next section, "In all of Italy," falls clearly into two-bar phrases, and its stepwise movement has a contrasting legato flow.

The tarantella is an intentionally lony choice for a big vocal ensemble ("The Nighttime Is No Time for Thinking"). The frantic speed of this dance idiom has rarely allowed its use in vocal music. In Rossini's song, "La Danza," the only familiar example, the composer does not assign a new syllable to each note, and some of the text is "la, la, la." An intelligible rendition of the Firebrand tarantella, with its haitflement of syllables, would be an entertaining tour de force. The dance supposedly originated as a cure for tarantula bites. This tarantella is enhanced, therefore, by the text's ludicrous assumption that the dance is conventionally "romantic" ("Heaven, you quickly discover ... never too far from your lover"), as well as by the euphonious rhymes: "Dreamily, dreamily, peaches and creamily."

The soldiers' chorus, "Just in Case," is, naturally, a march, but the wildly jangling chords of the verse, "We're soldiers of the Duchy, whose Duke is very touchy," already convey less than unshakable patriotism. The chorus begins with apparent militaristic fervor: "On to Pisal - On to Verona!" but at the phrase, "on to, on to, on to..." the repetition of two notes, increasing in speed two measures later, expresses the soldiers' genuine sentiment: pentulant reluctance. The text continues: "We don't want to, want to, want to..." Surely this piece would be fun on stage.

The Firebrand of Florence is an uneven work. Because the score is so different from any other Weill, the expedient of "pastiching" a revivat version is out of the question. Advantageous cuts, however, could certainly be made. Granting the libretto's weaknesses, it still has much to recommend it. (Edwin Justus Mayer was not an insignificant figure; he wrote the screen play for Be or Not to Be, a fairly familiar technique and structure by resorting to derivations of the terms "cubism" and the - to me - appalling neologism "Kubertäuschung" and its v.t. "Kubierung" - inevitably occasions reflections like: "Must be a variation on what you do to vegetables (dicing); or "We'll, I suppose it's a squared version of theater-in-the-round."

One wishes that, rather than indulging in this fondness for abstractions, the author had concentrated instead on other, more immediately relevant and substantial matters which he either touches on briefly or ignores altogether. There may be much that is unfairly excluded ("cubistic music," "cubizing of the theater; the - to me - appalling neologism "Kubertäuschung" and its v.t. "Kubierung") inevitably occasions reflections like: "Must be a variation on what you do to vegetables (dicing); or "We'll, I suppose it's a squared version of theater-in-the-round."

There is no doubt that Brecht - or rather his painstaking elucidators - is partly to blame for this, but only partly. Throughout this study one senses the chill hands of Adorno and Hegel grasping a half-formed theory of the shared outlooks might have found its place in the study? Often one feels the author is more concerned with - as Brecht puts it in a poem: "[Making] obscurely more obscure and [preferring] to believe the absurd rather than to seek for a sufficient cause." At times both Weill's and Brecht's pronouncements on Gestus and gestische Musik are puzzling enough without the researcher seeking to make them even more abstruse.

And while I should not like to argue in favor of a rigidly historicist-empiricist approach to
BOOKS
tellectual topics, I part company with an author who can solemnly assert:

...whether Brecht came across the term Verfremdung in Moscow or derived it from the Marxian concept of alienation, whether he came on it in the works of Francis Bacon or Nietzsche, learned of it from Karl Korsch or Hegel... is as of correspondingly secondary importance as the question whether Stravinsky might have had intellectual contact with the Russian formalists or not (p. 74).

Throwaway assertions like this, together with asides that 'Wagner created the most comprehensive music-theatrical representation of Mahagonny with The Ring' (p. 183), leave one simply bemused at the author's sense of priorities, especially when, some pages later (p. 189) he provides an intelligent and revealing analysis of Weill's use of modified da capo rhythms (especially the bole) in the overture to Mahagonny.

Readers and critics looking to tackle the difficult question of the relationship between Verfremdung and Gestus would do well to reflect on the Brecht quotation cited on p. 103 of Engelhardt's study:

'Kinjeh told how he had once dreamed that a benevolent government, because of the proliferation of poesievery, had introduced strict examinations for the practice of this art... And in the end the public practice of poetry was permitted only to those who could write down the most observations in the shortest form. One should like to think that had Brecht foreseen the possible wider applications of this remark to criticism he might have thought twice about ever using terms like Verfremdung and Gestus.'

MICHAEL MORLEY
Flinders University
Of South Australia


736 pages.

Lasst euch nicht verführen is a very long book with some very strong good points and some equally strong failings. Its author describes it as 'ein Versuch im Brechtschen Stil' ('an attempt, in Brecht's sense,' p. 20), but the scope of the work takes it beyond even Brecht's enlarged sense of the word. Dümling's attempt to encompass the background and effects of Brecht's involvement with musical matters has produced the most ambitious work of scholarship to have addressed this generally neglected area. It is a formidable overview of Brecht's practice and theories of music which can command attention, if for that reason, demands a thorough critical analysis. For reasons of length, however, I can only begin that analysis here. I must necessarily focus on Dümling's treatment of Weill and, therefore, on the worst of what Lasst euch nicht verführen has to offer.

Dümling takes a biographical approach to his subject, weaving the history of Brecht's musical activities into a panoramic view of his life. Each of the book's four parts is devoted to a particular phase in the development of Brecht's musical interests. Part I details the early musical influences on Brecht and his first uses of music as poet, 'composer,' singer and playwright. Here, too, Dümling develops the recurrent theme which gives the book its title, namely: that Brecht feared being seduced (or misled, 'verführt') by his emotions and, being particularly sensitive to the affective power of music, sought to control musical expression along with the other subjective aspects of his life (see pp. 11, 97-114).

In the remaining sections Dümling chronicles the consistency in his involvement with Brecht's musical practice as he sought to win a succession of composers to his theories of music for the Epic Theatre. With special attention to Eisler's role, Dümling shows how Brecht's fundamental skepticism toward music remained constant even as he developed a more sophisticated appreciation for the composer's art. Throughout these four sections Dümling displays admirable skill in depicting the historical forces which impinged upon Brecht's work. The reader should be warned, however, that Dümling frequently takes Brecht's statements about music out of their historical context to support his case. In a fifth section Dümling attempts to demonstrate Brecht's continuing influence upon music in personal interviews with three contemporary composers. The book then concludes with an extended appendix containing a short chronology of Brecht's life along with the end notes, bibliography and indexes.

One of the strongest points of this book is the vast array of resources Dümling marshals in support of his position and the way in which he weaves his facts and opinions into an almost seamless narrative. At the same time, this aspect gives rise to the greatest failing of Lasst euch nicht verführen, because Dümling's command of his sources is sometimes weak and usually selective, and his narrative 'seduces' the reader into the quite un-Brechtian act of swallowing the author's arguments uncritically. (This is encouraged by placement of the notes at the end of the book, where they are buried amid the other appendices.) Even a knowledgeable reader is apt to overlook flaws in Dümling's presentation, and a naive reader is likely to accept that presentation not as an 'attempt' but as gospel.

What leads Dümling astray is his desire to provide definitive answers for every possible question and to tie these answers inexorably to the overall theme of the book. He is not interested merely in exposing difficult problems regarding Brecht's attitudes toward, and uses of, music, but he tries to nail down a cause for every effect, even if he has to plumb the dark depths of psychobiography (cf. pp. 110, 138). In many cases Dümling's addiction to clear-cut answers seems to have led him to formulate those answers before approaching the question, and his prejudiced answers are particularly prevalent in his treatment of Weill.

With regard to the Weill-Brecht collaboration, Dümling's argument is never explicitly stated but is implicit in the discussion which begins on page 110. There he establishes that Brecht had a natural ear for music which was able to devise melodies for most of his poems, and in 1924 arrived in Berlin with a stock of songs to complement his literary plans and sketches. Among these plans was the completion of his first book of poems, the Hauspostille, which consisted mostly of poems Brecht had written and set to music during his youth. For Dümling, the Hauspostille provides the vehicle through which he introduces the reader to Brecht's first professional musical collaborator, Franz S. Brunier. At the same time, the Hauspostille provides the springboard from which he launches his attack against Weill.

Brunier was a young composer with whom Brecht worked sporadically between November 1925 and May 1927. During that time, he is known to have composed settings for nine texts by Brecht, generally using the poet's melodies as a starting point. Five of these texts were published in the Taschenpostille (1926) and the Hauspostille (1927), and Brecht's melody for one of them, "Alabama Song," is included in the appendix to those publications. That the beginning of the Brecht-Brunier collaboration coincided with preparation of the Hauspostille for publication suggests to Dümling that Brunier probably helped transcribe Brecht's melodic sketches for publication (p. 129). Although based on slender evidence, this is a likely conclusion. Dümling, however, quickly transforms probability to certainty without further substantiation, and Brecht is chided for not acknowledging Brunier's contribution to the Hauspostille (p. 134). Thereafter, he continues to mention Brunier's assumed role in preparing the Hauspostille melodies as if it were an established fact (see, for example, pp. 147, 149, 393).

KURT WEILL NEWSLETTER PAGE 13
Dümming’s claims for Bruinier do not end with the Hauspostille. He suggests, for instance, that Bruinier’s setting for “The Moon of Alabama” (i.e., the “Alabama Song”) may have been connected to Mann ist Mann, in which Galy Gay sings a German version of the song’s refrain (p. 131). Galy Gay’s song, however, was not added to the play until it was revised for the Berlin production of 1931, which premiered (with incidental music by Weill) four years after Bruinier’s death. In another instance, Dümming flatly states that Brecht intended to include Bruinier’s setting for “Surabaya-Johnny” in Lion Feuchtwanger’s play Kultakta. 4 Mai, but does not document the assertion (p. 206; cf. p. 280). The text of “Surabaya-Johnny” was intended for Kultakta. 4 Mai in 1925, but, although it is possible that Bruinier’s existing setting was to be used, there is no evidence to suggest that any composer but Eisler was to write music for the play.

Bruinier provides a “missing link” between Brecht’s youthful melodic sketches and his collaboration with Weill. However, for Dümming, Bruinier’s compositions are only a “fragile foundation” he erects a rising series of logical whole before Weill had anything to do with it (p. 179). He bases this belief partly on Brecht’s notes to the play from 1930 and on Erwin Faber’s unsubstantiated recollection from 1979 (p. 177). He suggests, too, that much, if not all of the music had been hatched before Weill came on the scene. To this end, he frequently reminds the reader that several songs had already been given melodies by Brecht or by Bruinier under Brecht’s direction (cf. pp. 131, 133, 134). Where evidence of a prior melody by Brecht is lacking, Dümming relies on supposition. Thus, he asserts that Brecht probably provided Weill with the “musical idea” and the melody for the “Moritat von Mackie Messer” (p. 184) and suggests that still more melodies in the play may have originated with Brecht (p. 139). At one point, Dümming even rebukes Weill for not acknowledging Brecht’s musical contributions (p. 134). Since this rebuke rests mostly on suppositions, it is senseless, and in light of Brecht’s admitted laxity in similar matters, the reprehension is downright ludicrous.

Before Aufricht commissioned Die Dreigroschenoper the play existed only in Hauptmann’s translation of The Beggar’s Opera, in which Brecht inserted new song texts. After adding original scenes and passing up several versions, Brecht gave the play something approaching its final form only during the two months immediately preceding the premiere, and it underwent numerous revisions both during rehearsals and again when Brecht published it. Brecht’s notes reflect only what, from his ideological perspective in 1930, he would have liked the play to be, and Faber’s claims are so seriously at odds with the established history of the play that they need to be corroborated before being offered as definitive proof.

As for Brecht’s musical contributions, they cannot be completely denied. For the record, however, what Weill borrowed from Brecht was a three-measure melodic segment for the “Barbara-Song” and the twelve-measure melody for the refrain of the “Seeriiuberjenny.” Although Brecht had found a melody for the “Kanonen-Song” and may have had one in mind for the “Lied von der Unzulänglichkeit menschlichen Strebens,” there is no evidence whatsoever that Weill even heard, let alone used these melodies. Nor is there any evidence that Brecht provided any musical material for the “Moritat.” Dümming’s assertions are pure conjecture.

Dümming continues to overstate the extent of Brecht’s role in all the plays on which he and Weill collaborated. He overestimates the worth of Happy End as a play and struggles to make it appear as something more than the hurriedly patched together piece of confusion it in fact was (pp. 197–210). Later he seems to suggest that Brecht took part in planning Das Berliner Requiem (cf. pp. 228–34). Der Lindemann’s treatment of Der Jasager comes in for a little better treatment in this regard, but Dümming is wrong in asserting that Weill did not intend its final composition for school performances (p. 245). He is also wrong when he says that Weill “could not be moved” to adapt his music for Der Jasager when Brecht rewrote the text (p. 270); the composer did begin a new version of the music but abandoned the attempt.

Dümming’s erroneous approach reaches a climax in his discussion of Die sieben Todsünden. According to him, Brecht’s collaboration on the ballet was forced on Weill by the financial backer (whom Dümming insists on calling “Ed” James), and Weill accepted the unwanted pairing so as to protect his fee (p. 366). Brecht then came up with the idea of centering the play on a “split personality” and, Dümming implies, all the other conceptual elements of the piece (pp. 357–68; there is, however, a cryptic reference to Weill as the author of one verse). Weill then meddled with Brecht’s intentions by designating the designation “der Kleinbürger” from the title (p. 369). This presentation is, of course, wrong on all counts.

The point of Dümming’s argument is not only to correct the misimpression that Weill was the composer for Brecht but, apparently, to diminish Weill’s ability and integrity, also. Like Brecht, Dümming contends that Weill’s music lent Brecht’s works an unwanted popularity with the middle class which those works were meant to attack (cf. pp. 191, 194–95). The contention is an attempt to shift responsibility for the misinterpretation of those works from the playwright to the composer, and it has become commonplace among Brecht’s promoters. Were he only interested in Dümming’s argument, it would be merely tiresome, but he expands the standard attack by also impugning Weill’s motives. The popularity of Weill’s music was, according to Dümming, motivated by the composer’s calculated attempts to make money, despite the effects on the playwright’s intentions.

Dümming bases this part of his argument on passages taken out of context from Weill’s letters to Universal Edition (pp. 157, 206). Where such support is lacking, he bases his case on conjecture and innuendo. Upon this fragile foundation he erects a rising series of assertions which leaves the impression that Weill’s motives were continually compromised by his desire for fame and wealth (see pp. 157, 182, 209, 368, 517). Weill’s essays are never seriously investigated for evidence of his intentions; only Brecht’s and, later, Eisler’s theoretical writings are taken at face value. Brecht’s contractual agreements with Weill, which continue to undermine the composer’s intentions, are not touched upon. Ultimately, Dümming is not interested in illuminating the complex relationship between Weill and Brecht. He wants only to banish the composer to the playwright’s shadow.

Brecht’s involvement in musical matters was extensive and had a far-reaching influence. Knowledge of that involvement is essential to complete understanding of his theory and practice of theater. As Dümming notes in his introduction, however, there remains much to be discovered about this theme (p. 11). It is unfortunate that the first step toward further discovery must be to clear a path through the misrepresentations and errors erected by Last euch nicht verführen. “Do not be seduced!”

RONALD SHULL
Lexington, Kentucky
The editors state the premise of their work in the introduction: "these texts...help us understand the political, social, financial, aesthetic, and personal milieu in which these composers lived and created their music." It is a fascinating consequence of examining such a wide historical range of writings that one sees a progression in the social concerns of composers of the respective eras: writings of the 18th- and 17th-century masters reflect the servility that characterized their role in the social system, the letters of Bach, Haydn, Mozart, and their contemporaries, reveal a growing strain caused by the lack of professional mobility inherent in that system, and so forth. It should be said, however, that the collection contains numerous items not directly related to what are presented as the main issues confronting the composer of a given period; thus it is sometimes difficult to maintain a thread of continuity from one reading to the next. The editors could perhaps have addressed this problem by providing chapter headings to emphasize the primary points under consideration, or, indeed, by being more selective in determining the volume's contents. And there are aspects of the editor's argument that are not easily granted: if a musical work reflects the social circumstances in which it was written, does it follow that "there is nothing static, eternal, or archetypal in any great music?"; that "abstract or nonrepresentational music does not exist?"

The view of music as a form of expression with intended manifest content is most apparent in writings dating from after World War I. Events in Europe during the decades following the War led many German composers to reconsider music's role within the culture, and it is the portion of the present volume reflecting this reevaluation that is of most direct value. Many of these texts — by Dessau, Eisler, Weill, and Henze — are, to my knowledge, not readily available in translation. One can say that Weill's essays included, two were translated in Kim Kowalski's study Kurt Weill in Europe (1979) and all were reprinted in their original German in an edition prepared by David Drew entitled Kurt Weill: Ausgewählte Schriften (1975); and the polemical dimension which the editors regard as being so integral to the writings of German composers emerges here with particular clarity. The concerns expressed in these texts have largely been to do with establishing a closer means of communication between composer and the general public, in some cases for the express purpose of propagating the socialist vision. A second, particularly intriguing, series of writings consists of reflections of the emigré composer on life in America.

With regard to the latter choice, one must state a further criticism of the volume: the editors seem to have selected some writings with an eye to a sensational rather than a true representative sampling, and the picture which thus emerges is slightly more realistic than the one provided in the introduction. The volume includes a letter from Hinde in which he disparages American culture; but the editors do not mention that it was written shortly after his arrival in the United States, and that he was eventually to embrace America warmly as his adopted homeland. We have a parallel instance with a rather ribald letter from Mozart to his cousin — a letter which echoes the view of the rascal Mozart made famous in Amadeus; yet letters of this kind are so few within the composer's entire correspondence that its inclusion here as one of merely five letters is deceptive.

Writings of German Composers is well, though modestly, produced, and will be of particular value to readers interested in the aesthetic climate surrounding Dessau, Weill, and their contemporaries. One wishes that the editors, rather than attempting to deal with such a wide historical range, had focused on the work of these modern German masters. Such a volume would indeed have represented an important contribution to the literature.

MICHAEL NOTT
Eastman School of Music

The Brecht Memoir.

By

Eric Bentley

New York: Paj Publications, 1985. 105 pages. $7.95

Bertolt Brecht would undoubtedly have gained his present fame in this country under any circumstances, but he did in actual fact attain the foundation of that fame thanks almost entirely to the British-born author of this brief, fascinating, rather disheveled memoir. When Bentley wrote Brecht's obituary in 1956 for The New Republic, he called Brecht "a man who has played a large, perhaps inordinate, part in my own life." Bentley also reports that in The New York Herald Tribune, Walter Kerr "had written in 1953 that Brecht speaks only to Bentley, and Bentley speaks only to God."

A single page (p.83) of this book, headed "Lotte Lenya and the Aftermath," will particularly interest readers of the Newsletter: "The relationship of Brecht with Weill lies outside the scope of this eye-witness account of the former since I never saw the two men together. I witnessed only the aftermath through an acquaintance with Lotte Lenya, but of course recall things Brecht would say about Weill. He was catty on that subject, not only having that he himself composed the best tunes [including the Marat, "Mack the Knife"]...but indicating that Weill had gone wrong where Brecht had been right in the handling of American exile. 'Pity Weill was born somewhere else,' he would say with a wicked grin, 'if the Americans didn't have a law against foreign-born presidents, he'd have made it.'"

After Brecht died, his children and heirs, Stefan and Barbara, came to regard Bentley as an enemy (he deftly ticks off Barbara as "the Wimfried Wagner of East Berlin's Bayreuth"), leading to bitter, internecine litigation ("all this shabby detail"). "When my relations with the Brecht coterie were good, my relations with Kurt Weill's entourage had
been bad, a fact that reflects the tension that had existed between Brecht and Weill since 1930. I am shocked today to pick up correspondence from the fifties that bears witness to hostility between me and Lotte Lenya. It was partly my fault. As critic for the New Republic, I had been excessively snotty about the 1954 opening of Threepenny Opera: there was sibling rivalry between me and the adapter, Marc Blitzstein. Not surprisingly Lotte Lenya wrote East Berlin of her preference of Blitzstein to Bentley, and so on and so forth.

Fortunately, though, ‘she and I were both people who did not know how to bear a lasting grudge and a business correspondence we began to have in 1961 burgeoned into cordiality by 1964. After that (I find I have some seventeen letters from Lenya in my files) my admiration for Lenya’s work proved to be not altogether one-sided...’ To this passage Bentley appends an intriguing footnote: ‘I did ask permission to print two of Lenya’s letters in full but Lenya’s executors refused. It seemed they didn’t wish the public to find out what she thought of Stefan Brecht.’

But why the apprehensiveness, particularly when this bundle of anecdotes contains so many good ones? They begin with Brecht’s first impression of Brecht, in 1942, when Brecht, his wife Helene Weigel, and their two children lived at 817 25th Street in Santa Monica (with Ruth Berlau, at that moment the woman in Brecht’s life, living close by): ‘I believe I took Brecht for a truly proletarian writer on the score of his current lack of money, whose environs are still enticing, but whose face is marred by the dour architectural mediocrity of the post-war years. The Dessau of the twenties and early thirties was an odd mixture of progressive institutions and provincial reaction. From 1925-32 it was the home of the Bauhaus School (now reconstructed and housing a Bauhaus museum).’

Bentley makes a serious charge indeed involving the political columnist Dorothy Thompson, a woman of vast influence, and Elisabeth Hauptmann, Brecht’s close collaborator and an unwavering adherent to the Stalinist line: ‘Frau Hauptmann was mastering Dorothy Thompson.... The needed intermediary between these two powerful females was a male communist named Hermann Budzislavsky — later a VIP in East Germany — who had contrived to become Ms. Thompson’s “private secretary.” When I turned up at the Hauptmann [sic] apartment for a Brecht session, Frau Hauptmann would be on the phone telling ‘beiber Budzi’ what should be in the next Thompson column, and a few days later I would see that it was said in the column.’

The random bits of mosaic in this book together form a sketch that both fascinates and repels; Bentley nowhere uses the German term Haustiefe, hate-love, but one encounters his conflicted emotions repeatedly, primarily on political grounds. He describes Brecht as ‘the quietest director I’ve ever seen at work,’” but also writes: ‘Brecht would always shout and scream when things went wrong in the theater. His paranoia was as outrageous as anyone I’ve ever met with the single exception, perhaps, of the critic F.R. Leavis. He found hostility and sabotage everywhere, and, though often he didn’t know who the ‘enemies’ were, he wouldn’t hesitate to define them as Nazis.’

Bentley makes a serious charge indeed involving the political columnist Dorothy Thompson, a woman of vast influence, and Elisabeth Hauptmann, Brecht’s close collaborator and an unwavering adherent to the Stalinist line: ‘Frau Hauptmann was mastering Dorothy Thompson.... The needed intermediary between these two powerful females was a male communist named Hermann Budzislavsky — later a VIP in East Germany — who had contrived to become Ms. Thompson’s “private secretary.” When I turned up at the Hauptmann apartment for a Brecht session, Frau Hauptmann would be on the phone telling “beiber Budzi” what should be in the next Thompson column, and a few days later I would see that it was said in the column.”

The random bits of mosaic in this book join together to form a sketch that both fascinates and repels; Bentley nowhere uses the German term Hassliebe, hate-love, but one encounters his conflicted emotions repeatedly, primarily on political grounds. He describes Brecht as “the quietest director I’ve ever seen at work,” but also writes: “Brecht would always shout and scream when things went wrong in the theater. His paranoia was as outrageous as anyone I’ve ever met with the single exception, perhaps, of the critic F.R. Leavis. He found hostility and sabotage everywhere, and, though often he didn’t know who the ‘enemies’ were, he wouldn’t hesitate to define them as Nazis.”

Bentley makes a serious charge indeed involving the political columnist Dorothy Thompson, a woman of vast influence, and Elisabeth Hauptmann, Brecht’s close collaborator and an unwavering adherent to the Stalinist line: “Frau Hauptmann was mastering Dorothy Thompson.... The needed intermediary between these two powerful females was a male communist named Hermann Budzislavsky — later a VIP in East Germany — who had contrived to become Ms. Thompson’s “private secretary.” When I turned up at the Hauptmann apartment for a Brecht session, Frau Hauptmann would be on the phone telling ‘beiber Budzi’ what should be in the next Thompson column, and a few days later I would see that it was said in the column.”

The random bits of mosaic in this book join together to form a sketch that both fascinates and repels; Bentley nowhere uses the German term Hassliebe, hate-love, but one encounters his conflicted emotions repeatedly, primarily on political grounds. He describes Brecht as “the quietest director I’ve ever seen at work,” but also writes: “Brecht would always shout and scream when things went wrong in the theater. His paranoia was as outrageous as anyone I’ve ever met with the single exception, perhaps, of the critic F.R. Leavis. He found hostility and sabotage everywhere, and, though often he didn’t know who the ‘enemies’ were, he wouldn’t hesitate to define them as Nazis.”

Bentley makes a serious charge indeed involving the political columnist Dorothy Thompson, a woman of vast influence, and Elisabeth Hauptmann, Brecht’s close collaborator and an unwavering adherent to the Stalinist line: “Frau Hauptmann was mastering Dorothy Thompson.... The needed intermediary between these two powerful females was a male communist named Hermann Budzislavsky — later a VIP in East Germany — who had contrived to become Ms. Thompson’s “private secretary.” When I turned up at the Hauptmann apartment for a Brecht session, Frau Hauptmann would be on the phone telling ‘beiber Budzi’ what should be in the next Thompson column, and a few days later I would see that it was said in the column.”

The random bits of mosaic in this book join together to form a sketch that both fascinates and repels; Bentley nowhere uses the German term Hassliebe, hate-love, but one encounters his conflicted emotions repeatedly, primarily on political grounds. He describes Brecht as “the quietest director I’ve ever seen at work,” but also writes: “Brecht would always shout and scream when things went wrong in the theater. His paranoia was as outrageous as anyone I’ve ever met with the single exception, perhaps, of the critic F.R. Leavis. He found hostility and sabotage everywhere, and, though often he didn’t know who the ‘enemies’ were, he wouldn’t hesitate to define them as Nazis.”

This slim volume shows indications of slow-copy editing and even more slovenly proofreading (“‘Langer’ for [Lawrence] Langner, ‘MacDonald’ for Macdonald, ‘later’ for after”), but it does reward the reader with numerous intimate snapshots of a great and enormously influential writer. Those familiar with Manhattan real estate today will get a particular charge out of the fact that back in the ‘40s, Brecht and Ruth Berlau, both of them proletarians to the marrow, lived at 124 East 57th Street, between Park and Lexington Avenues!

PAUL MOOR
San Francisco
PERFORMANCES

tions. Today it no longer enjoys the prominence of the early post-war years — nearly Leipzig and Dresden and, of course, Berlin have reassumed their leadership — but a recent production of Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny has shown that Dessau still has a theater of stature.

This is the only fourth production of a Weill opera in Dessau. Der Protagonist was staged there in 1927 and Die Dreigroschenoper was produced in 1931 and again in 1982. The current Mahagonny production, mounted to commemorate the 85th anniversary of Weill's birth, showed careful planning and no doubt benefited from the participation of Weill expert Jürgen Schebera, who was engaged to serve as a guest dramaturg for the project. There was also a ready acknowledgment of debt to the spirit and design (including the use of a narrator) of Joachim Herz's 1977 Konische Oper production of the work. The Dessau Mahagonny reflected a genuine respect for the integrity of the original opera without slavish adherence to historical production models.

Not surprisingly, the work was interpreted as a parable of how the evils of capitalism and unabridged consumption lead to fascism. The lewd symbol of unfettered sexual license established in the first scene as Mahagonny's trademark, becomes a stylized swastika by the end of the opera, where amid the sea of signs reading "Für" (For) there is one with the ominous spelling: "Führ" (as in Führer). While both Western and modern parallels were clearly intended, there were no obtrusive attempts to 'contemporize' the opera's props or setting. The colorful sets by Fridolin Kraska had the look and feel of Georg Grosz's drawings and left the large stage uncluttered for the well-rehearsed choral and ensemble pieces. Effective use was made of an extended prosценium stage that allowed the singers a chance to step out beyond the orchestra pit and involve the audience in the action. Indeed, it was apparent that stage director Rüdiger Flohr sought less to distance his audience from the action than to draw them into the collective fantasy that is the city of Mahagonny. In this way the shock, "the rude awakening," as Flohr writes in the program, of the opera's oppressive closing scenes strikes home all the more forcefully.

In keeping with Flohr's general concept, music director Sieghard Rennert placed less emphasis upon the score's hard, brittle edges than upon its lyrical qualities and the tragi-comic elements of its character pieces. Under Rennert's direction the Dessau orchestra played with precision and verve, and the cast sang with gratifying assurance. Etcetera Marien Schröder underwent a dazzling series of transformations as the widow Begbick and clearly enjoyed her role. Thomas Krause and Reinhard Westhauser as Fatty (Willi here) and Trinity Moses were remarkable in their gradual transition from a pair of comic con-artists to steely-eyed gestapo-like henchmen. Waltraud Vogel's Jenny coupled a palpable sensuality with a very enticing reserve, masking, perhaps, less vulnerability and innocence than a well-developed sense of self-interest. Günter Kraus as Paul Ackermann (Jimmy Mahoney) lacked something of the vocal weight or physical stature of an ideal Jimmy, but his performance was compelling nonetheless. The principals were ably supported by Ernst Kräf, Karl-Heinz Koppitz and Rainer Franz as Jakob Schmidt, Alaska Wolf Joe and Moneybags Billy, and an outstanding ensemble and choruses.

It is apparently difficult to fill the 1,300 seat Dessau Landestheater under the best of circumstances and during the second performance of this new production there were perhaps 600 in attendance. Intendant Peter Gogler, however, is committed to a mixed repertory of newer works and more traditional fare. He is likewise committed to staging further works of Dessau's native son, Kurt Weill, and has plans for a production of Street Scene in 1989. Judging by the present production of Mahagonny it will be well worth a trip.

CHRISTOPHER HAILEY
New Haven

Mahagonny Songspiel.
Y Chamber Symphony,

The Theresa L. Kaufmann Concert Hall, part of the 92 Street Y Performing Arts Center on New York's East Side, has paneled walls of a dark, almost mahogany-colored wood around the top of which are inscribed, in large gold letters, the names of cultural luminaries—Shakespeare, Beethoven, Lincoln, etc. For the second half of this concert, a performance of the Mahagonny Songspiel given by the Y Chamber Symphony under the direction of Gerard Schwartz (the first half brought works by Strauss, Stravinsky, and Mozart), two further names, hand written on provisional cardboard rectangles were added: Brecht and Weill. Yet this was no straight concert performance. Director Michael Posnick introduced other pieces of property, too, as well as attractive projections by Mary Frank, which certainly deserved to be exhibited in their own right. In this production, they contributed, perhaps as they should, to the over-all montage effect, appearing to bear little direct relation to the work as a whole.

According to the program booklet, Posnick's staging "followed Brecht's production." This is an exaggeration. Where, for example, was the all-important boxing ring? The presence of the Narrator (Judith Malina), on the other hand, whose connective texts are drawn from the full-length Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny, is declared a "major addition," which it plainly is not, and also contradicts Posnick's interest in reconstruction.

Originally, the Mahagonny Songspiel represented, as music theater, and like Stravinsky's Soldier's Tale, a challenge to operatic tradition rather than to the institution of the concert hall. (As Weill put it, as it counts as a 'Zwischengattung':) In the context of the concert, its semi-staging, a quality intrinsic to the work, paradoxically creates the impression of a loss, not gain. The paucity appears makeshift. And if the work's intentionally oppositional character is to succeed, then the performers have to display utter conviction. The women (Nadia Pelle and Joanna Simon) were less successful here than the men (Jon Garrison, Glenn Siebert, John Ostendorf, Andrew Wenzel): the former seemed too self-conscious, too shame-faced about their disruptability.

That Weill's music has a lot to say is borne out by, among other things, the critical question of phrasing and, in particular, tempo. The instrumental chorale before 'God comes to Mahagonny,' for instance, is simply too fast to capture the music of monumentality and pathos in that interlude. And although there can be no objection, in principle, to taking a slower tempo than Weill's to the "Alabama Song," the anacritic foundation must not be allowed to crumble as it did here. "Mahagonny" may only be, as the concluding phrase has it in Michael Feingold's translation, "a made-up word," and hence the work itself, a questioning of art's illogical character. But the actual orchestration of that misgiving may show no uncertainty. Such uncertainties may have surfaced now and again during this performance, but the delivery of that crucial last line was impeccable.

STEPHEN HINTON
Berlin to Broadway.
Coconut Grove Playhouse, Coconut Grove, Florida. 18 February - 9 March 1986.

The Coconut Grove Playhouse assembled a brilliant cast of five musical comedy veterans for their recent production of Berlin to Broadway. Located in a thriving area of Miami, the Playhouse is the largest nonprofit theater in South Florida. With 800 seats and a prosenium stage, the general design and dimension reminds one of a traditional Broadway house; only the relatively small stage falls short of expectations.

In a year when many producers lament the lack of suitable Broadway talent, it is encouraging to see a regional theater bring together one of the best ensemble casts of recent memory: Diane Frantantoni (A Chorus Line, Cats), David Holliday (Coco), Judy Kaye (On the Twentieth Century), Stephen Lefevre (Bri-gadoon), and Martin Vidnovic (Baby, Brigadoon). Although over-amplified in typical Broadway fashion, the singing in solos and ensembles was glorious, heart-rending, and satisfying. It is impossible to describe the
The Seven Deadly Sins.
Pina Bausch Tanztheater Wuppertal.

The Music...

Pina Bausch's performances of The Seven Deadly Sins at BAM promised much but delivered little. The Seven Deadly Sins has always been one of my favorite works, and a chance to see the full ballet was a dream come true — especially since this masterpiece was to be interpreted by a major choreographer, with a major conductor (Michael Tilson Thomas) and a fine orchestra (the Orchestra of St. Luke's). This performance had the makings of greatness.

The lack of regard for musical considerations, however, was subtly evident from the start. The names of the singers alternating in the role of Anna I and the presence of the orchestra of St. Luke's went unannounced until shortly before the performances began. Even at the performances, it was unclear whether Anna I was played by Ann Höling or Sylvia Kesselheim: both were listed, but it was anybody's guess as to who performed on what night.

Ann Höling played Anna I at the performance I attended, but she didn't sing. She seemed to be attempting a Sprechstimme but omitted something much closer to a howling screech. The wireless microphone and amplification made the sound of her voice even more intolerable. Because of the high level of participation demanded of Anna I in Bausch's production, there was probably insufficient time to rehearse singers not already familiar with the choreography. Still, as Höling shouted her high notes, growled her low notes, and neared correct pitch on only three or four occasions, one did begin to wonder if there weren't anybody in Wuppertal better prepared for this demanding role. The Family, a male quartet, displayed a woolly vocal tone as badly miked as Höling's, and — in order to have a clear view of Tilson Thomas — spent most of their time watching TV. One envied them.

The Orchestra of St. Luke's fared little better, located at the rear of the stage without the benefit of a shell. Microphones were placed behind the musicians, causing the brass and percussion to be the dominant voices, thus overpowering the small string section. Michael Tilson Thomas gave a hurried, lackluster reading of the score, and seemed to care not merely congratulatory, but allow me to note one outstanding contribution from each performer: Ms. Frantantoni, "I Wait for a Ship"; Ms. Holliday, "September Song"; Mr. Kaye, "Pirate Jenny"; Mr. Lehew, "Johnny's Song"; Mr. Vidmovic, "The Trouble with Women."

Unfortunately, other aspects of the production did not fare as well. The staging of the musical numbers by director Jack Allison was often ineffective and suggested a general misunderstanding of the songs. The Threepenny Opera songs (especially "Jealousy Duet," and "Barbarn Song") lacked the subtlety in delivery required to evoke their humor. "As You Make Your Bed" and "Bilbao Song" were staged on a tall platform and too far from the audience to impart the necessary dramatic impact. In the second act, the players seemed to have directed themselves. Tending toward "cabaret" style, here the presentations of the American songs displayed little regard for their original context and whatever success they enjoyed was due again to the strengths of the performers. Fred Kolo's typically "Brechtian" set for the first act (black walls, spots, scaffolding, platform, ladders) was "made Broadway" in the second act with the introduction of curtains of multi-colored streamers, creating a consciously glitzy effect.

Adapters Allison and Kolo made several changes in Gene Lerner's original text with the permission of the various authors. Their version begins with an excessively long scene in which the actors are in street clothes preparing for their first "rehearsal." Mr. Holliday explains he is to play Kurt Weill, and while applying his makeup for the transformation, he tells the audience about the composer's life. The scene has the effect of placing Kurt Weill onstage while attempting to avoid the pre-tense of an impersonation. When the musical portion begins, the Kurt Weill character continues in his role, delivering the narration and commenting upon the action. Allison and Kolo were able to integrate the Weill character somewhat effectively into the first act, but given the inherently dramatic events of Weill's life in Germany and his subsequent emigrations to France and the United States, this was not a difficult task.

In the second act the character becomes less prominent, and little effort is made to explain the special circumstances of Weill's collaborations and the influences of the American years. We do observe, however, Weill performing a soft-shoe dance routine on the scaffolding during "Progress," which simply proved embarrassing. And he returns near the close of the show, seemingly suspended through the use of a tight spotlight, to sing "September Song." At the end of the song, the light fades, representing the obvious. Although executed in a straightforward manner, the overall effect was maudlin.

On the musical side, the adapters added six songs: "The Liquor Dealer's Dream," "Tchaikowsky," "Very, Very, Very," "The Trouble with Women," "I'm a Stranger Here Myself," and "It Never Was You." Newton Wayland's original and effective 1972 five-piece band arrangements were supplemented with additional arrangements for the new songs by musical director Bruce W. Coyle. While one hardly noticed the orchestra tucked away behind a black scrim on the right side of the stage — its unobtrusive but sure support served as an example of the musical excellence which characterized the entire evening. But concurrently, this same excellence drew into greater relief the serious disappointments of other aspects of the production.

DAVID FARNETH
Kurt Weill Foundation

The Orchestra of St. Luke's fared little better, located at the rear of the stage without the benefit of a shell. Microphones were placed behind the musicians, causing the brass and percussion to be the dominant voices, thus overpowering the small string section. Michael Tilson Thomas gave a hurried, lackluster reading of the score, and seemed to care little about the performance. Why should he when Ann Höling ignored every cue? Throughout the production Pina Bausch's Neo-Expressionist adaptation of The Seven Deadly Sins sacrificed the music in favor of the choreography and text, weakening the ballet as a whole. Bausch did not merely adhere to the all-too-common practice of slighting Weill...
PERFORMANCES

while elevating Brecht — thus ignoring the total power of their collaboration — for she didn’t seem to pay much attention to the lyrics, either.

‘Don’t Be Afraid,’ the second piece on the bill, is a slight work with hit songs from the Weill-Brecht oeuvre. Bausch’s choreography displayed a bit more humor, although the singing was still suspect. The size of the Orchestra of St. Luke’s was more appropriate to the music, and was better balanced sonically. Conductor Michael Feldman, director of the ensemble, gave the music a chance to breathe a bit, and his well-rehearsed musicians played with enthusiasm.

PAUL M. YOUNG
Los Angeles

The Dance...

If Horst Koegler is right in judging Pina Bausch’s production of The Seven Deadly Sins the most successful realization of the work in postwar Europe [Kurt Weill Newsletter Vol. III, No. 2], then I begin to agree with David Drew, who commented at the Kurt Weill Conference in November 1983 that no stage production has added “one iota” to the work and words of the work alone. At the time, Drew’s opinion that The Seven Deadly Sins is more successful as a self-sufficient concert piece than as musical theater seemed blasphemous, but after seeing Bausch’s production at the Brooklyn Academy of Music and in a New York staging of the work [see Dance Chronicle 9:1], I am not so sure. Neither Balanchine nor Bausch seems to have realized fully the dynamics of the work, the way that the two Anna’s begin as conflicting sides of one self but over the course of the action blur their distinctive identities. By the end both have become victim as well as victimizer.

In her 1976 staging, not seen in America before last fall, Bausch addressed her choreographic concerns of the moment, just as Balanchine had done on two earlier occasions. What is interesting to see is how Bausch’s production, especially its second half, a miscellaneous collection of Weill songs entitled Don’t Be Afraid, points the way toward her subsequent development of Tanztheater, a new genre of dance theater that replaces ‘choreography’ as traditionally understood with theatrical collage. Her production of The Seven Deadly Sins proper, the first half of the evening, initiated her commentary on the exploitive potential of sexual relations, which subsequent works deepened.

In The Seven Deadly Sins Bausch de-emphasizes the social dimension of the action and focuses instead on the sexual dimension. She achieves this partly by isolating the quartet of male singers from the action. Sitting around an old-fashioned table placed downstage right, the singers are no more involved in the action than the onstage orchestra seated upstage. Gone is the device used by Balanchine of a house built brick by brick around the quartet as the action progresses. In Balanchine’s pro-

duction the building of the house reminded the spectator that Anna’s actions were motivated by her family’s materialistic desire for a new home back in Louisiana, to which Anna returned at the end. In contrast, Bausch represents the house not by exterior walls but by interior furnishings — a strikingly apt metaphor for her turn away from the social toward the personal. From time to time stagehands unobtrusively carry pieces of furniture onstage. Only at the end when the singers walk over and appropriate the space formerly occupied by the dancers as their own does the spectator realize that a house has been built. This action brings closure to the work through reference to the original libretto, though in terms of the stage action it reads like an enigmatic coda.

The production’s true closure occurs just before the coda, when Anna II (danced by Josephine Anne Endicott) exits after her ordeal. To use the terminology of Method Acting, the through-line of her role is “to exhaust oneself through constant sexual intercourse.” At the beginning she cavorts girlishly over a smiling sun chalked on the stage floor. The sun becomes smeared as the action progresses, an obvious metaphor for her corruption, which happens almost immediately upon her encounter with Anna I, sung alternately by Ann Höling and Silvia Kesselheim. Anna II roughly brushes her hair and makes her change out of her girlish smock into a body-revealing chemise and red high heels. A chorus of women appears, and Anna II is shoved into place in the line-up. At first she appears unwilling, but the recurring rhythm of the prostitute’s act deadens her into passive submission and acceptance. One man bumps and grinds her from behind, and even when he steps away, she continues the action on her own. Another man measures her waist and bust and thigh, scrawling the results on the floor, while she stands impassively staring into the audience. She flies from the arms of her “lover” to the arms of her “protector,” a distinction made only by the libretto, for she hardly seems aware of the difference. Immediately afterward, as a group of men (including women dressed as men) line up to take their turns with her, she does not recognize the man who a moment before was “her lover.”

The audience may have been confused as to which sin was being depicted at any given time, but Bausch was not illustrating them. In the end Bausch shows only one sin — the unfeelingness of bought sex. Her staging erases the dialectics of the work’s original conception. Rather than emphasize the reversal of values written by Brecht and set to music by Weill in the conceit of the seven sins, Bausch takes the conceit literally. She presents Anna not as a metaphor for how capitalism demands the prostitution of the self but in the stereotypical role of a prostitute. In turn she presents the chorus, Anna’s customers, as rapists. As a friend remarked, in so doing she reinforces traditional morality rather than challenging it.

In later works Bausch manages to distance her aggressive images of sexual relations and comment on the power-plays — but not here. The final irony is that the production remains a tits-and-ass show, albeit a deliberately provocative one intended to shock the opera-house audience. As German critic Norbert Servos has remarked, Bausch evolved Tanztheater from the “less reputable traditions of her own medium like vaudeville, music hall, and revue.” But at the time she staged The Seven Deadly Sins, her evolution had just begun. Perhaps this explains why her staging mirrors the “less reputable” genre it intends to deconstruct.

The second half of the evening, subtitled ‘Don’t Be Afraid,’ was comprised of a collection of Weill songs from Die Dreigroschenoper, Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Happy End, Berliner Requiem, and Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny. Though it offered less of a unified whole than The Seven Deadly Sins, it was more interesting in one way: it sketched out the direction that Bausch has more fully developed since her Tanztheater works.

Don’t Be Afraid: the structure of revue displaces narrative continuity, requiring the performers to interact directly with the audience and relying on associations between the disconnected scenes to create meaning. Bausch uses the Weill songs as clichés — fragments of sentimental nostalgia — to counterpoint the aggressive and violent actuality of the action. For instance, the title song is taken from a Salvation Army chorus in Happy End, but as sung by a tuxedoed gentleman its lyrics shift from the second person plural to the second person singular [du dich] and are addressed to a young woman whom the gentleman attempts to seduce and, failing that, rapes. He then immediately turns his attention to another young woman with the same chilling lullaby.

The scenes that show the progressive seduction and rape of the woman are interspersed with other scenes that anticipate later recurring motifs in Bausch’s works: a woman staring into a three-sided mirror, two women dancing a pathetically girlish turn, a woman putting on layer after layer of clothing, the group moving in a solid block or sitting in rows of chairs. Whereas The Seven Deadly Sins builds its effect through the repetition of images of unfleeing sex, Don’t Be Afraid presents images that begin to work on more than one level. The woman staring into the mirror suggests narcissism but also self-oblit-eration. The two dancing women parody incompetent entertainers but also present the sole image of companionable intimacy. The woman encumbers herself with the clothes that define her sexual identity. The group moves together but does not project a feeling of unison.

Half of the group of “girls” are men in drag. Their costumes do not abolish the gender distinction altogether, as do the costumes worn by Kabuki actors, but rather layer “femininity” of dress on top of “masculinity” of physique. This exploration of the artifi-

KURT WEILL NEWSLETTER PAGE 19
PERFORMANCES

ciality and naturalness of gender roles is provocative and anticipates Bausch's later works that explore the issue in ever more complex fashion and in counterpoint to the role-playing of theatrical performance.

In Don't Be Afraid, Bausch uses Weill's songs the way her dancers use pieces of clothing, as found objects in a theatrical collage. She makes no pretense of staging Weill, but takes off from Weill for her own purposes. One is left wondering if it is possible for a choreographer to approach Weill, in particular The Seven Deadly Sins, with less self-interest. David Drew has yet to be proved wrong.

SUSAN ALLENE MANNING
New York

RECORDINGS


Kurt Weill is alive and well; his rock 'n' roll heart is still beating. But on the album cover of "Lost in the Stars," the face of the reputedly vigorous Weill is a cadaverous yellow-green. That's the first warning sign that, on the album cover, the inspirations was native to the cases legendary rock and jazz artists to pay tribute to Weill. One gets the feeling, however, that the inspiration was native to the producers and not the performers, that these musicians wouldn't have played Weill's songs of their own volition. Weill's music doesn't speak to them in the way that it spoke to Louis Armstrong or The Doors. The album's ostensible purpose is to introduce Weill to rock fans — and rock to Weill fans. But the minds don't meet: the artists presented here are unable to find the harmony between Weill's music and their own.

One egregious example of this is Sting's widely-publicized rendition of "Mack the Knife." Sting plays it straight, hoping perhaps to give us the impression that he's stepped out of a stage production of Threepenny. But he sounds bored, half-asleep: he's not paying close enough attention to deliver a faithful account of Macbeth's crimes, and he doesn't make a personal statement either. His indifference may have been a studious attempt at Verfremdungseffekt, but more likely it's an opportunity wasted.

The most successful cut comes from Todd Rundgren, ordinarily a less interesting performer, who delivers a thumping, apocalyptic dance number in "Call from the Grave," with layered synthesizers and wailing saxophones. It's the kind of involvement all but lacking anywhere else on the album.

A few other tracks merit comment, for one reason or another. Lou Reed (who almost singlehandedly preserved rock during the lean dark years of the seventies) takes "September Song" and turns it into the archetypal Lou Reed Song. Which means that it rocks, it reeks of a tainted past and hopeless future, and it displays a thorough disregard for musical considerations. Reed never has been able to sing on pitch, but Weill's original melody is unrecognizable — to an astonishing degree. The track would be more appropriate on a tribute to Maxwell Anderson, but for those who adore Reed (as I do), this cut is a treat. The jazz artists don't contribute much to the album — either in quantity or quality. Charlie Haden gets a little too involved in "Speak Low," plunking out the notes on his bass so slowly that you forget what song he's playing. Carla Bley's arrangement of the title tune, however, is soulful and lovely, if a little tame for my tastes.

Mark Bingham, Johnny Adams, and Aaron Neville give us the chorus "Oh, Heavenly Salvation" from Mahagonny as a smooth gospel number — far from Brecht and Weill's twentieth-century Sodom but near to the emotional heart of the piece. Even when assessing this performance on its own merits, one wonders if this music (which isn't a song, much less a Song) warrants such treatment — a vexatious consideration one encounters often on the album, especially since no one involved with the project seems to have thought about it.

There's not even the spirit of irreverence displayed on Malcolm Maclaren's "Fans" album, which turned several Puccini arias into rap numbers. Although I'm as bored as anyone by the constant debates over just how "serious" Weill's music is, I've appreciated more awareness from the performers of the music's origins. On the album, only the Armadillo String Quartet (performing a chamber arrangement of the chanson "Youkali") seem to have realized that, with Weill as with few other composers, you can "cross-over" in two directions.

Willner and Young throw in a couple of fart-out cuts from John Zorn and Elliot Sharp with, respectively, "Kleine Leutnant" from Happy End, and "Meatball Song" (that's "Klops-Lied" to the rest of us). Zorn weaves a bumbling Japanese speech into his numerous sound effects (the debt to "Revolution Number 9" from the Beatles' White Album is enormous), and Sharp experiments with some very interesting instruments including what sounds like a hubcap filled with bolts. There's also not one but three Lenya impersonators — Dagmar Krause ("Surabaya Johnny"), Ellen Shipley (with Ralph Schuckett on 'Alabama Song'), and the grande dame of rock, Marianne Faithfull ("Ballad of the Soldier's Wife").

Despite all the talent on this album, there's nothing truly inspired here, nor is there anything truly offensive. There should have been both.

WILLIAM MADISON
New York
**NEW PUBLICATIONS**

**Exhibitions**

Caspar Neher: Brecht's Designer is the title of an exhibition displayed in London's Riverside Studios, 15 January - 16 February, and now traveling throughout England (The Cornerhouse, Manchester, 26 February - 6 April; Graves Art Gallery, Sheffield, 12 April - 18 May; City Museum and Art Gallery, Plymouth, 31 May - 5 July).

The 150 drawings concentrate on Neher's collaboration with Brecht, and the earliest works date from 1922-23 when both were living in Munich. Included are drawings from Die Dreigroschenoper, Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny, and Die sieben Todsünden. In addition, there are two cases of Neher family photographs, Brecht memorabilia, stage photographs, and projections.

In New York, The Threepenny Opera as seen by Arth Blatas will open 22 April at the Museum of the City of New York and run through 15 October. Originally shown in 1984 at the Teatro Goldoni in Venice, the exhibition, curated by Robert Taylor, will feature paintings, drawings, lithographs, and sculptures inspired by the 1984 production at the Theatre de Lys.

Mr. Blatas began his artistic career in his native country of Lithuania and at the age of twenty-one became the youngest member of the "School of Paris." His thirty portraits in oil and bronze dating from this period are recognized as a unique document of the "school" which included such artists as Soutine, Picasso, Braque, Leger, and Cocteau. In collaboration with his wife, opera singer and stage director Regina Resnik, Blatas has created stage designs for Elektra, Falstaff, Carmen, Salome, and The Queen of Spades.

**ARTICLES**


**BOOKS**


Hermand, Jost and Steakley, James, ed. Writings of German Composers. New York: Continuum, 1984.


**DISSERTATIONS**


**SCORES**


**RECORDINGS**


Kiri: Blue Skies. Kiri Te Kanawa with Nelson Riddle and his Orchestra. London 414 666-4 (cassette). [Also available on LP and Compact Disc] [Includes "Speak Low"]


Die Sonne so rot. Marius Müller-Westernhagen. WB Records 240 492-1 (LP). [Includes "Mackie Messer"]

Star Quality. Gertrude Lawrence. ARI 2119 Mono. [Includes "Saga of Jenny" and "My Ship"]

BELGIUM
L’Opéra de Quat’Sous, Liege, Conservatoire Royal, Dec. 1986

BRAZIL
Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny, Brazil; October 1985

DENMARK
Die sieben Todsünden, Copenhagen, Puppentheater, April 15, 1986

ENGLAND
Berlin to Broadway, Barbican, Plymouth; opened Sept. 16, 1985
Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, Phillip Jones Brass Ensemble, Oct. 31, 1985
Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, London Sinfonietta, Diego Masson, cond., Feb. 12, 1986
The Threepenny Opera, Plymouth Theatre, Plymouth, Opera South West, November 1985
The Threepenny Opera, Manchester, Manchester Actors Co, Dec. 1985
The Threepenny Opera, National Theatre, London, with Tim Curry; D. Muldowney, music dir., opened March 12, 1986

FINLAND
Violin Concerto, Sibelius-Akademie, Helsinki, students, Feb. 1986

FRANCE
Vom Tod im Wald, Paris, London Sinfonietta, April 9, 1986
L’Opéra de Quat’Sous, Theatre Musical, Chatelet, Paris, G. Streher, dir. Milva, Fall 1986
Recital, Amphitheatre, Bordeaux, Sheila Armstrong, sop., Dec. 2, 1985

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY
Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny, Theater des Westens, Berlin, B. Karp dir. Revived Sept. 1985
Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny, Theater am Goetheplatz, Bremen, G. Schneider, cond.; K. Stone, E. Gillhofer; Jan. 9-12, 20, 25, 1986
Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny, touring company, Neu-Isenberg, Pfalztheater Kaiserslautern, February 1986
Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny, Pfalztheater, Kaiserslautern, Wolfgang Blum, dir., Wilfried Emmert, cond., Beginning March 21, 1986
Ballet: Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Köln, Köln Oper Bält; Jürg Büthn, cho.; Jan 26, 1986
Concert: Gisela May, Stuttgart Residenz-Theater, Stuttgart, Sept. 1985
Concert: Milva, Kleine Westfalenhalle, Dortmund, Nov. 20, 1985
Down in the Valley, Fachakademie für Musik, Nürnberg, students; November 1985
Die Dreigroschenoper, Theater an der Rott, Eggenfelden, Dec. 6, 1985

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny, Landestheater, Dessau, Dec. 13, 15, 1985
Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Schwerin, Schwerin Philharmoniker, April 10, 1986
Die sieben Todsünden, Schauspielhaus, Berlin, Gisela May, Jan. 22, 23, 1986
Der Silbersee, Berliner Festtage, Berlin, Städtische Theater Karl-Marx-Stadt, Gastspiel during Oct. 1985
Symphony No. 2, Berlin, Berliner Sinfonie-Orchester, Hans-Peter Frank, April 2, 1986

ITALY
Concert, Festival di Musica Moderna, Teatro Communale, Carpi (Modena), Milva, Oct. 17, 1985
**SCOTLAND**

*Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny, Glasgow, other cities, Scottish Opera, Felicity Palmer, others, Mar. 86 (touring SEE LAST ISSUE)*

*Symphony No. 2, Henry Wood Hall, Glasgow, Glasgow Orchestral Society, Graeme McKinnon, cond., Dec. 15, 1985*

**UNITED STATES**

*Burl to Broadway With Kurt Weill, Zephyr Theatre, Los Angeles, CA, Revival continues for open run*

*Burl to Broadway With Kurt Weill, Coconut Grove Playhouse, Miami, FL, Feb. 18-March 9, 1986*


*Concert, Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, MA Boston Concert Opera, Winter 1986*


*Der Jasager and Mahagonny Songspiel, Universalist Church, New York, NY, Center for Contemporary Opera, Feb. 13, 1986*

*Down in the Valley, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH, College of Musical Arts, Nov. 15, 16, 1985*

*Down in the Valley, Maryvale Middle School, Cheektowaga, NY, T.W. Kaminsky, dir.; students, Feb. 6, 7, 1986*

*Down in the Valley, College of Notre Dame, Belmont, CA, students, March 14, 15, 1986*

*Down in the Valley, Bolinas, CA, West Marin Community Chorus and Orchestra, March 22-23, 1986*

*Down in the Valley, Norwood Senior High School, Norwood, OH, students, April 18, 19, 1986*

*Down in the Valley, Brevard Music Center, Brevard, NC, H. Janiec, con.; R. Magoulas, dir.; June 28, 1986*

*Happy End, Hartke Theatre, American University, Washington DC; students; Oct. 4-11, 1985*

*Happy End, “America’s Musical Theatre”: on “Great Performances,” Public Broadcasting System, Arena Stage Production; Jan. 19, 1986 and other dates*

*Jazz arrangements, Willem Breuker Kollektief, The Jazz Showcase, Chicago, Illinois, Oct. 24, 1985*


*Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, TX, students, Dec. 10, 1985*

*Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, State College of Jersey City, Jersey City, NJ, Orch. of Jersey City, David Dworkin, cond.; Dec. 15, 1985*

*Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, St. Louis, MO, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Erich Leinsdorf, cond.; Jan. 10, 1986*

*Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Performing Arts, Purchase, NY Philharmonia Virtuosi, Richard Kapp, cond.; Feb. 23, 1986*


*Knickersbocker Holiday, Jacksonville University, Jacksonville, FL, students, October 1986*

*Lost in the Stars, Hampton University, Hampton, VA, S. Roberson, con.; A.C. Marshall, dir.; Apr. 16-20, 1986*

*Lost in the Stars, Long Wharf Theatre, New Haven, CT, Arvin Brown, director, April 18 – June 1, 1986*

*Lost in the Stars, Carroll Hall, Washington, DC, Opera DC, E. Roberts, con.; M. Von Villa, dir.; May 8-10, 15-17, 1986*

*Lost in the Stars, 92nd Street Y, New York, NY, Lyricists and Lyricists, Maurice Levine, cond.; June 1986*

*“Mack the Knife,” Carnegie Hall, New York, NY, Frank Sinatra, Sept. 5-11, 1985*

*Mahagonny Songspiel, Otterbein College, Westerville, OH, L. Berklyther, con.; M. Achter, dir.; Feb. 27 – Mar. 1, 1986*

*Mahagonny Songspiel, 92nd Street Y, New York, NY, Chamber Symphony, Seegers Schwarz, cond., March 15, 16, 1986; also Carnegie Hall March 17, 1986*

*Mahagonny Songspiel, Emanci-el Midtown Y, New York, NY, Downtown Music Productions, Mimi Stern-Wolf, prod.; N. Deutsch, dir.; April 5-6, 1986*

*Mahagonny Songspiel, Fox Theatre, San Diego, CA, San Diego Symphony Orchestra, Apr. 17-20, 1986*

*Recital, Warner Library, Tarrytown, NY, Jane Carlyle, Nov. 3, 1985*

*Recital, Ambassador Auditorium, Pasadena, CA, Christopher Trakas, baritone, Feb. 3, 1986*

*The Seven Deadly Sins, Temple University, Tomlinson Theater, April 3-5, 1986*


*Song: “Lost in the Stars,” Kennedy Center, Washington DC, William Warfield, Julius Rudel, Oct. 5, 1985*

*Songs: Tribute to Kurt Weill, Julie Wilson, Algonquin Hotel, New York, NY, Billy Roy, piano; December, 1985-January, 1986*

*Street Scene, Boston Conservatory of Music, Boston, MA; students; dir. N. Donohoe; K. Stanton cond.; Feb. 28-Mar. 3, 1986*

*Street Scene, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ, V. Goodall, dir.; W. Berz, cond.; Nov. 12-15, 1986*

*String Quartet No. 1, Temple Beth Am, Miami FL, Sequoia String Quartet, Oct. 27, 1985*

*String Quartet No. 1, Foy Concert Hall, Bethlehem, PA, Sequoia String Quartet, Oct. 30, 1985*

*String Quartet No. 1, California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, CA Sequoia String Quartet, Nov. 20, 1985*

*Ballet: String Quartet in B minor, Chicago, Mordine and Company, March 8, 14, 22, 1986*

*The Threepenny Opera, New York, NY, Collegiate School, Spring 1986*

*The Threepenny Opera, Reno, NV, Univ. of Nevada, Spring 1986*

*The Threepenny Opera, Newport, RI, Rhode Island Shakespeare Theatre, Spring 1986*

*The Threepenny Opera, Oregon Shakespearean Festival, Ashland, OR, J. Turner, March 1 to October 30, 1986*

*The Threepenny Opera, Maccabe College, St. Paul, MN, students, January 1986*

*The Threepenny Opera, Vermont Opera Theatre, Barre (April 4-5, 11-12, 1986) & Woodstock, April 18-19, 1986*

*The Threepenny Opera, California State University, San Bernardino, CA, May 29 -June 7, 1986*

*Unspecified Songs in rock/pop concerts throughout U.S. and Europe, David Johansen as Buster Poindexter, 1985-1986*

*Violin Concerto, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI, James Smith, violin; Feb. 14, 16, 1986*

*Violin Concerto, Vogel Hall, Performing Arts Center, Milwaukee, WI, Milwaukee Chamber Music Society, Ralph Evans, violin, April 3, 1986*


**WALES**

*Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, St. David’s Hall, Cardiff, London Sinfonietta, Feb. 25, 1986*
ORDER FORM
A NEW ORPHEUS:
ESSAYS ON KURT
WEILL

Please send me ____ copy (copies) of A New Orpheus: Essays on Kurt Weill at the special prepublication price of $28.50 per copy. A check drawn in US dollars and made payable to the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music, Inc. is enclosed. (New York residents, please add sales tax.)

Payment of $_________________________ is enclosed.

Ship to: __________________________________________
                                                  __________________________________________
                                                  __________________________________________

Mail this form with payment to:
Kurt Weill Foundation for Music, Inc.
142 West End Ave., Suite 1R
New York, NY 10023
U.S.A.

THE KURT WEILL FOUNDATION FOR MUSIC
142 West End Avenue, Suite 1-R
New York, New York 10023
Phone: (212) 873-1465

NEWSLETTER
RESPONSE FORM

Name ____________________________
Institution _______________________
Address __________________________

Telephone Numbers ________________________

___ Add my name to mailing list
___ Delete my name from mailing list
___ Update listing

Detach and mail to: Kurt Weill Foundation for Music, Inc.
142 West End Avenue, Suite 1R, New York, NY 10023
U.S.A.