BACCHANALIA, BERLIN-STYLE: Paul Ackermann (Elliot Palay) condemns commercialism in Joachim Herz’s Komische Oper production of Mahagonny. The production premiered in Munich this summer.

Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny
Münchner Staatsoper am Gärtenplatz
Premiere: 27 July 1984

Since 1967, Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny has been a trademark of Joachim Herz, the famous East German stage director. This summer, Munich’s State Theater on the Gärtenplatz imported much of Herz’s successful East Berlin mise-en-scene, added its own jubilantly celebrated resources, and arrived at a production which was nothing if not colorful and lively.

However, Herz pinned his direction on a problematic concept. In Mahagonny, the desire for happiness and freedom is manipulated toward blind consumer gratification, a highly emotional issue which Herz did not confront but obscured in a haphazard collection of symbolic images which defined consumerism neither culturally nor historically. Be it Coca-Cola bottle, dirndls and lederhosen, an oversized Coke bottle, dirndls and lederhosen, an emotional issue which Herz did not confront but obscured in all bad taste as reflected in all bad times.

Instead of emphasizing the original themes of the work, Herz attempted to use the city of nets as a symbol of the Weimar Republic and the opera as a denunciation of fascism: for example, in the Finale, Herz’s most impressive scene, the stage is finally stripped bare of the cluttering scenery and protesters enter. Their posters display the words FÜR (“for”) and PRO (“for”); as the protesters merge into one large and menacing group, the FÜR posters disappear and the united mass gathers behind one large FÜR which develops into an oversized FÜHR (“lead”—a reference to “Der Führer”). Herz explained his concept in the program:

"Since no one knows the right way any longer, the only way left is Vorgänger im gleichen Schritt und Trritt. ["Forward in uniform step and stride," a direct quote from the Horst Wessel Song] Thus thunders the march of the columns. March nineteenth, nineteen hundred and thirty. It can be drawn further that the hurricane in Act I symbolizes the 1929 Stock Market Crash, and so on. Since these political connections were not included in the libretto, Herz added an extra character: a master of ceremonies who, by virtue of the fact that "he had been there," could explain these implications to the audience. An excellent performance by Hans-Reinhard Müller almost made one forget the embarrassment and awkwardness of this role.

The much more horrifying timeliness of Mahagonny was best communicated in the person of Paul Ackermann (Elliot Palay, an American who has sung the role in Herz’s East Berlin production). Mr. Palay was vocally excepional and portrayed his character as happy, cordial, and loveable: grounding the symbolism and philosophy in a leading man with whom the audience could identify.

Less successful was Tamara Lund (also a veteran of the Komische Oper Production) as Jenny. An attractive stage presence, Lund got off to a slow start, but by the evening’s end acquitted herself admirably. The entire cast sang quite well, strong voices all. The Gärtenplatz imported much of Herz’s successful East Berlin mise-en-scene, and the company offered a solid and vibrant interpretation (if somewhat operetta-ish and lacking in nuance under the baton of Georg W. Schmöhe). The supporting players lent competent, though unspectacular, performances. Like Lund, Rainer Schölzel as Trinity Moses began weakly, but by the boxing scene had established himself as the standout in the supporting cast.

Despite the distracting concept, the strong singing of the cast and supportive playing of the orchestra made this a convincing and occasionally moving performance. Now there remains the hope that some day the Gärtenplatz will present one of Weill’s works without relying on outside resources. No other theater in the Federal Republic is so ready for the task.

From Reports by JOSEF HEINZELMANN

GUY STERN

Mahagonny Songs
(Mahagonny Songspiel)
English National Opera, London
Premiere: 8 September 1984

On several counts, the English National Opera’s double-bill of Mahagonny Songs and Janacek’s opera, Osud (“Fate”), which opened on 8 September, proved an unhappy coupling. The raison d’être for the evening was the first staging in the U.K. of the three-act Janacek work which, played without a break, lasted some 85 minutes. ENO may have been concerned about shortchanging the audience, but the choice of the Weill work was ill-conceived. The cavernous London Coliseum dwarfed the ten-piece band conducted by Lionel Friend, while the Keith Hack production was obliged to accommodate itself on a revolving set specifically designed for the large choruses of Osud. Under such handicaps, spirits flagged: untidy staging, blown singing, a funereal "Benares Song"….

The Janacek was something of a revelation and deserves a revival to itself. In contrast, this Mahagonny Songs should be quietly disbanded before memories are erased of the same company’s excellent Rise and Fall several seasons ago.

PAUL MEechAM
London
PERFORMANCES

Happy End
The Arena Stage, Washington, D.C.
May-June 1984

Given the excellence of the Arena Stage summer production of Happy End, it is no wonder that Public Broadcasting Station WGBH filmed it to be aired this spring. All of the pieces fell neatly together to provide a totally satisfying and even eye-opening experience.

The visual team demonstrated a polished ensemble effort as John Aronne (set design), Marjorie Slaiman (costumes), and Frances Aronson (lights) created a somber setting for the sleazy Bill’s Bar and the multi-leveled Shakesesque Salvation Army mission. A white scrim curtain on the four sides of the Arena’s stage-in-the-round was used effectively for scene changes and projections of titles, and was pleasingly reminiscent of the familiar boxing ring stage. Shafts of light dramatically shot from the ceiling and through the floorboards, illuminating portions of the stage while leaving the rest in almost total darkness. Deep reds and blues in the costumes along with a “BB” sign in bright red lights over Bill’s Bar created a unified “neutral with accent” color scheme.

Director Garland Wright molded a company of widely experienced singing actors into a cohesive unit whose techniques fully exploited the comic and dramatic twists of the plot. Even the absurdity of the “happy end” was deftly handled as the actors literally burst the confines of the stage to envelop the audience in the conflict. Wright took a few liberties with the staging of “Surabaya Johnny”: Marilyn Caskey and Biggs; also notable were Richard Bauer’s most elegant portrayal of the Asian gangster Dr. Nakamura; Michael Genet’s irreverent Reverend, and the crystal clear tenor voice of Michael Cone as the innocent Brother Hamnul. Franchelle Stewart Dorn’s Miriam lent strength, sharply-defined support even in silence; Susan Blommaert’s high-strung serenizing as Sister Mary was quite funny, and the veteran actress and opera singer Elizabeth Pritchett made a formidable Major Stone. Although Judith Anna Roberts was competent in her glamorous femme fatale role (costumed to the nines and sporting a foot-long cigarette holder), she was woefully inadequate vocally in the “Ballad of the Lily of Hell,” and, as a result, killed the dramatic and musical impact of the strategically placed song.

Music director Robert Fisher conducted his well-rehearsed ensemble from under the floorboards of the stage with stylistic conviction. The excellent balance and precision between the orchestra and the singers served to highlight the ironic simplicity and colorful orchestration of Weill’s music. Obviously much different in character and intent from Threepenny Opera, the comic spirit of the score reinforced the often voiced opinion that Happy End contains Weill’s most approachable songs. The only detraction from the musical integrity of the production was the omission of a second trumpet which is required for two of the songs. The most obvious loss here occurs in “In Our Childhood’s Bright Endeavor,” where Weill provides a purposefully “sweet” trumpet duet to contradict the tone of the stage action. This one example shows the crucial role which Weill’s orchestrations play in fulfilling the dramatic function of the music.

Apart from these few, minor flaws, Arena’s Happy End was a striking example of fine ensemble work, and it should adapt well to television treatment. If as much care is given to the PBS production as was evidenced in the stage production, the entire country should have an opportunity to view a remarkable Happy End.

DAVID FARNETH
Kurt Weill Foundation for Music

Milva canta Brecht
Royce Hall, UCLA, Los Angeles
18-22 July 1984

The legend continues, for better or for worse. We first learned the songs of Weill in the voice of the aging Lenya (“an octave lower than Irmagis,” by her own admission) and the sound and music became one. There’ll be time to unlearn whenever Stratlas makes her long-promised record of the Lenya repertory. Meanwhile, we put up with frogs in the throat and Weill in the wrong key. Show me a lady baritone who hasn’t been told, somewhere along the line, “you oughta sing Brecht-Weill,” and I’ll show you a Tibetan high priestess.

All the immortal clichés were in place at Milva’s U.S. debut last summer during the Los Angeles Olympic Arts Festival: the sexy sink against the prop lampost beside the prop suitcase, the insolent wave of the cigarette, the Louise Brooks wig for the first half, the flaming-red coiffure for the second, the drop-dead glare—and the frog. “Never mind the poetry of Brecht, or the lovely music that Eisler and Weill made for it,” she seemed to be saying, “Just listen to my chest tones.”

A barroom and pop singer since 1961, Milva Biolcati has spent most of her career attached to Giorgio Strehler and his Piccolo Teatro of Milan, which was doing its miraculous version of Shakespeare’s The Tempest a few miles west at UCLA even as she croaked her way into the hearts of a large, undiscerning invited audience downtown. Under Strehler she has sung a Jenny in a Milanese Threepenny Opera and done a run of solo Brecht evenings similar to her American debut. Aside from a scattering of Eisler songs at the end (several of which are misascribed to Weill)—tiny pieces, agreeably homely—the Los Angeles program was made of predictable stuff. Less predictable: it was all sung in Italian, apart from an over-stressed, spot-out “Surabaya Johnny” in what, I think, was meant to be German. Listed on the program, but for obvious reasons left unperformed, was one genuine rarity, the “Bilbao Song from the Little Mahogany” [sic].

Milva has made a few records—one (Ricordi SMRL 1614) a Brecht-Weill-Eisler program taped in 1975, similar in both content and irresponsible self-indulgence to this summer’s concert, the second a Seven Deadly Sins from 1981 (Metronome 0060.558) in the same deadly wrong keys as the available Lenya and Gisela May recordings. The Sins performance is conducted by Bruno Weil. That’s about as close as it gets.

ALAN RICH
Los Angeles
The New York Times
based on an article by Harold C. Schonberg in
an article in full.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following report is
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production of
New York Times ,

PERFORMANCES

Threepenny Opera

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Threepenny Opera
**BOOKS**


During the past fifteen years it has become fashionable to speak of a certain 'Brecht-Müdigkeit' or 'Brecht-fatigue.' The 'fatigue' stems from the sheer volume of Brecht's writings as more and more plays, essays, diaries and correspondence have emerged from his archive in East Berlin. It results, too, from the fact that one cannot approach his plays without running up against the mass of theoretical commentary. In addition, there is the numbing effect of the millions of pages devoted to analyzing, interpreting and documenting Brecht's life and works, pages which often delve into the least detail of the least of his activities. Finally, the classical status accorded Brecht's works has created an imposing monument which exacts an ever-increasing amount of awe and trepidation.

**Brecht in Context and Brechts Dramen** are attempts to counteract 'Brecht-fatigue' with the authors' unashamed enthusiasm for their subject. That enthusiasm pervades Willett's opening description of his fifty-year fascination with Brecht's works and moves Reinhold Grimm in his essay to recognize Brecht as the most important and influential German Theaterdichter ("theater poet") of the twentieth century (Dramen, p. 11). In their enthusiasm, both books try to clear the dense air surrounding Brecht. Their object, however, is not to canonize the playwright but to offer fresh, panoramic, often witty views of his works which often delve into the least detail of the least of his activities. Finally, the classical status accorded Brecht's works has created an imposing monument which exacts an ever-increasing amount of awe and trepidation.

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**Brecht in Context** is an anthology of sixteen essays by various experts in the field. These include Grimm's opening analysis of Brecht's dramatic theory, "new interpretations" of ten plays, and five articles devoted to such general subjects as the "learning plays" and Brecht's adaptations. At the end of the book, Christiane Bohnert offers a clear chronology of Brecht's life and works and an extensive bibliography. The principal strengths of Brechts Dramen are that it draws together so much information and so many points of view and that, despite the authors' high regard for Brecht, their analyses are objective and evenly-handed.

Each book devotes one essay to the role of music in Brecht's works. In Brechts Dramen, Ulrich Weisstein begins by noting the dearth of research into this subject, and his most important contribution is the recognition that critical analyses of the works do not adequately account for the musical element (pp. 280-81). Weisstein also provides an overview of the literature touching on Brecht's involvement with music. The overview, however, is limited to works which focus on Brecht, and it ignores a great deal of the music research on his musical collaborators. Douglas Jarman's illustrated biography of Weill, for example, appears neither in Weisstein's endnotes nor in the bibliography, and Kurt Weill in Exil is represented only by a passing reference to Kim Kowalk's dissertation abstract. As a result, Weisstein draws most of his information about Weill from Ronald Sanders' "popular" biography and Gottfried Wagner's Brecht und Weill. Missing, too, are many valuable studies of Brecht's uses of music by such East German scholars as Joachim Lachesi and Gerd Rienacker. Similar gaps occur in the discussion of available recordings, from which the London Simfonietta collection (DG 2740-153) is the most serious omission.

Prior to the publication of the literature, Weisstein briefly summarized the history of Brecht's traffic with music and then offers an investigation of Die Dreigroschenoper and Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny. This investigation, which is meant to illuminate Brecht's approach to opera, contains some interesting insights, but it is marred by error and confusion. Some of these errors are as minor as misstating the vocal parts for Mahagonny Songspiel (p. 286); correctly state on p. 288). Others seriously misinterpret Weill's intentions, as in Weisstein's conclusion that the composer considered Aufstieg a "symphonic" work to be played in concert halls (p. 285). Some observations merely degrade the composer, e.g., the assertion that the singing roles in Die Dreigroschenoper were determined in part by the "fact" that Weill had to provide good parts for Lotte Lenya (p. 287, note 105). A more dangerous error is Weisstein's statement that the Kurt Weill Archive is closed to most scholars (p. 279); the charge is substantiated with nothing more than an unquestions reiteration of Sanders' 1979 claim.

Confusion occurs when Weisstein tries to find a critical approach which can account for the functions of both text and music in the operas. Instead of exploring the complex interrelationship of these elements, Weisstein tries to weigh the importance of one against the other and thereby misses the theatrical ends they serve together. As a result, his analysis is unable to do justice to either element and succeeds only in perpetuating the critical problem he is trying to correct. In general, Weisstein has tried to accomplish so much in this essay that neither his review of the literature and recordings, nor his historical overview and critical analysis of the two operas fully satisfies the need recognized in his opening remarks.

In his essay on "Brecht and the Musicians," Willett has set himself less ambitious goals. He contents himself with a general historical overview of Brecht's musical endeavors, from his beginnings as a guitar-strumming poet-singer to his work with Weill, Eisler and Dessau. It is a clear, concise presentation which, while not exhaustive, offers much information which is not generally well known. The strength of this presentation is that it allows the reader to perceive quickly the scope and variety of Brecht's musical activities. At the same time, there are a few minor errors which need to be corrected. For example, it was not Ernst Busch, as Willett states (p. 165), who sang the "Moritat" in the premiere of Die Dreigroschenoper but Kurt Gerron. Willett also repeats a misunderstanding which has entered the literature about Eisler, namely that the composer received an Oscar for his film music for Hangmen Also Die (p. 167); Eisler was nominated but received no award.

These errors are relatively inconsequential when compared with the important insights provided throughout the essay. One of the most valuable of these is Willett's recognition that Brecht's "learning plays" were born in the musical context provided by Paul Hindemith and the movement for Gesamtschau-musik (p. 158). This insight gains in significance when one recalls that all of the "learning plays" were conceived for musical settings, a point ignored in Weisstein's analysis, and not adequately addressed elsewhere in Brechts Dramen. Also valuable are Willett's short but objective evaluation of the split between Brecht and Weill (pp. 159-60), his discussion of the effect of Brecht's musical ear on his dramatic and poetic works (p. 173), and his attempt to summarize the features common to Dessau's, Eisler's, and Weill's settings for Brecht's texts (pp. 173-74). The concluding sentences of the essay are indicative of Willett's insight and his enthusiasm for Brecht.

Brecht wanted effective didactic and theatrical music, and from 1927 on he got it. What he, and we, got over and above that was a corpus of marvellous settings of modern poetry: such as no other collaboration—not Auden and Britten, not Claudel and Milhaud, not Ramuz and Stravinsky, not Cocteau and Poulenc—have been able to provide.

In such statements lies the remedy for "Brecht-fatigue."

RONALD SHULL

LEXINGTON CHILDREN'S THEATRE

**KURT WEILL NEWSLETTER**

PAGE 15
Das grosse Brecht-Liederbuch, 3 vols.
Edited by Fritz Hennenberg.
Berlin (East): Henschelverlag Kunst und Gesellschaft;
Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1984.

No area of Bertolt Brecht's vast output was left untouched by his interests in music, which began coincident with his literary career and continued to affect his poetic, dramatic, and theoretical work. At least half of Brecht's 1800 published poems, plays, and dramatic fragments were conceived for musical settings, most of which were composed in consultation with the author. Brecht himself provided melodies for over ninety songs, and he continued to influence the music of the composers with whom he worked. Until recently, however, Brecht's musical interests have not been much investigated and nor the resulting compositions made widely accessible. Das grosse Brecht-Liederbuch (The Big Brecht-Songbook) begins to correct this oversight.

The Liederbuch is intended as a practical anthology serving all those interested in music inspired by Brecht. It offers piano-vocal (or guitar-vocal) arrangements of 121 popular settings of Brecht's texts by Dessau, Eisler, Schwan, Wagner-Régeny, and Weill. In addition, the collection includes sixteen of Brecht's own "compositions" (transcribed and arranged by Schwan) and four produced in Brecht's first collaboration with a professional composer, Franz S. Brunier. For eleven texts there are multiple settings by two or more of these composers. The Liederbuch, therefore, puts Brecht at the center of a great deal of musical diversity, but he is the focal point from which the music radiates.

The musical settings are presented chronologically in two volumes. Volume 3 contains Hennenberg's extensive notes about the songs and plays, the sources of the settings (usually published piano-vocal editions), discussions of editorial decisions, and remarks about interpretation and recordings. Together, the three volumes offer the first effort at an extensive overview of Brecht's involvement with music and make many important contributions to the understanding and practice of Brecht's artistry and the artistry of the composers with whom he worked.

The Liederbuch's many fine qualities are, however, marred by some bothersome faults. The publication of Brecht's melodies for his early verses, one of the book's most valuable contributions, has an unfortunate drawback. Brecht's scribbled melodic sketches have been reproduced in standard notation with rhythmically and harmonically developed accompaniments, and in some cases Brecht's guitar chords have been altered to accord with proper musical grammar (p. 355). This turns the poet's raw musical ideas into something like Hausmusik and seems to be an effort to make him appear more musically accomm-
for the opera problem." But that is a fairly esoteric point. On a more fundamental level, I find wholly untenable the assertion that Berg's Wozzeck "appears to be the last fulfillment of the grand opera, at least for the time being," and one might also criticize the summarizing of opera plots in a publication of this kind as bordering on the redundant; here Gerhartz's text betrays all too clearly its origins. However, he offers much, particularly on Verdi (his specialty), Mozart, and Berg, that can be recommended without reservation.

By way of extreme contrast, Zur Problematik der Opernstrukturen by Erik Fischer is the published form of a doctoral dissertation with the highest scholarly and philosophical ambitions. The author is principally addressing the small circle of his colleagues in musicology, and, it must be said, not always in the most charitable terms, which is perhaps hardly surprising, for he sees his research as a radical departure. The thesis he expounds is nothing if not polemical. Whereas the more traditional, according to Fischer, an opera only qualifies as bordering on the redundant; here the genre for our century, at least for the time being, as Brecht endeavoured to transcend [aufheben] the fundamental structure of the genre, implying, as Fischer also does, at one point by quoting without comment Gottfried Wagner, that the artistic intentions behind Mahagonny were the same for both collaborators. Weill's writings, for all their contradictions, deserve more than the scant treatment that Fischer accords them; for it is they, as much as anything, that constitute the three constituent media of expression—language, the scenic element, and music. There must be a relation between theory and practice within the context Gottfried Wagner, that the artistic intentions behind Mahagonny were the same for both collaborators. Weill's writings, for all their contradictions, deserve more than the scant treatment that Fischer accords them; for it is they, as much as anything, that constitute the three constituent media of expression—language, the scenic element, and music. There must be a relation between theory and practice, which accentuates the horizontal pull of the bow rather than a vertical attack into the string. This produces an effect more light and colorful than dark and rich. Combined with the word that comes to mind. As neither work has had much exposure, this recording provides a rare opportunity to hear, as Kim Kowalke states in his very helpful liner notes, "two more missing pieces of a still incomplete picture of the composer." The Sequoians—Yoko Matsuda and Miwako Watanabe, violin; James Dunham, viola; and Robert Martin, cello—have taken their task seriously. And their enthusiasm for Weill's work has transformed what could have been a mere musicological document into a gesture of sure musical friendship.

The Sequoia Quartet hails from California, where it is in residence at California Institute of the Arts and California State University at Long Beach, and where it has established its reputation. Realizing that comparing geography and sound is a tricky business, it can be said that the Sequoia Quartet has a distinctly open and sunny quality that it has maintained apart from its East Coast counterparts. And, although this is a mature group of musicians—the Quartet won the Walter H. Naumburg Chamber Music Award and is now entering its second decade—their collective voice is a youthful and exuberant one. This results from a particular vibrato, more sweet than intense, and bowing style, which accentuates the horizontal pull of the bow rather than a vertical attack into the string. This produces an effect more light and colorful than dark and rich. Combined with the group's obvious musical intelligence, this is a balance well-suited to the works on this record.

The Quartet in B Minor, the older and larger of the two quartets, is the more conservative structurally and the Sequoians attack it with verve. They gave the piece its...
RECORDINGS

American premiere in 1983 and 'traverses its varied idiomatic terrain with acuity. This is a forthright reading of a score filled with romantic nuance. While sympathetic to the youthful outpouring, the Sequoias do not indulge it. They opt instead to trace the larger dimensions of the show's four movements. Curiously, it was the Quartet No. 1, Opus 8 (thought by some to be the weaker composition) which is given to the more powerful reading. Perhaps the free-form, idiosyncratic quality of the one-movement work emboldened the Quartet to surge and flow right along with Weill's developing sensibility. Both composer and performers seem freer here than in the earlier quartet.

The recorded quality of this disc is not the razor-sharp sound that comes from a closely-miked studio environment. The performance was recorded in a large space and the listener gets a sense of the room's acoustics. The ambience is attractive, and flattering to the Quartet. Occasional lapses in intonation (particularly during the chromatic rigors of the B Minor's final movement) and in tonal quality represent small, but noticeable, flaws. They are overcome, however, by the Quartet's conviction and apparent affinity for Weill's music. If openness, honesty and loyalty characterize friendship, they also characterize this rendering of a young and gifted composer's early musical utterances.

RUTH DREIER
New York

Lady in the Dark. Gertrude Lawrence and supporting cast. AEI 1146. (1 disc, mono)

Lady in the Dark, the fruit of Moss Hart's psychoanalysis and Kurt Weill's longstanding desire to collaborate with Ira Gershwin, was, as Hart wrote in 1941, "a show in which the music carried forward the essential story and in total quality represent small, but noticeable, flaws. They are overcome, however, by the Quartet's conviction and apparent affinity for Weill's music. If openness, honesty and loyalty characterize friendship, they also characterize this rendering of a young and gifted composer's early musical utterances.

RUTH DREIER
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Lady in the Dark, the fruit of Moss Hart's psychoanalysis and Kurt Weill's longstanding desire to collaborate with Ira Gershwin, was, as Hart wrote in 1941, "a show in which the music carried forward the essential story and was not imposed on the architecture of the play." It was also a hit with audiences and a succes d'estime among the critical community. Beyond the witty, complex book and score, the show profited from the presence of Gertrude Lawrence in the title role. Lisa Elliott's wide range of emotions, from pathos to merriment, challenged Lawrence to one of her greatest performances.

Unfortunately, Lady in the Dark opened two years before the practice of making complete cast albums began (the first was Oklahoma! in 1943). Lawrence recorded her key numbers shortly after the show opened (available on RCA LPV 503); then Danny Kaye recorded his (Harmony HL 7314). A studio recreation of the complete score was made in 1963 featuring Risé Stevens, Adolph Green, and John Reardon (Columbia OS 2209), and there are numerous fine takes of individual songs, including Lenya's version of "The Saga of Jenny" (Columbia MG 30087). However, listeners and historians have missed an aural document that gives a sense of the original as a whole.

This new recording goes far towards filling the gap. Though the jacket does not say so, a tape in Ira Gershwin's archives identical to the record indicates that it is a Theatre Guild of the Air production, broadcast in 1950. Besides Lawrence, the radio cast includes one of the male leads from the Broadway cast, MacDonald Carey. Others in the radio version are Hume Cronyn, Jane Seymour, and Arthur Vinton.

While the show was heavily edited and revised for radio listening, a great deal of the letter and flavor of the show, including spoken and sung scenes, is reproduced. Fragments of the elusively song, "My Ship," are woven throughout, until Lawrence finally sings the entire song with great poignance at the climax of the story. The dream episodes contrast well with the down-to-earth ones. The "Glamour Dream," the first of the three, is the most fully presented; it is the best representation on the record of Weill and Gershwin's mastery at making memorable songs like "One Life to Live" fit naturally into a free-associative, almost surrealistic texture of music and lyrics. Very little of the second, "Wedding Dream," appears; there is a little more of the third, "Circus Dream," which includes an enticing performance of "The Saga of Jenny," in which Lawrence argues convincingly in Dream-logic that Liza should never make up her mind about anything.

Perhaps the most important feature of the new recording is Lawrence's incomparable performance both as singer and actress. Even without being seen, the character comes to life, a complex, fascinating woman full of fears, in command one moment only to dissolve the next, high spirits followed often by despair—a woman who, in spite of it all, is courageous, defiant, and determined to triumph. It is very satisfying when she does.

Now that this record is out, it suggests that another, more complete archival reconstruction of the show be made. This could include not only the radio broadcast, but also the songs Lawrence recorded in 1941 that were not included on the radio ("Huxley," "This Is New," and "The Princess of Pure Delight") and Danny Kaye's recordings of his key songs, especially "Tschakowsky." Such a record would show even more conclusively that, as Weill wrote to Gershwin after Lady in the Dark opened, "We are the challenge boys of the American entertainment world."

DEENA ROSENBERG
New York University

Tryout. Kurt Weill and Ira Gershwin. DRG Records MRS-904. (1 disc, mono)

Lyrics by Lerner. Alan Jay Lerner, Kaye Ballard, and Billy Taylor.
DRG Records MRS-903. (1 disc, mono)

Today, it is simply taken for granted that a Broadway musical of quality will be preserved on a commercial original cast recording, sometimes containing two discs. It is easy to forget that, as recently as the 1940's, cast albums were the exception, not the rule. Not until Street Scene (Columbia M683), Down in the Valley (RCA Victor DM 1367), and Lost in the Stars (Decca DAU 738) were Weill's scores properly documented by their original cast members (One Touch of Venus only contained highlights). One longs for the missing: Nanette Fabray and Ray Middleton in Lore Life, and complete albums of Firebrand of Florence, Knickerbocker Holiday and the others.

There are, however, discographical oddities, which do not take the place of cast albums but have their own intrinsic appeal and historical interest. Two such albums of Weill's music have recently been reissued on DRG Records: Tryout and Lyrics by Lerner. Each provides a rare opportunity to hear major Broadway creators performing their own work.

Tryout is a collection of private demonstration records from Weill's 1945 film score to Where Do We Go From Here? and the 1943 show One Touch of Venus. The composer plays piano on both sides and also sings the Venus selections himself. The film songs are sung with wishy washy by Ira Gershwin: occasional harmonies and alternating lines are tossed in by Weill. The film cuts have a more polished style of presentation, while Weill on one Venus selection announces that the following songs are still unfinished. Surely the highlight of this album is the lengthy miniopera from Where Do We Go entitled "The Nina, The Pinta, the Santa Maria," a spoof of Christopher Columbus on route to America, sung with jolly gusto by Gershwin and Weill.

Although the DRG reissue is an exact replica of the original release on Heritage Records, it is somewhat annoying then as now that selections from the two scores are alternated rather than grouped by show: a sense of the original scores is lacking. Still, it is a thrill to be allowed to hear these creators in a private moment.

Unlike Tryout, Lyrics by Lerner was intended to be a commercial release from the outset and thereby reveals a slickness of presentation lacking on the other album. In packaging and content, it is virtually identical to the Heritage original. Of its fourteen selections, seven are from Love Life and represent the
PERFORMANCES

AUFSTIEG UND FALL DER STADT
MAHAGONNY

Bremen, FRG. Theater der Freien Hansestadt. January 6, 1985
Bristol, ENG. Unv. of Bristol Operatic Soc. 7-9 February 1985
Frankenthal, FRG. Frankenthal Schule. January 1985
Hamburg, FRG. Kampnagelfabrik. June 1985
Munich, FRG. Staatsstheater am Gärtnerplatz. Beginning 27 July 1984
Stuttgart, FRG. Kleines Haus, Württembergisch Staatstheater 7 June 1984

CONCERTO, VIOLIN & WINDS, OP. 12

Bonn, FRG. O. Littman-Skolar, violin; Orchester der Beethovenhalle. 7 June 1984
Maastricht, [NL?]. Staatstheater. V. Beths, violin; Limburgs Symfoniorkest. 26 June 1984
Tucson, AR, USA. University of Arizona. 4 October 1984

DOWN IN THE VALLEY

London, ENG. Studio '68. Concert Artistes Association, 28 June - 13 July 1984

DIE DREIGROSCHENOPER

Bremen, FRG. Schauspiel, Grosses Haus. Beginning 28 September 1984
Bremerhaven, FRG. Schauspielhaus. Beginning 28 September 1984
Diepholz, FRG. Graf-Friedrich-Schule. Theater-Arbeitsgemeinschaft. 5 September 1984
Dortmund, FRG. Staatstheater Bremen. Beginning 21 September 1984
Herzogenburg, AUS. Niederoesterreichischen. Beginning 24 August 1984
Kiel, FRG. Haus an der Holtenauer Br. 20 September 1984
Winsen, FRG. Theater-AG des Winsener Gymnas. June 1984

FRAUENTANZ

Amsterdam, NL. Concertgebouw. 30 March 1985

HAPPY END

Claremont., CA, USA. Pomona College Theatre Dept. 5-8 December 1984
Clevedon, ENG. Backwell Playhouse. 19-23 June 1984
Frankfurt, FRG. Schauspiel Frankfurt. 20-23 July 1984
Greenville, NY, USA. CW Post Summer Theatre. July 1984
Guildhall, ENG. Guildhall School of Music. Student Theatre Society. July 1984
Hamm, FRG. Staatliche Hochschule für Musik. June 1984
Loughborough, ENG. Loughborough Drama Centre, December 1984
Oberhausen, FRG. Theater Oberhausen. May - June 1985
Philadelphia, PA, USA. Wilma Theatre. May 1985
Vienna, AUS. Volkstheater Wien. April 1985
Wuppertal, FRG. Wuppertaler Bühnen. January 1985

DER JASAGER

Amsterdam, NL. University of Amsterdam. 18-19 December 1984
Hamburg, FRG. Rundfunkproduktion. 12, 19 November 1984

KIDDUSH

Grand Rapids, MI, USA. East Congregational Church. 5 October 1985

KLEINE DREIGROSCHENMUSIK

Bielefeld, FRG. University Bielefeld. 11 February 1985
Bietigheim-Bissingen, FRG. Musikschule. 11 October 1984
Florence, IT. Teatro Communale. Rome RAI Ensemble. 14 June 1984
Köln, FRG. Maximilian Kolbe-Gymnasium. 2 October 1984
Stans, FRG. Stans Collegium Sanct. Fidelis. 3-4 May 1985
Stevenson, Essex, ENG. Gordon Craig Theatre. Stevenage Youth Orch. 15 July 1984

DER LINDBERGHFLUG

Steiermark, AUS. Muerrzuschlag. 24 October 1984

largest number of songs from that score ever issued on one album.

The principal vocalist here is Kaye Ballard, who demonstrates considerable versatility as she bounces through the lively "Green-up Time." charms with the tender ballad, "Here I'll Stay," and turns torchy in "Mr. Right" and "Susan's Dream." Her partner is none other than lyricist Alan Jay Lerner, who reveals a smooth, almost professional, light baritone and sings with a gift for nuance usually reserved for song writers themselves.

Of the Life songs, most touching is Lerner's soulful "Love Song," a hobo's vision of the wonders of the world. A male quartet sings two humorous songs, "Economics" (which, we're told, are "bad for love"), and "Progress," a litany of modern horrors, in which the men are joined by Lerner. The delicate and delightful accompaniment by Billy Taylor's sextet offers the buoyancy of jazz, but in this case appropriately is subordinated to the clarity of the lyrics. The seven remaining songs, all composed by Frederick Loewe, are from Brigadoon, The Day Before Spring, and Paint Your Wagon.

Each of these albums is basic literature and essential to any collector. Their return is long overdue.

MILES KREUGER
Institute of the American Musical
MAHAGONNY SONGSPIEL
Cheltenham, ENG. Opera 3. 10 - 13 October 1984
Liverpool, ENG. University of Liverpool. 28, 30 November 1984
Beginning 8 September 1984
Stuttgart, FRG. Studio im Planetarium. Tollen Theaterstage -
Ensemble. July 1984

ONE TOUCH OF VENUS
New Haven, CT, USA. Shubert Theatre. New Amsterdam
Theatre Co. 9 June 1984

PANTOMIME I from DER PROTAGONIST
New York, NY, USA. Carnegie Recital Hall. Chamber Orchestra
of the Curtis Institute of Music. 3 February 1985 (American
Premiere)

DIE SIEBEN Todsünden
Düsseldorf, FRG. Neanderkirche. Rheinisches Musikfest. 1 June
1984
Düsseldorf, FRG. Württemberg-Kammerorchester. 6 March
1984
Munich, FRG. Theater am Gärtenplatz. 12 March 1985
Villach, FRG. Kongresshaus 23 August 1984

SONGS
New York, NY, USA. Merkin Concert Hall. Sheila Schoenbrun.
15 December 1984
New York, NY, USA. All-Weill Concert in Celebration of Weill's
85th Birthday. Merkin Concert Hall, Joy Bogen. 3 March 1985

SYMPHONY NO. 2
Houston, TX, USA. Jones Hall. Houston Symphony. Julius
Rudel, cond. 17 - 19 November 1984

THREEPENNY OPERA
Chicago, IL, USA. Bailiwick Repertory. 13 September - 4
November 1984
Cleveland, OH, USA. Cleveland Institute of Music. Cleveland
Opera Theatre. July 1985
Daytona Beach, FL, USA. Summer Music Theatre. June 1984
Flynt, MI, USA. University of Flynt. November 1984
Hereford, ENG. Royal National Blind College. Northumberland
Theatre Co. 9 October 1984
Kenilworth, ENG. Talisman Theatre. 20 September 1984
London, ENG. King's College Opera Group. December 1984
Los Angeles, CA, USA. East West Players. May 1985
Newport, ENG. Apollo Theatre. Apollo Players. June 1984
Nottingham, ENG. Theatre Royal. Opera North, June 1984
Sandwich, Kent, ENG. Sir Roger Manwood's School, December
1984
St. Louis, MO, USA. Washington University. October 1984
Welsh National Opera. Tour. 1985

ZAR LÄSST SICH PHOTOGRAPHIEREN
Köln, FRG. Rundfunkproduktion. 22 October 1984
Philadelphia, PA, USA. (In English) Haverford School Centennial
Hall. Curtis Institute of Music. March 22, 23, 1985