

# MEMORABLE SELECTIONS FROM CURRENT REVIEWS CULLED FROM OUR CLIPPING SERVICES

German-to-English Translations by Lys Symonette and  
William Madison

## LONDON SINFONIETTA: "BEANFEST," 16 APRIL 1985

... So how is [ the *Mahagonny Songspiel* ] to be put across to a 1985 British audience? David Alden, who produced, and David Fielding, who designed, had no doubts at all. Lots of crude sexual jokes (an inflatable lifesize rubber doll, for instance), lots of din, a pair of giant anti-Thatcher posters with movable pound and dollar signs to replace the lady's eyes, [ conductor ] Simon Rattle with a toy rocket pointlessly strapped to his back, lots of repetition, and let the music shift for itself.

The repetition was the most startling element, and in a way the most interesting. A dispirited woman, with a child on a table beside her, began the proceedings by intoning "I like it... I like it... I like it..." one or two hundred times. Though I didn't count, I don't think I exaggerate; if I were simply to transcribe her part on this page, my column would soon be filled. The effect was wildly boring; not exactly numbing, however, for one wanted to scream.

I call the incident interesting because at no earlier time would a performer have got away with such behavior; a good old uninhibited audience (such as Brecht admired) would have indulged in catcalls, and rightly so. Poor old Weill has thus, for the second time in one London season (a feeble version of the same piece having been prefixed to the ENO's brilliant *Osud*), missed the bus. Or perhaps not. For at the end the audience burst into excited applause. They liked it.

Desmond Shawe-Taylor  
*The Sunday Times*  
London  
21 April 1985

## MEMORIES

At one time, the songs by Brecht and Weill exercised a cunning impact on the victims of Nazism; I remember the inmates of Dachau chanting the revolutionary songs when marching to the roll call square for inspection.

Herbert G. Luft  
*B'nai B'rith Messenger*  
Los Angeles, California  
7 June 1985

## "... AND THE HASSID DANCES ON"

The most exciting event of the seven-day Israel Festival was a Kurt Weill Evening with the Israel Sinfonietta Beer-Sheva under Mendi Roodan in the Jerusalem Sherover Theater: *Die sieben Todsünden* was linked with the *Berliner Requiem* and the "Pantomime I" [ from *Der Protagonist* ] by the director, David Alden, who staged *Wozzeck* at the Met this year.

It was a great spectacle which brought Brecht's somewhat acidulous social criticism closer to the end of this tumultuous century — and grippingly included the story of Jewish suffering. While parts of cadavers are piled into a heap — arms, legs, bodies in a giant toilet bowl — glass is crashing — who wouldn't be reminded of the horrendous examples of Bergen-Belsen, Maydanek, and Auschwitz? Merciless, blinding searchlights sweep the stage, motorcars threaten the audience, two astronauts pick their way through the barrage of noise and garbage, walls collapse, a dog is lost, soldiers — in the spotted camouflage uniforms of the Israeli Army — lie down to die and — in the middle of this desert world — a Hassidic Jew dances, unimpressed by it all. As if in an old movie projected much too fast, he wriggles around, pressing a cassette player to his ear, and prays in front of a set piece which has been turned into a gigantic Wailing Wall; he prances about, unconcerned. He hops up and down: a Happy One at the edge of an abyss, and proceeds merrily, his coattails flying ....

Although the performance of *Die sieben Todsünden* was rather conventional (the Anna I was weak; the male quartet was excellent), the audience rewarded it with its heartiest applause; the first half comprised the bitter satire of the *Requiem* and the evil burlesque of "Pantomime I."

Elisabeth Bauschmid  
*Süddeutsche Zeitung*  
Munich  
12 June 1985

## "NEW YORK PRAISES GISELA MAY"

With stormy applause and cries of bravo the audience of the Performing Arts Center of the State University of New York at Purchase honored the actress and singer Gisela May. The artist from the German Democratic Republic made a guest appearance in three performances with works by Bertolt Brecht from four decades in settings by Paul Dessau, Hanns Eisler, and Kurt Weill, and also with a "Tribute to Marlene Dietrich."

(Reprinted in its entirety)

*National Zeitung*  
Berlin, German Democratic Republic  
9 July 1985

## "WEILL-REVUE" IN BERLIN

This was an evening one won't forget for a long time. Three times we see Kurt Weill: a German, a Frenchman, an American. Each time he is perfect. In Germany we understand ingenuity as a form of resistance to change. For us, the greatest genius is that composer in whose work we can identify no more than two unambiguous accents. Kurt Weill didn't accept this definition of genius. He always adapted himself: he had to adapt and he could adapt .... This evening is for me one (if not the only) highlight of the 1985 season.

"kr"  
*Theater-Rundschau*  
June 1985

## "WEILL-REVUE" IN HAMBURG

The premiere of the Theater des Westens *Kurt-Weill-Revue* in Hamburg's Operettenhaus was a huge success. The revue, nearly three hours long and featuring Hamburg's favorite daughter Nicole Heesters, concluded with endless ovations. Among the most spirited was the guest of honor: the amiable former chancellor, Helmut Schmidt, with his wife Loki .... The favorite, Nicole Heesters, smiled jubilantly. The young Ute Lemper received stormy applause; she seemed scarcely able to believe her success .... A "kurzweiliges" and lively program which, after all the crazy mixture of this dark Berlin season, is an answer to prayer.

Christian Frenzel  
*Ütersener Nachrichten*  
Ütersen, FRG  
1 June 1985

## "WEILL-REVUE"FEVER HITS HERMSDORF

Hurray! I won two tickets to the *Kurt-Weill-Revue*. For this I want to thank you very much. It was a wonderful surprise. The performance was very good, the seats terrific. Now I want very much to write to Ute Lemper [ featured dancer in the show ]. How can I get her address?

Christa D., Eisenbruchstr., Hermsdorf  
Letters to the Editor  
B.Z.  
Berlin  
16 April 1985

# REVIEWS

**Der Silbersee.** Bühnen der Stadt Gera. 1 November 1984; in repertory through June 1985. Städtische Theater Karl-Marx Stadt. 5 May 1985; in repertory through June 1986.

Musically and theatrically, *Der Silbersee* presents an extraordinary challenge, one which is not easily met by the standard ensembles of either opera or theater companies. Best described (not by the authors, but on a 1933 recording of song selections) as "Eine Schauspiel-Oper," *Der Silbersee* requires actors capable of sustaining a work which is predominantly spoken dialogue, and singers capable of mastering the operatic roles of Fennimore and Severin. We can't be certain how the problems were solved in the work's first performances, but we do know of the compromise solutions of the New York City Opera in 1980 (where the inclusion of other music by Weill steered the work toward the operatic) and in Zürich in 1982 (where the piece was transformed into a gigantic revue) — both changing *Silbersee* into something which was not "Schauspiel-Oper."

In Gera and Karl-Marx-Stadt, two dramatic theaters cooperating with orchestras from local opera houses, recently tried to stage *Der Silbersee* without compromising either musical or dramatic intentions, a worthy objective. Ultimately, both productions reified the enduring relevance of Kaiser's themes while failing to overcome the difficulties of the piece.

The Gera production opted for a naturalistic staging, often presenting the action in semi-darkness; in Karl-Marx-Stadt, director Hartwig Albiro chose to emphasize the artificial aspects of Kaiser's "think-piece" with profound results. He kept his two-level stage nearly empty, with only a few set pieces to indicate changes of scene. In both productions, the stagecraft in the final scene (the miraculous freezing of the Silverlake) was extremely effective. In Gera, an enormous white sheet fluttered down over the stage; in Karl-Marx-Stadt, the horizon opened and widened in brilliant white light as Severin and Olim made their crossing.

The warm and prolonged ovations at the premieres of both productions and at repeat performances confirmed the appreciation of the work's timeliness. I was very much impressed that, after 50 years, Kaiser's "winter's tale" of an uneasy union of good (the friends Olim, Severin, and Fennimore) pitted against evil (the greedy von Luber and Laur) remains a vivid theatrical experience. Certainly the theme has much to say to us now.

The treatment of Weill's music, however, proved much more problematic! The Gera production used Weill's original orchestration, with 35 players from the opera house orchestra and a large chorus. The actors, unaccustomed to singing with such formidable accompaniment, were unable to project their voices, so that the audience couldn't hear a single word of the lyrics. In Karl-Marx-Stadt, the orchestra was re-

duced to 22 musicians and placed on the stage — but with the actors and conductor unable to make eye contact. It was possible to hear the lyrics, but the music sounded weak and ineffective with only single strings, and orchestra and singers often lost each other. Musicians came to the premiere with as few as three orchestra rehearsals (depending on their schedules at the opera house) and were not of the highest caliber — those were too valuable to be spared from the opera. Actors in both productions had more than six weeks of intense rehearsals, but in neither production were the Severin and Fennimore any match for the vocal demands of the score. The young conductors, who usually lead small stage-bands at dramatic houses, had no feeling for the spirit of the music. The disregard for Weill's work was painful to hear.

*Der Silbersee*, 50 years after its premiere, is still a genuinely effective piece of theater. A successful production requires an ensemble of good singing actors and two excellent acting singers, plus 35 first-rate musicians and an experienced conductor. These requirements make a normal run wildly impractical for a theatrical company, but the challenge of *Der Silbersee* can be met if there is genuine cooperation between "Schauspiel" and "Oper," with compromise on both sides but without sacrifice either to drama or to music. Such a collaboration would be the highlight of any season, and audiences could not help but appreciate the gesture.

JÜRGEN SCHEBERA  
*Leipzig*



Olim and Severin's hospital duet from *Der Silbersee*, Karl-Marx-Stadt, 1985.

**Street Scene.** Chautauqua Opera, Chautauqua, NY. 9, 12 August 1985.

Chautauqua Opera presented two fine performances of *Street Scene* in Norton Hall on the grounds of the venerable Chautauqua Institution in upper New York State. The enormous demands of Weill's opera are not merely musical, but director Cynthia Auerbach, her staff and cast rose to the challenge admirably. Franco Colavecchia designed an impressively massive brownstone set; Joseph Citarella's costumes (from the New York City Opera production) were attractive and accurate, despite a slight 1950's influence in some of the women's outfits. Marie Barrett's lighting, although generally quite good, might have served the longer arias better with more variation.

*Street Scene* requires so much of its performers: there are demanding arias and ensembles, Broadway numbers, blues, and a boogie-woogie number, to list a few. The cast handled the more classical numbers beautifully, but the Broadway and blues numbers were sometimes slighted: conductor John de Main rushed the tempi and the singers did not always seem to understand the requisite vocal style. A few cuts—such as the deletion of the Julia Richman High School song—did not disjoint the opera.

The cast, full of fine singer-actors, featured some extraordinary performances. Spiro Malas was particularly moving as Frank Maurant, inarticulate, insensitive, yet needy. Karen Huffstodt and Carolann Page were the mother and daughter whose search for a world outside their oppressive existences brings the drama to its inexorable end. Huffstodt's physical attractiveness, natural acting style, and fine singing made her an especially strong Mrs. Maurant. As Rose, the hope of the family, Page sang and acted with equal distinction. Michael Davis' characterization fused earnestness with the elegance of his Italianate tenor into the ideal Sam Kaplan: this was a performance to be savored. Other highlights included Marion Pratnicki's delicious Emma Jones, one of the I-Told-You-So's who infest every family and every block; Gail Tremitiere and Richard Fracker's Mr. and Mrs. Fiorentino; the warm-voiced and sweet Jennie of Melissa Thorburn; and the skilled and very funny dance couple, Wysandria Woolsey and Gregg Ganakas.

VALORIE GOODALL  
*Mason Gross School of the Arts  
Rutgers University*

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## The Threepenny Opera

East-West Players. Los Angeles, California. 22 May through 7 July 1985.

In the curiously endearing cultural mix known as Los Angeles, few theatrical ventures are more curious — or more endearing — than a small theatrical venture in the Silverlake area, close to downtown, known as the East-West Players. Its personnel stems, as the name suggests, from a variety of origins. Specifically, in every show I've seen there, the casts have included players of pure Asian appearance as well as pure-American six-foot blonds. Its founder and director is the actor Mako, best known for his role as the Narrator in the original Broadway run of Stephen Sondheim's *Pacific Overtures*, but also known in Movieland for kung fu movies and similar delights.

East-West works in a theater about the size of this page, but cleverly used. In a creditable *Happy End* I saw there in 1981, there was a sense from the direction that everybody, audience and players alike, was sitting around Bill's Bar. Then, as in the recently closed *Threepenny*, the orchestral forces were minimal, something you noticed for about the first three minutes.

The work survived, and then some. The small band worked offstage behind a scrim; the action moved smoothly on a brilliantly assembled two-level stage. There was no chorus; the principals merely moved together and sang loudly whenever mighty forces were needed. Whatever its lack in performing forces, Mako's production at least always captured the dazzling vitality in the work. Some changes were made in proper directions; some in other directions. Polly got her "Pirate Jenny" back after a generation of usurping Jennys; the score was given complete, all verses, in the Marc Blitzstein translation with a very few localisms patched in. A more curious twist was to give the "Moritat" to a woman, a gamine at that, and all the worse for that.

But the Polly — a twenties-looking blonde with bee-stung lips and a wicked lure in her walk, name of Janellen Steininger — couldn't have been better, nor could the swaggering, sonorous Ernest Harada, the Peachum. Keone Young's Macheath, alas, was sung with great fervor but cut no kind of dash. Shizoku Hoshi, the Jenny, had obviously learned all the great Lenya poses in the old Pabst movie, but lacked the vocal thrust to make the imitation work.

Now it's time to consider legislation requiring there being at least one performance of *Threepenny* in every city over a given size at all times. Certainly Los Angeles — despite the residence here of the gracious Margot Auericht, widow of the work's first producer, and of many other old-time Berliners close to Weill

in the good old days, despite the persistent echoes of Brecht's footsteps all over town — has much catching up to do with Weill's Berlin repertory, and the adventurousness in this area of such Band-Aid and paste companies as Mako's at least puts the city's major producers to shame.

ALAN RICH

Los Angeles

## "Little Mahagonny" and "Conversations With Fear and Hope After Death"

Pepsico Summerfare Festival, Purchase, NY. 24-28 July 1985.

Peter Sellars' view of *Mahagonny* is that it depicts sinful man in need of redemption. This is not far-fetched. Weill called it a "morality tale" and likened it to Sodom and Gomorrah. Brecht's *Hauspostille*, where the *Mahagonny* poems first appeared, was put together in the manner of a Lutheran chapbook, a sort of family-style handbook of meditations for daily use. *Mahagonny*, in all its forms, is a kind of Pilgrim's Progress, upside-down.

Brecht's idea was to send the public out of the theater upset and presumably ready for redeeming, collective action. The Bach Cantata movements assembled by Peter Sellars and Craig Smith — under the name "Conversations With Fear and Hope" and designed as a sequel and companion piece to this production of the *Mahagonny Songspiel* — suggests a much more personal idea of redemption.

Would Brecht have approved? Probably not, but I suspect Weill might have. Brecht loved to invent the particular so he could generalize from it. Weill started from a generalized and common language and ended up with the particular and the personal. This contradiction, not at first obvious in the *Mahagonny Songspiel*, was a source of creative conflict for the partnership but eventually fueled their breakup. Peter Sellars strikes right to the heart of the contradiction and in the most extraordinary manner. The issues of personal redemption are expressed through an objective, representational style of production. More contradictions, more dialectics!

Every once in a while someone tries to find a way to put Bach on the stage. Bach, the greatest baroque composer never to write for the theater, was, of course, influenced by the opera. But his dramatic scenes are so personal and internalized that stage actions and scenic pictures of any kind always seem imposed and superfluous. But not in this production. For Sellars, *Mahagonny* is a scenic cantata. The really active physical movement comes in the Bach! To get at Bach through Brecht-Weill is not just a director's trick. Sellars has discovered that *Mahagonny* is a glass that enables us

to view, not so much the present (as we always thought), as the past — Germany's past above all — in a new way.

Sellars' productions of eighteenth-century opera — Handel especially — work in somewhat the same way. Alas, I missed his *Giulio Cesare* earlier in the festival, but I have seen his *Orlando*. That production was faithful to the eighteenth-century, musically speaking. Its stage was a contemporary fantasy which completely overturned our sense of time and movement (elapsed, stage, historical, stylistic, or otherwise). Every number of *Orlando* is a space-shuttle shimmy. How logical for its characters to ride a baroque rocket to the moon.

Together, "Little Mahagonny" and "Conversations" tell a story much like that of *Orlando*. Sellars' *Orlando* took place in the same physical state as *Mahagonny* — a mythical Florida. We go, via one cataclysm or another, from the steamy jungles and hurricanes of human desire to the bare rocks of the moonscape of the soul. With a shimmy or two along the way.

Sellars' (and conductor Craig Smith's) "Little Mahagonny" is the authentic 1927 *Mahagonny Songspiel*. It takes place, not in the original boxing ring (Brecht was not shy about communicating his idea of conflict in modern society) but on a kind of life-raft. The entire piece is played on this raft — a simple square platform decorated with a table and four chairs that look as though they might have been salvaged from the third-class bar of a derelict ocean liner or tramp steamer. The platform, pushed by two stage hands, moves only towards and away from us across a deep bare stage. This wave-like motion only reinforces the image of a life-raft on a boundless sea. The city of Mahagonny is just a plank surrounded by a vast emptiness. It can only bob up and down, back and forth, and it never gets anywhere at all.

Craig Smith, Sellars' long-time music director, describes the first Weill/Brecht collaboration as the most perfect of them all. It is certainly the only one whose form is entirely generated by the music. Ironically, it is also the one whose musical tone now seems to us the most Brechtian. (Perhaps this is the reason why the music could be allowed to generate the form.) It is a brisk, cutting, modern-music cantata, the most "objectified" and least personal of Weill's works. The male quartet is identified as Charlie, Billy, Bobby, and Jimmy, but they always seem to sing in their quartet persona. The women, identified in the cast list as two soubrettes, Jessie and Bessie, are little more personalized, but not much. The duet form of "Moon of Alabama" is truly heart-breaking even as it leers incomprehensibly. The two pieces originally written in peculiar broken English (by Elisabeth Hauptmann, Brecht's girlfriend and associate) have the most emotion-laden settings!

It is the sense of objectification and distance in the music which was most modified by Weill in the later, operatic treatment of the *Mahagonny* material. Brecht blamed the large orchestration but, in fact, it is inherent in Weill's

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reworking and expansion of the music in every domain. Only the *Songspiel* could remind us of a Bach cantata and it took a Peter Sellars to point out the connection.

"Conversations With Fear and Hope" begins exactly at the point that the *Mahagonny* ends. There is a murder. The apparently limitless possibilities of the boundless sea, of the brave New World of Mahagonny, are cut short by bitterness, discord, fear, sin, oblivion. The raft has come to rest; it will move again only once and briefly. What could be perceived as a boundless surround of emptiness is now seen as a road. Telephone poles (or are they crosses?) and wires are strung through the theater, across the stage, and, in an indefinite perspective (the image of deep perspective is important in both productions) stretch to the wall and beyond. (The telephone poles and the road were there all along — when God came to Mahagonny, He was a highway patrolman — but for this reviewer the importance of these motives did not register until the Bach portion of the evening.) Jessie and Bessie are the mourners, the two Marys; the murdered man is Jesus. The others are accomplices in his death or perhaps onlookers who are, nonetheless, also implicated.

The original idea was to use Cantata No. 60 as the musical text, and movements from this work, with its famous chorale, "Es ist genug," still provide the basic outline. Numbers from other cantatas, more appropriate to the dramatic and emotional ideas of the piece, have been substituted or interpolated.

The musical movement of the cantata has been "staged" — always within the framework of the dramatic *Affekt*. Sellars adds nothing to the music, nor does he attempt to "interpret" it — only to physicalize the intensely personal and largely internal conflicts by presenting a stage picture that is, in some sense, parallel or analogous to the music. There are really only two external features, but they are important ones. The stage pictures, the physical movement and action, are made by the same people who are singing the music; this is choreography for singers. The other feature is a constant awareness of the threads that connect this internal journey with our earlier ride on the Mahagonny life-raft.

This extraordinary double bill originated in Cambridge, Mass., a few years ago and is still in the process of accomplishing its own journey. The next stop for this production — it should properly be referred to in the singular — will be the Kennedy Center where Sellars now heads the American National Theatre project. That so extraordinary and difficult a conception will ever find a definitive form may be questioned, but in whatever stage of evolution it appears, it will astonish and stimulate.

ERIC SALZMAN  
New York



A scene from Peter Sellars' staging of *Mahagonny Songspiel* at the PepsiCo Summerfare Festival, Purchase, N.Y.

Photo by Peter Krupenye.

**Happy End.** The Wilma Theater, Philadelphia, PA. 5 June through 20 July 1985.

The Wilma Theater, a storefront noted for its innovative productions of original scripts and its "Brechtian style," this summer turned to one of the most problematic works in the Weill/Brecht/Hauptmann canon: *Happy End*. Michael Feingold's English adaptation, is a staple of regional American theaters, but it is a shaky affair whose tone veers wildly from low comedy to whisky romance to radical soapbox oratory as it attempts to entertain us, with varying degrees of success, until the next musical number comes along.

The Wilma's production was unable to resolve these contradictions. The portentous tone and pacing of much of the production, as well as the earnest efforts of Melissa Schaffer as Sister Lillian, led one to believe that director Jiri Zizka intended us to take the play seriously. Nevertheless, there were repeated intrusions which caused one to doubt the consistency of Zizka's approach. The pitiable poor who gathered at the Salvation Army were portrayed as grotesque caricatures in rubber Halloween masks. A sneering master of ceremonies (ably played by Al Bornstein) was added to introduce and comment on the action; when the same actor portrayed The Lady in Grey, one wondered if the director wasn't trying too hard to inject a note of Weimar decadence. Marica L. Ferguson played Major Stone as a barely-repressed nymphomaniac, getting tremendous laughs but sacrificing the integrity of her character. Tom Teti got off to a promising start but his hard-

boiled Bill Cracker gradually lost his resolve, making the "happy end" seem that much more arbitrary. This was a production that didn't know where its heart was; a reverent attitude is not required in producing a script of this sort, but it is reasonable for an audience to expect stylistic consistency and dramatic coherence.

Considerations of economy, space, and balance compelled the Wilma to employ a solo piano accompaniment for the show (a grant from the Kurt Weill Foundation would have subsidized the authentic seven-man orchestra, but the theater declined the grant due to lack of additional funding). Although the singers could have been drowned out in the small auditorium, it is a pity to lose the color and bite of Weill's splendid original orchestrations. Schaffer, a sometime rock singer, sang the "Sailor's Tango" an octave lower than the score indicates, in a chest tone that was powerful but sounded terribly labored; she sang "Surabaya Johnny" in the correct register with the exception of the climactic high passages in each verse, leading one to believe that musical director Rick Stoppleworth failed to comprehend the important connection between melodic contour and emotional intensity in Weill's vocal writing. Bornstein, in his first singing role, played The Fly with a neurotic quality reminiscent of Blanche du Bois and delivered "The Lily of Hell" with halting introspection instead of the fiery intensity clearly intended by the composer. Throughout the production, the performers wrestled with Feingold's nearly unsingable translation, and the rapid passages (e.g. "Song of the Big Shot," "Bilbao Song") seemed terribly awkward when not unintelligible. It is clear that a more experienced hand was needed in preparing the musical aspects of

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this production.

It is worth noting the positive audience response to *Happy End*, a production which was not without its pleasant moments. The show was well-received by the popular press, and the run was extended by several months. Brecht and Weill have not fared terribly well in Philadelphia; still fairly fresh in our memory is the Pennsylvania Opera Theater's production of *The Threepenny Opera*, notable for the excellence of its singing and the muddled thinking of its dramatic concept (the action was set in a subway tunnel under the city of Philadelphia). The Wilma Theater's *Happy End* does not goof on such a grand scale, but for an audience familiar with the true emotional and theatrical impact of Weill and Brecht, this production was a bit of a disappointment.

CHARLES GILBERT, JR.

University of Delaware

## Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny. Radio

Orchestra of the West Deutsche Rundfunk. Rheinisches Musikfest, Duisburg, 4 June 1985. Ruhrfestspiel, Recklinghausen, 5 June 1985.

The West German Radio Orchestra's concert performances of *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* (a studio production will be broadcast this winter) were, hardly surprisingly, a tremendous success with audiences. Conductor Jan Latham-König's interpretation threw the work into a surprising new light; he opened many of the "standard" cuts (but omitting the "Crane Duet") and, for once, took the tempi as slowly as the composer prescribed them. I did not time the performance, but I estimate it to have been 20% longer than the average *Mahagonny* — and that 20% made a 200% difference. Musical and textual details could be savored instead of rushed over mercilessly. No superficial "spice," no artificial good humor, no souped-up swing interfered with the ironic undercurrent of sorrow which so marks this work; the brittleness of this world of pleasure was manifest. But the music did not drag; it triumphed. Given their full due, the far-reaching melodies had more voltage and carrying power, haunting and not tickling the ears. Most importantly, *Mahagonny* was offered as a complete work, and one to be taken seriously, not as a series of hit songs with dry bits in between.

The Radio Orchestra (rather than the Symphony Orchestra) provided exactly the right ensemble: the musicians are as familiar with the classics as they are with pop music. Thus the loftier passages paid their debts to Bach or Hindemith, and the solo violin knew how to sigh, too. The brass had no difficulties with the syncopations and the jazz instruments were integrated into the orchestra in the most natural way. The banjo was an exception, being over-amplified; amplification created other problems in that the chorus was too soft and one soloist overmiked — it was clear that the radio broad-

cast took precedence over the concert, so far as the technical staff was concerned.

It is hard to say if the slow tempi were only possible by this cast of uniformly fine singers, or if the singers profited more from slow (i.e. correct) tempi: the melodies came into power and proved that Weill knew how to write brilliant vocal music. Wolfgang Neuman did not seem much like a lumberjack (especially garbed as he was in a regulation concert-opera tuxedo), but among the many Jimmy Mahoneys I have seen and heard, he made the strongest vocal impression on me. He was truly superb, in command of the character's development and sustaining long tones without effort or change of color — even the high C in his third-act aria which, in the best of cases, I have only heard yelled. Neuman sang his aria without pressing, but his desperation and fear of death were all the more palpable because he didn't employ any Caruso-style sobbing (that is Puccini's domain); this music had the great Mahlerian *Gestus*. Equally impressive was the function of Jimmy's aria as part of the dramatic whole: flowing into the powerful trial scene and a Finale like a funeral march — no, a death march. Even the girls in the reprise of the Alabama Song sent cold chills up and down the spine. And then, more broadly in tempo but without ritardando, the threatening message to the audience: "Können uns und euch und niemand helfen." The effect was to render this message undeniable: there is no help for this man or this world.

It is difficult to resist piling on the superlatives in describing how Anja Silja, as Jenny, began this apocalyptic finale. In "Denn wie man sich bettet," I was forced to abandon my earlier conceptions of this song and of the entire opera. I heard freshly something I had thought too familiar to sustain new meanings. The song has always seemed to me a gratuitous insert, a reiteration of the Havana Song as Jenny tries to get out of another unpleasant situation. Silja started off with an accentuated "Meine Herren!" in such a way that for a moment I thought she had missed the style and was attempting to deliver a highly dramatic aria. But in her maestosissimo interpretation the song became more than an aria; the little whore grew into a goddess of vengeance, a mythic Stone Guest. Compared to such a mighty, dangerous figure, Begbick looked like a small-time hustler. Silja's Jenny was neither a vamp nor a waif: her self-assurance was deadly.

The concert staging was negligible. Adolf Dresen, the stage director, contributed a few slide projections on a ridiculous screen. This was superfluous, because the soloists were so familiar with their parts that they were able to express the situations with mere gestures. To be sure, the dialogue could have been better delivered. Dresen's chief success, however, was that the soloists overcame the limitations of their evening dress, rendering sharper characterizations than one meets in most fully costumed productions.

JOSEF HEINZELMANN

Mainz

# TELEVISION

**Happy End.** "America's Musical Theater" on "Great Performances," Public Broadcasting System. Air-date to be announced.

The delightful confusion called *Happy End*, in an energetic yet uneven production by the Arena Stage of Washington, D.C., is being presented by P.B.S. in the near future (as of press time, broadcast was slated for spring, 1986 — having been delayed since fall, 1984). WGBH, the network's Boston affiliate, is the television producer for the program — "with additional funding by Milky Way and M&M/Mars" (heavens to Brecht!) — and Martha Schlamme acts as hostess, reading notes prepared by the play's translator, Michael Feingold. The difficulties of filming a live musical production in the round and in stage lighting have been overcome with relative aplomb, but the stage director, Garland Wright, has offered us only a partially successful vision of seamy Chicago lowlife and Salvation Army lassies battling each other, Cupid, and Saints Ford and Rockefeller.

Credit must be given Musical Director and Conductor Robert Fisher for a well-honed musical performance, although one suspects that many dynamic and textural delicacies were lost in the transference to video tape. Listeners familiar with the soulful pit band sound of the Twenties, however, will miss the fast vibrato and stylish phrasing so appropriate to Weill's music, and so lacking in the young crackerjack musicians of today. One wonders when the historical authenticity movement in our conservatories will catch up to the 1920s.

The singer/actors have their highs and lows. The lows I would attribute more to directorial decisions than to the performers themselves. Among the principals, Marilyn Caskey as Sister Lillian Holiday succeeds vocally but is hamstrung by stage actions such as pouring dirty water (the sea?) from a pail during the "Ah, the sea is blue, so blue" section of "Sailor's Tango." Singing the entire "Surabaya Johnny" atop a revolving stool works better, as she radiates a cool intensity that entraps both Bill Cracker and the audience. By the way, it's nice to see the sexual angle of the relationship between Lillian and Bill played up more than usual, though at times it seems a bit much.

Casey Biggs (Bill Cracker) leads a gang of actors with good comic timing and individualistic performances (watch for the hilarious repentance speech of Michael Genet as the Reverend), but who are often loud. "Bilbao Song" peaks much too early and becomes almost a vaudevillian circus rather than a reminiscence. The one stunning exception occurs in the second verse of "Mandelay Song," where Sam, portrayed by Joe Palmieri, leads a hushed gang lamenting poor Mother Goddam's Whorehouse, now underneath the bay. I got goosebumps.

The Salvation Army lackeys are led vocally by Michael Cone. With his fine tenor, Mr. Cone gives a strong performance as Brother Hannibal Jackson, shaming himself in his pants under

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the gun of The Governor (Richard Bauer) in "The Liquor Dealer's Dream." Here, at the end of Act II, Mr. Bauer also shines as he terrorizes the Mission and joins in on his favorite song. Michelle Howard (Sister Jane) sings beautifully in "Don't Be Afraid," while Elizabeth Pritchett, Susan Blommaert, and Franchelle Stewart Dorn as The Major, Sister Mary, and the barmaid Miriam turned Sister Miriam, offer fine characterizations. Ms. Blommaert must have sucked lemons for weeks for her portrayal of the prudish, priggish Sister Mary. Special mention to Charles Janasz for his sad dog Brother Ben Owens.

Act III, with its corny but irresistible "happy end," is highlighted by the aforementioned "Mandelay Song" and "Surabaya Johnny." On the opposite side of the ledger, Bill's reprise of "Song of the Big Shot" is unconvincing, as is The Fly's (Judith Anna Robert's) "Ballad of the Lily of Hell," where Ms. Roberts gets caught in a vocal no-woman's land. This is a notoriously difficult singing assignment, however, and I have yet to hear an actress give a persuasive performance of this song.

On the whole, the broadcast starts off slowly, builds up steam in the comic sections of Act II, and eventually succeeds in engaging the viewer—and listener—by the Finale. One only hopes that the viewing audience, especially those who are enjoying their first exposure to Weill (how many hundreds of thousands!!), will stay tuned and be turned on by Weill's wonderful score.

GARY S. FAGIN  
New York

## BOOKS

### Kurt Weill: Brecht Engeki Kara Broadway Musical Made

("Kurt Weill: From Brechtian Theater to Broadway Musical")

By Tatsuji Iwabuchi and Erina

Hanasaki. Tokyo: Arina Shobô, 1985.

This is the first book on Kurt Weill by Japanese authors. Owing to the revival of interest in the culture of the 1920s, his name has become well-known here, not only in Brechtian circles but also among music lovers especially. But it was not until this biography that the fragmentary images and scattered anecdotes of Kurt Weill were consistently integrated in a systematic, but none too scholarly, manner. The volume is divided into 16 chapters: "September Song" and "Moritat"; "Busoni's Masterclass"; "Weill and His Times"; "The Way to Musiktheater"; "Encounter with Brecht"; "Die Dreigroschenoper"; "Happy End"; "The New Opera Mahagonny"; "Lehrstück"; "Germany: A Winter's Tale"; "The Paris Period"; "The Way to the Promised Land"; "Knicker-

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bocker Holiday; "Weill in Wartime;" "American Opera;" and "Conclusion."

As this structure shows, the authors aim to present a "standard" biographical description of Weill rather than a new outlook with a critical basis: the book is descriptive rather than interpretative. Therefore, it doesn't go beyond the works of Ronald Sanders or Gottfried Wagner. The importance of the book in fact lies not in its scholarly value but in its stylistic simplicity, chosen by the authors for Weill's "debut" in the Japanese book market. Their plain style enables unfamiliar readers in Japan to approach easily the essence of Kurt Weill's *oeuvre*: the ambiguities between elite and popular culture, between German and American music, between art and entertainment.

Any biographer of Weill must confront the problems of the continuity and discontinuity of his musical works, from the avant-garde compositions in the Twenties to the popular musicals of the Forties. For our authors, Weill's religious consciousness displayed both in his earlier works (e.g. the "Chorale" in the Symphony No. 1) and in his later works (e.g. *The Eternal Road*) is central to the continuity of Weill's output. His interest in religion, linked with his consciousness of his Jewish origins, distinguishes him from his German and American colleagues such as Brecht, Eisler, Anderson, or Rice. Thus, rather than being political manifestos or pure entertainment, Weill's works focus on humanity itself and the question of its role in contemporary society.

The Afterword which follows this rather objective, if not neutral, biographical text offers us a sort of "confession" from Tatsuji Iwabuchi, who is also the translator of many of Weill's songs (from *Die Dreigroschenoper*, *Happy End*, etc.) and the author of several books and articles on Brecht, his predecessors, contemporaries, and successors (Büchner, Wedekind, and Dürrenmatt, to cite a few among many). According to Iwabuchi, the American Weill is less interesting than the German one because of the tediousness of the librettos Weill worked with on Broadway and in Hollywood, as contrasted with the solidness of Brecht's texts. He especially complains of a sugar-coated sentimentality which he finds in Weill's musicals.

Despite this negative attitude towards "the American Weill," the book in fact deals with his contributions to the American theater in the Thirties and Forties, a topic which has been completely ignored in Japan. This "discovery" of the non-Brechtian Weill — at least in Japan — will certainly raise questions about the broader context of transatlantic cultural intercourse in the second quarter of our century.

We can hope that the second collaboration of the authors, a book on Eisler which is announced in the Afterword, will enlarge the view of the "alternative" development in modern music and discern clearly the distinctions between these two composers, who lived so differently in the same world.

SHUHEI HOSOKAWA  
Tokyo



### Busoni the Composer.

Antony Beaumont. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985. 408 pp. \$32.50

"Ferruccio Busoni has been called the last Renaissance man. This description comes closest to his nature. When Busoni died a year ago, we did not lose a man but a standard," Weill wrote in 1925, going on to compare Busoni to Leonardo and describing not merely a revered teacher or a great composer but a phenomenon, a superman. For those who know Busoni only superficially and have been perplexed by his reputation, Beaumont's study closes a conspicuous gap, while those conversant with Busoni will find in it a number of surprises, great and small. For instance, we discover the identity of Madeline M., the American girl who called for the *Sonatina ad usum infantis*, a photograph of whom is included among the book's 43 plates; we learn that the *Sonatina seconda* originally concluded with a brilliant "al saltarello" (!); and, most importantly, we find that Busoni—contrary to all previous accounts—left sketches for the unfinished final scene of *Doktor Faust*, which Beaumont has utilized in his own completion of the opera.

"Because Busoni is not yet well known as a composer," Beaumont writes, "it seemed essential to provide a basic introduction to his mature works... A complete list of Busoni's works is also included: of the 314 pieces catalogued, I have discussed only the last 58." This may seem to give short shrift to "Busoni the composer," though, in fact, it is the only wise choice: a companion to the present volume which Beaumont has suggested he may write, dealing with the juvenilia, transcriptions, and cadenzas, might well be called "Busoni the Assembler." Accordingly, Beaumont begins with the *Konzertstück* for piano and orchestra—winner of the Rubinstein Prize in 1890—and such things as the Violin Concerto, the Second Violin

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Sonata, and the Piano Concerto, which reveal Busoni's technical grasp turning to mastery as his strong attractive features begin to emerge from the overlay of tradition. The bulk of the book, is given to the comprehensive examination of the works of Busoni's last two decades—including chapters on the *Outline of a New Aesthetic of Music* and the unpublished prose sequel of *Arléchino*—which establishes him as one of the inventors of Modernism.

Busoni was haunted by an ideal of the superhuman—represented variously by Nietzsche's *Übermensch*, Leonardo, and Faust—which prompted him to the conscious work of integration and transformation, work mirrored in the alchemy of his art through the creation of a "Faustian" musical language. Beaumont identifies no less than 23 published satellite works which contributed something to the final "auto-synthesis" (as van Dieren termed it) of *Doktor Faust*. Beaumont's command of the extensive manuscript material, his flair for expounding technical matters with a narrative flourish akin to that of Berlioz's best criticism ("an outline of the music's anatomy rather than a dissection of it"—generously helped out with 305 examples in music type), his resourcefulness in locating the telling vignette from recent and unpublished sources (for instance, in a brief chronicle of the tense relationship with Schoenberg), and his easy reference to the literature, art, and architecture which informed the composer's imagination, lend his account of Busoni's hermetic endeavor a vivid, compelling—sometimes harrowing—forward thrust, transcending the dully elaborate dissertation style customary in this field, to achieve a masterly work of humane literature which admirably complements (and sometimes supplants) E.J. Dent's biography, adds higher lights and deeper shadows to Stuckenschmidt's sketch in *Busoni: Chronicle of a European*, and claims a place beside such classics as Barzun's *Berlioz and the Romantic Century* and the Stravinsky/Craft volumes.

The book itself is handsomely produced, handily organized, and thoroughly indexed. The works discussed are listed headnote style at the beginning of each chapter with such basic information as the dedication, dates of composition and first performance, publisher, instrumentation of orchestral works, location of the manuscript, and approximate duration. Frequent "notes for performers"—advising, for example, of unpublished revisions in the second Elegy or that certain low notes for celesta in the *Berceuse élégiaque* are possible only on Berman (Schiedmayer) instruments—make this an indispensable volume for the musician. Indispensable, too, for everyone concerned with the origins and history of Modernism, about which this book has much to reveal.

Tucked away in the select bibliography is notice that Beaumont has in preparation a volume of selected Busoni letters. One can only look forward to this with the keenest anticipation.

ADRIAN CORLEONIS  
Klamath Falls, Oregon

## Brecht's Dreigroschenoper. Edited by Werner Hecht. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1985.

Whose "Dreigroschenoper"? The cast-list for the premiere, which took place on 31 August 1928, is headed with the following description: "*Die Dreigroschenoper* (The Beggar's Opera). A play with music in one prelude and 8 scenes after the English of John Gay. (Interpolated ballads by François Villon and Rudyard Kipling.) Translation: Elisabeth Hauptmann. Adaptation: Brecht. Music: Kurt Weill." And so end the names of those who can be said, in the traditional sense, to have contributed creatively to the work's genesis. Thus it represents, as Brecht himself had to concede, more than one person's "intellectual property." By citing Brecht's name only, one could argue, the title of Werner Hecht's anthology of materials on the *Dreigroschenoper* seems as absurd as a book that specifies as the author of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* not Mozart but his librettist Gottlob Stephanie. True, the *Dreigroschenoper* cannot claim to be an opera in any strict sense; yet it must be closer to a *Singspiel*, surely, than to a mere play with incidental music. Indeed, the music is anything but incidental; it is, arguably, the principal factor behind the work's phenomenal success and the chief reason why it is still remembered today. So why the book's title? Because, it has to be said, it fulfills what one would normally expect of it: namely, to reflect the book's contents, or, in this case, its bias.

The chapter entitled "On the Music" occupies only a tenth of the book's pages, while the initial chapter, "On the Genesis," which is twice that length, concerns only Brecht's side of the collaboration. Here it is especially irritating to read letters from Brecht to Weill but not to be offered the reply or, where appropriate, at least to be informed that the reply has been lost.) Nonetheless, having combed the Brecht Archive in East Berlin, Hecht has accumulated materials, some hitherto unpublished, that possess considerable value for an understanding of the work's beginnings as well as the circumstances of some later revisions. Of particular interest, in addition to some suppressed songs, is a version of the last scene dating from May 1928, when the work still bore the title *Die Ludenoper* ("The Pimps' Opera"). At one point, for a couple of pages, the scene produces a comical but crude alienation effect, with the actors unexpectedly stepping out of their roles to engage in a debate with "the voice of the author" on the play's ending. The actor playing

Macheath asks, "Do you think the people here pay eight Marks in order to see the truth? They pay their money for not seeing the truth." The actor playing Peachum agrees. The ending should be "satisfying," he insists, and the proposed hanging called off. Students of epic theater will, of course, find this irresistible.

The section on "theater work" documents only three productions: the premiere; Giorgio Strehler's 1956 production for Milan; and the 1960 production at the Berliner Ensemble, which had the same director as the premiere, Erich Engel. Here, as in the next section, "Interpretations," the editor includes his own contributions ("Engel probiert die *Dreigroschenoper*" and "*Die Dreigroschenoper* und ihr Urbild"). He fails however to mention that both pieces were published in his book *Sieben Studien über Brecht* (Frankfurt am Main, 1972), thereby creating the misleading impression that they were written specifically for this volume. The last section comprises essays and documents on the *Dreigroschenfilm*, and an appendix rounds off the book with brief accounts of the work's sources; a "curriculum vitae" of the work from 1728 to 1963; cast-lists of the three productions discussed; and a select bibliography.

Like Hecht's own contributions, much of the material will already be familiar: snippets of theory from Brecht and Weill, interpretations and analysis from Adorno and Bloch, and Fritz Henning's "Die Musik Kurt Weills," which is excerpted from his *Das grosse Brecht-Liederbuch* (Frankfurt am Main, 1984). This last article is full of pertinent but aphoristic facts which ideally require following up and substantiating, as do Henning's critical judgments. For example:

If on the one hand there was the street ballad as a model, then on the other opera seria; Weill led the former into the language of art and opened up the latter to popular language. Meanwhile, the music bore traces of its own destruction; the *Dreigroschenoper* was little suited to serve as a model and has never been imitated with success.

As one might expect from a collection of assorted materials, the book as a whole is necessarily a mixed bag. The bias implied in the title reaches its intolerable limit with the reprinting of the notorious statement from Brecht's *Arbeitsjournal* declaring Weill's "principle" to have in fact been Brecht's own invention: "I told him [an undisclosed musician] how I met Weill as a pupil of Busoni and Schreker [sic], as author of atonal, psychological opera, and dictated to him, bar by bar, by whistling and above all performing, etc." Thankfully, apart from such undiluted claptrap, Hecht's anthology also presents material, both well known and unfamiliar, that might form part of more even-handed and judicious assessments of the Brecht-Weill partnership.

STEPHEN HINTON  
Berlin

# RECORDINGS

## "LOVE LIFE" ON DISC

There exists no recording of *Love Life*, Alan Jay Lerner and Kurt Weill's extravagant experiment in curdled Americana. Nor are there any tantalizing glimpses of the original (and only) production available through recordings made by its stars (Nanette Fabray and Ray Middleton). A victim of the 1948 ASCAP strike, *Love Life* exists only in the memory of those who were there, at the Forty-Sixth Street Theatre, sometime between October 1948 and June 1949.

Nonetheless, a determined musical theater buff can get some sense of the show by assembling the various recordings made considerably after the fact. These recordings frequently play fast and loose with tempi and interpretation, consistently ignore Weill's original orchestrations, and often truncate material. But they are better than nothing.

The best collection in terms of quality is to be found on an album entitled LYRICS BY LERNER [DRG MRS-903, reviewed in the last issue of the *Newsletter*], recorded in the early fifties and featuring Lerner performing his own songs, assisted by Kaye Ballard and a male quartet, and accompanied by Billy Taylor and a jazz ensemble consisting of piano, bass, guitar, and percussion. While these *are* jazz interpretations, they rarely violate the integrity of the songs. Half of the album's 14 offerings come from *Love Life*, and the most satisfying cuts are Lerner's. His phrasing of "Love Song," for example, is particularly moving, but even so, he does not sing the penultimate interlude and final chorus of the song, and the verse is a shortened version of the one that appears in Weill's score. His version of "Progress" (an ensemble number in

the show, here rendered by solo and ensemble) is similarly well-phrased and manages a properly subtle edge, yet it too is shortened. The quartet goes it alone in an edited version of "Economics," the vocal arrangement retaining much of Weill's witty original but the jazzy musical accompaniment (although expert and enjoyable in its own right) is a far cry from Weill.

The four other songs go to Kaye Ballard. She is delightful in a snazzy rendition of "Green-Up Time," in which she manages to downplay the "cuteness" of the song. Still, we hear only one chorus of the lyric and the original verse is replaced by a much shorter and completely different one, obviously written with sheet music in mind. The attractive simplicity of her "Mr. Right" is, unfortunately, severely damaged by the decision to jettison nearly the entire second half of the song, which moves into an almost manic swing tempo and is one of the best examples anywhere of music commenting on character. Without this contrast, Ballard's simplicity is left to twist slowly in the wind.

Ballard's versions of "Susan's Dream" and "Here I'll Stay" are the least successful cuts on the album. Both seem to be attempts at providing her with another "Lazy Afternoon"—aiming for dreamy, but settling for dreary. In the case of "Susan's Dream" (cut from the show and sung originally by a male quartet), the repetitiveness of the vocal line suggests the need for harmonizing voices to keep things interesting. (The problem is more than just slowness, as Martha Schlamme's up-tempo, soprano version [MGME 4052P] also fails to hold together.) "Here I'll Stay" is simply a miscalculation, as the torchy approach drains a robustly romantic song of its power.

The song is also missing both its verse and interlude.

The other major collection of recorded material from *Love Life* can be found in Ben Bagley's "Revisited" series, spread over three albums: ALAN JAY LERNER REVISITED [Painted Smiles PS 1337], and KURT WEILL REVISITED Vol. I [PS 1375] and Vol. II [PS 1376]. The Lerner album was recorded over ten years before the Weill albums, yet they share a consistency of tone. That tone, unfortunately, veers dangerously close to camp all too often. In his liner notes, Bagley claims to "have recorded practically every song from this wonderful show." Though his enthusiasm is admirable, his claim is exaggerated. He has, however, recorded eight songs from the finished show, two that were cut out-of-town, and one which never even made it into rehearsal, for a total of 11.

The Lerner album contains the best-known material. The versions of "Progress" (featuring Nancy Walker and Roddy McDowall with chorus) and "Economics" (Dorothy Loudon and chorus) are at least more complete (one stanza is still missing from "Economics") than the ones offered on LYRICS BY LERNER. But Norman Paris' orchestrations sound frenzied and fussy, and the performers respond accordingly. More successful are Jerry Orbach's renditions of "Love Song" (again incomplete) and "This Is the Life" (which Lerner and Weill wrote in rehearsal as an "aria" expressly for Ray Middleton.) Orbach's interpretations never progress beyond the competently straightforward and the orchestrations lack Weill's astringency and intelligence. Still, better dull than distorted.

The best thing on the album, though, is Dorothy Loudon's "Mr. Right," described by Bagley as "Betty Hutton-ish." Loudon's interpretation is too broad to work in the show, but it beautifully highlights the satire in the song and is delivered with energy and style. It is also complete!

The WEILL REVISITEDs are just as spotty. Most successful are the cuts with Jo Sullivan and John Reardon. Sullivan is charming on "What More Do I Want?," a swirling waltz that was dropped for the show while it was being written (and more than likely replaced by either "Here I'll Stay" or "I Remember It Well"). Her duet with Reardon on "I Remember It Well" is a bit too heavy and sentimental, but the loveliness of the melody is well served. And it is fascinating to hear the germ of an idea that didn't really bear fruit dramatically until Lerner re-used it in *Gigi* (with a different lyric and a new melody by Loewe). Reardon is also featured in "The Locker Room," a long sequence blending music and dialogue, presented here in a considerably edited and consequently confusing version, and his booming voice is well suited to the hyper-masculine music. Less apt is the light baritone of Arthur Siegel in the part of the *basso profundo* masseur. Finally, in an attempt to create some sense of continuity, someone has been fit to write four uncredited



"Punch and Judy Get a Divorce," ballet sequence from the first (and only) production of Weill and Lerner's *Love Life* (1948). (Scenery by Boris Aronson, Choreography by Michael Kidd)

lines of lyric, which give themselves away glaringly by attempting to rhyme "gore" and "masseur," a highly unlikely transgression for someone with Lerner's command of craft.

Siegel uses his voice to better advantage in a shortened "My Kind of Night," communicating the charm of this easygoing paean to misguided contentment. However, shorn of its companion piece, "Woman's Club Blues," it loses much of its irony.

Chita Rivera whispers her way through "You Understand Me So," another song cut out-of-town. This deliberately insincere love song, originally sung separately by Fabray and Middleton (to the objects of their respective adulterous attentions), seems rather bland when presented without its subtext. Ann Miller bulldozes her way through half of "Is It Him, Or Is It Me?" Bagley showed good sense in choosing this version, which is considerably better than the out-of-town rewrite, though why he lopped off the second half (containing crucial character development) is a mystery.

The Off-Broadway cast album of *BERLIN TO BROADWAY WITH KURT WEILL* [Paramount Records PAS 4000] offers truncated versions of "Progress" and "Love Song." The former is reasonably well performed and features a musical arrangement far closer to Weill's than other versions. The latter is mistakenly made to serve as a sort of mini-*finale ultimo* for the entire cast.

There are undoubtedly numerous instances of the two hit songs, "Here I'll Stay" and "Green-Up Time," showing up on various pop albums. Felicia Sanders recorded an album of Weill songs [Time 52007] that included them both and must be heard to be believed. Suffice it to say that the album is a genuine historical artifact of the early Sixties. The best available recording of "Green-Up Time" is on *THE LOTTE LENYA ALBUM* [Columbia Masterworks M6 30087]. Although the musical arrangements and choral support border on the cloying, Lenya's singing is buoyant even when her accent seems distinctly out of place. The sheet music verse is here used somewhat less intrusively as an interlude between choruses. Unfortunately, we are still limited to one chorus of the lyric and we are denied hearing the original verse.

Of course, even if one assembled the best versions of the available material in the proper order, one would not have anything resembling a definitive or complete recording. Much remains unrecorded, including the extended opening sequence and the ambitious Minstrel Show Finale (a good 20 minutes long). But one can begin to get a sense of the incredible variety of styles used by Weill as well as a sense of the function of the split-level score (book song followed by comment song). Until a visionary entrepreneur underwrites a studio recording or Liz Robertson decides she wants to star in a revival, we'll just have to make do.

ERIK HAAGENSEN

New York

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## DISSERTATIONS

Cook, Susan. "Opera During the Weimar Republic: The *Zeitoper* of Ernst Krenek, Kurt Weill, and Paul Hindemith." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1985.

Gresham, Jon. "Aspects of Style in Five Works for Winds by Kurt Weill." DMA thesis, Cincinnati-College Conservatory of Music. [in progress]

## RECORDINGS

*Brecht/D'Andrea Konzert*. Nicole and Oswald D'Andrea, 2 pianos. (Les Uns par les Autres MNO 12061)

*September Song and Other American Theatre Songs of Kurt Weill*. Lotte Lenya. (CBS MMP 39513) Reissued in Europe, remastered.

*Threepenny Opera*. Original cast album, Theatre de Lys. (Polydor 422-820 260-1) Reissue.

*Willem Breuker Collective*. Willem Breuker Kollektief. (About Time). Includes jazz arrangements of *Happy End* songs.

# PERFORMANCES

## AUSTRIA

*Berliner Requiem*, Vienna, Brahms-Saal, Musikverein, Ensemble Kontrapunkt, Beginning March 3, 1986  
*Die Dreigroschenoper*, Linz, Landestheater, Beginning Nov. 16, 1985

## DENMARK

*Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*, Copenhagen, Royal Danish Guards, Aug. 13, 1985

## ENGLAND

"Barbara Song," Bath Festival, John Harle's Berliner Band, June 3, 1985  
*Berliner Requiem*, London, Royal Albert Hall, London Sinfonietta, P. Langridge, S. Roberts, M. Rippon; David Atherton, cond., Sept. 4, 1985  
 Concert, London, Studio '68 International Theatre Festival, Gisela May, July 13, 1985  
*Happy End*, London, Kensington and Chelsea Library, Studio '68, May, 1985.  
*Happy End*, Tour, Royal Shakespeare Co.; Di Trevis, Stuart Hoppe, dirs.; Tony Castro, cond., Corby, Aug. 30, 31; Redruth, Sept. 2, 3; Newton Abbott, Sept. 6, 7; Tiverton, Sept. 11, 12; Castleford, Sept. 19-21; Workington, Sept. 24, 25; Chorley, Oct. 3-5; Crawley, Oct. 10-12; Grimsby, Oct. 17-19; Lincoln, Oct. 24-26; Walsall, Oct. 28-30; Mansfield, Nov. 8, 9; Belfast, Northern Ireland, Nov. 15-17; Alton, Nov. 22, 23; Ryde, Nov. 29, 30; Stratford-on-Avon, Dec. 9-Jan. 25, 1986  
*Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*, London, Serenade Concerts, Wimbledon Symphony Orchestra, June 19, 1985  
*Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*, Royal Albert Hall, London Sinfonietta, David Atherton, cond., Sept. 4, 1985  
*Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*, London Sinfonietta, Diego Masson, cond., Feb. 12, 1986  
*Symphony No. 2*, London, Royal Academy of Music, Sinfonia Orchestra, Lawrence Leonard, cond., July 8, 1985  
*The Threepenny Opera*, Oxford, St. Aldate's, St. John's Mimmers, May 7-11, 1985  
*Violin Concerto*, Leamington, Leamington Chamber Orchestra, P. Ibbotson; A. Mogrelia, cond., May 19, 1985

## FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

*Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, Berlin, Spiegelzeit, Cornelia Niemann, May 12, 1985  
*Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, Bielefeld, Bühnen der Stadt, D. de Villiers, dir., "Scenic Concert"  
*Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, Bergedorf, students; U. Becker, dir., May 3, 5, 7, 1985  
*Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, Hamburg, Kampnagelfabrik, June 1985  
*Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, Munich, Staatstheater am Gärtnerplatz, J. Herz, dir., in repertory June, July, 1985  
*Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, Duisburg, Mercatorhalle, Rundfunk Orchester, J. Latham-König, cond.; A. Silja; A. Dresen; dir.; June 4, 1985  
*Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, Neu-Insensburg, touring company of the Pfalztheater, February, 1986  
 Cabaret—"Brecht-Chansonettes," Cologne, Senftöpfchen, Ina and Devina, May 21-June 5, 1985 (also in Berlin, other cities)  
 Concert, Clausthal, Gisela May, May 21, 1985  
 Concert, Freiburg, Zelt-Musik-Festival, Sonja Kehler, June 10, 1985  
 Concert, Dortmund, Kleine Westfalenhalle, Milva, Nov. 10, 1985  
*Down in the Valley*, Büttgen, Gymnasium, students; Peter Port, May 19, 1985  
*Die Dreigroschenoper*, Innsbruck, Tiroler Landestheater, May-

June, 1985

*Die Dreigroschenoper*, Kassel, Staatstheater, Heinz Kreidl, dir., June, 1985  
*Die Dreigroschenoper*, Frankfurt, Schauspiel Frankfurt, I. Waszerkas, dir.; Perfs. 1, 6, 11 July, 1985  
*Die Dreigroschenoper*, Emden, Landesbühne Wilmershaven, Oct. 22, 1985  
*Happy End*, Oberhausen, Theater Oberhausen, May 30-31, June 1, 8, 11-12, 14-16  
*Der Jasager*, Altona (near Hamburg), Paulus-Kirche, June, 1985  
*Kiddush*, Frankfurt, Hochschule for Musik, Musica Judaica, Linda Horowitz, dir., June 1985  
*Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*, Stams, Collegium St. Fideli, Dominik Wyss, May 3, 4 1985  
*Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*, Saarbrücken, Musikhochschule, Students, July 4, 1985  
*Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*, (ballet), Trossingen, Murray Louis Dance Troupe, Aug. 28, 29, 1985  
*Kurt-Weill-Revue*, Wiesbaden, Hessischen Staatstheater, Maifestspiele, Guest by Theater des Westens, Berlin, Nicole Heesters, May 22, 23, 1985  
*Kurt-Weill-Revue*, Hamburg, Guest by Theater des Westens, Berlin, Nicole Heesters, May 30-June 9, 1985  
*Kurt-Weill-Revue*, Berlin, Theater des Westens, Ingrid Caven, June 14-22, 1985  
*Die sieben Todsünden*, Various cities for 1986 tour, Milva  
 "So ist die Lieb" (revue), Mannheim, Kunsthalle, May 1985  
*Symphony, no. 2*, Würzburg, Hochschule für Musik, February, 1986

## FRANCE

Concert, Paris, Théâtre de Paris, Sonia Rykiel, June, 1985  
 "Derniers tangos" (ballet), Strasbourg, Opéra du Rhin, June 18, 1985  
*Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*, Murray Louis Dance Troupe, Tour including Annecy, Dijon, and Strasbourg, Sept. 1985  
*Die sieben Todsünden*, Ballet du Nord, J.-C. Maillot, chor., June, 1986  
*Vom Tod im Wald*, Paris, London Sinfonietta, April 9, 1986

## HONG KONG

*Happy End*, Shonshon Theater, Vicky Wi, dir., Summer 1985.  
 Funded by the Goethe Institute

## IRELAND

*Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, Wexford, Wexford Festival, Theatre Royal, S. Jolly, cond.; D. Donellan, dir.; S. Zannoth, T. Spencer, N. Willis; Oct. 25, 28, 31, Nov. 3, 1985.

## ISRAEL

Weill Evening: *Berliner Requiem*, "Pantomime I" from *Der Protagonist*, *Die sieben Todsünden*, Jerusalem, Israel Festival, Israeli Sinfonietta, D. Alden, dir., June 1-3, 1985

## ITALY

Concert, Milan, Piccolo Teatro, Hélène Delavault, May, 1985  
 Concert, Rome, Citta di Castello, Gisela May, Aug. 21, 1985  
 Concert, Naples, Villa Patrizzi, Antonella d'Agostino, June 5  
*Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*, Genoa, Orchestra la Sampdor, K. Arp, cond.; June 19, 1985  
*Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*, Frascati, Estate Tuscolana, Grand Ensemble, A. Franceschelli, July 7, 1985  
 Recital, Spoleto, Festival of Two Worlds, Joy Bogen, soprano, July 11, 1985  
*Die sieben Todsünden*, Naples, Teatro da Camera Villa Patrizzi, Antonella D'Agostino, June 20, 1985  
*Die sieben Todsünden*, Venice, Biennale Teatro, Wuppertaler

Tanztheater, Pina Bausch, chor., May 24-26, 1985  
*Die sieben Todsünden*, Rome, Teatro all'Argentina, Wuppertaler  
 Tanztheater, Pina Bausch, chor., June 19, 20, 1985  
 Songs and Seminar, Carpi (Modena), Music Festival at Carpi,  
 Milva, Sept.-Oct. 1985  
 Weill Concert, Venice, Teatro la Fenice, Wuppertaler Bühne,  
 May 24-26, 1985

## JAPAN

Televised Weill/Brecht Concert, Tokyo, Japanese Philharmonic,  
 Nina Hagen, vocalist, Aug. 20, 1985

## NETHERLANDS

Concert, Leyden, featuring *Frauentanz*, Suite from *Der Silbersee*,  
*Vom Tod im Wald*, Weill/Berio "Grand Lustucru," May 29,  
 1985  
*Der Silbersee*, Amsterdam, Netherlands Sinfonie, Ashkenazy,  
 cond., Beginning Nov. 1, 1985.

## SCOTLAND

*Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, Tour of the Scottish Op-  
 era; E. Ross, F. Palmer; S. Rattle, cond.; D. Alden, dir.; Glas-  
 gow, Mar. 5, 8, 25, 27, 29; Edinburgh, Mar. 12, 15; Aberdeen,  
 Mar. 19, 22; Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, Apr. 2, 5, 1986.  
 Concert, East Kilbride, Scottish National Orchestra, Elise Ross,  
 sop., May 22, 1985

## SWEDEN

*Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*, Aarhus, Aarhus Symphony Orch, Ole  
 Schmidt, May 23, 1985

## SWITZERLAND

*Berliner Requiem*, Geneva, Collegium Academicum, Michel Du-  
 monthay, May 19, 1985  
*Die Dreigroschenoper*, Gossau, Gymnasium Friedburg, Beginning  
 Nov. 8, 1985  
*Kleine Dreigroschenmusik* (ballet), Murray Louis Dance Troupe,  
 in Geneva and Lausanne, Sept. 1985

## TASMANIA

*Die Dreigroschenoper*, Newton, Tasmania, May, 1985

## UNITED STATES

Ballet: "Three Penny Dances," Glassboro, Glassboro State Col-  
 lege, New Jersey State Ballet, Norbert Vesak, chor., May 19,  
 1985  
*Berlin to Broadway*, Providence, Barker Playhouse, June, 1985  
*Berlin to Broadway*, San Francisco area, Marin Community Play-  
 house, Marin Civic Light Opera, June 28-July 6, 1985  
*Berlin to Broadway*, Los Angeles, Zephyr Theater, extended run.  
 Cabaret, New York, Upstairs at Greene Street, Ellen Foley,  
 throughout summer, 1985  
 Concert, Syracuse, Landmark Theatre Grand Promena, Syra-  
 cuse Vocal Ensemble, May 12, 1985  
 Concerts, Purchase, NY, Summerfare Festival, Gisela May, July  
 4-6, 1985  
 Concerts, National Chorale, Martin Josman, dir.; Stamford, CT,  
 Cove Island Park, July 21, 1985; New York, Damrosch Park,  
 July 30, 1985; Westchester, NY, Westchester Festival, Aug. 1,  
 1985  
*Down in the Valley*, San Angelo, TX, Angelo State University, May  
 2, 4, 1985  
*Down in the Valley*, Bartlesville, OK, Bartlesville Wesleyan Col-  
 lege, May 3, 1985  
*Down in the Valley*, Wheatridge, CO, Northland Chorale, May 17,  
 18, 24, 25, 1985  
*Down in the Valley*, Laurel, MD, Oaklands Presbyterian Church,  
 June 8, 9, 1985  
*Down in the Valley*, Flagstaff, Northern Arizona University, stu-

dents, August 9, 1985

*Down in the Valley*, PBS, television rebroadcast, Aug. 9, 1985  
*Happy End*, Philadelphia, Wilma Theatre, dir., Jiri  
 Zizka, May 21 through June 30, 1985  
*Happy End*, Los Angeles, The Powerhouse Theatre, Pacific The-  
 atre Ensemble, M. Tulin, S. Smythe, June 18-July 20, 1985  
*Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*, Chicago, Chicago Symphony Or-  
 chestra Hall, Chicago Symphony Orch., Erich Leinsdorf, con.,  
 May 23-25, 1985  
*Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*, New York, Alice Tully Hall, Concordia  
 Chamber Ensemble, Marin Alsop, cond., June 7, 1985  
*Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*, Purchase, NY, SUNY, Philharmonia  
 Virtuosi, Richard Kapp, cond., Feb. 23, 1986  
*Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*, Purchase, Summerfare Festival,  
 Quatuor de Saxophones Contemporain, July 7, 1985  
*Knickerbocker Holiday*, Jacksonville, Jacksonville University, stu-  
 dents, W. Vessels, mus.; D. Sikes, dir., April 17, 18, 1986  
 "Mack the Knife," performed by the Boston Pops, John Williams,  
 cond., on tour, Summer, 1985  
 "Mack the Knife," performed by Liberace on tour, Summer, 1985  
*Mahagonny Songspiel*, New York, 92nd Street YMHA, Y  
 Chamber Symphony, Gerard Schwarz, cond, March 15, 16,  
 1986  
*Mahagonny Songspiel*, Purchase, Summerfare Festival, Peter  
 Sellars, dir.; July 25-28, 1985  
 Revue, visiting nursing homes in various NY cities, AMAS Rep.  
 Theater, Rosetta LeNoire, dir., Summer, 1985  
 "Saga of Jenny," Davenport, IA, Quad Cities Symphony "Pops"  
 Concert, Mary Beth Peel, James Dixon, cond. Sept. 8, 1985  
*The Seven Deadly Sins and Fürchtet Euch Nicht*, Brooklyn Acad-  
 emy of Music, Next Wave Festival, Wuppertaler Tanztheater,  
 Pina Bausch, chor., Oct. 17-22, 1985  
*Street Scene*, Hanover, NH, Dartmouth College, July 19-Aug. 24,  
 1985  
*Street Scene*, Chautauqua, NY, Spiro Malas, Karen Huffstodt;  
 Cynthia Auerbach, dir.; John De Main, cond.; July 26, 29, 1985  
*Street Scene*, Rutgers, NJ, Rutgers Univ. Opera Workshop, Valo-  
 rie Goodall, Nov. 1986  
*The Threepenny Opera*, Los Angeles, Loyola High School, May 1-  
 12, 1985  
*The Threepenny Opera*, East-West Players, East West Players,  
 May 22-July 7, 1985  
*The Threepenny Opera*, Kent, Kent School, May 26-28, 1985  
*The Threepenny Opera*, San Francisco, Eureka Theatre Company,  
 Oskar Eustis, dir.; June 26 through Aug. 11, 1985  
*The Threepenny Opera*, Holland, Hope College Summer Theatre,  
 June 28-Aug. 31, 1985  
*The Threepenny Opera*, Villanova, PA, Villanova Univ. Summer  
 Theater, July, 1985  
*The Threepenny Opera*, Shoreham, Shoreham Wading River  
 School, Aug. 23, 24, 1985  
*The Threepenny Opera*, Carbondale, Southern Illinois University,  
 Oct. 3-6, 1985  
*The Threepenny Opera*, Western Illinois University, students, Oct.  
 31-Nov. 2, 1985  
*The Threepenny Opera*, Des Moines, Drake University, Nov. 15-  
 23, 1985  
*The Threepenny Opera*, Ashland, Oregon Shakespeare Festival,  
 Andrew Traister, dir., 85/86 Season  
*The Threepenny Opera*, Rochester, NY, Opera Theater of Roches-  
 ter, Jan. 25-26, 1986  
*The Threepenny Opera*, Providence, RI, Brown Univ., James O.  
 Barnhill, dir., Feb., 1986  
*The Threepenny Opera*, Orlando, FL, Good Shepherd Church,  
 Feb. 28, Mar. 1, 2, 1986  
*The Threepenny Opera*, North Babylon, NY, Our Lady of Grace  
 Players, Mar. 8-9, 15-16, 1986  
*The Threepenny Opera*, Kansas City, Lyric Opera, April 16, 18, 21,  
 26, 1986  
*The Threepenny Opera*, San Bernardino, California State Univ., A.  
 S. Rudisill, dir., May 29 to June 7, 1986  
*Violin Concerto*, Cincinnati, University of Cincinnati, May 21, 1985  
*Violin Concerto*, Milwaukee, Milwaukee Chamber Ensemble; R.  
 Evans, violonist, April 3, 1986

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