

NEWSLETTER

INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN AMERICAN MUSIC

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

Volume XIV, Number 2

May 1985

STUDYING AMERICAN MUSIC *by Richard Crawford*

In recent years the outgoing president of the American Musicological Society has delivered a valedictory address to the members attending the annual meeting of the society. Last October 27th in Philadelphia, Richard Crawford ended his term as A.M.S. president with such an address. His topic was so precisely attuned to the past, present, and future concerns of I.S.A.M. that we wished we could publish the address; we consider ourselves, and now our readers, fortunate to have gotten Professor Crawford's permission to do just that.

Studying American music, a slightly eccentric pastime for a musicologist not so long ago, now seems more and more like a perfectly natural thing to do.

In 1970 the American Musicological Society met in Toronto, Ontario. One afternoon was set aside for members to divide into groups for discussions of their specialties—chant studies, Renaissance *musica ficta*, the classical sonata, Baroque performance practice, and the like. I recall walking past the rooms in which these groups were meeting, some of them 50 or 60 strong, on my way to the American-music session, located in a cage-like cubicle deep in the bowels of the library stacks. Hardly more than a dozen souls found their way to this meeting, which had the spirit of a gathering of wallflowers. As I recall it, we spent most of our time consoling each other about the low esteem in which our colleagues held our interests.

Let's now move the clock ahead to March 1984. The scene is the spring meeting of the Board of the Directors of the very same American society that 14 years earlier in Toronto had consigned its American wing to the garage. Two issues that arose at this more recent meeting are worth noting here. The first was a proposal that funds be committed to guarantee completion of an AMS-sponsored edition of the complete works of William Billings. The second was a report from a committee charged with planning the Society's own series of American music publications. Both the money for Billings and the proposal for the national series were endorsed by the Board. Moreover, just a week later in Boston was held the annual meeting of the Sonneck Society, named after the pioneer musicologist Oscar G. Sonneck and devoted to the study of music in America. In four days of sessions, this group heard some 30 papers and both daily and nightly performances, all focused on American music. The 200 or so who attended the meeting totaled about a quarter of the organization's members. Clearly, all is no longer quiet on the American front, musicologically speaking. The wallflowers have not only been welcomed into their national society; they have gone and set up a separate dance and have hired a band of their own.

What changed between 1970 and 1984? In a word, perspective. First, concertgoers, record buyers, and, eventually, scholars

were reminded that the American past was full of riches if one knew where to look for them. These discoveries required no radical shift in perspective, of course, but simply a willingness to search in a place believed to be barren. It's standard practice in our field for scholars to enter the caves of the past looking for lost or hidden treasure and to appear triumphantly some time later with the precious artifact in hand.

The growing momentum of American-music studies has been the result of a sharper shift in perspective than that. Let's describe it this way: rather than simply exploring the cave of the past for more hidden treasure to be hauled back to civilization, the scholar's goal is to make a map of that cave in as much detail as possible. If treasures appear in the course of mapmaking, fine. But excavating treasure is not the chief purpose of the expedition. Making precise observations on the cave's terrain is. Where, if at all, is treasure to be found? What other items surround it, and what is its relationship to them? Can it be extracted? What effect might removal have upon it and upon the cave? As you can see, our mapmaker's view is much different from that of a musical prospector. The prospector knows precisely what he's after and has little concern for the rest. The mapmaker is after *all* of it; he seeks to reveal the whole so that the parts are seen in relation to each other. The mapmaker's responsibility is to context.



Richard Crawford (New York City, March 1985)

STUDYING (continued)

These metaphors of caves, treasures, and maps are borrowed here to suggest that scholars of American music are more and more engaged these days in a process of exploration. If caves are hidden terrain of the past, if treasures are good pieces of music waiting to be discovered in them, and if maps are historical narratives, then the maps we are now making go far beyond the X-marks-the-spot, Long-John-Silver variety. For scholars of American music in recent years have more and more looked beyond the selective, aesthetically dominated perspective of the concert hall and begun to consider any kind of music made in America as potentially significant. They have broadened their focus from Music with a capital M to *music-making*: in John Blacking's phrase, from product to process—the entire process of music-making in the United States.

If studying American music means not only winnowing out the best of it (the product) but focusing on the circumstances and means of its making (the process), then I'd like to suggest that our scholarly agenda can be summarized in five questions:

1. What music have Americans made?
2. Who has made music in America?
3. Where and in what circumstances has music been made here?
4. How has the making of music here been financially supported?
5. What American music is the most important and why?

The questions posed here are vast ones. The first, "What music have Americans made?", is bibliographical. The second, "Who has made music in America?", relies on biographical research. The third, "Where and in what circumstances has music been made here?", can only be answered by regional studies. The fourth, "How has the making of music here been financially supported?", leads into sociology. Finally, the fifth question, "What American music is the most important and why?", brings us back to the realm of stylistic perceptions, structural analysis, and aesthetic judgment that is widely considered to be historical musicology's highest calling.

Any one of these questions is big enough in itself to occupy a scholar or group of scholars for a lifetime. We have begun to answer some of them, but no systematic approach to any one, much less all, has yet been carried through. Since we've claimed mapmaking as our goal, let's glance briefly at the current state of mapmaking in some of the realms we're talking about here: bibliography, biography, regional studies, financial support. If we are to map American musical history from these perspectives, how much of our terrain has already been taken care of?

"Bibliography is the backbone of history." These words were a favorite proverb of the late Irving Lowens, following the lead of his spiritual mentor, Oscar Sonneck. If we were to apply Lowens's proverb to American-music bibliography with the famous spiritual *Dry Bones* in mind, the foot-bone would indeed be connected to the ankle-bone, and the ankle-bone connected to the shin-bone. For, thanks to Evans, Shaw-Shoemaker, Sonneck, and Wolfe, printed secular American music is catalogued through 1825, and before long, Britton, Lowens, and Crawford will have taken care of sacred music printed

through 1810. [Bibliographical references appear on page 13.] Along about the knee-bone, however, ossiferous matter gives way to cartilage. X rays of the whole reveal why the patient, though owning a couple of strong ribs and a fully-developed clavicle, droops above the knee like a Salvador Dali watch and is unable to stand up, much less walk. There is no comprehensive bibliographic control of American music after 1825.

Bibliography, of course, means more than just printed music. It means writings on music and discography, both of which appear in Haywood. Discography, given the nature of the sources, is quite slippery, though the work of Rust, Jepsen, Allen, and others in jazz and Oja in 20th-century concert music provides a network of fact upon which narrative accounts of the terrain can be built. (These are the ribs and clavicle I referred to above.)

Another arm of bibliography—the thematic index, whose completeness itself rests upon bibliographic rigor—is indispensable to studying large repertoires. Keller and Rabson's work, covering secular music performed in 18th-century America, and including both manuscript and printed sources, forms a foil to Sonneck's and Wolfe's bibliographies. Temperley and Manns have catalogued sacred fusing-tunes in England and America to 1800. And Temperley's forthcoming index, an electronic data base, will cover Anglo-American psalmody and hymnody from the 16th century to 1820. All three of these indexes incorporate both English and American music, which is the only sensible way to treat early American musical culture, ineluctably a blend of the two.

Having noted a few of our bibliographical maps—and we must add Jackson to our roster too—we should recognize that our bibliographies, discographies, and indexes tell us what music Americans have made only in the way that the Philadelphia phone book tells us who the people are who live in that fair city. Without interpretation, bibliography is simply raw material from which answers can be drawn. But without bibliography there can be no real scholarship, no work for which all existing data are incontrovertible and the practitioners of which shrink from no inconvenience of drudgery in their search for information.

Now let's turn to the question "Who has made music in America?" We might begin to answer it by identifying four categories of music-makers and weighing our chances of finding out about them: 1) many people, working in oral tradition, whose lives have left almost no trace on the written record; 2) others whose recreational music-making can be glimpsed in general, if not documented in detail; 3) others for whom music has been a profession, and whose careers can be traced through bibliographical and biographical detective work; and finally, 4) musicians whose careers have earned them scholarly attention in articles, monographs, dissertations, books, and biographical dictionaries. This last group, a very small one indeed, can be thought of as the tip of a pyramid. Let's examine it for a minute.

Accurate biographical data on American musicians that *somebody* has considered important is easy to come by. Leading

(continued on page 10)

I.S.A.M. MATTERS

It's taken a while, and much research, but I.S.A.M. has finally chosen its theme song. It's Parker McGee's *American Music*, as recorded by the Pointer Sisters back in 1982 on their album *So Excited!* (Planet BXL1-4355). From the intro's affectionate parody of *The Star-Spangled Banner* through the irresistible buoyancy of the tune itself ("American music! Play it on your stereo!! . . .") to the long closing fadeout, the piece is a real grabber. Try it! You'll like it!

On the fellowship front. Our I.S.A.M. Senior Research Fellow this spring, Roger Reynolds, delivered a pair of probing lectures on his compositional approaches and attitudes. Called *A Searcher's Path*, they included a first talk on "Methods and Materials . . . Deciding (Finally) What Goes with What" and a second on "Structure and Experience . . . Fashioning Those Roller Coasters in the Mind." We look forward to publishing them as an I.S.A.M. monograph. . . . Next fall's Research Fellow will be James Lincoln Collier. Fresh from his critically acclaimed book *Louis Armstrong* (1983), which followed his panoramic *The Making of Jazz* (1979), Mr. Collier will direct a seminar on Duke Ellington (on whom he is now working at a major book for Oxford University Press). . . . And spring of 1986 will see Doris J. Dyen on hand as Senior Research Fellow. Not surprisingly, in view of her work over the past decade or so on ethnic musics in Florida, Alabama, Georgia, and Pennsylvania, she will lead a seminar on ethnic musics in New York and, among other things, will invite the seminar students to look into

their own ethnic musical roots. . . . Former fellow Richard Crawford has just completed his delivery of the prestigious Bloch Lectures at the University of California, Berkeley. Under the overall title "The American Musical Landscape," they proceeded from the general to the particular: "Cosmopolitan and Provincial: American Musical Historiography"; "Professions and Patronage: American Musical Economics"; "William Billings (1746-1800) and American Psalmody"; "George Frederick Root (1820-1895) and American Vocal Music"; "Duke Ellington and His Orchestra"; and "George Gershwin's *I Got Rhythm*." . . . Carol J. Oja, former I.S.A.M. Research Assistant and still Research/Editorial Consultant, has accepted appointment to the Brooklyn College Conservatory as assistant professor. She recently defended—successfully, we add (if anyone had any doubts)—her Ph.D. dissertation, *Colin McPhee (1900-1964): A Composer in Two Worlds*.

I.S.A.M. monographs at various stages of production: Andrew Lamb's *Jerome Kern in Edwardian London*, which we will publish this summer, in recognition of Kern's centenary; William Lichtenwanger's massive catalogue raisonné *The Music of Henry Cowell*, which for the first time will bring order to that composer's immense, confused, and (till now) confusing oeuvre; and Edward A. Berlin's *Reflections and Research on Ragtime*, with his fellowship lectures "Unanswered Questions in Ragtime: Problems and Prospects" and "Dance Folios during the Ragtime Era: A Computer-Aided Study."

BLUEGRASS BREAKDOWN

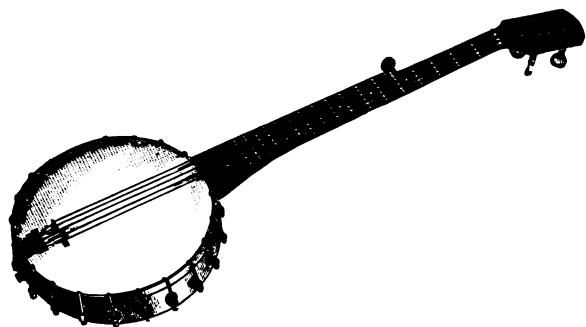
The Making of the Old Southern Sound

Robert Cantwell

"This is so superior a book as to make the handful of sketchy histories and biographies as ephemeral as newspaper stories. It is brilliant, original, superbly thought out, impressively researched and dazzlingly written . . . a wonder and a work of art."—Doug Green, of *Riders in the Sky*, and author of *Country Roots*.

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NEWS AND INFORMATION

Further Along on the Path to AmeriGrove. By the time you read this, all copy for *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*—some 5,000 articles by about 1,000 authors—will have gone to the typesetter. The dictionary, definitively retitled and its format stabilized at four 8½ x 11 (RAMH-size) volumes, will be published in September 1986. Its list price is \$450 (guaranteed for orders placed before 1 December 1985), discounted to \$385 for orders prepaid by 1 December 1985; add \$10 for shipping and handling on all orders. Write to Grove's Dictionaries, 15 East 26th Street, NYC 10010.

Painfully we report . . . that John Knowles Paine's longstanding claim to priority as the first American university professor of music (at Harvard, 1875-) has just been resoundingly denied. Rival claimants have appeared. One is **Hughe A. Clarke** (b 15 August 1839), first to hold the chair of Professor of the Science of Music established at the University of Pennsylvania in 1875. Whether, however, he was actually appointed in that year, or not until 1876 (in which case Paine still beat him out), is not wholly clear from the university's records. But there is no doubt about **Frédéric Louis Ritter** (as we learn in a recent note from Mary Jane Corry of SUNY at New Paltz). In 1878 Ritter was named Professor of Music and Director of the School of Music at Vassar College. But this was only the last in a series of his appointments there: in 1873 he had been given the title of Professor of Music, and way back in 1867 that of Professor of Vocal and Instrumental Music. . . . *But wait! Hold the presses!!* A second note from Corry proposes an even earlier candidate, also at Vassar—**Edward Wiebe**, appointed Professor of Music in 1865 (as attested by the *Historical Sketch of Vassar College*, Green Press, 1876). Thus it seems to be Wiebe over Ritter over Paine . . . and Vassar over Harvard, by a long shot.

Sheet-music collectors need to know about *The Sheet Music Exchange*, now in its third volume. This magazine contains information on songwriters, illustrators, and publishers, useful tips on collecting, and classified ads for people wanting to buy or sell sheet music. Subscriptions are \$12 a year for six issues; a sample copy is \$2. Write to P. O. Box 2136, Winchester, VA 22601.

Cassettes from CRI. Let us now (again) praise famous men (and women): those at CRI. Not only does this record company—alone, we imagine, at least among firms of such longevity (since 1956) and productivity (over 400 LPs to date)—keep every disc it issues in press and available for purchase; now it has begun a cassette series of reissues from its own catalogue. Ten cassettes begin this "Anthology" series, and all are of American music. Each has about an hour's worth of superb performances, on premium chromium dioxide tape. Nine are devoted to individual composers: Partch, Sessions, Carter, Del Tredici, Cowell, Harrison, Rorem, Crumb, and Thomson (on ACS 6001 to 6009 respectively); the tenth (ACS 6010) contains electronic music by Varèse, Ussachevsky, Babbitt, and Luening ("The Pioneers"). List price for each cassette is \$12.98; direct-mail customers pay \$10.98 plus shipping and handling; all ten tapes cost \$89.98 plus shipping and handling. Order direct from CRI, 170 West 74th Street, NYC 10023.

Anyone know this tune?

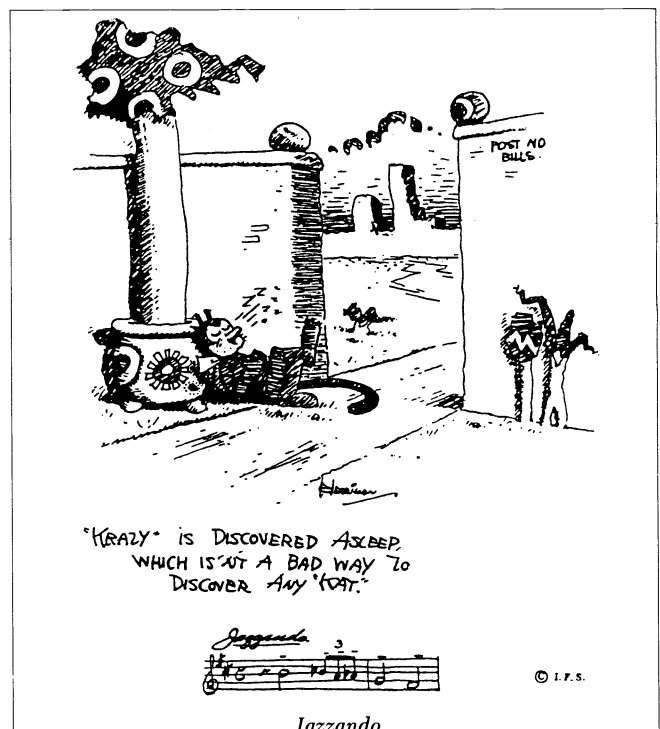


Right: it's the main theme of Frederick Delius's *Appalachia* (1896), which is subtitled "Variations on an Old Slave Song"—one presumably heard by Delius during his brief stays as a young man amid the orange groves near Jacksonville, Florida, and the tobacco plantations around Danville, Virginia. But can anyone nail down the identity of the "old slave song"? Gloria Jahoda, in her book *The Other Florida* (pp. 335-36), claims to have heard Florida blacks sing the tune in the 1960s to this text:

There's no trouble in that land where I'm bound;
There's no trouble in that land where I'm bound.
There's no trouble and no sorrow and no pain at all,
No trouble in that land where I'm bound.

There's no sickness in that land where I'm bound;
There's no sickness in that land where I'm bound.
There's no sickness and no cryin' and no death at all,
No sickness in that land where I'm bound.

But that doesn't quite make a perfect fit with Delius's tune. And we've not found any black-music scholars (or others) who can go beyond Jahoda either to substantiate or contradict her claim. (Not even Jeff Driggers, chief of the Art and Music Department of the Jacksonville Public Library, and Honorary Life Director of The Delius Association of Florida, with whom we've had some pleasant correspondence.) Anybody out there who can help?



IVES AND WHITMAN by Michael Tilson Thomas*

Performances of and commentary on Ives's music tend to emphasize the innovative aspect of his musical technique or the nostalgic "Americana" of his use of musical quotations. Both of these are indeed elements of his technique, but they are there only to serve his larger purpose, which is expression. Perhaps no other composer has even attempted to express such an amazing range of ideas and feelings. I know of no musical parallel to his work. But I have always felt that he had a literary precedent in the work of Walt Whitman.

Whitman and Ives had many thematic elements in common: memories of childhood; an aching yearning for simpler times,

times of real feelings; a keen and affectionate sense of observation of all things in life; and a belief in the promise of the American people and their democracy. Above all, they believed in a life of plain speaking, singing, and doing which recognized the Universal and sought harmony with it.

Recently I was excited to read the following sketch by Whitman (thought to date from the late 1860s) for a poem (never completed) on music/opera. *How Ivesian it is!* I hope it will stimulate others' imaginations in recognizing Ives's work as a continuation in music of such themes and purposes as those of Whitman's work.

*The well-known conductor phoned us in great excitement over the Whitman "Theme for piece/poem" and kindly agreed to share with our readers his reactions. The facsimile of Whitman's manuscript is from the Trent Collection, William R. Perkins Library, Duke University, and is reproduced with permission. The transcription is from *Faint*

Clews and Indirections: Manuscripts of Walt Whitman and His Family, by Clarence Gohdes and Rollo G. Silver, pp. 13-14. Copyright 1949 by Duke University Press. Copyright renewed by Duke Press 1976. Used by permission.

Theme for piece
poem

An opera

? an opera in a dream
—different singers & characters,
—the suggestions, associations

Some old song & hymn? Rock
me to sleep mother?
? Rock'd on the cradle of the deep?
—with its memories, associations
—of where I last heard it,
in Hospital —
—? some typical appropriate
? tune, or ? hymn — or ? dirge
played by the band (some dirge
or ? opera passage
or dead march)
Calling up the whole
dead of the war
The march in last act of the opera

Theme for piece
poem

An opera
? an opera in a dream
—different singers & characters,
—the suggestions, associations
Some old song? hymn? Rock
me to sleep mother?
? Rock'd on the cradle of the deep?
—With its memories, associations
—of where I last heard it,
in Hospital. —
—? some typical appropriate
? tune, or ? hymn— or ? somth'g
played by the band (? some dirge
or ? opera passage or dead ? march
Calling up the whole
dead of the war
The march in last act of *La Gazza Ladra*
One Stanzas must describe
a strong *triumphal*
instrumental & vocal *chorus*
as of *triumphant man*—triumphant
over temptation & all
weakness & ?

[verso]

One Stanzas must describe
a *loud strong triumphal*
instrumental & vocal *Chorus*
as of *triumphant man* — triumphal
over temptation & all
weakness & ?

BEHIND THE BEAT *with Mark Tucker*

Bill Evans died in 1980, not long after his fifty-first birthday. He had begun his professional career in the early 1950s as a sideman in dance bands and combos. In 1956 he made his first recording leading a trio. For a brief but important time in 1958 he was a member of the Miles Davis Sextet. After that, through the 1960s and up until the end, he did his best work in trios, in a duo with bassist Eddie Gomez, or alone.

Bill Evans: The Complete Riverside Recordings (Berkeley, CA: Fantasy, Inc., 1984) fills 18 discs and covers nearly seven years of this artist's recording career, between 1956 and 1963. Most of the selections were released earlier, either on the original Riverside albums or in reissue packages from the 1970s. Producer Orrin Keepnews has added some alternate takes and a few tunes not issued before. But the greatest revelation comes from a series of solos Evans played one January night in 1963: never before released, these contain some of the most beautiful Bill Evans on record.

The new Riverside set shows how far jazz recordings have come from the days when personnel listings and dates were considered extras. The handsome accompanying booklet is graced with a knowing essay by Martin Williams and Keepnews's first-hand descriptions of each session, many photographs, and complete discographical information; there is even a title index. The composer best represented is Evans himself, with 23 of the 112 tunes. Richard Rodgers comes next with six, then Gershwin and Porter with five each. The remainder are popular songs both familiar and fresh (like Earl Zindars's lovely "Elsa" and "How My Heart Sings"); pieces by other jazz musicians (among them John Lewis, Miles Davis, and bassist Scott LaFaro); and even a few evergreens like "Danny Boy" and "Santa Claus is Coming to Town." These last two present completely different sides of Evans. The Irish air has a gentle nostalgia and major-mode sadness worthy of the best sentimental song tradition, from Thomas Moore to Willard Robison. "Santa Claus," on the other hand, reveals a carefree Evans swinging along with a light touch and a smile in the direction of both Monk and Mozart.

The Riverside recordings offer many examples of Evans's celebrated harmonic imagination and introspective lyricism. They also highlight other, equally important aspects of his style. On the earliest session (27 September 1956) Evans's touch is hard and his approach aggressive. The spiky dissonance of Monk runs through "Five," and many of Evans's single-note lines have the febrile energy and sharp accents of Bud Powell. By the second session, late in 1958, Evans is a different pianist, more restrained and more interested in sonority. The pacing of "Young and Foolish" shows the dramatic effect Miles Davis had on Evans's treatment of ballads. It is Davis, I believe, more than any other musician, who shaped Bill Evans's musical persona; this is especially clear on Evans's interpretations of "Blue in Green" and "I Loves You, Porgy."

Evans's rhythmic experiments became bolder over the years. In the reprise of the unaccompanied "Easy to Love" of 1962 his right-hand melody keeps lagging behind the beat while his left hand adds tension by leaping unpredictably from mid-register to bass (like some crazy parody of James P. Johnson).

And when the melody of "Polka Dots and Moonbeams" returns, Evans uses triplets to both stretch and compress it; his unceasing rhythmic variations work hand in hand with new harmonic shadings.

It would be unfair to claim all of the glories of the Riverside set for Evans alone. His trio with Scott LaFaro and Paul Motian remains one of the highest achievements in jazz ensemble-playing. Throughout the famous 25 June 1961 Village Vanguard session—here presented in its most complete form to date—this ensemble's flexibility and three-way communication are astounding. The opening of "My Foolish Heart" displays the trio's perfect reconciliation of solo and group functions. Evans is heard with other bassists and drummers, and also in a few larger groups. Two of his most sympathetic partners are the guitarist Jim Hall and the late tenor saxophonist Zoot Sims.

On the previously unissued 1963 solos Evans seems to be playing in the privacy of his living room. You can almost hear the pianist *listening* to himself—savoring the sound of each note, the weight of each chord. "When I Fall in Love" has the *Innigkeit* of a Schumann song and the soft tone-colors of a Debussy prelude. Never has tempo—or the absence of tempo—figured as such an important emotional factor. On many of these performances time seems to stand still—or, like Messiaen's quartet, perhaps Evans is playing for the end of time. Messiaen wrote his piece in prison; Evans here seems imprisoned in some inner chamber of his soul. The cover photograph shows him bent low over the keyboard, almost curling into himself. The self-reflexive posture illustrates the way Evans sounds on these solos.

Had I selected the color scheme for this set I might have turned to blue or green because of the late-night meditative quality in so much of Evans's playing. Yet the designer's blood-red is a better choice. For the music of Bill Evans came from a place deep within. It flowed strong, and it pulsed with life. How his heart sang!

* * *

Have you ever heard Coleman Hawkins take a bass saxophone solo? a 1926 dance-band arrangement by a 21-year-old Harold Arlen? an obbligato played on the goofus? All of these turn up on *Fletcher Henderson and the Dixie Stompers, 1925-1928* (Swing Records SW-8445/6).^{*} The 33 sides recorded by the "Dixie Stompers" (a *nom de disque* assumed by Henderson while under contract to another company) give a representative slice of mid-to-late 1920s dance music as played by one of the top bandleaders of the time. The repertoire includes popular songs ("Ain't She Sweet," "St. Louis Blues"), foreign-flavored fox trots

^{*}The goofus, according to Walter C. Allen's magnificent *Hendersonia* (p. 115), is more properly called a "cuenaphone" (also spelled "cuenophone" and "queenophone"). It "looked like a piccolo with piano keys" and "constantly needed repairs"; perhaps that's why Don Redman plays it on "Get it Fixed"!

Hawkins's bass sax solo is on "Spanish Shawl"; the Arlen arrangement is "Dynamite."

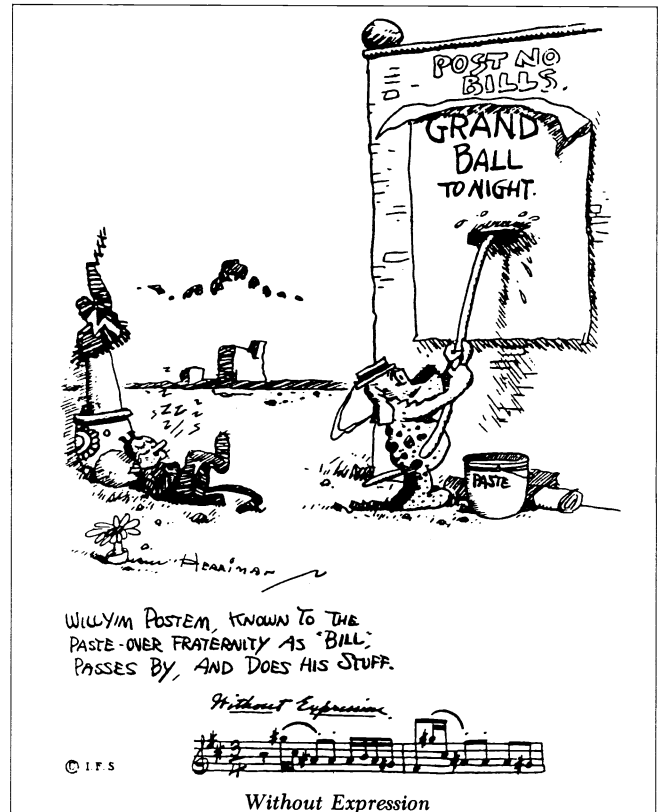
(*Hendersonia* [printed by the author in 1973] may be ordered from OLB Jazz, Box 2263, Providence, RI 02907.)

REGARDING RECORDINGS

Albright . . . all right! I first heard William Albright play ragtime in Paris in 1969 and was knocked out by the range of expression he found in the genre (and projected in smashing performances). He has not gained the cachet he deserves. One reason is that he fearlessly works at times in veins that are not all that rich in pure musical gold. Take his Musical Heritage Society recording *The Symphonic Jazz of James P. Johnson (1894-1955)* (MHS 4888W; 1984), for instance. Leaving aside the misnomer (the music is all for solo piano), one can greet only with a historian's curiosity such touching but pathetic attempts at large-scale composition as Johnson's Piano Concerto in A-flat (*Concerto Jazz-A-Mine*) of 1934, the second movement of which survives in this solo piano version of 1947, or his 13-minute "negro rhapsody" *Yamekraw* (published as a piano solo in 1927). These suggest the light-years that separate George Gershwin, for example, or even Duke Ellington from almost everyone else who worked at building the same sorts of material into large structures. On the other hand, "April in Harlem," the only surviving movement from Johnson's *Harlem Symphony* (1932), is a straightforward blues-based piece, and the better for it. And Albright and Johnson really hit their stride (so to speak) with the rag *Fascination* (1917), the stride-shout *Keep Off the Grass*, and the boogie-woogie *A-flat Dream* (1939). You can hear Albright in fine fettle, and more consistently interesting repertoires, on *Sweet Sixteenths: A Ragtime Concert* (MHS 4578A; cassette MHC 6578F) and *Albright Plays Albright* (MHS 4253T; cassette MHC 6253W).

Seeking an epiphany, anyone? Try *Say Amen, Somebody* (DRG Records, SB2L-12584), titled as is the documentary film (1983) from which most of its music comes. The film centers on the gospel singer **Willie Mae Ford Smith** (at age 77) and other gospel artists who assembled in St. Louis for a tribute in her honor. The double album succeeds well in capturing the film's mixture of affection, adulation, reverence, and buoyant jubilation. One tender moment finds the patriarchal **Thomas A. Dorsey** (then 83) and Sallie Martin joining in, ever so gently, on a recording Dorsey made in 1932 of *If you see my Savior*. But mostly the tone and tempo are joyfully boisterous and irresistibly infectious, in the hands of seasoned gospeleers like Smith herself, the O'Neal Twins, and the Barrett Sisters, as well as a raw young riproaring talent like **Zella Jackson Price**. And there is an uninhibited intimacy to the proceedings that invites a shared catharsis and opens doors to a genuine epiphany. Richard Schickel, in the international edition of *Time* for 2 May 1983, summed it up perfectly: "*Say Amen, Somebody* is a [recording] to which even a tone-deaf atheist will say amen."

Victor Herbert: Souvenir (Arabesque 6529; 1984) is a sampler of operetta excerpts, salon pieces (*Badinage, Souvenir, Karma*, the "Cuban" movement from the *Suite of Serenades*), and the *22nd Regiment* march. Donald Hunsberger, best-known as the conductor of the Eastman Wind Ensemble, here leads the Eastman-Dryden Orchestra—and that's what's interesting about the recording: the group is a 23-member turn-of-the-century theater orchestra, with 11 strings (4-2-2-2-1), 4 woodwinds, 6 brass, piano, and percussion; and all the music is done in authentic period arrangements, either by Otto Langley or Harold Sanford (the latter a longtime arranger for Herbert), or from the



composer's own orchestrations. (The "Dryden" of the ensemble's name comes from the Dryden Theater at the George Eastman House, which has been the venue of silent films, with accompaniments done by the orchestra.) The performances, only slightly brass-heavy, and the recording quality are equally crisp.

Easy Listening. The **Brooklyn Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra** under Lukas Foss's direction is the mainstay of a diverting disc from Gramavision Records, 260 West Broadway, NYC 10013 (GR 7006; 1983). Lou Harrison's *At the Tomb of Charles Ives* (1964) is a 3'40" confirmation that he is the best orchestrator we have. Vladimir Ussachevsky's *Divertimento 1980-1981*, in five sections, is a Coplandesque diversion featuring the composer's hobbyhorse, the E.V.I. (Electronic Valve Instrument), a kind of mouth-on electronic synthesizer; its final cadenza is absolutely ruined, but marvelously so, by funnily distorted electronic accompaniment. *Party Pieces*, by Cage, Cowell, Harrison, and Thomson, are compositions by committee—each piece composed successively in bits, the bits already written not seen by the man whose turn it is to compose the next one—and about as significant as you can guess; the work is saved only by a witty arrangement for winds and piano by Robert Hughes. Leo Smit's *Academic Graffiti* (1962; rev. 1982) is scored for "histrionic voice" and chamber ensemble and is a Walton-esque *Facade*-like work with amusing texts by Auden and Smith himself ("Mallarmé had too much to say . . ."). This is "classical" American music's answer to "easy listening."

—H.W.H.

ALL THE THINGS THEY ARE: Comments on Kern *by Milton Babbitt*

The secret life of composer Milton Babbitt includes a not-so-secret love affair with American musical theater and its songs. His jacket notes for an album of songs by Jerome Kern, sung by Joan Morris with William Bolcom at the piano (Silver Linings, Arabesque 6515), were cited in our review of the disc last November. They are rather special in their knowing, composerly comments on the music. When we learned that Mr. Babbitt's original text was longer and more detailed than the published version, we sought—and got—permission from him and Arabesque to print it.

The attributes of care and craft which Jerome Kern's fellow songwriters could only have been impressed by are surely those which sensitive laymen can only be affected by. Like Richard Rodgers, George Gershwin, Harold Arlen, and Stephen Sondheim—all of whom, along with Victor Herbert, expressed their admiration for his work—Kern wrote only for the Broadway and London stages and Hollywood films; like them, he was not a composer of isolated popular songs. ("The Last Time I Saw Paris" is singular in every respect, including the reversal of Kern's normal order of creation of words and music.) But, unlike Gershwin, Arlen, and Rodgers, Kern wrote few songs for revues, where a song was a thing in itself, and not an element in a dramatic succession; manifestly, the initial condition for any Kern song was the theatrical context, and even if some of the songs were peripatetic, moving in and out of a number of shows before finding a resting place ("Bill" found in *Show Boat* its third and final home), they were originally conceived in terms of their dramatic pertinence, and finally placed by virtue of their even greater appropriateness.

Thus it is appropriate that the earliest song in this collection, "Rolled Into One" (1917), is from a Princess Theatre production. Whether or not one feels qualified to agree or differ with Alec Wilder's judgment that Kern's early work was "in no way indicative of what was to come" (and to the extent of my knowledge of the earlier songs I basically do), the Princess Theatre was the locale of the earliest realizations of Kern's personal conception of musical theater—intimate musical theater, chamber musical theater. The Princess, which opened in 1913, was small: its seating capacity was a mere 299; the stage was small, allowing no "spectaculars"; the orchestra was necessarily small; the two sets of each production were simple, and the books, though perhaps naive and surely simple, were direct and contemporary. It is touching to realize that Kern's last Broadway musical, *Very Warm for May* (1939), was for good or ill more in the spirit of the Princess shows than of the more exotic *Cat and the Fiddle* or *Music in the Air*, or the more elaborate *Show Boat*.

Kern was over thirty when he wrote "Go, Little Boat" (1917), and already a veteran of some dozen years of writing for the London and New York stages; and in "Go, Little Boat" there are strong indications of what was to come later, even much later. The music for P. G. Wodehouse's words "Flow, river, carry me to him I love" embodies a harmonic succession that is not only unusual for the musical-comedy stage of its time but intimates, even pretentiously, the music of, say, the releases (the "B's" of the familiar AABA pattern) of "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes" and "I Won't Dance"—even of "Long Ago (and Far Away)" with its singular chorus of four parallel musical statements, the first and third at the tonic major level but the second and fourth at levels defining the third and fifth of the minor tonic, the fourth section then smoothly returning, for its last

four measures, to the initial level. "All Through the Day" from the film *Centennial Summer* displays similar characteristics, differently deployed, and Kern's final song, "Nobody Else But Me," written for the 1946 revival of *Show Boat*, is the most refinedly daring example of his harmonic departures.

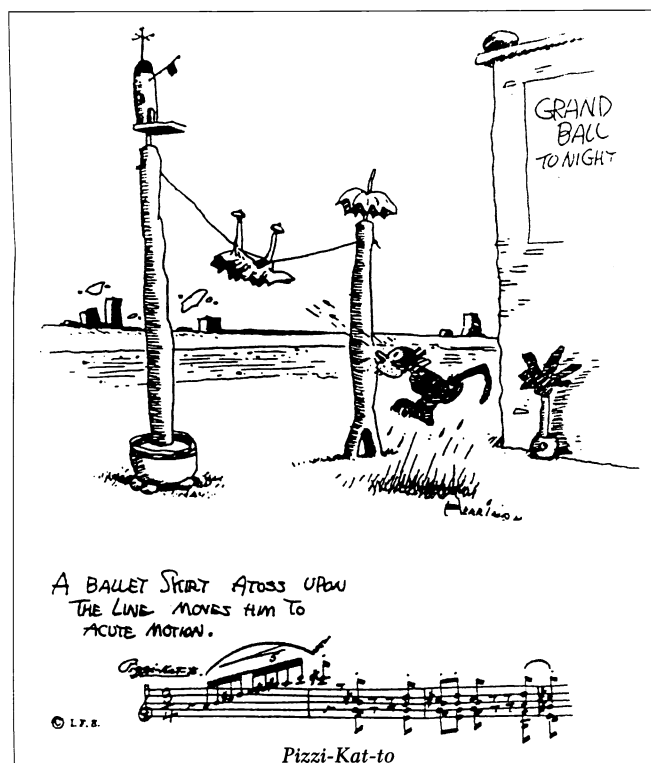
But Kern's songs do not rest upon, or melodically exemplify, luxuriant or aberrant chords. He is eternally a melodic, linear, vocal composer of songs for voice and piano. Even his most un-critical admirers make no defense for his one ambitious and extended orchestral work, *Mark Twain*, which Gerald Bordman, whose *Jerome Kern* is a meticulously, exhaustively researched biography, describes—kindly—as "diffuse" and "meandering." But within his *métier* Kern's composerly ambitions to unify his songs induced, for instance, new fusions of the two basic sections of a song, usually termed the "verse" and the "chorus." In fact, Kern designated none of the verses in the present collection as such; and as early as "Cleopatterer" (1917) he labelled the "chorus" (or refrain) "burden," a term primarily associated with 15th-century English carols; in "Bungalow in Quogue" (also 1917) it became "burthen" (a variant of "burden") and remained so forevermore, presumably as an indication of the artistic distance Kern sought to achieve from his peers' "choruses." In "All the Things You Are" (1939), which is a celebrated member of the company of harmonically ambitious songs, the verse in G major moves simply and suavely into a burthen in A-flat major, thus functioning as an extended leading-tone to the latter. But the release of the burthen, which might otherwise appear as just another deviant Kern "bridge," proceeds immediately to a decisive G-major cadence, recalling explicitly the pitch level of the verse; moreover, the vocal line of the first measure of the verse is echoed in the second measure of the burthen—not to mention the very last measures of the song—in the piano part of the published song. Such integration of verse and burthen occurs most familiarly and extendedly in "I've Told Ev'ry Little Star" (1932), where the verse appears, virtually unchanged, as the release. But such cross-reference is to be heard as early as "Rolled Into One" (1917), where the opening measures of the verse reappear as the second measure of the refrain.

One can harbor, not ungratefully, two causes for regrets in reviewing the remarkable achievement of Jerome Kern. One is that he apparently did not regard himself as competent to provide his own lyrics (though he did write them for a few of his early songs). For I find many of his songs burdened (if not burthened) by inadequate, even unworthy, lyrics. One need not be concerned, perhaps, for the fate of songs that have survived "I chaffed them" ("Smoke Gets in Your Eyes") or "sequester'd days" ("Yesterdays") by virtue of their musical strength. But such awareness does not lessen the discomfort of hearing Ira Gershwin's "Life's a four-leaf clover. Sessions of depressions are through," in "Long Ago." Even more destructive to the fusion

KERN (continued)

of music and words are such settings as that of the unaccented syllable "swer" of "answer" ("I've Told Ev'ry Little Star") to the highest note of the song, as the realization of its largest upward leap, or of "Though men think it strange" ("Rolled Into One") with an initial accent on "though" ("men" to be sung on a tiny sixteenth-note). Beyond the multitude of such sonic and rhythmic awkwardnesses, rarely is there reflected, even in a clever Dorothy Fields lyric, the general care and craft, and the specific subtleties of variation and reference, so often displayed in the music. Perhaps one explanation—but not a justification—is Kern's invariable procedure of writing his music first. There is also evidence that he was relatively unconcerned with, even insensitive to, issues of text-setting. Bordman reports Kern's impatient displeasure with Leo Robin for the lengthy time he spent, in all awareness and conscientiousness, on writing the lyrics for such songs in *Centennial Summer* as "In Love in Vain," which contains just two terminal rhymes, both rhyming with the title, and less apparent means of sonic association, such as assonance and consonance within and between lines, to make for the most unobtrusively fluid fit of any words to a Kern melody.

The second, sadder cause of regret is that when Kern collapsed on Park Avenue and 57th Street in New York on November 5, 1945, and died on November 11 he left not even a hint of how he would apply the intricate aspirations intimated in such songs as "All Through the Day" and "Nobody Else But Me" to a musical of the Wild West—the projected *Annie Oakley* with lyrics by Dorothy Fields, which became *Annie Get Your Gun* with words and music by Kern's friend Irving Berlin. We shall remain, however, happily beholden for all the things Kern did leave us.



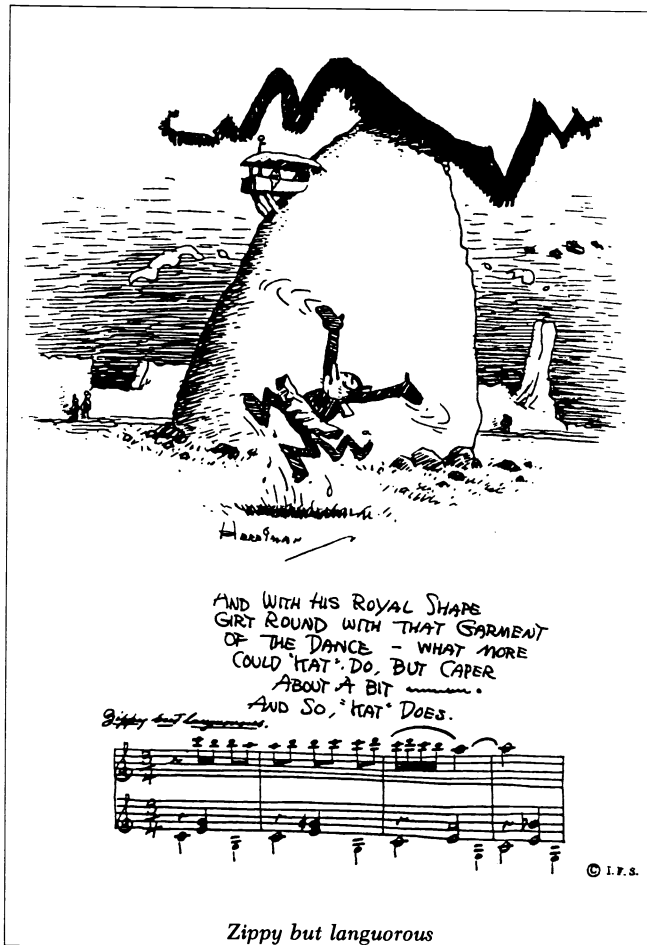
SCORE/RECORDING COMBOS

It's helpful to have available the scores of unfamiliar music on recordings, and vice versa. Two couplings of this sort deserve mention:

The Player-Piano Man. Now that he has been awarded a coveted MacArthur fellowship and has broken his forty-year self-imposed exile in Mexico to appear in various American and European cities, Conlon Nancarrow and his stream of unique player-piano studies are no longer a remote legend. And Peter Garland and Charles Amirkhanian—working more or less independently, though they are both Westerners and good friends—have further reduced the distance between Nancarrow's singular art and us. Beginning in 1977, Garland's Soundings Press has been systematically chipping away at Nancarrow's *oeuvre*, issuing facsimiles of his carefully notated studies. This spring, Volume 6 of the *Collected Studies for Player Piano* was published; the six volumes include most of the studies—nos. 2–12, 14–21, 23–24, 26–27, 31, 33, 35–37, and 40–41. . . . Meanwhile, also in 1977, Amirkhanian (a composer who is well known as the imaginative music director of KPFA, Berkeley) journeyed with the recording engineer Robert Shumaker to the composer's studio in Mexico City to begin recording Nancarrow's dazzling works. (The journey was essential, since only on the composer's custom-altered Ampico uprights can his personally punched piano rolls be played.) Volume 4 of the *Complete Studies for Player Piano* was released last year (1750 Arch Records S-1798); the earlier discs were volumes I (S-1768; 1977), II (S-1777; 1979), and III (S-1786; 1981). They include all the studies published by Soundings Press, plus the studies nos. 1, 13, 22, 25, 28–29, 32, and 34.

American Victoriana in song. The enterprising tenor Paul Sperry canvassed the American song literature of the turn of the century and culled sixteen examples to make up an attractive volume, *Songs of an Innocent Age*. Not only that, he has recorded the whole batch, with Irma Vallecillo as accompanist, on the Gregg Smith Singers label (GSS 109). The composers are Ethelbert Nevin (4 songs), Charles Griffes (2), Henry F. Gilbert (2), Amy Beach (3), Harvey Worthington Loomis (1), Edward MacDowell (2), George Chadwick (1), and Dudley Buck (1). In this bouquet the most attractive flowers are Nevin's *Orsola's Song* ("Chantez! la nuit sera brève") and the Straussian songs by Griffes (*Auf ihrem Grab; Wohl lag ich einst in Gram und Schmerz*); better described as weeds are Gilbert's songs *Tell me where is fancy bred* (Shakespeare) and *Pirate Song* (after Stevenson's *Treasure Island*).

Sperry considers the main problem of American songs of this generation to be the mediocrity of their texts; he has chosen this group with a view to their being settings of "poems one need not be embarrassed by." (An exception is Buck's *The Capture of Bacchus*, to a text by Charles Swain: "The Swain poem is so bad, and the Buck setting so appropriate, that the song becomes hugely entertaining.") Sperry's recorded performances are lively, diverting, and stylish in their freedom of tempos and dynamics and their fluidity of expression. He has edited the printed collection liberally, along the same lines, in very helpful ways. The song volume is available from G. Schirmer, the disc from GSS Recording Co., Box 87, Saranac Lake, NY 12983.



Reich and Adams—Doubly Coupled. Steve Reich, *Variations for Winds, Strings, and Keyboards* (1980), and John Adams, *Shaker Loops* (1977–78; rev. 1982–83); San Francisco Symphony, cond. Edo de Waart (Philips 412 214). Minimalist classics: the Reich a burbling affair with beautifully tuned, organ-like chordal underpinnings; the Adams more dynamic, wide-ranging in sonorous and expressive gesture (despite its instrumentation for strings alone). Technically, both orchestra and recording are first-class. Scores of both works are available: of the Reich from Reich Music Publications, of the Adams from Associated Music Publishers. . . . Steve Reich, *Eight Lines* (an arrangement by Ransom Wilson of Octet, 1980), and John Adams, *Grand Pianola Music* (1982); Solisti New York, cond. Wilson (EMI Angel DS-37345). The Reich a slightly clattery and somewhat tedious affair with perky, spiky rhythmic keyboard figures set off by sustained string and wind sonorities; the Adams an almost perversely cliché-ridden amalgam of sonorous found objects (Allan Kozinn's excellent jacket notes summarize its last movement perfectly: "a rollicking movement, with a Gospel style main theme, a keyboard part that alludes to bravura Beethoven, chordal brass parts out of the late Romantic symphonies . . . a lively burlesque in a minimalist setting." The recording quality makes the chamber orchestra sound symphonic.

STUDYING (continued from page 2)

composers, from Billings to Foster to Ives to Gershwin to Ellington and Copland have received full biographical treatments. So have many performers, from Blind Tom Bethune to Arturo Toscanini, Bessie Smith, Bing Crosby, Jimmie Rodgers, Robert Shaw, and Elvis Presley. General biographical compendiums on America carry reliable facts about some musicians' lives: for the quick, *Current Biography*; for the dead, the *Dictionary of American Biography*, with its welcome profusion of detail. Most standard dictionaries and encyclopedias of music give short shrift to Americans. *MGG* has few useful articles; *The New Grove* is more generous. And *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music* promises to be a real breakthrough when it appears. *Baker's* includes many people whom one might not expect to meet, though its entries are brief indeed. Specialized biographical dictionaries such as Feather, Harris, and Southern, all based on primary source materials and aiming at comprehensiveness within their chosen spheres, are indispensable for any serious researcher in the fields they cover.

That's the tip of our pyramid. But of course, a serious map-maker's cast of characters extends far below the tip. It touches many people whom history has forgotten—men and women too obscure even for national biographical acknowledgement, much less Groveworthiness. Because music-making depends so heavily on the cooperation of musicians, musical biography must deal closely with human communities that include both well-known musicians and those falling below the threshold of biographical recognition. The need to reconstruct the richest possible biographical environment for their subjects has sent scholars of American music searching in the more fugitive sources of data, including music periodicals, newspapers, city directories, genealogies, census records, even birth and probate records. No longer content to leave the pyramid's tip suspended in mid-air, they are taking steps to restore at least the outlines of its base.

Our third question, "Where and in what circumstances has music been made in America?", leads to a study of geographical communities—of the details of music-making in particular locales.

Many of the richest sources of local music history are documents not primarily musical. In cities, newspapers are usually the best source. Elsewhere, municipal and church records and histories of parishes, villages, and towns are the places to look. Music periodicals, of which more than 300 were published in the U.S.A. before the 20th century, are also helpful. Finding the data of local music history requires much looking for needles in haystacks, a job few musicologists relish. The need for such tedious searching often precludes dealing closely with music; which is no doubt one reason why local music history studies have not flourished widely here.

Yet we can point to some notable achievements and some promising prospects in local music history. Perkins's and Dwight's book on Boston's Handel and Haydn Society is an excellent institutional study. Sonneck's reconstructions of early American concert life, drawn from 18th-century newspapers, give a nuts-and-bolts view of the subject as useful to the scholar now as they were at the time of their publication, some 75 years ago.

STUDYING (*continued*)

Johnson's account of musical life in early Boston is a readable counterpoint to Sonneck, whose work bristles with nearly indigestible detail. Bordman's chronicle of the Broadway musical theater manages to be both comprehensive and accessible.

As for promising prospects in local music history, two can be mentioned here. The first are New England town and local histories written in the 19th and early 20th centuries that, when taken together, reveal important musical processes as they spread from one place to another: the reform of congregational singing, the introduction of organs into Protestant churches, the forming of meeting-house choirs, the hiring of singing masters by towns and churches, the rise of amateur composers, the formation of town bands, the building of theaters. A second promising development is the appendix to Kaufman's study of music in New Jersey. This appendix is a documented census of some 2,700 musicians active in the state, from the famous traveling virtuoso to the saxhorn player in a militia band. The census helps to illuminate some tough questions: how 19th-century American professional musicians made their livings; or when different groups of immigrant musicians began to arrive and to assume musical leadership in the U.S.; or the extent to which music instruction in mid-19th-century America was dominated by females. The New Jersey census carries with it the prospect of comparative studies based on documented fact, if and when similar data are collected about other regions.

Now to our fourth question: How has the making of music in America been supported financially? Here we must first note a fundamental difference between the Old World and the New. In western Europe fine-art music has developed over many hun-

dreds of years with the consistent patronage of society's richest and most powerful institutions: the church, the court, and the state. Because all three have felt their own need for music of the highest quality, they have trained, hired, and supported musicians to supply it for them. But in America neither a national church nor an aristocratic court has existed, and the state's need has been limited to simple music for utilitarian functions. Rather than being supported and shaped by society's leaders, it has therefore been left chiefly in the hands of humbler folk. Foremost among the shapers have been musicians themselves, who have worked as individuals in a commercial environment, seeking to satisfy the needs of various social groups—for artistic expression, worship, instruction, entertainment, or participatory recreation.

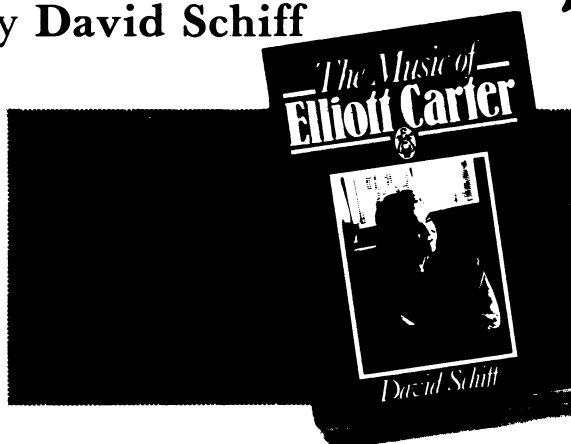
Music-making in America, in short, has had to pay its own way. Although the way it has managed to do so has yet to be systematically studied, one approach is to examine the history of musical professions in this country. How have people in the U.S. made money through music? How have the different professional roles evolved? As I see it, there are six ways in which Americans have supported themselves, or tried to do so, through music: performing, teaching, composing, distributing music, writing about music, and manufacturing or selling musical goods (like instruments). A study of each of these activities as a gainful line of work, and of the relationships among them, would cast some much-needed light on institutions and economic arrangements, which have traditionally been left in the dark by musicologists. As Virgil Thomson argued nearly half a century ago, in essays called "How Composers Eat" and "Why Composers Write How: or The economic determinism of musi-

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—Paul Griffiths, *Times Literary Supplement*

STUDYING (continued from page 11)

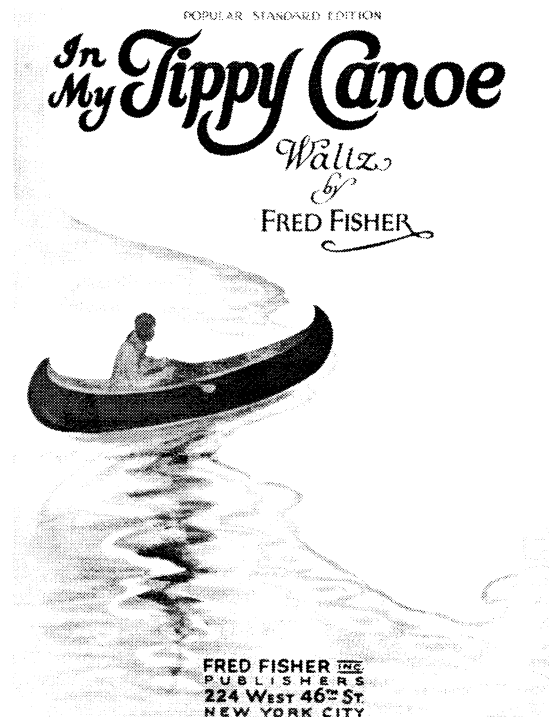
cal style," in a musical culture like ours, where music is often subject to the pressures of the marketplace, money and musical style are closely intermingled. Perhaps Thomson's barbed but serious comments on the subject are simply too smart-alecky in style for scholars to have taken them seriously

Data on the musical professions and on financial support are widely available. Present in bits and pieces in almost every study, they are hard to bring together partly because we have no handy label under which they can be located. (For an exercise in frustration, you might try looking up in indexes such words as commission, institutions, money, patronage, salary, and wages.) Studies centering on certain musical professions do exist, however—among them, Wolfe on the music publishing trade to 1830, Hart on the American symphony orchestra, and Buerkle and Barker on the profession of jazz performer in New Orleans after World War II.

The very act of outlining the general features of the American musical landscape, as we have been doing, should help to show us that the making of better maps and the systematic use of them will help us to understand *any* piece of American music. When we study Billings's hymn tune *Chester* within a context of bibliography (its printing history and many manuscript versions show us who sang and played it, and when, and sometimes why), of biography (we have learned a good deal about the composer's career and method of composing, and some speculations about his training have been made), of local history (*Chester* seems to have been far more popular in New England than elsewhere), and economics (the process of *Chester's* marketing and circulation has been traced and was profitable to people other than the composer)—when we examine *Chester* within each of these contexts, we should be far better able to evaluate Billings's aesthetic achievement than if we were simply to have taken its score and launched our analysis. And we are also better qualified to evaluate it as listeners than if we encountered it in a choral concert—say as part of a warm-up group before the Mozart *Requiem*.

Ralph Waldo Emerson's poem "Each and All" tells of a sparrow whose song "at dawn on the alder bough" is entrancing but loses its effect when the bird is carried home by the poet. Why? The poet explains: "I did not bring home the river and sky; he sang to my ear; they sang to my eye." In much the same way, the scholar's duty to *Chester*—not necessarily the critic's duty, or the performer's, or the listener's, but the *scholar's* duty—is that it be allowed to sing in something like its own context. It is to the creation of that context that our first four questions are addressed.

We have now arrived at our fifth question: "What American music is most important and why?" With this question we set music-making aside and return finally to Music with a capital M. We return to our profession's mainstream, which flows through the territory of masterworks and the musicians who make them. As we canoe down this stream—and surely as Americans we must choose a canoe for our travels—we are treated to a world of wonders, a Shangri-La in which only the worthiest music has won a place. It would be nice if we had



Embarking down the mainstream of American music: Fred Fisher's anticipation (1921) of Richard Crawford's metaphor (*Music Division, The New York Public Library at Lincoln Center, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations*).

time to stop and visit some of the homegrown attractions that beckon to us: Ives's Concord, Massachusetts, for example, where sages sing their belief in the common man; or Ellington's Warm Valley on the outskirts of town, where another kind of faith is expressed and, we understand, there's fun to be had by all.

But there's no point regaling you with sights and sounds you know already. And you will also recognize, though it's not always obvious to a person sitting in a canoe, that this musical mainstream, this Shangri-La, is not a natural wonder of the world but an illusion, a giant theater, built not by God but by men. It's artificial, fabricated through the artifice of human beings who command both talent and technical skill. Composers, performers, and musicologists have all had a hand in creating this mainstream, this Masterpiece Theater—this world-within-a-world of scores, concerts, recordings, criticism, journalism, and scholarship. If we look closely as we paddle along, we can see that the chief attractions, the works themselves, have all been brought here from elsewhere; once composed, they have been chosen and carried from the place of their origin, set in a glorious landscape designed by musicologists and tended and cultivated by performers.

What does this have to do with our fifth question? This, I think: We are probably right in assuming that the most important American music will somehow find its way into the Masterpiece Theater, some of it because scholarly prospectors will excavate it from the caves of the past and present, and some of it because

STUDYING (continued)

its superior quality is recognized when it is first composed. But should we be equally confident that only the music that has won a place in our Masterpiece Theater, only the music that has been able "to sing itself," is important enough to deserve scholarly attention? Importance stems, of course, from being good and being indestructible; but it can also stem from being first, being new, being different, being representative—in short, from holding a place of particular significance in its own particular context.

Studying American music requires the creation of contexts different from that of the Masterpiece Theater of western music. We know so little about the history of American music that our fifth question—"What's important?"—is bound to be hard to answer until the "what?", the "who?", the "where?", and the "how much?" of our first four questions have been more closely considered.

The Masterpiece Theater of western music, we remind ourselves again, is precisely that: a theater, not a whole world. To get there, you must cross less luxuriant terrain. Of course, one can settle near the Masterpiece Theater and spend one's whole life working among its many pleasures. But there are also musical scholars, including Americanists, who, while they might like to visit that charmed territory, don't choose to live there. They, inspired by the pioneering efforts of Sonneck and the few intrepid explorers who have followed the rocky course of his trail, have done much to invigorate the study of American music in recent years. The flame that burns in them is that of the map-maker who confronts whatever is there, who struggles to learn its significance, and who, if you ask, just might be able to tell you something even the residents don't know about how the Masterpiece Theater was built in the first place.

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II. Biography

A. General

Current Biography, many vols. (New York, 1940-)

Dictionary of American Biography, many vols. (New York, 1928-)

B. Musical

Bio-bibliographical Index of Musicians in the United States of America Since Colonial Times (Washington, 1941)

The New Grove Dictionary of American Music, ed. H. Wiley Hitchcock and Stanley Sadie (forthcoming)

Leonard Feather, *The New Edition of The Encyclopedia of Jazz* (New York, 1960)

Sheldon Harris, *Blues Who's Who* (New Rochelle, NY, 1979)

Eileen Southern, *Biographical Dictionary of Afro-American and African Musicians* (Westport, CT, 1982)

III. Regional Studies

A. General

[Selected town histories, church records, city directories, census records]

B. Musical

History of the Handel and Haydn Society of Boston, Massachusetts, Vol. 1 (Boston, 1883-93)

Oscar G. Sonneck, *Early Concert-Life in America* (Leipzig, 1907)

Oscar G. Sonneck, *Early Opera in America* (New York, 1914)

H. Earle Johnson, *Musical Interludes in Boston, 1795-1830* (New York, 1943)

Gerald M. Bordman, *American Musical Theatre: A Chronicle* (New York, 1978)

Charles H. Kaufman, *Music in New Jersey, 1655-1860* (Rutherford, NJ, 1981)

IV. Sociological & Economic Studies

A. Musical

Virgil Thomson, *The State of Music* (New York, 1939)

Richard J. Wolfe, *Early American Music Engraving and Printing* (Urbana, IL, 1980)

Philip Hart, *Orpheus in the New World: The Symphony Orchestra as an American Cultural Institution* (New York, 1972)

Jack V. Buerkle and Danny Barker, *Bourbon Street Black: The New Orleans Black Jazzman* (New York, 1973)

ON BROADWAY

Side by Side by Side. Although the so-called integration of the Broadway musical occurred decades ago in works like *Show Boat*, *On Your Toes*, and *Oklahoma!*, a similar integration in the study of the genre itself has yet to materialize. Scholars in music, theater, dance, and the various design elements of a musical have too often worked in isolation. A welcome exception is *Musical Theatre in America*, ed. Glenn Loney (Greenwood Press, 441 pp.; \$39.95), the proceedings of a 1981 conference sponsored jointly by the American Society for Theatre Research, the Sonneck Society, and the Theatre Library Association. Each of the papers presented here focuses on one area of specialization, but it is refreshing to find articles discussing musical issues and acting techniques side by side with knowledgeable articles on choreography and costume design.

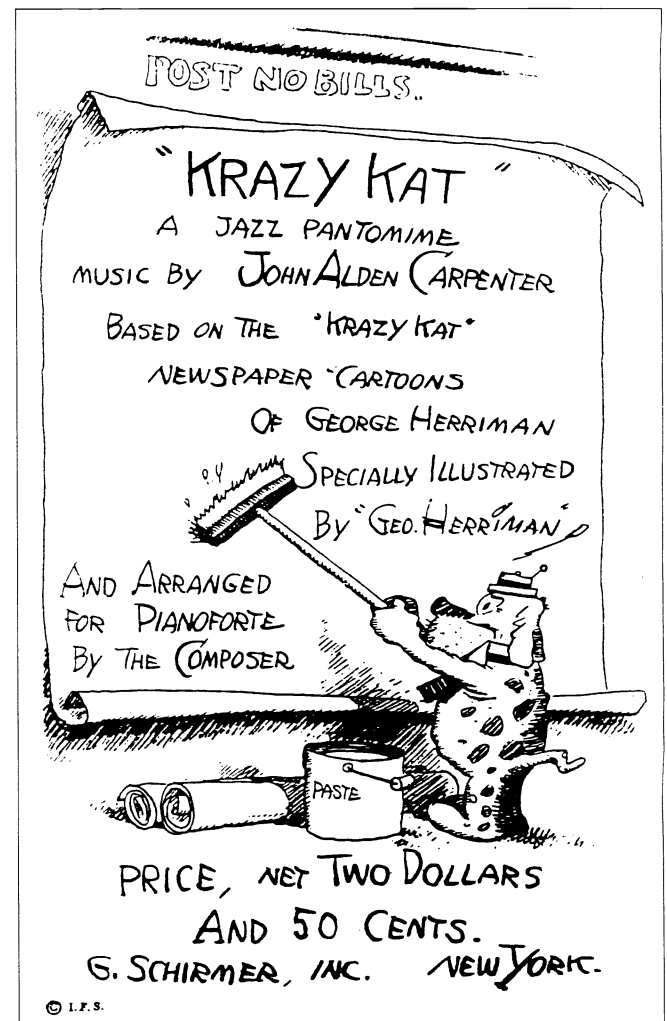
The noble concept of these proceedings is not always matched by the quality of the more than thirty papers ranging from ballad opera to Jerome Robbins, which is uneven. But some are exceptional. Musically, the most significant contributions include those by William Brooks on reconstructing an evening of eighteenth-century musical theater, Robert B. Winans on early minstrel show music, and John Graziano on turn-of-the-century black musicals, the last replete with musical examples. (How many books on musical theater offer them?) Also included are transcriptions, some extensively summarized, of panels confronting the problems of preserving the musical—in written, visual, and aural records and in performance—and one involving such creators as Betty Comden, Adolph Green, Joe Layton, Oliver Smith, and Charles Strouse. Let's hope the serious and cooperative study of the musical continues.

Listomania. The most comprehensive list of musical theater works yet to appear is Ken Bloom's *American Song: The Complete Musical Theatre Companion, 1900-1984* (Facts on File, 2 vols., 1440 pp.; \$95). Cataloguing nearly 3,300 shows and more than 42,000 songs, this work covers a generous variety of musicals, including Broadway, off-Broadway, off-off-Broadway, and regional theater productions, shows that closed out of town, plays with original music, and selected nightclub shows. The concise entry for each production supplies date of opening, number of performances, production credits, list of songs (including those cut during tryouts or added after the opening), and principal cast members. Volume 2 is comprised of a personnel index and a song-title index. You won't find all the information you would like here—the names of theaters, cities for non-New York productions, and the roles played by cast members are not given—and the songs are listed alphabetically rather than in the order of performance within the production. But there are shows listed here you won't find anywhere else. The author's occasional personal remarks—often desultory and snide, always opinionated and provocative—are really out of place in a reference book, but they are guaranteed to keep you awake.

In the Sweet Bye and Bye. If you're seeking more detailed information on shows that departed this world before making it to New York—like Marc Blitzstein's *Reuben, Reuben*, Vernon Duke's *Sweet Bye and Bye*, and Frank Loesser's *Pleasures and Palaces*—try William Torbert Leonard's *Broadway Bound:*

A Guide to Shows That Died Aborning (Scarecrow Press, 618 pp.; \$39.50), which spans the seasons 1932-33 through 1980-81. For both musical and nonmusical productions that did not survive their out-of-town tryouts, this book provides tryout dates; production credits; a complete list of cast members indicating their roles and the frequent replacements in a troubled show; a list of songs; a plot summary (this alone often explains the work's early demise); and brief quotations from reviews. Shows that previewed in New York but never officially opened, such as the notorious musical version of *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, are also listed. Various classified indexes, including a chronological one, make the book easy to use.

—R. Allen Lott



The perky drawings spotted here and there in this issue of the Newsletter are by George Herriman, creator of the comic strip "Krazy Kat." They appear in the 1922 piano arrangement (by the composer) of John Alden Carpenter's ballet *Krazy Kat: A Jazz Pantomime* (1921). Carol Oja called them to our attention; they are reprinted with special permission of King Features Syndicate, Inc., and G. Schirmer, Inc.

RAVE REVIEWS

A Model Ethnic Recording. *Turtle Mountain Music: A Cross Section of Traditional Music Currently Played on the Turtle Mountain Reservation of North Dakota* (Folkways FES-4140 Stereo), the work of folklorist Nicholas Vrooman, is a well researched and beautifully produced two-record set; with its accompanying booklet it provides a panoramic soundscape of a modern Ojibway community. It should serve as a model for future portraits of music in today's world, mainly because it includes all the major musical forms currently enjoyed at Turtle Mountain; these include Pembina Chippewa drum songs, French songs and ballads, Anglo-French fiddle music and dance calling, a country & western band, and a rock group. The musicians often relate when they learned certain pieces and what the music means to them. The illustrated 16-page booklet provides excellent documentation, as well as texts and translations for the songs.

—Nancy Groce

Simply Stunning. That's the right reaction, we think, to *The Makers of Cajun Music / Musiciens cadiens et créoles*, published last year by the University of Texas Press. Thirteen chapters on more than twenty Cajun musicians are a cunning mix of narrative text and oral-history interview quotations; they are the work of Barry Jean Ancelet, a young folklorist who has worked at the Center for Louisiana Studies of the University of Southwestern Louisiana at Lafayette. "Lavishly illustrated" is a publisher's cliché that for once is true: one hundred color photos—sensitive, searching, subtle, sparkling—adorn the book; they are by Elemore Morgan, Jr., professor of art at the same university. A thoughtful foreword by Ralph Rinzler of the Smithsonian Institution touches on the main value of the book: ". . . We can listen to recordings of these musicians years after they have passed away, but the grandeur, humor, and humanity of these music makers will have escaped us"—and those are precisely the qualities that this book has captured and that it projects. Bilingual presentation reflects the new pride in, and laudable preservation of, the living Cajun cultural tradition. University of Texas Press, Box 7819, Austin, TX 78712; \$24.95 cloth, \$14.95 paper.

BEHIND THE BEAT (continued from page 6)

("Spanish Shawl," "Chinese Blues"), and energetic jazz stomps ("Black Horse Stomp," "Nervous Charlie Stomp"). Despite some ordinary arrangements and a few performances more lukewarm than hot, many individual moments shine, among them trumpeter Joe Smith's beautifully poised solo on "Jackass Blues," Charlie Green's daredevil first trombone break on "Oh, Baby," and the impassioned exchange between clarinet trio and brass on "Tampeekoe." And when the whole band cuts loose on the last chorus of "Goose Pimples" you'll know what it was like to have Saturday night fever in 1927.

Note: The best introduction to the music of Henderson is still *Fletcher Henderson: Developing an American Orchestra, 1923-1937* (Smithsonian Collections P2-13710), which offers a more varied portrait of the band, torrid solos by Louis Armstrong, Rex Stewart, and Fats Waller, and a fine essay by J. R. Taylor.

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"You are the far edge of American music today,"
Charles Seeger (1977)

Congratulations to the three composers just awarded Pulitzer Prizes. Two of the three are well known: **William Schuman**, the first Pulitzer Prize winner in music, received a special citation, and **Stephen Sondheim** won the drama prize (along with librettist-director James Lapine) for his *Sunday in the Park with George*, only the sixth musical to be so honored. **Stephen Albert**, who was awarded the prize in music, is not exactly a newcomer, having already received an impressive array of awards and commissions, yet his music is still relatively unknown. We've just heard a tape of his prize-winning symphony, *RiverRun*, inspired by James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*. It's a gripping work filled with lush orchestral timbres that delights in references to the past but is firmly rooted in the present. We hope this work and more of his music will soon be recorded.

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

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The I.S.A.M. Newsletter is published in November and May. Copyright © 1985 by the Institute for Studies in American Music, Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, New York 11210. 718/780-5655.

Institute for Studies in American Music
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