

NEWSLETTER

INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN AMERICAN MUSIC

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

Volume XII, Number 2

May 1983

ITALIAN RADIO, AMERICAN MUSIC by H. Wiley Hitchcock

Last summer I was in ~~Florence~~, or rather in the countryside outside of Florence, with a big Grundig portable radio as a major source of entertainment. With that (and the help of *Radiocorriere*, a weekly magazine that gives detailed listings of all the programs on the state-owned radio networks), I made a point of checking the American-music offerings during my three-month stay. Here are some notes on the experience.



Three continuous programs going simultaneously on RAI (Radio Italiana): Radio 1, Radio 2, Radio 3. Music on all of them—least on Radio 1, more on Radio 2, most on Radio 3. American music on all of them, for a total of maybe four to five hours a day. All kinds of American music—folk, pop, rock, blues, ragtime, gospel, jazz, “serious” (*musica classica*)—with the emphasis perhaps predictably on pop, rock, and jazz.



You pay a tax (though not much of one) to have a radio. For a thousand more *lire* per month—about a dollar—you can plug into a kind of cable radio, “Filodiffusione,” that gives you two more continuous programs of nothing but music. One of these, “Auditorium,” broadcasts only *musica classica*. The other is “Musica Leggera,” or “light music,” covering not only pop, rock, and jazz but also disco and funk, operetta and musical comedy, film music and . . . *facile ascolto* (right! “easy listening”—Mancini, Mantovani, et al).



During my first day in Italy (it happened to be the Fourth of July, but that doesn't cut any ice with RAI), here's what was offered by way of American music: (1) An hour-long program (with a five-minute newsbreak—no commercials on RAI) on “La commedia musicale americana,” one in a weekly series broadcast on all thirteen of the Sunday mornings I was in Florence; this one was on *Pajama Game*, with knowledgeable continuity and intelligent comparisons between the Broadway-cast and Hollywood-

film recordings. (2) An hour-long program, 11:00 p.m. to midnight, on “Il jazz”—again, one in a continuing series (but nightly) that was still going strong when I left for home at summer's end, the theme of the whole series being “improvvisazione e creatività nella musica.” (3) On the Light Music program of Filodiffusione, a two-hour vocalists' show, half of it a “Recital di Sarah Vaughan” and then bits and snatches from other singers ranging from Josephine Baker to Judy Collins. (4) Closing the hour-and-a-half-long “Filo musica” program on Filodiffusione's Auditorium wavelength, Samuel Barber's *Toccata festiva* (the CBS recording with E. Power Biggs, Eugene Ormandy, and the Philadelphia Orchestra).



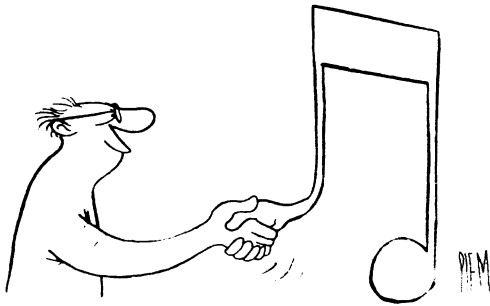
My last day in Italy, a Thursday, offered the following: (1) On Radio 1, late-ish in the morning, “Irving Berlin: Cheek to Cheek,” seventh in a series (who knows how long it was to go on?) tracing the long, long songwriting career of Berlin with affection, insight, depth, and lots of good recordings. (2) The evening special on Radio 3: a live broadcast from the Biennale Musica 1982 in Venice, and alongside works by York Höller and Yannis Xenakis the Italian premiere of John Cage's *Thirty Pieces for Five Orchestras*. (3) Before Radio 3's final newscast and sign-off, “Il Jazz” as usual, now concentrating on “Big Band in concerto” (meaning mainly, that evening, the 1938 Benny Goodman Carnegie Hall concert and some imposingly titled Stan Kenton pieces from the late 1940s). (4) Lots of American music on the Musica Leggera band of Filodiffusione—from film music and “Rock & Pop” [*sic*] through *facile ascolto* (Melba Moore, The Beach Boys, even Earth, Wind & Fire on this show) and “Musical Morning” (*Mattutino Musicale*) (with Gershwin's early *Lullaby*, in the Juilliard Quartet recording) to “A Notte Alta” (how to translate that—maybe “At High Midnight”?). The last show offered, among works by “serious” composers of other nationalities, the “Lament” from the *Indian Suite* of E. M. Dowell. (Surely you remember Dowell, and such works as *To a Wild Rose*. The entire *Second Orchestral* [“Indian”] *Suite* of “Dowell” had been heard two days earlier.)



ITALIAN RADIO, AMERICAN MUSIC (continued)

Between those first and last days, three months apart, I noted especially the following:

* Radio 2 offered every other day or so, in a continuing series called "Jazz Heroes" (*Protagonisti del jazz*), a musical portrait of a jazz giant, from Armstrong and Ellington to Gillespie and Getz (none, however, later than the latter).



Hands Across the Ocean? Well, almost. While in France writing his piece about American music on Italian radio, H. Wiley Hitchcock clipped the drawing above from *Le Figaro*.

* Also on Radio 2: an almost daily series of hour-long shows, "[so-and-so] Sings": "Canta Ella Fitzgerald," "Canta Ray Charles," "Canta Cole Porter," "Canta Joan Baez." Not surprisingly, a whole sub-series of "Canta Frank Sinatra" materialized; that ended, only a bit archly, with "Cantano Nancy e Frank Sinatra jr."

* One of the best-produced series on Radio 2, with thirteen forty-minute shows, was "Two or Three Versions . . ." (*Due o tre versioni che so di lei*), in which each show was built around different performers' or groups' versions of the same jazz or rock classic—four or five singers' treatments of *All the Things You Are*, for example, or several rock and pop groups dealing with *Eleanor Rigby*—and all with good historical and discographical commentary.

* Along slightly similar lines was a Radio 3 series—fourteen programs, fifty minutes each—called *Pianeta USA* and subtitled "musical styles and differences in the various states": Tennessee vs. Texas country music; New York vs. California jazz; New England vs. Southern Appalachian fiddling; northern tapdance vs. southern clogdance; and the like. A terrific series!

* On Filodiffusione, in a series called "Composer's Portrait" (*Ritratto d'autore*), we heard hour-long programs on Barber and Gottschalk. (Gottschalk shared honors with Stephen Foster as the earliest U.S. composer to be broadcast, unless you accept as Benjamin Franklin's, as did RAI, the string quartet sometimes attributed to him and heard on the program well titled *Rarita musicali*.)

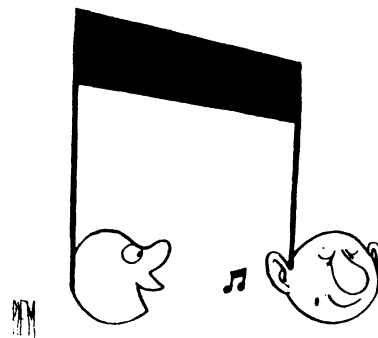
* Is Menotti an American? Not in Italy: his *Piano Concerto* appeared in a series titled "The 20th-Century Italian Concerto."

* An ongoing series of thirty-minute shows on Filodiffusione is called "The American 20th-Century School." Maybe Italians sense a homogeneity, an unmistakable national flavor, among all

our concert composers that we don't. Each program offered music by a pair of composers, and here are some of the bedfellows: Varèse and Bernstein, Ives and Barber, Riegger and Copland, Gould and Cowell, Chadwick and Cage!



And so it went. . . . Italian state radio may be no more adventurous than American radio in its programming of our music: practically no chamber or wind-band music; very little 19th-century music of any kind, and none earlier than that; no vanguard music to speak of (apart from Cage's, an interest in which seems to be universally *de rigueur* nowadays); Gershwin and Copland the insistent favorites in concert music. But Italian radio is surely *generous* with it. (Think the other way around: how much Italian music on U.S. radio?) The present report is being written from Paris, halfway through another stay abroad (or: what's a sabbatical for?), and I'm checking now on the French state radio's American-music offerings. A very different story indeed . . . which perhaps I'll tell in the next Newsletter.



The Joys of Music. Yet another *Le Figaro* drawing.

More Cage. John Cage's birthday year continues to generate new recordings. In addition to *Roaratorio*, reviewed on page 12, recently arrived are a Wergo recording (60099) of *Music of Changes* (Herbert Henck, pianist) which manages to be both sprightly and clangorous, and a Philips recording (9500-920) of five early works: *Amores*, *A Valentine out of Season*, *Music for Marcel Duchamp*, *Nocturne*, and *Six Melodies*. On the Philips disk, Reinbert de Leeuw gives beautiful performances of the first three pieces (though the piano is inaccurately prepared for *Amores*). He is joined by Vera Peths in the two duets for piano and violin; the formidable problems of ensemble and balance posed in the *Six Melodies* have been better solved elsewhere, but the rarely played *Nocturne* is a pleasure.

I.S.A.M. MATTERS

At the American Music Center's 1982 year-end party, I.S.A.M. and its director H. Wiley Hitchcock were honored to receive a **Letter of Distinction** "for in-depth research on the broadest range of American music." A second certificate was awarded on the same occasion to composer Henry Brant.

Edward A. Berlin, I.S.A.M. Senior Research Fellow last fall, gave two public lectures in late March and early April: "Ragtime's Unanswered Questions: Problems and Prospects in Ragtime Research" and "Dance Folios During the Ragtime Era (A Computer-Aided Study)." Then in late April and early May William Brooks, Senior Research Fellow for the spring semester, presented two lectures under the title "John Cage: What's the Score?" The first one explored Cage's scores as "A Record of an Idea," and the second considered their realization in performance as "A Set of Instructions." In addition to his I.S.A.M. appointment, Brooks has been awarded an NEA Composer's Fellowship; his article "On Being Tasteless," appeared in the 1982 annual *Popular Music* (reviewed elsewhere in this issue).

Next year's Senior Research Fellows will be the composer Morton Subotnick, who will be teaching a course on "Music and Technology," and Gillian Anderson, of the Music Division of the Library of Congress, who will be considering film music. Subotnick recently won the Brandeis Creative Arts Award; in June, the New York Philharmonic will be performing his *Ascent Into Air*.

I.S.A.M. Monographs 18 and 19 are about to be published. The first, *Life and Death of a Small Magazine (Modern Music, 1924-1946)* by Minna Lederman, is a 225-page treasure-trove of unpublished letters, article excerpts, and editor's insights into the influential journal *Modern Music*. The book is handsomely illustrated with photographs of the composers and writers discussed. . . . Monograph No. 19, *Ives: A Survey of the Music* by H. Wiley Hitchcock, is a reprint with corrections of Oxford University Press's 1977 publication. Brewster Ives responded to the first edition of the book with: ". . . your new book on Uncle Charlie's music . . . was more instructive . . . than anything I have read heretofore."

Next year's anticipated publications include Russell Sanjek's *From Print to Plastic: Publishing and Merchandising America's Popular Music (1900-1980)*, Frank Hoogerwerf's *Confederate Sheet Music Imprints*, and William Lichtenwanger's catalogue of the music of Henry Cowell.

In the midst of closet-cleaning and file-pruning, we've come upon a batch of defective I.S.A.M. monographs—physically defective, that is. Anyone who wouldn't mind a torn cover or a few upside-down pages may purchase these books at a 50% discount. Supplies are limited.

DA CAPO ANNOUNCES

new!

THE MUSIC OF ELLIOTT CARTER

by David Schiff

This long-awaited monograph on Elliott Carter, the first book-length study ever published on his formidable body of work, examines the personal and cultural background from which Carter took his bearings, analyzes his innovations in rhythm, harmony, texture, and time-structure, and theorizes how these formal elements evolved—work-by-work—to fulfill the powerful expressive needs of the composer. By careful studies of finished works and sketches, long exegeses of the *String Quartets 1, 2, and 3*, *Concerto for Orchestra*, *Piano Concerto*, *Double Concerto*, *Anaphora*, *Syringa*, and *Night Fantasies*, as well as the early works, David Schiff has intensified appreciation for Carter's achievement, its integrity and solitude. With a chronological catalogue of Works, a bibliography, and complete discography. (New York and London, 1983)
ISBN 0-903873-06-0/ 375 pp., 120 musical ex., 41 charts, 8 pp. of photos/ \$39.50

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STRAVINSKY IN MODERN MUSIC

Edited by Carol Oja

Foreword by Aaron Copland

Covering the years 1924-26, this selection of articles from the influential journal *Modern Music* highlights the first burst of enthusiasm for Stravinsky's work among American composers and critics. Essays by Sessions, Carter, Copland, Thomson, Blitzstein, Denby, Kirstein, and many others display the range of responses to the sharp, unexpected turns in Stravinsky's musical style. (New York, 1924-26)
ISBN 0-306-76108-4/ xix + 176 pp./ \$32.50

A BIOGRAPHY OF EDGARD VARESE

by Fernand Ouellette

This "first document" of the life of Varese also serves as a guide to avant-garde music in New York and Paris during the middle years of the century. A moving record of Varese's struggle for recognition, it contains extensive excerpts from his diaries, lectures, and reviews of first performances. (New York, 1968)
ISBN 0-306-76103-3/ xi + 271 pp., 18 illus./ \$27.50

BIBLIO GRAB BAG

All American Music is the bold title of a bold new book by *New York Times* critic John Rockwell, who sweeps through profiles of twenty contemporary American composers and musicians. From the opening sentence—"This is a book about new American music as it really is"—through essays on the old guard (including Milton Babbitt, Elliott Carter, John Cage) and the new (including Philip Glass and Laurie Anderson), on jazz musicians (a curious representation in Keith Jarrett, the Art Ensemble of Chicago, and Ornette Coleman) and various pop figures (Eddie Palmieri, Stephen Sondheim, Neil Young, Talking Heads), Rockwell's prose oozes with opinions. Whether you agree with him or not, he forces you to sit up straight and take a stance; maybe even to come out swinging. His choice of representative figures is idiosyncratic, ignoring such important names as Steve Reich or George Crumb or Miles Davis, and yet it's unabashedly his own. So start reading, but get ready to put up your dukes. (Alfred A. Knopf; \$15.95)

—Carol J. Oja

Gottschalk Catalogued. John G. Doyle produced his first Gottschalk bibliography as part of his dissertation at New York University in 1960, a time when no one had any clear idea of what the composer had actually written or even where copies of his published piano works could be found. Perhaps the most useful part of Doyle's thesis was its guide to the Gottschalk holdings of archives here and abroad. Since then the work force in the Gottschalk vineyard has expanded mightily. The complete (published) piano works have been reissued; piano and orchestral recordings have proliferated; Gottschalk ballets romp irresistibly from Broadway to the White House to the great cultural complexes of Middle America. The extent of this extraordinary change is reflected in Dr. Doyle's new bibliography, *Louis Moreau Gottschalk (1829-1869): A Bibliographical Study and Catalog of Works*, a hefty tome of 396 pages subdivided into nine sections—the principal ones being Bibliography and Catalog (Literature and Modern Performances, 742 items); Newspapers and Periodicals; Collections (including Iconography, Memorabilia, Letters); Manuscripts; Catalog of Compositions. The author remarks that his book "contains everything about Gottschalk known [to him]." That proves to be a great deal indeed, and with certain reservations it would be hard to imagine a more useful general handbook for the present hour in Gottschalk studies.

Yet it is at the essence of the late-blooming and much-misrepresented Gottschalk case that ongoing field reports make it necessary to revise many of our accepted notions, and the likelihood is that these revisions will continue for years to come. Some examples. The first page of Doyle's main text perpetuates a real clinker: a wrong date first launched by the composer's forgetful sister Clara in the original edition of *Notes of a Pianist* (therewith richly confusing all subsequent chronologies and among other things utterly obliterating the young prodigy's all-important first year amidst the great events of Romantic pianism at its Paris headquarters). Gottschalk sailed for France in May 1841, *not* 1842.

Clara acknowledged her mistake around the turn of the century, and the incontrovertible facts of the matter are found in two collections noted elsewhere in the Doyle book. Among a number of notable iconographical omissions is a Gottschalk caricature that is historically the most important of them all: a mid-century drawing by Nadar of the young pianist in the company of Liszt and his other Paris contemporaries (a treasure described last fall for the first time in the pages of this *Newsletter*).

Missing also from the Doyle book is the first American press report of the success in Paris of a *published young American composer*; this unparalleled scoop appeared in New York at the astonishingly early date of 1849, at the very dawn of Gottschalk's European celebrity. This was not only four years before his New York debut but three years before Melville published *Moby Dick* and five before Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*; indeed, Edgar Allan Poe was then still at large giving readings of *The Raven*.

Then there is the matter of Frank LaForge's early recording of *Pasquinade*, a copy of which was stated by this writer, some years back, to be in the possession of the Lincoln Center archive. Dr. Doyle seems to think that ain't so—but it is, Dr. D., it is. It was there then, and it's there now; in fact it was there listened to a few weeks back by a member of the staff who noted its stylistic singularities.

Let me conclude by adding in all piety that although none of these examples—and there are many more—is exactly without importance to the Gottschalk record, they are not advanced here as compromising Dr. Doyle's remarkably substantial contribution, but simply as recommending a wary circumspection to future students and bibliographers alike.

—Robert Offergeld

Gittin' Up Steam. Blistered and bleeding fingers were Leslie Swanson's reward in April 1928 when he began his tour of duty as the calliapist on the excursion steamer *Washington*. Several days later, with calluses formed, Les had the time of his life bringing the calliope's irresistible sound to river townspeople on the Mississippi and Ohio, until the *Washington* ran aground at Shawneetown, Illinois five months later.

In his *Steamboat Calliopes*, Les draws on his skills as a long-time newspaperman and photographer to present his reminiscences together with notes on the history of the calliope and calliope playing, especially as experienced on inland waters; there are also twenty-one photos of excursion boats, calliopes, and related subjects. The revised edition of 1983 makes a few corrections in the text of the original 1981 edition and substitutes three photos. Calliope fans are sure to enjoy this 60-page paperback, while waiting for Frederick Dahlinger's comprehensive book to appear. (\$3 postpaid, from Leslie C. Swanson, Box 334-CA, Moline, IL 61265)

—Frederick Crane (University of Iowa)

RECORDS GALORE

Aeolian Echoes. If the bandleader Paul Whiteman is undergoing critical re-evaluation—and there are signs that he is—one document that should aid in this process is the Smithsonian Collection's archival reconstruction of perhaps his most famous concert—*An Experiment in Modern Music: Paul Whiteman at Aeolian Hall*. Most people are familiar with at least one work premiered on this occasion, the young George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*. This set contains the 1924 Gershwin-Whiteman version of the *Rhapsody* together with other pieces played on the concert and recorded by Whiteman's band, Zez Confrey and his Orchestra, the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, and others. Few today will be shocked by this musical modernism. But it is fascinating to hear what was then considered the vanguard of popular music and instructive to get it in the original sequence of the program.

Thornton Hagert's ten-page liner essay is a major statement; in it he provides copious information about Whiteman and the concert itself and takes an in-depth look at each piece performed that evening. Besides the spirited rendition of the *Rhapsody*, the listener can sample Whiteman hits ("Whispering" and "Song of India"), Zez Confrey's orchestra imitating a coin-operated piano ("Nickel in the Slot"), a symphonic synthesis of Cadman and MacDowell performed by the Goldkette band ("Fox Trot Classique"), and song-plugger Clarence Senna doing a musicological job on "Yes! We Have No Bananas" ("How to Write a Popular Song"). A personal favorite is Whiteman's transformation of "Meditation" from *Thaïs* into a bouncy dance tune, replete with soaring violins and a sobbing saxophone chorus. Massenet fans, fear not: it was only an experiment. (Order from: Smithsonian Recordings, P.O. Box 10230, Des Moines, IA 50336; \$13.98 + \$1.75 for shipping)

—Mark Tucker

New Discs. Of the many fine new contemporary recordings recently received at I.S.A.M., the best, to these ears, is *The Music of Brian Fennelly, Vol. 1. In Wildness Is the Preservation of the World* is beautifully lyrical, and as Fennelly describes it: "Though not necessarily apparent at the surface, *In Wildness Is the Preservation of the World* is twelve-tone in concept and structure. It is in three overlapping parts (played without pause) related by proportional tempi." Also on the recording are Fennelly's *Sonata Seria*, a large-scale piano work hearkening back to Webern, and the *Empirical Rag*. (Serenus SRS-12094).

Piano music by **Ruth Schonthal**, one of Fennelly's colleagues at New York University, is featured on a new Orion release (ORS-81413). Of the works included (*Variations in Search of a Theme*, *Sonata Breve*, *Nachklangen (Reverberations)* and *Sonatensatz*), the most interesting is *Nachklangen*, in which wood and metal objects are used to cover the lower piano strings, and glass, plastic, and wood cover those in the middle register. German tunes are quoted in a nostalgic way. Gary Steigerwalt is the pianist.

Walter Piston's *Tunbridge Fair*, Alcides Lanza's *Eides*, Henry Cowell's *Little Concerto for Piano and Band*, and Frank Benncriscutto's *Symphonic Jazz Suite* are given rousing performances by

the **McGill Wind Ensemble** on McGill 79008. Notable is Cowell's *Little Concerto*, which is full of melody, whimsy, and freedom. The excellent liner notes are in both English and French.

Paul Hindemith's *Clarinet Sonata*, Quincy Porter's *Quintet for Clarinet and Strings*, and Elliott Carter's *Pastoral for Clarinet and Piano* are given excellent performances by Keith Wilson (clarinet), Donald Currier (piano), and the Muir String Quartet. Unfortunately, the notes are confusing. (Golden Crest RE-7075).

—Rita H. Mead

Boston Purebreds. Northeastern Records, a company launched in 1979 by Northeastern University in Boston, has focused on home-town folk in five of its ten releases to date. Amy Beach, Joyce Kerkeel, Daniel Pinkham, and Leo Snyder are among the Boston composers featured, and Doriot Anthony Dwyer, Virginia Eskin, and The Boston Musica Viva head the list of performers. Perhaps Northeastern's two most winning discs are *Amy Beach: Songs and Violin Pieces* and *Four American Women*. The Beach album contains songs and short violin works showing the composer at her sauciest (in "Just for This," for example) and most turgid ("Dark is the Night"). In the higher registers mezzo-soprano D'Anna Fortunato has so round a tone as to engulf her words and blur their focus, but precision of phrasing and clarity of diction characterize her singing in the lower range. *Four American Women* includes more Beach—piano character pieces—and some extra-Boston fare in works by Mary Jeanne van Appledorn (*Set of Five*), Marion Bauer (*From New Hampshire Woods* and *Turbulence*) and Ruth Crawford Seeger (*Preludes 6-9* and *Piano Study in Mixed Accents*). The playing of pianist Virginia Eskin is concise and imaginative. For a catalogue, write to: Northeastern Records, Box 116, Boston, MA 02117.

The East-West Circuit. To hear Western transmigrations of Asian musics, we can turn to the recordings of Gamelan Son of Lion on the East Coast, Prime Numbers on the West, and now Dreamtiger in London. Last year Dreamtiger, led by composer Douglas Young, produced a five-part BBC series, *Approaches to the East*, which chronicled East-West musical interrelations over the past century, and it also released an album including, among other works, Colin McPhee's *Balinese Ceremonial Music* and George Crumb's *Vox Balaenae*. Committing this group of McPhee's two-piano gamelan transcriptions to disc seems to be an Anglo-American mission: the last—and only other—recording of it was made by McPhee and Benjamin Britten in 1941. Dreamtiger's McPhee interpretations are stunning, suffusing the transcriptions with the shimmer and supple rhythmic swing of the gamelan. Just as compelling is the performance of Crumb's *Vox Balaenae*, which draws out all the nuances of the work's drama and mystery. (Cameo Classics GOCLP9018(D); order from Serenade, 1713 G Street NW, Washington DC 20006).

—Carol J. Oja

IMPROVISATION: TOWARDS A WHOLE MUSICIAN IN A FRAGMENTED SOCIETY by Malcolm Goldstein

For the Massachusetts composer and violinist Malcolm Goldstein, improvisation is the essence of his art. The following essay is a sequel to one on the same topic that appeared in *Percussive Notes* (March 1983). It is illustrated by two pages from Goldstein's score for *The Seasons: Vermont*—examples of his own prescriptions for improvisation. *The Seasons: Vermont* is an hour-long work in four parts for tape and an ensemble of live musicians. Goldstein has this to say about it: "Each of the four seasons consists of a magnetic tape collage constructed from sounds recorded in Vermont and edited to create a structure appropriate to each season." Within the article below, several excerpts are quoted from John Blacking's *How Musical Is Man?* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1973).

How is it that we have so thoroughly omitted improvisation from the experience/musicianship/training of students in practically every college and music conservatory? . . . or perhaps it would be more accurate to say "excluded?!" And, if it has been excluded, then what does such an act tell us about our culture, attitudes, and value systems? What we choose to teach, what we choose to enact and share informs us as to what we consider valuable, to be perpetuated and socially acknowledged. Pieces of music.

. . . but the saunterer, in the good sense, is no more vagrant than the meandering river, which is all the while sedulously seeking the shortest course to the sea, muses Thoreau. *Walking*.

How is it that many composers whose works are part of the European classical repertory were known in their time also for their talents as improvisers and that today it is rarely part of a composer's activities? Consider the training of a composer and performer: what was the difference between composer and performer in the past? What is the difference between composer and performer now?

Our systems of education encourage a splitting of the mind into intellect (a comprehending of things at a distance) and performing (an enacting of the rules of performance practice).

So often students first practice "the notes" (those tiny dots running upon the page) and then add "expression," like putting salt and spices into a dish that doesn't quite taste right. And so, also, we practice our scales and exercises as preparations for pieces of music, rather than as soundings: ascending ladders and enrichments of the muscles of our musical spirit. We separate the person playing from the object being performed and, in the process of realization, what often is expressed/experienced is the chasm that yawns between. How then shall a piece-of-music/the-musician become whole?

A naming of things;
a pronouncing of labels;
a closing of doors and windows, shades down;
an assigning of tasks;
a limitation of possibilities;
a division of labor

the act of definition

is called efficiency;
is the way of study/technique
so defined, defining what is to be known
(accomplished) and how to arrive there . . . (not here);
is fragmentation



Malcolm Goldstein. Excerpt from *The Seasons: Vermont/Summer*. 1980.

. . . so our theories (perhaps, even as-realized/as-what-should-be-known) divert us from full perception.

It would seem to me that improvisation is that instance of mind being whole, of weaving the fabric of many threads—music theory, compositions studied and rehearsed, ear training—into the present moment: the whole musician sounding.

Music is a synthesis of cognitive processes which are present in culture and in the human body: the forms it takes, and the effects it has on people, are generated by the social experiences of human bodies in different cultural environments. Because music is humanly organized sound, it expresses aspects of the experience of individuals in society. (John Blacking, *How Musical is Man?*, p. 89).

. . . in-culture/in-the-human-body (bodies): a continual dialogue of becoming. The human being as the central concern. "Soundly organized humanity."

What does improvisation ask of the performer that is so different from printed, through-composed pieces of music?

. . . perhaps, "Who are *you*?" "How do *you* think or feel about this moment/sounding?"

Not pieces of music; but, rather, people making music.

I watch orchestral musicians performing, eyes glued to the printed page, often with their ears (apparently) closed to the sound around them. But, then, how can an individual be responsive in a large corporation, when they are obedient to the beat of the conductor?

I have heard from professional musicians regarding my scores, which usually are improvisation structures utilizing a variety of new notation procedures and performance techniques, "Anyone can do them" (which is true); and then they add, "So why should I do them?" It is almost as if the accessibility to common touch eradicates the value of something. Isn't it true of our whole economy: precious metals and jewels, limited editions, antique string instruments, expensive cars . . . ? Isn't the value so high because of the rarity of the object?! Isn't it strange, that in commenting on modern art, an adult is heard to say, "Oh, my child could do that." A wonderful compliment to their child, but usually intended as a criticism of the painting: as if a child isn't also capable of a wondrous creation to open our eyes to whole new worlds that our sophistication has lost; or, as if it were necessary to go to school and spend years of training to arrive at some profound truth, some precious gem to be stored away in locked vaults. "Don't touch," the museum guard said, as my friend gently nudged the Calder mobile into motion. The air was so thick and stifling that the poor mobile hung inert and lifeless until that moment.

Our village life would stagnate if it were not for the unexplored forests and meadows which surround it. We need the tonic of wildness, . . . At the same time that we are earnest to explore and learn all things, we require that all things be mysterious and unexplorable, that land and sea be infinitely wild, unsurveyed and unfathomed by us because unfathomable. . . . We need to witness our own limits transgressed, and some life pasturing freely where we never wander. "Spring:" a time of rejuvenation in Thoreau's Walden.

Improvisation: to begin with, listen. (Even in Western, concert-hall music it's important to take the eye off the printed page, and to put the ear into the sound.)

Improvisation: a process of discovering. Do we allow our students/ourselves the space to fail? And yet, again, if an improvisation were looked upon as a process of discovery by someone, shared within the moment/finding with other people, could it ever be unsuccessful?

Play two pitches, alternating back and forth—each sound always somehow different. Consider varieties of timbre/quality (like, on a bowed string instrument: bow speed, pressure, placement, and articulation), dynamics, and duration. Hear each pitch experienced as within itself, sounding. Hear each pitch, also possible, as related to the preceding pitch. Juxtapositions, confrontations, extensions, suspensions, transformations. Hear the sound as responsive-to/at-one-with the energy of the physical gesture,

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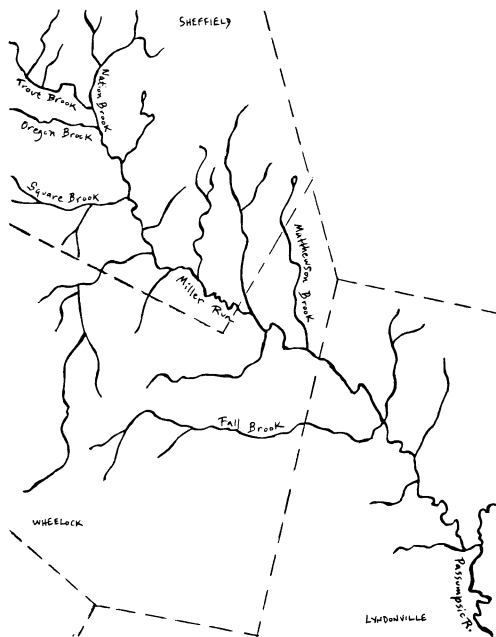
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IMPROVISATION (continued)

rooted in the body/needs, in the presence of the person (you) at that moment . . . like walking the same path in the woods, all senses keenly aware and noticing more and more nuances and/or relationships changing, and even something totally unheard before emerging. Practicing Bach and finding in-him/in-me new, fresh/refreshing soundings. (Gluck complained that the singers so heavily elaborated—improvised!—around his melodies, that the tune—his tune—was unrecognizable. Yet, did he really mean to encourage the dull repeating of skeletal melodies, backbones without flesh, as we endlessly hear now?)



Malcolm Goldstein. One page from the ensemble score/part for *The Seasons: Vermont/Spring*. 1982.

Consider the glorious moment of the cadenza in a concerto: when the orchestra lingers, silently suspended, and the soloist has the opportunity to bring together the composed musical material in an enlivened musical moment, "Now, this is the way I see/hear/feel/think about it." Now: this moment, improvised, realized in sound. Each performance unique, responsive to the experience of the composed music as played by that particular orchestra, with that particular conductor, in that particular concert space on that particular day. . . . Perhaps, sometimes, the soloist might even sit or stand in silence, when appropriate. And how would we, as audience, respond, being placed in the present? A new music unfolding that we would have to participate in, without expectations, if we, also, were to be present! Yet, what we teach our students is to perform, by rote, the jottings of some dead editor, seated away from the reality of a particular performance and working out a through-composed, for-all-times-to-come edition. What have we gained? What have we lost? Again (and again) what does this tell us about the society we live in?

. . . music can never be a thing in itself. . . . all music is folk music, in the sense that music cannot be transmitted or have meaning without associations between people.

Blacking confronts us with radical insight. Who are the folk that attend concert-hall renditions? Associations only through past imprints, phonograph records over and over in the brain, or as rivers-of-continuity/the-score brought to life in the present moment "between people?" Consider all the student (and professional) recitals of Corelli's *La Folia*: the melody played and then played again, unadorned! Carefully we program the computed music and evaluate the number of wrongly or imperfectly performed notes. Our educational process becomes a perpetuation of class values: an investment in the past, with payments in the future. In the process, we lose the present-moment/finding.

Improvisation allows for the logic of our total selves to participate; what comes forth is the coherence of the sounding gesture.

My son, then about two years old, bent over, looking: the thin layer of ice-thawing bubbles and rivulets of Spring coolness. I learned to see again: his vision awakening in me green and purple limbs, as the earth brown tumbled all around us.

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BEHIND THE BEAT *with Mark Tucker*

The bag this time is a rather mixed one: a big biography of a prominent jazz musician; two studies of genres; and three reference books on rock, black popular music, and jazz in films.

A Life of (yet another) Carter. Keeping up with the Carters is getting harder all the time. Last year it was Jimmy's memoirs, this year brought David Schiff's study of Elliott, and somewhere in between came a two-volume tribute to Benny, the noted composer, arranger, and jazz instrumentalist—*Benny Carter: A Life in American Music*. Benny Carter's "life in American music" has been long, distinguished, and varied. The same man who played with Fletcher Henderson's band and McKinney's Cotton Pickers in the 1920s also led his own ensembles (large and small) over the past nearly sixty years; arranged music for hundreds of recordings made by both soloists and groups; wrote pop tunes, jazz standards, and scores for films and television; and taught at Princeton. Carter's character is like his playing: warm, elegant, self-assured yet self-effacing. Although dubbed "King" in his early years, he has never really been the regal type. As a bandleader he had neither the outgoing personality to appeal to a wide audience nor the charisma to become an object of cult-hero worship. But his versatility, prolific output, and consistently high standards of musicianship make him a deserving subject for this massive project (800+ pages) undertaken by Morroe Berger, his son Edward, and James Patrick.

The second volume of this study presents a detailed chronology of Carter's career together with three painstakingly compiled "ographies" (disc-, film-, and biblio-). The discography is outstanding; it lists not only Carter's numerous appearances on record as a performer but includes every known recorded version of his compositions and arrangements. The first volume is mainly a straightforward account of Carter's life, which is interrupted once by a chapter on Carter's arranging and soloing styles in the late 1920s and early 30s and is interwoven with a kind of social history of jazz. Besides needing more musical commentary from other periods of Carter's career to round out the picture, the first volume does not assess Carter's contributions within either the jazz tradition or the larger field of American popular music. The authors' unreserved enthusiasm for Carter and the many complimentary quotes gleaned from reviews and interviews make for more of an encomium than a critical biography. Still, in a field marked by many romanticized and even lurid versions of lives in jazz, this detailed and responsible study is a welcome addition. (Scarecrow Press, 2 vols.; \$45)

Of Radicals and Roots. Both a fine-tuned critical sensibility and lucid musical analyses distinguish Ekkehard Jost's *Free Jazz*. Now nearly ten years old, and recently reprinted by Da Capo, Jost's book is still the best introduction to the more adventurous trends in jazz of the 1960s. Jost mainly stays away from the politics and polemics of his subject, instead zeroing in on leading figures (John Coltrane, Charles Mingus, Ornette Coleman, Cecil Taylor, and others) and their musical contributions. Each chapter contains an annotated, chronological account of a musician's (or group's) recording career, as well as close discussion and transcribed examples of individual pieces. The prose is sometimes

a bit clunky (or is this the work of the unidentified translator?), but Jost's analytical points are always clear and his use of terms precise. A sequel to this book (i.e. exploring currents in the 1970s and after) is much needed. (Da Capo; 214 pp.; \$19.50)

Stephen Davis's and Peter Simon's *Reggae International* is a very different kind of genre study. The book is neither monograph nor encyclopedia but a vibrant collection of essays, interviews, and photographs celebrating the important form of Jamaican music that has so influenced American, English, and, indeed, international popular music. Here the authors are interested not just in the music, but in the lifestyle and cultural roots of the people who create it. Articles on Jamaican history, politics, and religion are mixed in with pieces on individual reggae musicians, bands, deejays, dub poets, recording engineers, dance styles, and other popular music trends. The book pulses with life and color. All that seems to be missing are a soundsheet with musical examples and a complimentary spliff. (New York: R & B, 191 pp.; \$14.95)

Who's Who in What? If you crave more concise information about the lives and music of reggae artists consult *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Black Music*. Other genres represented here are disco, jazz-rock, funk, R & B, blues, and gospel (not so much on the last two). Besides performers, this volume has entries for producers, songwriters, and important black record labels. And because of the editors' perhaps questionable definition of black music (that which is "aimed primarily at a mass black audience"), the reader will also run across white musicians, usually session players or figures involved in "fusion" or "crossover" forms. The tone of the writing is often chatty and at times more flip than hip (see the entries on Jimi Hendrix and Rick James). Even so, this work fills a major bibliographic crater and should be of value to both fans and students of these musical styles. (Harmony Books, 224 pp.; \$12.95)

In *The Rock Who's Who: A Biographical Dictionary and Critical Discography*, Brock Helander claims to take an opposite viewpoint from the *Black Music Encyclopedia's* editors. For Helander, "mere popularity is not sufficient reason for inclusion in this text," and so the reader will find nothing on "bubblegum" rock, the "twist," or disco. Yet popularity *does* figure in nearly every entry, for the author focuses on career highlights (e.g. best-selling records) of most every major rock group and artist. Less attention to "hits" and more to quality songs or albums might truly have resulted in a "Critical Discography." Nevertheless, this volume is a useful source of information (especially for the chronology provided in the discographies) and a quick, reliable guide for rock researchers. (Schirmer, 686 pp.; \$14.95)

If both the above fail to sate your appetite for facts, then feast on David Meeker's new enlarged edition of *Jazz in the Movies*. This mind-boggling book cites not only every film about jazz or featuring jazz musicians on screen (as actors or players) but identifies literally thousands of films with jazz soundtracks, jazz composers, and jazz musicians performing the scores. Meeker's scope is admirably international, ranging from the biggest Hollywood blockbusters to the most obscure foreign animated films. While his brief plot summaries can be cheeky (even downright bitchy), for sheer comprehensiveness and dogged sleuthing Meeker surely deserves an Oscar. (Da Capo, \$13.50)

NEWS BRIEFS . . .

Volume 1, Number 1. *American Music*, a joint venture of the Sonneck Society and the University of Illinois Press, has finally made its inaugural appearance, resplendent in a handsome blue cover. Both the journal's motto and its editor's preamble emphasize a devotion to "all aspects of American music," and indeed *American Music* has gotten off to a determinedly ecumenical start. Articles range from Richard Crawford's "Musical Learning in Nineteenth-Century America" to Charles K. Wolfe's "Frank Smith, Andrew Jenkins, and Early Commercial Gospel Music," and the many reviews (thirteen books and six recordings) are equally as diverse topically. Basic documentation could have been better in some of the articles: Martin Williams's "Art Tatum: Not for the Left Hand Alone" was written recently for his new and revised edition of *The Jazz Tradition* (Oxford University Press, 1983), not way back in the 1950s (as the opening copyright note to his article implies) for *The Art of Jazz* (as it states); Charles K. Wolfe's article ends with general "Notes on Sources," leaving it up to the reader to match specific quotations and references to their correct sources; and in "Oscar Sonneck Writes to Carl Engel," there is no location or physical description given for the Sonneck letter printed as the article's centerpiece. To obtain a copy of the journal, either join the Sonneck Society by writing 14-34 155th Street, Whitestone, NY 11357 or order directly from the University of Illinois Press. . . . *The International Congress of Women in Music Newsletter* is also newly published, with quarterly issues planned. Its first issue includes reports of past women's congresses and plans for future ones. Subscriptions to the Newsletter accompany a membership in the International Congress on Women in Music; write to P.O. Box 366, Loyola Boulevard at West 80th, Los Angeles, CA 90045.

Heavenly Hymnology. Twenty-five years of work by some fifty scholars affiliated with the Hymn Society of America is about to yield two publications: *The Bibliography of American Hymnology* and *The Dictionary of American Hymnology: First-Line Index*. Both works will be issued in microfiche within the next few months. The *Bibliography* lists 7,500 hymnals published in North, South, and Central America, from the seventeenth century (*The Bay Psalm Book*) to 1978 (the *Lutheran Book of Worship*). Each entry includes hymnal title, imprint, publication date, hymnal compiler (whether an individual or organization), number of pages, location of copy indexed, denomination, and indexer's name. Its companion, *The Dictionary of American Hymnology*, is a compilation of one million first-line citations covering 192,000 hymns, which will be published in approximately 120 microfilm reels. For more information contact: Christopher Pavlakis, University Music Editions, P.O. Box 192, Fort George Station, New York, NY 10040.

American Music at Avery Fisher. From 2-15 June the New York Philharmonic will be presenting a series of concerts and symposia featuring contemporary American works. **Horizons '83:** Since 1968, *A New Romanticism?*, with Jacob Druckman as its artistic director, will feature works by John Adams, George Crumb, David Del Tredici, John Harbison, Barbara Kolb, Gunther Schuller, William Schuman, Morton Subotnick, Charles Wuorinen, and others.

Authors' Queries. This is the last call for titles to be included in James R. Heintze's *American Music Studies: A Classified Bibliography of Master's Theses*, which will be published by the College Music Society and Information Coordinators, Inc. as one of their "Bibliographies in American Music." If your American-music thesis is bibliography-worthy, write to Professor Heintze at the University Library, The American University, 4400 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20016. . . . Reynold Weidenaar is writing a book—and possibly producing a film—on that pioneer in electronic sound generation, **Thaddeus Cahill**. Anyone with information about letters, recordings, and other materials related to Cahill's Telharmonium, or anyone with an interest (not to mention expertise) in digitally reconstructing the sound of the Telharmonium, should contact Professor Weidenaar at 5 Jones Street, Apt. 4, New York, NY 10014.

Vestal Offerings. Have a hankering to own a 36-inch polyethylene likeness of the Victor dog? A musical toothbrush? A set of directions for tuning a military band organ? If so, send for the eccentric but enticing catalogue of **The Vestal Press**, which includes among its treasures books and manuals on player pianos, music boxes, gambling machines, juke boxes, and phonographs and also lists recordings, theater organs, and reed organs. Even if you aren't in the market for these exotica, the catalogue itself makes fun rainy-day browsing. Although The Vestal Press usually charges \$2 for its catalogue, Vestal President Harvey Roehl is offering it free to *I.S.A.M. Newsletter* readers. Write to: The Vestal Press, Ltd., Box 97, 320 N. Jensen Rd., Vestal, NY 13850.

Publishers' Catalogues, promoting the work of composers affiliated with their houses, are produced aplenty. But two recent ones are of special note and potential usefulness. C. F. Peters's *Roger Reynolds: Profile of a Composer* is more than a catalogue; it's a 48-page, generously laid-out compendium of essays by Gilbert Chase, Andrew Porter, Ben Johnston, Gordon Mumma, and Reynolds himself, together with the transcript of an interview of Reynolds by **Harvey Sollberger**. **There are many photographs of Reynolds** alone and others from his Ann Arbor ONCE days, a bibliography, discography, and chronological list of works. According to the catalogue's subtitle, this is the "first in a series of portraits of American composers designed to provide an introduction for both student and professional." The next one, scheduled for late '83 or early '84, will be about George Crumb; after that, a Charles Wuorinen catalogue is planned. . . . Boosey & Hawkes has issued a catalogue of the work of **Jacob Druckman**. Although by no means as lavish or expository as Peters's for Reynolds, it provides a detailed, comprehensive listing of Druckman's important output.

Hats Off to Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, winner of this year's Pulitzer Prize in music. Ms. Zwilich, who won the Pulitzer for her "Three Movements for Orchestra," commissioned and first performed by the American Composers Orchestra last year, is the first woman so honored in the award's 40-year history.

. . . MORE NEWS

Calling All Back-Bay Enthusiasts. Mrs. H.H.A. Beach, George Chadwick, Isabella Stewart Gardner, Charles Martin Loeffler, Amy Lowell—just a few names that come to mind when we think of Boston at the turn of this century. The next meeting of the **Sonneck Society**—scheduled for Spring 1984—will be devoted to music in that time and locale. By 1 September, send proposals for papers to Steven Ledbetter, 65 Stearns Street, Newton Center, MA 02159.



Prophets of Minimalism. Could it be that American audiences were ready for *Satyagraha*, Philip Glass's Sanskrit opera chronicling Gandhi's years in South Africa, over a century ago? Maybe so, according to the following tidbit unearthed by R. Allen Lott: *It is true that the Musical Snob knows nothing of foreign languages, indeed he is miserably deficient in his own, but the degree of his enjoyment is always in proportion to his ignorance of the words which some charming cantatrice is torturing into very questionable harmony. He almost swoons with rapture when she sings in German or Italian, and if he could only hear an opera in Sanscrit [sic] or Japanese, the agony of his enjoyment would be too much for his feeble body.* (*Richmond Examiner* quoted in the *Fredricksburg (VA) News*, 26 January 1858)

Da Capo Press, as co-publisher with Eulenberg Books, has just released *The Music of Elliott Carter* by David Schiff. As a former Carter composition student, Schiff gives an insider's view, communicating his penetrating knowledge of both the music and the man in masterly prose. Often Schiff turns to the language of art or literary criticism to illuminate Carter's complex output. (\$39.50; 10% discount on prepaid orders) . . . Another new bit of Carteriana—too new to be reviewed here—is Paul Jacobs's Nonesuch recording of *Night Fantasies* (1980) and the Piano Sonata (1945-46). (Nonesuch 79047)

. . . AND A REVIEW

Duets by American Composers, a Musical Heritage Society release by duo-pianists Carolyn Morgan and Douglas Riva, makes up for its square, earthbound performances by featuring some little-played yet appealing bits of four-hand Americana. Henry F. B. Gilbert's *Three American Dances in Ragtime Rhythm* and Edward MacDowell's *Three Poems* (Op. 20) and *Lunar Nocturnes* (Op. 21) are opposite Arthur Foote's *Clavierstücke* (Op. 21, No. 1), Percy Grainger's *Let's Dance Gay in Green Meadow*, and Vincent Persichetti's perfectly delightful *Appalachian Christmas Carols*.



The Clay Neal Singing School. Old Center Church, Logan County, Kentucky (ca. 1890). Photographer unknown. Reproduced here from a postcard that can be ordered—together with others of non-musical images—for fifteen cents from: The Museum Store, Department of Library, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Kentucky 42101.

ROARATORIO APPRAISIATED by William Brooks

John Cage's *Roaratorio: An Irish Circus on Finnegans Wake*, a "Hörspiel" commissioned by Westdeutscher Rundfunk, produced at IRCAM, and awarded the Karl-Sczucka-Prize for 1979, is now available in an enticing "sound and text" package from Athenäum containing a 185-page book of commentary, a yard-square poster, and a 90-minute audio cassette. As often happens in Cage's work, the documentation threatens to swamp the music; the cassette seems rather small, plastic, and inconsequential in the context of all those words. But the music is beautiful; though superficially resembling earlier works, its character is its own.

Roaratorio is Cage's most recent venture into what I call his "encyclopedias." Like *Williams Mix*, *HPSCHD*, and other predecessors, *Roaratorio* was assembled from an immense sound-catalogue, in this case one derived from two sources: a list of all the sounds described in *Finnegans Wake*, and a list of the places named in the book (supplied by the late Louis O. Mink). Into *Roaratorio*, then, went 1210 Joycean sounds, grouped into categories that range from "musical instruments" to "farts," and 1083 other recordings made in locations Joyce mentions (including the planet Neptune, I believe, courtesy of NASA). This vast array was regulated by and mixed with an hour-long reading by Cage of his own "Writing for the Second Time through Finnegans Wake," the words of which were extracted from Joyce's book without altering their order, as one might extract landmarks from a journey. Cage used this text as a kind of ruler; each of the sounds he had catalogued was inserted at a time that corresponded approximately to the location in which it was mentioned in the book. A final overlay consisted of 32 pieces of traditional Irish music performed by six musicians and distributed through the work by chance operations.

But, although *Roaratorio* is kin to earlier works, it is a cousin, not a twin. *HPSCHD*, for example, has always struck me as festive, exhilarating, almost giddy; it seems to be a piece about dance, or at least about movement, and encourages conversation and activity. *Roaratorio*, on the other hand, is more contemplative, coupling a special kind of innocent discovery with a reflective, almost nostalgic, awareness of loss. It seems to be concerned, fundamentally, with *narrative* in the broadest, Joycean sense—a tale without beginning or end, whose protagonist is all humanity. Much of *Roaratorio*'s atmosphere is due to Cage's entrancing reading, which trails through the soundscape like a voice borne by wind, not quite intelligible. Cage reads in a kind of *Sprechstimme*, but one which recalls Partch rather than Schoenberg, the voice intoning rather than expressing. Or perhaps the effect is Oriental, like a shadow-puppet play in which a richly textured overlay illustrates and sometimes obscures a half-chanted epic in a foreign tongue. In any case, the voice is central, despite the balances; even when only a murmur, it remains the poetry for which all else is a setting.

But the setting, too, contributes to *Roaratorio*'s distinctive atmosphere. Of the 1210 sound events used, 371 (thirty-one percent) involve the human voice (laughing, crying, singing, shouting). Another twenty-seven percent are of natural origin (animals, birds, water, thunder); thirty percent have to do with music. Six percent involve bells; another six percent, guns or explosions. Of the

locations from which recordings were collected, a few are urban (Paris, London); most, however, are rural, often Irish (Cage spent a month traveling in Ireland, gathering material). Hence the sounds from the "geographic" catalogue harmonize well with the sounds explicitly mentioned by Joyce; in particular, electronically processed sound is wholly absent, and mechanical or technological sources are few.

The soundscape of *Roaratorio*, then, is pastoral, unsullied, spacious. Its inhabitants—its voices—evoke rather than command; freed from syntax, they contribute to what Cage has called the "demilitarization of language." *Roaratorio*'s world is not our own, but Anna Livia's; it is from the nineteenth century, not the present. No, not even that; rather than of the nineteenth century, this soundscape is of what that century might have become. It is a soundscape for Thoreau, for Joyce, for Charles Ives: unreal, dearly loved, joyfully affirmed, but illuminated by the certainty of loss, the recognition that this place cannot be, never was, before us.

Does this mean, then, that Cage himself grows autumnal, has turned toward the past and away from the future? I think not; though Cage shares with Thoreau and Joyce and Ives their visionary idealism, he has always tempered this with an almost ruthless practicality. As he continues to remind us, his father was an inventor; Cage has, above all, a remarkable ability to devise workable schemes for bringing impossible, utopian ideas into reality. *Roaratorio* itself started as such an idea; in this case the compromise (or perhaps insight) entailed the recognition that completeness was impossible: the work was "finished" when the time available to make it ended.

What *Roaratorio*'s evocative soundscape does demonstrate is Cage's continuing sensitivity to text. Cage is, in a very important sense, one of the major song-writers of the twentieth century—not because of early pieces like *The Wonderful Widow of Eighteen Springs*, lovely though they are, nor even because of recent works like the *Song Books* and the *Hymns and Variations*, but rather because his extended "settings" of Thoreau (*in Empty Words*) and Joyce (*in Roaratorio*), as well as his performances of his own texts (like *Mesostics*), serve well the fundamental purpose of song-writing: to marry text and context in such a way that each transforms, rather than enhances, the other.

When Cage named *Roaratorio*, he thought he had invented a Joyce-like title; only later did he find he had subconsciously recalled a fragment from *Finnegans Wake* itself. Miraculously, as always, the fragment not only describes the piece but includes listeners, like ourselves, who "with their priggish mouths all open for the larger appraisal of this longawaited Messiahs of roaratorios, were only halfpast atswееep. . . ." Though "halfpast atswееep" we may well be, still trying to "wake up to the very life we're living," and though Cage often seems more leprechaun than "Messiahs," still *my* priggish mouth, for one, will remain all open, longawaiting what next he may serve us. (Order from Athenäum Verlag, Postfach 1220, D-6240 Königstein/Taunus, BRD; DM 68 [ca. \$28]).

A TRIO OF DISCOGRAPHIES . . .

There's No Music Like Show Music. If you've been trying to get a grip on the five complete recordings of *Evita* or the more than fifteen of *South Pacific*, your worries are over. In *Show Music on Record*, Jack Raymond, some of whose private record collection has been reissued by the Smithsonian Institution, has compiled by far the most comprehensive discography of American productions to date. It includes original- and studio-cast albums and recordings of excerpts by original-cast members, as well as those of motion-picture and television soundtracks containing at least one song. Although it does not include as much detailed information as its British counterpart, Brian Rust's *London Musical Shows on Record* (e.g. precise recording dates, complete lists of songs and performers), Raymond's book is much easier to use because of its show, rather than performer, orientation (shows are arranged chronologically, and recordings of each are grouped together) and its comprehensive index. Each entry includes the names of composer, lyricist, orchestrator, conductor, and singers and occasionally information not found on the record itself, such as names of singers who dubbed for stars in motion pictures. No attempt was made, unfortunately, to list all re-releases, but some are included, e.g. Columbia's reissue of the collector's item, *Texas, Li'l Darlin'*. While I missed Mancini's score to *The Great Race* (with Dorothy Provine singing "He Shouldn't-a, Hadn't-a, Oughtn't-a Swang on Me!"), there are many obscure recordings here to keep music-theater buffs busy for years tracking them down. This book is a truly remarkable achievement—and a bargain. (Frederick Ungar Publishing, \$11.95)

—R. Allen Lott

35 Years of 45s. Paul C. Mawhinney, the owner of Record-Rama in Pittsburgh, has a collection of over one million 45s—thought to be the largest outside of the one at the Library of Congress—which he has used as the basis for two mammoth computerized volumes: *MusicMaster: the 45 RPM Record Directory, 35 Years of Recorded Music 1947 to 1982*. In both mass and format the books resemble the Manhattan phone directory: over 1,000 pages each, listing 100,000 releases by song title (Volume One) and artist(s) (Volume Two). Publication of annual revisions and updates is planned. The listings are succinct, including title, performer(s), year of release, and information on which pressing is catalogued. Although flip-side songs are cross-referenced, the method used is to give MusicMaster's in-house catalogue numbers, without song titles; since no numerical listing of songs is provided, the cross-references are none too useful. Mawhinney includes "Information Request" forms at the back of each volume; for a one-dollar fee he will research 45-related questions. (Order from: Record-Rama, P.O. Box 150, Allison Park, PA 15101; \$150)

Yet another jazz discography has appeared to fill a gap in an increasingly well-documented field. *Boy from New Orleans: Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong on Records, Films, Radio, and Television* by Hans Westerberg, a Swede-Finn, is a detailed listing of Armstrong's recorded legacy that often hides its treasures in densely

packed minutiae. The entries are arranged chronologically, from 1923 recordings with King Oliver up to Armstrong's death in 1971. Recording date and place are often given, as are performers' names and piece titles. Unfortunately, Westerberg gives the user no hint of his methods and presentation format, making a voyage through his discography more like one through thick mud than clear, blue water. (Copenhagen: JazzMedia, 1981; order from Oak Lawn Books, P.O. Box 2663, Providence, RI 02907, \$10)



. . . AND A NEW JOURNAL

Penetrating Pop. *Popular Music*, a British annual, is in its second year of publication with Volume 2, "Theory and Method." This hardbound, multidisciplinary journal from Cambridge University Press successfully counterbalances the neglect of popular music by historical musicologists by providing a forum for serious inquiry.

Although diverging theories and methodologies are advanced in this issue, the editors (Richard Middleton and David Horn) and contributors share the view that analytic techniques used in the study of Western art music are not necessarily appropriate to the study of popular music. Drawing from the disciplines of musicology, anthropology, aesthetics, and sociology (thankfully, with a minimum of technical terms), non-traditional approaches are suggested which stimulate a rethinking of our own critical/analytical stances. William Brooks, for example, in his essay "On Being Tasteless," advocates a non-judgmental approach to music as a means of liberation from habituated behavioral patterns; the editors, too, consider "quality to be secondary to the problem of meaning," and semiology or the analysis of meaning is a common concern of many of the contributors.

An overview of critical/aesthetic theory is provided by Iain Chambers; Max Paddison addresses the negative view of "popular music as commodity" as formulated by the Hegelian social philosopher Theodor Adorno. In a quest for methods of study relevant to all popular music, a wide range of music is discussed, including rock, (Peter Wicke), 19th-century British ballads (Anthony Bennett), South African urban popular music (David Coplan), Soviet popular song (Vladimir Zak), Afro-American blues (Paul Oliver), and theme music from TV's "Kojak" (Philip Tagg).

Included in the journal as regular features are an extremely generous review section and annotated bibliography, making it possible to keep up with current scholarship in *all* areas of popular music through *one* source. (Dissertations are, unfortunately, omitted.) This issue boasts reviews of 30 books and recordings, including some foreign-language offerings, and a critique of popular-music entries in *The New Grove*. The following themes are projected for forthcoming volumes: 3. "Producers and Markets," 4. "Performers and Audiences," and 5. "Continuity and Change."

—Joan Stiles (Brooklyn College)

ODE TO ENCYCLOPEDISTS AND CATALOGERS

Compendia of American-Music Facts and Figures. *The Encyclopedia of American Music* by Edward Jablonski contains much valuable information on all aspects of this country's music, from Billings to disco, and while one welcomes such an all-embracing approach toward American music, the book is by no means as definitive as its title implies. It is difficult to use as a reference tool, with its unusual arrangement into seven historical periods and its somewhat erratic choice and variety of entries (e.g. in addition to the main entry on Virgil Thomson, there are others on four of his individual works). These traits, however, combined with the anecdotal nature of many of the entries, make the book fun browsing material, if for no other reason than to see what is included and what is not.

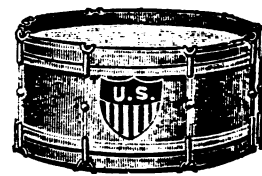
Not surprisingly, popular music and musical theater are especially well-covered. Composers and lyricists, as well as musicals and even songs, receive separate entries. Curiously, there is no entry for Meredith Willson, and the team of Harvey Schmidt and Tom Jones is represented only by an entry for *The Fantasticks*. Serious music is not slighted, but most people will turn to *The New Grove* when possible for more authoritative information and bibliographies—there are none of the latter here. There are, however, entries for people not readily found elsewhere, such as Benjamin Dearborn, Hezekiah Moore, the Dodworth family, and many late nineteenth-century popular composers. If you're looking for the background of a particular song or theater work, or for information on an obscure musician, you just might find it here. (Double-day; \$24.95)

In *American Composers*, David Ewen has compiled a vast amount of information on approximately 300 American serious composers from Francis Hopkinson (1737-1791) to Joseph Schwantner (b. 1943) and Thomas Pasatieri (b. 1945). The book's limited scope allows Ewen to lavish generous space on each composer—Pauline Oliveros and Steve Reich, for example, both receive four pages of text—and to provide “heart, flesh, and sinews to the bare bones of biographical information.” The value of this book lies in its coverage of 20th-century composers (over 90% of the composers were born after 1870 and over 50% after 1910), with much of the information gathered directly from the composers themselves. Some contributed a statement of their musical philosophies for “The Composer Speaks”; for others, a selection was made from previously published material, although the source is frustratingly not identified. Work lists and bibliographies, which include articles from newspapers and non-music periodicals, are substantial, but for major composers are not as detailed as those in *The New Grove*.

Some of the 25 composers included who were born before 1870 are treated patronizingly. One wonders, for instance, at the difference between the “naïve realism” of the sleigh bells in Fry's *Santa*

Claus and the “serious artistic intent” of the taxi horns in Gershwin's *An American in Paris*. Despite Ewen's claims for accuracy, the inevitable errors do occur (e.g. the year of Partch's death is given as 1976 instead of 1974). Nevertheless, this book contains a wealth of information and makes a valuable contribution toward documenting the careers of this century's composers. (G.P. Putnam; \$50)

—R. Allen Lott



Attention band aficionados! Hot off the press are two books (a set, actually) of much interest: *Hallelujah Trombone: The Story of Henry Fillmore* and *The Music of Henry Fillmore and Will Huff*, both by Paul E. Bierley, of John-Philip-Sousa fame. The second, a compact but valuable companion to the first, is a comprehensive catalogue of all of Fillmore's 1030 compositions organized alphabetically by title under the composer's various names (he not only used his own name but also several pseudonyms). It is chock-full of information for each work, including the date of publication or copyright, publication information (excluding modern reprints), dedication, performing ensemble, text author (if applicable), and derivation (if applicable). The sixty-six works by Huff, catalogued separately, are included because Fillmore once used that pseudonym (before realizing that his new “handle” was the name of a living, breathing composer, also in southern Ohio). This list is the first attempt to sort out the Huff from the Fillmore. (Columbus, OH: Integrity Press; \$5.95)

The more substantial of the two books is the biography, and a comprehensive and awesomely detailed work it is. Bierley spent nine years researching his subject, leaving not a stone unturned. James Henry Fillmore, Jr. (1881-1956) was a composer, publisher, band conductor, showman, and educator; he is sometimes referred to as John Philip Sousa's successor. Bierley carefully traces Fillmore's career, from his childhood in Cincinnati and first music “job” (organizing an orchestra at his school) through a stint with a circus band, employment in the family music-publishing firm, increasing activity as a composer, and work as a band conductor, on to his activities in support of music education, primarily through promotion of high-school bands. The book is written in a chatty, informal style, with much detail that helps recreate the ambiance of Fillmore's world. But there is almost too much detail. Bierley seems to have included *everything*, from information on Fillmore's ancestry (which is useful) to the number and variety of trees in the backyard of his Miami home (which is not). (Integrity Press; \$14.95)

—Katherine K. Preston
CUNY Graduate Center

DOWN WITH "SERIOUS" MUSIC! by Elie Siegmeister

The fighting words that follow are those of a longtime fighter-through-music. For at least a half-century, Elie Siegmeister, who recently turned 74 but you'd never guess it, has been speaking out for what he believes—since his angry song of 1933, "Strange Funeral at Braddock," was published by Henry Cowell in New Music. He was fighting for recognition of an American musical tradition long before most people imagined there was any such tradition older than yesterday. As for himself within that tradition: ". . . there has been a kind of underground indigenous musical line, always rejected by the Establishment, from Billings, Billy Walker and Gottschalk, up through Ives, and Gershwin's Porgy and Bess—all of these breaking through after decades of rejection. . . . I feel part of that line. . . ."

When I was a young piano student, I sometimes dreamed of being a composer, and since the music I liked was Beethoven, Bach, and Mussorgsky, my dream was that I too would some day write symphonies, concertos, and maybe even an opera or two. When a pretty girl, hearing that I was a pianist, would ask, "What kind of music do you play, popular or classical?" I would answer, somewhat belligerently, "Classical, of course."

Later, when I had grown up a bit and composed a few pieces, the term "classical" composer began to sit uncomfortably on my shoulders. First, I wasn't dead yet. "Classics" were by composers long gone, with names enshrined in big letters on the covers of those green Peters or yellow Schirmer editions, or even more funereally emblazoned over the proscenium arch of the old Metropolitan Opera House: GLUCK, GOUNOD, DONIZETTI, et al. Second, much of my early music was anti-classical—ironic, jazz-tinged, definitely antagonistic to laurel wreaths and Roman togas.

In due course, however, I did write symphonies, concertos, even an opera or two. So what could I call myself?

"Serious composer," obviously. For a long time, although much of what I wrote took its inspiration from city streets, Coney Island, steel mills, camp meetings, and such, I was stuck with "serious composer."

One day some years ago, I was on a railroad platform in Cologne, waiting for the train to Frankfurt. It was quite late, the train hadn't come, and suddenly I thought I might be on the wrong track. Seeing a group of black American musicians, I went over and asked, "Is this the track for Frankfurt?"

"Yeah, man," came the answer.

"You're musicians?" (I could see the trombone case.) "Are you going to play a gig there?"

"Yeah, man. Say, what do you do?"

"Me? Oh, I'm a musician, too."

"Yeah, what do you play?"

"I don't play anything much; I'm a composer."

"Composer? What kind of music do you write?"

"I suppose you'd call it serious music."

"Well, we're serious jazz men," he answered, and walked away.

I laughed, but his answer gave me pause. Obviously he had a point: "serious" can't belong to only one kind of music. Any good musician is serious about his work, no matter what field he's in. A fine piece of jazz, a first-rate popular song or rock impro-

visation, brings more to the world than those grim "Vortices" or "Diaphonies" that often put us to sleep at academic avantist concerts these days. Anyway, were the composers of *Così fan tutte*, *The Love of Three Oranges*, *L'histoire du soldat*—not to mention Satie's *Parade* or Thomson's *Four Saints in Three Acts*—serious composers? There's no question; it's a stuffy, dull, pretentious term.

So what's the answer?

Quite simply, let's drop it once and for all. In fact, after some months of discussion, that is what the Symphonic and Concert Committee of ASCAP has just done. For years, ASCAP composers were classified as either Popular or Serious. From now on, "serious" is out, and the writers of quartets, symphonies, or electronic pieces are to be called "concert" composers.

"But what about jazz and rock concerts?" you ask. Certainly, jazz, rock, gospel, and country are played at concerts—but their primary locales have traditionally been the tavern, the dance hall, the disco, the night club, the country church, the theater. The composer of sonatas, choral works, song cycles, and orchestral music, on the other hand, writes *specifically* for the concert platform. (Those who write operas or film music remain, of course, opera or film composers.)

Today, if I should meet a pretty girl, I can drop "classical" and "serious" and pass simply as a "concert" or "opera" composer, depending on what I'm working on at the moment. And I recommend to my colleagues, male and female, that they, too, liberate themselves from the curse of "serious."

I. S. A. M. Newsletter, Vol. XII, No. 2/ISSN: 0145-8396

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The I.S.A.M. Newsletter is published in November and May. Copyright ©1983 by the Institute for Studies in American Music. Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, New York 11210. 212/780-5655

Institute for Studies in American Music

Conservatory of Music

Brooklyn College

Brooklyn, New York 11210

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