

# KURT WEILL NEWSLETTER

Volume 11, Number 1

Spring 1993

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Above: Georg Kaiser looks down at Weill posing for his picture on the 1928 Leipzig Opera set for *Der Zar lässt sich photographieren*, surrounded by the two Angèles: Ilse Koegel (left) and Maria Janowska (right).

Below: The Czar and His Attendants, costume design for the Santa Fe Opera by Robert Perdziola.

PROTAGONIST ▲▲ ZAR ▲▲ SANTA FE

## Santa Fe becomes Weill Mecca

Santa Fe, New Mexico will become a focus for Weill fans this summer when the Santa Fe Opera and the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival present seldom-performed stage and concert repertoire as part of the 1993 season. On Saturday, 31 July 1993, the opera company launches the American professional premiere of Weill's double bill *The Protagonist* and *The Czar Has His Photograph Taken*. The productions, designed by Robert Perdziola, will be directed by Jonathan Eaton and conducted by George Manahan. Principal cast members include Jacques Trussel (*The Protagonist*), Ashley Putnam (His Sister Catherine), and Patryk Wroblewski (*The Young Lord*); and David Malis (*The Czar*), Kathryn Gamberoni (Angèle), and Angelina Réaux (the False Angèle). The double bill will be presented in English translations of Jonathan Eaton and Lionel Salter. Other performance dates are 4 and 13 August, as the double bill will run in repertory with *La bohème*, *The Magic Flute*, *Xerxes*, and *Capriccio*.

For its 21st Season, the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival presents Weill works on three of its summer programs in five performances. On Sunday, 1 August, and Monday, 2 August, Lisa Saffer will be the soprano soloist in a performance of *Frauentanz*, op. 10; her collaborators will be Tara O'Connor, flute, Paul Neubauer, viola, Franklin Cohen, clarinet, Steve Becknell, horn, and Lynette Diers Cohen, bassoon. The program also includes Mozart's Quintet in E-flat major, K. 452, for piano and winds, and Dvorák's Piano Quintet in A major, op. 81. These concerts, at 5 pm and 7 pm, respectively, begin with a pre-concert lecture on the music of Weill.

On Friday, 6 August, the Orion String Quartet performs Weill's String Quartet, op. 8. Also on the concert are the Beethoven Serenade in D major, op. 25, for flute, violin, and viola, and Fauré's Piano Quartet in G minor, op. 45. The 22 and 23 August concerts devote part of the program to Weill's songs, the soloist for which will be soprano Phyllis Bryn-Julson, accompanied by pianist Ursula Oppens. The program begins with Two Rhapsodies for oboe, viola, and piano by Loeffler and includes Tchaikovsky's String Sextet in D major, op. 70, "Souvenir de Florence."

On Saturday afternoon, 31 July 1993, the Kurt Weill Foundation will host a mini-symposium devoted to the Santa Fe Opera double bill. Kim Kowalke will chair a panel comprising Michael Morley, who will speak

on Kaiser; Stephen Hinton on *Der Protagonist* as a critique of Expressionism; David Drew on *Der Zar's* multiple musical languages; and Jonathan Eaton on his directorial conceptions for the current productions. The symposium is open to the public and will be held at the Buena Vista Art Center at the Witter Bynner House in Santa Fe. A reception for the press will follow.

## Lost in the Stars: Stage Adaptation, Concert Version and Full-Length Recording

In a production opening on June 18 for a six-week run, the Goodman Theatre in Chicago will present a new adaptation by Frank Gelati of Alan Paton's novel, *Cry the Beloved Country*. Gelati, best known for his much praised adaptation of *The Grapes of Wrath*, plans to utilize most of Weill's and Anderson's score for *Lost in the Stars*.

Another "Cry, the Beloved Country," this one the concert suite devised by David Drew of music from *Lost in the Stars*, will be conducted by Robert Ziegler at a Promenade concert in London's Royal Albert Hall on 25 August 1993. The soloists are Damon Evans, Cynthia Clarey, and Jake Gardner performing with the London Adventist Chorale (40 voices), the BBC Singers (24 voices), and the Matrix Ensemble, which will be making its Proms debut. All Proms concerts are broadcast live on BBC Radio 3. "The Promenade Concerts are unique in the atmosphere they generate, compounded of youthful enthusiasm, well-worn badinage during the intervals between items in the program and a silent concentration during the music." (*The New Grove Dictionary of Music*).

The first full-length recording of *Lost in the Stars* has just appeared on the MusicMasters label (01612-67100-2). Maestro Julius Rudel conducts the Orchestra of St. Luke's, the Concert Chorale of New York, and a cast comprised of Gregory Hopkins (the Leader), Arthur Woodley (Stephen Kumalo), Cynthia Clarey (Irina), Carol Woods (Linda), Reginald Pindel (various roles), and Richard Vogt (various roles). Producer John McClure has recorded 72 minutes of music, including selections not on the original cast recording: Introduction to "The Little Gray House," Entr'acte, "The Wild Justice," "The Wild Justice Reprise," and one "cut" number, "The Little Tin God." ("Gold," the most famous "cut" number from the show, is not included.) The accompanying booklet features program notes and synopsis by David Kilroy as well as the song lyrics.

## "Brecht, Weill, Berlin" at the New York Philharmonic

As part of a new series of "celebration weeks" instituted by the New York Philharmonic for its 1993-94 season, Maestro Kurt Masur will conduct Weill's *Die sieben Todsünden* and Berg's Lulu Suite on 15-18 December 1993 at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall in New York. Soprano Angelina Réaux will make her debut with the Philharmonic singing the role of Anna I. Réaux, well-known to Weill fans in the States and abroad through her recordings, recitals, and one-woman show, will also present a solo concert at a New York venue to be announced. A program of lectures will supplement the musical offerings, all under the title, "Brecht, Weill, Berlin 1928-35."

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The Newsletter is published to provide an open forum wherein interested readers may express a variety of ideas and opinions. The opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the publisher's official viewpoint. The editor encourages the submission of articles, reviews, and news items for future issues. The submission deadline for the next issue is 1 August 1993.

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## Knickerbocker Holiday at the Barbican

*Knickerbocker Holiday* will be the last of five works performed in concert as part of the 1993 "Discover the Lost Musicals" series at the Barbican Centre in London. The popular series, produced by Ian Marshall Fisher and now entering its fifth year, aims to "celebrate fine twentieth-century musical theater writers." It focuses on works that did not have a long opening run and have been unjustly neglected since.

The Weill-Anderson musical will be presented on consecutive Sundays at 4:30 pm, beginning 26 September and continuing through 17 October. Other musicals scheduled for the 1993 season, which opens on 9 May, are *Du Barry was a Lady* (Porter, Fields, B. DeSylva, 1939), *Allegro* (Rodgers and Hammerstein, 1947), *Music in the Air* (Kern and Hammerstein, 1932), and *Carnival* (Merrill and Stewart, 1961).

## Assault on the Arts Exhibition at the New York Public Library

The New York Public Library, Fifth Ave at 42nd St., has mounted the exhibition, "Assault on the Arts: Culture and Politics in Nazi Germany," scheduled to run 27 February - 28 May 1993. The exhibition is organized in three sections: Literature and Ideology, Fine Arts, and Performing Arts: Film and Music. Three related exhibitions are running simultaneously at the Library and Museum of the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center: 1) It Can't Happen Here: Anti-Fascist Performance in New York, 2) The Gift to be Free: Refugees from Nazism in the American Performing Arts, and 3) In Perilous Times: Dancers of Germany and Austria, 1930-1945. Related events include educational programs, public symposia, concerts, lectures, and film showings. For more information, call (212) 930-0679.

## Editions Plume Publishes French Translation of Weill's Writings

Editions Plume (Paris) published in January 1993 *Kurt Weill: de Berlin à Broadway*, collected and translated by Pascal Huynh. The publication represents the first, extensive collection of Weill's writings in French translation. The handsome 333-page book is divided into two principal sections: "La Fiebre de Weimar" and "Exile et reconquete," and includes over 60 of Weill's essays, as well as contemporaneous reviews and interviews documenting Weill's reception during the 1930s in France.

Some of the research for the book was undertaken by Dr. Huynh with a grant from the Kurt Weill Foundation.

## A Kurt Weill Edition Update

The planning of the *Kurt Weill Edition*, a collected critical edition of Weill's music to be published by European American Music, has proceeded with the establishment of a distinguished international Advisory Board and the convening of the Edition's Editorial Board.

In October of last year, the *Kurt Weill Edition* issued invitations to a number of prominent individuals in a variety of musical fields. The response to these invitations was overwhelmingly enthusiastic. Many observed that the Edition represented a project of great significance not only for Weill's legacy but for musical theater in general.

A number of disciplines are represented in the membership of the Advisory Board. Members offer expertise in conducting, composition, musicology, and publishing; they include:

|                           |                  |
|---------------------------|------------------|
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In January of this year, the Editorial Board — David Drew, Stephen Hinton, Kim Kowalke, and Giseler Schubert — met for the first time to consider matters of editorial policy. A critical edition of Weill's work must necessarily confront an unusual array of problematic issues that result from the tremendous diversity of style within his output. Guidelines for editorial practice presuming to encompass the range of such an oeuvre must exhibit a great degree of flexibility while prescribing certain rigorous criteria. At this first meeting, the Board made significant progress towards defining this rigor and flexibility. A second meeting, planned for July of this year, will be devoted to establishing a complete set of editorial guidelines to be used by all volume editors.

The Weill Edition enjoyed a remarkable amount of attention from the media in January and February. Subsequent to Allan Kozinn's extended piece in *The New York Times* (5 January 1993), a number of German newspapers ran reports of the Edition's inception. One article in the *Berliner Zeitung* by Rainer Pöllman articulated most clearly the pressing need for authoritative texts to Weill's music. The author wrote, "adapters could, until now, talk their way out of responsibility for their actions by pointing out the terrible status of extant editions.... Now all this is about to change." The Edition also received television coverage in the form of a report produced by the Cable News Network and aired internationally.

Currently, the KWE is engaged in fundraising to support the vast array of projects and activities which it will comprise.

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The book can be ordered directly from Editions Plume, 51 rue de Turenne, 75003 Paris, France; tel. (1) 40-29-96-09 or fax. (1) 40-29-96-11.

## Maurice Abravanel Celebrates 90th Birthday

The Utah Symphony celebrated Maurice Abravanel's ninetieth birthday on 14, 15, 16 January, with Joseph Silverstein conducting concerts of music associated with Abravanel, including Milhaud's *La Création du monde* and Weill's *The Seven Deadly Sins*. On 19 January, the renowned jazz musician,

composer, and arts educator Billy Taylor appeared with the Utah Symphony to perform his *Jazz Suite for Piano and Orchestra*, commissioned by Maurice Abravanel. In addition to these musical tributes, civic and cultural leaders and friends from around the world met on 5 January at the Symphony Hall to honor Maurice Abravanel with a gala birthday-eve dinner. The home of the Utah Symphony has been renamed Abravanel Hall.

Abravanel, the music director laureate of the Utah Symphony, conducted or premiered many of Weill's stage and concert works in Europe and on Broadway. He was the recipient in 1990 of the first Kurt Weill Distinguished Achievement Award.

## Street Scene Bows at Munich and London

On Wednesday, 30 June 1993, the Staatstheater am Gärtnerplatz will premiere its new production of *Street Scene*. Presented in the German translation of Lys Symonette, *Street Scene* will be directed by Frank Arnold and conducted by Herbert Mogg. Gerd Rohde is the set designer, and costumes are by Susanne Dieringer. In the principal roles are Riccardo Lombardi (Frank Maurant), Andrea Catzel (Anna Maurant), Katherina Müller (Rose Maurant), Volker Bengl (Sam Kaplan), Erich Hallhuber (Harry Easter), and Gisela Ehrensperger (Emma Jones). Other summer performances include 4, 12, 15 July. *Street Scene* runs in repertory throughout the 1993-94 season at the Gärtnerplatz.

The English National Opera will mount its popular production of *Street Scene* as part of its 1993-94 season. Nicolette Molnar will direct the David Poutney staging that opens on Friday, 27 August 1993. James Holmes is the conductor. *Street Scene* is in repertory with additional performances scheduled for 2, 3, 9, 11, 16, 23, and 28 September.

## 1993 Grants Awarded

In December 1992, the Board of Trustees of the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music, Inc. approved the recommendations of the Independent Grants Advisory Panel to award the grants listed below:

### Research

David Kilroy, Cambridge, MA. Research and travel grant to examine the Maxwell Anderson diaries and documents at the University of Texas, the State Historical Society of Madison, WI, and the University of North Dakota for various monograph projects.

James L. Zychowicz. Research and travel grant to study the source materials relevant to *Ulysses Africanus* at the University of Texas, Yale University, and the Kurt Weill Foundation for a documentary study of the work and its relation to *Lost in the Stars*.

### Performance

Boston Musica Viva, Boston, MA. Performance and recording of songs, duets, and instrumental selections from American and European stage works.

Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH. *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*, *Mahagonny Songspiel*, selections from American stage works.

The Philharmonia Orchestra, London. Concert performances of *Knickerbocker Holiday*.

The Santa Fe Opera, Santa Fe, NM. Double bill of *Der Protagonist* and *Der Zar lässt sich fotografieren*.

Utah Symphony, Salt Lake City, UT. *The Seven Deadly Sins*.

Announcing the Publication of

## A Stranger Here Myself: Kurt Weill Studien

a collection of essays based on presentations made at the Kurt Weill Symposium, Nordrhein/Westfalen Kurt-Weill-Festival in March of 1990

edited jointly by Kim H. Kowalke (of the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music, New York) and Horst Edler (of the Salomon Ludwig Steinheim-Institut für deutsch-jüdische Geschichte, Duisburg Germany)

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This volume is to be published by the Georg Olms Verlag and available in the summer of 1993. Individuals may order directly from Olms via check or international money order. The price will be approximately DM 40 (also payable in the US dollar equivalent). Write to:

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To The Editor:

I was fascinated by Christopher Hailey's review in vol. 10, no. 2 of John Stewart's *Ernst Krenek: The Man and his Music*. He demonstrates a deep knowledge and a sharp erudition in his own outline of Krenek's life, personality, and accomplishment, and is certainly correct in criticizing Stewart for not having fully utilized the archival sources available to him, emasculating his portrait by providing almost no context for it. Missing, for example, are Krenek's complex relationships with Webern, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Rilke, Kraus, and many others. But a far greater tragedy is his virtual omission of his greatest source, Krenek himself, who provided dozens of hours of taped interviews on any subject Stewart desired to talk about. Krenek was chagrined that he had gone to so much trouble for Stewart who hardly utilized this vast treasure of useful and interesting information. Now that Krenek is dead, no one else will have this opportunity so thoroughly and uselessly consumed by Stewart.

Hailey's list of "mistakes" is too short by far, and probably deserves some carping, but the primary failure of the book does not lie in its errors or omissions. And here lies my essential disagreement with both Hailey and Stewart. I am a strong partisan of Krenek and his music, yet I hope that that position does not blind me to the value of negative assessments of Krenek, arrived at through thorough analysis and study. It is not the fiercely condemning views of both Hailey and Stewart which I find disturbing. Is, however, Stewart's dismissal of work after work in his book legitimate in and of itself (or, for that matter, his praise)? Don't we deserve to know the process of analysis or study which evolved these "assessments?" May we not also dismiss as cursorily Stewart's own unsupported opinions? And, if so, why, readers at US Press, was the book even published?

Hailey also succumbs to name-calling in dismissing as more or less worthless 40 years of creative activity without so much as a subordinate clause explaining why. Are we to believe that *Auf und Ablehnung*, *Fivefold Enfoldment*, *Sardakai*, *Der Goldene Bock*, *Opus Sine Nomine* and so on are "lesser works" because Hailey has announced that they are; or that *The Dissembler* contains "little musical interest *per se*" because John Stewart says so? Not only is Stewart's book an all-out attack on Krenek, but it fails even to use scholarship as a weapon in this attack and relies instead on churlish epithets devoid of a demonstrated process of thought. I am sure that devotees of the musical personality of Kurt Weill would not con-

done such perfunctory commentary on Weill. And Hailey joins in by dismissing most of the works of Krenek's last 40 years as "singularly unappetizing." Is this musical scholarship?

Michael Ingham  
Santa Barbara

*Christopher Hailey replies:*

Michael Ingham takes offense that I find numerous of Krenek's works "unappetizing." My observation was a purely subjective judgment. Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge* is a work I likewise find "unappetizing," though here I am persuaded of the necessity of its refractory surface qualities. I am not always convinced that Krenek's consummate craftsmanship is accompanied by a corresponding expressive urgency. That said, I gladly grant that my misgivings may well say more about my own intellectual or aesthetic limitations than about the quality of Krenek's music. My point was not to imply an artistic failure on Krenek's part, but to attribute my discomfiture with much of his work to his ambivalent response to that ever widening rupture between composers and their audience that so preoccupied his generation, which of course included Hindemith and Weill. Each of these composers framed the dilemma differently; each found different responses. It is perhaps *because* Krenek's work is so insistently enmeshed in the aesthetic quandaries of content and communication that I find it so problematic; it is at any rate one of the reasons I continue to try to come to grips with his scores no matter how "unappetizing" I may find this work or that.

I stated that the "shape and content" of Krenek's legacy had been established by 1950 not in order to dismiss his later works, but because I believe that Krenek had by that time formulated those aesthetic concerns which are productive in his work. One could say the same of Schoenberg and Stravinsky at fifty, although *Moses and Aaron* and *The Rake's Progress*, the String Trio and *Threni* were yet to come; to have formulated the problem in no way implies that the range of solutions has been exhausted.

Michael Ingham should learn to differentiate between critical opinion (whatever its "scholarly" credentials) and "fierce condemnation." I count myself among Krenek's admirers and have on more than one occasion in these pages and elsewhere urged that he receive attention commensurate

with his stature. I would suggest that Ingham's fine performances and recordings speak more effectively for Krenek's cause than partisan polemics.

To The Editor:

Having just recently read Ronald Taylor's *Kurt Weill: Composer in a Divided World*, I feel compelled to respond to Stephen Hinton's hypercritical review of this work in the Fall issue of the Newsletter.

As opposed to Mr. Hinton, who is obviously a Weill scholar, I am merely a Weill music lover of long standing. This is the first full length biography of Kurt Weill that I have read, and I must say that I will be forever grateful to the author for providing this masterful word picture of the man and his times.

Although Taylor may dwell on the dichotomy thesis more than Mr. Hinton would prefer, he leaves his reader with no doubt as to the uniqueness and originality of the composer's music whether it was being written in Berlin, Paris, or New York. But, far more important, Ronald Taylor gives us a very human and always empathetic portrait of the composer against the background of world events of the fabulous first half of the century. And all of the accounts of Kurt Weill's relationships with his family, friends, and, especially, with his wife, Lenya, and with Brecht, his foremost European collaborator, always presented tastefully and with a kindness and understanding, all go to make fascinating reading for any Kurt Weill fan.

Joseph D. Teller  
Jupiter, Florida

### Composer of the Week on BBC Radio 3

Kurt Weill was "Composer of the Week" on BBC Radio 3, 22-26 March 1993. "Kurt Weill in the 20s," hosted by Donald Macleod, featured a wide variety of recently-issued recordings and historical reissues, many of them originally made in the United Kingdom. "Composer of the Week" is a regular feature of Radio 3 programming and is broadcast Monday-Friday from 9:00-10:00 AM.

## A New Beginning in Dessau

by Jürgen Schebera

Despite the precarious state of funding for cultural activity in the former German Democratic Republic, the *Kulturamt* of the city of Dessau, in collaboration with the Landestheater Dessau, proceeded boldly with preparations for "Kurt-Weill-Fest: Auftakt '93," which took place 2-6 March 1993.

Presented within the span of five days were ten programs, ranging from staged theatrical presentations to programs of a more modest scale. Such concentrated activity is remarkable considering that Dessau is a smallish city of about 90,000 inhabitants and that, with only a few sporadic performances of Weill's work over the last twenty years, the composer is hardly known in his native locale. Sad but true.

That said, the public received this initial festival with great enthusiasm. The city's inhabitants not only accepted their native son, but flocked to the theater, the *Bauhaus* stage, and the concert hall. Almost all the performances were sold out, some having to be repeated spontaneously to accommodate the overflow crowds. Such a dramatic response bodes well for similar activities already in the planning stages for 1994.

As for the performances themselves, I must in the first place mention the presentation at the Musikschule Dessau of *Der Jasager*, directed by Stefan Blüher of the Komische Oper in Berlin. An ensemble consisting entirely of students (orchestra, chorus, and soloists) and conducted by faculty member Jochen Lehmann devoted itself to several weeks of rehearsals. Weill himself would certainly have been pleased with the commitment and energy that these young people of 1993 put into their tasks. The solid performances by chorus and soloists more than compensated for the occasional problems in the orchestra.

The Landestheater contributed a staging of *Die sieben Todsünden* by the well-known choreographer Arila Siegert, who revived her 1988 Dresden production (see this Newsletter 6, no.1) for the Dessau stage. Once more, the talented young soprano Anette Jahn sang Anna I, and the new

Dessau Generalmusikdirektor Daniel Lipton realized a musically inspired performance. Weill's ballet was coupled with a choreographic paraphrase of Wassily Kandinsky's *Der gelbe Klang*, set to music by Roland Pfengle. This pairing stands squarely in the Dessau Bauhaus tradition. In 1928, Weill's one-act opera *Der Zar lässt sich photographieren* was matched with a choreographed version of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, for which Kandinsky had provided the staging and *mise-en-scène*.

Perhaps the most artistically satisfying events of the festival were the two evenings of performances by the Kurzweil Ensemble of Cologne, which attracted such attention at the 1990 Weill celebrations in Nordrhein-Westfalen. The extremely talented soprano Stefanie Wüst (accompanied by pianist Thomas Wise and violinist Albert Rundel) offered two evenings of songs by Weill marked by a truly inspired vocal style and carefully perfected expression. Especially convincing was her interpretation of the early *Lieder*, which are completely unknown in these parts. *Ofrah's Lieder*, in particular, was bewitchingly beautiful. Other high points were the Rilke *Lieder* and the Walt Whitman Songs.

The actors, musicians, and singers of the Landestheater developed a special presentation for the festival entitled *Ich sitz in Dessau und esse Klops — Auf den Spuren von Kurt Weill in Dessau* [I sit here in Dessau and eat meatballs — on the tracks of Kurt Weill in Dessau]. This revue incorporated music written by Albert Weill (Kurt's father), including two movements of his *Synagogengesänge*, in an evening-long reflection on the decades-long absence of Weill's music from his native city. Meeting with great interest on the part of the Dessauers, this stimulating presentation had to be repeated twice.

In honor of the festival, the city commissioned three new compositions. The Archeopteryx Duo from Saarbrücken gave successful premieres of works by Regina Wenzel (Halle), Anette Schlünz (Dessau), and Aseon Han (South Korea). The cultural office anticipates making commissions of new compositions a regular component of future Weill festivals.

Additionally, there were screenings of G.W. Pabst's film version of *Die Dreigroschenoper*, and two special exhibitions (including the one by the Dumont Lindemann Theater Archive that was shown in Düsseldorf in 1990). The renowned Leipzig Aulos-Trio presented an evening of chamber music, including works by Busoni, Weill (Sonata for Cello and Piano), Wolpe, and Goldmann. Finally, late at night, the Dessauer Brass Collegium offered adaptations of some Weill pieces in the club of the Bauhaus.

Dessau's mayor opened the *Auftakt* personally and set forth in the festival's program book his conviction that "Dessau will find a permanent place in the cultivation of Kurt Weill." There is talk now of establishing a Kurt Weill Study Center in one of the former Bauhaus *Meisterhäuser*. Here, the interested public would have access to the most important literature, musical recordings, and study materials on the composer available in Germany.

Translated by Lys Symonette

