

Kurt Weill Newsletter

VOLUME 31

NUMBER 2

FALL 2013

Title	Lyrics	Piano Score	Orchestration
Opening Chorus	Simplify (names etc.)	Finished except ending	same X
The Modest Goddess		Finish	finished X
How much I love you			same X (Key?)
Stranger			finished X
Vive la différence			same X
Westwind			finished X (ending)
Jersey Blues			- (Key?)
Foolish Heart	to be written	same X	same X
Dittie for opening Patio Scene	to be written	same	same



FEATURES

New Light on Weill: The David Drew Collection

Kurt Weill on Broadway

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A variety of opinions are expressed in the *Newsletter*; they do not necessarily represent the publisher's official viewpoint. Letters to the editors are welcome (newsletter@kwf.org).

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Cover photo: Background image: Chart prepared by Weill listing songs in *One Touch of Venus*; original in David Drew Collection. Foreground: Melissa Errico sings "Foolish Heart" during *Kurt Weill on Broadway* at Symphony Space, with James Holmes conducting (photo: Rahav Segev).

UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

The Firebrand of Florence

Staatsoperette Dresden
Holger Hauer, director; Andreas Schüller, conductor.
25 October – 11 May

Street Scene

Staatsoper Hannover
Bernd Mottl, director; Benjamin Reiners, conductor.
2 November – 5 February

Weill songs

“Far Away Places,” Patti LuPone, soloist.
31 January 2014, San Diego; 20 March, Las Vegas;
21 March, Scottsdale, AZ; 22 March, Costa Mesa, CA;
3–4 April, Palm Desert, CA.

The Threepenny Opera

Atlantic Theater Company, New York
Martha Clarke, director; Gary Fagin, music director.
12 March – 4 May

Symphony No. 2

New York Philharmonic
Jeffrey Kahane, conductor.
20–22, 25 March

Violin Concerto

Sinfonieorchester Aachen
Kazem Abdullah, conductor; Kolja Blacher, violin.
13–14 April

The Threepenny Opera

Signature Theatre, Virginia
Matthew Gardiner, director; Gabe Mangiante, music director.
22 April – 1 June

Weill songs

Blitzstein songs

Madison Symphony Orchestra
John DeMain, conductor; Ron Raines and Emily Birsan, soloists.
2–4 May

Symphony No. 2

Dresdner Philharmonie
Michael Sanderling, conductor.
24 May

To learn about the many other Weill performances coming up around the world, view the performance calendar at

www.kwf.org.

EDITORS' NOTE

Exactly ten years ago, the *Newsletter* posed the question, “Where did Weill cross into France when Caspar and Erika Neher helped him to flee Germany in March 1933?” We received a number of suggestions from readers, but a lack of hard evidence left the answer uncertain. Now a new source of information, an interview with the Neheres conducted in the 1950s, brings us closer to a definite answer. The transcription below provides the most complete account yet of Weill’s escape from Germany. It comes from the papers of the extraordinary Weill scholar and promoter David Drew, whose work with and for Lenya and the Kurt Weill Foundation from 1957 until his death in 2009 generated a large collection of material that now has found a home at the Foundation. See pp. 4–12 for some highlights from the David Drew Collection. Spelling and punctuation have been standardized throughout in transcriptions from Drew’s papers; minor errors have been tacitly corrected.

Kate Chisholm and Dave Stein

From George Davis’s interview notes with Caspar and Erika Neher

The opening night of *Silbersee* the S.A. walked into the theatre; Heinsheimer said, “The time is getting close.” Not into the theatre, but marching past. Sensational success. Then back to Berlin. Kurt went back to the house, just the dog and the maid there. Letters he began to discover in his mailbox: “You dirty Jew, get out of here.” By this time he was already afraid to go home alone, often spent the night with the Neheres. First flight to Munich, Kurt came back alone to Berlin, Lenya went to Vienna. Kurt had his money in Switzerland by this time. Then his advisor Steinthal told him to bring his money back to Germany because the pound was cut in half (English pound). One night Kurt came to the Neheres around 11:00 and said he had to leave. Then Kurt went to his sister. Steinthal found a little hotel where Kurt could hide after the anti-Semitic letters, where he himself lived. After the 11 at night talk, it was arranged that Kurt come to the Neheres the next morning. They left at 7 in the morning in Kurt’s Citroën, Caspar, Erika, and Kurt. Kurt was calm and cheerful about the whole thing, said that he’d undoubtedly be back in six weeks. Marburg—stayed overnight—Trier, into Luxembourg, stopped at Trier for lunch. While they were at lunch children probably drew a swastika in the dust on the car. German guard at border advised them to wipe it off. Beautiful weather, warm, lots of fun. Stayed overnight in Luxembourg, took their time. Kurt was 33 and buoyant. The flight was the day Hindenburg made Hitler chancellor. Kurt joked about Richard Strauss’s wire of congratulation to Hitler, sent before actual chancellorship official. At Easter time ate Easter eggs in Neuilly, where Neher had been stationed during the First World War. Arrived in Paris in the afternoon, stayed overnight at the Hotel Américain, then Kurt went to the Splendide. They went to a café near the Etoile-Rotonde, ran into Gide and Renoir. At that time the Neheres thought of migrating, but Kurt was against it. The Neheres stayed on about ten or fourteen days, three or four weeks for Kurt in hotel, then to Noailles. Kurt was already at work on *Seven Deadly Sins* when he telephoned Neher in Berlin to ask if he would do the décor. Neher said yes. Brecht may have come in from Vienna to work on it. Neher came alone and stayed in Paris fourteen days.

NEW LIGHT ON WEILL: The David Drew Collection

DAVID DREW described himself as “a musician and a writer about music,” and his home in London fairly burst at the seams with his life’s work. Most of his papers were acquired by the Akademie der Künste in Berlin by prior arrangement, but material created or collected in the course of his work with or for Lotte Lenya and the Kurt Weill Foundation has come to the Weill-Lenya Research Center in New York: thousands of letters, hundreds of periodicals and clippings, dozens of scores and programs, and a small but significant sampling of his books and archival sound recordings. There is a substantial amount of material from Weill’s lifetime, some of which belonged to Weill himself, but the bulk of the collection chronicles Drew’s activities on Weill’s behalf. The collection is still being processed, but we are pleased to announce the acquisition of this remarkable assemblage that will add so much to our understanding of Weill’s life, works, and reception.

For twenty years, David Drew worked closely with Lotte Lenya. The relationship began in 1956 when Drew approached Lenya and her husband, George Davis, with a proposal to write a biography of Weill, whom Drew regarded as an unjustly neglected composer snubbed by the reigning orthodoxy. Davis and Lenya at that time were researching their own biography of Weill, and more importantly, restoring his reputation by making a series of essential recordings: songs from both the German and American theater works, *Die sieben Todsünden*, *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, *Die Dreigroschenoper* (in German and English), *Der Jasager*, *Johnny Johnson*. Almost immediately, and crucially after Davis’s premature death in 1957, Drew became a partner in the larger project. When Lenya formed the Kurt Weill Foundation in 1962, he was one of the first directors; later he served both informally and formally as Lenya’s European representative of Weill’s estate.

When the Foundation took on new form and function after Lenya’s death in 1981, Drew again played important roles, first as a consultant, then a member of the International Advisory Panel and the Editorial Board of the Kurt Weill Edition, and finally as an Honorary Trustee. He continued to write, edit, and create new performing versions of Weill’s works. Until his death in 2009, Drew struggled against a largely indifferent musical establishment to put Weill in his rightful place in the pantheon of major twentieth-century composers. Drew may not have achieved all his goals, but it is impossible to imagine Weill’s present prominence without Drew’s labors over half a century. The David Drew Collection documents and demonstrates his manifold accomplishments. Voluminous correspondence and accumulations of both primary and secondary source material combine to offer a fuller picture than we have ever had of Weill, Lenya, and Drew himself, laying out the work of a single advocate on behalf of a single composer. Barring the discovery of a trove of lost Weill manuscripts, we will not see another collection of this magnitude and significance again.

The Formative Years

When David Drew began planning a critical biography of Weill in 1956, Weill had been dead a mere six years, and most of his friends and collaborators were still alive. In addition to full ac-

cess to Weill and Lenya’s papers, Drew had the opportunity to solicit recollections from dozens of Weill’s associates. Not all of them replied, or offered anything substantial, but Drew also amassed a large number of clippings, journals, letters, and programs that enrich our knowledge of Weill’s early life and work. Letters from his sister Ruth and Peter Bing, the son of his music teacher, tell us much about the teenage years. A nearly complete set of original Dessau theater guides from 1900 to 1920 will help us understand exactly what Weill might have seen and heard. The Drew Collection also provides many new documents from Weill’s early years in Berlin (1918–1924) that will allow us to reconstruct more accurately his affiliations and activities during that time. Reminiscences from such friends and fellow musicians as Maurice Abravanel, Dimitri Mitropoulos, Wladimir Boritsch, Fritz Stiedry, and Walter Kämpfer provide new information. Detailed letters from Feri Roth (of the Roth Quartet) and conductor Heinz Unger fill in important facts about early performances of Weill’s instrumental music. Drew also unearthed photocopies of two letters from Weill to the unidentified “Wally” from 1919, adding to our very small stock of early letters to non-family members.

Scores

Drew collected a number of scores and scripts that had belonged to Weill or were used in early productions of his works, including a vocal score of *The Eternal Road* in which Weill himself marked twenty-odd pages with anything from a dashed-off note to a setting of new or revised text, written in whatever space was available on the page. (This source has already made its presence felt in the concert adaptation, *Die Verheißung*, prepared last year by Ed Harsh.) Vocal scores of *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* and *Die Bürgerschaft* elucidate early productions in Berlin, including the world premiere of *Die Bürgerschaft* (1932). A score of *Mahagonny (Songspiel)* augmented by conductor Maurice Abravanel’s full scores of numbers adapted from the full-length opera has helped answer the question, “What exactly was in the so-called Paris version of *Mahagonny* staged in December 1932?” Then there are the many amended and annotated scores Drew used in preparing new editions of *Mahagonny* (opera and *Songspiel*), *Das Berliner Requiem*, Symphony no. 1 and no. 2, and performing versions of Weill works, from Gunther Schuller’s

orchestration of *Royal Palace* through Drew's work on *Propheten*, derived from Act IV of *The Eternal Road*.

Works from Weill's American career are also extensively represented among Drew's scores. He located and preserved rehearsal scores from *The Firebrand of Florence* and *Street Scene* to which Weill added new music. Substantial groups of annotated rehearsal scores from original productions of *Love Life*, *Firebrand of Florence*, and *Railroads on Parade* will document changes in these shows as they made their way to the stage. Weill's personal vocal score of *One Touch of Venus*, a bound set of copyist's vocal scores assembled after the show opened, with an added title page in the composer's hand, is another exciting find.

Our understanding of *Der Kuhhandel*, premiered in revised and translated form in 1935 as *A Kingdom for a Cow*, will be enriched by Drew's extensive assemblage of early vocal scores and notes on the state of musical manuscripts, clippings from the London press, some of Weill's own letters about the production (one of which challenges the *Times* critic to a duel), and promotional material for the Savoy Theatre. A staggering amount of material documents his efforts to revise the original operetta, in collaboration with Lenya, librettist Robert Vamberg, Dramaturg Josef Heinzelmann, and publisher Heugel. Researchers can find evidence of Drew's profound engagement with the resuscitation of many of Weill's other works, in the form of correspondence, notes, newly orchestrated numbers, and other documentary testimony.

Posthumous Reception and Promotion

Drew's pride of place in Weill studies means that the progress of his own research, and the course he took in reaching conclusions about Weill's career and impact, have provided a seedbed from which virtually all subsequent scholarship has grown. His extensive writings are still widely cited; his introductory articles on *Die Bürgschaft*, *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, and *Der Kuhhandel*, to name just three, remain essential reading. His early, negative, appraisal of Weill's American works has not held up well, but even in this case, Drew's position gave a newer generation of critics and scholars a clearly stated position to argue against. If you want to understand what led up to the burgeoning of Weill studies in recent decades, David Drew's papers are essential.

The corpus of Drew's unpublished writings on Weill has not been included in the collection. The estate has retained this material, with an eye to evaluating it and providing access to portions of it in the future. With regard to Drew's previously published scholarship on Weill, including essays, reviews, program notes, and liner notes, the Kurt Weill Foundation plans to work with Judith Drew to create an on-line archive, with the goal of making it fully accessible and searchable.

Drew, of course, was not just a scholar; he was an advocate and promoter as well. This facet of his work also makes his papers a crucial resource for studying Weill's reception history. And Drew was not merely chronicling Weill reception; he was making it happen. He altered its course fundamentally between 1960 and 1980, through prolonged and persistent campaigns to arrange performances and recordings and through discussions with directors, conductors, and performers. Drew sought nothing less than a major shift in prevailing attitudes toward Weill's oeuvre, and he largely succeeded. Numerous letters from noted

performers and critics demonstrate his impact. To select two examples: the 1971 Holland Festival and the 1975 Berliner Festwochen both focused on Weill and offered performances of little-known works, including some world premieres. It took a lot of doing: writing letters, preparing scores, appointing and working with editors and copyists, endless meetings, dickering over expenses—dealing with everything, great and small, that could go wrong.

Lenya

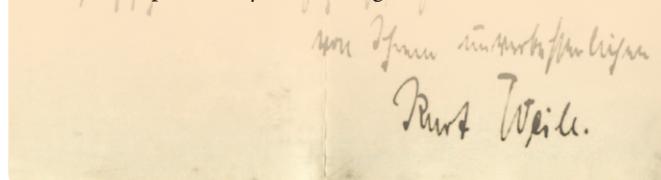
The collection preserves hundreds of Lenya's letters, written to Drew, to publishers of Weill's music, or to others. Nearly all of the letters date from the 1960s or 1970s and open a new window onto the last twenty years of Lenya's life. We can discover day-to-day details of her movements, enjoy her tart analysis of world events, or gain a fuller understanding and appreciation of her ceaseless efforts to defend her husband's work against assaults from all quarters. For twenty years, Lenya and Drew formed a team buoyed by remarkable trust and communication.



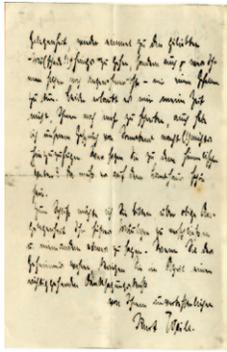
Above: Program from the first post-Nazi production of *Die Dreigroschenoper* (Berlin, 1945).

From Weill's letter to "Wally," 12 March 1919

I have a great favor to ask of you. You will no doubt have read in sundry German and foreign newspapers that a certain Miss Ruth Weill has passed her exams. I'd like to ask you, as soon as you can after receiving these lines, to take the enclosed sum, purchase some lovely flowers, wrap them up with the enclosed "billet doux," and have them sent to the Weills at Steinstrasse 11/14. . . . In closing I must ask you to seal your lovely lips about this mission and say nothing to anyone. If you guard the secret, you will get a proper kiss of thanks in April from your incorrigible Kurt Weill.



From Weill's letter to "Wally," 24 February 1919

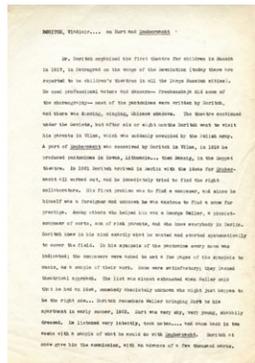


My studies are moving forward rapidly. Rehearsals of an orchestral work of mine are already underway in the Hochschule, and it's gaining widespread recognition and acclaim from all the instructors and students. You can imagine I'm very happy about that. But of course a little girl like yourself doesn't understand such things. You will be more interested to hear about my friends in the very highest places. First, Her Excellency, Madame President Ebert, was in her early years

the servant girl of a close acquaintance of mine. Second is an associate of mine, who until very recently worked as a stagehand at the theater in Weimar; now he [sic] is the cleaning lady for the National Assembly. And our chimney sweep is about to become Prime Minister of Bavaria.

From Walter Kämpfer's recollections of Weill, n.d.

From the beginning, [Weill] had a penchant for the theater; it was one of his passions. For a concert conducted by Arthur Nikisch (Schubert's Unfinished Symphony), he sat on the stage. Afterwards his face was shining, and he said it was the most marvelous concert. Normally he did not show his feelings; he was always reserved. But this concert made such an impression that he experienced it as a dramatic event. Weill knew the operatic repertoire very well... He had spent a lot of time as an accompanist and had already worked professionally as a coach.



From George Davis's interview notes with Vladimir Boritsch

In 1921 Boritsch arrived in Berlin with the ideas for *Zaubernacht* all worked out, and he immediately tried to find the right collaborators. Boritsch knew in his mind exactly what he wanted and started systematically to cover the field. In his synopsis of the pantomime every move was indicated; the composers were asked to set a few pages of the synopsis to music,

as a sample of their work. None were satisfactory; they lacked theatrical approach. The list was almost exhausted when [George] Weller said that he had an idea, somebody absolutely unknown who might just happen to be the right one. Boritsch remembers Weller bringing Kurt to his apartment in early summer, in 1922. Kurt was very shy, very young, shabbily dressed. He listened very intently, took notes, and came back in two weeks with a sample of what he would do with *Zaubernacht*. Boritsch at once gave him the commission, with an advance of a few thousand marks.

From Feri Roth's letter to Henry Schnitzler, 10 June 1955



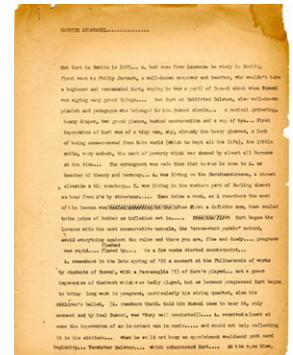
Kurt Weill came to see me in 1922 in October the first time... He was entirely unknown, a student in composition of Ferruccio Busoni. Slight, short, pale, already balding. The score that he brought and I have kept for studying it, was his Streichquartett Op. 8. He came to see me quite often from this time on, and I told him how very much impressed I am with his composition and that I would like to perform it with my Quartet... The

first performance has taken place in Busoni's composition class, in Busoni's Victoria Luise Platz apartment, in November 1923, Busoni who knew the piece (naturally) liked it very much...

The first public performance took place in Berlin in January 1923, Bechstein Saal, in one of the concerts of a series presented there by the music society "MELOS" of which Philipp Jarnach was president and was one of the outstanding modern music organizations (publishing a magazine by the same name) of Berlin. (After the performance we sat together with Kurt and his father, to whom the work is dedicated, in a restaurant am Potsdamer Platz.) In the same program we have played an American composer Otto Luening for the first time in Berlin.

From George Davis's interview notes with Maurice Abravanel

Met Kurt in 1922 at Gottfried Galston's, also well-known pianist and pedagogue who belonged to the Busoni circle—a musical gathering, heavy drapes, two grand pianos, hushed conversation and a cup of tea. First impression of Kurt was of a tiny man, shy, already the heavy glasses, a look of being once-removed from this world (which he kept all his life), the little smile, very modest, the mark of poverty which was shared by almost all Germans at the time. The arrangement was made that [Kurt] was to come to Abravanel as a teacher of theory and harmony. [He] came twice a week, as A. remembers the cost of the lesson was first a definite sum, then scaled to the price of butter as inflation set in. Kurt began the lessons with the most conservative manuals, the "crossword puzzle" method, avoid everything against the rules and there you are, fine and dandy. Progress was rapid—flashed by—in a few weeks started counterpoint. As lessons progressed Kurt began to bring along work in progress, particularly his string quartet, also his children's ballet [*Zaubernacht*]. (A. remembers that Kurt told him Busoni came to hear it, only comment and typical Busoni, was "Very well conducted.") A. received almost at once the impression of an important man in music and could not help reflecting it in his attitude. When he could not keep an appointment would send postcard beginning "Verehrter Meister," which embarrassed Kurt.



From Heinz Unger's letter to David Drew, 17 February 1963

Yes, I have known Kurt Weill in those early days. We both belonged to the circle around Busoni. Whether I met him first at Busoni's house or through another Busoni pupil (Wladimir Vogel), or whether Weill came first to me under the impression of one of my Mahler performances, I do not remember. He came frequently to our house, and I had a great personal liking for him. He impressed me as a genuine and very serious musician, struggling hard for self-expression in music. His human warmth and frankness made him always welcome company ... There was not the slightest hint in those days that Weill was destined to become a Broadway celebrity one day. I was always waiting for something substantial from him in the symphonic field ... I think the 'Beggars Opera' meant the parting of the ways with many of his old friends. There was no quarrel. I wished him well, but his development took him into a direction in which my musical convictions did not allow me to follow.



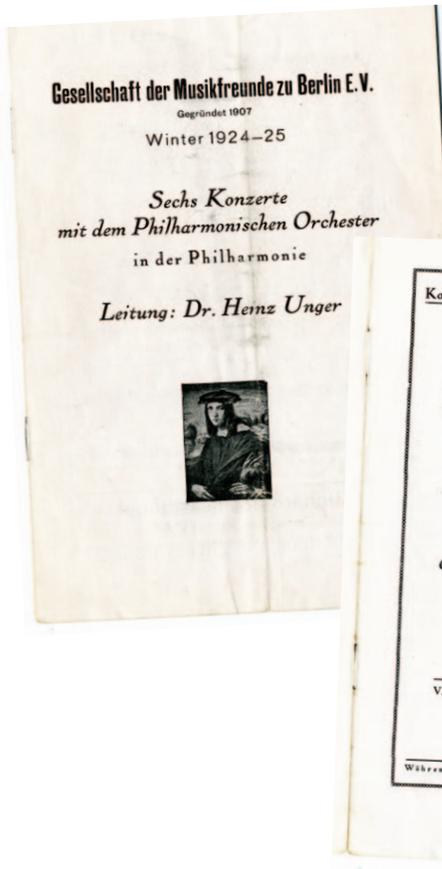
The program for a concert of "Stundenbuch," conducted by Heinz Unger, 22 January 1925, with Weill's program bio, written by Hugo Leichtentritt (translated)

Kurt Weill: Six Songs for baritone and orchestra, op. 13

The name of Kurt Weill has become known in wider musical circles for the first time since his song cycle *Frauentanz* was performed to great acclaim at the International Association for

New Music festival in Salzburg in 1924. Kurt Weill comes from Dessau. At eighteen he came to Berlin to study at the Hochschule der Musik. Over the next two years he gained hands-on experience as a theater conductor. He was a member of Busoni's master class from 1921 to 1923. Among his compositions: music for a pantomime performed at the Theater am Kurfürstendamm [*Zaubernacht*]; Fantasia, Pas-sacaglia and Hymnus performed at the Berlin Philharmonic, 1923; and a string quartet performed in Berlin, London, and Paris by the Roth Quartet. *Frauentanz* has also been given at the Musical Revue concerts in Paris. In addition, he has composed a choral work on a Latin text, *Recordare*, and a Concerto for violin and wind orchestra. Currently he is working on an opera with a libretto by Georg Kaiser.

The *Sechs Gesänge*, op. 13, performed today is a setting of six poems from Rilke's *Stundenbuch*.



Postcard mailed the day after the premiere of *Mahagonny* (*Songspiel*) to Frau L. Bohne (?) in (Bad) Harzburg. The text reads, "Six German citizens are sitting together and send greetings." It is signed by Margarethe Kaiser, Lenya, and Weill (with an unidentified musical phrase), and a likewise unidentified Ursula.



From George Davis's interview notes with Caspar and Erika Neher

Bürgerschaft: It was Kurt who came to Neher with Herder's fable. Kurt said he was tired of only writing songs and wanted to do something with big choruses, on a grand scale, was afraid of becoming a songwriter. Kurt had talked to Klemperer, and Neher remembers Klemperer as being very helpful. Neher had never written but they had had long talks. Kurt came practically every day, worked almost a year. Kurt had a very definite conception of what he wanted musically: a big chorus here, a little chorus there. *Bürgerschaft* represents a picture of the German social setup of the time: the inflation, Black Friday, the value of money set against the story of two friends. Wrote one scene; Kurt set it to music right away. To [work out] a skeleton of a story, long talks at Café Wien, then went home and wrote. Was planned for Klemperer. The Krolloper went into bankruptcy and was taken over by Intendant Tietjen, Klemperer was fired, no bankruptcy. Ebert was with the Charlottenburg Opera, had done *Macbeth* and *Masked Ball*, Ebert said *Bürgerschaft* would be a perfect third opera. Talked about casting with Ebert, preliminaries were over; then the Neher and Weills decided to take a trip to Spain. Kurt bought a new car, a Buick, drove through France to Marseilles, through Perpignan to Barcelona. Hotel in Alberga, Hotel Sol, seven pesetas, thought it was for room, turned out to be for three days' meals and room. In Barcelona they found turned-over streetcars and burnt-out churches; coming into the country everything searched. Went to Prado, saw a bullfight. Were in Spain about a month. In Spain changed last act of *Bürgerschaft*, eliminated a few characters because of casting problems. Only two heroes and chorus remained at end. Then drove back through Paris to Holland, and from Holland to Berlin in one day. Had to come back from Spain because they had to prepare film of *Dreigroschenoper*. Neher didn't do sets but did costumes for the film. Movie people wanted to do it in style of Hogarth but Brecht and Weill were against it because of Gay opera. Then first rehearsals of *Bürgerschaft* (after lawsuit on film). About this time repercussions from the American crash: all the big-time speculators had money involved. All this affected Berlin theatre—money withdrawn from private theatres. While film was being made so many stage actors came to Kurt looking for work. Ordinarily *Bürgerschaft* would have been done in thirty or forty opera houses, but [because of] the situation actually was done in four houses. Incident of Lenya at intermission hearing men talk: Men don't change; it's circumstances that change their behavior. All this time the Neher's lived on the Schlangerbaderstrasse 90.

Terrible unemployment crisis. Went to Hamburg, saw people lying on the hills. Kurt was determined to write something that would reflect all this; interesting that with *Silbersee* again Kurt had to reflect his time, could never relax, a child of his time. Not like Piscator, for example, just using current events. Kurt always tried to give it parable form, to get at some essence, an authentic art form. Told Erika he was glad to live in a time when he could watch events, be part of them.

From George Davis's interview notes with Fritz Stiedry

Stiedry talked about the river scene in *Bürgerschaft*. At one of the last rehearsals they asked friends to write down what they liked and disliked. Some of them liked this scene, that scene, but everyone seemed dissatisfied with the river scene. That night Stiedry, Neher, Kurt, Ebert sat up in the theatre trying to find a solution for the river scene, drinking coffee, falling into naps. Nothing seemed to work, and they staggered home. The night of the opening, they came to the theatre at six o'clock. Suddenly Ebert had the idea of lowering different veils that kept shifting during the scene. The two friends meeting in the fog, the one calling, "Where are you...?" The scene was a tremendous success, one of the most memorable in modern opera, with the chorus chanting the scientific formula in nature for fog. Erica Stiedry told us that for years in Germany that became a slogan for certain situations:

"That's how fog is made." Meaning of course that that's how people get away with murder, etc.

Left: From p. 103 of Stiedry's score to *Die Bürgerschaft*. Neher's text, sung by the basses of the chorus, reads, "Water vapor in the air condenses. That's how fog develops."

Below: Program from the premiere (Berlin, 1932).



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 ELECTROLA GESELLSCHAFT M. B. H., Berlin W 8, Leipziger Str. 23, W 15, Kurfürstendamm 33

Johann Mattes, Viehhändler in Urb	Hans Reimann	Charlotte Müller	Eine Altstimme	Ruth Berglund
Anna, seine Frau	Charlotte Müller	Irene Eisinger	Ein Mann	Thorild Novei
Laise, seine Tochter	Paul Fieber	Wilhelm Rode	Ein anderer Mann	Carl Jaeger
David Orth, Getreidehändler in Urb	Rigm Falen	Joseph Burgwinkel	Volk, Soldaten	
Jakob, sein Sohn	Josef Burgwinkel	Herk Noort	Ort: Das Land Urb	
Der Richter von Urb	Werner Schupp	Wilhelm Sporing		
Ellis, der Kommissar der großen Mühle	Hans Leyenbocker			
Sein Adjutant				
Gilblügger				
Wegelager				
Die drei Eppesner				
Häcker				
Agenten				
Der Schreiber des Richters				
Der Mann, der seinen Acker verkaufen will				
Ein Assistent				

G. BARGENDE
 TEPPICHE
 LINOLEUM
 Klebe- und Tapetenarbeiten
 Charlottenburg 5, Kottbusser Platz 3 und Wilmersdorf, H. C. Wilmersdorf 104

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 Bismarckstraße 109 am Schiller-Theater
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 Theateroperas RM 2,- und 2,50
 Portion Mokka m. Schlagastne RM 0,70

DAS SCHÖNSTE KAFFEE-RESTAURANT
 Charlottenburgs, Konzert-erster-Künstler

FÜR PHOTO
 NUR GRASS & WORFF
 Markgrafstr. 18, Ecke Kottbus.

Wochenplan:
 Sonntag, 11. März, 20 (8) Uhr, Tarnus 11.
 Montag, 12. März, 20 (8) Uhr, Tarnus 11.
 Dienstag, 13. März, 20 (8) Uhr, Tarnus 11.
 Mittwoch, 14. März, 20 (8) Uhr, Tarnus 11.
 Donnerstag, 15. März, 20 (8) Uhr, Tarnus 11.
 Freitag, 16. März, 20 (8) Uhr, Tarnus 11.
 Samstag, 17. März, 20 (8) Uhr, Tarnus 11.

An der Kassengehäufe Eintrittskarten werden nur im Falle der Absendung einer Vorstellung bis zu deren Beginn gegen Erstattung zurückgenommen. Anderenfalls ist der nachträgliche Rücktritt auf dem Namen der Käuferin oder Einkäuferin über die Eintrittskarten - Die Tageskassen sind geöffnet von 10-2 Uhr vormittags und eine Stunde vor Beginn der Vorstellung. - Die Sonntagskasse ist wochentags geöffnet von 10-2 Uhr vormittags und abends von 6-8 Uhr.

SAXOPHONES and TUNES in this Operetta

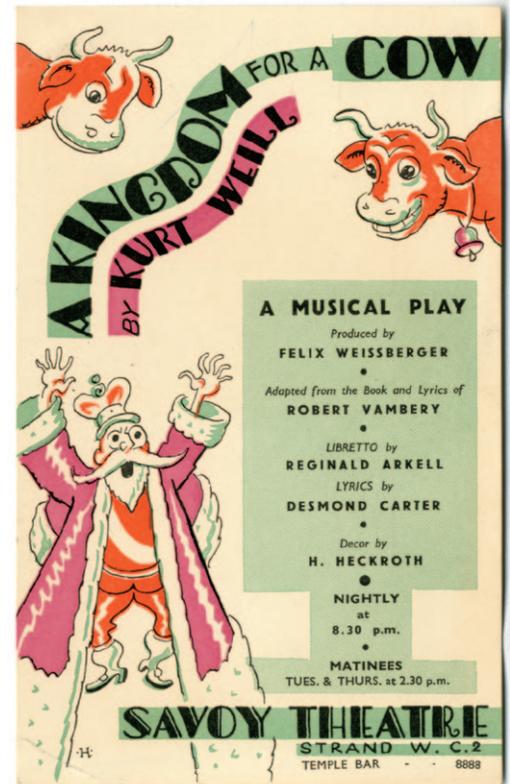


Weill, quoted in Stephen Williams, "Saxophones and Tunes in this Operetta," *The Evening Standard*, 27 June 1935

"In this operetta [*A Kingdom for a Cow*] I try, as far as possible, to build up the music out of the stage action. In my mind always is the divine and eternal model of such writing—the finale of the second act of *Figaro*. There the music is a perfect symphonic whole, yet every bar is dictated by the events on the stage." ...

"Compared with the operetta, [*The Eternal Road*] is, of course, what you would call 'serious' music," he said. "But don't let us draw too rigid a distinction between 'serious' music and 'light' music. Music is not necessarily good because it is solemn. Take *Figaro* again: it is nearly all 'light' music, yet who would say that it will not last forever?—or, at least, as long as *Tristan*, which is 'serious.'

"My music is always melodious. I believe melody is essential to music. Composers of to-day have abandoned melody, yet what have they given us in its place? They have evolved a new and wonderful musical language, but they have found very few important things to say in it."



Publicity postcard for premiere of *A Kingdom for a Cow* (London, 1935)



Left: From the *Times* of London review of *A Kingdom for a Cow*, 29 June 1935

Letter from Weill to the Editor of the *Times* of London, 1 July 1935, in response to the review

Sir,

Your critic in his account of the first performance of my operetta, *A Kingdom for a Cow* at the Savoy Theatre, writes in your issue on Saturday last that my music would be the German authorities' most valid justification for my recent departure from Germany.

To use this catastrophe in my life for a feeble joke is an exhibition of vile taste and I find consolation in the fact that most of his remarks about my music reveal the same poverty of intellect.

Your nameless scribe should, however, know that my departure from my native land on the advent of the Third Reich was entirely voluntary on my part and was dictated only by the fact that my love for freedom of thought and democracy was dearer to me than anything the new regime had to offer me.

Your critic may have heard of many others in a position similar to my own who share this view.

It is far from my thoughts not to give the critic the right to criticize—even in the most definite form he likes—but for the critic to use his privileged status to indulge in personal abuse is a flagrant violation of good manners which I cannot believe a newspaper of the standard of *The Times* will allow.

If, however, you will disclose to me privately the identity of your anonymous contributor, I shall be happy to invite him to *[letter continued on a second page, below]*

The political satire is the best part of this "musical play," which hovers uneasily between comic opera, musical comedy with the inevitable shuffling of the whole company in ungainly mass movements, and extravaganza. Kurt Weill's music is less morbid than *Anna-Anna* and is satiric like the *Dreigroschen Oper*, but, as in those works which are all we have had of his music here, it leaves an unpleasant taste behind, for there is no salt in the satire. The canonic trio in lullaby rhythm sung by the three politicians of Santa Maria was certainly satirical and amusing, but the duet "Good-bye, my Love" of Juanita and Juan was slush—though it is certainly a matter of some difficulty to tell when sentimental music is satirizing itself and when it is being itself. Weill writes a particularly nauseous form of jazz with every beat of a bar of common time regularly made into a strong beat, and his waltzes are more sympy than the old-fashioned kind. It is not stated whether his recent departure from Germany was occasioned by his partiality for politically tendentious satirical texts like this one or for the kind of music he writes, but the music would be the German authorities' most valid justification.

Brance, where I now live and where I can demand from him personal satisfaction to which I am entitled for his vulgar affront.

Faithfully yours,
Kurt Weill

Below and bottom right: Three pages from a prospectus on *The Eternal Road* given to potential investors in 1936. The two pages below present "appraisals" from well-known figures, including Einstein. The page at right begins a breakdown of the weekly budget.

IV.

A FEW APPRAISALS OF "THE ETERNAL ROAD".

(1) STEFAN ZWEIG: "I read Werfel's play in manuscript form. I regard it as one of the most important works of our day. In my opinion, it surpasses in dramatic power, his 'FORTY DAYS OF MUSA DAGH', which is undoubtedly the most monumental thing he has done."

(2) PROFESSOR ALBERT EINSTEIN: "I have read the play with the greatest of interest and with genuine admiration for the remarkable genius of the author. I am convinced that this play will exert an extraordinary influence on all those who witness its majestic tragedy. I am delighted that this production is in the capable hands of the greatest living director—Max Reinhardt."

(3) LORD MELCHETT: "In my opinion, it is one of the most amazing pieces of work I have read both musically and textually. I am looking forward with much pleasurable anticipation to attending the premiere in New York."

(4) DR. JOHN ERSKINE: "I have read the Werfel play with the greatest interest. It seems to me narrative, lyrical and dramatic. It undoubtedly offers large opportunities for pageantry and stage craft."

6

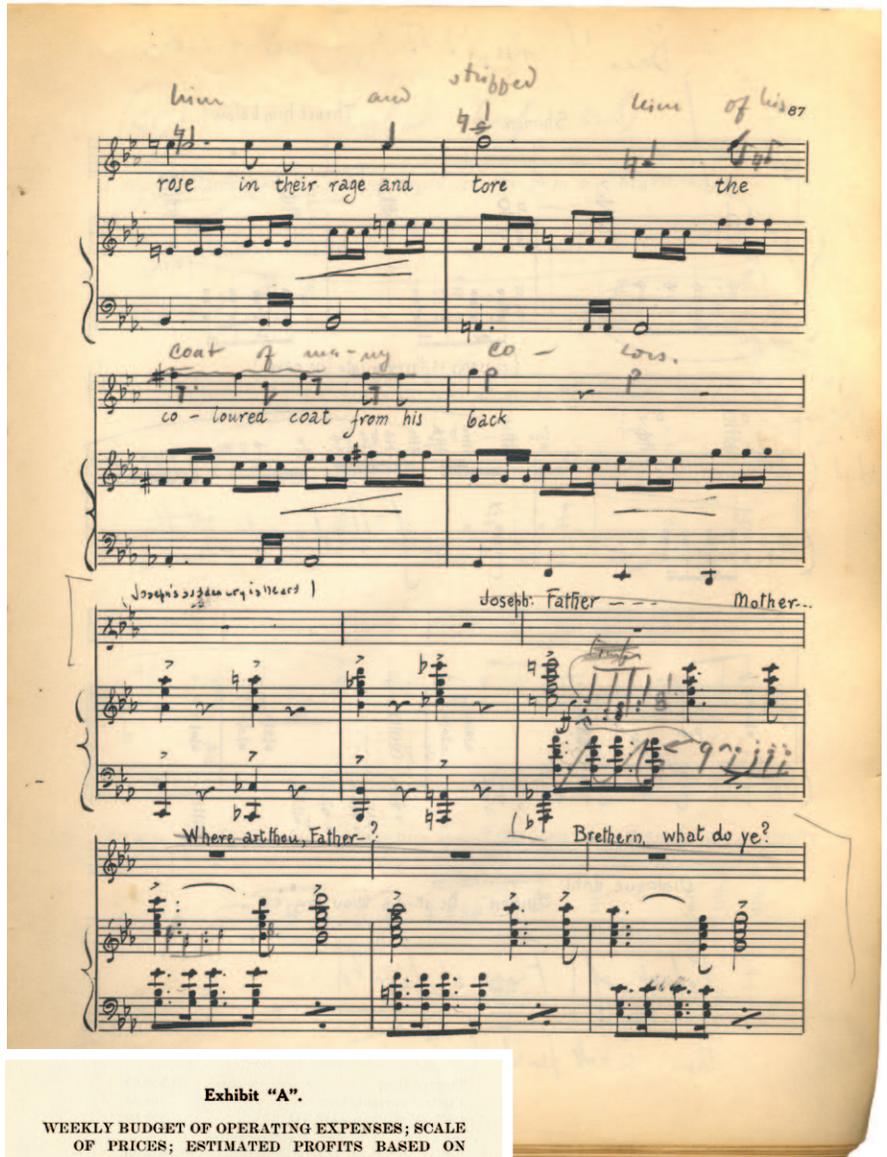
(5) LUDWIG LEWISOHN: "For many reasons I had determined to translate no more. Nothing less than the quality of Werfel's 'THE ETERNAL ROAD' could have made me break this determination."

(6) NORMAN BEL GEDDES: "It is an amazing piece of work, and certainly the most elaborate dramatic concept I ever read. Under the hand of Reinhardt it should be a tremendous success. If I did not believe that together we could surpass on this production what we did together on 'THE MIRACLE', I would not go into it."

These are only a few of the tributes which are almost universally applied to "THE ETERNAL ROAD" by those who have read it. It is significant that the statements not only appraise the majesty of the art, but also reflect the sheer dramatic and emotional force which would project itself to an audience and assure the play's commercial success.

In the light of the praise which has been heaped upon "THE ETERNAL ROAD" in its mere script form, it becomes possible to understand the rapturous enthusiasm of those who have seen the play come to life under Reinhardt's direction during rehearsals,—have viewed the models of the extraordinary stage sets designed by Norman Bel Geddes,—and have heard what is generally acclaimed to be Kurt Weill's greatest music.

Such a combination of extraordinary and unique talents has never before been marshalled for one production, and the grandeur of the musical extravaganza, together with the piety and intensity of the play, lends credence to the statement of such a conservative producer as Crosby Gaige, when he says: "THE ETERNAL ROAD" is in my opinion the greatest production ever attempted in the history of the theatre."



Above: Page 87 of Weill's vocal score of *The Eternal Road* shows a text change probably made during rehearsals in 1936. Weill altered the music to match the new text and made further alterations in the third and fourth systems.

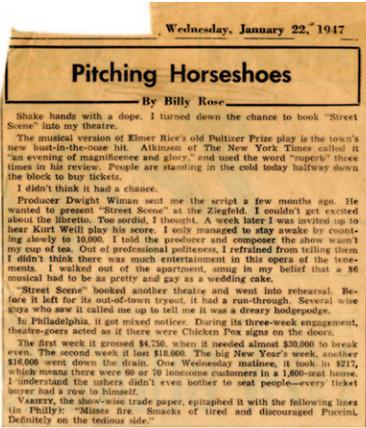
Exhibit "A".

WEEKLY BUDGET OF OPERATING EXPENSES; SCALE OF PRICES; ESTIMATED PROFITS BASED ON VARYING PERCENTAGES OF CAPACITY.

1. WEEKLY BUDGET OF OPERATING EXPENSES.

<i>Cast</i>			
Principals, 60		\$6,345.00	
Dancers, 32 @ \$30.00	\$960.00		
2 Premieres	300.00	1,260.00	
Supers, 100 @ \$15.00		1,500.00	9,105.00
<i>Other Salaries</i>			
Music		\$850.00	
Conductors		325.00	
Sound Men		200.00	
Stage Manager and Assistants		300.00	
<i>Stage Crew</i>			
44 Men @ \$62.50	\$2,750.00		
3 Heads @ \$75.00	225.00		
3 Road Crew @ \$150.00	450.00		
Technical Director	150.00	3,575.00	
Wardrobe Department		500.00	
Make-up Men and Supplies		500.00	
Theatre Maintenance, including ushers, guards, ticket men, tickets, cleaners, etc.		1,200.00	7,450.00
<i>Expenses</i>			
Royalties* (Reinhardt, Werfel, Weill, Geddes) and producers' salaries, approximately		\$5,000.00	

* Note: These royalties are computed on the original contract basis. As stated in the memorandum, negotiations are being conducted to reduce this amount.



From Billy Rose's account of how he failed to produce *Street Scene*, published in *Variety*, 22 January 1947

Shake hands with a dope. I turned down a chance to book *Street Scene* into my theatre.

The musical version of Elmer Rice's old Pulitzer Prize play is the town's new bust-in-the-nose hit. Atkinson of the *New York Times* called it "an evening of magnificence and glory," and used the word "superb" three times in his review. People are standing in the cold today halfway down the block to buy tickets.

I didn't think it had a chance....

I got the word-of-mouth on it from three of the smartest cookies in the theatre, who caught it

[at the tryout] in Philly. Each of these sure-footed old-timers is a Pulitzer Prize playwright. I give you their comments:

Pulitzer Prophet No. 1: "Sick-making"

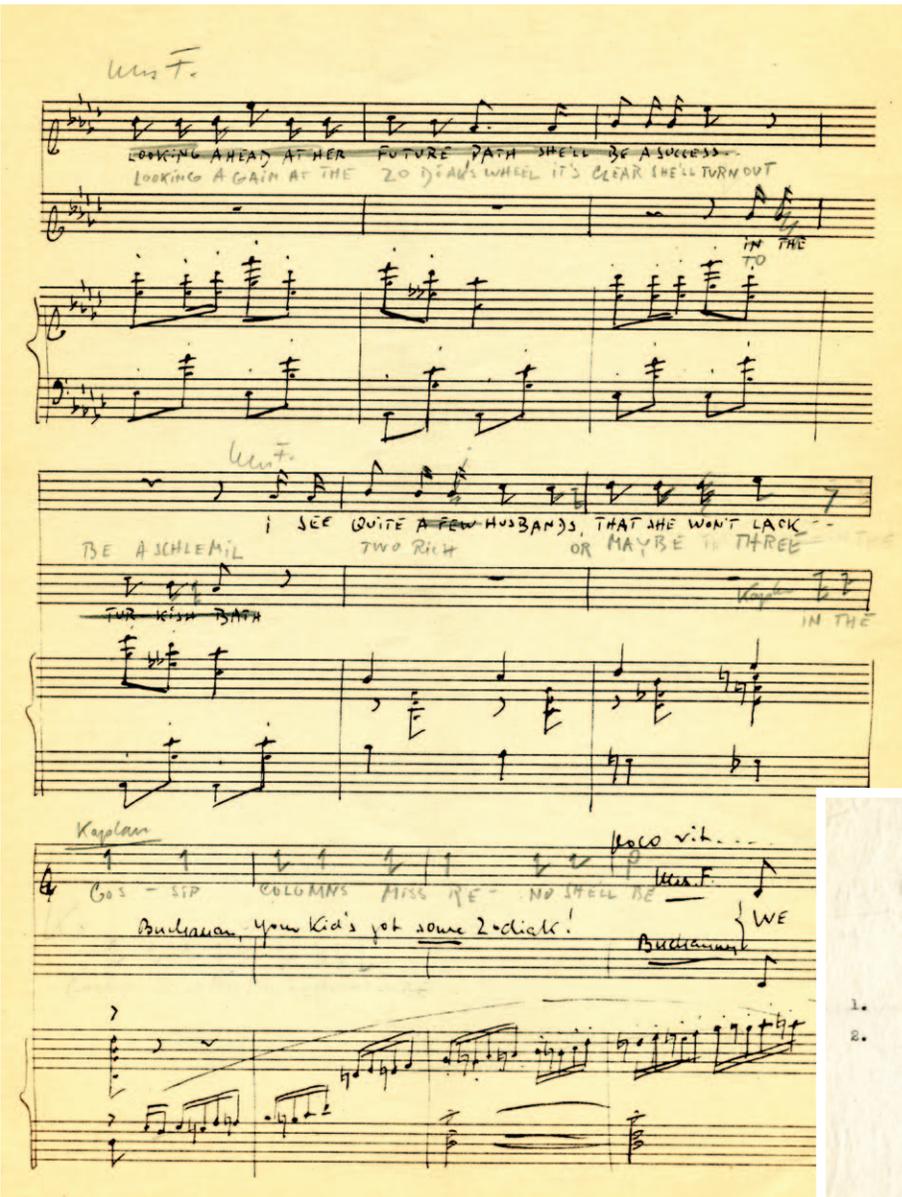
P.P. No. 2: "Don't ask."

P.P. No. 3: "Unfit for human consumption." ...

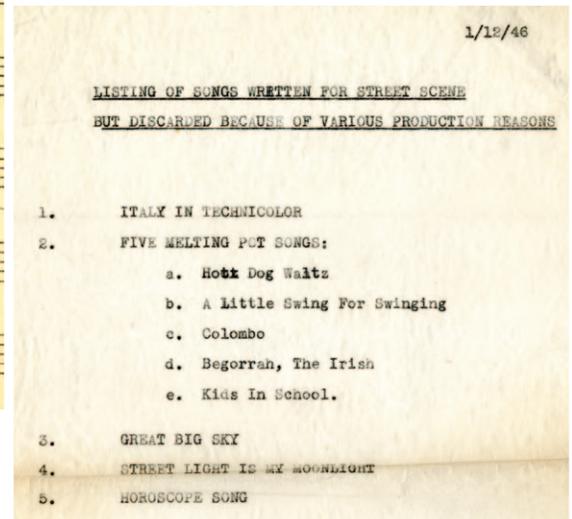
And then [on opening night] the curtain went up.

Within ten minutes the Broadway wolfpack sensed it was in at the birth of something special. They were looking at a world of trapped and hungry people, people who reached out for something pretty and got their fingers stepped on. Kurt Weill's music and Langston Hughes's lyrics told their stories with a kind of wistful passion. A stageful of nobody-I-ever-heard-of sang better than any cast around here in twenty years. Charlie Friedman's direction, Jo Mielziner's set—only wonderful! It was one of those rare nights when a show catches lightning in a barrel. The applause was like a 21-gun salute going off in a phone booth.

When the final curtain dropped on a scene of murder and despair, I found myself weeping—and I don't weep easy.



Left: A photostated page with Weill's changes in pencil from a rehearsal score of "The Horoscope Song" from *Street Scene*. The song was performed during the tryout under the title "She's a Gemini Girl" but was cut before the Broadway opening.



Right: A list of songs cut from *Street Scene* before the Broadway opening. The date apparently was mistyped and should have read "1/12/47," a few days after the show opened.

KURT WEILL ON BROADWAY

Symphony Space, New York

7 October 2013

by Peter Filichia

You know the way you feel when there is autumn in the air? Fifteen days into fall, 700-plus theatergoers felt even better. On 7 October 2013 at Symphony Space, they attended a concert of songs titled *Kurt Weill on Broadway*. The date was not arbitrarily chosen. The 7th marked the 70th anniversary of the premiere of *One Touch of Venus*, Weill's longest-running Broadway musical. When host Ted Chapin mentioned that Weill had collaborated with wordsmiths S.J. Perelman and Ogden Nash, few expressed surprise. But they oohed after Chapin revealed that director Elia Kazan, whom they associate with *Death of a Salesman* and *A Streetcar Named Desire*, staged *Venus*, too.

Conductor Ransom Wilson began the night by leading his ensemble, "Le Train Bleu," in *Venus*'s exciting "Entr'acte." As the music played, a brief film from the original production—augmented with still photos—showed Mary Martin, the original *Venus*, come alive. She was thrilling, whether alone onstage or surrounded by sixty people. Did Oscar Hammerstein first get the idea of calling Maria von Trapp "a whirling dervish" as a result of seeing Martin's *Venus* spin around with such dexterity? The star also showed her elegance by discarding a cloak, arching her shoulders back, and becoming the goddess with whom barber Rodney Hatch fell in love.

Film brought to life that famous photograph of Martin simply sitting in a chair while delivering "That's Him." The kindest cut of all, however, was a photo from rehearsals in which Martin sat atop a piano that Weill himself was playing. Film and slides would not provide the only memories. Later in the evening, Chapin pointed to a seat on the left side of the house and introduced Sono Osato. She was a true touch of *Venus* who needed no prompting about the significance of the date; she was the show's "premiere danseuse" in 1943. Although Osato did not stand—she



Melissa Errico and Brent Barrett sing "Speak Low."

PHOTO: RAHAY SEGEV

recently passed her 94th birthday—she undoubtedly appreciated the warm applause that greeted her.

The event also celebrated JAY Records' release of the long-aborning two-disc set of *Venus*—the first complete recording. Only the downloadable version from iTunes was available; those who preferred CDs in jewel boxes with liner notes would have to wait. Attendees enjoyed a substantial taste of the album, for the conductor and three of its singers were on hand: Melissa Errico (*Venus*), Brent Barrett (Rodney) and Ron Raines (Whitelaw Savory). Conductor James Holmes served as the evening's music director and led all the vocal numbers.

Errico punctuated both "I'm a Stranger Here Myself" and "Foolish Heart" with an "I-can-still-do-it" smile. Indeed, Errico seemed no older than she was in 1996 when she played *Venus* at *Encores!*. "And after three kids," she muttered. When singing "That's Him," she proved she was still in shape by climbing onto the piano and recreating one of her 1996 poses. A striking fact: Errico won the 1995-96 Lucille Lortel Award for her *Venus*. That series, now in its twentieth year, has offered 60 productions, and yet Errico remains the only *Encores!* performer ever to have been so honored.

Barrett performed "How Much I Love You." If the audience hadn't known that *Venus* was produced during wartime, it would have figured it out from one of Nash's most piquant lyrics, "[More than] the Axis hates the United States," which Barrett delivered with a knowing look. Ron Raines's mellifluous baritone was not the only attraction of "Westwind"; Chapin reminded us before he began that Weill wrote his own orchestrations, and we were thoroughly grateful for those glorious strings. Just as artful was Weill's use of a sailor's chanty and "Pop Goes the Weasel" to comment on Nash's lyrics in "Way Out West in Jersey." Weill, Chapin said, was applying for citizenship at the time; his apt use of these all-American ditties was proof enough that he belonged here.

Prizewinners from recent Lotte Lenya Competitions made an excellent impression. Maren Weinberger and Analisa Leaming joined Judy Blazer to do some close harmony on the title song.



Maren Weinberger, Jacob Keith Watson, and Analisa Leaming sing "Way Out West in Jersey."

PHOTO: RAHAY SEGEV

Not only did Richard Todd Adams, Cooper Grodin, Zachary James and Jacob Keith Watson sing “The Trouble with Women,” but Holmes also joined in, undoubtedly moved by the music rather than the song’s message. Next, Holmes couldn’t stop turning towards the audience to watch Blazer put across “Very, Very, Very” with a smile that suggested he wanted to enjoy her performance as much as we did. The first half concluded with Errico and Barrett singing that most beguiling of beguines, “Speak Low.” They followed it with a kiss that rivaled the one that Cary Grant and Ingrid Bergman shared for 150 seconds in *Notorious*.

Act Two began with selections from *Lady in the Dark*. Because the groundbreaking show alternated straight-play scenes with through-composed dream sequences, Chapin wittily called it “a play with musicals.” Wilson conducted the show’s stirring “Entr’acte”; the boogie-woogie take on “Saga of Jenny” drew some gurgles of surprise. Holmes then returned to the podium as Adams, Grodin, James, and Watson sang “Oh, Fabulous One” to Errico, and she showed she deserved it by replying with “One Life to Live.” (Does any Weill song better demonstrate that the master could write a true A-A-B-A show tune?) She clearly enjoyed vamping the lads and even offered a tad of soft-shoe. Douglas Carpenter, the latest Lenya Competition winner, hauntingly delivered “This Is New.”

On to *Love Life*, which also opened on 7 October, albeit in 1948. When Chapin called the concept musical that Weill wrote with Alan Jay Lerner “unjustly overlooked,” he received applause. Many were all set to celebrate the 65th anniversary.

“I Remember It Well” was a revelation for those who know only the version set by Frederick Loewe for *Gigi*. Hearing Weill’s less sentimental melody with similar but not identical lyrics was an unexpected treat—especially when Blazer drolly corrected Raines’s every turn of phrase. Blazer was so lovely on “Mr. Right” that even the lyric’s (deliberate) grammatical error—“I’ll be part of he”—wouldn’t have offended an English professor.

Chapin stated that *Street Scene* was a genuine opera, but Barrett delivered a pop song as the first selection, “Wouldn’t You Like to Be on Broadway?” After that, though, the arias came out: Leaming’s “What Good Would the Moon Be?” and Watson’s “Lonely House.” Chapin quipped justly, “Not bad, these winners.” As if to second that motion, Justin Hopkins followed with the stirring title song from *Lost in the Stars*, and Grodin and James duetted on “Army Song” from *The Threepenny Opera*, produced on Broadway no fewer than four times.

Errico, dressed in a striking red and black outfit, wowed in the lone selection from *Happy End*, “Surabaya Johnny.” Although October was upon us, Raines proved it’s never too late to hear “September Song.” Throughout the entire evening, Richard Jay-Alexander’s taut direction prevented even a single misstep.

At the end, a clip from a 1949 television broadcast showed Weill accompanying Martha Wright and Lanny Ross on *Love Life*’s “Here I’ll Stay,” which the cast reprised after its bows. Many of us indeed wanted to stay, even until 8 or 9 October.

Peter Filichia is the critic emeritus for the Newark Star-Ledger way out west in Jersey.



PHOTO: RAHAV SEGEV



PHOTO: RAHAV SEGEV



PHOTO: RAHAV SEGEV



PHOTO: JOSEPH MARZULLO/PLAYBILL

Clockwise, from top: Cooper Grodin, Richard Todd Adams, Jacob Keith Watson, and Zachary James perform “Oh, Fabulous One”; Ron Raines sings “September Song”; Melissa Errico poses in her “Surabaya Johnny” costume; Judy Blazer delivers “Mr. Right.”



PHOTO: JOSEPH MARZULLO/PLAYBILL

Lenya Competition winners with Ted Chapin and James Holmes (who have each judged the Lenya Competition multiple times) after the show. L to R: Cooper Grodin, Ted Chapin, Justin Hopkins, Maren Weinberger, Zachary James, Richard Todd Adams, Jacob Keith Watson, James Holmes, Analisa Leaming, and Douglas Carpenter.