<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Susan Gillerman</td>
<td>Boston University, Boston, Mass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carla Pollack</td>
<td>Brandeis University, Waltham, Mass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark H. Jasinski</td>
<td>Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myrl Hermann</td>
<td>Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, Pa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger Hall</td>
<td>Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ronald T. Olexy</td>
<td>Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruce Saylor</td>
<td>City University of New York, New York, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Gugliotta</td>
<td>City University of New York, Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie Bergbächler</td>
<td>City University of New York, Hunter College, New York, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monica Grabie</td>
<td>City University of New York, Queens College, Flushing, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Marion</td>
<td>Columbia University, New York, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurel Fay</td>
<td>Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betty J. Scott</td>
<td>Florida State University, Tallahassee, Fla.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Youens</td>
<td>Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert A. Green</td>
<td>Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrea Olmstead</td>
<td>Juilliard School, New York, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel O. Douglas</td>
<td>Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, La.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Slemon</td>
<td>McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorna Faraldi</td>
<td>Manhattan School of Music, New York, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John T. Bryan</td>
<td>Memphis State University, Memphis, Tenn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Petersen</td>
<td>New York University, New York, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cecilia Van de Kamp</td>
<td>Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marjory Smith</td>
<td>Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward Parmentier</td>
<td>Princeton University, Princeton, N.J.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Wilkinson</td>
<td>Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Witherell</td>
<td>Stanford University, Stanford, Calif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael A. Keller</td>
<td>State University of New York at Buffalo, Buffalo, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeffrey Weinstein</td>
<td>University of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol Quin</td>
<td>University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Ark.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Ladewig</td>
<td>University of California, Berkeley, Calif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur Haas</td>
<td>University of California, Los Angeles, Calif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Badarak</td>
<td>University of California, Riverside, Calif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrick Rogers</td>
<td>University of California, Santa Barbara, Calif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy Mallitz</td>
<td>University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Kotylo</td>
<td>University of Colorado, Boulder, Colo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Amerson</td>
<td>University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret Grossman</td>
<td>University of Illinois, Urbana, Ill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Lamkin</td>
<td>University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Martin</td>
<td>University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harold House</td>
<td>University of Kentucky, Lexington, Ky.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramona H. Matthews</td>
<td>University of Maryland, College Park, Md.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hugh Kerr</td>
<td>University of Miami, Coral Gables, Fla.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruce Gustafson</td>
<td>University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judith J. Warmanen</td>
<td>University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Theodore Staton &amp; Eva Murphy</td>
<td>University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josephine Hart</td>
<td>University of Oregon, Eugene, Ore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norman Sanger</td>
<td>University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellen J. Keck</td>
<td>University of Rochester, Eastman School, Rochester, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Foreign

László Somfai (Bartók Archives, Budapest, Hungary)
Georges Franck (Brussels, Belgium)
L. Gene Strasbaugh (Free University of Berlin, Berlin, Germany)
Albrecht Schneider (Friedrich-Wilhelms University, Bonn, Germany)
Don Harran (Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel)
Winfried Kirsch (Johann Wolfgang Goethe University, Frankfurt, Germany)
Bernd Baselt (Martin Luther University, Halle-Wittenberg, GDR)
Rudolph Angermüller (Mozarteum, Salzburg, Austria)
Horst Heussner (Phillips University, Marburg, Germany)
Anne-Marie Riessauw (State University of Ghent, Ghent, Belgium)
A. Annegarn (State University of Utrecht, Utrecht, Holland)
Axel Helmer (Svenskt Music History Archives, Stockholm, Sweden)
John M. Jennings (University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand)
Niels Martin Jensen (University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark)
Susette Clausing (University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Erlangen, Germany)
Georg Borchardt (University of Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany)
Anthony Ford (University of Hull, Hull, Yorkshire, England)
G. R. Rastall (University of Leeds, Leeds, England)
Anne-Marie Bragard (University of Liège, Liège, Belgium)
Andrej Rijavec (University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, Yugoslavia)
Davitt Moroney (University of London, London, England)
Ladislav Řezníček (University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway)
Bojan Bujic (University of Reading, Reading, England)
Wolfgang Sieber (University of Regensburg, Regensburg, Germany)
Giorgio Pestelli (University of Turin, Turin, Italy)
Walter Pass (University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria)
Hans Conradin (University of Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland)

Whenever possible, communications to the corresponding editors should be addressed care of the music department of the institution in question. Otherwise, they may be sent to the Editor of Current Musicology for forwarding.
REPORTS

7 From the Domestic Corresponding Editors: Studies in American Music at Twenty American Campuses

Robert A. Green 35 Bloomington: The Black Music Center at Indiana University

H. Wiley Hitchcock 37 Brooklyn College: The Institute for Studies in American Music

Hugh H. Kerr 41 Miami: Ives Centennial Festival, 1974-75

Nina Archabal 43 Minneapolis: Ives Festivals at Minnesota, Spring 1971 and Spring 1972

Douglas Seaton 46 Chicago: American Musicological Society Convention, November 1973

From the Foreign Corresponding Editors:

Susette Clausing 48 Erlangen-Nuremberg: Musicology at the Friedrich-Alexander University

Albrecht Schneider 52 Hungary: Fourth International Conference on Folk-Music Instruments, May 1973

54 Announcements

ARTICLES

David S. Josephson 55 Percy Grainger—Some Problems and Approaches

69 In Tribute to Charles Edward Ives on the 100th Anniversary of His Birth

Malcolm S. Cole 71 Eric Zeisl’s “American” Period


Robert F. Nisbett 90 Louis Gruenberg: A Forgotten Figure of American Music

Harry Perison 96 The Quarter-Tone System of Charles Ives

Judith Tick 105 Ragtime and the Music of Charles Ives

Charles W. Ward 114 Charles Ives’s Concept of Music
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Edward Berlin</strong></td>
<td>120</td>
<td>Robert J. Dietz—The Operatic Style of Marc Blitzstein in the American “Agit-Prop” Era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>J. Bunker Clark</strong></td>
<td>127</td>
<td>The Renaissance of Early American Keyboard Music: A Bibliographic Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Richard Koprowski</strong></td>
<td>133</td>
<td>“Postface”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>135</td>
<td>Contributors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Percy Grainger—Some Problems and Approaches

David S. Josephson

[Ed. Note: This is the fourth and last in a series of writings conceived by Professor Josephson as an essay in bibliography, seeking to provide the foundation for a thorough and broadly-based study of the life and music of Percy Grainger. The first essay, “Percy Grainger: Country Gardens and Other Curses,” is in Current Musicology 15 (1973): 56–63. The second, a review of Thomas Carl Slattery’s 1967 dissertation on the wind music of Grainger, is in Current Musicology 16 (1973): 79–91. The third, a review of Margaret Hee-Leng Tan’s dissertation on Grainger’s “Free Music,” is in Current Musicology 17 (1974): 130–33.]

The phenomenon of personal creative decline is found often enough in the annals of music history; in Percy Grainger’s life it was unmistakable. We have good reason to suspect that Grainger was aware of a waning of his creative impulses by mid-life, even though he seems never to have acknowledged it. His courageous and remarkable effort in the last years to achieve a mechanically produced “Free Music” may well have arisen from a dimly-felt but powerful urge to regenerate those impulses or, perhaps, from an attempt to avert the recognition of their decline. Roger Covell has stated the general problem concisely and clearly:

Nearly all of Grainger’s significant music, whether known, unknown or radically experimental, was sketched or at least conceived between his seventeenth and thirtieth years. Much of his later creative activity consisted of revising and rescoring his music for more or less conventional forces and of trying to translate into practicable terms his very early apprehension of newer types of sound organization and production . . . . Everything known about his creative career indicates that he perceived its full possibilities at an exceptionally early date.¹

The fact that Grainger had been interested in one or another form of “Free Music” for almost all his life should not blind us to the dark spirits that hover somehow over his daring and imaginative experiments of the 1950s. There is something troubling, even desperate, about these last attempts. They seem to have progressed, uncharacteristically, by fits and starts. For all the toil they cost him, for all the hope they held out, these visionary experiments finally achieved virtually nothing. One cannot help but think that Grainger would have abandoned them had death not intervened first. Even the machines so painstakingly devised have disappeared; and we regret their loss as documents of the man rather than of his music.
We must ask why Grainger did not fulfill the promise of his experiments and go on from there to probe what seems, on the surface at least, to have been a puzzling and disappointing career. Hints of reasons appear in myriad places. A man who considered composition only “frozen inspiration” encountered difficulties when that inspiration deserted him. He found himself in one such situation in June 1904, when, in a revealing letter to his friend Herman Sandby, he admitted being in a

curiously ‘nüchtern’ and uncreative period, when all that touches music-writing seems at very far removes and when I lack the sympathy and insight to understand (let alone enjoy and like) even my own stuff . . . .

In single-voice writing our modern melodic lack comes out most baldly. We really must all try to get ‘tunier’; otherwise our style will unnaturalize as did the grand old church-style even in Bach; and our splendid harmonic and formal strides be beaten back by a primitiver, barer, thinner, but clearer-cut stronger-lined throw-back (as was Haydn and what followed).

. . . We must all (how badly I need it) buck up melodically, or at any rate look more to line than we do; there must be more heart-pulsing sweep to our partwriting. I feel the need for it quite awfully.2

This passage may throw light on Grainger’s embrace of folk-song collecting in the following year, his integration of its melody and spirit into his own work, and his abandonment of both the traditional compositions and radical experiments of his youth. In the meantime, his restless ear found other outlets, such as the exploration of non-Western musics and the experiments in composition for percussion. Grainger never abandoned folk-song; but in the early 1930s, as the fertility of its influence waned, he applied much of his energy to the mining of early European art-music and then returned to his interest in “Free Music.” Meanwhile, however, youth had passed and his strength was being exhausted by a grueling professional career as a pianist; it soon would be drained further by his ambitious project to build a museum and library in Melbourne. If his was a fascinating life, it was also badly disjointed, and it never allowed a foundation to be built from which he could grow surely as a composer. His existence was an endless but distracted pursuit of old dreams and new, with scarcely a moment for the reflection and privacy that are so vital to the creative spirit.

It is interesting to note that Grainger’s closest friends and fellow students during the formative years in Frankfurt suffered a similar deterioration of the creative impulse. None of these ambitious young men, whose prospects had seemed so bright in the early years of the century, would leave a mark on the music of our time. Yet in so many ways did their careers touch on and reflect Grainger’s that in any serious study of his life they demand more than passing mention.
Norman O’Neill (1875–1934) spent twenty-five years as musical director of the Haymarket Theatre in London; despite long associations with the Royal Philharmonic Society and the Royal Academy of Music, his compositions consisted mostly of theater music and songs. Balfour Gardiner (1877–1950), a sensitive, eccentric, and fascinating individual, trained at Charterhouse and Oxford, was a composer of beautiful miniatures. He joined Grainger in the folk-song movement and for a short time collected songs for The Folk-Song Society. In 1912–13 Gardiner drew upon his personal fortune to subsidize concerts of new English music, in which Grainger was represented, at Queen’s Hall in London. During the war years he began to withdraw from musical society; he left London for the provinces and allowed his membership in The Folk-Song Society to lapse. During the twenties he quit composition altogether. Eton-educated Roger Quilter (1877–1953) was also a miniaturist, rarely straying from the composition of elegant songs, whose creative powers did not outlive the 1930s. Quilter, too, joined The Folk-Song Society with Grainger. Cyril Scott (1879–1971), a highly cultivated if rather odd man, was perhaps Grainger’s most understanding and perceptive friend. He was the only member of the Frankfurt group to write major works in the mainstream of European tradition; in his extended essays Scott sought—as did Grainger—some mode of organic development rather than classical procedures. And, like Grainger, Scott failed to achieve more than passing recognition in these essays; he is remembered rather for his shorter pieces. Scott openly acknowledged his debt to Grainger’s experiments in polytonality and irregular rhythm. By the 1930s his creative powers declined (the piano works and songs, which account for most of his output, virtually ceased with the onset of the Second World War), as his literary efforts and interest in the occult came to absorb his energies.

One is struck by the musical and personal correspondences in the lives of these men, as well as by their melancholy collective experience. They spent their youth in the midst of all that was new and exciting, and then by the end of the Great War found themselves on the periphery, their gentle modernisms having been absorbed and overtaken by the hardier manner of the English “nationalists” and by the astonishing continental developments in musical vocabulary and technique. Sir Thomas Armstrong assessed them aptly as “belated pre-Raphaelites,” independent but fragile spirits who could not withstand the shock of the war to all Europe. It is not only in retrospect that they appear to have had so much in common. They recognized their communality from the beginning and, with the exception of O’Neill, remained kindred spirits all their lives. Grainger took unusual interest in his friends’ music and spent hours examining it and offering criticism and aid. With Gardiner he was especially close, and towards the end Grainger paid tribute to him by working out one of Gardiner’s unfinished pieces, orchestrating another, and reworking a third for inclusion in a projected Gardineriana Rhapsody.
The size of Grainger’s correspondence with these men is staggering, and its tone invariably warm. This material is rich in insights into their lives, character, and music, and some day a representative selection of it must be published, with its sadesses, hilarities, keen perceptions, misunderstandings, and reminiscences intact. Read, for instance, the following extract from a touching letter to Grainger written by Gardiner on 21 December 1924:

It looks doubtful whether I am ever going to write any music again, ever, on any terms: I am too much disheartened now by continual failure. I set out with great enthusiasm and write twenty or thirty bars: after that it is worry, first with one small point & then with others, till the whole edifice collapses under a weight of misery. I am ill for days after. The other reason is that I am hardly ever keen enough on old work to do anything more to it. My one & only chance of writing anything now seems to be a happy period of three or four hours in which I can get a section outlined, complete in itself. To this I would add others, & so in time build up a work. But as I say, I am disheartened, & hardly like to try. Indeed, for some time past, I have deliberately put music aside and engaged in other pursuits, & on the whole I am happier. Or perhaps I ought to say that I do not get the days & days of misery I used to get: on the other hand the exaltation of living in a world of music is something to forego than which there is nothing better on earth or in heaven: I feel as if I were an outcast from Paradise.7

Such painful sentiments were absolutely beyond Grainger’s ken, although they should not have been so, for underneath them hid the sad recognition and acceptance of a creative deterioration that was afflicting both men. But Grainger refused to understand, and he prodded Gardiner over and over again to return to music. A long misunderstanding ensued, occasionally erupting into bitter exchanges. In one extraordinary letter, written on 11 June 1929, Gardiner related once again how he had loved music for its own sake, how he had struggled to keep it, what horror he experienced when it began to slip from him, and how he finally had to abandon it. Grainger, he wrote, was bound to music by other things: a sense of duty, theories, principles:

You have spun this web for years, & for all I know, may still be spinning it. At any rate, there is no question of your disentangling it now. You talk, quite rightly, of your being engaged in a “campaign for life”. I am sorry, for your campaign is not likely to succeed, & there are many grievous disappointments in store for you.8

Gardiner was altogether correct, but his pleas fell on deaf ears. Grainger would find suffering without ever gaining the insights that should have flowed from it.

No less important than the influence of his friendships is the matter of

58
Grainger's musical experiences and formal education at Frankfurt. There he developed a broad repertory and superb technique as a pianist, as well as some very peculiar tastes in the music to which he was exposed. He came to worship Bach, but of Mozart's "Jupiter" Symphony, K. 551, he could write:

It is too shallow, lively & dance-like to be deemed a really great work of art.\(^9\)

And of Beethoven:

The shortcomings of Beethoven's late works are too often laid at the door of his growing deafness. Surely it would be more sensible to attribute them to his lack of musical culture, to his ignorance of the great musical resources of the past.\(^10\)

And of chamber music:

After Bach's time the noblest traditions of chamber music were lost for nearly two centuries, to be regained around 1900 by Herman Sandby, the Danish composer.\(^11\)

These opinions arose not from ignorance (indeed, the first two were not unique to Grainger) but out of a powerful reaction against the crushing force of the central European musical tradition imposed on Grainger during his childhood and especially during the Frankfurt years. The classical German training scarred him; to that experience one can trace his unhappy spell with Busoni in Berlin in 1903 (from whom he nevertheless absorbed the ideal of transcription as re-creation) and his later distrust of academic music and his inability to conceive and successfully execute large formal musical designs—an inability he masked as conscious rejection. It also sheds light on his embrace of Grieg in an intense if short-lived encounter, through whom he learned the art of condensation and who stamped upon his mind the legitimacy of a natural, direct, folk-song-based style to which he had begun to turn.

The Frankfurt years, the London years, Grainger's experience as a bandsman in the American army towards the end of the First World War: these are crucial areas which remain shrouded in darkness. So, too, is the seminal encounter with the writings of Rudyard Kipling. The similarities between Kipling and Grainger are extraordinary (keep in mind that the influence was not mutual, but flowed entirely from Kipling to Grainger); yet, nobody but Cyril Scott has made the slightest attempt to examine them. Read, for instance, the following passages from T. S. Eliot's brilliant essay on Kipling; substitute the composer and his music for the author and his verse, and you have Grainger:

The starting point for Kipling's verse is the motive of the ballad-maker; and the modern ballad is a type of verse for the appreciation of
which we are not provided with the proper critical tools. We are therefore inclined to dismiss the poems, by reference to poetic criteria which do not apply. It must therefore be our task to understand the type to which they belong, before attempting to value them: we must consider what Kipling was trying to do and what he was not trying to do. The task is the opposite of that with which we are ordinarily faced when attempting to defend contemporary verse. We expect to have to defend a poet against the charge of obscurity: we have to defend Kipling against the charge of excessive lucidity... we must defend Kipling against the charge of writing jingles.

This is exactly our problem with Grainger, and suddenly we realize how inadequate our defense has been. Further on, Eliot writes:

There is always a potential public for the ballad: but the social conditions of modern society make it difficult for the good ballad to be written. It is perhaps more difficult now than it was at the time when Barrack Room Ballads were written: for Kipling had at least the inspiration and refreshment of the living music-hall.

Here Eliot not only corroborates our hunch about the great impact of the music hall on the young artist (read: Grainger) recently arrived in London, but also illuminates the reasons for Grainger's settings of the Kipling ballads. Finally, there is a passage which lends powerful support to Grainger's insistence on scrupulous attention to either monotonously-recurring or irregular verse in his settings:

The variety of form which Kipling manages to devise for his ballads is remarkable: each is distinct, and perfectly fitted to the content and the mood which the poem has to convey. Nor is the versification too regular: there is the monotonous beat only when the monotonous is required; and the irregularities of scansion have a wide scope.12

Other, more subtle, matters remain to be examined. One is Grainger's affinity for cultural and professional backwaters—Australia, Norway, the Faeroe Islands, and the English fen country (Lincolnshire) and border marches (Gloucestershire). Even during his residence in New York he chose to live outside the city, in White Plains. His career as a pianist was not centered in the great cities but spread through the American hinterlands. Most of his compositions he would try out, rehearse, and perform with amateur rather than professional groups.

Another area of interest is the complex of personal, social, and cultural influences which molded him—despite his fascination with humbler societies and democratic ideals—into the cast of an upper-class Englishman, even while at the same time he retained a certain detachment from that society.
(Here, too, the shadow of that other colonial, Kipling, looms large.) Although Grainger grew up in Australia, his mother kept a home which reflected proper English values and which was a transplanted bit of the old country. Grainger did develop a consciousness of being Australian, despite his having left that land when he was twelve. While he could never return there permanently, neither could he shake off its attraction, and in later years he became quite tied to it. Covell indeed claims Grainger for Australia and presents his argument persuasively. But Grainger was not so unequivocal. He wrote the following statement, for example, in 1926:

There is no Nordic folk whose outlook I less share, no national hopes & aims that I could less easily make myself at one with than with those of the Australians . . . . I was a true & passionate Australian, or at least a would-be Australian, in my young manhood, in the days when I was still a spirit-filled [inspired] tone wright [composer], & works like Bush Music, Marching Song of Democracy & many others were awaredly [consciously] lit by a flame of being-filling Australianism. What, it would seem, cut me adrift . . . for ever [sic] was the going to Scandinavia—the finding there of the things I have liked best in Australian pioneering-ness, in Icelandic pride and truth-zeal, in German art-worship . . . & in the farmer art, family sagas, steadily [local] folkspeeches [dialects] & self—that seem to me to be steering towards an uplift of mankind, a solving of human problems.13

Finally, in order to arrive at a reasonably enlightened understanding of Grainger, there are two periods of his life which demand close attention. One covers his childhood, his education at the hands of his mother, and his relationship to his parents. His father was a private and sensitive man, generous to his estranged wife, a great lover of music, and a superb draftsman. John Grainger fought a severe drinking problem, maintained an undoubting and unbroken love for a child who was clearly the mother’s boy, and took full responsibility for the breakdown of his marriage. Yet only in his forties did Percy come to understand and identify with his father. “I seem closer to his fate & person,” he wrote in the first of his autobiographical sketches in 1923, in a painful effort to sort out his past.14 Still, his beloved mother—who emerges from these writings as an attractive but cold, jealous, shrewd woman of enormous strength masked in a frail body—always exercised an incomparably greater hold on the composer. His art, he wrote, craved “to voice what she was.” Morning Song in the Jungle “is like her sun kissed hair & open hearted pure eyes,” Marching Song of Democracy “like her brave energetic mankind-loving nature,” as opposed to his own timidity and gloominess. Irish Tune from County Derry was “typically Aldridge, & shows not the taint of Grainger that is upon me as a man,” while Shepherd’s Hey expressed “her skittish, somewhat teasing gaiety” rather than his “rougher and more sinister” humor. It is interesting to note that the works that he thought expressed himself (and therefore did not dedicate to her) were the
Hill Songs, which express "the unabridged wildness & non-humanness of nature," The Warriors, "in which the type of excitement is mainly sinister & sadistic," and perhaps, he added, Father and Daughter as well.15

The second period wanting examination is the crucial decade following his mother's death in 1922. At its beginning, Grainger was a young composer moving in new directions, still growing and unpredictable (two of his most ambitious works, The Warriors and a revised edition of the first Hill Song, were soon to be published by Universal in Vienna), with the boundarics of his creative mind still undefined. At its end, his creative powers had waned decisively, his early accomplishments had been forgotten, and his youthful, romantic, quixotic life style had given way to one which was rather more stable. Now he began to settle back, collect, and save. The energy consumed from the late 1930s on by the construction and stocking of his museum in Melbourne was symptomatic of an energy turned in upon itself. Not that Grainger stopped producing: Lincolnshire Posy and The Power of Rome and the Christian Heart were still to be completed and published, and during the final years he worked to transform his fascinating ideals of "Free Music" into sound. But the former two works, while major achievements, had their genesis in earlier efforts, and the latter was not so much a creative task as a series of technical experiments whose philosophic foundations are more interesting than their musical results.

* * * * * *

Perhaps the least explored area of Grainger's music is the group of large-scale compositions that he himself thought would come to be recognized as the centerpiece of his oeuvre. If we eliminate the suites, we are left with only a handful of works, notably the two versions of Hill Song, The Warriors, and The Power of Rome and the Christian Heart. The second Hill Song has achieved a certain place in the wind repertory; the others remain curiosities. None, to my mind, is a success. Yet each piece contains some very interesting music, each cost the composer a good deal of time and effort, and each became a matter of considerable concern to him. It behooves us to inquire into the genesis and development of these major compositions, and in the process we can learn something of the workings of Grainger's musical mind. Particularly interesting is The Power of Rome, the autograph sketches (in original or photocopy) of which are in the New York Public Library, the Library of Congress, and Grainger's home in White Plains.

Having conceived The Power of Rome for organ and orchestra, Grainger began by working with a group of independently composed melodic gestures, sharply etched and differentiated through rhythm, harmony, and interval. By repetition and elaboration each gesture generated a phrase which the composer labeled with an identifying capital letter. The phrases were then developed and expanded into sections which were fitted together in building-block fashion. The following reconstruction is based on the three American sources mentioned above.16

62
The first building block was a rising melody for muted brass instruments, composed “summer or fall, 1918,” which Grainger called “The Power of Rome” and labeled E (mm. 30–35). A connective fragment consisting of a repeated measure in five variant forms, labeled \(D^1\) to \(D^5\), was sketched on 10 September of the same year; it was eventually discarded. The opening subject, labeled \(A\) (transposed up a tone in the final version, mm. 14–23), was completed by January 1919, as was “the lonely man” subject, labeled \(B\), and its close variant phrase \(C\) (mm. 24–29). A four-measure figure capable of expansion, labeled \(F\) (mm. 36–42), was composed in early December.

EXAMPLE 1

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{E} \\
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{example1.png}
\end{array}
\]

EXAMPLE 2:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{A} \\
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{example2a.png}
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{B} \\
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{example2b.png}
\end{array}
\]
EXAMPLE 3:

With this Grainger came to the end of what we may call the exposition of his piece. Scattered notes such as "[F] can follow C & be followed by F" betray the block structure with which the exposition was built.

If the fair copy in the New York Public Library is an accurate reflection of the original compositional process (which it seems to be), Grainger's imagination caught fire, and he composed without interruption an authentic development of some seventy measures (mm. 36–108) around F and a fanfare figure. The sketch ends with a notation that A is to follow. By now he had worked out some of the orchestration of these sections, and on 20 December he tried them out (perhaps with his Army band) on Governor's Island in New York.

The next sketches—like the first group, in piano score—date from August 1921: three related fragments, to be followed by C. Grainger eventually chose the second of them as the introduction to the entire composition, expanded the fragment, and followed it not with C but with the first subject, A (Ex. 4).

EXAMPLE 4

In October 1923 Grainger worked out a closing section ("near end of work") in rough form, noting possible instrumentations and extensions of the material. The next surviving group of sketches, dating from August 1937, is a complete set of wind parts for the "Slow Bit" (mm. 129–49) written out at Interlochen, Michigan, apparently for rehearsal there. The existence of these parts offers positive proof that by this date Grainger's habitual tinkering with arrangement and transcription had overcome his original instrumental conception of the piece; it was now being considered equally for orchestra or for band, both with organ obbligato. In February and March 1939, while

64
returning from a concert tour of the Midwest, he composed an orchestral sketch of the “Slow Bit” in short score, and two months later he scored it for strings alone. In two later scores, written out in January 1942 and identical except for their key (one is in C, the other in A♭), Grainger entitled this passage a “Dreamery” and noted its function in pure “Graingerese” as a “Slow ’Tween-Play.” It was, he added, “my best writing for strings.”

EXAMPLE 5

“Dreamery”

![Music notation](image)

From January 1942 comes also an orchestral score of the “Tail-Piece” in A♭ (mm. 166–87), copied from a set of parts “tried out at Ernest Williams music camp, Saugerties, N.Y., summer, 1940.” This haunting set-piece for wind obligato was to be followed by an “organ solo, much like the very beginning of the piece—maybe melting out into ‘The Power of Love’ ending: [music notation].”

Two months later, while on tour in the West, he copied out some parts for sections A, B, and C. In the autumn of 1942 he sketched and in January 1943 wrote out another full score and a set of parts for the “Tail-Piece,” this time a tone higher, in B♭. The final version would be in the key of G:

EXAMPLE 6

“Tail-Piece”

![Music notation](image)

At this point the sketches end. All that was left to complete the composition was the marvelous merging of A and the fanfare (mm. 109–20) and the strangely woolly passage (mm. 121–28) which ends the development; the recapitulation of subjects E and B which separates the “Slow Bit” from the “Tail-Piece” (mm. 150–65); and the working out (as planned) of “The Power of Love” ending (mm. 188–210). With these additions and a re-
the unfoldment of musical feelings started by thoughts of the agony of Individual Souls in conflict with The-Powers-That-Be—as when the Early Christians found themselves at strife with the Power of Ancient Rome.

The Power of Rome and the Christian Heart owes a direct debt, hitherto unnoticed, to Wagner in certain details. In the earliest extant sketch of the “Tail-Piece” (1923), Grainger plays with a counterpoint figure: will it be, he asks, for violas and cellos, or perhaps instead for half of all the strings, as in Wotan’s “Abschied”?22 The farewell was strongly etched in his imagination: the scoring of the “Tail-Piece,” with its migrating melodic fragment, seems directly inspired by similar passages in the farewell,23 as do the principal melody of the “Tail-Piece” and the chromatic passage that immediately follows it.24

The building-block organization, however, is the most revealing facet of the work. It recalls the construction of the experimental Random Round (1912–14), where this method and its attendant labeling define the context and limits within which the suggested improvisation can proceed. In The Power of Rome, however, the blocks serve not the performers’ needs but the composer’s. Having rejected such classical procedures as sonata (and this piece is not a sonata, despite certain superficial similarities) or variation technique in his original instrumental works, yet determined to write a large-scale composition for instruments alone, Grainger was unable to sustain his effort without recourse to a step-by-step mode of writing. Perhaps “rejected” is the wrong word. Grainger had once before, in March 1911, tried to write a set of variations on Handel’s “Harmonious Blacksmith.” By the beginning of the third variation, either unable or unwilling to go on, he gave up the effort, and he later turned the work into the charming but undemanding Handel in the Strand.25 Clearly, Grainger had his troubles with musical growth and form, as did his closest colleagues. Yet his music is rarely uninteresting. The Power of Rome is a strong and noble work. Its failure is one of technique, not of vision; and while its musical language is visibly dated, it bears undiminishedly the stamp of a wonderfully imaginative, persuasive, and individualistic spirit—a spirit we have barely begun to probe.
NOTES

2 Library of Congress, Grainger Collection.
3 Several songs noted by him in November 1906 and May 1907 are found in the third volume of the Journal of the Folk-Song Society, cited in the author's article in Current Musicology 15 (1973): 59.
4 One other student in Frankfurt must be mentioned: Herman Sandby (1881–1965), a Danish composer and cellist, who remained apart from the British contingent yet would share their musical fate. Grainger alone befriended him. Their warm and fruitful relationship, about which we know all too little, lasted until Grainger's death.
7 Library of Congress, Grainger Collection.
8 Ibid.
11 Ibid., p. 6.
13 Library of Congress, Grainger Collection, sketches for The Life of my Mother & her Son, p. 68 (30 November–1 December 1926).
14 Ibid., p. 29. The context of the passage suggests that Grainger thought that his father had died some years earlier. Indeed, in Photos of Rose Grainger, which Percy printed and circulated privately around the end of 1923 (see Current Musicology 16 [1973]: 81, 83), he claimed that John had died in 1917 (p. 5). But there exist in the Grainger Collection at the Library of Congress letters from John to Percy, dated 7 August 1923 and 2 February 1924! The former letter was in response to one from Percy, in which he told his father of Rose Grainger's death and of the book of her photographs that he was preparing. John answered: "The Book you are preparing will be deeply interesting & I will appreciate it." It is therefore shocking and bizarre that Grainger printed, only a few months later, the statement of his father's death in 1917.
15 Ibid., p. 4. Aldridge was his mother's maiden name.
16 Since these manuscripts do not account for all of the music, and since in general the sketches are fair copies of the originals now apparently lost, this reconstruction must be considered only tentative.
17 These measure numbers, along with the musical examples, are derived from the published score (New York: Mills Music, 1953).
18 It was inscribed some time after January 1933. The presence of various jottings and sketches of music written fifteen years earlier (some of it rejected in the meantime) is inexplicable, unless we assume that Grainger was making an exact copy of an earlier working manuscript. At this point in the copy, by the way, The Power of Rome sketches are interrupted by a brief sketch, dated 1 January 1933, for the "slow movement" of The Warriors.
19 This sketch remains in a copy made in Australia in December 1926.

20 Grainger seems to have been particularly fond of this “Dreamery.” In anticipation of the first performance of his Youthful Suite in April 1943, he found himself unable to complete the slow movement (“Norse Dirge”) of that suite. Instead, he rescored the “Dreamery” for full orchestra and inserted it in place of the slow movement. For the “Dreamery” was “one of the strongest of all my heart-throbbies.” (From a “Round-Robin” letter of 18 January 1943, in the Grainger Collection of the Library of Congress.)

21 Alto and bass clarinet, three cornets, and tuba.


23 Ibid., pp. 977-84, 1007-10.

24 Ibid., pp. 980 and 1005-06, respectively.

Once a nice young man . . . said to Father, "How can you stand it to hear old John Bell (the best stone mason in town) sing?" . . . Father said, "He is a supreme musician." The young man (nice and educated) was horrified—"Why, he sings off the key, the wrong notes and everything—and that horrible, raucous voice—and he bellows out and hits notes no one else does—it's awful!" Father said, "Watch him closely and reverently, look into his face and hear the music of the ages. Don't pay too much attention to the sounds—for if you do, you may miss the music. . . ."

Eric Zeisl’s “American” Period*
Malcolm S. Cole

“America can find in my work not her own image mirrored, but she can find there strong medicines against the ills of fate, which I have learnt to brew and which she may need one day.”¹ In these words the Austrian-American composer Eric Zeisl (1905–59) graphically summarized the impact upon him of America as an adopted homeland. Although he felt that difference of environment should not be overrated in its effect on a mature composer, the trauma attendant with his immigration to America liberated memories of early childhood and caused him to write his best works.

Viennese by birth, heritage, and training, Zeisl absorbed the legacy of 19th- and early 20th-century Austro-German Romanticism. As a student at the Vienna State Academy of Music, he immediately displayed a talent for melody, orchestration, and dramatic expression. Counterpoint and the handling of large forms, on the other hand, required patient study. The primacy of song in Zeisl’s formative years cannot be overemphasized, for it was in this genre that his style most rapidly and freely developed.² Not apparent in the songs are two other shaping forces: (1) the Slavic tinge that colors some instrumental endeavors (Variations on a Slovakian Folksong, 1933) and (2) Zeisl’s early awareness of the Jewish plight. Memories of the stream of fugitive Polish Jews who poured into Vienna would find powerful expression in a host of American works.

Ironically, it was in Austria that Zeisl composed Three African Songs (ca. 1930), his sole work on specifically American motifs. Inspired by German translations of two poems by Langston Hughes and one by Frank Horne, he set them for STB solo, SATB chorus, and small orchestra.³ “Arabesque” (Horne) illustrates the danger of working from translations. Taking the verb “schaukeln” to mean “to rock,” the composer humorously portrayed a little Irish girl playing with a Black baby boy under a tree in which a Black man rocks, as in a hammock. In fact, the man had been hanged, the victim of a lynch mob. Zdenko Kestranek, Zeisl’s sometime librettist, tampered inexcusably with “Aunt Sue’s Stories” (Hughes), changing Aunt Sue to Kyulila and shifting the location to Africa. The beautiful “Harlem Nightsong” (Hughes) transcended all such vicissitudes.

Forced by the spread of Nazism to flee from Austria just as he was becoming established, Zeisl spent 1938 in Paris, where he began composing the music for Job (based on the novel of Joseph Roth), a work that was to occupy him for the rest of his life and provide a wellspring for his American years.⁴ Emigrating to America in 1939, Zeisl settled temporarily in New York. Through radio broadcasts, his music won considerable acclaim.⁵

* The gracious assistance of the composer’s widow, Mrs. Gertrude Zeisl, has been invaluable in the preparation of this article.
Moving to Los Angeles, he spent two disillusioning years in the movie studios. He subsequently became an instructor of theory and composition, first at the Southern California School of Music, then at Los Angeles City College. Although Zeisl's adopted homeland was by no means invariably kind—problems of employment, performance outlets, and especially publication harassed him—he enjoyed good success with critics and audiences. Most important, a number of significant works were commissioned and performed. Composed during his twenty-one years in America, these twenty-two works earned for Zeisl a niche in our American musical heritage (see Appendix).

The principal characteristics of Zeisl's pre-1939 style may be summarized as follows:

1. Extramusical stimuli: the poem, the play or story, texts scriptural and liturgical, the art work. Even some of the early instrumental works contain themes with vocal associations.
2. Melody: Zeisl's lines, vocal and instrumental, derive from the Austro-German Lied tradition. In shape and stressed pitches they reinforce the essentially major-minor orientation of the harmony.
3. Rhythm: the prevailing meter is common duple. Metric changes within a work are encountered occasionally. Choices of rhythm and tempo, including precisely indicated fluctuations, serve both to heighten dramatic expression and to articulate sections. Rhythmic patterns tend to function as ostinatos. The union of a supple, rhapsodic melody with a strict accompanimental figure is common. Cross rhythms are also found.
4. Harmony: the scale upon which almost any given composition is based is major or minor ("Armseelchen," an early song, is prophetically modal). Pedal points, step movement in the bass, and sequence provide a logical, simple foundation upon which Zeisl superimposes rich detail that clearly derives from post-Romantic chromatic harmony and voice-leading. Harmonic rhythm is slow. Polychords occur. Polytonality and purely parallel progressions or chords built of fourths are rare, progressive tonality practically unknown.
5. Scoring: he tends to orchestrate in layers and clearly separates melodic and accompanimental functions.
6. Counterpoint: although he effectively employs contrapuntal devices (augmentation, inversion, diminution) from the outset, the early fugues tend to be somewhat stiff and vertically conceived.
7. Structure: compositions grow rhythmically, melodically, and harmonically from a germinal nucleus. Ostinato patterns unify within movements, cyclic themes between movements. Formally, songs, choral works, and small instrumental movements are cast most often in song form. To his larger compositions Zeisl either transfers song form or
adopts Baroque procedures (e.g., Passacaglia-Fantasy, 1933). The sonata-
allegro and the rondo are not customarily employed. Absolute instru-
mental music is in fact practically nonexistent.

These, then, are the genres, the techniques, and the procedures that Zeisl
brought to America. The fundamental structural techniques would not
change (ostinatos, pedal points, step motion, germ themes, etc.); the sound
would change dramatically, reflecting a deeper personal evolution which
can best be surveyed first by noting what Zeisl abandoned in this country,
then by dividing his American output into five general, and sometimes
overlapping, categories.

He abruptly abandoned the comic opera, for which there was no demand
in this country, and the Lied. At the same time he temporarily perpetuated
his European style, as in the Romantic Comedy Suite (1939-40), essentially a
reworking of excerpts from the Singspiel Leonce und Lena (1937; G. Büchner).
This characterizes the first of the five “American” categories. Conceived
entirely in America, Zeisl’s incidental music to Emil Ludwig’s comedy
The Return of Ulysses (1943) differs in no way, whether in the poignance
of the Ithaca theme, the lyricism of the love music, or the humor of the ballet
music, from the music of an earlier time and a different place.

A second category, initiated in Paris, is Zeisl’s Gebrauchsmusik. The finest
representative example, the Pieces for Barbara (1944), was actually not con-
ceived as a pedagogical tool but rather as a gift for his daughter. The
composer’s wife subsequently added the delightful programatic titles. In
their published arrangement, the thirteen pieces—the publisher suppressed
four others because of their alleged difficulty—provide the young pianist
with stimulating 20th-century material of increasing complexity, intro-
ducing him to a host of technical, dynamic, rhythmic, interpretive, stylistic,
textural, and formal problems.

It is in the third category that Zeisl’s approach alters most radically.
The impact of his displacement, combined with the plight of the European
Jews, recalled memories of the Polish fugitives and reawakened a sense of
his own Jewish heritage. The seminal work is Job, the story of a simple man.
The sufferings and wandering of the Mendel Singer family and its redemp-
tion through the once sickly, crippled son Menuhim stirred Zeisl’s creativity.
In Paris in 1939 he composed the overture, Menuhim’s Song, and the Cossack
Dance for a staged version. By 1941 he had completed the music for Act I
of an opera. Zeisl’s music flows continuously in a kind of Sprechgesang, with
lyrical set pieces interspersed. The orchestra underlines the action with
appropriate rhythms and tone colors, fills all transitional passages, and
bears the burden of reiterating and transforming the song of the still almost
inarticulate Menuhim. Act I establishes the tenor of Zeisl’s American output.
Its germinal theme of the Wunderrabbi’s prophecy, i.e., Menuhim’s Song,
recurs as a leitmotif in almost each subsequent composition. Its sound
inaugurates a new compositional direction.
Conceptually and technically, the *Requiem Ebraico* (Psalm 92, 1944–45), still Zeisl’s most widely performed work, illustrates the thrust of this direction. In 1934, ironically, Zeisl had won the Austrian State Prize for a *Requiem Concertante*, using the Latin text and even retaining the characteristic French overture rhythm for the “Rex tremendae” section. In America, on the other hand, he wrote a specifically Jewish work, set to a scriptural text of praise and consolation, printed in Hebrew and English, and dedicated to “the memory of his father and of the other countless victims of the Jewish tragedy in Europe.” For solo voices, mixed chorus, and organ (or orchestra), this work embodies new approaches to structure, melody, rhythm, tonality, and harmony.

Rather than setting the psalm verses as discrete, relatively independent movements, as he might once have done, Zeisl arranges them into units (1–2, 3–4, 5–7, 8, 9–11, 12–14, 15), builds almost each unit upon a transformation of the germinal theme (see Menuhim’s Song) announced by the organ in m.1, and links these units with instrumental interludes.

Conspicuous examples of transformation occur at the soprano-alto unit of verses 12–14, where he stretches the nine-measure announcement of the main theme in $4_4$ to seventeen measures of $4_4$, and at the concluding fugue, where the originally lyrical melodic arch has been sharpened rhythmically and compressed.

Zeisl’s melodies are at least modal, as in the gypsy minor construction of some lines in the fugue, and at times positively chantlike, as in the two
extensive baritone solos (verses 5–7, 9–11), which consist of recitation tones, ornamental inflections, and occasional florid, freely rhythmic melismas.

Zeisl sets the introductory chorus in $\frac{2}{3}$, $\frac{4}{4}$ and $\frac{2}{3}$ usurping in these years the place formerly held by common duple meter. The tempo indication Grave moderato, is likewise typical, Grave and Pesante tempos contributing to the mood of numerous compositions. Rhythmic patterns tend to be more pliant; frequent cross rhythms and meter changes contribute further to the rhythmic plasticity. New tonally and harmonically is the archaic liturgical flavor captured at the foreground level. Individual chord progressions are often modal (m.1, see Ex. 2), with open fifths, not infrequently in parallel motion, to enhance the effect. New also is the employment of progressive tonality, this work beginning in B minor and ending in its relative major. With increasing frequency, filler material progressing in steady quarters at the interval of the third or the sixth contributes animation to a slow-moving accompaniment (m.27).

EXAMPLE 4: Requiem ebraico, m. 27

Zeisl's contrapuntal techniques, present throughout the work, may best be seen in the concluding fugue, a model of the control he now possessed in this medium. After its presentation in an extended exposition, the subject is rarely absent, as an identifiable entity appearing in stretto, inversion, and, symbolically, augmentation (at the words, "To show that the Lord is upright"). At this climactic point Zeisl successfully combines the original form of the subject with its augmentation.

This category profoundly influenced categories four and five. To category four belong works conceived as reactions to phenomena fostered in the United States. The modal, chantlike Prayer (1945), Zeisl's only independent American work for solo voice, incorporates Biblical texts that express the composer's hope for the then new United Nations. Zeisl's realization of the atomic bomb's potential for destruction elicited the unperformed dramatic ballet Uranium 235 (1945–46, his first since 1929), that places in juxtaposition a young couple and a mad scientist. A march of doom, Satan's dance, dynamo music, and nature music demonstrate Zeisl's pictorial powers. A concluding prayer recalls the specifically Jewish output of this time.

Conversely, the revival of the dramatic ballet suggested the possibility of utilizing this medium for vivid expressions of patience and faith in the face of persecution, ideas belonging to category three. The result was two Biblical ballets, The Vineyard (1953) and the more pastoral Jacob and Rachel (1954). Derived from the story of Naboth's vineyard (1 Kings 21), the
former work includes majestic court music, exotic rites of Astarte, a bacchanal, and a stoning scene. In the concluding passacaglia and fugue, Zeisl not only exhibits absolute control of the Baroque procedure, but also turns it to dramatic use as the action proceeds to its inevitable denouement, the destruction of the King’s palace.

The sharply increased production of independent, not overtly programatic instrumental music, category five, is signalled by an Organ Prelude (1944) that resembles the overture to Job and Menuhin’s Song. In 1949 a significant cycle of multimovement solo and chamber pieces begins with the Sonata Barocca. The immediately ensuing Sonata for Violin and Piano (“Brandeis,” 1949–50), which achieved wide recognition, perhaps best illustrates the forms and procedures typical of the cycle: three- (or four-) movement format, progressive tonality, cyclic relationships among movements and even among works. The first movement consists of a solemn, modal section that returns in ritornello fashion, framing components that approximate a sonata-allegro exposition and recapitulation. An expressive, chantlike line, at times rhapsodically melismatic, distinguishes the slow movement (Andante religioso [Hebraique]). To this melody strict ostinato patterns are bound. The choice of modified song form suggests the derivation of these instrumental songs from vocal predecessors and counterparts. The thematic material of the finale, an extended rondo, embodies Eastern European folk elements: strongly accented dance rhythm, narrow range, repeated patterns, modal flavor, and popular cadence patterns.

EXAMPLE 5: “Brandeis” Sonata III, mm. 6–7

\[ \text{[Allegro]} \]

Frequent meter changes (even to \( \frac{3}{4} \)), which at times produce an additive effect, are characteristic. Notable in the remaining works of this cycle is the perpetuation of Baroque procedures in the finales of the Sonata Barocca and the Viola Sonata (Prelude and Fugue; Passacaglia and Fugue) and the Pesante-Fugue opening movement of the Second Quartet. The Cello Sonata includes an innovation in its slow movement. Instead of a chantlike line Zeisl, under the influence of the scholar Solomon Rosowsky, creates a melody from allegedly authentic Biblical cantillation formulas. Written toward the end of his life, an unpublished trio for flute, viola, and harp (“Arrowhead”) is suggestive of a new direction in chamber composition, which is pessimistic in tone, spare in texture, and compact in form.

Zeisl’s three principal orchestral works are: Music for Christmas, a set of variations on “O Little Town of Bethlehem” with a fugal finale in which the composer combines the “Adeste fidelis” subject with “O Little Town” and “Silent Night” in a contrapuntal tour de force; a piano concerto; and a
concerto grosso for cello and orchestra with a variation finale (Pesante maestoso, ½) that fittingly caps Zeisl's orchestral endeavors: modality, rich—even sensuous—orchestration, a concentrated theme of flexible rhythm and narrow range, and at times polytonal accompaniment, and a powerful fugue that incorporates cyclic references from the first movement.

Following an involuntary hiatus of sixteen years, Zeisl returned to Job and brought to the composition of Act II increased expressivity and technical mastery. Switches of scene are more abrupt, the orchestral fabric is richer, the set pieces in turn more savage (Cossack chorus and dance), more tender (Deborah's lullaby), more sensuous (Miriam and the Cossack) than anything in Act I. Ensembles, which had been present in Act I, are more frequent and more assured, e.g., the complex one in Act II, Scene 2 that conveys the assorted moods of Miriam and her Cossack lover, Mendel standing before the synagogue, the chorus of the pious singing their evening hymn, and the Cossacks celebrating drunkenly in the inn. Appropriately climaxing Zeisl's years of struggle with counterpoint is the closing fugue of that scene, in which the entire cast combines variously to mock or to sympathize with Mendel's plight. The contrapuntal texture ceases dramatically at Mendel's decision to go to America. The coda (½), a stretto treatment of Menuhin's Song, symbolizes redemption while the chorus pronounces Mendel's fate, "Wandre Jud!"

With the completion of Act II Zeisl's career ended. He died in Los Angeles before composing Acts III and IV of Job, which would have been set in America. This unfinished and unperformed work, in which the composer's powers are so convincingly displayed, stands as a monument to the man who stated that his own immigration to America had deeply affected his works. In his exile Zeisl wrote, "I feel that I might never have written my best were it not for the great emotional strife of my uprooting" (see Note 1). Although he did not compose American music, Eric Zeisl may be said to have enriched America's musical heritage.

APPENDIX: ZEISL'S AMERICAN OUTPUT


Romantic Comedy Suite (five excerpts from Leonce und Lena), orch., 1939–40.

Return of Ulysses (incidental music to play by E. Ludwig), fl., vln., tpt., pfte., celesta, 1943; suite for chamber orch., 1948.

Pieces for Barbara (13 pieces for piano for children, e.g., "Walking with Daddy"), 1944 (Vienna: Oesterreichischer Bundesverlag, 1949).

Prelude for Organ, 1944.

Requiem ebraico (Psalm 92), SATB soloists and chorus, org. or orch., 1944–45 (New York: Transcontinental, 1946).

Uranium 235 (ballet in two scenes by M. Dekobra), 1945–46.

To the Promised Land (three [four] movements for chamber orch.), 1948.


Music for Christmas (variations and fugue for symph. orch.), 1950.


Concerto for Piano, 1951–52.

"Be merciful unto me, O God!" (Psalm 52), tenor solo, TB chorus, chamber orch., 1952.


The Vineyard (Biblical; ballet by B. Zemach), 1953.

Jacob and Rachel (Biblical; ballet by B. Zemach), 1954.

Concerto Grosso for Cello and Orchestra, 1955–56.


NOTES


2 "The Published Songs of Eric Zeisl," a manuscript by the present author, is in preparation.


5 For example, public demand forced NBC to broadcast the Little Symphony (1955, after pictures by Roswitha Bitterlich) three times in six weeks.

6 See Zeisl's Scherzo and Fugue for String Orchestra (comp. 1933; Vienna: Universal, 1937); the theme of the trio ("Vergessmännchen") and the fugue subject ("Der Weise") are taken from songs.

7 To view most of these elements, see the cycle for soprano and piano, Kinderlieder [Children's Songs] (Vienna: Capriccio Verlag, 1933); reprint, with English translation (Vienna: Doblinger, 1956).


[Ed. note: Permission for Ex. 1 was granted by the copyright owner, Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp., Melville, N.Y. Permission to use Exx. 2–4 was granted by Transcontinental Music Publications. Example 5 is © copyright 1955 by Ludwig Doblinger. Used by permission of Associated Music Publishers, Inc.]
The Hodges and Newland Collections in the Library of Congress: A Preliminary Report
Charles H. Kaufman

Recently I had occasion to peruse two of the many personal collections in the holdings of the Music Division of the Library of Congress. Previously ignored, the libraries of two 19th-century church musicians, Edward Hodges and William Newland, help to provide an insight into the musical taste, range of interest, methods, and repertory favored along the northeast coast of the United States during the last century.

The largest collection that I examined was that formerly belonging to Edward Hodges. It originally comprised 743 volumes, most of them standard works which have been catalogued and dispersed throughout the library's holdings. A substantial number of them, approximately 250 items, remain uncatalogued but available for study as a single entity.

Edward Hodges was one of the many European musicians to arrive in the United States during the early 19th century. He was born in Bristol, England in 1796, to a family that conducted a retail business in music and instruments. Despite early evidence of mechanical aptitude, Hodges studied music as a profession and later applied his mechanical ability as well as his musical skill to the improvement of the organ. The instrument in St. James's Church in Bristol was rebuilt to his specifications, according to which the first CC manual and CCC pedal were incorporated into an English organ. For the services inaugurating this instrument on 2 May 1824, Hodges composed a Morning Service and an Evening Service, each in C major; a setting of Psalm 150; and an anthem. These are his earliest known compositions. In 1825 he received the Doctor of Music degree from Cambridge University. During the year 1835 Hodges competed for the coveted post of organist at St. George's Chapel, Windsor. He lost to George Elvey (1816–93), an organist and composer who was knighted in 1871. In reference to Hodges the dean of St. George's said that he did not "fancy the broad-brimmed hat, white neck-tie, and boots with pointed toes, suggesting to him an individuality that might be hard to control." 1 Officers of the Toronto Cathedral offered to Hodges the post of organist in 1838. He accepted and passed through New York City on his way to Canada. In Toronto the musical situation proved to be so discouraging that he canceled his contract and returned to New York City.

On 15 January 1839 the Vestrymen of New York's Trinity Church appointed Hodges organist of their institution at a salary of $300 per annum. 2 In the same year the old building in which Trinity's services were held was found to be in unsafe condition, and the Vestry decided to have it demolished and a new edifice erected in its place. During the seven years required to accomplish this, Hodges performed his duties at St. John's, one of Trinity's
chapels, where he officiated at the new Firth and Hall organ that was installed there in 1839.

In 1843, under the aegis of Trinity's music committee, a music department was established at the New York Protestant Episcopal School (for boys). The primary purpose of the department was to provide Trinity Church with a continuous source of choir boys. The boys were to serve at Trinity in return for the yearly allowance provided them by Trinity Parish. Dr. Hodges served as music director of the school, but unfortunately "the Trinity School [did] not furnish musical talent enough to feed the class," and apparently Hodges had considerable difficulty in maintaining his choir, which usually comprised between twelve and fourteen members. On Ascension Day, 21 May 1846, Trinity's new church was consecrated. Hodges was appointed organist and provided with the following yearly payments: $500 for carrying out his duties as organist, $500 for his teaching activities at the Protestant Episcopal School, and $1,500 for maintenance of his choir. Hodges resigned his post at the school in May of 1853, owing to his general dissatisfaction with the policies of its director.

During the Lenten season of 1854 Dr. Hodges suffered an attack of paralysis that temporarily disabled his left hand. One of his sons, John Sebastian Bach Hodges, served as Trinity's organist during the term of his father's indisposition. Ill health forced Hodges to take a leave of absence from Trinity in October 1855. He returned in January of the following year, but by 1859 his illness had increased in severity to the point that he felt constrained to return to England. Sufficiently recovered, he ventured back to New York in 1861 and lived with his brother-in-law until 1862, the year of his wife's death. John S. B. Hodges, now a Doctor of Divinity and Reverend of Grace Church in Newark, New Jersey, provided a home for his father until 1863, when the elder Hodges returned once more to England. He died on 1 September 1867 and was buried in the graveyard of the Church of St. Mary in Stanton Drew, near Bristol. He was survived by three sons: J. S. B. Hodges; George Frederick Handel Hodges, who served as supernumerary organist at Trinity in New York; and Reverend Jubal Hodges, a Presbyter of the Diocese of Pennsylvania, and by one daughter, Faustina Hasse Hodges.

Although Dr. Hodges spent a considerable part of his life in the United States, his outlook and allegiance remained essentially British. By no means may one consider him an influential American musician of his period, but rather a British musician living in America who, in all probability, helped to raise American musical standards and to foster an appreciation of older masters. This he accomplished through his many students, who scattered all over the country to fill posts as teachers and performers.

When one pieces together information gathered from Messiter's History of the Choir and Music of Trinity Church, old Trinity Church programs, and the manuscripts in the Hodges Collection, it becomes apparent that Hodges was quite conservative and narrow in his choice of sacred music for use in his
church, although it must be pointed out that his repertory represented a considerable broadening of that which preceded his tenure. Before Hodges, for example, it was not unusual to find that the same Morning Service by William Jackson of Exeter (1730–1803) was performed on twenty successive Sundays. The following list contains the composers and the number of works by each that were performed at Trinity during Dr. Hodges’s term as organist and choir director:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Morning Services</th>
<th>Anthems by:</th>
<th>Funeral Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>William Boyce (2)</td>
<td>William Boyce</td>
<td>William Croft (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Clark (1)</td>
<td>Giacomo Carissimi</td>
<td>Edward Hodges (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orlando Gibbons (1)</td>
<td>Creighton (?)</td>
<td>Henry Purcell (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward Hodges (5)</td>
<td>William Croft</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Jackson (3)</td>
<td>Maurice Green</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King (?) (1)</td>
<td>William Hayes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Langdon (1)</td>
<td>Edward Hodges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Nares (3)</td>
<td>Benedetto Marcello</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rogers (?) (1)</td>
<td>James Nares</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Travers (1)</td>
<td>Henry Purcell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Travers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inspection reveals the retrospective quality of the repertory as well as its adherence to works by English composers. The works of the two Italian composers represented were arranged by Hodges and not used in their original versions. It would appear that Edward Hodges’s favorite composer was Edward Hodges. Messiter’s assertion, that Dr. Hodges’s choirs used manuscripts utilizing old (C) clefs in alto and tenor parts almost exclusively is borne out by their presence in the forty-seven volumes containing the above selections. All are punctiliously copied out in Dr. Hodges’s hand.

Despite the somewhat limited range indicated by the Trinity repertory under Hodges, evidence in his collection and in his personal papers proves that he was a musician of wide-ranging activity. A list of subjects that he prepared, under the heading “for articles in the Musical World,” gives some idea of the broad extent of his interests:

Plain Song
Gregorian Tones
Numbers and definite proportions
Sir Isaac Newton and Prismatic Tones
Polarized light and analogy with sounds
Old Hydraulic organ
Sol fa system
Practical thoroughbass
Modulation
Numerical notation
Scale of ten octaves, 15 3/8 to 32.00
Consecutive 5ths and 8ves, why forbidden?
G. F. Bristow
Key note—the Final Bass. Why?
Social standing of musicians
Pitch and its tide
Ancient choirs

In Boston, during 1864, there appeared the


Tuckerman was one of Hodges’s successors at Trinity as well as a personal friend. In the *Trinity Collection* his editorial work consisted of eliminating the old clefs present in Hodges’s manuscripts and preparing what he felt were “easier arrangements” of some of the Doctor’s more difficult pieces. Of the 344 pieces in this collection, 15 were by Hodges and 89 were revised by him. Among the other composers represented were Franz Josef and Michael Haydn, Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Tallis, Playford, Handel, Burney, Henry Purcell, Ravenscroft, Orlando Gibbons, J. S. Bach, W. A. Mozart, Goudimel, Martin Luther, Telemann, Gluck, and William Boyce. Since this list does not coincide with the names of the composers whose works Hodges used for his choir, one must assume that the selections in the *Trinity Collection* include pieces that were used for general congregational singing.

A “Gloria in Excelsis” (E♭) and a “Benedicte omnia opera” (F) by Dr. Hodges were contained in

*A Collection of Cathedral Chants*: including the Gregorian Tones—Adapted to the Canticles and Occasional Services of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Also Services for the Holy Communion and the Burial of the Dead, with an Easy Morning Service, in F. Consisting of Te Deum and Benedictus by S. Parkman Tuckerman, Mus. Doc. Boston 1858.

Tunes by Tansur, Boyce, Ravenscroft, S. P. Tuckerman, and the versatile New Englander H. K. Oliver, as well as the anthems by Dr. Hodges listed below, appeared in

Anthems by Hodges included were:

Benevolence L. M.
Gloucester L. M. (two versions)
Kyle L. M.
Bristol L. M.
Peace S. M.
Double Chant for Benedicte omnia opera
Habakkuk C. P. M.

Among the manuscripts in the collection are the following unpublished works by Hodges, all in his hand:

Psalm 94th (An Anthem upon Popish Persecution (in Ireland) of the so-called Church Reform in England) Bristol 1833
Psalm 136
Morning Service in C
Morning Service in F
Morning Service in D
Morning Service in E
Evening Service in C
Evening Service in F
Communion in F
Kyrie in F
Kyrie in C
Kyrie in E
Jubilate [This is a rather unfortunate affair in which Hodges set what apparently are his own texts to works composed by J. S. Bach, including the Magnificat in D.]
Anthem. O be joyful in God—adapted from Carissimi
Funeral Anthem—in Memory of His Late Royal Highness, Frederick, Duke of York. Performed Saturday 1 January 1827.
Morning Service—Composed for and performed at the Consecration of Trinity Church New York on the Feast of the Ascension, Thursday May 21st, 1846. by Edward Hodges Mus. Doc. Late Director of the Music of the Parish of Trinity Church and now Organist of Trinity Church New York [signed and dated] Edw. Hodges June 8, 1846.
Psalm 136 [a setting for double chorus]

Example 1 (p. 84) is an extract from the Communion in F and provides a good representation of Hodges's steady, conservative, almost plodding style.

The following selection of titles culled from Dr. Hodges's collection will further serve to verify the breadth of his musical interests. It should be noted that most of these scores bear evidence of his study; many penciled notations and marginal comments attest to the fact that he must have spent considerable time analyzing the works of his predecessors.

The Fitzwilliam Music, being a Collection of Sacred pieces selected from manuscripts of Italian composers in the Fitzwilliam Museum.
Now for the first time published by permission of the University of Cambridge by Vincent Novello—Organist to the Portuguese Embassy—London 1825.


Te Deum, Jubilate, Sanctus, Kyrie Eleison, Magnificat, et Nunc dimittis, A Morning and Evening Church Service for four voices, with an Accompaniment for the Organ or Piano Forte, Composed and Respectfully Dedicated to all Choirs by Samuel Wesley. London [n. d. On the title page, the following dedication appears:] For Dr. Hodges from the author December 21 1825.

Selection of Sacred Music from the works of some of the most eminent composers of Germany and Italy. C. F. Latrobe. London 1806.
The Compleat Psalmodist or the Organist's, Parish-Clerk's and Psalm singer's Companion—5th ed. by John Arnold, Philo Musicæ. Author of the Essex Harmony and Leicestershire Harmony. London 1761.

The Whole book of Psalm Tunes in Four Parts by several Authors. With the usual Hymns and Spiritual Songs. Collected by Thomas Ravenscroft, Batchelor of Music. [n. p., n. d.]

Sonate a violine e violone o cembalo—da Arcangelo Corelli da Fusignano. [n. p., n. d. This print is dedicated to “Sofia Carlotta, Elettrice di Brandenburgo,” and the dedication bears the date “il primo Gennara 1700.”]


One also notes such items as an 1801 Breitkopf & Härtel edition of Haydn's Die Wörte des Erlösers am Kreuze; an 1823 edition, also from Breitkopf & Härtel, of Beethoven’s Christus am Oelberge; John Stafford Smith’s Musica Antiqua, an anthology of music from the 13th through the 18th century (London, 1812), and a manuscript, not in Hodges’s hand, that contains seventy-seven catches and glees by Calcott, Samuel Webbe, Stevenson, Hayes, Shield, and Welch, as well as madrigals by Gironimo Converso, John Wilbye, and Michael Cavendish.

For approximately six years, from 1820 to 1826, Dr. Hodges kept what he described as his

Humpum Scrumptum or a Musical Commonplace Book. A Book which was intended to receive and retain such detached scraps of good harmony or melody as might occasionally occur in extempore effusions—November 12, 1821.

Despite the date of 1821 on the title page, the book contains several entries dated 1820. True to his keynote statement, Hodges entered numerous cadences, fugue subjects, melodies, and fragments of harmonic progressions.

A number of items in the Hodges collection bear neither the Doctor's bookplate nor his inscription. It appears that extraneous material has been mixed with the collection; in fact, an entirely separate group of items is contained within Dr. Hodges’s holdings. These manuscripts and books are at least part of the personal library of William Augustine Newland, an influential but little-known Catholic Church musician, composer, and music seller.

Newland was born on 2 November 1813, in London. His parents were Irish. He demonstrated a talent for music early in his life and, despite his father's objections, was educated, in part, at The Royal Academy of Music. In October of 1832 Newland and his brother emigrated to the United States;
after a short stay in New York City, they moved to Philadelphia. Although born and raised as an Episcopalian, Newland converted to Catholicism and was baptized in 1833. His first post as organist was at St. Michael’s Church in 1834, and there followed short periods of similar service at St. Mary’s Church, the Church of the Holy Trinity, St. Augustine’s Church, Old St. Joseph’s Church, the Church of St. John the Evangelist, St. Patrick’s Church, and, finally, a long tenure at the Church of St. John the Baptist from about 1838 to 1891.

But Newland’s musical activities extended far beyond the perimeter of a parish organist. He organized and conducted numerous public concerts of sacred music and is credited with being responsible for the performance of works by Haydn, Mozart, Weber, and of Rossini’s Stabat mater.\(^5\) As a pedagogue he was very much in demand by “Philadelphia’s best families.”\(^6\) Newland probably had scholarly inclinations, since he was appointed by his bishop to teach Gregorian Chant to seminarians in Philadelphia’s St. Charles Borromeo Seminary. In 1858 he engaged in a short-lived retail organ business, and in the same year the Harmonia Sacred Music Society of Philadelphia conferred on him the honorary title of Doctor of Music. Newland composed approximately twenty sacred works, most of which are in his collection in manuscript form and none of which has been published. He died on 28 November 1901 and was buried at St. John’s.\(^7\)

In Newland’s material one finds prints of bibliographical interest, such as an Artaria edition (1799) of Beethoven’s Op. 12, Tre Sonate Per il Clavicembalo o Forte-Piano con un violino (dedicated to Antonio Salieri) and a Simrock edition (1805) of the same composer’s Kreutzer Sonata. But of considerably greater import are the numerous manuscripts that comprise the bulk of the collection. The greater part of these consists of the works of Charles Zeuner (born Heinrich Christopher Zeuner in Saxony in 1795), the unfortunate German-American composer and organist who died by his own hand on 7 November 1857.

Zeuner was a musician of considerable stature in Boston, where he settled after leaving his native Germany in 1824, and later in Philadelphia. In the former city he served as president of the Handel and Haydn Society from 1838 to 1839 and was considered “one of the best educated musicians and organists in the city.” In 1840 he left Boston and moved to Philadelphia but did not pursue his vocation with his former zeal. During his life Zeuner had developed a reputation for instability and a “quick and nervous temperament” that reached the point of overt mental aberration during his last few years. This condition culminated in his taking a boat trip across the Delaware River, walking into the woods on the east bank, and shooting himself.\(^8\)

Newland’s collection appears to contain some heretofore unknown works by Zeuner, including a number of chamber pieces and at least three Masses. It has not yet been determined why Newland, a Catholic organist, should have been in possession of Zeuner’s manuscripts, particularly since Zeuner was a Lutheran church organist at the time of his death. Zeuner had no family,
and one would have expected that his materials would have reverted to his church.

In addition to the Zeuner documents there are other manuscripts that invite investigation, particularly in regard to their possible inclusion in repertories of the time:

**Vesper Service**, by F. Bühler
Mass in E flat for four voices, by Rev. Francis Bühler

These two items are probably the work of Franz Bühler (1760–1824).

**Requiem**, by W. Tomasz-k
The latter part of the composer’s name is not clear in the manuscript.

It is likely that this is the work of Johann Wenzel Tomaschek (1744–1850). There is no Requiem in compilations of his known works, however.

**Several Masses** by J. W. Kalliwoda (1801–66).
Masses are not listed among his known works.


**Requiem No. 1**, by Dreyer.

The composer probably is Johann Melchior Dreyer (1746–1824).

**Joseph Lederer**—1781—Six Masses.
Lederer’s dates are 1733–96.

A number of other complete manuscripts and loose sheets are present in the Newland Collection. Among these are works by Eduardo Marzo (1852–1929), Saverio Mercadante (1795–1870), H. Phillips (?), and Benjamin Carr (1769–1831). The latter is represented by a *Te Deum* and a Mass in an arrangement presumably by Newland. It must be understood that the handwriting in all these manuscripts shows a great deal of variation, and it is impossible to say with any degree of certainty whether it is Newland’s calligraphy at different times in his life, or whether it is the hand of one of several anonymous scribes (perhaps even the composer’s).

F. X. Reuss, who knew Newland personally, claimed that the organist had arranged a Carr Mass from some old manuscripts that were given to him by the Reverend Dr. Moriarity of Old St. Augustine’s Church in Philadelphia, manuscripts which were supposedly written during Carr’s lifetime. Though a preliminary search did not bring it to light, the original Mass manuscript may still be among Newland’s papers, and it seems probable that he also obtained the manuscript of Carr’s *Te Deum* from Dr. Moriarity. Neither the *Te Deum* nor the Mass which Newland arranged appears to be among Carr’s published or known works.

The largest single entity in the Newland Collection is Newland’s sketchbook. This volume, an unbound, oblong, staff-paper notebook, appears to have been kept by Newland over a long period of time. In it he transcribed the music (no texts, only incipits) to 191 popular and folk songs of his day, a number of which originated well before his birth. A few are carefully written in piano score with ink; others are scrawled in pencil, with the melody only,
as though hastily taken in dictation. Each has been marked with a title or titles, and twelve carry composer attributions. Seven are repeated. The first page contains a quasi-legible table of contents that is of some help in identifying selections with blurred titles in the body of the book. Unfortunately there is not one date in the entire volume. The contents reflect the successive ethnic waves that lashed the shores of the United States: traditional English ballads, songs in Black slave dialect, songs in German dialect, Irish reels and folk songs, as well as a number of purely American songs, some by Stephen Foster and many of a traditional nature.

Why are there no texts? Assuming that Newland had access to the texts at the same time that he acquired the music, it is not in keeping with his careful workmanship (as evidenced in his manuscripts and writings) to omit an integral part of the work at hand. There are several possible reasons for this void. The first is that some of these melodies were dance tunes to be played rather than sung. This would account for approximately ten per cent of the contents. The second may be that these songs were in common currency at the time of their transcription, and that Newland did not feel that texts were needed. The most important cause for the lack of lyrics may have been Newland's own position. As he was a distinguished Catholic musician, organist and musical director of a large Philadelphia church, and a teacher of Gregorian Chant to seminarians, it would not have been in keeping with his position, nor possibly with his religious nature, to involve himself with bawdy texts, as some of these are. Nevertheless, his musical interests were broad enough to impel him to maintain a record of a facet of Philadelphia's musical life that was not directly concerned with his own professional endeavors.

The completion of Newland's songbook might well fill a number of lacunae. There are a number of American songsters from the period, but they carry texts and no music. Newland's sketchbook contains music but no words. Cursory inspection reveals that there is considerable correlation between the two. Newland's songbook, for example, contains the texts to many of the songs in Henry de Marsan's Singer's Journal that appeared in New York between 1868 and 1871, as well as the full melody of The American Star, the war song which arose during the War of 1812 and the music for which is not currently available.

As has been seen, inspection and study of collections such as those of Edward Hodges and William Newland, each accumulated by a professional musician working in a major urban area, can enrich current knowledge of 19th-century musical practice and taste in America. Undoubtedly, many more such personal collections are contained in the holdings of local libraries and historical societies throughout the United States. They merit the attention of scholars concerned with the history of American music.

NOTES

Trinity Church Vestry Minutes, 15 January 1839.

Dr. Hodges's memorandum, 15 March 1847.


Reuss, ibid.; see also American Catholic Historical Researches 20 (1921): 44.

I am indebted to Father George Hiller, S. J., of the Church of St. John the Baptist in Philadelphia, for his assistance in locating biographical material pertinent to Newland.


See note 5.

An edition of both works is currently in preparation.

An edition is being prepared by the author of this report.
Louis Gruenberg: A Forgotten Figure of American Music

Robert F. Nisbett

Forgotten by many long before his death on 9 June 1964, Louis Gruenberg was one of the most important American composers in this century. His significance and tragedy were summed up precisely by Claire Reis in a letter to The New York Times, written shortly after the composer's death:

To The Editor:
When Louis Gruenberg died a few weeks ago, a plan had just been launched to celebrate his 80th birthday on Aug. 3 by programing some of his earlier compositions. In one of his last letters he wrote:

"I'll have none of this 80-year old stuff! I was forgotten on my 70th, my 60th, my 50th birthdays (where in hell was everybody when I needed this kind of treatment), but now I don't need anybody. If my stuff is to be played, it will be because it is worthy of being played, and not because I am an old dog who is thrown a bone! Basta!"

... He helped to establish the League of Composers and he was a president of the United States Section of the International Society for Contemporary Music. Discouraged by the constant efforts required to retain the position of renown he had won, he withdrew from the New York scene to lead a solitary life, and for many years dedicated his entire time to his compositions. ...

Gruenberg was one of the first innovators in the use of jazz in serious music. Although at times he composed in an Impressionistic style and often experimented with chromaticism, he developed a unique, personal, musical language, especially notable in his later works. Unpublished pieces include six symphonies, seven operas, and numerous chamber and vocal compositions. Unfortunately, his early works are rarely heard, and most of his later ones have yet to be performed.

Born in Brest-Litovsk, Russia, on 3 August 1884, the son of Abraham and Clara Gruenberg, he was brought to this country at the age of one. His strong musical talent was apparent quite early, and he began his studies with Adele Margulies. A gifted child, he was quickly put to work by his father and in the early 1890s was giving numerous recitals including appearances on the Keith Vaudeville Circuit.² Desiring to study in Europe, he gradually saved enough money and arrived in Berlin in 1905. Even though Gruenberg had written many compositions, his goal at this time was to study with Busoni and pursue a concert career. Unable to meet with the latter, however, he studied for a short time with Friedrich Koch but soon returned to New York because of financial problems. In December 1907 Gruenberg again returned to Europe and settled in Vienna. Here he made contact with Busoni and was accepted as one of the master's pupils. This started his long association with Busoni, first as a student and later as a friend.
Gruenberg remained in Europe for seven years and sustained himself through concert performances, composing, and occasional teaching. His success at this time is evidenced by a news item appearing in *Musical America* on 23 December 1911:

In the young American, L. T. Gruenberg, who gave a piano recital in the Harmonium Hall on Wednesday evening, we heard the possessor of talent far above the ordinary. . . . Where Mr. Gruenberg excels is in his really pronounced talent for constructing, for outlining a work. With the infallible judgment of the thorough musician, this pianist may be relied upon to bring out every effect contained in the composition. . . .

In London when the World War started, Gruenberg made plans to return to the United States. He had left many of his manuscripts in Berlin, and much of this early work has never been recovered.

Describing his return to the United States in 1914, Gruenberg wrote the following entry in his notebook:

I soon found out that a European reputation alone did not guarantee a penniless musician a welcome reception. I am quite sure there wasn't a manager, publisher or even a piano firm whom I did not try to interest in my career, with unsuccessful results. During my three years stay I wrote continually—my own experiences, I would rather not enlarge on; they do not form very pleasant recollections.

In 1919 Gruenberg's life took an upward turn. His composition *Hill of Dreams* won the $1,000 Flagler prize, and with this success he decided to devote all his time to composition.

A strong leader and advocate of contemporary music, Gruenberg was, together with Varèse and Salzedo, a founding member of the International Composers Guild. At the first concert on 19 February 1922, he performed his piano work *Polychrome*. The most important of the early concerts of the Guild was the one in which the U.S. premiere of Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* was given. Gruenberg was selected to conduct because he had attended the rehearsals and the concert conducted by Schoenberg the previous year. After twenty-two rehearsals the concert was given at the Klaw Theater in New York on 4 February 1923 with great success. It was soon after this that the Guild broke up and the League of Composers was formed, with Gruenberg as one of the leaders.

For many years Gruenberg was very much intrigued by the jazz idiom and in 1921 wrote:

A matter which has often interested me, and which always eluded practical application, has been the possibility of adapting the fresh and unspoiled rhythm, so-called jazz atmosphere to serious music.

It was this interest that produced a series of pieces with such titles as *Jazz-berries, Jazzettes, Jazz Suite*, and *Daniel Jazz*. Along with this interest in jazz, Gruenberg had a very strong love for the Negro spiritual. In 1926, after
much research on his part, Universal-Edition brought out four volumes of spirituals which he had transcribed.

Culminating this period was Gruenberg’s most famous work, the opera *Emperor Jones*, based on the play by Eugene O’Neill. Gruenberg spent two years of negotiations with O’Neill before finally securing his permission to convert the play into an opera. Without doubt one of the most important operas in American musical history, it enjoyed ten performances with the Metropolitan in the 1932–33 and 1933–34 seasons. In his *Memories of the Opera*, Giulio Gatti-Casazza wrote:

This work was in every sense an American achievement. It was a drama on an American theme by one of the finest playwrights of America. It was set to music by an American. The chief protagonist was an American. And I must add a word for the striking and effective sets designed and painted by still another American, Jo Mielziner.7

It was soon after the success of this work that Gruenberg made a decision to leave the New York scene. He was invited by Rudolf Ganz to become head of the composition department at the Chicago Musical College. He stayed there for two years, but his desire to compose would not permit him to remain a teacher. He described his state as follows:

The gradual feeling of drudgery, the hopelessly incompetent pupils, the meaninglessness of this kind of life, the severe winters, full of ills and worries, the over-animation and stimulation of the morning’s work and the afternoon’s teaching—making it almost impossible to sleep. *Helena* creeping along slowly, too slowly, already 3 years for a one-act opera.8

Gruenberg decided to move to California in 1937 and support his family primarily through his compositions. Always concerned and dejected because composers had to struggle so hard for their existence, he attempted to start an organization called the Composers Society of America. Its purpose would be to provide the means through which composers could have their music performed and published. He called a meeting and invited the leading composers in Los Angeles at that time. These included Achron, Copland, Antheil, Weil, Toch, Schoenberg, and Hansen. In his notebook he made the following comment:

They all came with the exception of Schoenberg who insisted to be made president before the society started. Oscar Levant came along with Copland and he kept disrupting any serious talk. It was a successful tea party, but nothing else followed.

His own work continued to meet with success in the closing years of the 1930s. His Quintet won the Lake Placid Prize in 1937, and in the same year his radio opera, *Green Mansions*, was successfully broadcast by CBS.

But these successes at this stage in his life (he was now fifty-three) had the opposite effect from what one would have expected. They prompted
his movement toward greater isolation and bitterness. Certainly, financial gain was not of the utmost importance to him; the utter frustration which he felt after a work was received with great praise and then put aside to gather dust made him turn more and more away from the public and his fellow composers. His attitude was expressed clearly in a speech he gave at the Berkshire Festival in September 1938, an event which he attended because his Second String Quartet, written under commission of Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, was being performed. Referring to "the appalling lack of practical help to the creative writer of music in America," he had this to say:

I don’t know how many of you are aware of what will happen to the works you have heard tonight and which Mrs. Coolidge brought to life through her commission. Well, this is exactly what will happen, nothing.

It was immediately after this, in 1939, that Gruenberg accepted his first job to compose for films. His first important film composition was his score for Pare Lorentz’s documentary Fight for Life (1940). The film received wide critical acclaim, and Gruenberg stressed the importance of his score in an article in The New York Times:

It is generally accepted that serious music today has no place in the scheme of screen plays. In this case I have made no attempt to write down to the level of usual screen music. The film itself is of such importance that anything trivial or light would be completely out of place. Therefore I have written as good music as I am capable of writing and can find no difference in its quality from either my symphonic or operatic compositions.8

Although involved with film music from 1939–49, Gruenberg continued writing his concert music and completed his Second,10 Third, and Fourth Symphonies and the Americana Suite for orchestra. One of his most important works, the Violin Concerto, was commissioned by Jascha Heifetz and completed in 1944. The piece is one of the few compositions by Gruenberg still played (although only irregularly).11 Utilizing Negro spirituals and the sounds of a hillbilly fiddle, the concerto marks a returning interest to the so-called American music style. Gruenberg documents this return in his notes:

Regarding the Americana Suite written in 1945, this was one of a series of compositions which started in about 1923, with Daniel Jazz, in which I endeavored to create an 'American Idiom' in music completely disassociated from European influences. This period concluded with Emperor Jones in 1933. When Jascha Heifetz approached me for a Violin Concerto with a request to be in an American manner the old flame was revitalized and in quick order the Concerto, Americana, and finally the Fourth Symphony in 1948 were finished.
In 1947 Gruenberg was elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters. However, this honor did not change the fact that none of his music had been published since Emperor Jones in 1933. His thoughts and feelings are summed up in the following statement which he wrote later:

I am working constantly, passionately and carefully, and I firmly believe that I am doing my best work now. . . . I could use a publisher, a record company; but the world of yesterday seems to have forgotten me and the world of today does not know me.

The 1950s were very fertile years and, no longer working on films, he was able to devote all of his energy to composition. Among his more important works were the operas Volpone and Antony and Cleopatra. The latter he considered his finest opera. Another major work of this period was A Song of Faith. Begun in 1951 and completed eight years later, the score shows Gruenberg reaffirming his own belief in mankind. Dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi, the preface reads:

The theme of this work is to reveal the underlying oneness of all religions, the universality of God. Its purpose, therefore, is not the glorification of a particular religion, but of all religions, its goals are the unification of men of all faiths under the Author of all their beliefs.

Gruenberg tried to attain this universality of religions by using texts from all the important faiths of the world. The work can be classed as an oratorio for chorus, soloists, orchestra, narrator, and dance groups.

Though the 1950s were years of important creative achievements, they were also years of disappointment. Emperor Jones, after its opening success at the Metropolitan Opera, ran into trouble continually. In 1950 NBC announced plans for presenting the opera with William Warfield in the lead role. But in November of that year Gruenberg received a note stating that it was best not to perform the work at that time because of the probable reaction of the average Black. The critic Olin Downes later wrote:

It is hard to perceive the logic in this objective especially in view of the history of the drama. . . . Let us hope that the opera, which in its conception and dramatic technique is by far the most mature and adult of any American work for the lyric theatre which appeared up to 1933, will find a proper and effective place in the television opera schedule.

Nonetheless, the opera was never given, and this disappointment, which began the last phase of Gruenberg’s life, continued until his death in 1964.

Despite the neglect his music faced in his last years, Gruenberg maintained an optimism and love for life which is to be envied. His own words best summarize this feeling:

Why do I write so much music? Is it for posterity? Well, what will posterity do for me? I write because nothing else, and really nothing else gives me a sense of joy, of power, when I succeed; of frustration when I fail; beauty when I am inspired, of all the elements of human
emotion that exist; and when I take pains, I can create in my brain and in my heart all things the world has to offer. Where else can I get all this just sitting at my desk?

NOTES

1 5 July 1964, sec. 2, p. 9, col. 3.
2 Madeleine Goss, Modern Music-Makers (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1952), p. 93. This is also discussed in Gruenberg's personal notes.
3 Vol. 15, p. 27.
4 All statements attributed to Gruenberg, unless otherwise noted, are taken from his unpublished notebooks in the possession of Irma Gruenberg, his widow, and are used with her kind permission.
5 Published as Polychromatics (Vienna: Universal-Edition, 1924). This work was recently recorded by Zola Shaulis and is available on Composers Recordings, CRI S-295.
6 Daniel Jazz, as performed by the Kohan Ensemble with William Lewis, tenor, is scheduled for release by Amrex Records.
7 New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1941, p. 224.
8 Opera after Philip Moeller's play, Helena's Husband.
9 14 April 1940, sec. 9, p. 5, col. 3.
10 The Second Symphony was taped by the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra for a broadcast by the Bayerische Rundfunk, Munich, on 10 October 1965.
11 It can be obtained through RCA's Personal Music Service Catalog under the "Vault Treasure Label," LVT-1017.
14 Ironically, just before Gruenberg's death the opera was considered by the National Company of the Metropolitan Opera Association but was rejected again for the same reasons.
The Quarter-Tone System of Charles Ives

Harry Perison

Microtonal intervals are certainly not an invention of the 20th century—
their use has been documented in the theoretical system of Greek Antiquity,
and certain medieval sources contain convincing evidence of microtones. 
Some theoretical systems of the 16th and 17th centuries involved as many
as thirty-one divisions of the octave, and as early as 1895 the Mexican com-
poser Julian Carillo (b. 1875) was using a system (Sonido Trece) that divided
the octave into ninety-six intervals. The principal work with microtones
during the first half of the 20th century was done by the Czech composer
Alois Haba (b. 1893), whose style is basically a combination of athematic
serialism with scales of quarter-, sixth-, and twelfth-tones.

Charles Ives's quarter-tone compositions are almost unique in the music
of the United States in the early 20th century. His first known effort
(dating from as early as 1903 and certainly no later than 1914) was the
Chorale for strings in quarter tones, in which his quarter-tone system is already
fully developed. This was later arranged for a quarter-tone piano with two
keyboards, the upper tuned a quarter-tone sharp,2 and in 1923–24 it became
the third piece of the set Three Quarter-Tone Pieces, for two pianos, one tuned
normally, the other a quarter-tone higher. The first piece ("Largo") was
composed for the quarter-tone piano in 1923–24; the second ("Allegro") is
an expansion of material from earlier pieces, in this case written speci-
fically for two pianos, to be part of the set.3

The first performance of Chorale took place on 8 February 1925, in Chick-
ering Hall in New York, with Hans Barth and Sigmund Klein performing
it on two pianos. This program also included quarter-tone pieces for un-
accompanied violin by Alois Haba.4

The complete set was given its first performance on 14 February 1925, by
Barth and Klein in Aeolian Hall in New York, as part of the second inter-
national Referendum Concert sponsored by the Franco-American Musical
Society, of which Ives was a member. This concert included works by a
number of prominent European composers, among them Tailleferre, 
Bartók, and Stravinsky, and E. Robert Schmitz presented a lecture on
quarter-tone music. Reviews by W. J. Henderson and Olin Downes indicate something less than popular acclaim for Ives's pieces ("excited
many of the hearers to laughter"), but both reviewers were too cautious to
flatly condemn them.

Almost forty years passed before the next known performance. In October
of 1963 the pieces were played by George Pappastavrou and Nicholas
Zumbro at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. This time the reviewers
were almost enthusiastic:
It was his "Three Quarter-Tone Pieces for Two Pianos," not heard in New York since 1925, that ignited the evening with its extraordinary pitch differential and its harmonic double exposure. . . . The results are akin to the distorted image one perceives of an object floating in shallow waters, or, for that matter, of someone who's had one too many trying to sing a song. 7

These pieces . . . have not been heard in over forty years and it is a pity, for they are beautiful. . . . Throughout, the quarter-tones are organic. 8

Arthur Cohn was more conservative in his review of the Odyssey recording 9; he found the pieces "somewhat academic" and concluded that "it will take considerable work by composers, and parallel exposure to auditors, before fractional tones will not be viewed as strangers to the sonorous world." 10

It is fortunate that Ives at least once broke his habitual silence about the technical aspects of his music. In the March 1925 issue of the Franco-American Musical Society Quarterly Bulletin there appeared an article by the composer, "Some Quarter-Tone Impressions," which revealed the theoretical basis for these pieces. 11 Perhaps because of the negative reaction to quarter-tone music, Ives felt it necessary to explain a system so revolutionary for New York in the 1920s.

Ives's interest in quarter-tones was apparently stimulated by his father. In his article he relates his father's experiments, at first with quarter-tone melodies which he attempted to get his family to sing (an attempt not totally successful—the final use of quarter-tone melodies was as punishment), and then with chords which he felt were a necessary foundation for the melodies. This led to the construction of a device capable of sustaining quarter-tone harmonies: a series of violin strings appropriately tuned and activated by weighted bows. These experiments were terminated by popular demand of family and neighbors. 12

Ives must have devised his quarter-tone system empirically. He has left no description of its origins, only a system of three basic chords and mention of two others which he rejected as unsuitable. He found triads inappropriate in quarter-tone music, explaining that if a triad is created by the addition of a quarter-tone interval to two notes which constitute a diatonic interval, the result sounds out-of-tune, as for example the diatonic fifth C–G with D♭ added. (The symbol 1 indicates one-quarter-tone sharp; 2 indicates three-quarter-tones sharp.) 13 This chord is perceived as an unstable sound that the listener hears as out-of-tune major or minor. But

if another note is added which will make a quarter-tone interval with either of the two notes which make the diatonic interval, we have a balanced chord which, if listened to without prejudice, leans neither way, and which seems to establish an identity of its own . . . neither major, minor, nor even diminished. 14
This first chord consists of four notes, all at equal seven-quarter-tone intervals (350 cents), except for the interval formed by the fourth note and the octave of the root (150 cents). Ives calls this chord “major” because its intervals are larger than those of the second chord. This chord has much of the character of the augmented triad or diminished seventh chord, with its equal spacing and resulting flexibility in inversions, a quality that Ives points out near the end of the article. Its stability may derive from the presence of two perfect fifths, one between the two diatonic pitches, the other between the two quarter-tone pitches (Ex. 1).

EXAMPLE 1

Ives recognized a need for the perfect fifth, “that inexorable thing—a part of natural laws which apparently no aesthetic principle has yet beaten out.” But he longed for the day when some genius would “suppress him [the fifth] with a blow from a new natural law.”

Two other combinations are considered as “major” chords: C-E₅-G-B₁ and C-E-G₁-B₂#₂. The first is rejected because of the “narrow interval” between B₁ and the octave of the root, the second not only because of its lack of a perfect fifth, but also because of the disturbing presence of a major third, with its strong diatonic implications.

The second basic chord is similarly constructed, but now of five notes at equal five-quarter-tone intervals (250 cents) and with three perfect fourths; it too has a smaller interval (200 cents) between its highest note and the octave of its root (Ex. 2):

EXAMPLE 2

But he prefers to use it in a slightly different configuration which he does not view as an inversion but as root position. He considers it to have a “more malleable sound,” and therefore to be in a “more useful form.” This chord has less finality than the “major,” is “absorbed readily into the fundamental,” has smaller intervals, and in general has a contrasting character. In this form it is spelled (Ex. 3):

EXAMPLE 3
Ives's next step is to provide acoustical justification for these chords, albeit in a half-hearted manner. He bases his procedure on William Pole's adaptation of Helmholtz's theory of relationship between beats of adjacent partials of chord tones and the degree of aural roughness. The proof is not entirely convincing—the degree of roughness for his chords is fairly high—and he concludes:

It has seemed to me that the value of measuring "roughness" is relative. I can't see why a great deal doesn't depend on how hard the notes are struck (their amplitude) or on the instruments playing them... I don't see how one can always measure by vibrations he doesn't always hear.

A third ("subsidiary") chord is proposed, one having the intervallic structure of "nine-five-five." It is "comparatively weak-sounding, and therefore pliable, but its vibration measurements are all out of whack." Nevertheless, this chord is used occasionally. Interpreting "nine-five-five" as intervals of quarter tones, this chord is spelled as follows (Ex. 4):

EXAMPLE 4

This chord also has a perfect fifth and a perfect fourth, but its intervals are unequal.

Each of these chords may be constructed on any of the twenty-four pitches of the quarter-tone octave, yielding "combinations and permutations that won't do our music any harm." Ives also considers each of them as far less static than diatonic chords; they may be "played quite continuously without holding you up, as a repetition of diatonic chords seems to do." This he attributes to the necessity of the ear to do "a certain amount of adjusting." The paragraph that follows in Ives's article suggests an awareness of the value of serial techniques in avoiding that restriction of "organic flow which we feel the need of," but it is so vague as to prevent any clear interpretation of Ives's intentions in this regard.

As for quarter-tone melody, Ives is quite specific in requiring that it not be mere quarter-tone embellishment of a diatonic tune but one in which the notes are about equally distributed between diatonic and quarter-tone pitches. The quarter-tones must not be restricted to passing-tones, suspensions, or neighboring-tones but must be integral members of the quarter-tone chords which support or generate the melody. It must be noted, however, that even in the most purely quarter-tone piece, Chorale, there is a great deal of diatonic melody, and that in the first two Pieces there is little quarter-tone melody.

Ives states that quarter-tone music, unlike diatonic music, can use parallel
motion just as satisfactorily as contrary motion. In fact, he uses parallel motion more extensively than contrary in pure quarter-tone sections. Less need is felt for passing-tones because of the harsh dissonance they often produce. He hastens to express a hope that the quarter-tone system will not lessen contrapuntal feeling.

Toward the end of the article Ives discusses mixture of diatonic and quarter-tone materials ("the extension of diatonic chords upward into quarter-tones"), the effect of which is primarily sensuous or coloristic. One such technique includes the simultaneous sounding of augmented triads whose roots are three- or five-quarter-tones distant. An example of this may be seen in the opening measures of the first of the Three Quarter-Tone Pieces. Another technique consists of piling up augmented triads whose roots are one quarter-tone apart, distributing them through several octaves. An example may be seen in the second piece, mm. 42-46; the triads here are on C, Cl, C#?, D, D#, and D#?, all arpeggiated and held by the sustaining pedal. The effect is one of "rhythmic waves similar to the sounds one hears on putting the ear close to a telegraph pole in a high wind." This passage intervenes between a section consisting of an interchange of diatonic material between the quarter-tone-distant pianos, and a section in pure quarter-tone harmony.

The most fully-developed quarter-tone technique (although mixed with largely diatonic passages) occurs in the last of the Pieces. The work is through-composed, with the exception of a four-measure repetition and two recurrent cadences. The entire piece is based on melodic and rhythmic fragments of America and La Marseillaise, with the former predominating (an appropriate combination for a concert sponsored by the Franco-American Musical Society). America is introduced so gradually as to be almost imperceptible at first, and only in the last thirteen measures does it become completely obvious, although it is incomplete even here.

In the following discussion these conventions will be used: upper case letters indicate "major" chords, lower case "minor," underlined lower case "subsidiary"; a subscript numeral indicates inversion (1 indicates first inversion), and the lack of a subscript indicates root position.

The most obvious use of quarter-tone chords occurs in mm. 10-15, where a diatonic fragment of La Marseillaise is accompanied by "minor" chords. The basic pattern consists of four such chords, each complete and unaltered: f/c#/b/g. This pattern is repeated, and a cadence using the chords A/c#/B#13/G concludes this section. The motion is strictly parallel in all voices, except for passing-notes in the melody-bearing highest voice. There is a notated emphasis on the chord root in Piano I which is encountered frequently, if somewhat inconsistently, in this piece.

A more interesting and more complex treatment is found in mm. 48-60. Here a true quarter-tone America (shared equally by the two pianos) is accompanied by root-position quarter-tone chords over a C-pedal and a five-note ostinato (in Piano II, left hand). The basic structure is (Ex. 5):

100
There is a high degree of regularity here. The first note of the melody is the third (third note above the root) of the "major" chord, and all succeeding notes are the seconds of "minor" chords in the preferred configuration. The result is strict parallel motion. Following the initial chord the second phrase is treated in an almost identical manner. The initial chord is C\#; the root movement of the succeeding series of "minor" chords is varied slightly, although the approximate shape of the first phrase is preserved (Ex. 6):

The third phrase abandons quarter-tone melody, but the harmony is quarter-tone in the manner of preceding phrases (Ex. 7):

The next phrase continues with a diatonic melody, again with quarter-tone harmony; however, "major" chords in inversion (second inversion) are used (Ex. 8):
There follow more inverted chords, incomplete chords (m. 58, first beat: \( d_{1,1} \), lacking the fourth, c), and one use of an altered “subsidiary” chord (m. 59, first beat: \( g_{3,2} \), with \( b_{2} \)). The alteration in this last instance is dictated by the diatonic statement of the first three notes of America (appearing as the highest notes of Piano II) and the C-pedal, also in Piano II. This chord is part of a cadential formula first appearing in mm. 7–9 in conjunction with a fragment of La Marseillaise that, without its dotted-figure anacrusis, is identical with the opening three notes of America. This is typical of the merging of melodic material in this piece that makes exact identification difficult.

Elsewhere Ives’s use of this quarter-tone system is less regular. Many passages which are obviously quarter-tone can only be interpreted as use of nonharmonic material or altered chords. The beginning of the Chorale is such a place; the first chord (C) moves through a \( b_{2} \) (alteration or passing-tone) to an incomplete “subsidiary” chord on F, in second inversion, with \( #2 \). The next chord is “major” on G, in root position, with \( b_{1} \); it resolves to “major” on C. On the other hand, this whole passage might be interpreted as an elaboration or “horizontalization” of the C-“major” sonority.

Measures 16–29 are based on ostinato figures derived from melodic and rhythmic elements of the borrowed tunes. This passage consists of an interchange between the two pianos of diatonic material, of course, at a quarter-tone differential; the effect is polytonal. This technique forms the basis of most of the first and second pieces of the set, as well. A clear statement of part of La Marseillaise occurs in mm. 26–27. This brief passage is in G-major (conventional major, not “major”), but with quarter-tone alterations of the chords. A repetition of the quarter-tone cadence of mm. 13–15 concludes this section.

The next section (mm. 30–42) is based on the second part of America. This, too, must be regarded as quarter-tone extension of the diatonic system, mostly over a C-pedal. It concludes with a pure quarter-tone cadence followed by repetition of mm. 10–14.

Ives defends the retention of the concept of tonality.\(^{26}\) It is clear that the “major” chord on C acts as a strong tonal center in the Chorale, not only because it occurs with remarkable frequency but also because it articulates
major sections. The use of a IV-I-V-I progression (in the conventional sense) in the bass at the close does nothing to weaken the effect.

The ostinato underlying the last part of the *Chorale* is noteworthy; it begins (m. 48) as a five-note pattern which emphasizes the augmented intervals of the fourth, fifth, and sixth, and the major seventh. The pattern is gradually shortened until only the augmented fourth remains—an interval basic to all three of the pieces, but one which does not appear in any of the quarter-tone chords of the system.

An assessment of the musical value of these pieces is difficult. Certainly they are of historical importance, but, unfortunately, they seem to have led nowhere; Ives employed quarter-tones in but a few other works. In *Tone Roads* No. 3 (1915) the use of quarter-tones is limited to a six-note cluster which serves as the final sonority of the da capo first section. Quarter-tones figure more prominently in the second movement of the Fourth Symphony (1909–16), but even here the technique is relatively undeveloped. The strings play glissando-like parallel chords or clusters producing an organum effect, and there is an eight-measure optional passage for quarter-tone piano consisting of gradual modifications of ostinato figures. It was only in the *Three Quarter-Tone Pieces* that Ives contrived a reasonably developed quarter-tone system, but it is evident that even here he considered the system tentative at best:

How quarter-tones will affect tonality, how they will help work out satisfactory polytonal and atonal systems, involves so many considerations that I won't venture to say much about it—I've ventured too much already. But it strikes me that a good deal depends on whether or not satisfactory scales can be developed.27

NOTES


3 Kirkpatrick, *Catalog*, pp. 103–04.


5 From a clipping (dated 16 February 1925) in *Miscellaneous Scrapbook*, p. 1, in the Sibley Music Library, Rochester, N.Y. It is presumably from the *New York Sun*, for which Henderson was music critic in 1925.


7 Ibid., 5 October 1963.


9 Odyssey, 32-16-0161 (mono); 32-16-0162 (stereo).


12 Ives, Essays, p. 110.


14 Ives, Essays, pp. 111–12.

15 Ibid., pp. 118–19.


17 Ives, Essays, p. 113.

18 Howard Boatwright, “Ives’ Quarter-Tone Impressions,” *Perspectives of New Music* 3 (Spring-Summer 1965): 22–31. (Boatwright apparently overlooks the effect of the third in the last chord.)


20 Ives, Essays, p. 114.

21 Ibid., p. 115. Boatwright misinterprets this spelling as ninth-fifth-fifth. (See his note c.)

22 Ibid.

23 Ibid., p. 112.

24 Ibid., p. 118.


26 Ibid., p. 117.

27 Ibid.
Ragtime and the Music of Charles Ives

Judith Tick

If ragtime were called tempo di raga . . . it might win honors more speedily . . . But neither the reproach of “reminiscence” nor the equal odium of “innovation” has ever succeeded against a vital musical idea. I feel safe in predicting that ragtime has come to stay . . . It will find its way gradually into the works of some great genius and will thereafter be canonized.

Rupert Hughes
Musical Record, 1 April 1899

That great borrower from American vernacular culture, Charles Ives, utilized all kinds of music in his own compositions—minstrel tunes, revival hymns, and popular songs. One vernacular style that he particularly exploited was ragtime, a music popular from 1895 to 1920. Indeed, rag rhythms, along with hymn tunes and marches, are among the most commonly quoted material in his music.

The hallmark of Ives’s ragtime style is his use of off-beat accents and complex syncopation. According to Cowell this “category of rhythm . . . [was] of especial fascination to Ives . . . . His humorous movements, which occur in almost all the larger works, are full of such irregular off-beat stresses.”

“Humorous works” no doubt refers to the scherzos in the Piano Sonata No. 1 or to “In the Inn” from the Set of Pieces for Theater or Chamber Orchestra. These works are directly related to Ives’s ragtime style.

Despite its sustained presence in Ives’s music, ragtime has received little critical attention as a discrete factor in the development of his rhythmic vocabulary. Most often writers attribute his use of syncopation to the influence of jazz, which postdates ragtime and much of Ives’s music. Others tie it to his boyhood memories of minstrel songs rather than to his later exposure to ragtime. There is, to be sure, documentary evidence for this view. In the Memos Ives wrote:

I had even heard the same thing [Black-faced comedians ragging their songs] at the Danbury Fair before coming to New Haven, which must have been before 1892 . . . . [Ragging was] throwing the accent on the off-beat and holding over—a thing people nowadays think was not done until jazz came along.

Nevertheless, he distinguished between ragging and ragtime, a style that he described as a “natural dogma of shifted accents or a mixture of shifted and minus accents.”

At Yale Ives played rag piano with the Hyperion Orchestra and was a
frequent customer at a tavern named Poli's, where he occasionally substituted for the regular pianist. In New York, where he moved after graduation, he continued to frequent music halls.

Ives's undergraduate years and early residence in New York coincided with ragtime's first wave of national popularity. Until the mid 1890s it was a regional phenomenon centered in the Southwest. But the performing team of Bert Williams and George Walker and the pianist Ben Harney seem to have stimulated a genuine ragtime craze on the East Coast.\textsuperscript{5}

\* \* \* \* \*

The strongest evidence of ragtime's impact on Ives is the music he wrote between 1902 and 1904. During this time he composed about a dozen ragtime dances for theater orchestra: a \textit{Ragtime Dance}, 1902–03; a \textit{Set of Nine Ragtime Pieces}, 1902; and a \textit{Set of Four Ragtime Pieces}, 1902–04.

Ives took this music "more seriously" than other pieces written during this period and therefore had them copied and arranged for both public performances and private readings.\textsuperscript{6} The Keith Theater Orchestra played some of them at an afternoon performance sometime between 1903 and 1906, while the Globe Theater Orchestra performed the \textit{Ragtime Dance} in 1905.\textsuperscript{7} Even as late as 1920 these pieces commanded Ives's interest to the extent that he attempted to reconstruct the original scoring of some of the dances from second-hand piano arrangements made by the pianist at Keith's Theater.

Ives respected this music because it was less conservative than some of his works in more conventional forms, the hymn-tune sonatas for violin, for example. It could "get going good and free" partially because of its secular connotations. As Ives stated in the \textit{Memos}:

Anyway, in considering my music, the secular things—that is, those whose subject matter has to do with the activities of general life around one—seem to be freer and more experimental in technical ways.\textsuperscript{8}

It is thus not surprising that he drew upon the ragtime pieces as a well-spring for some of his most interesting and rhythmically experimental works. His constant rewriting of this material may account for the dates of 1902–11 assigned to them in the \textit{Memos}. During those years the dances were rewritten as scherzos for various combinations of instruments, as sonata movements, or as separate orchestral pieces. Their descendants are the scherzos in the Piano Sonata No. 1; the second movements in the Violin Sonatas Nos. 2 and 3; the scherzos "The See'r," "Over the Pavements," and "Tone Roads"; and the second movement of the \textit{Orchestral Set No. 2}.\textsuperscript{9} Ives also composed a "Study in Rag" for the opening of the fourth movement in the Piano Sonata No. 1. It has an ostinato pattern in common with "Over the Pavements" that establishes the link between the latter piece and the ragtime music (Ex. 1).
The ragtime pieces were similar in some ways to their popular counterparts. They were written in \( \frac{2}{4} \), the common rag meter, for small instrumental groups. The *Set of Nine Ragtime Pieces*, for example, was scored for piano, violin (?), clarinet, cornet, trombone, and drums—an ensemble similar to the one that recorded “Cakewalk in Coon Town” in 1903, in which piano, two clarinets, cornet, and trombone were used. Furthermore, the pieces were arrangements of familiar melodies, in this case hymn tunes.

In ragging well-known melodies, Ives was adopting the conventions of popular ragtime. Although the combination of a secular style with a religious melody may have appealed to him philosophically, we need not look to Transcendentalism for a musical rationale. A rag arrangement of the hymn tune *Nettleton* appeared in Ben Harney’s *Ragtime Instructor* in 1897. Ives’s practice of combining more than one melody in a single piece also had its vernacular parallel. The *Entertainer’s Rag* by Jay Roberts (1910) used *Dixie* and *Yankee Doodle* in counterpoint.

Given Ives’s practice of liberal quotation, one attraction of ragtime was that it was a style through which preexistent melodies from multiple sources could be assimilated and recomposed. The two scherzo movements in the Piano Sonata No. 1 illustrate this point. For convenience we shall refer to them by using the divisions indicated by Ives in the manuscript: IIA—mm. 1–57; IIB—“In the Inn”; IVA—“Study in Rag”; IVB—mm. 52–158. In IIA and IIB the hymn tune *Bringing in the Sheaves* is dissected motivically, while in IVB the emphasis is on climactic rag arrangements of the melody. With respect to motivic transformations, rag rhythms are used to vary the successive presentations of the opening figure (Ex. 2).

EXAMPLE 2: Opening figure from “Bringing in the Sheaves”
It is never literally repeated, and the rhythmic differences between IIA—m. 15, m. 19, and m. 21 (Ex. 3)—are important though small.

EXAMPLE 3: Piano Sonata No. 1, mm. 15, 19, 21

If we compare those measures with later variants—for example, mm. 32 and 34 of IIA and m. 42 of IIB—it is clear that Ives controls the detail by moving toward complexity. Similarly in IVB the arrangements of the hymn tune become increasingly elaborate. In the final chorus section the texture is an exciting interplay of cross-rhythms and syncopation (Ex. 4).

EXAMPLE 4: Piano Sonata No. 1, IVB, mm. 128-29

Despite the comparative textural simplicity of popular ragtime, it was nevertheless the inspiration for complex rhythmic textures. As Ives's own comments indicate, he viewed it as a style from which new rhythmic ideas could be abstracted:

If one gets the feeling . . . of these shifts and lilting accents, it seems to offer other basic things not used now (or used very little) in music of even beats and accents . . . at least so it seems to me.¹³

The "basic things" were most likely the polymetric implications suggested through continual syncopation. According to Gunther Schuller, rag patterns
“can definitely be traced to African cross-rhythms . . .” and should be heard additively. He interprets the pattern in Example 5 as 3 plus 2 plus 3: “This pattern is unmistakably African in origin and approach, splitting the bar metrically rather than accentually.”

EXAMPLE 5: Standard ragtime rhythm

In his instruction book *The School of Ragtime*, Scott Joplin recommends the same phrasing for Schuller’s figure (Ex. 6). Similarly, Ives interprets the same figure cross-metrically as 3 plus 3 plus 2 in the second movement of the Violin Sonata No. 3. In mm. 38–39 the accents in the left hand support this division (Ex. 7).

EXAMPLE 6: Scott Joplin, *School of Ragtime*, exercise No. 4, mm. 1–2

EXAMPLE 7: Violin Sonata No. 3, 2nd mvt., piano part, m. 38

Ives’s desire to exploit cross rhythms may also explain the peculiar notation characteristic of this movement. In mm. 66–67, for example, the odd sixteenth-note occurs on the beat, but the notation emphasizes the accompaniment’s off-beat accents (Ex. 8):

Copyright 1951, Merion Music Inc. Used by permission of the publisher.
EXAMPLE 8: Violin Sonata No. 3, 2nd mvt., piano part, m. 66

It is possible that this notation relates to a practice described by Ben Harney:

... real ragtime on the piano played in such a manner that it cannot be put into notes is the contribution of the graduated Negro banjo-player who cannot read music. On the banjo there is a short string that is not fretted and that is consequently played with the thumb. ... The colored performer, strumming in his own cajoling way, likes to throw in a note at random, and his thumb ranges over for this effect. When he takes up the piano, the desire for the same effect dominates him ... and he reaches for the open banjo string with his little finger. Meanwhile he is keeping mechanically perfect time with the left hand. The hurdle with the right hand finger throws the tune off its stride, resulting in syncopation. He is playing two times at once.

The “shifts” by which Ives characterized ragtime was another effect he abstracted and exaggerated in the scherzos. The term “shifts” appears not only in the Memos but also in the music itself. It occurs in a footnote at the end of IIB in the Piano Sonata No. 1:

The Chorus is an impromptu affair (as is also the rest to some extent)—and may be varied according to the tempo taken. The 2nd and 4th measures of the Chorus may be changed each time, as suggested below, and also in the other measures the L.H. may change ten. [uto] “shifts” ad lib ... .

The music illustrates that “shifts” were the placement of accents on a succession of different beats. To achieve the improvisatory effect the pianist could readjust the rhythmic relationships between notes, relocate the tenuto accents and add extra beats to the measure, thereby altering the meter. The instruction “ad lib.,” an integral part of the whole effect, occurs also in the second movement of Violin Sonata No. 3, a rag-derived movement.

Why did Ives describe ragtime as a “series of shifts and lilting accents”? Another example from Joplin’s School of Ragtime suggests a possible explanation (Ex. 9). According to Joplin, the first ragtime effect was the second note,
right hand. The syncopation was emphasized by the chord that was repeated on a different beat or subdivision:

\[ 1 - + - 2 - + - 1 - + - \quad (*=\text{repeated chord}) \]

EXAMPLE 9: Scott Joplin, School of Ragtime, exercise No. 5, mm. 1–2

Two examples from the Piano Sonata No. 1 illustrate this interpretation of "shifts and lilting accents." In the first (Ex. 10) the repeated interval C–A culminates in a series of chords that function as the climax of the phrase. If the Joplin example is played rapidly and the right-hand chord accented, it suggests the rhythmic quality Ives was producing. Another more complicated version of this effect is illustrated in Example 11. Here the left hand has its own counterline, while the right is repeating one chord on different subdivisions of the beat.

EXAMPLE 10: Piano Sonata No. 1, 4th mvt., mm. 105–08

*Copyright 1954 by Peer International Corporation. Used by permission.*
Thus Ives's ragtime carried certain tendencies in popular ragtime to great extremes. Passages in his rag idiom could include a multiplicity of syncopated figures in one hand accompanied by cross-metric ostinatos in the other. In addition, repeated chord clusters on a variety of off-beats suggested the improvisatory quality of unpredictable "shifts."

If this kind of texture is what Ives heard in ragtime, small wonder that he associated it with music deceptively remote from its popular prototype. He called The New River a "rag" in the Memos. Similarly, the fourth movement in the Piano Sonata No. 1 begins with a "Study in Rag" in which "ragging combinations of fives, twos and sevens are tried out." Although the "Study" opens with changing accents, its relation to popular ragtime is much more tenuous. There are few recognizable rag figures in this experiment in cross-rhythms.

* * * *

From a historical point of view, Ives's use of ragtime illustrates the continuing influence that vernacular music had upon his music as late as 1910. He appropriated a variety of conventions, not just the most obvious novelties. Perhaps there are other aspects of Ives's style that have been attributed to his Transcendentalist disposition or regarded as compositional idiosyncracies which are in fact transplanted, though highly developed, elements from vernacular culture. Thus ragtime stimulated Ives's own creative impulses toward rhythmic experimentation because he was sensitive to its potential. His music thereby refutes Copland's contention that "serious composers became aware of the polyrhythmic nature of Afro-American music only in its jazz phases. . . ."20 Long after his own ragtime dances had been composed, Ives wrote in tribute that "ragtime may be nature's way of giving art raw material. Time will throw its vices away and weld its virtues into the fabric of our music."21

NOTES

6 Ibid., p. 64.
7 Ibid., pp. 119, 328.
8 Ibid., pp. 129, 130.
11 Blesh and Janis, *They All Played*, p. 129.
12 Ibid., p. 183.
15 Blesh and Janis, *They All Played*, p. 143.
16 Ibid., p. 227.
18 Blesh and Janis, *They All Played*, pp. 143-44.
19 Ives, *Memos*, pp. 60, 57.
21 Cowell, *Charles Ives*, p. 94.
Charles Ives's Concept of Music

Charles W. Ward

As if in a fit of anger Charles Ives once exclaimed, "My God! What has sound got to do with music!"1 This statement has become popular as evidence of Ives's modernism, for it sounds much like what some contemporary composers and theorists have said, i.e.: "Sounds, then, are not part of music, however essential they are to its transmission."2 However, Ives's concept of music is rooted in the thought of the New England Transcendentalists and is fundamentally opposed to many 20th-century ideas about music.

The popularity of Ives's statement arises from a misunderstanding of the meaning of this outburst, which was penned while Ives was describing the reactions of a violinist who wanted to alter the composer's music to suit the instrument. Ives continues, "Why can't music go out in the same way it comes in to a man, without having to crawl over a fence of sounds, thoraxes, catguts, wire, wood, and brass? . . . Why can't a musical thought be presented as it is born. . . ."3 Ives was asking that performers not expect his compositions to conform to their own technical limitations.

But, if Ives's exclamation has been misinterpreted, even more crucial is the misunderstanding of what Ives thought to be the nature of music. Benjamin Boretz and other contemporary theorists seem to operate from what Louis Kampf has called a "somewhat naive version of logical positivism."4 These theorists believe that music must be viewed as an object of "rational—that is scientific—discourse."5 ("To many of us in music, the virtues of a confluence of rational inquiry and art have long been evident, if rarely exhibited," writes Boretz.6) That scientific discourse is pursued in terms of "an internally consistent model expressed in the language of mathematics."7 Composing a work of art is the defining and creating of "relational 'universes' of elements in whose interrelations are embedded hypothetical properties of relational behavior."8

Sounds are thus not part of music, because artworks, "though they are inferred from observable characteristics of particular slices of the physical-entity world, are not themselves, as art entities, composed of those slices." Art entities are, rather, "purely phenomenal things, intersubjective in the sense of thoughts rather than in that of sounds and sights."9 The notational score is, I presume, more characteristic of music because of its ability, through the symbols or signs it utilizes, to express the relationships Boretz would want to constitute music.

Ives, however, had no such ideas when he talked about music and sound. It is true that some of his statements imply at least partial agreement with Boretz's ideas on sound as important only as a means of transmitting music; the surface similarity with Boretz's ideas is further suggested in this comment.
by Ives: ‘‘That music must be heard is not essential—what it sounds like may not be what it is.’’

Ives’s concept of music was metaphysical in the highest transcendental sense. What he wanted to suggest by ‘‘My God! What has sound got to do with music!’’ is present in the famous anecdote about Old John Bell, with its admonition not to miss the music by paying ‘‘too much attention to the sounds.’’ The essence of the story has been recognized by many of Ives’s close friends. In a letter dated 24 July 1923, Clifton Joseph Furness, expressing an idea derived from both Ives’s Essays and correspondence with him, referred to the composer’s ideas ‘‘about regarding sound as purely a symbol of a mental concept.’’ The Cowells note that Ives believed music to be ‘‘the idea’’ and that ‘‘in certain sorts of composition Ives makes a distinction between the music, which is the idea, and the sound, which is simply a physical disturbance during a performance.’’ John Kirkpatrick confirms this, noting that ‘‘Ives always regarded ‘the music’ as being the character of the idea or spirit, quite apart from its embodiment in sound.’’ Music is, as Hegel expressed it, the sensuous incarnation of the Idea. That Idea was not a property of relational behavior but the ‘‘substance,’’ a quality which Ives believed to be all important in music.

There are further distinctions which can aid our understanding of Ives’s concept of music. For Ives there were several different types of music. He distinguished between ‘‘composed’’ and ‘‘natural’’ music—music based purely on stylistic considerations and music which tries to reproduce sounds in nature, such as George Ives’s attempt to reproduce the sounds of church bells pealing in a rainy, misty afternoon, or Charles’s concern with the effect of distance on sound. Ives felt that ‘‘natural’’ music, in this sense, provides many suggestions towards composition—‘‘glimpses into further fields of thought and beauty.’’

However, there is a more fundamental, metaphysical music—‘‘natural’’ music in its transcendental sense. ‘‘Whence comes the wonder of a moment? From sources we know not. But we do know that from obscurity and from this higher Orpheus comes measures of sphere melodies, flowing in wild, native tones, ravaging the souls of men, flowing now with thousand-fold accompaniments and rich symphonies through all our hearts, modulating and divinely leading them.’’ Hawthorne sensed the mysteries of these ‘‘supernatural sound waves’’ and tried ‘‘to paint them rather than to explain them.’’ And Thoreau did not have to go to Boston to hear ‘‘the Symphony.’’

The roots for this concept of music are found primarily in the ideas of the New England Transcendentalists, particularly those of Thoreau. Although Emerson had some interest in music, it was Thoreau who most extensively developed a metaphysical concept of music. He was intensely interested in perceiving what he thought to be the inherent musical qualities of the sounds and ‘‘silences’’ of nature, but he also believed there to be a transcendental music behind these sounds of nature.
Daniel E. Rider has suggested a number of aspects of Thoreau's theory of music:\(^24\): (1) Music is discussed not in its technical sense, but in a more comprehensive and general meaning. The word music is often used symbolically and poetically, so that even sounds and silences become forms of music. With his acute sense of hearing Thoreau perceived some of the incredibly complex organizations of the sounds of nature, hearing what most men call nature's silence to be rich in sounds. From this he poeticized the terms Sound and Silence in relation to their effect on man's soul. (2) Certain qualities inherent in sound can be classified as music, such as those found in a child's beating on a tin pot. (However, these qualities are dependent on a sympathetic disposition toward the child's activities. Thoreau imputes the musical qualities to the situation.) (3) Thoreau treated music, as a term, in a very metaphorical sense; his terms thrive in a suggestive sense but are destroyed if asked to undergo rigorous examination. (4) Music is viewed in a symbolic function, as a vehicle to other philosophical and moral truths. (5) Music is also a tool for spiritual development, a means for escaping the materialism and industrialization of the 19th century. Music is both a means of expression and a catalyst for other human experiences.

Thoreau's particular understanding of music comes from an idealistic belief in Nature as a manifestation of Spirit and in music as a realm of the Spirit expressing itself. For an idealist such as Thoreau the sounds of nature would be much more potent for revealing Spirit than the comparatively artificial organization of the sounds and silences that man calls music. In his *Journal* Thoreau described nature's sounds as "the general earth song."\(^25\) In his youth Thoreau thought of the earth as "the most glorious musical instrument, and I was audience to its strains."\(^26\) These sounds are the birds, the crickets, the wind, the rivers rushing over the rocks. There is a real music in the earth, infinitesimally complex, that is always open "to the ear that is fitted to hear it."\(^27\)

Behind the sounds of nature lies the realm of pure music—"sphere music"—which Thoreau describes through the use of a metaphor of music rising into the universe. "Some sounds seem to reverberate along the plain, and then settle to earth again like dust; such are Noise, Discord, Jargon. But such only as spring heavenward, and I may catch from steeple and hilltops in their upward course, which are the more refined parts of the former, are the true sphere music,—pure, unmixed music,—in which no wail mingles." A balloonist will rise from the world of discordant sounds "into the region of pure melody."\(^28\) The finest, purest strains of music travel farther than the coarse ones; thus, "those strains of the piano which reach me here in my attic stir me so much more than the sounds which I should hear if I were below in the parlor, because they are so much purer and diviner melody."\(^29\) This is the universal music, the realm of "sphere music" in which the earth gyrates.\(^30\)

Music is also "God's voice, the divine breath audible," and "the sound of the circulation in nature's veins."\(^31\) It is the voice of God or Spirit which
permeates nature and man, reconciling all into one whole. Therefore "is not all music a hum more or less divine?"32

Another prominent metaphor which Thoreau used was that of the telegraph harp. He was fascinated by the sounds of the wind blowing through the telegraph wires which were being erected on the railroad right-of-way near Walden Pond. This Aeolian Harp was a man-made invention that had been blessed by the Spirit. At last, "the latent music of the earth had found here a vent. Music Æolian." It is "the travelling patterer for the Universe Insurance Company." The telegraph harp can also rise into the realm of pure melody, if only occasionally. When the right conditions prevail, when "some indistinguishable zephyr blows," the harp "suddenly and unexpectedly rises into melody, as if a god had touched it." Through the harp, the Spirit touches Thoreau's soul: "When the zephyr, or west wind, sweeps the wire, I rise to the height of my being."33

But ultimately, perhaps, the universal song is the song that rises from within the soul of man, from the Spirit speaking within. "All the world goes by us and is reflected in our deeps. Such clarity! obtained by such pure means! by simple living, by honesty of purpose. We live and rejoice. I awoke into a music which no one about me heard. Whom shall I thank for it?"34 Man is moved to perceive the inaudible music of the universal Over-Soul.

There was a time when the beauty and the music were all within, and I sat and listened to my thoughts, and there was a song in them. I sat for hours on the rocks and wrestled with the melody that possessed me. I sat and listened by the hour to a positive though faint and distant music, not sung by any bird, nor vibrating any earthly harp. When you walked with a joy which knew not its origin. When you were an organ of which the world was but one poor broken pipe. . . You sat on the earth as on a raft, listening to music that was not of the earth, but which ruled and arranged it. Man should be the harp articulate.35

Thus, when Ives exclaimed "What has sound got to do with music!" he was asserting a Transcendentalist's impatience with a musician whose mind was limited by the facility of his fingers, a violinist who lacked a vision of the Divine. It was this impatience which motivated much of Ives's experimentation. In the article "Some 'Quarter-Tone' Impressions," he outlined the relationship between his concept of music and his exploration of new musical ideas:

It will probably be centuries, at least generations, before man will discover all or even most of the value in a quarter-tone extension. And when he does, nature has plenty of other things up her sleeve. And it may be longer than we think before the ear will freely translate what it hears and instinctively arouse and amplify the spiritual consciousness.

But that needn't keep anyone from trying to find out how to use a few more of the myriads of sound waves nature has put around in the
air . . . for man to catch if he can and "perchance make himself a part with nature," as Thoreau used to say.

Even in the limited and awkward way of working with quarter-tones at present, transcendent things may be felt ahead—glimpses into further fields of thought and beauty.36

For Ives music was a mystical revelation of the Over-Soul, and he saw his role as a composer as one enlarging the means by which man could express, as did Thoreau, "the melody that possessed me."37

NOTES
3 Ives, Essays, p. 84.
5 Boretz, Languages, p. 31.
6 Kampf, On Modernism, p. 319.
7 Boretz, Languages, p. 41.
8 Ibid., p. 33.
9 Ives, Essays, p. 84.
10 Charles E. Ives, Memos, ed. John Kirkpatrick (New York: Norton, 1972), p. 132. The motto on the title page of this project gives the full text of this anecdote.
11 Ives's correspondence with Furness is in the Ives Collection, Yale University.
13 Ives, Memos, p. 242.
15 Ives, Essays, pp. 75ff.
17 Ives, Essays, p. 111.
19 Ives, Essays, p. 109.
20 Ibid., p. 31 and note. This is a paraphrase from Carlyle's Sartor Resartus.
21 Ibid., pp. 41-42.
22 Ibid., p. 51.
23 Obviously the Transcendentalists' view of music is much too complex to be treated in a short article. Also, Ives draws on a wide variety of sources for his ideas, and sometimes it is difficult to trace the many allusions in the Essays. However, in this article I am trying to contrast aspects of Thoreau's view of music with a 20th-century approach in order to illustrate Ives's own concept of music.

26 Ibid., pp. 306–07.
28 Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 53, 58.
29 Ibid., vol. 3, p. 125.
30 Ibid., vol. 1, p. 35.
31 Ibid., pp. 154, 251.
34 Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 268–69.
35 Ibid., vol. 6, p. 294.
37 See note 35 above.
Robert J. Dietz—*The Operatic Style of Marc Blitzstein in the American "Agit-Prop" Era*

Ann Arbor: University Microfilms (UM order no. 70-15,591, 1970. 475 pp., University of Iowa diss.)

Edward Berlin

As part of an ongoing study of music in the United States between the World Wars, Dr. Dietz focuses in this dissertation upon the period of the Depression and on a single artistic manifestation of that era, as represented by Marc Blitzstein. The scope of the essay is exceedingly broad, encompassing social, economic, and political aspects, as well as the relevant musical and theatrical trends. This overview, an attempt to capture the very spirit of the era, is wholly appropriate, for Blitzstein was an outspoken participant in society, an artist notably conscious of his role and responsibilities.

Dr. Dietz's organization is clear and logical. As background he considers Blitzstein's early training and influences; the effect of social and economic conditions on the arts; federal support of music and theater; the influence of labor movements on theater; and the influences of Brecht, Weill, and Eisler. Following this section is an account of Blitzstein's musical and theatrical activities between 1936 and 1941 which concentrates on two stage productions, *The Cradle Will Rock* and *No for an Answer*, and a song-play for radio, *I've Got the Tune*. The final portion is devoted to an examination of the music.

The biographical outline draws upon personal papers on deposit at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, letters from Blitzstein to Dr. Dietz (1963), and published materials. It is undoubtedly the most authentic compilation of facts on the composer, and it corrects numerous errors which appear in standard reference works. However, the author sometimes fails to analyze or interpret new data he is introducing. For example, the most startling of these corrections, relegated to a footnote, is the disclosure that Blitzstein did not die in an automobile accident; rather, he was the victim of a vicious beating (p. 15, fn. 26)! But there is no further discussion or speculation on this point. What is the source of the information? Why were the newspapers misinformed? Was there an investigation? Was there any political motivation for the crime?

Of greater relevance for the present study is the examination of Blitzstein's musical training, his family background, and his moral and ethical values. As a well-rounded musician with exceptional performing abilities, he crowned his formal training, in 1926–28, by studying with both Boulanger
and Schoenberg. On his return to the United States, he was viewed as a promising young composer in the Stravinsky orbit (p. 138). That he then rejected the imposing and respected language of the avant-garde in favor of Broadway was a surprising development, but one, as the author convincingly explains, which was totally consistent with his conception of art.

Blitzstein's early life, experiences, and influences, as described by Dr. Dietz, clearly delineate the inevitability of his embrace of Marxist ideals. These ideals, however, clashed sharply with the elitist implications of his sophisticated musical style, and it was the political side of his nature which gradually became dominant. As a social visionary who would not divorce art from life, Blitzstein chose to use his music as a weapon for his ideals and to popularize his style to widen his audience. The intellectual processes which directed his musical choices are traced by Dr. Dietz through the composer's writings in such publications as Modern Music, The Musical Quarterly, New Masses, and The New York Times. At the same time the reader is made aware of the added dimension of Blitzstein as critic—a most eloquent and perceptive commentator on the then-current musical scene.

The year 1935 witnessed his active entry into "agit-prop"—agitation-propaganda—art. His first such work, "Send for the Militia," a song-skit based on a workers' insurrection in Spain in 1934, was included in Parade, a collectively written leftist-oriented revue. Significantly, in 1935 he also joined The Composers' Collective and renewed his acquaintance with Brecht and Eisler.

Surveying Blitzstein's creative activity, Dr. Dietz examines each of the works written between 1936 and 1941. The circumstances surrounding each composition and production are outlined, along with a synopsis of the text or dramatic action and a summary of the public and critical response. The Cradle Will Rock (1937) is discussed in greatest detail, for there were many extraneous events which helped to make it a spectacular success: the coincidental resemblance to a current steel dispute in which strikers were killed; its status as a production of the Federal Theater Project of the WPA and the government's attempts at censorship; the resourcefulness of director Orson Welles in leading the audience of almost 1,000 on a march up Broadway to a nongovernment theater; the union restrictions which resulted in the actors performing in the audience, and Marc Blitzstein alone providing the music from a piano on the stage.

The facts as presented are intriguing, well-researched, and documented. It is all the more curious, then, that two fairly obvious errors should appear. First, the reader is misled with the implication that Blitzstein was joined on the stage by other musicians (p. 207):

The orchestra musicians (or those who chose to participate) were not to be placed in the orchestra pit, but upon the stage, in which case they would be considered to be part of a concert. . . .
Dr. Dietz never explains that the musicians chose not to participate, the lone exception being an accordionist who joined in briefly from the audience.\(^1\) The second error concerns a misreading of the play. Dr. Dietz designates a leitmotif for occurrences of murder and in the process rewrites the text to suit his theory (p. 298):

> . . . Mr. Mister directs Dr. Specialist to tell news reporters that the murdered Joe Worker fell and was killed in the steel mill because he was intoxicated.

The text, however, states that the character was merely injured. He is referred to as “the machinist who got hurt,” and the doctor who examines him “after his injury” states, “He was obviously intoxicated” (scene 9). In addition, the injured worker’s name was Joe Hammer, not Joe Worker.

Accounts are given in less detail of Blitzstein’s incidental music for films and plays, a choral song, and a radio song-play. Most of the composer’s works were well received, and success was similarly anticipated for his second “agit-prop” opera depicting management’s abuse of workers, \textit{No for an Answer} (1941). Despite a favorable reception from critics, however, the work was a commercial failure. Dr. Dietz concludes that the public’s desire for this type of protest theater diminished as economic conditions improved and offers a parallel in the decreased circulation of such leftist publications as \textit{The Daily Worker} and \textit{New Masses} (p. 277).

As with the previous opera, the discussion of \textit{No for an Answer} is informative but also not without shortcomings, this time in the form of contradictory accounts. The reader is led to believe that Blitzstein decided to use only a piano in \textit{No for an Answer}, following the precedent accidentally established in \textit{The Cradle Will Rock}. On p. 262 Dr. Dietz states:

With Marc Blitzstein again at the piano—this time in the orchestra pit. . . .

And, on p. 269, there appears the following quotation from \textit{Opera News}:

\textit{[No for an Answer,]} played without benefit of orchestra. . . .

But then, on p. 339, one finds this unexplained statement about orchestration:

As in the two earlier “agit-prop” works, the orchestration for \textit{No for an Answer} is not a major factor in the style.

How is this contradiction to be reconciled? And why should the reader be expected to simply accept this unsupported and undiscussed opinion?

Dr. Dietz summarizes Blitzstein’s career after 1941, indicating an abandonment of the “agit-prop” approach. According to his own testimony, Blitzstein felt that the necessity for a unified war effort outweighed all other considerations, and it was for this reason that he put his “agit-prop” activities aside. It was not long before he again addressed himself to social themes, but the problems had changed, and he adjusted accordingly. This could indeed be the subject of another dissertation.

122
Up to this point, Dr. Dietz's paper is to be commended for its extensive research and its generally logical presentation of facts. Beginning with the section devoted to musical analyses, however, the value of the study decreases as the flaws become more frequent and glaring. For example, it appears that Dr. Dietz was unfamiliar with the term "segue." When finding it in a Blitzstein score, he concluded not that the composer was following a traditional musical, and especially operatic, usage but that he had been influenced by his reading of radio scripts (p. 300, fn. 7):

The term "segue," common to radio scripts, is frequently used between scenes in Blitzstein's piano-vocal scores.

This misunderstanding is not an isolated instance. Furthermore, Dr. Dietz's analyses, replete with measure-counting and lengthy descriptions of stereotyped forms, lack direction and purpose. In his musical examples he frequently fails to establish any particular point and often overlooks what is significant. He does recognize that Blitzstein, in applying himself to the vernacular, brought to it a dimension not usually found on Broadway, but Dr. Dietz does not seem to show any understanding of the nature of this unique music.

Example 1, along with Dr. Dietz's comments, illustrates the lack of correspondence between example and description (p. 333):

The chorus is heard here in the unison singing of a narrow-ranged melody which centers around c' and e' . . . .

EXAMPLE 1: No for an Answer, II 5, mm. 4–8

Clearly, it is E♭ which is a focal point in this example, and not E. Even if one assumes that the flat was omitted through a typographical error, no centricity can be attached to the ornamental C.

He proposes Mrs. Mister's "Hard Times" song in Cradle as typical of Blitzstein's subtle technique, but the example again fails to establish his point (p. 305):

The refrain is twenty-six measures long and in ternary form. The meter is primarily 4/4 with an occasional 3/2 measure to accommodate the text, and the tonality is E-flat major/minor. Once more, the over-all impression is that of a commercial popular song but Blitzstein again avoided the most obvious characteristics of that song type.

What are these "most obvious characteristics" which are avoided? To the present writer, at least, the seven measures illustrated (mm. 18–24) suggest little out of the ordinary (Ex. 2).
Rather than view the passage as a bimodal E₇, it would be more plausible to place the tonal center at D♭, interpreting the chords as: ii–V₇ of V–V₇–I. There are no meter changes shown; besides, is Dr. Dietz suggesting that a composer is so controlled by his own text that he must resort to irregular metrics to “accommodate” the words? More likely, words and music are organized to achieve a desired rhythmic effect.

On the other hand, he cites an extraordinary song (Ex. 3), but, not seeing the possibilities for discussion, he appears almost apologetic at its assumed barrenness (pp. 296–97):

The main body of the song is in strophic form, each strophe twenty-three measures long. There are no variations in the two repetitions of the original statement. Except for a slight irregularity in phrase lengths, the form and musical contents are simple and predictable. Above all there is no use of dissonance or altered tones which are not traditional . . . . Blitzstein, in his enthusiasm for a new musical ideology, had proceeded farther in the direction of traditional commercial music than his creative integrity would later allow.

One could agree that “there are no variations in the two repetitions” only if the varied piano part were discarded. But beyond that, the song is rich in unexpected turns. The “slight irregularity of phrase length” is at the very heart of Blitzstein’s ability to keep the listener off balance. What starts off as an ordinary phrase in D♭ suddenly cadences a beat too soon, and in the “wrong” key! The dissonant harmonization of “sure” in the following phrase extension is hardly a part of the “traditional” Broadway language, and the final cadence is again rhythmically misplaced, disrupting the anticipated equilibrium. Rather than being “simple and predictable,” this
song is a classic example of Blitzstein's disposition to affect a commonplace manner while achieving an uncommon result.

A consideration which should form a major part of any dramatic-musical examination, but which occurs only rarely here, is the relationship between music and drama. Interpretations of this type may be debatable but should still be ventured.

In commenting on the use of a chorale for Reverend Salvation's sermons in *Cradle*, Dr. Dietz makes some valid points: the obvious significance of a religious melody in this context and the ironic comparison between the chorale's original title, "Brunnquell aller Güter," and the Reverend's willingness to alter his morality for a price. He locates the source in the "69 Chorale Melodies" appended to collections of Bach chorales but neglects to mention that Blitzstein preserves the original bass line. But there are more serious flaws in the author's analysis and interpretation, as he tends to overlook the correlation between musical device and dramatic meaning (p. 305):
The chorale melody is in two parts, each repeated, and in E minor throughout. The first appearance of each part is accompanied by the melody and bass line, without harmonization. Each repetition is harmonized in simple chordal style.

As the description is incorrect, a valid interpretation is impossible. Actually, the repetitions are not “harmonized in simple chordal style”; every other chord change is omitted! Could it not be that Blitzstein is suggesting that there is something essential lacking in the Reverend?

In a following passage, Dr. Dietz again seems to miss the dramatic context of the musical setting. When the Reverend agrees, for a substantial contribution, to alter his previous sermon and preach on the virtues of war, we hear a variation of the first chorale (p. 306):

... Blitzstein chose to introduce a contrapuntal chorale variation as accompaniment for the Reverend Salvation’s sermon. The second part is an example of Blitzstein satirically incorporating the extreme contrapuntal dissonance of those composers whose craft he admired but whose social significance he doubted.

The author wisely avoids mentioning which of the “admired” composers is being parodied, for there is no obvious candidate. Besides, there is no reason for such a parody. More likely, as the sermon is varied, so is the music. And as Christian morality is distorted by the Reverend, the chorale, representing traditional Christian values, is similarly abused with dissonance.

It is unfortunate that Dr. Dietz’s lack of success in discussing Blitzstein’s music itself detracts from the accomplishments in the earlier parts of the paper. The gathering together of factual information, the correlation with the social, political, and economic milieu, and the presentation of Blitzstein’s critical writings give this dissertation value. It is to be hoped that, should Dr. Dietz continue to examine American music between the World Wars, he will approach the musical problems with some of the ability evidenced in his research.

NOTE

1 Marc Blitzstein Discusses His Theater Compositions, Spoken Arts 717. Dr. Dietz is aware of this recording and mentions it on p. 311, but he does not list it in his sources.

[Ed. Note: Musical examples are quoted from the dissertation of Dr. Dietz, who based them on the manuscript scores. The examples are used by permission of the executors of the Estate of Marc Blitzstein. The Cradle Will Rock copyright © 1938, 1964, and No for an Answer copyright © 1941, 1969. Edward Davis, and Josephine Davis, Executors of the Estate of Marc Blitzstein.]