

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Compiled by Kenneth Schlesinger

The following list offers a selective summary of the documents acquired by the Weill-Lenya Research Center since October 1988. Due to space limitations, omitted from the listing are books, articles, press clippings, and commercial recordings, as well as most photographs, programs, and posters. The names of donors are indicated in italics at the end of each entry, when appropriate.

COLLECTIONS

Jürgen Schebera, Berlin (DDR): "Charivari: More details about *Dreigroschenoper* early history," article, plus four photostats of original *Dreigroschenoper* advertisements in *Charivari*, Bloch Erben's house journal, 1928-29. Donald Spoto, Los Angeles: Interview tapes and selected materials gathered while researching *Lenya: A Life*.

CORRESPONDENCE

Lotte Lenya to Milton Caniff (15 letters, photocopies; 1962-78) (*Donald Spoto*); Kurt Weill to Ira Gershwin (20 letters, photocopies; 1940-44; random annotations by Gershwin) (*Mrs. Ira Gershwin*).

THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

Humphreys, Paul W. "Expressions of *Einverständnis*: Musical Structure and Affective Content in Kurt Weill's Score of *Der Jasager*." Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1988.

Scott, Harrison Charles. "Busoni's *Doctor Faust*." Masters thesis, North Texas State University, 1976.

HOLOGRAPHS

"Surabaya Johnny," early holograph sketch, 44 measures, pencil, 1½ sides, on Beethoven Papier Nr. 38a (28 Linien) [1929]

NON-COMMERCIAL RECORDINGS

"Kurt Weill and his Jewish Heritage," Symposium at Merkin Concert Hall, 1987; Studs Terkel Radio Show, WFMT-Chicago [*Happy End*, Court Theatre, 1989]; *Happy End*, Westdeutscher Rundfunk, Köln, 1988; *The Seven Deadly Sins*, Sinfonia San Francisco, 1987; *The Threepenny Opera* and *Johnny Johnson*, The Banff Centre, Banff, Alberta, 1989; "Cry, The Beloved Country/Lost in the Stars," a concert sequence devised by David Drew, American Composers Orchestra, Carnegie Hall, 1988; *War Play* (Weill/Drew), Ensemble Modern, Frankfurt, 1988; "Kurt Weill" and archival recordings, Hungarian Radio, Budapest, 1988; *Lady in the Dark*, Edinburgh Festival, John Mauceri, 1988; *Street Scene*, Scottish Opera, John Mauceri, 1989; Violin Concerto, Stephanie Gonley with Guildhall Chamber Orchestra, 1987.

ORAL HISTORY

"Reminiscences of Weill/Lenya:" Hesper Anderson; Ben Cutler and Maya Gregory, cast members of *The Eternal Road*; Jean Dalrymple, theater producer; Martus Granirer; Willi Kraber, member of Group Theater; Paula Laurence; Maurice Levine; Henry Marx; Lys Symonette; Wilhemena Tuck; Peggy Turnley. Interviewed for 1988 Oral History Project, Professor Mel Gordon and students, New York University.

"Conversation with Maurice Abraham," by Olivia Mattis. Typescript and cassette tape.



Sketch for "Ira" from *Die sieben Todsünden* by Casper Neher.
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PROGRAMS

"The Judgement of Paris," Agnes de Mille ballet to Weill score, Westminster Theatre, London, July 1938 (*Jane Pritchard*); *Der Jasager*, Music School of the Henry Street Settlement, New York, 25 April 1933; *Der Jasager*, Akademie für Kirchen- und Schulmusik, Berlin; original playbills from Weill Broadway musicals: *Firebrand of Florence*, *Knickerbocker Holiday*, *Lady in the Dark*, *Lost in the Stars*, *Love Life*, and *Street Scene*.

SCORES -- PUBLISHED

"Sechs ausgewählte Stücke aus der Oper *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* von Kurt Weill/Text von Bert Brecht/

Gesang und Klavier" Vienna: Universal Edition 9851A, 1931.

The Road of Promise, photocopy of Chappell piano-vocal rental score for *The Eternal Road* (Ben Cutler).

UE rental full scores for *Die Bürgschaft*, *Die Dreigroschenoper*, *Der Jasager*, *Der Protagonist*, *Royal Palace*, *Der Silbersee*, *Der Zar läßt sich photographieren*, and *Der neue Orpheus*.

SCORES -- UNPUBLISHED

"America," "Battle Hymn of the Republic," and "Star Spangled Banner," piano-vocal scores of Weill's settings in copyist's hand (*Rodgers and Hammerstein Theater Library*).

Firebrand of Florence, selections from rehearsal scores.

"Langsamer Fox" (1921), transcription prepared for 1975 Berlin Festival by David Drew (*David Drew*).

Where Do We Go From Here, photocopy of vocal score. (*Mrs. Ira Gershwin*).

SCRIPTS

Der Silbersee, Felix Bloch Erben, from Harold Prince Collection; *Der Weg der Verheißung*, photocopy of Werfel's holograph, Van Pelt Library, Special Collections, University of Pennsylvania.

VIDEOTAPES

Die Dreigroschenoper, Hessischer Rundfunk, 1957; *Die Dreigroschenoper* (1989), *Happy End* (1988) and *Der Jasager* (1989), Banff Art Centre;

Mahagonny Songspiel (with "Conversations with Fear and Hope After Death") Peter Sellars, BAM Opera, 1989; *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, Hessischer Rundfunk, 196-; *The Eternal Road*, Paramount newsreel (1937) and "On Stage: March of Time" (1949) (*Mel Gordon*).

VISUAL ART

Neher, Caspar. "Ira," sketch for *Die sieben Todsünden* stage panel. Yellow and gray wash on paper. 36 X 24 cm. Purchased from the Edward James Collection.

WRITINGS

"Der deutsche Rundfunk," photocopies of articles by Weill, January 1925-May 1929 (*Jürgen Schebera*); "Musikfest oder Musikstudio?"; [Zu *Der Lindberghflug*] "Keine Differenz Weill-Hindemith"; "Rundfrage Richard Strauss," *Musikblätter des Anbruch* 6:5 (May 1924); "Schriftsteller 1934: Eine Umfrage," in *Pariser Tageblatt* 2:41 (21 January 1934).

NEW PUBLICATIONS



ARTICLES

- Fehn, Ann Clark. "Concepts of the Masses and German Drama in the Weimar Republic." *Seminar* 24:1 (February 1988): 31-57.
- Hinton, Stephen. "The Concept of Epic Opera: Theoretical Anomalies in the Brecht-Weill Partnership." *Festschrift Carl Dahlhaus* (1988), pp. 285-294.
- Lucchesi, Joachim. "Eine moderne und politische Kunst: Der Komponist Wladimir Vogel." *Musik und Gesellschaft* 5, (May 1989): 247-249.
- Raddatz, Fritz J. "Besuch bei der alten Dame." *Zeitmagazin*, 24 March 1989, pp. 24-34. [Profile of Maria Ley-Piscator.]
- Werner, Paul. "Frauen, die Geschichte machten: Lotte Lenya, Stimme des Volkes." *Viva*, 4 April 1989, pp. 106-113.

BOOKS

- Bassi, Adriano. *Kurt Weill: I Grandi Musicisti del XX Secolo*. Milano: Targa Italiana Editore, Collana Musica Studio, 1988.
- Bentley, Eric. *The Brecht Memoir*. Manchester: Carcanet Press Limited, 1989. [New British edition with an introduction by Martin Esslin.]
- Berlau, Ruth. *Living for Brecht: The Memoirs of Ruth Berlau*. Edited by Hans Bunge. Translated by Geoffrey Skelton. New York: Fromm International Publishing Corporation, 1987.
- Gilbert, Michael John T. *Bertolt Brecht's Striving for Reason, Even in Music*. New York: Peter Lang, 1988.
- Gordon, Eric A. *Mark the Music: The Life and Work of Marc Blitzstein*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989.
- Martin, Jeffrey Brown. *Ben Hecht: Hollywood Screenwriter*. Studies in Cinema, No. 27. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1985. [References to Hecht's 1943 "We Will Never Die," with music by Weill.]
- Mehner, Klaus and Joachim Lucchesi, editors. *Studien zur Berliner Musikgeschichte: Musikkultur der zwanziger Jahre*. Im Auftrag der Akademie der Künste der DDR. Berlin (DDR): Henschelverlag Kunst und Gesellschaft, 1989.
- Speirs, Ronald. *Bertolt Brecht*. London: Macmillan Publishers Ltd., 1987.

RECORDINGS

- Entartete Musik: Eine Tondokumentation zur Düsseldorfer Ausstellung von 1938*. I. Säuberungen; II. Mißbrauch; III. "Deutsche Musik"; IV. Widerstand. Zusammengestellt und kommentiert von Albrecht Dümling. CDP Berlin 57265043 & 57265023. (4 CDs)
- Der Jasager*. Joseph Protschka (Student); Lys Bert Symonette (Mother); Willibald Vohla (Teacher). Düsseldorf Children's Chorus and Chamber Orchestra; Siegfried Köhler, conductor. *Concerto for Violin and Wind Orchestra*; Anahid Ajemian, soloist, with M-G-M Wind Orchestra; Izler Solomon, conductor. "Dance of the Tumblers" from *Lady in the Dark* and "Gold!" from *Lost in the Stars*; M-G-M Chamber Orchestra; Arthur Winograd, conductor. PolyGram 839727-4 (cassette); 839727-2 (CD) [Reissue.]
- Der Lindberghflug and The Ballad of Magna Carta*. Pro Musica Köln; Kölner Rundfunkorchester; Jan Latham-König, conductor. Capriccio 60012-1 (CD). [Includes a 1930 broadcast recording of the Weill-Hindemith version of *Der Lindberghflug*, conducted by Hermann Scherchen.]
- Over There: Songs of War and Peace, c. 1900-1920*. Michael Feinstein; Armen Guzelimian, piano. EMI Angel CDC 7 49768 2. (CD) [Includes Weill's "Riders' Song [Reiterlied]," "Parting Song (Im Volkston)" and "The Beautiful Child. (Das schöne Kind)".]
- Die sieben Todsünden*. Gisela May, with the Rundfunk-Sinfonie-Orchester Leipzig; Herbert Kegel, conductor. *Das Berliner Requiem*. The London Sinfonietta; David Atherton, conductor. PolyGram 429333-2/4 (CD/cassette). [Reissue.]
- Symphony no. 2*. Variaciones concertantes, op. 23 by Alberto Ginastera. Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks; Julius Rudel, conductor. Musical Heritage Society 512381Z (CD); 312381H (Cassette)
- Threepenny Opera Suite (Kleine Dreigroschenmusik)*. Chicago Pro Musica. Reference Recordings RR-29. (LP and CD.)
- A Walk on the Weill Side*. Helen Schneider. CBS Masterworks MK 45703 (CD); MT 45703 (cassette).

BRECHT

GROSSE KOMMENTIERTE
BERLINER UND FRANKFURTER
AUSGABE

Stücke 1

Die Bibel - Baal (1919) - Baal (1922)
Lebenslauf des Mannes Baal - Trommeln in der Nacht
Die Hochzeiten - Der Bettler oder Der rote Hund
Er treibt einen Teufel aus - Lese in tenebris
Der Fischzug - Pierre
Im Dickicht - Im Dickicht der Städte

Bertolt Brecht: Werke. Große kommentierte Berliner und Frankfurter Ausg. Hrsg. von Werner Hecht (u.a.) (Berlin: Aufbau; Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1988)

Bd. 2. **Stücke 2** (Bearb. von Jürgen Schebera.)
Bd. 3. **Stücke 3** (Bearb. von Manfred Nössig.)
Bd. 4. **Stücke 4** (Bearb. von Johanna Rosenberg und Manfred Nössig.)
Bd. 5. **Stücke 5** (Bearb. von Bärbel Schrader und Günther Klotz.)
Bd. 11. **Gedichte. 1. Sammlungen 1918-1938** (Bearb. von Jan und Gabriele Knopf.)
Bd. 12. **Gedichte. 2. Sammlungen 1938-1956** (Bearb. von Jan Knopf.)

Several years ago I seem to recall the reviewer of some recent additions to the crop of Brecht-editions or *Materialienbände* commenting wryly that these would represent yet a further installment in his already considerable investment in money and bookshelf space devoted to primary Brecht literature – and that the investment would undoubtedly need to be topped up again, and yet again. As far as this latest edition is concerned, Weill scholars will probably be better off than their Brecht counterparts: they will not have to contemplate buying all thirty volumes in order to stay abreast of material unpublished, forgotten, re-assigned, rediscovered, or finally reprinted with commentaries that may throw up old problems and new issues.

This may seem a rather grudging note on which to begin a review of what is clearly, on the evidence of these first six volumes, a valuable undertaking. But I cannot, offhand, think of another twentieth-century author for whom the scholar – not to mention the libraries – has had to contemplate the need, every two or three years, to buy up one or several volumes which will invariably duplicate much of what he or she already has, merely in order to obtain a few additional

snippets of information, diary entries, unpublished earlier versions, or textual variants. Thus, the first question to be asked of the new edition must be: will it replace the earlier ones from Suhrkamp and Aufbau? Well, um, yes, and er, no.

But in at least one crucial respect, this new enterprise is to be welcomed. For it aims to present “die autorisierten and wirksam gewordenen Erstdrucke oder geht bei postum erschienenen Werke auf die Texte aus dem Nachlaß zurück,” together with an extensive (though by no means exhaustive) critical apparatus divided into six categories: *Textgrundlage, Übersicht, Entstehung, Text/Fassungen, Wirkung, and Zeilenkommentar*. Such an apparatus is vital to any understanding of Brecht’s development (perhaps “twists and turns,” or his own quirky word “lavieren” would be the more appropriate term): for he was always, compulsively reworking earlier, perhaps unregenerate works, in the light of his later, more developed or “reformed” awarenesses. Changes in the text, the repositioning of themes and elements sometimes peripheral in earlier versions closer to the center of a play’s or poem’s argument, the occasional drastic shifts in his attitude to his central figures in the light of social and political developments (most obviously in the case of Galileo, but just as intriguingly and ambiguously in the case of Galy Gay, the positive-negative “hero” of *Mann ist Mann*) – all these will now prove, thanks to the new edition, much easier to trace and comprehend. It is still far from the ideal – a historical-critical edition which would probably pose problems even more complex than those relating to Hölderlin’s or Goethe’s output – but that is, like the goal in Brecht’s poem “To Those Born Later,” “far in the distance...and I myself [read “we readers”] was [were] unlikely to reach it.”

As was the case with the previous hardcover and softcover editions, the volumes are beautifully presented, with the Garamond typeface looking both as elegant and “sachlich” as ever. And the fact that the edition is appearing simultaneously in the Federal Republic (Suhrkamp) and the GDR (Aufbau) is to be welcomed – as is the presence on the editorial committee of scholars from both Germanys. The jacket design is, however, different; and here I would express a clear preference for the Aufbau version which lists on the front cover, below the generic title, the individual works included.

And yet, right at the outset, there are some problems. Open *Gedichte 1* and you find the first cycle to be *Lieder zur Klampfe von Bert Brecht und seinen Freunden. 1918*, a collection of poems Brecht put together for performance and for entertaining his Augsburg friends. The notes point out correctly that “die Musik...spielt für die Entstehung der *Lieder*...eine wichtige Rolle.” (p. 289). Yet nowhere in the edition is a bar of this music to be found, nor even the barest attempt at describing its idiom – primitive

for the most part, but effective, and crucial to the understanding of the tone and mood of the individual songs. (Any reader interested in pursuing the question further could find some, but by no means all, of the tunes reproduced in Hennenberg’s *Das grosse Brecht-Liederbuch*). To some, this may seem a trivial objection. Yet Brecht’s concept of *Gestus* and “gestic” language cannot be grasped without a look at its origins in sung-spoken delivery, performance situations, and the way the aural-oral popular traditions are as important as the literary-scribal ones. Of course, the musical sketches in the material preserved in the Archive are at times difficult to decipher, but some are quite clear, and at least one or two of these should have been transcribed and included in such an edition.

The situation, however, is much more disturbing in the case of the next collection, the *Hauspostille* of 1927. It is, strictly speaking, *factually* wrong for the editors to note that the basis for their edition of the work is *Bertolt Brechts Hauspostille. Mit Anleitungen, Gesangsnoten und einem Anhang*, Berlin 1927. For nowhere in this new edition are the *Gesangsnoten* to be found and the single paragraph (p. 303) devoted to some desultory comments on the sources for the musical style makes no mention of the reasons for not including them. (Unless there is a contemporary negative sub-textual hint to be gleaned from the editors’ earlier laconic observation that, in the case of the original: “Die *Hauspostille*...kommt zu einer *grosszügigen*, [my italics] für Lyrik-Sammelungen jedoch nicht ungewöhnlichen typographischen Gestaltung” (p. 302)).

The scholar who wishes to study the first edition as it actually appeared must either track down the original, Klaus Schuhmann’s more recent facsimile reprint, or the American *Manual of Piety* published for the first time back in 1966, all of which contain the original melodies. A similar criticism applies in the case of *Lieder Gedichte Chöre*, published in Paris in 1934, which also included thirty-two pages of music as well as the Brecht texts. In this case, one might have thought that publisher and editors could have heeded the relevance of the very clear message Brecht himself had spelled out in a *passage they quote on p. 366 of the commentary*: “so fordert er [Brecht] die Redaktion von *Internationaler Literatur*...auf, im Fall der *Wiegenlieder* die Musik mitzudrucken, ‘damit die Gedichte Gebrauchswert erhalten.’” Am I the only reader prompted to murmur, “De te fabula?”

Such reservations aside, the first two poetry volumes are a considerable achievement, the explanatory material succinct and helpful (though suffering at times from comparison with John Willett’s editorial commentary and notes in the English *Poems 1913-56*). The major discoveries to be made here are the various collections of sonnets Brecht worked on over the years. Some

BOOKS

have been published previously, others have been known of, but for the first time the editors have brought together all the sonnets Brecht prepared for (mostly unrealized) publication in his lifetime. Foremost here are the *Augsburger Sonette* and the thirteen sonnets written over a period of roughly three years to Margarete Steffin. Brecht himself had no compunction about referring to the bulk of these as pornographic, and they seem to have filled for him a purpose similar to Joyce's letters to his wife, Nora. But if pornographic they are (and the *Lehrstück Nr. 2*, "Advice of an older whore to a younger," is certainly, scurrilously that), they are also virtuoso displays of poetic (even sexual) technique and often hilariously funny. In these days of modernist, post-modernist, neo-subjective, neo-brutalist, and old-minimalist verses, it is relief to find a poet who could not only master the sonnet as proficiently as Rilke and Auden (and with considerably more fluency) but can actually cause the reader to laugh out loud at some of the unexpected metric and physical stratagems.

However, if Brecht's major female collaborators and partners might be said to come well out of these volumes, the same cannot, alas, be said for his musical collaborators. The works written with Kurt Weill are included in volumes 2, 3, and 4, though for some reason, the *Berliner Requiem*, which was performed and published and should have warranted inclusion, is glaringly absent. But the editors responsible for each volume could hardly be said to display uniform (or even analogous) command of both aspects of this subject.

Jürgen Schebera is predictably helpful and knowledgeable on *Die Dreigroschenoper* and the two *Mahagonnys*. Particularly valuable – indeed essential in such an edition – is the evidence he adduces, in the form of information concerning published sheet music and record releases (pp. 439-40), to demonstrate the widespread popularity of the former work in pre-Nazi Germany. At a time when Andrew Lloyd-Whoever and his Terribly Useful Music Factory send their mass-produced article out on to the stages of the world with the Biblical admonition "Go forth and multiply," it is still worth remembering that by January 1933 – and without the benefits of laser-technology and -eyed marketing men, considerable private wealth, and a promoting organization that might teach Saatchi and Saatchi a thing or two – *Die Dreigroschenoper* had clocked up over ten thousand performances in eighteen languages in Europe alone.

Along with such detail and the excerpted responses of Adorno, Stuckenschmidt, Pinthus et al., the commentary section also displays some inconsistencies and puzzling omissions. Why, for example, are we told in the case of *Die Seeräuber-Jenny* that the poem dates from 1927, yet this information is withheld in the case of the *Barbara-Song*

(p. 444)? Turn to p. 342 of the notes to *Gedichte 1* which includes *Die Songs der Dreigroschenoper*, and the omission is rectified but still without indicating that the composer F.S. Brunier had worked with Brecht on the earlier settings. And surely, though some stories gain in the retelling, it is now a little late to be trying that sort of thing for the tale of the impetus for the writing of the *Moritat*. It's presented once on p. 428 of Volume 2 and again, in slightly different, extended form, on p. 341 of Volume 11: would not a simple "see page x" have been neater? Or did the publishers really think that the reader, hungry for *Die Songs der Dreigroschenoper* would not have thought of buying *Die Dreigroschenoper* as well?

If room can be found for that sort of anecdote, why no mention of two equally relevant details on which the notes are silent: the fact that the legal actions brought by Weill and Brecht against the Nero Film Company ended with rather different outcomes, and the (to this reader, though also, I hope, to others) deliciously ironic anecdote that K.L. Ammer, after the plagiarism lawsuit concerning the Villon translations used in *Die Dreigroschenoper*, was compensated fully, listed as a future royalty beneficiary, and bought a vineyard from his proceeds? It might not say much about literary or theatrical culture in Weimar Germany, but it certainly says something about the commodity value of the artwork, as well as representing an interesting reversal of the familiar aphorism from *Die Dreigroschenoper* "Ethics first, then grub," (or, in this case, grapes).

The "heikle Frage" of what Brecht did to some passages and several songs from the work is discussed in the notes and presented in the published variants. Personally, I have always found little to cavil at in Brecht's relaxed attitude to such outmoded nineteenth- and twentieth-century notions as the inviolate sanctity of the poetic text. Any author concerned primarily with reflecting changing social conditions and attitudes and speaking to his time rather than to a closed group of scholars or aficionados, is placing a real, functional value on his work. "If in its earlier form, it cannot be made to speak to new times and contemporary issues, then change it," was Brecht's attitude. Inevitably, this poses problems when specific texts had specific musical settings provided for them; but the new versions of those *Dreigroschenoper* songs Brecht provided for post-war performances in Germany are shown, ironically enough, in this edition, to have outlived any possible future function simply by virtue of the number of footnotes they require. The footnotes for the whole of *Die Dreigroschenoper* occupy roughly two pages; the notes required for the "new" songs with their references to Hitler's satraps, occupy just over a page. Not much likelihood of those songs speaking to a thea-

ter audience in such a form. Besides, apart from the odd witty rhyme or pun, they are very obviously "occasional" pieces – though the new version of an incident from Act I, scene iii where, instead of five cripples, a journalist comes to seek registration with Peachum after he has been blacklisted for disclosing details of massacres in the Belgian Congo, is savagely funny and wholly accurate in its satire on the links of European business concerns (nowadays read: and American) with Black (read: South) Africa.

Mahagonny is rather more problematic. Suffice to say that anyone seeking to understand the work's performance context would still have to keep David Drew's 1969 edition of the piano-vocal score for Universal [UE 9851] close at hand to have any idea of the theatrical effect and musico-dramatic function of various sections. To give but one instance: surely some method could have been decided upon to indicate to the reader that Moses' text at the beginning of scene 19 (p. 382) is not – as the typographic layout might lead one to conclude – to be sung, but spoken. Much more complicated is any attempt to try to reconcile the UE version with the text published here. Until both UE and Suhrkamp decide to pool their resources and produce a working/study edition which, for example, incorporates Brecht's arguably more sharply focused textual and scenic alterations in scenes 19 and 20 (Schebera speaks of the replacement of the "private" action between Jim and Jenny and the exchanges between soloists and chorus, by the dominating presence of the chorus and consequent highlighting of the social dimension (p. 462)) with the musical adjustments Weill himself accepted as appropriate, any director or conductor tackling the piece with their own texts (and pre-established views), can expect a re-staging of the old "Prima la musica, poi le parole" conflict as a curtain-raiser to any rehearsal period.

With Volume 3, however, the flaws and vagaries of this edition emerge more clearly. Manfred Nössig's editorial material relating to all the Brecht-Weill collaborations is sometimes inadequate, often misleading. The reader is told (p. 402) that for the first performance of *Der Lindberghflug* in July 1929, Weill composed seven of the fourteen musical numbers, Hindemith six, with one scene containing music by both; but *who* actually wrote *what* is left to the reader's powers of intuition. And I may have been suffering from a surfeit of Brecht commentaries by this stage, but I simply gave up trying to work out which 1929-30 sections were in-out-re-allocated-not sung, not published, or where the original sections in the April 1929 version began and ended. As for the text's relation to Weill's score, p. 403 informs us that the 1930 piano-vocal score consisted of 15 sections but gives no indication of what is sung and by whom. Such omissions might perhaps be considered

acceptable if the reconstruction of the theatrical details and context of the first performance allowed the reader to visualize the text as staged. But when the editor quotes two brief remarks from Brecht about the sort of production-values and -effects he was aiming at and omits the surely significant – even semiological – detail that the listener is to be represented by “ein Mann in Hemdärmeln mit der Partitur [who]...summt, spricht und singt den Lindberghpart” (*Briefe*, p. 149), one wonders what the criteria were for selecting editorial material.

The *Jasager* and *Neinsager* commentaries are likewise somewhat sketchy, with barely a page devoted to the *Wirkung* section. This is surely odd, as I possess some UE publicity material which speaks of the work as “ein Ereignis im deutschen Schulleben” and includes lengthy excerpts from reviews from nine critics, including Einstein, Stuckenschmidt and Pringsheim, none of whom receives a mention in the notes. And lest it be thought these were merely musicological responses, it should be said that Brecht’s text, together with Weill’s score, receives some favorable and crisply worded comment in the reviews. Given that the editor’s work on the dramas in Volume 4 is both wide-ranging and informative, should one assume that such documents were merely overlooked?

The notes on *Die sieben Todsünden der Kleinbürger* (sic) are somewhat puzzling on the question: with or without *der Kleinbürger*? We are told the two additional words are there in Brecht’s handwriting on the earliest typescript, that the ballet was originally entitled *Die sieben Todsünden*, and, in Brecht’s lifetime, was known only under this title. But when the addition was made is unclear. So why the opting in favour of the expanded title—a decision seemingly at odds with the principle of printing “die autorisierten und wirksam gewordenen Erstdrucke?” Is there not a slight inconsistency here, particularly when one notes that *Die Hochzeit* is to appear in Volume 1 under that title, and not the expanded one? These are perhaps minor objections, but a few words of explanation might have helped, particularly since, in the material relating to the Galileo-complex, space is found for such essentially irrelevant information as the first recorded use in English of the expression “making mountains out of molehills” – not, I trust, a remark applicable to the reservations expressed in this review.

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Mark the Music: The Life and Work of Marc Blitzstein By Eric A. Gordon. New York: St. Martin's Press. 1989. 605 p.

A veritable Who's Who of mid-century American musical culture, Eric Gordon's, *Mark the Music: The Life and Work of Marc Blitzstein* is a vast and long overdue biography of the man who, according to Aaron Copland, “made indigenous American opera possible.” He was a complex personality and a significant contributor to twentieth-century American musical theater. His best-known work, *The Cradle Will Rock*, is the fruit of hit-and-miss musical experimentation, representing an avid commitment to left-wing causes. Apparently an exceptional pianist and certainly a tireless composer, Blitzstein strove to incorporate communist philosophy (in a time of burgeoning McCarthyism) into his musical aesthetic. Moreover, he bears the distinction of being the only American composer to have studied both with Arnold Schoenberg and Nadia Boulanger, thereby being influenced, though not without criticism, by two seemingly diametrically opposed approaches to musical composition. About Kurt Weill, the young Blitzstein was harshly critical but later became a deep admirer and, it can be argued, imitator of Weill's musical style.

Born in 1905 of a Russian Jewish banking family in Philadelphia, Blitzstein received a privileged musical education. His initial passion was for the piano, and he demonstrated considerable ability and promise for a professional career. Blitzstein dabbled in composition from his early teens but, daunted by the manifest talent of his favorite pianists (which included Vladimir Horowitz) he directed himself ambitiously toward composition; by fifteen he had com-

posed his first orchestral work, the *Marche Vainqueur - A Festival March for Complete Orchestra*. Later, he abandoned a troubled academic career at the University of Pennsylvania to enroll as one of the first students at the newly established Curtis Institute of Music in 1924. In the early twenties, he commuted to New York to study with Alexander Siloti. By the middle of the decade he was studying with Rosario Scalero, who was also Virgil Thomson's teacher and later the mentor of Samuel Barber, Gian Carlo Menotti, and Lucas Foss. During this time, Blitzstein wrote notably of his appreciation for jazz works as “authentic pieces of art.” Also during this period he made the acquaintance of Berenice Skidelsky, who – along with Jo, his sister, and Eva Goldbeck, his future wife – would remain one of Blitzstein's closest confidants and advisors and later count as the source of remarkably keen and sensitively drawn insights into the composer's personal life.

In the late 1920's, Blitzstein longed for a specific American musical style which he believed had not yet emerged from the culture. In his song settings of Whitman poems (1925-1928), the composer felt that he had touched upon a musical language marked by a uniquely American inflection and wedded to indigenous texts. Soon after, however, he left for Europe where he was to undertake his study with Nadia Boulanger and Arnold Schoenberg. During this time, the highly politicized plays of Bertolt Brecht and other left-wing playwrights were inspiring a simpler and more direct musical theater, like that of Weill, to surface in Berlin. Wary of Schoenberg's high-brow twelve-tone idiom, and partly the result of the deep support of communism he had seen in Germany, Blitzstein began writing a number of communist-theme musical theater works. Gordon points out that Blitzstein's long-lived and impassioned commitment to communism may be more the product of a second-hand knowledge of communist philosophy than of a personal reading of Marx or Stalin. This notion is poignantly dramatized in Blitzstein's silence about, if not ignorance of, the Soviet Union's lack of artistic freedom and retrogressive attitude about homosexuality, two issues with which Blitzstein himself struggled most painfully throughout his life.

Blitzstein's appreciation for Kurt Weill's music was not immediate. In 1928, he found Weill's music, including *Die Dreigroschenoper*, “ugly because it is characterless.” Yet, he thought there was potential in the young Weill. But again, back in America in 1931, he characterized *Die Dreigroschenoper* performances at Philadelphia as “not so good.” Weill was not in bad company, though. Blitzstein was similarly critical of Bartok, Berg, Richard Strauss, and Hindemith. Conversely, in 1935 he found Lotte Lenya “a special talent,” charming and enigmatic. Over the years Blitzstein's opinion of Weill was, of course, transformed.

Although the reasons for this are not made immediately clear, certainly Blitzstein came to appreciate Weill's cross-over idiom between serious and popular music. In fact, Blitzstein's *The Cradle Will Rock* (1937) is clearly indebted to Weill's musical style, even so much to have elicited the comment from Weill: "Have you seen my new opera?"

Blitzstein began making his English adaptation of *Die Dreigroschenoper* early in 1950, and soon after Weill's death that same year he wrote that he believed the "Moritat to be one of the great songs of the century." Marc Blitzstein committed a goodly portion of his later life to finding appropriate venues for his own important compositions. Though it was a 1930's period piece, *Cradle* enjoyed many performances through the 1950's; the New York City Ballet premiered *The Guests* in 1955, and the City Opera offered a production of *Regina* that same year. The composer suffered a number of debacles, as well, such as his musical adaptation of *King Lear*, which was performed and directed by Orson Welles.

Weill himself did not think much of Blitzstein's music, except that he felt Blitzstein copied his style. Gordon's book records a number of instances in which Weill wields a sense of superiority over Blitzstein, demonstrating a peculiar professional insecurity. However, Weill did appreciate the American composer's literary talents and it is significant that Weill's legacy in America thus far lies not in his American works (as he had hoped), but rather his "adapted" German work, *The Threepenny Opera*, which is marked by Blitzstein's clearly discernable thumbprint.

Gordon makes much of Blitzstein's homosexuality and personal struggle with relationships, which is, doubtless interesting in its own right. But the biography is cluttered with tangential characters and events, and frequently the discussion degenerates into a rudimentary chronology of events propped up by chatty and gossipy irrelevancies about the composer's life-long struggle with what are ultimately normal human difficulties and failings. These faults notwithstanding, the value of the book rests in its re-introduction of an important figure of American music, putting the sources of his life and work before the American public. The volume also presents the case for the high quality and importance of works wrought by communist artists earlier in this century, when a cultural isolationism – and even fear – determined taste for many Americans. It is hoped that this book will prompt producers to put Blitzstein's compositions onto their repertoire lists and inspire scholars to continue researching this rich period of American music.

Brian Byrnes
New York University

Briefly noted . . .

The Brecht Memoir By Eric Bentley with an introduction by Martin Esslin. Manchester. Carcanet Press, 1989. 135 p.

Eric Bentley has amended and enlarged his *Brecht Memoir*, first published by PAJ Publications in 1985 (see review in Vol. 4, No. 2). Besides making corrections to the first edition, Bentley adds a "postscript," wherein he shares some personal notes about his upbringing, education, and career.

The Idea of Gebrauchsmusik: A Study of Musical Aesthetics in the Weimar Republic (1919-1933) with Particular Reference to the Works of Paul Hindemith. By Stephen Hinton. New York: Garland, 1989. 246 p.

Stephen Hinton's *The Idea of Gebrauchsmusik . . .* represents a new title in the Garland series "Outstanding Dissertations in Music From British Universities," John Caldwell, editor. Completed in 1984 at the University of Birmingham under the supervision of Nigel Fortune, the dissertation is organized into three parts: "The Idea of Gebrauchsmusik," "Weimar as a Musical Epoch: From Expressionism to Neue Sachlichkeit," and "Hindemith."

Hinton, who is currently on the faculty of the Technische Universität in Berlin, is a regular contributor to the *Kurt Weill Newsletter* and has recently finished work on *Kurt Weill: The Threepenny Opera*, soon to be published by Cambridge University Press.

Studien zur Berliner Musikgeschichte: Musikkultur der zwanziger Jahre Edited by Klaus Mehner and Joachim Lucchesi. Berlin (GDR): Henschelverlag, 1989. 156 p.

The editors have chosen nine wide-ranging essays by leading German musicologists for inclusion in this collection: "'Dein Tänzer ist der Tod!' Leben in den Zwanzigern" by Kirsten Beuth; "Stefan Wolpe: Ein fast vergessener Berliner Komponist" by Eberhardt Klemm; "Zur Stellung Ferruccio Busonis im Berliner Musikleben" by Jutta Theurich; "Arnold Schoenberg und seine Berliner Schüler" by Mathias Hansen; "'Ein Theater für alle Tage': Aufstieg und Fall der Krolloper" by Joachim Lucchesi; "Filmspezifische Musik" by Wolfgang Thiel; "Zur Rolle des Rundfunks der Weimarer Republik als ästhetische Avantgarde" by Stefan Amzoll; "Berlin und das Neue in der Musik" by Klaus Mehner; and "Berliner Musikkritik" by Frank Schneider. The slim, paperback volume, commissioned by the Akademie der Künste der DDR, was produced directly from typescript.

Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny Los Angeles Music Center Opera, Jonathan Miller, stage director, Kent Nagano, musical director, 10, 13, 14, 16, 17 September 1989

It took a certain bravery for the Los Angeles Music Center Opera – only in its fourth season and remarkably successful so far despite the predictions of some of the town's most outspoken naysayers – to subsume *Mahagonny* into its agenda so soon. But Peter Hemmings' fledgling company knows no fears; its list of previous successes includes works as daunting as *Katya Kabanova* and *Wozzeck*. Somebody, after the long and famous Los Angeles operatic drought, is finally doing something right. (Most of the time, anyhow.)

There was, furthermore, some delicious irony at work in casting the Weill-Brecht agitprop masterpiece onto the stage of the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion for five performances in September, in the midst of the Music Center Association's gala self-celebration of twenty-five years' survival – a capitalist orgy if ever one was. And just in case the irony might go unnoticed, stage director Jonathan Miller and designer Robert Israel set their *Mahagonny* not in the customary vaguely Floridian desert but on a Hollywood soundstage circa 1930. And why not? After all, Otto Friedrich's penetrating study of Hollywood's palmy days (written with fine Brechtian thrust and irony) does call itself "City of Nets." (The opera, in Michael Feingold's updated if not upgraded translation, does not; however, it settles for "Spider-Web City," which strikes me as somewhat clumsy.)

Even so, the Hollywood setting raised some hackles. "Lights, Cameras, Inaction," growled the *Los Angeles Times'* implacable Martin Bernheimer. Actually, however, the Hollywood setting receded almost immediately in one's awareness. The framework of the primitive sound stage, with the tired old car bursting through a fake wall at the start, and with Robert Israel's buildings obviously consisting of false fronts easily rotating to reveal other, well, false fronts, made its reasonable, Brechtian statement: all the world's a stage, and we are only props.

Miller, already a Music Center Opera veteran (with a cutesy-poo *Mikado* and a powerful *Tristan und Isolde* to his credit) had his own strong ideas: basically, to de-Brechtify the framework of the opera by doing away with the placards and processions (and also most of the narration) and, in his words, "to liberate a small, naturalistic drama from its confines of didactic Marxist twaddle." In this he cannot be faulted; his vision of the great score could, under proper circumstances, have stood in for the basis of a thrilling evening of abrasive, compelling, musical theater. The Israel sets, likewise –



Billy (John Atkins), Jimmy (Gary Bachlund) and Jenny (Anna Steiger) share spirits in the tavern. *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, Los Angeles Music Center Opera. Photo: Frederic Ohringer.

despite their insistence on sand colors and grey (an Israel cliché, if you remember his *Akhnaten* in Houston and New York) – did serve to establish some strong thoughts on character: Begbick in her garish golden gowns right off Theda Bara, Jenny in her white-on-white (ha!ha!) virginity.

Unfortunately, the operatic powers-that-be chose to torpedo some of the high concept that director and designer brought to the work. Kent Nagano, a fast-rising young conductor already ensconced on the international circuit (California born, and a one-time protégé of Seiji Ozawa in the Bay Area) either perpetrated or acquiesced to a drastic series of cuts in the score that lopped off some forty-five minutes of music and, worse, distorted the timing of the work. Some scenes were chopped in half; latter stanzas even of songs as familiar as “Denn wie man sich bettet,” not to mention both “Alabama” and “Benares,” were missing; the result veered dangerously in the direction of “*Mahagonny*’s Greatest Hits.” And why? The work as written is not long; furthermore, this distorted reading (with often-cut “Crane’s Duet” included but stuck in the wrong place) seemed unduly protracted.

Some of this might have been helped by a stronger musical concept, but Nagano had none to offer. Given a splendid pit band in the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra (with the most seductive saxophones you’ll ever hear in some of Weill’s most eloquent moments), Nagano seemed lacking in any sense of onward thrust, the music often just lay there. Considering that the opera is a co-production with the Geneva and Kentucky Operas, and, with Nagano’s own Opéra de Lyon also possibly involved, there may be sad news ahead for those cities. Let’s assume, anyhow, that Geneva and Lyon will be spared the fussy new Feingold translation, a far remove from his earlier text for the great Yale revivals in the early 1970’s, full of “s”-words and other titillations, and needlessly underscored in Los Angeles by running supertitles rendered needless by the supe-

rior diction of the cast.

One thing the Music Center Opera has developed has been a solid repertory ensemble of solo singers, and some of these were good enough to keep the opera afloat in its bad moments: Greg Fedderly as a curiously slender Fatty, Jonathan Mack as Jakob in his deliriously funny calf-eating scene, Michael Gallup as a resonant Trinity-Moses. The Begbick was another company regular, Marvellee Cariaga; she did push the pitch somewhat, in her best Katisha manner; against memories of previous Begbicks, however, there was a musicality in Cariaga’s style that discouraged reproach.

The lovers were Gary Bachlund and Anna Steiger (Rod Steiger’s and Claire Bloom’s kid). Again, memories of former Jimmies (Cassilly at the Met, and the sour tenors on both recordings) may have made Bachlund sound better than he actually was, but I heard him as a bright, youthful tenor with a thread of the heroic in both voice and manner. Steiger, sweet to behold, was not quite up to this, however; it’s a pretty voice she has, but it says nothing about the character. Mimi yes; Jenny no.

Alan Rich
Los Angeles

Concerto for Violin and Wind Orchestra Detroit Symphony Chamber Orchestra, Stephen Stein, conductor; Geoffrey Applegate, violinist. 28-30 April 1989

As this review is written in late summer, the future of the Detroit Symphony seems to be hanging by a thread. Like so many first-rate ensembles in the U.S., the orchestra has been plagued by financial difficulties and distressingly low attendance. Detroit (continually attempting to upgrade its national image) needs especially to maintain a high-caliber musical organization.

At no time were the talents of the Detroit Symphony more in evidence than in the Chamber Orchestra’s concert of 30 April. The inclusion on the program of Weill’s *Concerto* (along with works by Elgar, Haydn and Bolcom) proved particularly refreshing; although this piece is perhaps one of the more frequently performed of Weill’s instrumental works, it is hardly yet a mainstay of the violin concerto repertory. However, the *Concerto* (1924) remains a fascinating composition, and it is quite moving when performed as well as it was here. One wonders if this concert led those who know only Weill’s later stage pieces to explore his earlier works of the 1920’s.

Theodor Adorno once wrote that this piece “stands isolated and alien: that is, in the right place.” As several scholars have pointed out, the piece is certainly not “isolated” from musical trends of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; parallels can be seen with Stravinsky, Hindemith, Schönberg, and even Mahler. Yet in its harmonic structure, polyphonic clarity, and use of a musical language (particularly in the solo part) which is at times profoundly lyrical and at times almost brutally angular, the *Concerto* is, in fact, strikingly original for its time, in some ways foreshadowing ideas that Weill was to use in his later stage works, and in other ways showing experimental avenues that Weill would neglect after moving to the U.S.

Geoffrey Applegate, principal second violinist with the DSO, was the soloist in this performance. Although technically nearly flawless, the performance was most notable for a warmth of expression. In some hands, much of this music can take on a rather icy quality; however, Applegate approached the more abrasive passages with the same depth of feeling with which he interpreted the lyrical sections. And for all his seriousness of purpose, he obviously enjoyed himself as well, especially in the charming duet between violin and bass in the “Notturmo.”

The rest of the ensemble performed admirably. Particularly lovely were the clarinet duet at the beginning of the first movement and the crucial (though brief) solo passages for horn and flute in the first and second movements. Throughout the piece the group maintained a clarity of sound which, though it owes much to Weill’s talents as an orchestrator, could still have been obliterated by a mediocre performance.

Unfortunately there were also occasional flaws: Stein’s tempi were sometimes too slow; the opening of the “Notturmo” was particularly lead-footed, and Applegate seemed the only performer able to project the humor of this section; the ensemble’s attacks in the final movement were not always precise. But these were only minor faults in what was generally an exceptional performance.

Jeffrey Taylor
Detroit

PERFORMANCES

Happy End Court Theater, Chicago. 3 March- 9 April 1989.

A young enthusiastic cast, a sympathetic audience, an intimate theater where the "stage" forms an integral part of a circular arrangement that ensures close contact between actors and onlookers, an effective split-stage set (Jeff Bauer), imaginatively used by a fine director (Linda Brovsky), appropriate costumes (Anne Jaros), and competent lighting (Rita Pietraszek) – all this and much more should make for a most satisfying evening of entertainment. And so it did in many respects last March at the Court Theater of the University of Chicago, except that it reminded this reviewer far more of New York's Broadway than Berlin's Schiffbauerdamm.

Happy End, to be sure, may well be the most problematic product of the short-lived Weill-Brecht collaboration: two writers whose respective contributions are still awaiting full clarification; a rather lightweight and at times confusing story with the Lord's private Salvation Army and Chicago's gangsters as stand-ins for good and evil; cliché figures from the Chicago underworld of the prohibition era, culled directly, it seems, from some early talking movie; an author or part-author fascinated with prize-fighters as metaphors for the modern world and, therefore, suggesting a boxing ring as the ideal stage for fifteen rounds of play; a composer flushed with recent unexpected success and hence in danger of repeating himself, writing, moreover, for a band geared to the incisive sounds of Berlin cabaret during the declining years of the Weimar Republic, etc., etc. In short, an unending list of potential pitfalls faces anyone bold enough to tackle a task as forbidding as it is potentially rewarding, provided everything somehow falls into place.

Some years ago in Frankfurt, German television's Colombo turned up between

Happy End rounds to the delight of the youthful audience, while a shapely blonde announcing each round in the nude was savored by some older gentlemen in particular. The Chicago production to its lasting credit eschewed the boxing ring as much as the cheap gimmicks that disfigure so many current productions. Instead, there was plenty of action and interaction, more perhaps than the songs warrant. But then, therein lies one of *Happy End*'s most obstreperous problems: how much horseplay will the music tolerate and vice versa? Linda Brovsky, in a succinct program note, referred to the plot's contemporary relevance in terms of both implicit and explicit social contradictions, only to assert: "add Kurt Weill's cheery, toe-tapping songs about God, sex, and violence – and you have *Happy End*." Had she understood that Weill's songs (never mind the epithets!) represent the very essence of the show, things might have been altogether different.

Michael Feingold's adaptation admittedly plays havoc with any serious attempt to render the music its proper due. For, it interferes time and again with the characteristic bite of the melodic-rhythmic patterning. Thus, her valiant effort notwithstanding, there was no way Shannon Cochran could articulate Hell's Lily's Ballad adequately *vivace*, as mandated by the composer. Feingold's text runs directly counter to the authors' single measure phrasing. Why, on the other hand, Jonathan Weir should have taken the beginning of the liquor dealer's "Moritat" as fast as he did is beyond comprehension. As for Ann Arvia's Lillian, her pleasant operatic voice was quite out of character. Looking and acting very well indeed, she nevertheless sang her socio-political *pièce de résistance*, the "Lieutenant of the Lord," as if totally unaware of its textual implications, let alone Weill's musical allusions to communist fighting songs. Her "Sailor's Tango," in turn, lacked not

only the necessary rhythmic precision and sharp accentuation but in the end lost whatever drive it did have at the outset.

When all is said and done, much of the blame must fall on a musical direction that was, to put it mildly, unconvincing, possibly because it never managed to come to terms with the peculiarities of Weill's post-*Three-penny* music. Mere lack of acquaintance with the period and style in question, however, does not fully explain such a lackluster performance on the part of the members of the University of Chicago's excellent New Music Ensemble who, far from doing their appointed share in carrying the action forward, accompanied at best and at worst provided mere background. Their awkward placement above and behind the open stage no doubt helped to obscure the true quality of the instrumental sound. It certainly precluded any kind of meaningful communication between the actor-singers and a conductor reduced to beating a measure. Given such minor yet disconcerting handicaps, the vocal performances could legitimately claim extenuating circumstances, the more so, as the smaller parts in particular deserve a good deal of praise, and the cast as a whole displayed a sense of mutual responsibility that Kurt Weill, for one, would have cherished.

Alexander L. Ringer

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Marie Galante. Happy End. (Concert versions) The Redwoods Summer Music Festival, Chalk Hill Winery near Santa Rosa, California. Ryan Brown, conductor. 20 August 1989.

The Redwoods Summer Music Festival at the Chalk Hill Winery near Santa Rosa, California presented on 20 August the West Coast premiere of Weill's songs and incidental music to the play *Marie Galante* by Jacques Deval and a concert performance of *Happy End*. Concert attendants that afternoon were shuttled up to the Wedding Park, a grassy knoll and grove of trees with a lovely view of the surrounding hills and vineyards. While no doubt an idyllic setting for connubial rites, it seemed less ideal for concert performances; the musicians had to deal with the concomitant problems of wind and sound amplification.

Ryan Brown, a New York-based musician, organized the event and conducted members of the Santa Rosa Symphony. Soprano Lucy Shelton was scheduled to perform but had to cancel because of illness. (Oddly enough, the last time I attended a performance of *Happy End*, albeit a fully staged one at the Berkeley Repertory Theatre, a substitution was made for the female lead, also.) Judy Ruth Hubbell, a San Francisco Bay Area soprano, did an admirable



Gang leaders Bill Cracker (David Nisbet) and Doctor Nakamura (Larry Russ) show off a soft shoe routine in *Happy End* at Chicago's Court Theatre. Photo: David Sutton

job taking on a program obviously intended for Ms. Shelton.

Marie Galante is unusual among Weill's works. Composed in 1934 during his stay in Paris, it retains the use of distinctly Weillian harmonies and rhythmic patterns derived from popular song and dance forms, while achieving a synthesis in the French idiom. Ms. Hubbell did well; hers is a pleasant voice with accurate pitch and excellent control, and she succeeded in conveying the dramatic content of the music without resorting to histrionics. She was accompanied by an ensemble consisting of the original instrumentation—two violins, viola, bass, three doubling woodwinds, two trumpets, one trombone, percussion, guitar (doubling banjo), piano (doubling harmonium), and accordion. Being unfamiliar with the incidental music and its genesis, I was surprised by Weill's self-borrowing, i.e. to recognize "Das Lied von der harten Nuss" from *Happy End* when the ensemble began the "Scene au dancing."

An intermission was followed by a concert performance of *Happy End*, sung in the more ribald English translation of Michael Feingold. Ms. Hubbell was joined by baritone J. Sean Mattingly; a five-voice chorus rounded out the forces. Mr. Mattingly has a full and confident-sounding voice which projects well; I doubt if the use of the microphone would have been essential. His jaunty delivery, however, lacked that sense of moral ambiguity or hint of menace essential to a Weill-Brecht protagonist. Ms. Hubbell continued to shine, demonstrating an understanding of the gestic style. She faltered only once, in the "Ballad of the Lily of Hell," as one hand grasped hat to head against the rising wind. The brief choral numbers were nearly inaudible at times because of amplification problems.

Although not without its flaws, most truly due to circumstances beyond the performers control, this overall commendable performance provided an enjoyable afternoon. *Happy End* always merits a listen, but one wonders why it has taken fifty-five years for *Marie Galante* to be heard on the West Coast. With any luck, there won't be nearly so long a wait for the next opportunity, and one hopes under more favorable conditions.

Michael Colby
San Francisco

Johnny Johnson (Concert Performance) Merkin Concert Hall, Rhonda Kess, conductor. 14 September 1989.

A concert performance of selections from *Johnny Johnson* was held on 14 September 1989 as part of Merkin Concert Hall's "Voices of Change: American Music of Protest, Politics and Persuasion" series. Veteran

showman Larry Kert took the role of Johnny Johnson as narrator, and the Western Wind Vocal Ensemble, six New York-based singers, assumed various singing roles and also formed the chorus. Rhonda Kess led the St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble.

Ms. Kess, who was certainly the motive force behind the performance, conducted with great nuance and obvious affection for the score. The orchestra brought out the delicacy of Weill's orchestrations (particularly in "Johnny's Dream," where the piano, two violins, and vibraphone created a moment of aural magic) and played with all the verve and bounce Weill's music demands. This ensemble shows a flair for Weill's theater music, and I will look forward to future performances of his scores under Ms. Kess's baton. The Western Wind sang well and with the evident enjoyment that informs all their performances. Cheryl Bensman Rowe was noteworthy as the Statue of Liberty and suitably flirtatious in "Mon Ami, My Friend." Mr. Kert was a likeable narrator and displayed his usual show-biz panache in "Johnny's Song."

Some reservations must be noted, however. Most seriously, the orchestra, placed on the tiny Merkin Concert Hall stage behind the singers proved to be overwhelming throughout, with the result that the lyrics were often inaudible. Balance is often problematic in Merkin Hall and, consequently, Ms. Kess might have been more sensitive to projection. Mr. Kert, seated at a podium, was miked.

The narration, given over wholly to Johnny, presented the character as much too sophisticated to have been the simple American Schweik that Green and Weill intended; the plot and consequent involvement of the other characters was minimal. Rather than this newly-conceived narration, I would have preferred an abridged reading of the original script. As John McGlinn's concert performances of early musical comedies have shown, this solution is a practical and by far the best alternative to an actual staged production.

Ms. Kess should be applauded for including a vast amount of Weill's underscoring, which offers some of the best moments in the score. A small disappointment was the lack of previously unrecorded music. Except for Minnie Belle's brief "Farewell, Good-bye," all of the music performed is available on the excellent Polydor reissue recording. Favorites from the score, such as Aggie's "Sewing Machine Song" and "The Psychiatry Song" were missing; but, given the time restraints of a half-evening concert, the program presented enough material for the audience to understand the main plot development. The enthusiastic audience reception suggested that a full-fledged production is long overdue.

Brian E. Drake
New York

KURT WEILL CAPRICCIO
AUFSTIEG UND FALL DER STADT
RISE AND FALL OF THE CITY OF
MAHAGONNY
TEXT - BRECHT
ANJA SILJA
ANNY SCHLEMM
THOMAS LEHRBERGER
KLAUS HIRTE
WOLFGANG NEUMANN
FREDERIC MAYER
PAUL WOLFRUM
HANS FRANZEN
KÖLNER RUNDFUNKORCHESTER
JAN LATHAM-KÖNIG
141 MIN
DIGITAL RECORDING

Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny, Kölner Rundfunkorchester. Jan Latham-König, cond. Capriccio (CD: 10-160/61)

In his own explanations of *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* Weill was anxious to stress the autonomous character of the music. "The subject matter of the opera," he asserted, "made possible a structure based on purely musical laws" (*Vorwort zum Regiebuch*). The libretto, conversely, "is actually structured from a purely musical point of view" (letter to Universal Edition, 18 November 1927). It is almost as if his opera aesthetic (or rather, Busoni's) had been conceived with the prospect of concert performances and sound recording already in mind. On its own, divested of the visual dimension, the score does indeed make perfect musical sense. But that's also the problem: the stage business is dispensed with. Less self-sufficient music serves to underscore the drama - drama which becomes conspicuous in recordings by its very absence. The alert listener, aware of that absence, is invited to compensate imaginatively. Not so with *Aufstieg*. In this sense, recordings of the work are an even poorer substitute for actual stage productions than with less autonomous scores.

Generalities aside, there are two specific ways in which this new recording puts the work at a further remove from the theater than is actually necessary. First, it omits the summarizing captions. Brecht saw these as an essential ingredient of epic theater; Weill as a neat way of avoiding bothersome spoken dialogue. Second, the execrable delivery of the small amount of spoken dialogue is by far the weakest aspect of this

RECORDINGS

otherwise admirable production. Jim (Wolfgang Neumann) is a particularly serious offender, turning at one point the performance direction "ironic" into something approaching "untutoredly indifferent." Although there is no question that this recording handsomely supersedes its 33-year-old predecessor, the new cast could still have usefully turned to Lenya and her associates for some lessons in acting.

The delights, however, are many. As one might expect, the CD sound is excellent. The orchestral playing, apart from some unedited infelicities in the strings, is also of a very high standard. Thomas Lehrberger, as a lyrical Fatty, and Paul Wolfrum, a sweet-toned Bill, are so assured in their relatively small roles that I regretted on occasions that they hadn't been given something bigger. Although the principals all put in fine performances, ultimately none of them seems utterly at home with his or her allotted part. Anny Schlemm as Begbick, very firm in the lower register, has to strain rather in the higher regions, being forced to apply vibrato of the "take-your-pick" variety. Wolfgang Neumann is clearly on top of one of the hardest tenor roles in the repertory, yet his Jim lacks a little of the both blameless and defiant victim that goes with the role and which a lighter, more lyrical voice might convey. He manages the top C in "Nur die Nacht," but only just. Anja Silja's Jenny is a piece of analogous casting. She is perhaps a little too mature and forceful for the part, comparable to Jessye Norman playing Carmen. *Pianissimo* (at the end of the "Alabama Song," for example) is a dynamic marking that she naturally fights shy of. Following the music with the piano vocal score I was left wondering whether Miss Silja or the score was at fault, particularly in "Denn wie man sich bettet." In the verse she sings the word "kein" ("Ein Mensch ist kein Tier") on an e^2 rather than the printed f^2 . In the refrain "bist" ("und wird einer getreten, bist du's") is a d^2 rather than the written $c^{\sharp 2}$. (There is also a measure missing in Act II, five mm. after figure 33. Or does the score [p. 177] contain one bar too many?)

If one agrees with David Drew that there is no ideal production of *Mahagonny*, just as there is no "definitive edition" (*Kurt Weill: a Handbook*, p. 185), then there is a *fortiori* no "ideal" recording. Unlike the 1956 recording, which introduced numerous cuts and transferred the "Kraniche-Duett" to the "love" scene in Act II, the producers of this new one have elected to give us everything in the Drew edition except the duet (and the reprise of "Lasst euch nicht verführen"). Perhaps they came to the conclusion, like Drew, that "the truthfulness of *Mahagonny* may well be greatest when the "Kraniche-Duett" is omitted." Its placing, not to mention its stylistic divergence from the rest of the opera, does indeed pose

a problem. Yet there is no denying that its absence represents a regrettable musical loss, however great the dramaturgical benefits.

The star of this recording is undoubtedly the conductor, Jan Latham-König, who does full justice to the score's claims to musical autonomy. In taking Weill's tempo indications seriously, at least for the most part, he gives the music a coherence and balance that I have never experienced before in the opera house. The "Alabama Song," for example, at its prescribed speed (half-note = 69) allows the 6 "Mädchen" to project a deliciously bored insouciance ("Oh don't ask why") while revealing an internal musical connection (the rhythmical inversion of anapests into dactyls) with its pidgin-English counterpart, the symmetrically placed "Benares Song." This latter song, in fact, Latham-König takes at an even slower speed than prescribed; but it works. The only serious departure from the score is the "typhoon" fugue which for obvious dramatic reasons Weill required to be played *molto vivace*. Here it sounds more like a piece of Gabrieli gone neo-Classical. Latham-König has set a high standard for all future recordings of *Mahagonny* to follow. The challenge that remains is to inject a greater sense of theater.

Stephen Hinton
Berlin (West)

Die Zwanziger Jahre Various performers. Thorofon CTH 2043 (CD)

Thorofon, which previously released Kurt Weill's *Der Lindberghflug* (as *Der Ozeanflug*, Thorofon MTH 118), has now made another welcome addition to its adventurous catalog. *Die Zwanziger Jahre* is an anthology of previously unrecorded music composed in Berlin during that fruitful decade. Of major interest is the first commercial recording of Weill's "Zu Potsdam unter den Eichen," in the 1929 arrangement for male chorus.

"Zu Potsdam" was originally composed by Weill to be sung by a male trio as the sixth movement of *Das Berliner Requiem* and was evidently broadcast by Radio Frankfurt at the cantata's premiere on 22 May 1929. Later Weill set "Zu Potsdam" for a *cappella* male chorus at the request of Erwin Stein of Universal, for inclusion in that publisher's series of choral works, "Die rote Reihe."

The piece is here sung expressively, if a trifle lugubriously (not at all out of place in this case), by the Staats- und Domchor of Berlin, under the direction of Christian Grube. In this performance, the music remains melodically and contrapuntally interesting, yet the text gains complete intelli-

gibility. At two minutes and twenty-one seconds (the shortest piece on the disc), "Zu Potsdam" leaves the listener hungry for more. Thorofon would have done well to add Weill's companion work, "Die Legende vom toten Soldaten," to help counter the imbalance.

Also of interest are first recordings of Krenek's *Symphonie für Blasinstrumente und Schlagwerke*, Op. 34, played with great sensitivity by the RSO Berlin under Vinko Globokar, and Hans Eisler's "Palmström." In an effective performance by Junko Ohtsu-Borrmann, Eisler's striking song cycle for soprano and chamber ensemble bears more than a superficial resemblance to Weill's own song cycle for soprano and wind ensemble *Frauentanz*. Eisler's music is so rarely offered on recordings, and yet his significance in the musical and theater world of the 20's and 30's commands an influence on later generations of socially-conscious composers such as Blitzstein, Copland, and Bernstein, that its inclusion here is doubly welcome. The other selections are performed with suitable panache and conviction; pianist Horst Göbel's playing of Grete von Zieritz's "Präludium und Fuge" is especially notable.

The program booklet in the attractive package offers an Editor's Foreword, a brief but informative overview of the musical scene in Berlin in the 20's, and a set of notes in German, French, and English on the composers and selections offered. On the negative side, the disc is poorly indexed: each work is given a single index point, with no indexing for the separate movements within the piece. Texts for the songs are given in German only, with no translations.

Horst Göbel states the rationale for the recording in the foreword:

The works have been chosen according to these criteria: the composer had to have lived in Berlin and the composition been written during the designated period; the composer had to have been of significance to the musical scene in Berlin; the work chosen should, if possible, be a first release on records, so as to enhance the presently meager supply of recordings from that era.

Bravo to Thorofon for a courageous and vitally necessary undertaking.

Brian E. Drake
New York

Editor's Note. This recording was also released on LP as part of a complete, 4-disc set entitled *Musik zwischen den Kriegen: Eine Berliner Dokumentation on Thorofon Capella ETHK 341/4*. Each disc has a separate theme: 1) *Die Zwanziger Jahre*, 2) *Die Dreißiger Jahre*, 3) *Die Hochschule für Musik*, 4) *Die Preußische Akademie der Künste*.

Brecht-Weill Songs Gisela May, *mezzo-soprano*, with studio orchestra conducted by Henry Krttschil. Capriccio Records (10 180)

A Walk on the Weill Side Helen Schneider, *soprano*, with Bruce Coyle, *keyboards*. CBS Masterworks (45703)

Ute Lemper Sings Kurt Weill Ute Lemper, with the RIAS-Berlin Chamber Ensemble conducted by John Mauceri. London Records (425 204-2)

The Kurt Weill Songbook Julie Wilson, *soprano*, with William Roy, *piano*. DRG Records (CDSL 5207)

Over There Michael Feinstein, *tenor*, with Armen Guzelimian, *piano*. EMI Records (CDC 7497682)

Iffy stuff, this, and in overpowering quantity.

Gisela May is, of course, the known quantity here, now and then with the Berliner Ensemble, since 1957 a Brecht-Weill-Eisler-Des-sau specialist (at the insistence, the story goes, of Hanns Eisler who, on hearing her at a Deutsches Theater matinee, announced, "This woman *can* sing and *must* sing!"). On her own, May has built a fair career, much of it in Lenya's footsteps and with Lenya's rewrites and transpositions.

Na und? It's been a long, long time since 1957; May has recorded most of this repertory — all of it the familiar stuff from the German shows — earlier and better (on Deutsche Grammophon and East German Eterna). Here we have yet another quavery-Lenya ripoff, to be listened to only by dedicated nostalgists. To perpetuate the notion of the Weill repertory as a sort of rest home for aging lady baritones is an idea whose time, I thought, had long since passed. Yes, May can still scare the pants off you with "Ballade vom ertrunkenen Mädchen," as did Lenya, and in the same Lenya misreading. *Na, und?*

The title of Helen Schneider's collection is bad enough, reports of the success she's been having with her Weill cabaret (at New York's The Ballroom *et passim*) is worse, and the record is worst of all. Do we really need this kind of half-spoken, insinuating

artiness applied to the soaring melodic arches of "Surabaya?" What I get out of Schneider's singing (and it could, of course, be the upcreep of old age) is the work of a willful innocent with a fine gift for cutesy troping of a given tune, but with no idea what the tune might be about. I can still go all soft when the likes of an Ella Fitzgerald can run a great tune through the bouncies the way a snake charmer might an amorous boa. Hearing Schneider pull fifteen of the greatest theatrical songs I know out of any consistent shape — well, it puts me squarely on the side of the boa. The slithery keyboard stuff in the background is certainly not on the side of Weill.

I wrote of Lemper — mostly with enthusiasm, as I remember — when her vinyl album came out early in 1987; my first disillusion-

cherishable music. All is style, all is slither; when you've made your tortuous way from the *Silbersee* "Fennimores Lied" to a *One Touch of Venus* group at the end (polyester posing as silk) you really haven't heard very much of the genius of these songs. John Mauceri's orchestral support is very fine, but most of the time there's not that much to support. One plus: the notes do include the complete texts; none of the other disks do.

Then there's Julie Wilson, whose management proudly lets out the story of her gig at London's Ritz Hotel in 1986, where patrons were losing their dinner from the intensity of her "Surabaya Johnny." Disrespectful if obvious comments aside, and my longtime adoration of Wilson's way with a song under firm control, I have to greet this

as another sad effort whose time has come and long since gone. Yes, there are the golden threads here, and in the light-textured "Sing Me Not a Ballad," that delicious irony of the Wilson of yesteryear bounces ingratiatingly into your consciousness. But the noises out of William Roy's collection of electronic toys is bothersome; Weill is not yet ready for that, and neither am I.

Feinstein, finally: an ingratiating singer if lots more fun in person. Rounding out his twenty-five-song tribute to World War I nostalgia are three of Weill's early pieces — "Reiterlied," "Im Volkston," and "Das schöne Kind" — songs clearly inspired by the young composer's immer-

sions in Mahler and the dying gasps of the German lied. They are, thus, entirely wrong for Feinstein's reedy, basically unformed voice, and his cabaret manner that makes the rest of the record so completely delightful. A pox on whoever leads such marvelous artists down such fruitless byways.

Alan Rich
Los Angeles



ment came later that year, at the mayhem she perpetrated upon excerpts from the Seven Deadlies at the Weill Festival at Merkin. Somebody, apparently, had gotten to what I had heard as a clean, unmannered, nicely directed way of singing and pointed it in the wrong direction. The new CD, around long enough already at this writing to have made some headway on the charts, duplicates almost nothing from the earlier set (only "Je ne t'aime pas," which Lemper had sung as "Wie lange noch" on the LP). But the new record also fails to duplicate most of what I had admired in the earlier set. This is, once again, a record about the way a singer can make up a lot of vocal styles and stick them, willy-nilly, onto some powerful and

PRESS CLIPPINGS

DER SILBERSEE FLOWED GENTLY THROUGH THE FORUM

The WDR performance, in concert form, of the play-with-music Der Silbersee at Forum Niederberg was an extraordinary experience.

In *Silbersee*, the author Georg Kaiser expresses his vision of regeneration for humanity. Severin, unemployed and starving, overcomes his desire for revenge against the policeman Olim, who wounded him during a robbery. Olim, who has come into money through winning the lottery, recognizes his guilt and cares for Severin until he is well. They become friends.

When they are driven out by the scheming housekeeper and her niece, they seek to drown themselves in the Silbersee [Silverlake]. But the lake freezes over and supports them: it is the symbol of hope for those who have become more human through insight and personal fortitude.

In social-critical parts of the play, Kurt Weill's music has the aggressive edge and songs in the style of "Dreigroschenoper". But, in accord with the dominant tone of the work, the music on the whole expresses an emotional depth devoid of parody, in particular at the very moving denouement. Despite many ensemble pieces and big scenes, the music always remains direct and theatrically effective. The sound of the large orchestra is colorful and clear.

To sing *Silbersee*, not singing actors but singers with acting abilities are a necessity. It was advantageous for the concert version that the spoken text was limited to just the essential parts. Most distinguished in singing, speaking, and interpretation were Hildegard Heichele as Fennimore, Eva Tamassy as the housekeeper, Wolfgang Schmidt as Severin, Hans Korte as Olim, and Frederic Mayer as the lottery agent. The Baron, the Shopgirls, the Young Men and the narrator Michael Thomas were all convincing in their roles.

The Cologne Radio Orchestra under the direction of Jan Latham-König played with absolute precision, potency, and virtuosity, yet was also able to capture the expressive atmosphere of the piece. The choir Pro Musica Köln was excellent, impressively and clearly embodying the voice of humanity. The enthusiastic applause was the audi-

ence's thanks for the magnificent performance of this work, which is unfortunately rarely heard.

Velberter Zeitung, 20 March 1989

Translated by Michael Hoexter

SELLARS' SUCCESS AT BAM

The second production of the Brooklyn Academy's opera venture was a revival, in the Majestic Theatre, of Peter Sellars' Weill-Bach bill: the "Mahagonny Songspiel" followed by movements of several Bach cantatas

wrote the "Mahagonny" lyrics, and Luther's Bible and between Weill's and Bach's heightened diatonism needed no stressing. The Bach movements were rescored for Weill's ensemble: clarinets for oboi d'amore, vibraphone for recorders, a saxophone obbligato winding through "Wie furchtsam wankten meine Schritte," from Cantata No. 33. Not an evening to "explain" but one to respond to, to be grateful for: a sequence of precisely composed, piercing visions.

The company consisted of Lorraine Hunt, Mary Westbrook-Geha, Frank Kelley, Sanford Sylvan, James Maddalena, and John Osborn. The lighting was by James Ingalls. Fine-grained instrumentalists from the Orchestra of St. Luke's were conducted by Craig Smith, whose phrasing is slightly too soft in outline, overtender, for my taste but was well suited to – play its part in creating – the poetic, shining dream.

Andrew Porter
The New Yorker
17 April 1989

KURT WEILL'S STREET SCENE

THEATRE ROYAL, GLASGOW

The tenth of Kurt Weill's American stage works—*Street Scene* of 1947, a "Broadway opera"—opened in Glasgow on Tuesday, receiving at long last its first full-scale British professional production.

This must count as a red-letter day in British opera, for the work is of astonishing richness, teeming with vitality and blazing with compassion, positioned at that rare but infinitely rewarding point where genuinely popular musical theatre meets opera to produce a masterpiece. The splendid 1983 student staging at the Royal Academy of Music paved the way; now Scottish Opera, fired by the joint Weill enthusiasm of its music director, John Mauceri, and of the show's producer, David Poutney, have added the work to the repertoire and to their list of shining good deeds.

In this work, the new theatrical style that Weill had consciously sought in America came to maturity; as the composer himself said, "Not until *Street Scene* did I achieve a real blending of music and drama." The cross-section of tenement life drawn from the 1929 Elmer Rice play by Langston Hughes, the librettist, offered him a kind of *tableau vivant*, in which the intricate backdrop of minor characters going about their daily business throws into relief both bold



Enjoying life's pleasures in the Peter Sellars productions of *Mahagonny Songspiel* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. Photo: Peter Krupenye

tas grouped as "Conversations with Fear and Hope After Death." Not exactly an opera, but an evening of imagery, moving in both senses of the word, where music took visual form while it sounded, and ear and eye were held spellbound by the shapes that voices, instruments, and bodies were tracing. It was a paradigm for Sellars' opera productions: a key to open the approach, for doubters, to ways in which he can invest music and its meanings with—sometimes deliberately contrapuntal—visual and physical attributes. Links between Brecht, who

and subtle the main tale of the unhappy Maurrants and their daughter Rose.

The ancestor of *Street Scene* is *Porgy and Bess*; both the family likenesses and the wholly positive influence of that earlier popular American masterpiece are easily recognized. But it is through awareness of the work's familiar features – the Broadway-type orchestration, brilliantly re-invented by Weill, the situations and sentiments of time-honoured usage – that one comes to appreciate its startling originality.

All of Weill is in *Street Scene*. The Sing-spiel-descended succession of speech and song moves with masterly fluency; and the sheer stylistic plurality of the numbers – which stretches from the cod-opera Ice Cream Sextet and Mrs. Maurrant's Puccinian opera aria, through the various shades of popular song, to a classic Broadway song-and-dance show-stopper and back again to the powerful mourning choral ensemble of Act 2 (in which the Berlin Weill is best recalled) – fleshes out the world of music-drama complete and indissolubly whole.

It used to be received opinion in higher musical circles that the Broadway Weill was a sell-out, a tragic loss to serious music. We know better now. To write a successful popular opera is to be deadly serious: you need a comprehensive command of theatrical styles allied to a comprehensive range of musical gifts, and in every respect this is one of the handful of successful popular operas. It pleases (those tunes!) and it moves, but it does not preach; its vision of life at the lower end of the city is at once a period piece and piercingly, at times painfully modern.

Normal life, abnormal death, eviction and a general sense of contained pessimism lie side by side; and after ten years of Thatcherite Victorian Values, Glasgow and London audiences may well find the question posed by Sam Kaplan, the "conscience" of the opera, newly and uncomfortably pertinent: "Why do we go on living in this sewer?" The luminous humanity of the opera itself provides one possible answer.

On Tuesday the Scottish Opera *Street Scene* proved to be a superb show not completely out of the chrysalis. Mauceri, who conducted the magnificent 1979 production at the New York City Opera (my own first exposure to the work), lavished love, expert knowledge and acute sympathy on every note and phrase; but, especially at the start,

one craved a sharper rhythmic outline and stronger forward movement, less rhapsodic lingering, and certainly less frequent covering of the voices. Many of the spoken words and too many of the sung ones want more forceful projection into the audience.

Pountey's production, in a set (by David Fielding) that blends the naturalistic and the fantastic, the "local" New York and the symbolic, is as one would expect – a first-rate piece of *mise-en-scène*. Characters and incidents are exactly placed, and will surely flower more vividly in later performances.



Susie Lee-Hayward (Mae Jones) and Philip Gould (Dick McGann) stop the show in the Scottish Opera *Street Scene*.

The single weakness is a familiar Poutney tendency to gild the lily: the wit of the Ice Cream Sextet is submerged in added routines, and the smooth seductiveness of "Wouldn't you like to be on Broadway" (and of Alan Oke's stylish, idiomatic Harry Easter) must compete with flashing neon signs. A passing beggar fishes a cigarette butt out of the gutter, and once again one feels a nudge from the elbow of this producer's Social Conscience.

These are mild irritations, and they are outweighed by a plethora of pleasures.

Max Loppert
Financial Times, London
25 May 1989

POLITICIAN ASKED TO CUT "MACK THE KNIFE" ADS

PITTSBURGH (AP) - A political ad being run by City Controller Tom Flaherty may be in copyright trouble.

Al Kohn, vice president of licensing for Warner-Chappell Music Inc., said Thursday that the firm's lawyers would be sending a cease and desist letter to the Flaherty campaign to stop running a radio jingle "as soon as we find an address to send it."

"We don't want to get anyone in any trouble, but this is a violation of a major copyright and we view it very seriously," Kohn said.

Flaherty, a Democratic mayoral aspirant, recently has been running a radio commercial with a jingle to the tune of "Mack the Knife."

Kohn said the rights to the famous tune were owned by the Kurt Weill Foundation, the estate of Bertolt Brecht and Warner Brothers.

He said no one had asked permission for use of the tune and that the song is not permitted to be used in a political context.

Pottsville, PA Republican
28 April 1989

BOULEZ A CONDUCTOR ON A GRAND SCALE

Musician to focus on "musical realities"

"The composer mustn't be the prisoner of technology. He must give something back; the composition must be his, not the machine's."

Pierre Boulez

Twenty-five years ago, when I first sat down with Pierre Boulez to discuss the future of the C-major scale and similar weighty matters, he had already emerged as a pulverizing presence on the musical landscape.

He had called, in one famous interview, for a destruction of all the world's opera houses and a reduction of the operatic repertory to just one work – Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht's *Mahagonny*. He had terrorized avant-garde circles with an article called "Schoenberg is Dead."

Alan Rich
Herald Examiner, Los Angeles, CA
12 May 1989

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