volume does consist of studies of domestic and worship music, Cynthia Adams Hoover adds a lengthy “Epilogue to Secular Music in Early Massachusetts” treating a number of matters underplayed in (or absent from) the first book of proceedings. We would single out, among the other contributions (six essays by as many

authors), Lambert's heavily documented account of “social music” in colonial Boston, Richard Crawford's study of Massachusetts musicians in relation to the “core repertory” of early American psalmody, and Barbara Owen's authoritative essay on 18th-century organ building in New England. *NB:* Lambert and Hoover are understandably pleased to emphasize their having pushed back by almost three years the date for the first known public concert in the New World. Ever since Sonneck reported in 1907 having found an announcement of a “Concert of Musick . . . at Mr. Pelham's great room” in the *Boston News-Letter*, December 1731 has been the accepted landmark for the beginning of concert life in America. A similar but earlier announcement has recently been discovered: on 3 February 1729 the *Boston Gazette* gave notice of a “Consort of Musick [to be] performed on sundry Instruments, at the Dancing School in King-Street,” later that month. Roll over, Billings, and tell Lowell Mason the news!



Charles Hess, *Convertible bed room piano*
(U.S. Patent No. 56413)

Three-Part Invention. In 1866 Charles Hess patented a novel remedy for cramped quarters—“a combination of piano, couch, and bureau.” The drawing submitted for the patent depicts a bed that rolls out from the piano base, drawers that hold linens, and a piano stool that converts into a writing desk or sewing box. The details of the drawing are meticulous, right down to the sheet music on the rack—“Rock Me to Sleep, Mother.”

IVESIANA

The Gottschalk Connection. Musical quotation hunters in the works of Charles Ives are almost always gratified: new instances of Ives's use of pre-existent music crop up continually.

Ives's setting of Psalm 90 (perhaps first composed in 1894 but lost and recomposed in 1923–24) is well known. Recorded in 1966 by the Gregg Smith Singers, published in 1970 in an edition by Smith and John Kirkpatrick, it is said to have been "the only one of his works that [Ives] was satisfied with" ("Editors' Notes" in the published score).

Verse 5 of the psalm speaks of the frailty of living things under God: "in the morning they are like grass which groweth up." Verse 6 pursues the image: "In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth." Ives sets this verse (as he does most of them) with due care for the typical psalmodic structure, which divides the verse in halves: the first half is for the full SATB chorus and is contrapuntal, chromatic, and dissonant; the second half is for tenors alone and begins diatonically and consonantly, only to crumple onto a chromatic scale-fragment at the phrase "and withereth" (which is then echoed by the basses).

No one seems to have noticed that the second half-verse quotes baldly from Louis Moreau Gottschalk's celebrated piano piece *The Last Hope*:

Gottschalk



Ives

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is labeled 'Gottschalk' and shows a short excerpt of a piano piece in G major, 4/4 time, with a melody that rises and then falls. The bottom staff is labeled 'Ives' and shows a similar melody in the same key and time signature, demonstrating a direct quotation of the Gottschalk phrase.

Ives's intention in borrowing the Gottschalk phrase is far from clear. Was he referring to the ostensible piety of the piano work, which is subtitled "religious meditation"? Did he have in mind the hymn *MERCY* or *GOTTSCHALK*, to a text by Edwin Pond Parker ("Holy Spirit, truth divine"), derived from *The Last Hope* (and not only beginning with the phrase quoted, but usually printed in B-flat, like Ives's quotation)? The hymn's text, affirmative and optimistic ("Holy Spirit, . . . by thee may I strongly live. Bravely bear, and nobly strive . . ."), seems unrelated to the psalm verse. Other intriguing connotations that may come to mind also seem irrelevant—e.g., the fact that Parker (1836–1925) was for half a century minister of the South Congregational Church in Hartford, Connecticut (Harmony Twichell Ives's hometown), and surely known to Harmony and Charles there (where her father was also a Congregational minister), or the fact that Parker's surname was the same as that of Ives's teacher at Yale, Horatio Parker. Puzzling indeed!

—H. W. H.

Ives as Ideator. *Charles Ives: The Ideas Behind the Music* (Yale University Press, \$17.95), by J. Peter Burkholder, is a good and timely addition to the growing body of scholarly work on Ives. Developed from the author's doctoral dissertation (University of Chicago, 1983), it is frankly revisionist in its consideration

of Ives's musical aesthetic. Burkholder begins with a fresh look at the *Essays Before a Sonata*, written by Ives mostly in 1919 and published the following year in conjunction with the "Concord" *Piano Sonata*. After summarizing the principal themes of the *Essays*, Burkholder reexamines the influence of Transcendentalism—both as a literary movement and as a philosophical system—on Ives and then, in one of his most interesting chapters, treats the philosophical traditions of Ives's close-knit family. This brings us up to 41 pages out of a total of 116.

The rest of the book traces the growth of Ives's musical thought through the four periods in the composer's career discerned by Burkholder: musical training under the influence of his father (1874–94); years of apprenticeship at Yale and in jobs as church organist (1894–1902); a period of innovation and synthesis coinciding with Ives's early years as a businessman (1902–8); and then a decade of maturity (1908–17), after which Ives ceased serious composition. Burkholder's concluding section begins: "In the preceding four chapters, every important aspect of Ives's point of view as he articulates it in the *Essays Before a Sonata* has been successfully traced to its origins *without* reference to Transcendentalism." The author then proceeds to summarize his case for Ives's having absorbed Transcendentalist ideas only relatively late in his development, and, even then, principally because "the Transcendentalist writers offered a framework in which all of [his] views could be integrated and all the outstanding problems in his philosophy of art could be resolved."

Burkholder's study occupies an apt niche in the Ives scholarship since the early 1970s that has reappraised his development. Among the important contributions have been Laurence Wallach's *The New England Education of Charles Ives* (1973), which reexamines the early influences on Ives's music; Frank Rossiter's meticulous *Charles Ives and His America* (1975), which reconsiders Ives's relation to his cultural milieu; and Stuart Feder's articles in *The Musical Quarterly* 66 (April 1980) and *The Annual of Psychoanalysis* 9 (1981) and 10 (1982), which place aspects of Ives's development in a psychoanalytical context. Another study that should be read in conjunction with Burkholder's is Rosalie Sandra Perry's *Charles Ives and the American Mind* (1974); Burkholder convincingly, I think, corrects in many aspects Perry's perspective on Ives's aesthetics.

I miss musical discussion in Burkholder's study—but he promises to remedy that in a forthcoming volume, *The Evolution of Charles Ives's Music*. That should be welcome, for we have yet to see a major study of Ives's compositional style that would expand and develop issues so tantalizingly raised by H. Wiley Hitchcock's *Ives: A Survey of the Music* (1977). Meanwhile, Burkholder has given us the most useful look to date at Ives's development as a musical thinker up to the time he wrote the *Essays Before a Sonata*. (Ultimately, perhaps, Burkholder might turn his attention to Ives's third career—the one he embarked on in the 1920s after those as composer and businessman: disseminating his music and nurturing his image as a composer. In certain ways this is the most fascinating and successful one of all, having resulted in a near-mythical picture of Ives that is only now being readjusted by careful scholarship to illuminate the real background from which he developed.)

—Paul E. Echols

NEWS AND INFORMATION

Fourscore. Recently turned 80 is Carleton Sprague Smith, among other things a longtime champion in many ways of American music, its study, and its performance. The New York Public Library, where he was chief of the Music Division from 1931 to 1959 (and established its Americana department), signaled the occasion with a reception this fall. The program of the affair was graced with an acrostic tribute to Smith fashioned by Thor E. Wood and his wife Ann; with their permission, we reprint it by way of offering our own kudos:

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Noble

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Eightscore. While clearing its warehouse, Theodore Presser Company discovered a small quantity of scores from the old (and most handsomely engraved) Juilliard Edition. Reluctant to destroy some American classics, yet not feeling that a full-scale promotion of them would be feasible, the company is offering complete sets to I.S.A.M. Newsletter readers at \$20.00 per set, to cover the costs of picking, collating, handling, and shipping the scores. Those interested should send a check, money order, or institutional purchase order to Dept. VC, Theodore Presser Company, Presser Place, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010 by March 15th. This offer is made on a first-come, first-served basis; checks will be returned once sets are exhausted. Following is a list of the eight-score set:

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D. G. Mason: *A Lincoln Symphony* (full score)
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—J. Bunker Clark

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BEHIND THE BEAT *with[out] Mark Tucker*

(We're without our regular jazz/pop columnist for this issue: he has other fish to fry, namely completion and defense of his Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Michigan, "The Early Years of Edward Kennedy 'Duke' Ellington, 1899-1927." We wish him well.)

Sophisticated Riddle. A re-issue—gorgeously remastered—of Ella Fitzgerald's 1963 *Jerome Kern Songbook* (Verve 825-669-1) gives opportunity not only to praise Fitzgerald but to shout one last "huzzah" for the Kern centennial and pause a moment before the imaginative artistry of Nelson Riddle, who died this October. Few Kern recordings are really satisfying, and this is tops among them. Fitzgerald sings the tunes fairly straight, but her clear tone and guileless delivery are just right. Riddle's arrangements are as lean and clean as Fitzgerald's voice, and some tempos reach perfection. The instrumentation for most tunes falls into a pattern: no slushy, wooing introductions, but crisp wind send-offs or simple piano statements. Strings usually do not enter until the second or third chorus, and even then only at the bridge or the ends of phrases; most often they serve merely to warm up the middle-ground of the texture.

The album shows careful planning. Rather than simply alternating up-tempo songs with ballads, Riddle places most of the rhythm tunes on Side 1, and on Side 2 presents a leisurely parade of lovely melodies. He opens Side 1 with a medium-tempo "Let's Begin" in B-flat, modulates to F in the introduction to "A Fine Romance," and then paces the tune to be neither too fast nor too cute. He uses "A Fine Romance" to build dramatic tension: beginning in the second chorus, Fitzgerald improvises with increasing abandon, and for the third, Riddle modulates up a step for a strong forward thrust. The pace breaks with "All the Things You Are" and then swings straight through to "She Didn't Say Yes": now and then a long-spun verse intercedes. Side 2 opens with a rhythmic "I'm Old Fashioned" and from then on is gloriously sinuous. "The Way You Look Tonight" (band 3) is the real beauty of the album, with an ideal tempo if there ever was one, and "Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man" takes on a new personality, stripped of its syncopation and slowed way down.

Riddle avoids the commonplace in his asymmetric balancing of tempos, as well as in his handling of key changes between songs. He shifts keys, of course, to accommodate Fitzgerald's range but mostly keeps them related and only occasionally uses an introduction for modulation. More often, he exposes the voice as a stark, linear link between songs by withholding orchestral accompaniment at the opening. Or, in a harmonically complex tune like "All the Things You Are," he begins by throwing the ensemble into a distant key, knowing full well that the tune will have little tonic stability until the end anyway. Riddle's arrangements enhance the subtlety and simplicity at the core of the art of both Kern and Fitzgerald.

—Carol J. Oja

Two books on major jazz figures have recently appeared in Twayne's Music Series, the ongoing and apparently open-ended project announced a few years ago by Twayne Publishers (G. K. Hall) in Boston. Already it's clear that, as with most multi-

author series, the volumes in Twayne's will be of widely varying character and quality; that is certainly true of Paul S. Machlin's *Stride: The Music of Fats Waller* and Lewis Porter's *Lester Young*.

Machlin and Porter were apparently briefed similarly by the publisher (or by Chris Frigon and Camille Roman, who are cited rather vaguely in Porter's book as having "cooperated" in the development and editing of the Twayne series): each book opens with the usual front matter, moves on to a tabular "chronology" of its subject, a first chapter that is biographical and others that are analytic, and closes with backnotes, bibliography, discography, and an index. They are about the same length, Machlin's having xvi + 167 pages, Porter's xxii + 190. There the similarities end.

Machlin, who chairs the music department at Colby College in Maine, has written a book that is not to be sniffed at, particularly since it is the first to deal in any detail with Waller's music as a whole. And it is especially intriguing in its confrontation with Fats as an organist, and with the qualities and qualifications of a pipe organ—"this cumbersome and grandiose instrument"—as a vehicle for jazz. (Between 1926 and 1929 Waller played organ on about 60 titles for Victor as soloist, singer's accompanist, and combo member; they were recorded mostly on an Estey organ in Trinity Church, Camden, New Jersey—a church that Victor had bought to use as a recording studio.) But I'm afraid we soon tire of analyses that are dogged rather than dynamic, smell of the lamp rather than soar from the flame, and seem to lead us away from, rather than deeper into, the swinging irreverence, the strutting stride, of Waller's playing and singing.

Porter's study of Lester Young, a revision of his Brandeis University dissertation, is, on the other hand, a virtuoso performance—dazzling, deep, original, coherent, cohesive, and convincing—by a young jazz scholar (and performer) who teaches at Tufts University. A variety of fresh analytic techniques seems to derive from an open-minded awareness of the possibilities for jazz studies of ethnomusicological approaches. Porter makes a good case, in surveying Pres's career as a tenor saxophonist, for, not a long decline from the first great recorded solos of the late 1930s (the received opinion), but a three-stage evolution in which each stage offered new and valuable music. One especially brilliant chapter documents this with analyses of entire solos from each period: those on *Lady Be Good* (9 November 1936), *After Theatre Jump* (22 March 1944), and *Pres Returns* (13 January 1956). And Porter offers not only a selected discography of LPs but an exhaustive catalogue of recorded works—commercial and private, legit and bootleg, airchecks and concert pickups, interviews and film clips.

—H. W. H.

CONFRONTING A CONFERENCE: IASPM at NYPL by Michael Sahl

In mid-October the International Association for the Study of Popular Music (IASPM) presented a four-day conference with (and at) the New York Public Library (NYPL) on "A Century of Popular Music in New York." The century under consideration was the one just ending (1885–1985), and the central themes addressed were: New York's Role in Popular Music, Jazz, and Broadway. (Rock and rap, blues and big bands, also had their innings.) I.S.A.M. suggested to composer-pianist-arranger Michael Sahl that he write up the conference: he has been identified with popular music in many ways over many years—as a composer of music tinged with jazz, folk, rock, and Latin idioms; as music director and pianist for Judy Collins; as co-author with Eric Salzman of the refreshingly different textbook Making Changes: A Practical Guide to Vernacular Harmony; and as arranger, in the best Argentine style, of tangos for The Tango Project (I, II, and III) of Nonesuch Records. Herewith Mr. Sahl's very personal reactions to the IASPM/NYPL conference.

The IASPM conference at the Lincoln Center Library and Museum of the Performing Arts, 10–13 October, raised for this writer a lot of questions about the long-awaited recognition of popular music as art. What we wished for twenty years ago is coming to pass, but like the wishes in fairy tales it is coming to pass with certain unlooked-for and, for me, undesirable by-products. We regard classical music in this country as something that does not participate in our lives and is not derived from our living selves; there is a substantial priesthood that is devoted to the adoration of the classics and the teaching of humility to the rest of us. In my fantasy, the recognition of popular music would have meant the abolition of that priesthood and the restoration of intimate relations between art and ourselves. Well, just the opposite has come to pass. By some kind of dispensation, the work of dead popular composers and performer-composers has been accepted into the company of saints, and it is now being treated to the same apotheosis reserved for music by dead European composers. Duke Ellington's work is being transformed, now that he's out of the picture, into some kind of carcass for the red ants of scholarship to feed on. The fallacies which the 19th century perpetrated on Beethoven—to wit, that inside the composer there was a theorist trying to get out, and that the real social value of creative work is as a stimulus to criticism—we find, renewed and refreshed, like vampires, by the blood of the popular music of the first half of this century. The living social context, so intimately and essentially nourishing to popular music, is whisked away, and in its place are Geniuses, to be cast in plaster and put on Schroeder's piano, each one creating in magnificent autonomy his/her unique macho tributes to Apollo.

I will pass over the sessions on Broadway and popular song, because they were mostly nostalgia and sentimentality without any real substance. There was some solid information, not widely known, about the publishing business, the recording industry, royalties, copyrights, etc., most of which came from Russell Sanjek, who spoke from the floor. The real issues came up on the jazz panel, which led off with a long exposition by Gunther Schuller, in which he gave what is now the line: Jazz is, in hindsight, a succession of masterpieces by individual Geniuses. What makes it great is the melodic variation "off" the harmony, not the harmony itself, and certainly not the rhythmic elements. (So far, this is a "white" look at jazz.) But surprise! Schuller then proposed that the genuine accomplishments in jazz have all come from black artists, and the relationship of white musicians to jazz has been only to rip it off for commercial purposes, in the process "sweetening" it or weakening it or adulterating it in some way or another. This is not a new point of view; as a matter of fact it resembles the French leftist point of view

on jazz, and seems at first glance to be an attack on racism. But looked at through the eyes of rock and the 1960s it reads thus: White boys (and, God forbid, girls) who approach jazz can only violate it: it has to be left *on its own terms* (like a black homeland?); any attempt by whites to learn from jazz is semi-criminal. So what should we honkies do? Obviously, write academic serial music. The essential racism comes in as a prohibition of miscegenation—as in South Africa.

To turn to rock: Any of us old enough to remember what people used to say about the now officially dead jazz when its makers were alive had a sense of "déjà-vu all over again" (to quote Yogi Berra) when we heard the conference panelists speaking about rock. Rock is now the focus for the bazookas of taste: rock is junk. Whatever a speaker said about jazz, he ended his remarks with a sort of *b'rucha* [prayer or plea] to the effect that that sacred music must not be confused with this unspeakable trash, rock. (I say "he" and "his" specifically: there were only two women as panelists, and one was Frank Loesser's widow, who was present *in that capacity*. This is not important to me as a feminist issue, rather as confirmation of my experience, over the course of time, that when women have no significant roles in a project, other aspects of it will also be reactionary.) Stanley Crouch even went so far as to explain that males (who would otherwise buy good jazz records) had to buy rock records because the female objects of their desire wouldn't come across without the proper musical ambience. Has he forgotten what was said in the pulpit and the classroom about ragtime, dixieland, the blues, Chicago jazz, bebop, cool jazz—in fact, music at every stage in the development of jazz and jazz-related music?

Why was so much paranoia focused on rock? Was it because, as Charles Hamm writes in *Music in the New World*, rock was the first truly interracial music? Was it because rock represents a cultural revolt in the flesh of daily life, as jazz had once done? These unbelieving ears even had to listen to the bit about George Martin creating the Beatles' songs. Anyone remember how Marlowe wrote Shakespeare's plays, since Shakespeare was only an actor and couldn't have had the culture to write them?

There was a little action at the rock panel (which was largely boycotted by the audience that attended the other panels); the conference's two most interesting papers were read at that panel: T. M. Scruggs's "What's in a Name? Musical Labels as Commodity and Cultural Symbol (Rock and Roll, Salsa)" and Bernard Gendron's "New York: Rock Meets the Avant Garde."

Lobby gossip had it that a previous international conference of IASPM, in Montreal, had been hot stuff. But I consider the

MISCELLANEA

Cambria Records has just released two disks of seldom-heard early 20th-century American works: *The Songs of Mary Carr Moore* (C-1022) and music by *Charles Wakefield Cadman* (C-1017). Moore's songs are lost to disappointing performances by soprano Evelyn de la Rosa, but Cadman's compositions are another story. They include his Trio in D Major, Op. 56 (1913), in a winning interpretation by the Thalia Trio; re-issues of his own performances on Duo-Art piano rolls of "At Dawning," "From the Land of the Sky-Blue Water," and three other solo pieces; and a re-issue of his 1941 Co-Art recording, with Marguerite Bitter sharing the piano bench, of *Dark Dancers of the Mardi Gras*. Cadman has a warm keyboard tone that is surprisingly well communicated through the piano rolls. The Cambria recording features detailed liner notes by Lance Bowling, a discography, and a bibliography. (Cambria Records, Box 2163, Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274)

Next time you're on a KLM flight to Amsterdam, the calming music that wafts through your headphones may be Ferde Grofé's *Aviation Suite* (1946). It has recently been recorded by The Promenade Orchestra, conducted by Jan Stulen, with sumptuous packaging and pressing, as a joint project of External Relations Amsterdam Airport Schiphol and CBS (CBS Masterworks M-39293). The album jacket opens to reveal . . . not detailed notes about Grofé but shots of KLM jetliners. And the music is tailor-made for easy listening, from the "Take-Off" to "Happy Landing." Grofé's *Hudson River Suite* and *Mississippi Suite* are also included.

Just off the press—too recently to be reviewed—is a dense and detailed study, *Computer Music: Synthesis, Composition, and Performance* (Schirmer Books). Almost 400 pages long, it's the work of a Brooklyn College colleague, Charles Dodge, and Thomas A. Jerse of Hewlett-Packard.

CONFERENCE (continued from page 8)

cultural effect of this one to be extremely reactionary—perhaps especially in the assimilation of jazz, which amounts to cooptation after death: we needed an opening-up, not a funeral. If IASPM continues on this path, getting to be more and more like the U.S. chapter of the International Society for Contemporary Music, its conference audiences will consist mostly of persons teaching courses in the History of American Popular Music (which I gather is a regular staple at big schools now), and it will not, cannot, have a stimulating and cross-fertilizing effect on the living, breathing American musical scene. I refer my readers to a theory expressed in Hamm's book—that the emergence of American musical style is the result of mutual "contaminations" of previously existing styles from Europe and Africa, and both oral and written traditions. This country's musical life depends on impurity, not purity, and this thrust is as imperative for scholarly as for creative work.

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*Standard Pneumatic Action Company,
advertisement (1920s)*

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REGARDING RECORDINGS

Worth Waiting For. It has long been known—well, for more than five years—that material for a New World Records release of minstrel-show music had been recorded in Ann Arbor, Michigan, under the supervision of Robert Winans. Apparently, funding for the album's production was slow in coming, and only now has it been issued (NW-338). It was worth waiting for. It helps to fill a major gap in the recorded repertory of earlier American music, that of blackface minstrelsy of the 1840s, when with the success of the Virginia Minstrels a whole new genre of American musical theater took off. The new recording encapsulates early minstrel-show music in cunning and credible ways.

Winans, whose appointment at Wayne State University in Detroit is actually in literature, is the leading scholarly authority on this music. He also plays a mean banjo, and the new recording reveals him as an able organizer and director of authentic performances. Early-music mavens, tune in! Here is the "classical" early minstrel-show instrumental foursome: fiddle (*sic*), bones (a pair in each hand), tambourine (large, with few rattles), and banjo (tuned lower, and more throatily mellow, than the modern version). And here is a male quartet, from which can be extracted soloists or duos at will. The performances are friendly and unforced, artfully artless.

The contents of the album, chosen carefully from printed sources of the 1840s and early '50s, add up to an anthology of minstrel song types (and methods of their realization in performance), plus two solo jigs for fiddle and banjo, respectively, and an instrumental medley of the sort that typically opened an evening's show. Songs by (or claimed by) Dan Emmett (*De Boatmen's Dance*, *The Fine Old Color'd Gentleman*), Stephen Foster (*Old Uncle Ned*), A. F. Winnemore (*Stop Dat Knocking*), and Billy Whitlock (*Mary Blane*, *Miss Lucy Long*) are among the works heard. *Dr. Hekok Jig* and *Pea Patch Jig* both come from Emmett's manuscript tune book (and can be compared with Hans Nathan's readings of them in his book on Emmett); the only musical disappointment of the album is the rhythmically shaky performance of *Dr. Hekok*.

Winans's helpful jacket notes address musical and social issues alike. Of the latter, he sensitively writes: "Some of the songs on this recording contain racist lyrics. This might be thought reason enough not to resurrect this material, but anything with so much cultural impact deserves serious study." Absolutely: consideration of the Holocaust does not bespeak anti-Semitism, and revival of the music of blackface minstrelsy should not be tarred as racist.

The Portland's Pistons. The ancient recording (?1940) by the Dorian Quartet of Walter Piston's First String Quartet hooked me on chamber music as a youth. A later version by the Juilliard Quartet didn't outdo the Dorian's in my view. Now, though, the Portland Quartet completes its splendid Northeastern Records series of all five of Piston's quartets, plus his Flute Quintet, with a reading of the First (coupled with the Second on NR-216) that outstrips both earlier recordings, in a performance that is crisply virtuosic as well as passionate.

Taking Tracks. A few recent discs offer some especially beguiling or intriguing tracks that are hard to resist calling to your attention:

+ **Michael Tilson Thomas** as pianist in deceptively (and persuasively) insouciant, Gershwin-esque performances of solo pieces by **Gershwin**, some unpublished (*Violin Piece*, *Sleepless Night*) and others he has reconstructed "under the guidance of Ira Gershwin" (*Short Story*, *For Lily Pons*), along with other Gershwin works. (CBS Masterworks Digital IM-39699)

+ *The Symphony in D* (1831) by **William Cumming Peters** (1805–1866), thought to be the first American "symphony" (a 1½-minute Andante plus a 3½-minute Rondo), edited by Frederick Wessel and recorded (in a concert performance) by The 1969 Economy Kunstwerk Orchestra (that's how it's listed, really) led by Richard Wetzel (who also writes the informative liner notes); other tracks reveal the simple beauty of the organ built in 1787 (and recently reconstructed) for the Moravians of Lititz, Pennsylvania, by the Saxon immigrant **David Tannenberg**. (American Communal Music of the 18th and 19th Centuries, Vol. 2; available @ \$10.50 plus \$1.20 for postage and handling from Quakerhill Enterprises, Box 206, Chesterhill, OH 43728)

+ A recent 18-minute orchestral work by **George Crumb**, played resonantly by the New York Philharmonic under Arthur Weisberg—*A Haunted Landscape*—with a continuous but unobtrusive deep drone (by two doublebasses, tuned down to Double Great B-flat, overlapping inaudibly) that evokes more precisely a "cavescape." (New World NW-326)

+ **Stephen Sondheim's Sunday Song Set**, four songs from *Sunday in the Park with George*, arranged by the show's orchestrator Michael Starobin for voice and guitar, and played by his brother David Starobin as accompanist for baritone Patrick Mason; the precise percussive plucked ping of the guitar is a perfect medium for the pseudo-pointillist Sondheim music, which moreover seems almost more appropriate, in its discursive-monologue way, to the chamber than to the theater. (Bridge BDG-2006)

+ (Yes, a puff for two colleagues:) The slow movement of the *Violin Concerto* (1981) by **Robert Starer** dedicated to **Itzhak Perlman** and played by him (with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Seiji Ozawa); their mutual roots in Palestine/Israel are evoked both compositionally and violinistically in all three movements, but most affectingly in the middle one. (EMI Angel Digital DS-38011)

+ Side 1, band 3, and Side 2, band 2, of the album of music by **Philip Glass** for the film *Mishima*. These (and portions of other tracks) are played luminously by the **Kronos Quartet** (which seems to specialize selflessly in minimalist works, e.g., string quartets by Terry Riley on a recent Gramavision double album, "Cadenza on the Night Plain . . ."). The rest of Glass's score is just *terrible* music, by any standards at all except maybe those of recorded technology. (Nonesuch Digital 79113)

ROCK CRITICISM (continued from page 2)

ing *Stone* and the slick, cynical assumptions of new ones like *Spin*—even if this product of the son of Bob Guccione, publisher of *Penthouse*, did offer semi-serious attention to artists slighted by *Rolling Stone* and MTV.

The optimistic signs included the reasonable good health of the record business, partially recovered from its doldrums and reinvigorated by new energies from beyond the mainstream. That recovery meant a healthier ad budget to support publications, even if a greater slice of the promotional dollar now went into video shorts (which may help explain the dogged hostility of so many older rock journalists to the entire video phenomenon). Rock criticism was now firmly established in the mainstream newspapers and magazines, so much so that classical critics worried that their space and even their very positions might be preempted.

What has not yet happened is for rock criticism to establish itself in the intellectual marketplace—for writers who love the music and devote the bulk of their time to its criticism to extend themselves into the arena of mainstream intellectual discourse, and to be taken seriously within that arena. For that, a clarification and, perhaps, a deliberate polemical extension of rock's ideology is necessary.

Notes

¹ Robert Christgau, *Any Old Way You Choose It: Rock and Other Pop Music, 1967-1973* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1973), p. 1.

² "Days of Rock-Write Past: A Short Personal History of Rock Journalism," part 1 (of 2), *California Living* magazine of the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, 8 June 1980, 21.

³ For example, Mark Crispin Miller, "Where All the Flowers Went," *New York Review of Books*, XXXIV/1 (3 February 1977), 31-36.

⁴ This whole controversy was best articulated in an attack by the writer Charley Walters in the 28 February 1978 issue of the *Boston Phoenix*, "Never Mind the Punks Here's the Rock Critics" (a play on the title of the Sex Pistols's first album, *Never mind the bollocks here's the Sex Pistols*). Walters's article was essentially an attack on Marcus and Christgau, and the letters that it generated, some of them mini-articles themselves, especially Christgau's in the issue of 11 April, were at least as interesting as the original article.

⁵ *Village Voice*, 17 September 1985, 43.

⁶ See his muckraking newsletter, *Rock & Roll Confidential*, no. 28 (September 1985).

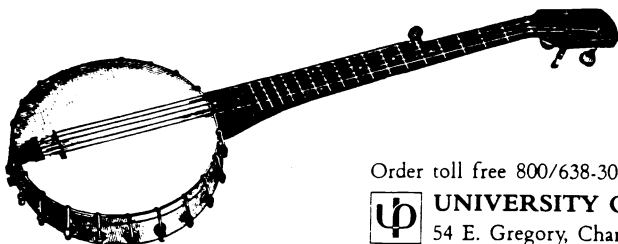
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A BOWLES REVIVAL

Few musicians have remained as mysterious as Paul Bowles. A student of Boulanger, Copland, and Thomson and a busy composer during the 1930s and '40s, Bowles essentially retired in the late Forties from an active role in American new music. He retreated into writing fiction (his first novel, *The Sheltering Sky*, was published in 1949) and to far-off Tangier, where he makes his home. Bowles has stayed visible in American literary circles, especially to readers of the *The New York Review of Books*, who see notices for his summer writing workshops in Morocco. Suddenly, however, the *music* of Bowles is with us in newly issued scores and recordings. They include: *Paul Bowles Selected Songs*, a handsome collection of 38 songs, some previously published, some not (Soundings Press, P.O. Box 8319, Santa Fe, NM 87504-8319); Bennett Lerner's recording of Bowles's *Six Preludes for Piano* and *Six Latin-American Pieces* (Etcetera ETC-1019; works by Copland, Thomson, Barber, Bernstein, and Phillip Ramey are also performed); and Paul Sperry's recording of five Bowles songs (Gregg Smith Singers Productions, P.O. Box 87, Saranac Lake, NY 12983; the album also includes songs by Richard Hundley, Farwell, and Chanler). Bowles's 1972 autobiography, *Without Stopping*, has also been reprinted (Ecco Press), and Ned Rorem's newest book, *Setting the Tone* (Limelight Editions), contains several essays about Bowles, most notably a reprint of "Come Back Paul Bowles," a shrewd appraisal from 1972.

Bowles's songs are marvels of direct poetic statement. Those with texts by Jane Bowles, William Saroyan, and Tennessee Williams are especially effective. At one extreme of Bowles's simplicity is the song *Three*, recorded by Sperry, that has a haunting, folklike melody, perfectly suited to the nursery-rhyme quality of Williams's text. Each of three verses has only four measures of music. *A Little Close*, first published in 1941 and set to a text by Saroyan, is likewise compact, but with more complexity. It draws on the American march and the cabaret style of Kurt Weill. The melodic line in both songs is as natural as speech itself. Bowles's piano works, as performed by Lerner, are similarly fresh and economical. The *Latin-American Pieces*, written between 1937 and 1948 when Bowles traveled a great deal in the Caribbean and Mexico, show something of his interest in traditional folk musics.

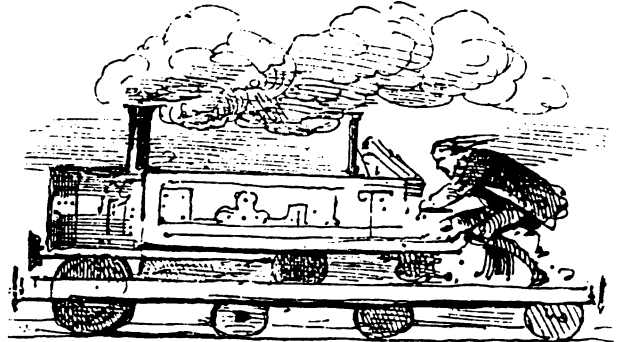
—Carol J. Oja

Harmonious Trio. Three of Bowles's compatriots and near contemporaries—Aaron Copland, Roy Harris, and Roger Sessions—have been given book-length treatment recently. Dan Stehman's *Roy Harris: An American Musical Pioneer* (Twayne Publishers, 296 pp; \$29.95) provides the most thorough and well-balanced view of its subject (but without a single photograph of Harris!). Andrea Olmstead's *Roger Sessions and his Music* (UMI Research Press, 180 pp; \$39.95) is essentially an expository catalogue raisonné. JoAnn Skowronski's *Aaron Copland: A Bio-Bibliography* (Greenwood Press, 273 pp; \$35) delivers all that its title promises, plus a catalogue of works.

PIANOS AMERICAN STYLE

Just opened last year is the **Museum of the American Piano** in New York. Founded by Kalman Detrich, the museum is "dedicated to preserve the history of a culturally, socially and economically important craft in the United States . . . by collecting, restoring and displaying artifacts such as pianos and parts, historical data and videotaped interviews with elder craftsmen." The collection includes memorabilia of piano makers and pianists and almost twenty American-made pianos, mostly Chickering's. Some of the more unusual specimens include an Osborn square piano from the 1820s, an 1856 Boardman & Gray with a corrugated soundboard, and a Lauter cement piano (!) dating from World War II. A concert and lecture series is already in full swing, and a newsletter is planned. For more information, write the museum at 211 West 58th Street, NYC 10019.

Pianos American Style III



Nouveau piano à vapeur américaine
(from *L'Illustration*, 13 July 1867)¹

Steamed. You won't find this "new American steam piano," designed "to drive back the tribes, terrified, a long way," in any museum. Imagined by a French artist, the "steam piano" brings to mind two anecdotes regarding European views of mid-nineteenth-century America. Pierre Zimmermann, director of piano classes at the Paris Conservatoire, refused to allow Louis Moreau Gottschalk to audition because "l'Amérique n'était qu'un pays de machines à vapeur."² And William Henry Fry claimed that the director of the Paris opera told him: "In Europe we look upon America as an industrial country—excellent for electric telegraphs and railroads but not for art." Fry's retort, not usually quoted, is priceless: he explained that "although we had excelled in making electric telegraphs to carry ideas without persons, it was not a necessary consequence that we built railroads to carry persons without ideas."³

¹ Reproduced from the magnificent illustrated catalogue by H. Robert Cohen, *Les Gravures musicales dans L'Illustration, 1843-1899* (Quebec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1983), p. 600.

² Gottschalk, *Notes of a Pianist*, ed. Jeanne Behrend (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), p. 52.

³ *The Musical World and New York Musical Times* 5/13 (26 March 1853), 196; quoted in *Dwight's Journal of Music* 2/26 (2 April 1853), 202.

—R. Allen Lott

ITTY BITTY BOOK REVIEWS

• Five years ago Charles Rosen, prior to playing Elliott Carter's Piano Sonata at the Library of Congress, delivered an Elson Lecture there, "The Musical Languages of Elliott Carter." Elson Lectures are usually published in modest paperback format. To make a rather long story (recounted by Jon Newsom in his Foreword to *The Musical Languages of Elliott Carter*) short, this Elson Lecture is between hard covers—and along with it are a reprint of Rosen's *New York Review of Books* article "One Easy Piece" (22 February 1973), an interview of Carter by Rosen for the B.B.C. (April 1983), and several documentary and bibliographic contributions by Morgan Cundiff. Anything Rosen writes is stimulating; in view of his special closeness to Carter and his music, the essays herein are especially so. (For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402; be sure to cite stock number 030-001-00108-3; \$9)

• Anthony Heilbut has revised and updated his book *The Gospel Sound: Good News and Bad Times* (originally 1971; postscript added in 1975), still the only attempt at a comprehensive survey of black gospel music. The new edition, published by Lime-light Editions in New York, has few significant changes, but the postscript has grown and a discography of long-play albums "currently in print" has been added.

• It's good to see that Paul Griffiths, in his history *The String Quartet* (Thames and Hudson), includes significant discussion of quartets by Babbitt, Cage, Carter, Ives, Krenek, and Rochberg. Similarly, in Melvin Berger's *Guide to Chamber Music* (Dodd, Mead) no fewer than 15 Americans make an appearance: Barber, Carter, Copland, Crumb, Dahl, Druckman, Irving Fine, Ives, Kirchner, Kraft, Laderman, Piston, Rochberg, Schuller, and Siegmeyer.

• Steven Ledbetter's *100 Years of the Boston Pops* is a carefully researched and handsomely illustrated 48-page booklet, illuminating in its tale of what is, amazingly enough, a century-old tradition in Boston's musical life. (Available postpaid for a \$5 check to "Boston Symphony Orchestra" addressed to Program Office, BSO, Symphony Hall, Boston, MA 02115) . . . A similar publication, equally attractive graphically, is *Making Music Chicago Style* by Robert L. Brubaker, prepared to accompany an exhibit of Chicagoan musical memorabilia at the Chicago Historical Society that opened earlier this year. The 72-page book has a lively text, wonderful photos and other illustrations of Chicago's musical life from about 1840 on, and a checklist of the exhibition. (Write the society, Clark Street at North Avenue, Chicago, IL 60614; \$6 & \$1.50 handling charge)

• A modest but interesting little yearbook is *Essays on Modern Music*, edited by Martin Brody (Susan Pasternack, Managing Editor) and published by the Boston Chapter of the League of Composers-International Society for Contemporary Music. Volume 2, nos. 1-3, includes essays by Bruce Saylor on Cowell's "dissonant counterpoint," David Owens on the composer in New England, and Andrea Olmstead on the influence of Sessions. (Annual subscription \$5; from ISCM, Boston, c/o Division of Fine Arts, Northeastern University, The Fenway, Boston, MA 02115)

• Martha Furman Schleifer initiates a new Scarecrow Press series, *Composers of North America*, with her *William Wallace Gilchrist (1846-1916): A Moving Force in the Musical Life of Philadelphia*. The series editors are Sam Dennison, William C. Loring, Margery Lowens, and Ezra Schabas, and they imply in their Foreword that the series, aiming to help restore "an almost forgotten part of our musical heritage," will concentrate on pre-20th-century composers. Schleifer's book is a creditable, careful work of scholarship, treating in turn Gilchrist's life (pp. 1-50) and his music (51-57), then offering a most careful catalogue raisonné (75-190) followed by an index of first lines (Gilchrist wrote much choral music and many songs), a list of sources consulted, and a general index. As you can gather (from the paginations), the book is, if short on critical or analytic assessment, long on documentary material; as such, it is a useful handbook.

• Fans of Garrison Keillor's *Lake Wobegon Days*, eager to learn about musical life in the state that gave us Bertha's Kitty Boutique, might enjoy the information in *Saint Paul's Schubert Club: A Century of Music 1882-1982* by James Taylor Dunn. The Schubert Club, like its counterparts in other American cities, was formed to bring learning and cultivation to the frontier. One of its first names was the "Ladies Musicale," and throughout its existence the club has primarily sponsored concerts by traveling virtuosi. From the 1930s on it has also commissioned and performed works by living Americans—even Minnesotans (for example, Domenick Argento's *From the Diary of Virginia Woolf*). . . . The Schubert Club has also reprinted essays from the 1940s by Brenda Ueland, a local music lover, in *Mitropoulos and the North High School Band and other Pieces on Musical Life*. They're quirky articles, filled with emotional responses to the masterpieces of European concert literature. Most interesting is Ueland's account of a 1943 concert at Hamline University—when Ernst Krenek was teaching there—of works by Roger Sessions, Charles Ives, Victor Babin, and Krenek. Although she consistently had trouble with new music, her determination to appreciate these works was sincere. After hearing Ives she wrote, "The songs were certainly queer. But I wouldn't allow my Philistine self to flounce off indignantly." (Both books available from: Schubert Club, 302 Landmark Center, Saint Paul, MN 55102)

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SHOW TIME (continued)

mental medleys of tunes from, say, a Victor Herbert operetta, the songs included in the medley are thus identified. In the case of private tapes made in the theater, Hummel adds also an estimation of the recording quality; he also indicates whether the tape includes the songs only or the entire show with complete dialogue.

Hummel's labor of love is a browser's delight. Here you can find out, for example, that the dramatic "Chase" number in *Brigadoon* was omitted from the original cast album, but can be heard on Lehman Engel's studio recording, while the "Sword Dance" that was one of Agnes DeMille's choreographic masterpieces is recorded only on private tapes of revivals. Or that Irving Berlin's 1940 *Louisiana Purchase* opened with a number brashly called "Sex Marches On" which has never been recorded and was replaced in the 1941 film version by the much tamer "It's New to Us." Or that all of Maury Yeston's music for *Nine* can be heard only on the cassette of the show's score; a half-dozen numbers are cut from the LP and three others are shortened from the versions heard in the theater.

The range of shows included is broad—but not complete. The early end of the repertory is the least satisfactorily covered, probably because of the scarcity of recorded materials and difficulties of verifying contents. Reginald DeKoven's *Robin Hood* (1891) seems to be the earliest show included, which suggests that Hummel has overlooked New World Records' attention to the older musical theater going back to *The Black Crook* (1866) and even *The Indian Princess* (1808). Except for *El Capitan*, Sousa's operettas are lacking, though they are represented on disc by instrumental medleys, which earn other shows (like some of Victor Herbert's) a place in Hummel's listing. Some song titles are bedeviled by typos ("My love awaits" rather than "My love awake!" in Herbert's *Wizard of the Nile*, for example), but the overall level of accuracy and completeness seems remarkably high.

MUSIC-THEATER CONFERENCE REPORT

About 100 scholars of music history, theater history, and literature met in New York this past 7 and 8 June for a conference on "Nineteenth Century Musical Theatre in English." Sponsored by New York University, the Pierpont Morgan Library, the Grolier Club, and the Shubert Foundation (with additional support from Allaire Music Publications of New Jersey), the gathering was designed as a forum for information exchange, research technique sharing, and mutual encouragement in a field that is by its very nature interdisciplinary.

The conference's Gilbert-and-Sullivan slant (three of eight papers) was somewhat disconcerting (but not surprising, considering the conference sponsors) to those interested in the early or middle part of the century. Other papers ranged from the general ("Musical Nationalism in English Romantic Opera," by Nicholas Temperley) to the specific ("Music for Monte Cristo: Melodramatic Conventions," by Anne Dhu Shapiro). Research techniques and sources were covered in two useful papers ("Music Research Sources for 19th Century Theatre," by Deane Root, and "The British Patent Archives as a Research Source," by Terence Rees). A session devoted to open discussion was thought-provoking and sometimes controversial—and demonstrated the value of the conference as a whole, spotlighting as it did the relative ignorance within any one discipline of the problems, concerns, techniques, and works-in-progress of the others. Publication of the proceedings is planned.

One of the highlights of the conference was a reception at the Shubert Archive on West 45th Street and a chance to see the jewel-like Lyceum Theatre. A tour of the Shubert Archive allowed participants a sneak preview of its treasures: some four million items that chronicle the Shubert empire from 1900 to 1945. What's more, after ten years of work and \$860,000 spent, these primary source materials are already sorted and catalogued. The tantalizing preview left many in happy anticipation of the Archive's planned opening in early 1986.

—Katherine Preston

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