

AROUND THE WORLD

Willi Kunzmann (Baron Laur), Ruth-Maria Nicolay (Fennimore), Thomas Thieme (Olim), and Mario Brell (Severin) perform *Der Silbersee* in Gelsenkirchen, May 1988. Photo: Majer-Finkes



The execution of Macheath (Klaus Henninger) in Krefeld's production of *Die Dreigroschenoper*, September 1987. Photo: Michael Fehlauer



La Opera de Dos Centavos bows at the Teatro Municipal San Martin, Buenos Aires, Spring 1988.



H.J. Reincke (Bill) leads his gang in "Bilbao Song" during a performance of *Happy End* at Städtische Bühnen, Regensburg, April 1988.

Lady in the Dark in Scotland

by Robert Kimball

John Mauceri and the Scottish Opera Chorus and Orchestra gave an eagerly awaited concert performance of *Lady in the Dark* that turned out to be one of the highlights of the 1988 Edinburgh International Festival. This was the first public presentation of the new edition of the Kurt Weill-Ira Gershwin score. It drew a large, appreciative audience to Edinburgh's Usher Hall on 31 August and received an excellent critical reaction.

Some, no doubt, were attracted to the event by the excellent word of mouth that Mauceri and the Scottish Opera had received for their concert account of George and Ira Gershwin's *Girl Crazy* at the 1987 Edinburgh Festival. Others were excited by the prospect of hearing an uncut version of one of the great American musical theater scores. (The Moss Hart-Ira Gershwin-Kurt Weill original, which starred Gertrude Lawrence as Liza Elliott and introduced Danny Kaye, opened in New York on 23 January 1941 and enjoyed a Broadway run of 467 performances.)

The new edition of *Lady in the Dark* was made possible by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to the John F. Kennedy Center in Washington DC, where Mauceri is consultant for musical theater. The project was supervised by Mauceri and edited by David Loud. Musical preparation was by David Will. Important help on this project came from Theodore S. Chapin, managing director of the Rodgers & Hammerstein Theater Library, and from the staff of the Kurt Weill Foundation.

In preparing what amounts to a new performing edition of the work complete with new scores and parts, Loud consulted Weill's full-score manuscript, the manuscript vocal score, original rehearsal materials, and the published vocal score.

It was Mauceri's idea to present *Lady in the Dark* at Edinburgh on a program with music associated with Germany of the 1930s – the decade of Hitler's rise to power. The concert opened with Richard Strauss's *München*, composed in 1939 and revised in 1945 as a memorial to the fallen city. Strauss, of course, remained in Germany during World War II, while Weill and Schoenberg emigrated to America. The concert continued with Schoenberg's Chamber Symphony No. 2, which was completed in 1940, while Schoenberg was living in California.

The first half of the Festival program concluded with Weill's stunning original Over-

ture to *Lady in the Dark*, with chorus and an orchestra of sixty. Patricia Hodge played Liza Elliott, David Drummond prepared the Scottish Opera Chorus, and the BBC Radio recorded the concert for broadcast.

It was a wonderful night for Weill-Gershwin enthusiasts as the new edition includes more than thirty minutes of music not heard on the Risë Stevens-Lehman Engel CBS album. The new edition improves chances of a complete recording of the score and enhances prospects of a full-scale theatrical revival. Here is a sample of some of the reviews:

The sheer accomplishment of Weill's score sweeps all before it. "The Saga of Jenny" ranks among the most engaging numbers he ever composed and, if not all the rest is on that level, the invention rarely falters. Weill's sense of pace, rhythm and color confirms him as a born man of the theater. His ability to hit any target he aims at is uncanny.

Peter Heyworth, *The Observer*

Weill is often said to have compromised his individuality and lost his cutting edge when, a refugee from Nazi Germany, he took up with Broadway... But the composer of *Lady in the Dark* is nobody's servant but his own. In the three dream sequences which make up most of the score, Weill successfully imposes his will and style on the American popular idiom.

David Cairns, *Sunday Times*

It was a painstaking labour of love by the conductor John Mauceri, who led a rousing account of the score... As Mauceri justly observed, Weill made no special musical compromises for the American market; his familiar fingerprints are all over the score... The long-forgotten overture, by the way, proved to be a stirring potpourri... Any future productions will surely reinstate it.

David Murray, *Financial Times*

Done with style and panache... Weill's score shows how completely he had absorbed an American idiom into his technique... An important stage in the development of the American musical as an art-form to be taken seriously.

Michael Kennedy, *Daily Telegraph*

The happiest aspect of all was that the real Kurt Weill made his presence felt not only by means of his professional skill... but also in an actually characteristic choral sound.

Gerald Lerner, *The Guardian*

The dream sequences allowed Weill to write a stunning series of pastiche numbers... Even its sizzling orchestration has subtleties... John Mauceri conducted the Scottish Opera Orchestra and Chorus in this spirited and immensely enjoyable concert performance.

Richard Morrison, *The Times*

A superbly stylish performance by Patricia Hodge. Miss Hodge should play the role on stage; a director, designer, and choreographer will be required who can fall in love with the clever-dick innocence of Forties Manhattan without leaving their intelligence at the door.

Michael Ratcliffe, *The Observer*

Julius Rudel Records *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik* and Violin Concerto

Conductor Julius Rudel, former director of the New York City Opera and frequent guest conductor with the Metropolitan and Vienna State Operas, has recorded *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik* and Weill's Violin Concerto with the St. Luke's Chamber Orchestra. The recording, available on compact disc and cassette (Musicmasters 60164), follows Maestro Rudel's acclaimed performance of both works at the 1987 Kurt Weill Festival at Merkin Concert Hall and should be released in December 1988.

***Street Scene* Returns to City Opera**

New York City Opera has recently announced plans to mount four performances of *Street Scene* in October 1989 at the New York State Theater. Jay Lesenger will recreate the company's 1978-79 production which features a set by Paul Sylbert and choreography by Patricia Birch. New costumes will be constructed to replace the ones destroyed in a 1985 warehouse fire. *Street Scene* is among the first group of productions to return to the repertory since that major loss.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

KURT WEILL

The Seven Deadly Sins'

JULIA MIGENES

Little Threepenny Music

'London Symphony Orchestra

MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS



The new recording of *The Seven Deadly Sins* on CBS Masterworks 44529, available on CD and cassette.

Original Broadway Cast

Kurt Weill STREET SCENE



Street Scene, the CD reissue of the original Broadway cast recording on CBS Masterworks 44668.

ARTICLES

Borwick, Susan Harden. "Perspective on Lenya: Through the Looking Glass." *Opera Quarterly* V/4: 12-36.

Hennenberg, Fritz. "Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny 1930." *Musik und Gesellschaft* 2/88: 78-81.

Meyer-Rähnitz, Bernd. "Drei Groschen und mehr: Werke von Brecht-Weill auf 78er Schallplatten." *FOX auf 78* (Fall 1987): 44-50; (Spring 1988): 24-28.

BOOKS

Deutsches Institut für Fernstudien an der Universität Tübingen, ed. *Musik Geschichte: Europäische Musik vom 12.-20. Jahrhundert*. Studienbegleitbrief 10. Musikverstehen und Neue Musik V. Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne, 1988. 128 p. [Includes "Analyse statt Ästhetik" and "Wider das bürgerliche Konzertwesen" by Stephen Hinton.]

Dümling, Albrecht, and Girth, Peter, eds. *Entartete Musik: Zur Düsseldorfer Ausstellung von 1938: Eine Kommentierte Rekonstruktion*. Düsseldorf: Landeshauptstadt Düsseldorf, 1988. 200 p.

Hart, Kitty Carlisle. *Kitty*. New York: Doubleday, 1988. 253 p.

Kazan, Elia. *Elia Kazan: A Life*. New York: Knopf, 1988. 848 p.

Lucchesi, Joachim, and Shull, Ronald K. *Musik bei Brecht*. Berlin: Henschelverlag, 1988. 1083p.

Lynch, Richard Chigley. *Broadway on Record: A Directory of New York Cast Recordings of Musical Shows, 1931-1986*. Discographies, 28. New York: Greenwood Press, 1987. 347 p.

Pausch, Oskar, ed. *Caspar Neher 1897-1962: Katalog zu einer Ausstellung des Österreichischen Theatermuseums und der Theatersammlung der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek*. Vienna, 1987. [40] p.

Rampersad, Arnold. *The Life of Langston Hughes; Volume II: 1941-1967; I Dream a World*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988. 512 p. [Includes chapter on *Street Scene*.]

Schebera, Jürgen. *Damals im Romanischen Café Künstler und ihre Lokale im Berlin der zwanziger Jahre*. Braunschweig: Westermann, 1988. 142 p.

Stisky, Larry. *Busoni and the Piano: The Works, the Writing, and the Recordings*. Contributions to the Study of Music and Dance, 7. New York: Greenwood Press, 1987. 419 p.

Traber, Habakuk, and Weingarten, Elmar, eds. *Verdrängte Musik: Berliner Komponisten im Exil*. Berlin: Argon, 1987. 376 p.

RECORDINGS

Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny. Lotte Lenya, Heinz Sauerbaum, Gisela Litz, Horst Günter, Georg Mund, Fritz Göllnitz, Sigmund Roth, Peter Markwort, Richard Munch; North German Radio Chorus; Wilhelm Brückner-Rüggeberg, conductor. CBS M2K 77341 [CD reissue]

Berlin and American Theater Songs. Lotte Lenya. CBS MK 42658. [CD reissue]

Die Dreigroschenoper. Wolfgang Neuss, Willy Trenk-Trebitsch, Trude Hesterburg, Erich Schellow, Johanna von Kóczyán, Lotte Lenya, Wolfgang Grunert, Inge Wolffberg; Orchester Sender Freies Berlin; Wilhelm Brückner-Rüggeberg. CBS MK 42637. [CD reissue]

Jill Gomez in Cabaret Classics. Jill Gomez, soprano; John Constable, piano. Unicorn-Kanchana DKP 9055. [Includes four songs from *Marie Galante*, "My Ship," "Lonely House," and "It Never Was You."]

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Concerto for Violin and Wind Orchestra, and Mahagonny-Songspiel. Nona Liddell, Meriel Dickinson, Mary Thomas, Philip Langridge, Ian Partridge, Benjamin Luxon, Michael Rippon, The London Sinfonietta, David Atherton, conductor. Deutsche Grammophon 423 255-2. [CD reissue.]

Die sieben Todsünden. Kleine Dreigroschenmusik. Julia Migenes; London Symphony Orchestra, Michael Tilson Thomas, conductor. CBS MK 44529.

Street Scene. Original Broadway Cast. CBS MK 44668 [CD reissue]

This is the Life: And Other Unrecorded Songs. Steven Kimbrough, baritone; Dalton Baldwin, piano. Arabesque Z6579. [Includes "Walt Whitman Songs," "Rilke Lieder," "River Chanty," "Song of the Free," "This is the Life," "Im Volkston," and "Das schöne Kind."]

SCORES

Lost in the Stars. New York: Chappell, 1950; reprint ed. New York: Chappell/Intersong, 1988. Distributed by Hal Leonard Publishing Corp., Winona, MN 55987.

VIDEODISC

The 3 Penny Opera. Directed by G. W. Pabst. The Criterion Collection, a joint venture of Janus Films and Voyager Press, 1988. [Reissue of 1931 film with simultaneous English translation by Anneliese Varaldiev on second audio track.]

Kurt Weill: A Handbook.

By David Drew. London: Faber; Berkeley: Univ. of California, 1987. 480 p.

David Drew has been a figure of such central importance in the history of Weill scholarship, his contributions have been so numerous and varied, his influence so pervasive, that the music, indeed the legacy of Kurt Weill, is today unthinkable without him. And yet for all his notable achievements, his essays and editions, the performances and recordings he has instigated, the dissertations and scholarship his own work has inspired, Drew has drawn much of his authority as the pre-eminent Weill scholar from two works-in-progress that over the years have cast long shadows as "standard works" *in absentia*. The first of these, Drew's source catalogue of Kurt Weill's musical legacy, has now appeared, over a quarter of a century after its inception, and while his critical biography of the composer still looms on the horizon, its foundation and framework have been firmly established in *Kurt Weill: A Handbook*.

Drew's title is far too modest. The catalogue provides not only a description of all known Weill autographs and principal holograph sources (sketches and drafts, rehearsal and full scores), but also plot synopses and information on each work's genesis, scoring, casting, approximate duration, first performance, publication, and performing versions. To most entries Drew appends background notes regarding a work's critical context and broader significance within Weill's artistic development. The author further provides a Weill chronology – the most detailed to date – as well as an illuminating chapter on the composer's unfinished (and un-begun) projects, a description of his private library, and a resumé of those sources still missing. In three appendices Drew outlines the operations of the Kurt Weill Foundation and Weill-Lenya Research Center in New York and the Weill/Lenya Archive at Yale University, while separate indices are provided for general topics, works, and authors.

In retrospect, it is difficult to appreciate how unlikely it was that this project found official support in those first years after Weill's death; it is particularly surprising to recall that this catalogue was originally intended as a companion volume to Josef Rufer's catalogue of Arnold Schoenberg's artistic legacy (*Das Werk Arnold Schoenbergs*, Kassel, 1959). Certainly the dissimilarities between the two catalogues are such as to belie even the remotest kinship.

Thirty years separate their publication, and the times, after all, have changed. The Rufer catalogue, dry in tone, factual and scrupulously objective, is the product of an era of post-war reconstruction in which every bibliographic inventory was a contribution toward salvaging a past obliterated by fascist tyranny and the physical and psychological effects of war. More than a generation later those salvage operations continue, but they have lost something of their urgency. Today we are more concerned with setting accents, balancing data, and exploring options.

That Schoenberg's legacy no longer occupies the commanding position it once had and that Weill should now be the focus of so much critical and scholarly attention says something about that process. Schoenberg, as Drew points out (p. 9), was a demonstrably "great" composer well aware of his historical status. He took pains to preserve his legacy, and students and disciples, Rufer among them, viewed their role as executors of a master plan drawn up by the master. Weill eschewed the trappings of creative genius and proved at times remarkably casual with the material records of his legacy. Accordingly, the mere task of 'inspecting' and 'gathering together' his papers was fraught with considerable obstacles, including the loss of most of the composer's European possessions. Adding to the difficulties created by the geographic dislocations of Weill's career are the aesthetic peregrinations that took the composer from the avant garde of Donaueschingen to the film studios of Hollywood, from opera house premieres in Berlin to openings on Broadway, thus compounding the vagaries of fate with the exigencies of performance practice.

While such factors might determine the content of a catalogue, they do not necessarily define its format and tone. It is in this regard that *Kurt Weill: A Handbook* is a remarkably – and sometimes disconcertingly – personal reflection of its author and of his role in the promotion of Kurt Weill's artistic interests. In an extended and rather disjunct introduction, framed as a report to the Academy of the Arts in West Berlin (the project's sponsor), Drew provides a narrative of the "long and sometimes troubled history" of his own work on the catalogue. That history parallels and to some extent illuminates post-war Weill reception, with which Drew has been so intimately involved; unfortunately, on more than one occasion he allows that intimate involvement to draw him into explanations and personal attacks that cannot help seeming both inappropriate and self-serving. To be sure, Drew has followed more closely than most the roller coaster ride in Weill's fortunes as they were

affected by shifts in technology, stylistic fashion, political preoccupation, popular culture, and artistic association. He has seen the insidious effects of lingering clichés and was himself apparently the victim of rumor and innuendo, which at various times seriously strained his working relationship with Weill's widow, Lotte Lenya. Notwithstanding, it is disturbing that his introduction increasingly takes on the character of a personal exculpation to which the uninitiated reader may find himself a coincidental and somewhat uncomfortable witness.

During its long gestation, Drew's catalogue underwent numerous revisions, not only to accommodate new discoveries and information, but also to forestall false impressions in light of changing developments. In the end, the book's multiple incarnations and the author's difficulties in finding closure are oddly appropriate for a work associated with Kurt Weill. And, as in many of Weill's own works, there is a palpable tension in the catalogue between purpose and aspiration, between the needs of the hour and grander aspirations. *Kurt Weill: A Handbook* is, in fact, an uneasy amalgam of two books. The one fulfills a bibliographic function, delimited by narrow goals and circumscribed by the available sources; the other seeks to go beyond those sources, to illuminate from within and interpret from without.

To be sure, the sources cry out to be interpreted, in part because they are scant and in part because there is so little cooperation from Weill himself, who was relatively silent on such vital topics as his early works and his German and Jewish heritages. Our priorities are clearly not those of Weill himself, and any biography or catalogue must deal with its subject's reluctance in allowing us to pry into areas of such obvious relevance.

This problem is exacerbated by the very dissimilar posture of Weill's best-known collaborator, Bertolt Brecht. Brecht's own copious written records, as well as those of his wives and mistresses, students, and disciples, have subjected the Brecht-Weill relationship to interpretations so perversely one-sided that Drew's treatment of the German poet, despite its sometimes disputatious tone, is remarkably even-handed (though he is far less so when dealing with Brecht's apologists). Nonetheless, Brecht-enthusiasts are unlikely to be convinced by Drew's arguments (chief among them – in countering the claim that Brecht may have provided Weill with melodic material – that Weill's "structural priorities are harmonic and tonal, not linear," p. 203), while those coming to the subject with fewer preconcep-

tions may find his concentration on the playwright both perplexing and obsessive. Of course, Drew is responding to an accumulation of thirty years' experience with Brecht scholarship, and while Weill's stature has grown in the interim, it is understandable that Drew might want to use the handbook (and no doubt the biography to come) as a forum to set the record straight and define Kurt Weill on the composer's – or at least the author's – terms. The danger lies not in adding yet a new distortion to the Brecht-Weill relationship (the vehemence on both sides tends to insure a fair airing of the arguments), but in slighting Weill's relationship with his less notorious collaborators, many of whom are in turn unjustly overshadowed by Weill. Like Brecht, Weill was an inveterate collaborator, though arguably with greater success; his need for relationships with creative men of letters (and words) – men such as Georg Kaiser, Iwan Goll, Caspar Neher, Maxwell Anderson, Paul Green, Ogden Nash and Ira Gershwin – was a driving force in his artistic life. A more thorough exploration of these and other relationships, most of which were founded upon the bonds of friendship, trust, and respect that Weill so sorely missed in his dealings with Brecht, would not only serve to place Brecht in proper perspective, but to establish those personal, philosophical, and artistic criteria that Weill sought in such relationships. Drew's treatment of Georg Kaiser suggests he is aware of the importance of this line of study, but neither Kaiser nor any of the other collaborators as yet emerges with sufficient clarity.

A similar problem arises in Drew's treatment of Weill's relationship with other composers. On several occasions we are informed about a "rivalry" between Hindemith and Weill that may have affected their selection of projects. These speculations, however intriguing, are insufficiently grounded to seem credible. Nonetheless, one is left wondering what, if any, hard evidence exists for Weill's attitudes toward and relationships with contemporaries such as Ernst Krenek, Wilhelm Grosz, or Max Brand, or for that matter, with Schoenberg, Stravinsky, and, say, Berg. Allusions to fruitful interchanges with Karl Kraus, Arthur Honegger, and Darius Milhaud are tantalizing, but occur only in passing. Drew's command of the subject matter is so sovereign, his knowledge of Weill and his music so broad, that in these and other instances he frequently offers information or conclusions for which he fails to give sufficient source support. One of numerous small examples is his reference to "talk of a new and more convenient" orchestration for *Das*

Berliner Requiem (p. 209). Elsewhere we are left wondering about the identity of Nelly Frank, the *Frauentanz* dedicatee, and that of its original dedicatee, a certain "Barbara" (pp. 148-149).

Naturally, a source catalogue is not usually the place to explore such matters, and one assumes that Drew's forthcoming biography will give them their due. It is therefore puzzling that Drew includes in this first book so many anticipations of the second, unless it is to stake out his territory or whet our appetites. The result, however, is a problem of focus. On the one hand we are given detailed information on brands and sizes of manuscript paper, paginations, and even inks (though inconsistently in the latter case), on the other the discussion of a work may run the gamut from closely argued reasons for dating to subjective marginal reflections on performance practice (such as the aphoristic notes 4-10 appended to the discussion of *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, p. 185). Drew himself indicates that he curtailed the bibliographic function of his catalogue to leave room for a "more broadly informative one," but the wealth of discursive information everywhere threatens to obscure the book's principal goal: to give a clear and concise list of Weill's known works and their sources. In the first instance, the prose format, so conducive to reading this catalogue from cover to cover – and Drew's lucid prose and insightful commentary are indeed a joy to read – makes it difficult to locate relevant data. Surely even within the design of the present book it would have been possible to have listed the extant works in succinct columns, in *each case* differentiating between holographs and copies, sketches, drafts, full scores, etc. and giving the sources in *every* instance (and not just when it is not at Yale). Instead, such information is too often buried in prose or simply assumed. It is not, for instance, entirely clear whether the full score of the Violin Concerto (discussed on pp. 156-157) is an autograph or a copy of which only the title page is in the composer's hand. Nor is it readily apparent from the discussion on pages 132-133 on what source the 1971 performing edition of the Divertimento is based; one is left to assume that it was devised from the parts, though only those for the last movement are explicitly mentioned. A similar problem plagues the publication listings which, if presented in columns, along with publication or plate numbers, would greatly enhance comprehensibility and facilitate cross reference (helping, for instance, to distinguish between sources identified simply as "song" album or "vocal" album). Likewise, the prose format of the extremely

valuable chapter on uncompleted projects (particularly interesting are those after 1933) makes it difficult to gain an overview of the subject. The discussion of Weill's Brook House library, on the other hand, is far less informative; a catalogue of books known to have belonged to Weill might have been more rewarding. Dating is not always consistent in format, and in the case of serial productions it might have been useful to include the length of the run. Given the subject at hand, it is regrettable that there are so few manuscript illustrations and that the few that are reproduced have not been cross-referenced with the text. Elsewhere musical examples would have been welcomed, as in note four in the chapter on *Die Dreigroschenoper* (pp. 201-204). Of course, such discussions deserve more space than Drew had at his disposal, leaving one again to wonder whether the entire subject might not be more appropriate in another setting. Finally, Drew's decision to follow a strictly chronological order in his listing of works has the unfortunate side-effect of separating the discussion of different versions of the same work. In short, Drew's catalogue is absorbing reading, but as a handbook it is anything but handy.

While *Kurt Weill: A Handbook* is not, in many ways, a definitive catalogue, it is thanks in large measure to its author that such a reference book (no doubt combining the work of several scholars and including performance statistics and a complete discography) is now within sight. Yet ironically such a work, however desirable, may very well miss the heart of Kurt Weill's legacy, which at every turn resists tidy categorization. In *Kurt Weill: A Handbook*, so idiosyncratic and at times frustrating in fulfilling its narrower goals, we have the work of a man – perhaps himself frustrated by the inadequacy of mere facts or made impatient by the "lateness of the hour" – who has already fixed his sights on the broader issues inherent in Kurt Weill's legacy. Overriding all misgivings about the tone and form of this book is the gratitude at having so compassionate and humane a view of the composer from one of his most articulate advocates and critics.

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David Drew is preparing a German edition of his handbook and would gratefully welcome any corrections of fact. All errata may be sent to the Kurt Weill newsletter, which will publish a list in a future issue.

The Threepenny Opera.

By Bertolt Brecht. English Version by Desmond Vesey. With the English Lyrics and a New Introduction by Eric Bentley. Illustrations and an original lithograph by Jack Levine. New York: Limited Editions Club, 1982.

This volume is meant to hold a special place in the owner's library. Two thousand copies were issued for members of the Limited Editions Club, each signed by Bentley and Levine. In all aspects, it is intended as a collector's item which will increase in value over a long lifetime. In some respects, it realizes this intention.

Designed by Howard I. Gralla, the edition is both pleasing and durable. It is handsomely bound by A. Horowitz and Sons in a black book-linen imported from Holland; the binding allows the volume to lie flat. The soft-white paper—a fine 100-pound stock—is easy on the eye, crisp to the touch, and complements the clean, sharp typeface (12pt. Walbaum). The large format (8½" x 11¼") allows speeches and songs to be clearly differentiated. All these physical aspects combine to give the volume a distinguished appearance.

Levine's etchings and illustrations are also pleasant to look at but are only marginally related to the play, having been inspired by G.W. Pabst's film version of *Die Dreigroschenoper* (1931). There is about these illustrations a childlike quality and a vague uneasiness which capture neither the raucous fun achieved by Brecht and Weill in 1928 nor the political trenchancy with which Brecht later tried to invest the play. Only Levine's style, characterized by sharply drawn but smudged lines, hints at the qualities that have made *Die Dreigroschenoper* so memorable.

Aside from the physical qualities, there is the matter of the text, and it is an interesting matter indeed. The difficulty of pinning down an "authoritative" text by Brecht is by now well-known. Brecht wrote pieces of text at the last minute, revised scripts during production runs, further altered them for publication, reworked them again when political conditions or his opinions changed, and exercised absolute control over which version could be performed at any given time. In addition to frustrating and disenfranchising his collaborators, Brecht's predilection for change continues to make it difficult to determine which version of a

script was actually performed or for which version the music was written, and this complicates the already difficult task of translation.

The history of *Die Dreigroschenoper*, however, is simpler than that of the translation. The play begins as Elisabeth Hauptmann's translation of John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*. Brecht first took an active hand in the script when Ernst Joseph Aufrecht offered to produce it. In revising Hauptmann's translation, he inserted his existing song texts and some poems borrowed from Rudyard Kipling and from a German translation of François Villon's ballads. Brecht later patched together new pieces of text during final rehearsals. With contributions from almost everyone Brecht knew, the play opened, became a tremendous hit, and left Brecht with the problem of justifying in Marxist terms a commercial success he had thrown together for fun. Attempts to solve this problem occupied Brecht for twenty years, resulting in an unproduced film exposé ("Die Beule," 1930), a completely revised playscript for his *Versuche* (1931), a novel (*Der Dreigroschenroman*, 1934), minor revisions for the Malik edition of his collected works (1938), and updated lyrics for post-war productions (1948; at Weill's insistence, these were never incorporated into the script nor authorized for performance.) In addition to copious notes on the play's "proper" interpretation and performance, these attempts also led Brecht to suppress publication of the original stage script. That script was never offered for sale although it was printed in 1928 by Universal Edition and Felix Bloch Erben for rental purposes. After 1949, the *Versuche* text became the basis for all subsequent productions, publications, and translations.

Based on Brecht's *Versuche* text, this English version apparently began as an unpublished translation of the play by Desmond Vesey. In 1946, when Brecht was trying to get an English-language collection of his plays into print, he recommended Vesey's version to Eric Bentley, who was to oversee the series. Three years later, Bentley edited Vesey's translation and published the resulting English-language version in Series 1 of *From the Modern Repertoire*. In 1955, Bentley revised the translation and added new lyrics which were borrowed from Christopher Isherwood's translation of the verses found in Vesey's translation of *Dreigroschenroman* (*A Penny for the Poor*, 1937). He further revised the playscript in 1960, altered the lyrics, and copyrighted the whole under his own name. This last version is published in the Limited Edition.

The Brechtian history of this translation is not altogether surprising. Bentley was probably closer to Brecht than any other American. After meeting the playwright in 1942, he worked tirelessly to understand Brecht's theory and practice of theater and became one of the few people able to compel Brecht to explain himself. In collaboration with Brecht, Bentley became chiefly responsible for getting the plays and theory of the "Epic Theater" translated and disseminated throughout America, and in the post-war years he brought many of Brecht's plays to American stages. In all of this, he was encouraged and instructed by Brecht.

Bentley's close association with and championship of Brecht can be felt throughout this translation presented in the Limited Edition. He has introduced numerous changes into Vesey's translation and substantially rewritten Isherwood's version of the lyrics. These changes make the translation a fairly faithful reflection of the *Versuche* text, and this is disappointing. In following this version, Bentley has given us a script for reading but not one which reflects the original performance experience. In this he follows the standard practice of Brecht's translators and gives us the "authorized" version of the script. As this was probably the only version made available to Vesey or Bentley, one cannot fault them for this choice. However, the publishers of the Limited Edition must take the blame for setting up expectations that the text cannot meet. Between the covers of this finely crafted volume the reader anticipates finding the text reflective of the excitement of the Theater am Schiffbauerdamm in 1928 or the Theatre de Lys in 1954. Instead, one finds a script with all the heaviness of the *Versuche* version. Brecht's added lyrics and assignment of songs are taken over as if Weill had set them to music, and his predilection to set linguistic choices against the music is taken to uncomfortable and ineffective extremes. Musical emphases fall on the wrong syllables or words, and the conflicts in verse accents and musical rhythms confuse rather than enlighten one another. In another context, the Vesey-Bentley translation would provide a serviceable English version for reading and literary study, but the present edition makes claims to authenticity which it, by its very nature, cannot satisfy.

RONALD K. SHULL
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PERFORMANCES

Street Scene. Westdeutscher Rundfunk, Jan Latham-König, conductor. Cologne Radio Orchestra, Cologne, 4 March 1988

By and large, German musicology has pigeonholed the "American" Weill as shallow and derivative, a composer who is considered to have catered to the interests of powerful Broadway producers, and who, thus, betrayed the Berlin heritage he had shared with Bertolt Brecht. Surprisingly, opera companies in Germany have done little to challenge this cliché and to allow the public – nowadays mostly formed by a new generation of Germans who grew up with American popular culture transmitted via TV and the Top 10, and who have learned English at school from an early age – to decide for themselves whether "Mr. Weill" is indeed worthy of reconsideration.

The Cologne-based Westdeutscher Rundfunk, one of the largest public radio stations in Germany, took a definite step in the right direction by offering a lavish concert presentation of *Street Scene* (Weill's ambitious "Broadway Opera" written in 1946) as part of the Duisburg Festival of American Music. Producer and Weill-champion Harald Banter presented for the first time Weill's New York immigrant neighborhood in its original English version to an audience otherwise accustomed to Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story* or to the American South as popularized by George Gershwin in *Porgy and Bess*. Kurt Weill, to say the least, compared respectably indeed.

An excellent cast of twenty-two soloists, mostly Americans singing with German opera companies with an occasional Italian and Scandinavian included for an authentic immigrant flavor, did their best to direct some of Weill's fresh Hudson breezes to the Rhine. They were supported by the Cologne Radio Orchestra, numbering sixty musicians, as well as by forty singers from the Cologne Radio Choir.

Despite the limitations of a concert performance, *Street Scene* received ovations from sell-out crowds in Duisburg, Recklinghausen, and in the new and spacious Philharmonic Hall of Cologne. Most of the soloists successfully delivered a touch of Broadway even though chained to microphones used for discreet amplification. Mrs. Lys Symonette, who assisted in the original Broadway production, provided coaching. Ron Williams, in the dual roles of Henry Davis and Harry Easter, sang affectively

with his "blues" voice, "I Got a Marble and a Star"; and his performance of "Would You Like to be on Broadway?" almost had the audience snapping along. Gillian Scalici and Patrick Bourque as Mae and Dick did the boogie-woogie with real New York pizzazz, much to the chagrin of the orchestra's pianist – too bad that, of all the numbers, this one had to be cut slightly to avoid chaos. Tenor Angelo Marenzi's *bel canto* singing in praise of American ice cream, which merged into the Puccini parody sextet, proved another highlight.

While Julius Best as Sam Kaplan sometimes seemed a bit stiff, Frederic Mayer managed to stir up images of Weill's bitter-sweet "Berlin sound" in the role of Sam's father Abraham Kaplan, a left-wing sympathizer whose poignant Brooklyn Jewish

did an acceptable job – but not much more. After weeks of intense rehearsals possible only in such a publicly supported institution, much more precision could have been expected. At ease with Weill's jazzy dance numbers, the strings paradoxically tended to be sloppy when it came to the more "serious" passages. Presenting a relatively unknown work with twenty-two violins is highly laudable, yet it was bothersome to hear occasionally twenty-two different tempi. Granted, it is not the concertmaster's fault that he happened to look like the mature Bismarck. Nonetheless, it would have been appreciated had he played his marvelously composed solo interludes a little less *à la prusse*.

Unfortunately, at times, the orchestra rushed and played too loudly; in spite of the amplification of the voices, it managed to drown out not only some of the soloists but also the choir in the final scenes, which was, nonetheless, impeccably prepared by Herbert Schernus.

Given this, it might have been a good idea to include at least part of Elmer Rice's libretto and Langston Hughes's lyrics in the program notes. Instead, there was only a brief and somewhat awkward plot summary, which also was read aloud between scenes by narrators J. Drew Lucas and Linda Joy.

The German audiences gave *Street Scene* an enthusiastic reception. Some newspaper critics, however, still could not place the "American Weill" into their musical perspective and smugly detected cheap Broadway *schmaltz*

while professing to have sought in vain for the composer's own, typical voice. In Dessau (German Democratic Republic), Weill's birthplace, a rather inconspicuous plaque remembers him only as Brecht's collaborator, while to the latter's memory (who, to my knowledge, has no real connection to Dessau whatsoever) an impressive statue has been dedicated on the city's main square. It is a sad irony of fate that in the two Germanys, which otherwise have drifted apart over the past few decades, there are still voices who agree wholeheartedly in their verdict on a German artist who was forced into exile, became an American, and chose never to return again.

It is hoped that this production of *Street Scene*, which was rebroadcast nationwide by several state radio networks, has made some reconsider their point of view.

STEFAN KRÜGER
Cologne



Original Broadway cast of *Street Scene*, Adelphi Theater, New York, 1946.

accent must have been lost on the greater part of the audience.

Jeanette Scovotti as Greta Fiorentino was utterly convincing as was Elizabeth Eaton – a very promising young soprano in the charming, though rather small, roles of the Nurse Maid and the Salvation Army Girl. Jane Curd and Joshua Hecht made a respectable Murrant couple, although their performance lacked any particularly memorable quality; only when Frank Murrant fired the fatal pistol shot at his unfaithful wife (done backstage), did he draw out a strong audience reaction: somewhat inappropriately, he brought the house down with laughter. Though this response was not intended, almost any stage action that helped dispel the sterile studio atmosphere was welcome – a subtle gesture here, a little miming there. At least attention was not unduly diverted from Weill's music.

The orchestra, conducted by the young and energetic Jan Latham-König (who had introduced *The Ballad of the Manna Carta* to Cologne's Weill aficionados last October),

Der Silbersee. Musiktheater im Revier, Gelsenkirchen. 8 May 1988

It probably was more than an accident that the Gelsenkirchen premiere of *Der Silbersee* coincided with the anniversary of the Second World War's end and Germany's liberation from National Socialism. Further, the work has gained in particular topicality: the Ruhr district, once dominated by the coal and steel industries, suffers from a steadily increasing unemployment rate and is in the throes of an economic recession. In the morning session which preceded the evening premiere, Josef Heinzelmann provided a lively and informative general introduction to the work, and chief dramaturg Hans Jürgen Drescher explained his concept of the staging. Clearly, the production team was concerned principally with the vindication of *Silbersee* – a work whose future in German theaters had been destroyed by the Nazis.

In his Gelsenkirchen staging, director Karl Kneidl chose not to emphasize a certain ambiguity characteristic of *Silbersee*. Similarly, conductor Ingo Metzmacher's otherwise sensitive and accurate interpretation of the music was also somewhat lacking in the delineation of the play's subtle thematic ambivalence. However, what this production did indeed emphasize most impressively were the work's straightforward and unequivocally bitter moments, as well as its purely lyrical passages. The unusually strong commitment of the cast to *Der Silbersee* came across the footlights, and the opening night audience's sympathetic reception was reflective of the work's deeply affective significance.

The scenery was modest but well conceived; the orchestra was placed on the stage, strings to the left, the conductor and all other instruments to the right. The actors performed either in front of the orchestra or between its sections. This unusual arrangement resulted in a few – but minor – discrepancies in precision of ensemble between the orchestra and singers, the latter being obliged to perform with their backs to the conductor.

The necessity for an economic production provoked the seemingly inexhaustible stage imagination of Kneidl and his designer Hans Peter Boeffgen. After the theft in the first act, Severin (played by Mario Brell) and his comrades hid among the members of the orchestra; Olim (Thomas Thieme) – proudly displaying his winning lottery ticket to the conductor, prompter, orchestra, as well as the audience – blurred further the traditional lines of separation among the ele-

ments of theater. The sound of the chorus (which was prepared by Nandor Ronay and which sang beautifully and expressively with expert diction) rose unobtrusively from the first rows of the auditorium; this seating placement made a decisive dramatic effect which was underlined when the chorus stood during the play's more urgent moments. The staging involved the audience even further as Fennimore's path to the Silverlake led her off the stage and into the auditorium; at the work's climax, Fennimore (played by Ruth Maria Nicolay) sang from the second balcony where she urged Olim and Severin, themselves balanced precariously on top of chairs in the theater's orchestra section, on to the Silverlake. A parallel was intentionally drawn between the audience and the frozen and fragile lake, a lake which could support or engulf the protagonists.

The Musiktheater im Revier deserves admiration for succeeding in assembling a cast of good singers *and* good actors, despite the customary failing of German theaters to combine the two talents effectively. All the participants satisfied the individual vocal demands of their roles. There were only a few moments of certain affectation, e.g., in the performances of Elise Kaufmann and Edith Lehr, the two salesladies, whose interpretations simply proved too operatic. This was not the case with Mario Brell and Thomas Thieme, who deservedly were greeted by enthusiastic bravos during the final curtain calls. The entire ensemble, of which I must also give special mention to Ruth Maria Nicolay in the role of Fennimore and Axel Böhmert in the role of the "Dicke Landjäger," received sustained ovations.

However, Eva Tamulénas and Willi Kunzmann as Frau von Luber and Baron Laur seemed miscast. It remained unconvincing that a cold, emotionless woman, with the speech mannerisms of a robot, could be proficient enough in the art of cunning to be able to regain possession of a castle; nor was such a feat any more believable in the friendly, elderly, and feeble Baron Laur of Kunzmann. The 1985 Recklinghausen production was much clearer: it represented these two people as members from the elite class of the Kaiser Wilhelm Empire – an aristocracy which in the new republic had lost its privileges and tried to turn back the wheels of history by any available means. In Gelsenkirchen, the director inappropriately cut important lines belonging to Laur which, otherwise, round out his character and give clues to his motivations.

I do not know what prompted the Gelsenkirchen theater to play *Der Silbersee* (which lasted two and a half hours) without any intermission. If a break had occurred after Act I, the audience could have grasped more of Kaiser's text. His characters are frequently very talkative, giving the impression of being compelled by a need for self-justification or confession; while talking so much, they ultimately and unwittingly unmask and reveal themselves. The Gelsenkirchen production preserved a skillful balance between the words and music, thereby enabling us to experience a truly great evening of theater. We can only hope that its success will shine forth and emit rays to other German stages.

ANDREAS HAUFF
Mainz



Elise Kaufmann and Edith Lehr (the two salesladies) in the Musiktheater am Revier production of *Der Silbersee*. Photo: Majer Finkes

PERFORMANCES

Lost in the Stars. Concert sequence devised by David Drew. American Composers Orchestra, Dennis Russell Davies, conductor. Carnegie Hall, New York, 9 October 1988.

Somewhere, there may be a theater piece that conveys a deeper sense of sorrow than Kurt Weill's musical tragedy *Lost in the Stars*. At the moment, not one comes to mind.

After deliberating for years, David Drew has abridged and restructured this score into a new format for concert performance (as he had done with *Happy End*, *Johnny Johnson*, and other works). On 9 October, his "concert sequence" was premiered by the American Composers Orchestra at Carnegie Hall.

In previews at the Guggenheim Museum, musical excerpts (by reduced forces) were interspersed with comments by Mr. Drew, director Peter Wexler, and conductor Dennis Russell Davies. These evenings were videotaped, and highlights should eventually appear on public television in the series "Works and Process."

Drew explained he wanted to focus his concert sequence not on the personal drama of the story's protagonists, but on the larger drama of South African society against which the action takes place. Thus, he has removed most of the "sentimental and popular" songs from the score, implying that they represented a once-necessary compromise between the proper tone of the story and the commercial requirements of the Broadway theater.

A starting premise for the suite was the desire to excise the numbers Weill had originally penned nearly ten years earlier for his unfinished *Ulysses Africanus* – though strangely, for reasons of "musical balance," Drew has retained "Trouble Man." Most of the choral passages from *Lost in the Stars* do appear in Drew's version, shuffled into a sequence which, he hoped, would have a satisfying musical logic of its own – and might imply a general story line (even when legal complications precluded having a narrator tie the music together by reading passages from Alan Paton's novel).

Drew admits that what remains is "relatively austere in character and predominantly dark in tone." The apartheid cantata he has fashioned is at once fervent and impersonal – like the image of a desperate crowd which, for most of us, evokes less sympathetic response than the picture of a solitary person clutching the body of a child. We badly miss the contrast of Weill's warmly melodic bal-

lads: "Stay Well," "The Little Gray House," and especially "Thousands of Miles." And likewise, the celebrated title song, which far from being sentimental, represents an unresolved crisis of faith. (Following discussions with the conductor, Drew discarded the odd notion of grouping these numbers together in a prologue.)

The choral lament "Cry the Beloved Country" is sixth in the twelve-movement sequence; to this writer, having passed that emotional peak, what followed (including a reprise) could only be anti-climactic. Another listener was more touched by the quiet tension of "Four O'Clock" – a move-



Page from full score of "Gold!" © 1988 European American Music. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

ment originally intended as underscoring for dialogue, punctuated by the chorus, as the minister awaits the hour of his son's execution. Having "Big Mole" sung by an adult woman was not effective, and a mistake in the published lyric of "Who'll Buy?" was uncorrected ("corn" should rhyme with "born," not "years").

The suite's greatest interest lies in its resurrection of two brief sections never before heard in context. "Gold" is familiar from an old MGM record – without voices and minus coda. With its moderate boogie tempo and explosive jazz accents, all this dance number needs is a biting, angry lyric, and it would be worthy of *West Side Story*. Anderson's lyrics, alas, are unexpectedly feeble: "You get a few nuggets and put 'em in your stocking / And nothing you do is considered very shocking."

A totally new discovery is Weill's original draft of "A Bird of Passage," orchestrated by

Christopher Shaw. Its introductory tenor solo ("Lord of the heart") is a wonderful blend of tranquility and harmonic unrest. And the ensuing choral lines – beginning *andante con moto*, with a distinctive modal countermelody – bring to mind the offstage hurricane hymn from *Mahagonny* ("Haltet euch aufrecht") and the *Schlusschoral* from *Die Dreigroschenoper*, not to mention their antecedents in Mozart and Bach.

The performance of Drew's concert sequence earned a hearty ovation, but suffered by comparison to the original 1949 recording. The Gregg Smith Singers and Morgan State University Singers had lapses of diction and balance. Damon Evans is a fine tenor but, like mezzo Milagro Vargas, took occasional liberties; neither voice could fill Carnegie Hall without some excess vibrato.

The difficulty of understanding the words was a severe problem; for performance in such a large hall, the full text should have been printed in the program. Instead, we were given a one-paragraph synopsis (which pointedly – or pointlessly – failed to mention which characters were black or white), along with an essay by David Drew and nearly five pages of extracts from the novel. Dim lighting was necessitated by the planned slide-show accompaniment; but due to a computer failure, the projected projections did not project, and the restless movements of lights and choristers seemed superfluous.

Two other premieres began the concert: Marc Blitzstein's 1934 *Orchestra Variations* and Stephen Sondheim's new suite from his film score *Stavisky* (the latter orchestrated by Jonathan Tunick). Weill was a major influence on both composers, but not in this concert's repertoire.

Is *Lost in the Stars* a beautifully integrated opera or merely a flawed Broadway show, and thus fair game for tampering? Faithful restagings, like that of the York Theatre Company this past spring, leave no doubt in this writer's mind.

What about the oft-cited "false optimism" of the script? Maxwell Anderson had spent his career trying to write Great Verse Drama, where humanity is somehow ennobled by the fatal mistakes of a tragic hero. If the final reconciliation scene between the bereaved fathers, black and white, does not ring quite true, the playwright's semi-Aristotelian formula is to blame. Yet, as the York production demonstrated, this is no happy ending. The reconciliation is a helpless verbal gesture. When the clock strikes the hour of his son's death, the grieving minister is terribly, inconsolably alone.

GLEN BECKER
New York

Stranger Here Myself. Angelina Réaux, soprano. Public Theater, New York, 9 August-3 September.

Angelina Réaux's voyage through the soul of her one-woman show's character is an often painful trip, related to despair and loss. She is a woman tossed on the seas of anguish by the desperate need to connect, to love and be loved, and to be understood by others. She takes this journey musically, and, not surprisingly, chooses Weill's music to depict her passage.

In the variety of his musical theater works, Weill rouses strong emotional response. His arias and songs often tell more than the lyrics imply. Even the happier moments in his shows reveal a suggestion of sadness, a peculiar longing which seems somehow unfulfilled. When Irina, the female lead in Weill's last show *Lost in the Stars*, sings of her love, it is a troubled love, which only satisfies a part of her desires and longings. The music is dark, blue, tragic, and the works acknowledge the limits of relationships.

It is this sort of dichotomy which Ms. Réaux has sought for her theater piece, and so it is appropriate that she has chosen some of Weill's lesser known pieces to spotlight the turns and changes in her "Everywoman" protagonist. She begins her show in silence, entering a strange hotel room wearing a large hat and gray coat, and carrying the sort of suitcase we associate with Lotte Lenya in *Mahagonny* – small, beige wicker, a bit battered. She introduces herself in the "Epitaph" from *The Berlin Requiem*, and her name is Johanna Grey. It seems a proper choice. Later she tells us her name is Anna and, still later, Marie. I would have been happier had she chosen one name for her character and stuck with it, when it was necessary to use a name at all. A small point.

The first act takes us through some painful memories of her childhood and her early relationships with "mean men." Thirteen songs later the soloist takes a much needed break, and the audience is firmly aware that this is no musical show with which to wile away a hot summer's evening. There is substance here, and it is brutal.

The second act, with ten songs, begins with the title song, "I'm a Stranger Here Myself," revealing Ms. Réaux's comedic talent. This interpretation offers a delightful change, but we realize that bitterness and disillusionment loom ahead. Songs like "Foolish Heart" and "Youkali" assume a heightened anguished quality to which we are unaccustomed. I must take a moment to

mention the suitcase again and put it into the context of the show. This schizophrenic woman, who has been a prostitute, a mistress, a cheap club performer, a devoted daughter and loving sister, a pragmatist, a wife, a dreamer, a world traveler, and God knows what else, carries her whole life with her in that suitcase. In the "Solomon Song," Réaux underscores with her remarkable voice and her solid dramatic intensity the futility of certain trappings, the vanities of wisdom, glamour, celebrity, in light of human failing. When the second act ends – rather obliquely actually, and I would hope that a better curtain "moment" would have been found – we return to the opening "Epitaph," which now has less bite, less impact, and an unforeseen sweetness. It's quite a transition.

The show has been well-staged by Christopher Alden, and if I can find fault with certain moments, they disappear in the overall image which remains. And that image is the one painted by the actress herself. Her voice is spectacular, if a tiny bit thin at the top, and her broad dramatic range and expressive vocal style are those which all actresses, singing or not, should strive to emulate. The physical trappings of the show work to the piece's advantage; all the designers have lent an economical hand to the stage environment, thus allowing the star her opportunity to shine.

Among the more unusual pieces by Kurt Weill heard in this two-hour evening are "Is It Him or Is It Me?" from *Love Life* and the song "Je ne t'aime pas," both of which tear your heart out; "Nanna's Lied" and "Le train du ciel" which are well sung and gain interesting dimension in this new dramatic context; and "Berlin-im-Licht Song." I think it is a bit unfortunate – with the exception of "Je ne t'aime pas" – that Ms. Réaux has chosen to sing some of her songs in German or French, rather than bringing all of them into English.

For variety, contrast, and sheer pleasure the songs of *Stranger Here Myself* punctuate the evening with more than the usual commas and periods we get on Broadway. I love hearing the sung question mark, the intoned exclamation points, and the elusive semi-colons of these songs. These complexities add immeasurably to what could be a maudlin experience, and lift one woman's misery into the realm of the sublime.

J. PETER BERGMAN
New York



Angelina Reaux in *Stranger Here Myself*.
Photo: Christian Steiner

RECORDINGS



This is the Life. Steven Kimbrough, baritone, with Dalton Baldwin, piano. Arabesque Records (Z 6579)

Cabaret Classics. Jill Gomez, soprano, with John Constable, piano. Unicorn Records (DKP CD 9055)

Here are two likeable song collections which prove – if proof was still needed – that it's possible to shake oneself free of the Weill-performance clichés of the past and establish a valid personal approach to this music. The two discs do not overlap except that they are both somewhat mistitled. Gomez's "cabaret" collection includes four of the *Marie Galante* songs and three from Broadway shows – along with more legitimate cabaret songs of Zemlinsky, Schoenberg, and Satie. Kimbrough's collection includes – at long last! – Weill's three surviving songs to Rilke texts (including Lys Symonette's completion of "Mach mich zum Wächter deiner Weiten"), two even earlier songs, along with the four songs to Walt Whitman texts (1942-47), and three other American pieces. *This is the Life and Other Unrecorded Songs* is the record's full title, but the Whitman songs were once recorded by William Horne for the Concert Hall Society (in a mail order album that was later also released to stores) and the title item (a song from *Love Life*) is sung by Jerry Orbach on one of Ben Bagley's hokey "revisited" collections. Oh well...

Kimbrough's light, pliant baritone is well equipped to do fair justice to the range of

songs in his chosen collection – a range that, in a sense, encapsulates Weill's own stylistic spectrum. Baldwin, of course, remains Baldwin, that most sympathetic partner best known for his long association with the great Gérard Souzay. The prizes here are the Rilke songs, dense, chromatic, tortured products of Weill's time with Busoni (1921 or thereabouts), and somewhat like the late works of that master. Truth to tell, the jagged, declamatory melodic line of the first, "Vielleicht dass ich durch schwere Berge gehe," does present Kimbrough (and, probably, most other singers) with some insurmountable pitch hurdles. To compensate there is Kimbrough's meltingly beautiful phrasing of that tortuous line in "In diesem Dorfe," with its long-withheld cadence like the sun after a storm. Five years earlier, Weill had already achieved some kind of boyish, exuberant mastery. Kimbrough sings two songs from Weill's sixteenth or seventeenth year, the folkish "Im Volkston" and the remarkable "Das schöne Kind" (out of *Tristan* via Mahler), and sings them very well indeed.

The American songs are cut from commoner cloth: "unexceptional" would be the aptest description of the Whitman set, a patriotic piece to an Archibald Macleish poem, and even the predictably rollicking *Love Life* ditty. But there is also a "River Chanty" from the *Huck Finn* project with Maxwell Anderson, a soulful, soaring lyric line from that tormented last year; with both insight and hindsight, David Drew describes this song as "a valedictory"; Kimbrough flings it forth in a heartrending, throbbing, memorable performance.

Gomez is an amazing artist, whose American career has yet to take off. Abroad, I have heard her in Mozart and Baroque opera and

in demanding contemporary music as well. She sings with high art and intelligence, yet with a disarming frontal approach that makes everything sound spontaneous and innate.

The *Marie Galante* songs are becoming famous; whether or not they are inferior to the theater pieces of Weill's bygone Berlin years, or to the American works yet to come, is beside the point. (One of them, it is interesting if unimportant to note, spans the whole of Weill's journeying: the tune of "Les Filles de Bordeaux" rips off one of the Salvation Army songs from *Happy End* and became, in turn, the Barbershop Quartet in *One Touch of Venus*.) Gomez's way with them is immensely appealing. There is a thrust here, a throb, that marks her as a splendidly instinctual artist, yet she is never cheap, never obvious. Her Weill-in-America group includes great songs from *Lady in the Dark*, *Street Scene*, and *Knickerbocker Holiday*: thrice-familiar material, perhaps, but again appreciated with fresh, independent spirit and a big, embracing, vibrant voice. She, too, is well partnered from the keyboard, this time with John Constable, who, like Gomez herself, seems to be an authority on early music as well as the challenging new-music repertory.

The remainder of the Gomez record has its share of delights as well, most of all in the three "Cafe-Concert" songs by Erik Satie: loving, gentle, insinuating little pieces, artless in their way but without the affectations of pseudo-simplicity that make some of his more "serious" music something of a trial.

ALAN RICH
Los Angeles

SELECTED PERFORMANCES

ARGENTINA

Der Jasager, Buenos Aires, Teatro Payró, El Grupo del Invierno, Betty Gambartes-Gordon, Daniel Jelin, dirs.; Miguel Martinez, cond., Summer 1988

La Opera de Dos Centavos, Buenos Aires, Teatro Municipal San Martin, Daniel Suárez Marzal, dir.; Federico Mizrahi, cond., Spring-Summer 1988

AUSTRIA

Happy End, Jura Soyfer Theater, Vienna, 1988-89 season

AUSTRALIA

Street Scene, Brisbane, Queensland Conservatory, 1-9 September 1988

CANADA

Der Jasager, Banff Center, Banff, Alberta, Banff Centre, School of Fine Arts, includes tour to Canmore and Calgary, 24, 27, 29 February 1989

Johnny Johnson, Banff, Alberta, Banff Centre, School of Fine Arts, 23-25 March 1989

Mahagonny Songspiel, Edmonton, Alberta College, 15 October 1988

The Threepenny Opera, Toronto, Co-production Banff Centre and Canadian Stage Company, Banff, 22-24 February 1989; Toronto, 9 March-2 April 1989

ENGLAND

Mahagonny Songspiel, Birmingham, University of Birmingham, 27 June 1988

Quodlibet, Belfast, Fall 1988

Die sieben Todsünden, Royal Albert Hall, London, The London Sinfonietta, Lothar Zagrosek, cond.; Maria Ewing, soprano, 8 September 1988

The Threepenny Opera, Chichester, West Sussex, Chichester Festival Theatre, Spring 1989

The Threepenny Opera, London, Innererklang Music Theatre, April-June 1988, includes tour to 30 cities

Street Scene, London Coliseum, London, English National Opera, David Poutney, dir.; Carl Davis, cond., 11 October-25 November 1989

FRANCE

Symphony No. 2, Montpellier, Orchestre de l'Opéra de Lyon, Kent Nagano, cond., 18 July 1988

L'Opéra de Quat'Sous, Niort, L'Ecole Municipale de Musique, de Danse, et d'Art Dramatique, June 1988

Les sept péchés capitaux, Montpellier, Festival of Dance, Lyon Opéra Ballet, La Compagnie Maguy Marin, Maguy Marin, sop.; Kent Nagano, cond., June 1988

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Die Dreigroschenoper, Aachen, Stadttheater, Dieter Loebach, dir., 1988-89 season

Die Dreigroschenoper, Hamburg, Kampnagel-Fabrik, guest performance, Theater des Westens, Günter Krämer, dir.; Peter Keuschnig, cond., 4-16 July 1989

Die Dreigroschenoper, Wiesbaden, Staatstheater, Wiesbaden, 1988-89 season

Happy End, Bamberg, E.T.A. Hoffmann-Theater, September-October 1988

Happy End, Bielefeld, Städtische Bühnen, 1988-89 season

Happy End, Cologne, Westdeutscher Rundfunk, Jan Latham-König, cond., Fall 1988

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Frankfurt, Radio-Sinfonie-Orchesters Frankfurt, Erich Leinsdorf, cond., 10-11 November 1988

Lost in the Stars, Oberhausen, Stadttheater, Spring 1989

ITALY

La Opera da Tre Soldi, Naples, Teatro Bellini, Cooperative Teatrale, Nuova Commedia, Tato Russo, dir.; Antonio Sinagra, cond., 15 October-31 December 1988

JAPAN

The Threepenny Opera, Tokyo, Parco Theatre School, 2-3 November 1988

NETHERLANDS

War Play, Amsterdam, Netherlands Wind Ensemble, 20, 27, 29 November, 20 December 1988

SCOTLAND

Street Scene, Edinburgh, Scottish Opera, John Mauceri, cond., David Poutney, dir., May-June 1989

SPAIN

Die sieben Todsünden, Córdoba, Teatro Municipal, 29 September 1988

SWEDEN

Tolvskillingsoperan, Stockholm, The Royal Dramatic Theatre of Sweden, Karin Betz, dir.; Peter Langdal, set design; Jean Billigren, cond., opens 15 October 1988

Tolvskillingsoperan, Riksteater, February 1989

SWITZERLAND

Die Dreigroschenoper, Basel, Theater Marat-Sade, 5 August-September 1988

Happy End, Zurich, Theater am Neumarkt, 1988-89 season

Johnny Johnson, Zug, Institut Montana, March 1989

TURKEY

Die Dreigroschenoper, Istanbul, Turkish State Theater, 1988-89 season

USA

Das Berliner Requiem, *Die Legende vom toten Soldaten*, *Zu Potsdam unter den Eichen*, *Kiddush*, New York, NY, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Florilegium Chamber Choir, JoAnn Rice, cond.; Paul Rowe, bar., 20 November 1988

The Czar Has His Photograph Taken, *The Seven Deadly Sins*, Houston, TX, The University of Houston, 3, 5 March 1989

Die Dreigroschenoper, New York, NY, Merkin Concert Hall, The Princeton Festival, Victor Symonette, cond., 9-10 July 1988

Down in the Valley, San Diego, CA, San Diego Opera Ensemble, Fall 1988

Happy End, Chicago, IL, Court Theatre, 28 February-9 April 1989

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, War Memorial Auditorium, Greensboro, NC, Eastern Music Festival Philharmonic Orchestra, Sheldon Morgenstern, cond., 6 August 1988

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Saratoga Springs, NY, Saratoga Performing Arts Center, Philadelphia Orchestra, Dennis Russell Davies, 13 August 1988

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Baltimore, MD, Baltimore Chamber Orchestra, 5 October 1988

Lost in the Stars, A Concert Sequence, New York, NY, Carnegie Hall, American Composers Orchestra, Dennis Russell Davies, cond.; Milagro Vargas, mezzo-sop.; Damon Evans, bar.; Gregg Smith Singers, Morgan State University Singers, 9 October 1988

Lost in the Stars, Highland Pk, IL, Apple Tree Theatre Company, Frank Winkler, dir., July-August 1988

Mahagonny Songspiel, Madison, WI, University of Wisconsin Opera, 7-8 October 1988

Mahagonny Songspiel, Brooklyn, NY, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Peter Sellers, dir.; Craig Smith, cond., March 1989

Mahagonny Songspiel, Ithaca, NY, Ithaca College, 26 October 1988

The Seven Deadly Sins, Sacramento, CA, Sacramento Community Center, Sacramento Symphony, Carter Nice, cond.; Marc Jacobs, dir.; Angelina Réaux, sop., 21-23 October 1988

Song Recital, New City, NY, Angelina Réaux, soprano, Christopher Berg, piano, 8 October 1988

Stranger Here Myself, New York, NY, Susan Stein Shiva Theatre, Angelina Réaux, soprano; Christopher Berg, pianist; Christopher Alden, dir., 9-28 August 1988

Street Scene, New York, NY, New York State Theater, New York City Opera, 5, 11, 17, 28 October 1989

Symphony No. 1, New Haven, CT, New Haven Symphony Orchestra, 25 October 1988

The Threepenny Opera, Oberlin, OH, Oberlin Theater, 14-16 July 1988

The Threepenny Opera, Milwaukee, WI, Skylight Opera, 25 January 1989

The Threepenny Opera, Stockton, CA, University of the Pacific, October 1988

The Threepenny Opera, Clarksville, TN, Roxy Theater, 15, 16, 22, 23, 24, 29, 30 July 1988

The Threepenny Opera, Omaha, NE, Opera of Omaha, Spring 1989

The Threepenny Opera, Wilmington, DE, Delaware Theater Company, October 1988

The Threepenny Opera, San Diego, CA, Old Globe Theatre, June 1989

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