

One Year after Unification: Cultural Notes from the Former GDR

by Jürgen Schebera

Reunified Germany had its first birthday on 3 October 1991. In reality, of course, "Unification Day" was 1 July 1990, when the Deutsche Mark was introduced as the official currency into what was then still the German Democratic Republic. From that moment on, there was functional freedom for the citizens who had been formally liberated by the crumbling of the wall, because they could travel where they wanted and buy what they wished, so long as they had the money. Doubtless it will be difficult for any reader of this newsletter already long accustomed to such freedoms to comprehend this feeling.

1 July 1990 was an eruption, as if the lid had been removed from a pot about to boil over. We were finally able to fulfill the desires we had dreamed of for so long. We traveled to Paris and Rome, we bought ourselves long awaited video recorders and computers, and we began to consider the purchase of a Volkswagen, a Fiat, a Peugeot, or a Japanese car, hoping to render obsolete what we had all driven for so many years, the "Trabbi" (a tiny two-cylinder car with a plastic chassis).

In the wake of these newly-explored freedoms, cultural needs and desires took a back-row seat and still do today – for two reasons. Until reunification it had been impossible for us to see or to experience "the world" first-hand. Hence, we had to be satisfied with imagery derived from works of Western art, albeit available in limited supply: each American film provided us with pieces of a mosaic of that inaccessible country, each exhibition of Western painting gave us an inkling of the approach to life that lay behind it, each novel by a French or British author offered us possible insights into the psychology of its people and their nation. A performance of *West Side Story* (there had been only three productions in the entire GDR in twenty years: one in Leipzig, one in Erfurt, and one in Berlin) became something of a sensation.

Now that has all changed. Art is no longer needed as a substitute for life. Now we derive our imagery for living directly from life itself.

There is a second reason for the fact that art is now on the back burner. It has to do with the former German Democratic Republic's "closed society." The powers-that-be of "socialism in the flesh" did not permit any outright criticism. Whoever dared it was either thrown in jail or, as was the case with many dissidents, sent to live in the West. Therefore, art became the medium for intelligently cloaked criticism. The theaters overflowed when the staging of a classical piece presented parallels to relations in the GDR, or when GDR dramatists (Heiner Müller, Völker Braun, Christoph Hein) conveyed encoded communications on stage. We waited impatiently for each new novel by Stefan Heym or Christa Wolf. Visitors thronged to exhibitions of clearly allegorical paintings (for instance, those by Wolfgang Mattheuer or Heidrun Hegewald). Even concerts of avant-garde music (when, for example, a musical setting of Gorbachev's words was premiered by Rainer Bredemeyer, at a time when Honecker was explicitly distancing himself from the path of Perestroika) donned a tribunal air.

In such cases, art substituted for political discourse; it adopted the tasks that had been banned in the political arena. In addition, art functioned as a medium of resistance. Both functions (substitution and resistance)

serve to explain the rapid sales of new editions of books and the unprecedented attendance at theaters and exhibitions, of which GDR officials were always so proud. Art was, in fact, not just a commodity for an elite group of intellectuals, but rather in demand as daily fare for all citizens and available at unusually low prices through state subsidies. (The best seat at the Leipzig Opera costs only the equivalent of \$4.00.)

Now all of that is history. Today art has to adapt itself to the laws of the marketplace that dominate the new Germany. Artistic institutions are being restructured according to West German norms, leading to a pervasive withdrawal of state subsidies. As Saxony, Thuringia, Brandenburg, Saxony-Anhalt, Mecklenburg-Outter Pomerania, and unified Berlin have been integrated into the federal structure, new subsidies must be sought from industry, foundations, and private individuals.

This restructuring is in many respects a complex procedure. First of all, the new federal states do not function very well. They are not yet solvent, and serious economic and social problems – the transition to a market economy with the accompanying failure of so many businesses and skyrocketing unemployment – make it difficult to attend to cultural problems. Second, entirely different structures had existed in the former GDR. A massive network of institutions for artistic amateurs in the form of theaters, orchestras, cinemas, and cultural societies, even in the least populated regions, had all been subsidized by the state. Third, and perhaps most important of all, the producers of cultural activities had had to deal with political problems – especially censorship – for forty years, but never with financial ones. Suddenly they had to learn something completely new, something which was to Western eyes as simple as one-plus-one: fund-raising and the search for sponsorship. Unfortunately, those are things that cannot be learned and implemented overnight.

Furthermore, the mentality of Germany's new rulers must be considered. Only one dictum was applied to all areas of GDR society (science, health care, education, etc.): "Whatever is incompatible with the system has to go." And since cultural life has to do with thought and feeling, the issue became more urgently a matter of "all that depends on a German Democratic Republic identity has to go."

The most obvious instance of this attitude at the moment is the liquidation of the former radio stations and the imminent demise of GDR television, which will shut down at year's end, despite undeniable internal improvements and general acceptance by listeners and viewers. The decision was made in the upper echelons of the government to replace these media, so that we now have the "Mitteldeutsche Rundfunk" in Leipzig



Abandoned Trabbis are common throughout former East Germany. Photo: Tamara Levitz.

for the states of Saxony and Thuringia, to name just one example. So far so good, on the surface. But the leading positions in these organizations are being assigned to second-rate radio and television people from West Germany instead of experienced media people from the former GDR. (I don't mean the old party functionaries, but the creative and upright "Easterners" who replaced them in the process of democratization.) These imports know nothing about regional characteristics nor are they empathetic with the psyche and mentality of their viewers and listeners who are *substantially* different from their Western counterparts. The unification of these diverse mentalities will prove to be the most tedious of all imaginable tasks.

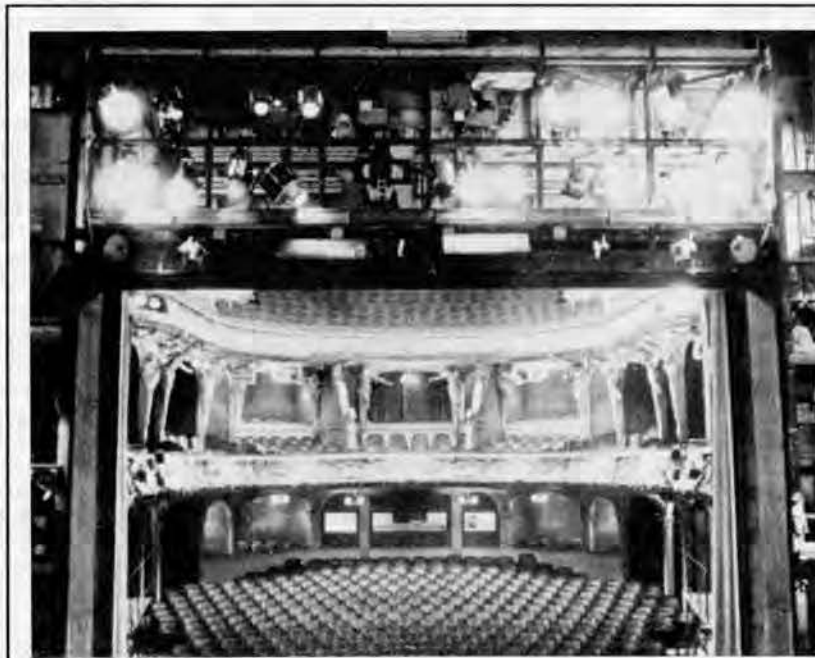
It is not simply a matter of colonization, but that is, in fact, the style in which the alteration is being pursued. Wherever one looks, "Westerners" are being enthroned. Quality is no longer a consideration, rather former citizenship. Administrators of lesser known West German touring theaters are being appointed heads of major stages of the ex-GDR (Erfurt, Halberstadt, Frankfurt an der Oder), an assistant musical director from the West Berlin radio station RIAS is to be the director of the state opera at Unter den Linden in former East Berlin, the choreographer of the Hamburg Staatsoper will become general director of the distinguished Dresdner Semper Oper, etc. Furthermore, the state-supported cultural network is beginning to be dismantled, a necessary evolution but one that is painful to its creators and to its public. A general demise of the cinema in the East is already a reality, the first orchestras have already been disbanded (the Mecklenburgische Philharmonie in Schwerin), and esteemed presses of the ex-GDR (Verlag der Nation in Berlin, Seemann-Verlag in Leipzig) have given in to competitors or been swallowed up by larger Western companies. And this is only the beginning.

The situation for visual artists is especially critical. With the collapse of the old system of state commissions coupled with the drastically increasing rents for studio space, many painters and sculptors find themselves at the edge of an abyss. The same is true for the majority of composers

who had received stipends and guaranteed performances. Many writers have found themselves without a publisher and with significantly fewer readers.

Clearly we are in the middle of a crisis. Culture and art are not a top priority, and people have other needs that require attention. The transition is both painful and joyful, and we in Germany are experiencing both sensations.

One last word for those interested in East Berlin's "Brecht scene." The Senate of the city of Berlin has made some clear-cut decisions. The Brecht-Archiv (like all divisions of the former East Berlin Akademie der Künste, which will be dissolved at the year's end — the official term is "abgewickelt"), will become a branch of the new Berlin Akademie der Künste, for-



Theater am Schiffbauerdamm. Original venue of *Die Dreigroschenoper* and present home of the Berliner Ensemble.

merly that of West Berlin. The archive will remain accessible, although whether it will remain housed at 125 Chausseestraße is still in question. The Senate has also taken over the maintenance of the Brecht Haus, where the work space and living rooms of Brecht and Weigel will remain open to the public as a literary museum. The Brecht Zentrum will become one of three facilities for literary discussions and readings in Berlin, along with the Literaturhaus on Fasanenstraße and the Literary Colloquium on the Wannsee, although its activities will no longer be centered on Brecht, but expanded to include all of contemporary German literature.

As for the Berliner Ensemble, Cultural Senator Roloff-Momin requested a letter of resignation from Director Manfred Wekwerth, who had been President of the former East Berlin Akademie der Künste and a Communist-Party member. Wekwerth agreed and quit his post in July 1991. It is clear that the theater will continue to be subsidized by the city of Berlin, but two other matters are less clear. The first involves the influence formerly exerted by Barbara Brecht on the cultural goals of her father's theater. Roloff-Momin has explicitly declared that he would be willing to continue the Theater am Schiffbauerdamm without Brecht productions if the conflicts with Barbara Brecht proved insoluble. This may be the case because Ekkehard Schall, her hus-

band, has quit his post as interim director now, too. The second concerns the appointment of a new directorate. An interim committee of three is now in charge: Serge Mund — a theater administrator from West Germany (of course!) who comes from Malta, has a Jesuit education, and bases his experience on work with a touring theater in the West — and a director and an actress from the company, the latter two as a sop to demands for democratic appearances. A fresh staging of Brecht's *Schweyk im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, directed by Manfred Wekwerth, inaugurated the committee's 1991 offerings. And the season's greatest drawing card? Despite, or more precisely, because of all this turmoil, a threadbare, ten-year-old staging of *Die*

Dreigroschenoper along with a more than six-year-old Weill evening "Vom Schiffbauerdamm zum Broadway."

Beginning in 1992, a five-member collective will manage the theater: Matthias Langhoff, Peter Palitzsch, Peter Zadek, Fritz Marquardt, Heine Müller. Langhoff, along with Manfred Karge, began his directing career at the Berliner Ensemble with stagings of *Der Brotladen* and the spurious "Das kleine Mahagonny." Both left the GDR to take up successful careers in the West.

Quo vadis, East German culture? We shall see.

Translated by Peggy Meyer Sherry

Archival Research in Former East Germany

by Tamara Levitz

When the first images of the opening of the Berlin wall flashed across the television screens of North America on 9 November 1989, few viewers suspected the far reaching consequences the event would have for Europe and the rest of the world. As East Germany continues to merge traumatically with West Germany, Germans on both sides are reexamining their own histories and identities. And, as Germany's split political personality comes together and historical documents that could not be discussed in cold-war Europe resurface, historians will recreate a more complete picture of the Weimar Republic and its culture. For over forty years, East German scholarship had been based on a restrictive official canon of selected communist and socialist works, against which East German academics had established an intriguing culture of opposition. Across the border, West German academics had always been considered "free." They established their own literary and musical canon, their own left, and their own opposition, the very existence of which, however, depended entirely on the survival of the German socialist state. Germany had a distorted double vision. Now that the wall has come down, the two Germanies are forced to look each other in the eye, an experience that is proving uncomfortable for both. Scholarship, the canon, opposition, and archival research will necessarily change. These changes are of vital importance to Weill scholars in North America, for whom the demise of the German Democratic Republic will also mean the rediscovery of a world of archives, libraries, *Nachlässe*, historical documents, and artifacts, all of which can now be examined without the difficulties and expense of crossing the wall.

The most important archive for information concerning the government, politics, cultural and educational policies, theatrical organizations, and leading personalities of the Weimar Republic is the Geheimarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz. Divided between West and East Germany for over forty years, the collections will be brought together eventually, possibly in West Berlin. At present, many pertinent items are housed in Merseburg, a town outside Halle in the most industrial area of former East Germany. At this archive, researchers still face a problem prevalent in many archives in Germany: selected documents from the 1920s, as well as many documents concerning victims of Nazi persecution, have simply disappeared. Although these documents have long been presumed lost or destroyed, it is now assumed in Germany that some of them will resurface in the next few years as

the political climate changes. Documents which were unflattering to the communist ego of former East Germany and which were suppressed for over forty years can now come to light. For the present, however, scholars will be permitted to see catalogs that list some material which is not available. In Merseburg, for example, almost all documents pertaining to Leo Kestenberg and the activities of the Prussian Ministerium für Kunst, Wissenschaft und Volksbildung in the early 1920s apparently have not survived.

For researchers specifically interested in the National Socialist Regime, the Berlin Documentation Center in West Berlin is an invaluable source of information. Administered by the American government, the Berlin Documentation Center has always been an exclusive archive largely inaccessible to German citizens. With the end of the Allied occupation of Berlin, these documents will eventually return to the German government. But the course and timing of these changes is uncertain. At present, researchers who are not American will require permission from their own governments to see these materials.

Scholars seeking more specific information on cultural life in the Weimar Republic will find it in the archives of individual institutions, schools, and concert organizations. In divided Germany many long-standing institutions, such as the Akademie der Künste and the Akademie der Wissenschaften, were duplicated in order to meet the needs of the two countries. Sometimes historical records and collections were also divided. Thus, when investigating these institutions, the researcher always had to determine in which branch items were located. Paradoxically, unification has complicated this situation further. The German government has recognized most West German institutions as the legitimate heirs to their historical antecedents and has appointed research commissions to investigate the "right to exist" of formerly East German institutions. This process normally involves sending research teams to East Germany from as far away as Cologne to interview established scholars and assess their capabilities within a few hours. This disturbing course of events affects the archival situation and will necessarily affect researchers travelling in the East. The Academy of Arts in West Berlin, for example, is official, whereas the East Berlin Academy is undergoing examination and scrutiny; there are repeated threats of its closing. The West Berlin Academy houses most documents pertaining to the history of the Academy, as well as many important

Nachlässe, whereas the nature of the East Berlin collection and the state of their archives remains difficult to determine. And yet it is known that the East German Academy does house important collections, such as a Hermann-Scherchen-Nachlaß which includes materials from Scherchen's Weimar years. Cataloging in this archive seems fragmentary, however, and accessibility limited.¹

Culture in Weimar was not, however, solely determined by public, governmental, and educational institutions, but rather by a multitude of smaller private organizations whose names and activities have often been lost to history. Remarkable discoveries are being made in East Germany: recently the archives of the Allgemeiner Deutscher Musikverein were unearthed in Weimar, for example, and scattered materials pertaining to the Novembergruppe and the *Anbruch* and *Melos* publications can now be found in various East German libraries.² There is also rumor that the archives of the Singakademie have been rediscovered in Berlin. Other music-related collections are often found at city and state archives: Breitkopf & Härtel has deposited many materials at the Staatsarchiv in Leipzig, for example. Slowly, important documents are also being returned to Germany from Poland and the Soviet Union, where they had been evacuated during World War II.

Theatrical organizations and archives are even more pertinent to Weill's career. Essential repositories for any study of the theaters in Weimar Berlin are the theater institutes of the Universität zu Köln, the Freie Universität in Berlin, and the theater collection at the Märkisches Museum in East Berlin. The larger theatrical institutions that were located in former East Berlin, such as the Deutsche Staatsoper, also have their own extensive archives that have now become more accessible.

Nachlässe and archives of individual artists often provide the most exciting material on cultural life in the Weimar Republic. The researcher must first locate these collections, however, and then gain access to them. Whereas published catalogs ease the search in West Germany,³ former East Germany's archival territory is largely uncharted. The researcher is dependent on an "oral" tradition of scholarship: only by word of mouth does one learn where lesser known collections are housed and who is in charge of them. The battle is not over once the collection has been found: often, it will be uncataloged and unavailable to the public. Sometimes, the researcher will confront archivists who were omnipotent in

former East Germany, and who still treat the collections as their own possessions and hide them from the public eye. Certain archives, such as that of Hanns Eisler, are in danger because their ownership is now in question; other collections, such as that of Paul Dessau, are threatened because figures central to East German culture have now fallen into disfavor. Thus, the entire search and research process is slow and cumbersome, productive only if the researcher plans an extended stay in former East Germany.

Unification has opened a treasure chest of contemporary newspapers and journals which provide invaluable sources of information on the less prominent people and organizations of the Weimar Republic. Not only are rare socialist and communist periodicals and newspapers still intact at the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek in East Berlin, but also a large variety of art, music, and literary journals, as well as North German and Berlin newspapers. That collection is now accessible, but unfortunately not on microfilm, and thus not reproducible.

The fate of the remarkable collections at the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek has been radically changed by the unification of the two Germanies. In 1991 the library became part of the Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz in West Berlin and must now conform to its laws and statutes. Whereas West German librarians have full job security, the differently-trained East German librarians are threatened constantly with losing their jobs. The organization of the East German library is changing daily to conform to its West German neighbor and eventually the music departments of the two libraries will merge completely. The West Berlin building will house the general collection, and the East Berlin division will keep all vault material (Nachlässe, manuscripts, etc). These plans are still in the rudimentary stages, however, and it is unlikely that they will be realized in the next five years. Nevertheless, the situation is already tense, and it affects any researcher working in the East German branch of the library.

Once they have located the archive that interests them, North American researchers in former East Germany may confront an archival situation with which they are not familiar. Archives and state collections were bound for over forty years to the rigid security precautions characteristic of the East German state, and although this situation has now relaxed, the process is slow in changing; insecurity and wariness about the drastic changes being imposed by West Germany remain. The researcher may often feel out of place in such circumstances, and it is necessary to proceed with great care and sensitivity.

Unquestionably, the archives and libraries in East Germany contain vast treasures,

as yet unearthed and uncataloged. Even librarians are only partially aware of them. The researcher must have a clearly formulated strategy, as well as specific questions — not to mention determination and patience — to uncover the hidden sources.

Any researcher planning to work in East Germany should write to every repository in advance of the visit. Travelling in former East Germany can be very disturbing because the country's identity is rapidly being swallowed by the West. There is enormous unemployment, discontent, social unrest and, often, prejudice against foreigners. Prices are unexpectedly high and accommodation can be difficult to find in cities which were never oriented towards tourists.⁴ It will be difficult to remain oblivious to the changes and insensitive to the difficulties many former East Germans are now experiencing. Thus a research trip to the East may inevitably become a difficult lesson in world history.

NOTES

1 Other educational institutions of interest to Weill scholars are the Hochschule der Künste in West Berlin and the Humboldt University in East Berlin. Both archives are well organized and accessible; however, both are missing documents from the 1920s.

2 Major libraries are in Leipzig, Dresden, Weimar and Berlin. See *Musikforum* 72 (June 1990) for a list of addresses of libraries and archives in former East Germany.

3 See for example: Mommsen, Wolfgang. *Die Nachlässe in den deutschen Archiven III Teile. Verzeichnis der schriftlichen Nachlässe in deutschen Archiven und Bibliotheken. Schriften des Bundesarchivs 17/II.* Boppard am Rhein: H. Boldt Verlag, 1983.

4 Consider private housing (Privat-quartier): in most former East German cities, families have opened their homes to tourists for \$15-30 dollars a night.

Selected Archives

Akademie der Künste Berlin
Hanseatenweg 10
W-1000 Berlin 21

Berlin Documentation Center
Wasserkefisteig 1
W-1000 Berlin 47

Deutsche Staatsbibliothek
Musikabteilung
Unter den Linden 8
O-1086 Berlin

Deutsche Staatsoper Archiv
Unter den Linden 5-7
O-1086 Berlin

Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer
Kulturbesitz, Abteilung Merseburg
[Formally Zentrales Staatsarchiv]
König-Heinrich-Straße 37
O-4200 Merseburg
(East) Germany

Geheimes Staatsarchiv
Preussischer Kulturbesitz
Archivstraße 12/14
W-1000 Berlin 33

Hochschule der Künste
Bundesallee 1-12
W-1000 Berlin 26
or:
Fasanenstraße 1
W-1000 Berlin 12

Institut für Theaterwissenschaft
Fachbereich 11, Wissenschaftliche
Einrichtung 8
Freie Universität Berlin
Riemeisterstraße 21-23
1000 Berlin 37

Märkisches Museum Theater-
geschichtliche Sammlung
Am Köllnischen Park 5
O-1020 Berlin

Staatsarchiv Leipzig
Dimitroffmuseum
Dimitroffplatz 1
O-7010 Leipzig
(East) Germany

Theatermuseum des Instituts für Theater-
Film- und Fernsehwissenschaft der
Universität zu Köln
Schloß Wahn
W-5000 Köln 90
Germany

Drops in the *Dreigroschen* Ocean

by

Stephen Hinton

Since publication of the Cambridge Opera Handbook *Kurt Weill: The Threepenny Opera* last year, two items have surfaced that I would liked to have included had I been aware of them earlier. One is Bernard Shaw's reaction to the 1930 Russian premiere of *Die Dreigroschenoper* cited in the final volume of Michael Holroyd's new and definitive biography. (The premiere itself is discussed in chapter 3 of the Handbook.) According to Holroyd, the production was "the only thing he hated about Moscow"; in Shaw's words: "an amazing and at points disgusting perversion of the *Beggar's Opera*" (*Bernard Shaw, vol 3: The Lure of Fantasy, 1918-1950* [London, 1991]). As other reports contained in the Handbook show, the reaction was typical in Britain at the time.

The other item is the short essay by Hans Keller on "The Harry Lime Theme," published under the rubric "Film Music" in the British journal *Music Survey* in 1951. Keller's observations on the added-sixth chord, on its "inhibitory" function, and its use in Weill's "Moritat vom Mackie Messer" are literally identical to those in his later piece on *The Threepenny Opera*, which he wrote for another British journal, *The Music Review*, on the occasion of Sam Wanamaker's London production in 1956 (and which is reprinted in the Handbook). Both essays train psychoanalytical searchlights on reactions such as Shaw's; and both place the issue of perversion squarely at the feet — or rather, ears — of the listener. But the earlier piece, reprinted here, is much more explicit about sexual matters. In this, it reflects a brash, often rather smug outspokenness characteristic of the short-lived *Music Survey* as opposed to the primmer scholarly tone of *The Music Review*.

A question arises: Did *The Music Review* cut any material from Keller's submission? In any event, the first essay represents a type of theorizing that has become quite fashionable, even academically respectable, in recent years. By equating the tonally functional musical cadence (or lack of it) with certain male forms of sexual expression, Keller appears to be pioneering a method of inquiry such as that pursued four decades later by musicologist Susan McClary. In the collection of essays *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minnesota, 1991), Professor McClary writes of "tonality... instilling expectations and subsequently withholding promised fulfillment until climax" and of "compositions [which] whip up torrents of libidinal energy that are variously thwarted or permitted to gush." Yet McClary, a feminist, would no doubt have plenty to take issue with in Keller's Freudian analysis, any "adult altruism" notwithstanding.

Film Music: The Harry Lime Theme*

by

Hans Keller

For well over two years, the Harry Lime tune (from Carol Reed's production *The Third Man*) has pestered the diatonic world; a recent visit to the Continent has shown that it is in fact becoming a classic: other tunes already quote it, and people who love it are even learning to whistle it.

Almost all popular hits seem vulgar, but since not all vulgarity is popular, the success of the tune asks for an explanation, all the more because one does not remember a previous instance of a hit-song which the light-music lover cannot sing, of a tune that is no tune at all. So far, two kinds of explanations have come my way, the circumstantial and the economical. The circumstantial, which is found among highbrows who pride themselves on their lowbrow practicality, has first been given by Anthony Hopkins at last year's International Film Music Congress in Florence, and later also in the pages of *Sight & Sound*. It says that these notes have caught on because in the film they were played on the unusual instrument of the zither. The economical explanation,

which I think I got from Benjamin Frankel, points to the commercial propaganda behind and in front of the tune. Both pointers are right; neither is an explanation.

Not only are there plenty of sufficiently banal tunes which have flopped despite heavy commercial backing, but I have seen many people being struck by the Harry Lime Theme without having been subjected to any kind of conditioning, without even having seen the film and heard its zither. When I first heard the music, I at once detested it — as if it were important enough to be detested. As soon as I detest something I ask myself why I like it.

Particularly when I am shocked to find myself whistling it. It is, in fact, time that one turned one's curiosity to the music itself and tried to find an intrinsic explanation for its appeal. The striking, indeed the only feature about this "tune" is its submediant obsession which, avoiding any Aeolian insinuation, creates an extended *appoggiatura*, a suspense by a prolonged suspension, enhanced by the tonic-dominant bass as well as by the alternation of tonic chord and dominant seventh. The sixth is the inhibitory degree *par excel-*

lence, because its opposition to the tonic is based on the strongest possible measure of agreement or *tertium comparationis*, including as only the submediant triad does the tonic third: hence the arch-inhibition, the interrupted cadence V-VI. Hence, too, the added sixth familiar jazz device is the rightest "wrong" note, a harmonic non-harmonic note producing (*ceteris paribus*) the most primitive kind of dissonant chordal tension.

When I drew a colleague's attention to the fact that the Harry Lime Theme was not much more than a figured added sixth, using this degree instead of everything, including the tonic, he very sensitively remarked that the piece had the feel of a *coitus interruptus* — more precisely, of a prolonged *coitus*. In fact, just as the latter may be regarded as both the most elementary and the most elemental application, in adult life, of what Prof. J. C. Flugel (*Men and Their Motives*) has called the "principle of increase of satisfaction through inhibition," partially regressing as it does to the unorgastic, fore-pleasurable sexual activi-

ties of childhood, so the prolonged submediant inhibition, the insistent suspension of the jazzy sixth, represents the most primitive application of this principle in the sphere of dissonant chordal formations. (In chordal progressions, the consequences of the interrupted cadence V-VI are, of course, the prototypical example of such an increase of satisfaction.)

It is imaginable that the musical primitivity of this harmonic maneuver corresponds to a relatively unsublimated amount of, perhaps, infantile sexual energy behind it; this

melodic-harmonic structure, in that the tune apotheosizes that submediant which we hear in certain blues in place of the leading note and with a VI⁷ implication: by an extreme inhibition of the tonic, the submediant here downright usurps it. Owing to the quality of the melodic line, we are no longer disgusted at the primitive inhibition, though in order to fully appease our unconscious conscience we may have to murmur something about the decadent German twenties. Decadent the tune certainly wishes to be, an aim which it achieves



"The Third Man" Words by Walter Lord. Based on music composed and arranged by Anton Karas.

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state of affairs would account for the "sexy" character of the tune to which a well-known singer has directed my attention, and which my own feeling confirms; it would also account for one's disgust at (i.e., unconscious, infantile love of) the tune's banality.

I immediately asked this singer whether he could think of another such sexy tune, and his associations anon supplied the one-time hit "Sous les toits de Paris" (from the film of, I believe, the same title) where, sure enough, the submediant (likewise arrived at chromatically from the dominant) also plays a strong and inhibitory role.

The primitive itself is not bad, aesthetically or morally. Rather is it beyond — better: before — good and evil. Prolonged *coitus* may revert to infantile pleasures, but as soon as it is practiced with a view to affording the woman gratification, it assumes a highly altruistic and thus adult significance.

Mr. Anton Karas's tune is in the main too primitive to be bad (except for the so far unmentioned and indeed unmentionable tonic resolution): a bare harmonic structure with an ornamental pattern instead of a melody. That the same harmonic device (in the same "primitive" key of C!) can serve as basis for something good is shown by Kurt Weill's "Moritat."

Weill indicates "Blues-Tempo"; to me the blues' influence seems even to extend to the

by the submediant's *unbroken* dominance over the tonic: if we adhere to our psychogenesis, we may here be confronted with a musical phantasy of the so-called method of *Karezza*, i.e., prolonged *coitus* without *ejaculatio*. We in our civilization tend to regard this practice as decadent, but there are sects which have ritualized it, the purpose being a supreme and sublime test of willpower as well as concentration on the spiritual aspects of the beloved. From the purely medical point of view, it would seem that we are right, in that the practice is both physiologically and psychologically idiotic, but then, with Weill's tune, the medical point of view does not arise. Possibly, if unconsciously, Weill exhibits decadence as it were in inverted commas in order to show us that decadent art is never where we look for it: he seems to offer a parody, not so much of decadence, as of our conception of decadence. In any case, the art of love can tell us something about the love of art. Not much perhaps, yet much we do not readily think of.

*As reprinted in *Music Survey: New Series: 1949-52*. Edited by Donald Mitchell and Hans Keller. London: Faber Music in association with Faber & Faber, 1981. pp. 283-285. (c) Milein Cosman.

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3) That leads directly to Hamilton's question of whether we could find "any clues as to who the other singers are" in the *Mahagonny* Querschnitt of Electrola, which only indicates Lotte Lenya on the label. I am quite sure that the singers are Trude Hesterberg (Begbick) and Heinrich Gretler (Alaskawolfjoe) from the original Berlin theater cast; I am not sure who sings Johann Ackermann (probably not Harald Paulsen) but all this is speculation, until perhaps one day we find original documents from the recording session. Obviously there were substitutions from the stage cast of the Theater am Kurfürstendamm because Hans Sommer conducts rather than Alexander von Zemlinsky.

The field of Weill shellacs remains a thrilling experience. Just recently we discovered two Japanese recordings from 1932-33 (excerpts from *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik für Blasorchester* with the Tokyo New Symphonic Orchestra, Hidemaro Konoe, conductor; and two *Dreigroschenoper* songs "Moritat" and "Ballade von angenehmen Leben," sung by Eiichi Uchida and the Taiyo Orchestra). I am sure these will not be the last discoveries.

JÜRGEN SCHEBERA

26 May 1991

Berlin

To the Editor:

I'm sorry that I rushed to criticize *Musik bei Brecht*, ed. Lucchesi and Shull, before I had had time to study it properly. Well, I have now done this and can agree with those who have said the book is a fine piece of scholarship and a useful item to have on one's shelves as a reference volume. I still hope someone will research the subject of music for Brecht texts composed in America — I use this last phrase to include composers, such as Stefan Wolpe, who might not be considered American composers even though they composed in America (and some of whom acquired American citizenship).

Then again much music for Brecht texts by Weill, Eisler, and Dessau was composed in America, and this music, to be sure, has already been adequately publicized. But there are many unpublished compositions of real interest which are in danger of being not only forgotten but totally lost unless scholars and librarians get busy.

ERIC BENTLEY

28 June 1991

New York

News From the Weill-Lenya Research Center

Oral History Program

In 1991, the Research Center undertook a more extensive Oral History Program (Project Director David Farneth, Project Manager Margaret Sherry). Interviewees include authorial and artistic collaborators, business associates, performers, family members, and friends, as well as contemporaries of Weill and Lenya who are able to offer specific contextual information with research value. Interviews are tape-recorded and conducted on a formal basis with prepared questions in order to be of use to researchers with precise historical interests. All interviewees grant future researchers full access to their interviews. After each tape is transcribed, it is indexed and abstracted; eventually a cataloging record for the interview will be entered into the RLIN database. Additional funding for the project is being sought from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture.

Interviewees who have participated this year include Agnes de Mille (*One Touch of Venus*), Todd Duncan (*Lost in the Stars*), Jean Dalrymple (*One Touch of Venus*), Michael Bamberger (relative of Peter Bing), Michael Wager (*Brecht on Brecht* and son of Meyer Weisgal), Kurt Drabek (conductor of *Der Jasager*), Bobby Lewis (*Johnny Johnson*), Saul Bolasni (costumer for the Blitzstein *Threepenny Opera*), Dino Yannopoulos (*The Shah has his Photograph Taken*), and Helen Hayes (*Candle in the Wind* and *Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory*). Ms. Sherry was in Los Angeles at the beginning of October to interview Hesper Anderson (the playwright's daughter), Stella Adler (Group Theater), Nanette Fabray (*Love Life*), Danny Daniels (*Street Scene*), Michael Kidd (*Love Life*), Anne Jeffreys (*Street Scene*), and David Raksin (*Where Do We Go From Here?*). Yet to come this Fall are interviews with Sylvia Fine Kaye (*Lady in the Dark*), Sidney Lumet (*Eternal Road* and *The Appointment*), Lenya's 1969 film with Omar Sharif), and Mrs. Sam Coslow (*You and Me*).

If you know of people who were associated with Weill's work in the '30s and '40s and who might be able to assist the Research Center with documentation either through a taped interview or by providing copies of personal papers, please call Ms. Sherry at (212) 505-5240.

A New Cataloging Initiative

At the end of July the Weill-Lenya Research Center became a member of the Research Libraries Group (RLG) and a contributor the RLG's national bibliographic database, "RLIN" (the acronym for "Research Library Network"). The staff selected RLG because its systems provide on-line access to holdings, excellent searching capabilities, and full implementation of the standard archives cataloging format as defined by the Library of Congress and the archival profession. The Research Center's affiliation with RLG brings numerous benefits: 1) bibliographic records for the Research Center's holdings will be accessible to researchers via terminals in their local libraries or by direct-dial access to RLG's main computer located in California; 2) cataloging of published materials (books, recordings, printed music, etc.) will be accomplished at much lower costs due to the shared-cataloging nature of the system; 3) staff will be able to provide more effective reference service; and 4) staff can readily determine the locations of related materials. The Research Center will maintain finding aids and a traditional card catalog of its holdings until it acquires a suitable computerized archival management system, which eventually will accommodate all of the cataloging records made with the RLIN system.

Performance History Documentation

The documentation for the various productions of Weill's stage works has been reorganized into a new series of "performance history" files. Student intern Amy Daken began work on this project last January. Photos, programs, and clippings are being brought together and arranged alphabetically by title. Under each title, documentation for individual performances is arranged according to date, geographical location, and producing organization. Folders are cross-referenced to indicate if a recording or a poster is filed in other locations. The computer inventory for each folder provides the director's name as well as a listing of individual press clippings by journal and author, when deemed significant for research. The initial volume of this series occupies twenty cubic feet, but it will grow quarterly as new materials are accessioned. Just to give an example of the range of any one subseries, the cur-

rent file for *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* includes seventy-five different performances in over a dozen countries and comprises over one-thousand items. Researchers may request copies of portions of the finding aid relevant to their research interest.

Workroom Redesigned

The general archives area was redesigned to accommodate larger office and processing space. The new layout features a custom-made worktable complete with storage cupboards constructed to accommodate Hollinger boxes as well as oversize preservation materials. New shelving has increased the room's storage capacity by one-hundred linear feet. A special cataloging workspace now accommodates the activities of the Center's new cataloging project. Non-print musical materials (audiotapes, videotapes, films) were transferred to their own storage space in a room which is typically cooler than the general archives area.

Performance Materials for *One Touch of Venus* Edited

Music arranger and editor Larry Moore is correcting the existing materials used for stock and amateur performances of *One Touch of Venus*. This process involves a comparison between the orchestra parts and the piano-conductor score with Weill's manuscript scores, while taking into account markings in the original Broadway parts. New scores and orchestra parts will be copied for any missing music. The new edition will be available for performances from the Rodgers & Hammerstein Theatre Library.

Acquisition of Published Materials

In addition to collecting manuscripts and other unpublished materials, the Research Center strives to acquire published materials relevant to Weill and Lenya in addition to those with an emphasis on music in the Weimar Republic and the American musical theater. Thus far in 1991, the Center has acquired 105 books, 19 recordings, and 42 journal articles.

Because the Research Center cannot purchase a wide selection of international periodicals, it relies on researchers to send copies of their articles for deposit. All articles are cataloged using a *ProCite* database, which permits full-text search of the bibliographic record and access by topical subject headings. The file now includes over 400 articles.