

## Behind the Scenes of Psychology and Passion: Thomas Hampson Talks About Singing Weill

“One of the most campy, wonderful, humorous scores I’ve ever heard,” is how Thomas Hampson describes *The Firebrand of Florence*, a work he highlights in his new EMI recording “Kurt Weill on Broadway” (now available in Europe and scheduled for U.S. release in Spring 1997).

Recorded in London in June of 1994, the new CD features some of Weill’s lesser-known American songs in their original keys and orchestrations, including the entire opening scene of *The Firebrand of Florence*. During the recording sessions, Hampson recalled having to do a few retakes because “Gershwin’s clever *Firebrand* lyrics left us all in stitches.”

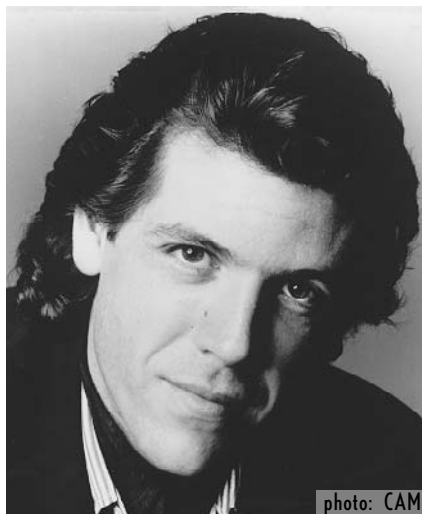
“This project started with *Love Life*. John McGlinn and I had wanted to make a complete recording of the work. I don’t recall whether it was Simon Woods, EMI producer and a big Weill fan, or John, or I, who said, ‘Let’s have a look at Weill’s American years!’” Although the *Love Life* project never reached fruition, Hampson believes strongly in the show and hopes for another full-scale revival soon.

“Weill’s output is a very specific chapter of music history in Central Europe and America; the sound of his music is so immediately recognizable, and his orchestrations are breathtaking. You find everything in them, from Mahler to Schreker, but the sum total is always Weill, whose music is

sometimes hard to digest, sometimes unrelenting. Weill’s music had a rough ride in America, but it takes a tremendous look behind the scenes of psychology and passion.” Comparing Weill’s operatic output to Berg’s *Wozzeck*, Hampson praises both composers as powerful creative forces because they “cut to the quick. Weill’s songs are like wide and deep brush paintings of people’s lives. His vocal lines are a dream to sing—expansive leaps with portamento. There is so much emotion in that kind of movement, which is lost when a singer just chases pitches and rhythms.”

Is it appropriate for an opera singer to perform Broadway show tunes? Hampson stresses that before the introduction of microphones, opera singers were often the stars of Broadway too. “There is something tremendously human and invigorating in acoustic settings, where you really have to articulate when you sing.” Clear articulation of the lyrics is essential to Weill interpretation. In Hampson’s words, Weill’s music has “all the voice but still the immediacy of language.”

Hampson has also recorded “Dirge for Two Veterans,” one of Weill’s four *Walt Whitman Songs*, for release by Angel in early 1997, along with other composers’ settings of Whitman’s poetry. Recently, he has been performing the song in solo recitals.



### New York City Opera stages *Seven Deadly Sins*

The New York City Opera, under newly appointed general and artistic director Paul Kellogg, will present *Seven Deadly Sins* in the English translation by W.H. Auden and Chester Kallman during its Spring 1997 season. The production is scheduled to open 15 March for seven performances. The work is paired for the first time with Carl Orff’s *Carmina Burana* in a new production directed by Ann Bogart. John Conklin will design the sets for both works. Conductor Derrick Inouye leads the City Opera

orchestra with soprano Lauren Flanigan making her debut as Anna I. The male quartet consists of Joel Sorensen, James Bobick, Matthew Chellis, and Don Yule. Although it has been performed many times in New York, *Seven Deadly Sins* last appeared as a repertory piece in 1958-59 at the New York City Ballet. Lotte Lenya returned to the role of Anna I, reprising her original role of 1933 along with George Balanchine, who re-choreographed the work especially for that production.

## Mahagonny opens 1998 Salzburg Festival

*Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* will open the 1998 Salzburg Festival with director Peter Zadek, conductor Dennis Russell Davies, and an illustrious cast including Catherine Malfitano, Gwyneth Jones, and Jerry Hadley. This will be the first ever production of a Weill opera at the Salzburg Festival. Two of Weill's works have been programmed in concerts at the Festival since its founding: in 1973, *Symphony No. 1* was performed by the London Symphony Orchestra under conductor Wolfgang Sawallisch; and *Die sieben Todsünden*, featuring Doris Bierett as Anna I, was performed by the ORF Symphony Orchestra in 1980.

Salzburg's *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* will commemorate Brecht's and Lenya's centenary. Lotte Lenya, born a stone's throw from Vienna's Schönbrunn Palace, played Jenny in the Austrian premiere of this work at Vienna's Raimund Theater on 26 April 1932.

## Cincinnati Showcases New Weill Revue

Jonathan Eaton has conceived and directed *Songplay*, a new Kurt Weill revue which opened at the Cincinnati Playhouse on 26 September. The concept is based on the stories of six wanderers—all alienated from their homelands and searching for their own personal utopias—who find themselves waiting for

a ship to carry them on their way. Their characters, goals, and dreams are expressed through some three dozen songs performed by Michael Brian, Herb Downer, Kim Lindsay, Karen Murphy, Pedro Perro, and Craig Priebe. Other production staff include musical director David Seaman, choreographer Daniel

Pelzig, and set designer Paul Shortt.

The production of *Songplay* will move to The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis in November for a three-week run.



photo: Sandy Underwood

## WWWWEILL

The Foundation staff is always on the lookout for World Wide Web sites which complement its own site at <http://www.kmf.org>. The number of Weill-related sites has been slowly but steadily growing for the past year. In this issue, we'll recommend some sites devoted specifically to Weill's collaborators.

### The George and Ira Gershwin Archive

<http://www.sju.edu/~bs065903/gershwin/homepage.htm>

A thorough, exemplary Web treatment of the Gershwins by Brian Sweeney. Although the bulk of the site concerns George, or the collaborations of George and Ira, there is a separate page for "The Ira Years, 1934-1983," as well as a page devoted to *Lady in the Dark*.

### Paul Eliot Green Papers

[http://www.unc.edu/lib/mssinv/dir/g/Green%2CPaul\\_Eliot](http://www.unc.edu/lib/mssinv/dir/g/Green%2CPaul_Eliot)

A basic, text-only page sponsored by the University of North Carolina as a guide to their Paul Green Collection, including a biography, list of Green's works, and a fairly comprehensive finding aid. A good example of scholarly use of the Web.

### Quelques poèmes de Robert Desnos

<http://www.worldnet.net/~mannoni/desnos.html>

The collaboration between Weill and Robert Desnos, *La grande complainte de Fantômas*, is now largely forgotten, but it was quite a production on French radio in November 1933. This well-designed site includes the complete text of many of Desnos's poems, including "Fantômas," along with a wealth of other information about him. Most of the site is in French, but some of the poems are rendered in English as well.

### Bertolt Brecht sites

So far, no one has mounted a large-scale Brecht site, but there are several sites of interest. For basic information on the Bertolt-Brecht-Haus and the Berliner Ensemble, go to <http://www.berlin.de/text/index>, and follow alphabetical index links from there. The Brecht journal *Dreigroschenheft* has a site that includes basic information about circulation, advertising, and availability in German and English (<http://www.geist.spacenet.de/dreigroschen/VERLAG-D.html>). A lecture by James Lyons about German exiles in the U.S., including some good Brecht anecdotes, can be found at <http://advance.byu.edu/pc/devotionals/JamesLyons>. On the lighter side, try "Bertolt Brecht does Shakespeare" (<http://www2.us.com/starport/xeno/brecht.html>) for an amusing treatment of "Mack the Knife."

If you find any good Weill-related sites, please let us know at [wlr@kmf.org](mailto:wlr@kmf.org).

## Lady in the Dark at the Royal National Theatre

London audiences will see the first Royal National Theatre production of *Lady in the Dark* at the Lyttelton Theatre from March 1997 onward. This Broadway extravaganza, which opened in January 1941, is a collaboration of Weill, Moss Hart and Ira Gershwin that starred the legendary Gertrude Lawrence as Liza Elliott. In this new production, directed by Francesca Zambello and conducted by Mark Dorrell, Maria Friedman (who recently starred in Sondheim's *Passion* at the West End and appeared as one of the narrators in the BBC Proms concert of *Der Silbersee*) will play the leading role. The designers of *Lady in the Dark* will be Adrienne Lobel (sets) and Nicky Gillibrand (costumes). This production will remain in the National Theatre's repertoire until late July 1997, with a total of about sixty performances.

# Upcoming Events

## IN REPERTORY 1996-97

### AUFSTIEG UND FALL DER STADT MAHAGONNY

GERMANY  
Düsseldorf-Duisburg (Deutsche Oper am Rhein); Mönchengladbach (Vereinigtes Städtische Bühnen Krefeld und Mönchengladbach); Osnabrück (Kuppeltheater); Würzburg (Stadttheater)

### DIE DREIGROSCHENOPER

AUSTRIA  
Vienna (Burgtheater)  
CZECH REPUBLIC  
Prague (Theater pod Palmokou)  
GERMANY  
Berlin (Deutsches Theater); Bremen (Bremer Theater); Nordhausen (Theater Nordhausen)  
POLAND  
Torun (Teatr im Horzycy); Warsaw (Teatr Polski)

### LADY IN THE DARK

ENGLAND  
London (Royal National Theatre)

### SEVEN DEADLY SINS

UNITED STATES  
New York, New York (New York City Opera)

### STREET SCENE

GERMANY  
Gera (Bühnen der Stadt Gera)

## IN REPERTORY 1997-98

### AUFSTIEG UND FALL DER STADT MAHAGONNY

FRANCE  
Lille (Opéra de Lille); Paris (Opéra Bastille)  
SWITZERLAND  
Lausanne (Opéra de Lausanne)

### DIE BÜRGERSCHAFT

GERMANY  
Bielefeld (Theater der Stadt Bielefeld)

## IN REPERTORY 1998-99

### DIE DREIGROSCHENOPER

SWEDEN  
Göteborg (Stadsteater)

### AUFSTIEG UND FALL DER STADT MAHAGONNY

FRANCE  
Nantes (Opéra de Nantes)  
UNITED STATES  
Chicago, Illinois (Lyric Opera of Chicago)

## Lotte Lenya Centenary Update

"Broadway Cares" plans a benefit event to commemorate Lenya at New York's Majestic Theatre on her 100th birthday (18 October 1998). This extravaganza will feature guest appearances of world-renowned Weill interpreters, crossing classical, jazz, and popular boundaries.



29 Suite in E Major. Tokyo, Japan. Chofu Music Festival, Toho Gakuen Orchestra.

## December

4-7 *The Threepenny Opera*. London, England. University College School.

5-7 *Lady in the Dark*. Chicago, Illinois. Roosevelt University.

16 *Suite panaméenne, Bastille Music, Berlin im Licht, Klops Lied, Öl-Musik*. Vienna, Austria. Ensemble Kontrapunkte.

## 1997

### January

15 Concerto for violin and wind instruments. Winterthur, Switzerland. Musikkollegium Winterthur.

16 (-2 February) *The Threepenny Opera*. San Jose, California. American Musical Theatre.

24 *Der Jasager*. Brest, France. Ensemble Sillage.

### February

8 *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Vom Tod im Wald*. Seville, Spain. Klangforum Wien.

12 *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Suite panaméenne, Vom Tod im Wald*. Vienna, Austria. Klangforum Wien.

26 (-1 March) Concerto for violin and wind instruments. Berlin, Germany. Berlin Philharmonic.

### March

1 *The Threepenny Opera*. Glendale, California. A Noise Within.

6 *Lady in the Dark* at London's Royal National Theatre  
15 *The Seven Deadly Sins* at the New York City Opera

20-29 *The Threepenny Opera*. Turlock, California. California State University.

### April

14 Pantomime from *Der Protagonist*. Vienna, Austria. Ensemble Kontrapunkte.

25 (-3 May) *The Threepenny Opera*. Fredonia, New York. SUNY Fredonia.

### May

5 *Suite panaméenne, Bastille Music, Berlin im Licht, Klops Lied, Öl-Musik*. Vienna, Austria. Ensemble Kontrapunkte.

9-11 *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*. Los Angeles, California. Los Angeles Philharmonic.

31 (-1 June) *Suite from the Threepenny Opera*. New York, New York. New York Chamber Symphony.

### September

9 *Der Jasager*. Brest, France. Ensemble Sillage.

## Calendar

### November

1 Concerto for violin and wind instruments. Edinburgh, Scotland. Royal Scottish National Orchestra.

1-17 *Songplay: The Songs and Music of Kurt Weill*. St. Louis, Missouri. The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis.

2 Concerto for violin and wind instruments. Glasgow, Scotland. Royal Scottish National Orchestra.

8-10 *The Threepenny Opera*, Tecumseh, Michigan. Tecumseh Players.

15-17 *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*. Richmond, Virginia. Richmond Symphony.

21 *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*. San Francisco, California. San Francisco State University.

22 *Der Protagonist*, Hilversum, the Netherlands. Dutch National Radio. (Concert performance)

23 *Mahagonny Songspiel*. Lennoxville, Quebec, Canada. Ensemble Musica Nova.

23-24 *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*. Fort Wayne, Indiana. Fort Wayne Philharmonic.

25 *The Ballad of Magna Carta*. Vienna, Austria. Ensemble Kontrapunkte.



**Kurt Weill Fest  
in Dessau**  
28 February-9 March

"American Dreams"  
Concert Recue; revival  
of *Der Silbersee* at the  
Anhaltisches Theater;  
Cherubino (Giles  
Swayne); *Lady Be  
Good* (Gershwin);  
photo exhibition by  
Carin Drechsler-Marx;  
Paul Klee exhibition at  
the Anhaltische  
Kunstverein; and  
screenings of Weill's  
musical films.

### Summer Festivals 1997

*Mahagonny Songspiel*, Holland Festival  
*Mahagonny Songspiel*, BBC Proms

## Around the World

### AUSTRALIA

Australia saw its first all-Weill concert in May of this year. The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, with soprano Helen Noonan, performed selections from Weill's European and American works under guest conductor Brian Stacey. As one in a series of concerts under the collective title "Metropolis" (others featured Milhaud and Ellington), it was advertised as illustrating "the witty, comic, salacious world of 1930's Berlin"—rather misleading, since the program opened with Robert Russell Bennett's Symphonic Nocturne from *Lady in the Dark* and closed with *The Seven Deadly Sins* in a semi-staged performance. In between were songs from the European and American years (including a beautifully moody rendition of "Speak Low") and a nicely gauged account of *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*.

Unfortunately, the performance of *Sins* was disappointing. Due to the layout of the Town Hall in Melbourne, the orchestra was seated on the auditorium floor together with the audience, while Anna II danced on a wide but shallow stage above and behind the orchestra. Thus the juxtaposition of theater, music, and dance elements went for nothing, and the vague and pointless choreography did not improve matters. The quartet—especially the two tenors—was impressive, but the space and positioning of the orchestra meant that too often the soprano's text was covered and inaudible.

It was a brave venture to program all these works in one evening. Given the audience's enthusiastic response, one might hope that conductor Stacey (or the orchestra's new principal conductor, Markus Stenz) succeeds in the plan to program the two symphonies in the near future.

**Michael Morley**  
Flinders University of South Australia

### ELLA FITZGERALD (1917–96)

*Aw, Bobby Darin and Louis Armstrong  
They made a record, oh but they did  
And now Ella, Ella and her fellas  
We're making a wreck, what a wreck of "Mack the Knife"*  
—Ella Fitzgerald, Berlin, 1960

"[Ella Fitzgerald] and her combo covered the tune just because it was a hit, and, in her words, 'we haven't heard a girl sing it.' Then she forgot the lyrics. But even her mistakes were inspired, and her demure, girlish voice became gruff and loose as she improvised." —Karen Schoemer, *Newsweek* (24 June 1996)

"[She] could turn any song into an oxygen rush of bouncing melody that reached the listener's ears as pure, untroubled joy—the eternally young sound of a young country." —Frank Rich, *The New York Times* (19 June 1996)

### JAPAN

Thanks to long and continuing distribution of European and American recordings, the music of Kurt Weill has been well-known in Japan for decades, but there have been relatively few professional productions of his works.

The one work which has been known and appreciated since its first Tokyo production is *The Threepenny Opera*, mounted in 1932 by the great Japanese director Senda Koreya (1904–94), who presented the piece in an adaptation set in early modern Japan. He had seen and admired the original production in Berlin. Senda produced the work several more times during his distinguished career, notably in 1973 and again in 1977.

Musicals and musical theater have enjoyed a considerable boom in Japan during the past twenty years. As audience interest has steadily increased, a new generation of performers has



Anju Mira as Liza Elliott

emerged who perform in a manner appropriate to modern European and American works, a technique which involves singing and dancing skills not widely practiced either in the traditional art of kabuki or in the serious spoken modern drama long popular in urban circles. The development of these abilities now makes it possible to stage successfully a whole variety of works hitherto known only through recordings or hearsay.

In this context, it is perhaps not so surprising that two productions of *The Threepenny Opera* ran concurrently in Tokyo last spring: one by the enterprising troupe En, in a translation by Iwabuchi Tatsuji, the leading Brecht scholar in contemporary Japan, the other by the youthful Seinen troupe. Reviews indicated a friendly rivalry and a popular success for both.

More unusual still was the Japanese premiere of the Weill-Gershwin *Lady in the Dark* last March, staged first in the Osaka-Kyoto area, roughly equivalent in U.S. terms to a Chicago opening. Reviews indicate that the production was both stylish and, for Japanese audiences, highly contemporary in feeling. The travails of an American businesswoman of 1941, the year of the New York premiere, remain relevant for today's Japanese young women, who did not generally rise to higher ranks in the workplace until the 1960s and after. The lead role of Liza Elliott was played by a popular star, the singer Anju Mira, who, according to those who saw the production, "surpassed expectations" in this difficult and glamorous role.

**Tom Rimer**  
University of Pittsburgh



## David Drew presented with Kurt Weill Distinguished Achievement Award



Noted music critic, publisher, scholar, and record producer David Drew was honored by the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music with its second lifetime Distinguished Achievement Award at an event in London on 21 July 1996, immediately after the BBC Proms concert performance of *Der Silbersee*. President Kim H. Kowalke made the presentation on behalf of the Board of Trustees at the post-performance reception “in recognition of Drew’s

immense contributions over four decades to the understanding and dissemination of the music of Kurt Weill.” The award, a specially designed and etched Steuben glass sculpture, was established in 1990. The first and only previous recipient of the award was Maurice Abravanel (1903–94), who conducted the premieres of many of Weill’s stage works in Europe and America. Among the 300 guests in attendance at the Albert Hall reception were composers Elliott Carter, Berthold Goldschmidt, and Alexander Goehr, Proms director Nicholas Kenyon (BBC Radio 3), Nicholas Payne (Royal Opera House), Dennis Marks (English National Opera), music scholars Oliver Neighbour and Donald Mitchell, and critics from London’s leading newspapers.

The award coincided with the fortieth anniversary of Drew’s involvement with Weill’s legacy; in 1956, he decided to write a

book on Weill, whom he saw as “a composer at the furthest conceivable remove from the ethos and preoccupations of Darmstadt and the successors of the Second Viennese School.” In 1957, he met Lotte Lenya in Berlin at the only post-war production of Weill’s most ambitious opera, *Die Bürgschaft*. She quickly abandoned her own plans to write Weill’s biography with her second husband George Davis and pledged her full support to Drew’s work, which expanded over the next two decades into a multi-volume life and works. (The introductory volume, *Kurt Weill: A Handbook*, was published in 1986.) In the interim, however, Drew collaborated with Lenya on what has since been called the international “Weill renaissance,” a worldwide rediscovery of the full range of the composer’s oeuvre. Drew’s vast contributions to Weill scholarship and appreciation have included: production of recordings (Gary Bertini’s version of the two symphonies, the historic 3-disc London Sinfonietta album on Deutsche Grammophon, *Berlin im Licht* on Largo), translation (including the libretto of *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* for Sadler’s Wells—still in use by the Metropolitan Opera), numerous editions for Universal Edition, reconstruction of unpublished concert works, collections of writings by and about Weill (Suhrkamp, 1975), and innumerable festivals and programs focusing on the composer’s work. Richard Taruskin has dubbed Drew the “Dean of Weill Scholars” and hailed him as “a man who thinks and writes on a level far beyond that of most of his colleagues, an author of prose that for grace, wit, and lucidity is (or ought to be) the despair of his colleagues and rivals.”

Mr. Drew retired as Director of New Music at Boosey & Hawkes in 1992 and now serves as Artistic Advisor and a producer for Largo Records. He is a Trustee of the Britten Foundation and is a frequent contributor to newspapers and journals. He maintains his close association with Weill as a member of the Editorial Board of the Kurt Weill Edition.

### Press Clippings: *Der Silbersee* at the BBC Proms

Prom no. 3 offered a wonderful revival, Kurt Weill’s 1933 *Der Silbersee*, “The Silver Lake”: wonderful not only for the music, but for the triumphant ingenuity of the revival itself. For *Der Silbersee* is a “play with music,” plenty of music (16 numbers)—but not an opera; too much spoken text for the Albert Hall, and yet we need to know what’s going on to appreciate the music fully.

The solution here was to have the score sung in German, where it sounds best, and to let Jeremy Sams take care of the rest in English. That he did by entrusting the story to three deft actor-narrators, who could drop into impersonating a character from time to time with a little help from the singing performers too. And he gave them a consistently witty script—not quite arch, but elegantly tongue-in-cheek—that brought out *Silbersee*’s comic vein.

—David Murray, *Financial Times* (23 July 1996)

*Silver Lake* is a fascinating hybrid: certainly not an opera, but for all its catchy tunes not quite a musical either, at least not the escapist schlock that the term “musical” so often suggests nowadays. It is deeply rooted in German operatic tradition, with obvious nods to *The*

*Magic Flute* both in the scene when the policeman’s conscience assails him chorally from off stage (Tamino and the Speaker) and the final approach to the Lake (trials of fire and water). Bach is in there, and so is a near-tongue-in-cheek, near-academic use of counterpoint.

Even in the Albert Hall, Stenz and his players managed to field the sort of crispness of sound essential to Weill, and the sardonic wit of his instrumentations was given full rein. The sleazy brass and Mantovani-style singing strings of the Lottery Agent’s tango were as entrancing as Graham Clark’s authentically repulsive (i.e., marvellous) performance, gold medallion glinting, shirt slashed to the navel, leer of complicity underlining his cynical message.

—Rodney Milnes, *The Times* (23 July 1996)

It is remarkable music: a score that holds the neoclassic, the “Verdian,” and the popular Weill in new tensions and contrasts. In *Silbersee* we hear a great composer’s exciting “next move” after *Mahagonny* and *Happy End*; and hear an heir of Bach, Mozart, and Mahler tackle a modern *Magic Flute*.

—Andrew Porter, *The Observer* (28 July 1996)

The Kurt Weill Foundation and European American Music Announce Publication of

## *Die Dreigroschenoper:* A Full-Color Facsimile of the Holograph Full Score

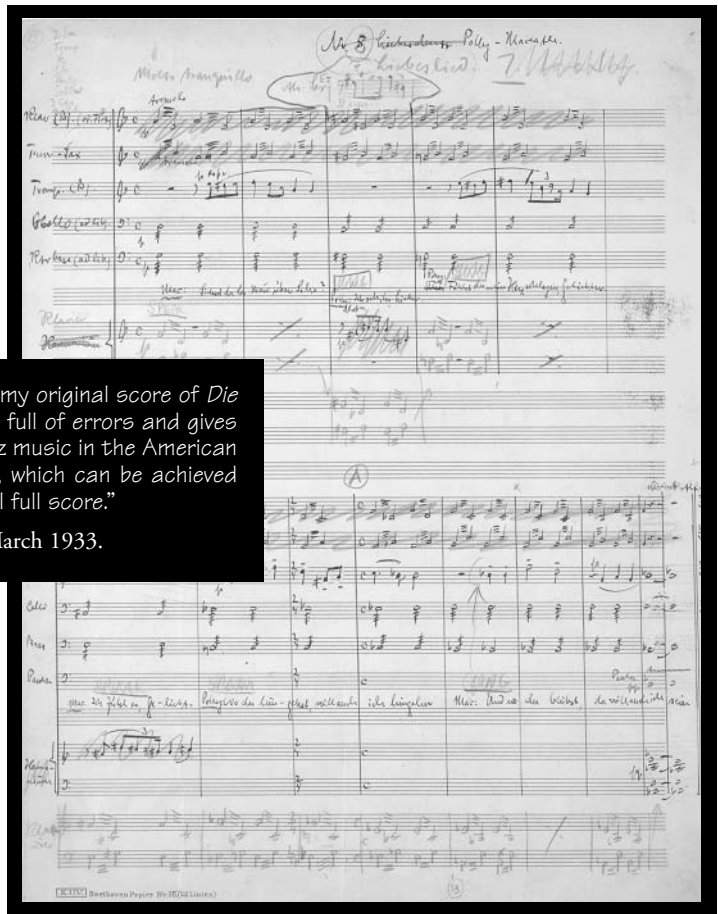
*The appearance of the Dreigroschenoper facsimile inaugurates the Kurt Weill Edition, a collected critical edition that, over the next several decades, will publish full scores of all the composer's completed works.*

European American Music Corporation and the Kurt Weill Foundation announce the publication of a hardbound, full-color facsimile of Kurt Weill's holograph full score of *Die Dreigroschenoper*. The score, which bears not only Weill's own manuscript but performance and translation annotations by Leonard Bernstein and Marc Blitzstein, uniquely documents the development of the work from its legendary 1928 first production in Berlin through its triumphal success

"Perhaps it would be helpful if you could send my original score of *Die Dreigroschenoper*. The printed score is really full of errors and gives rise to many false impressions.... It is not jazz music in the American sense but rather a quite special, new sound, which can be achieved only by a meticulous realization of the original full score."

Kurt Weill to his publisher, Universal Edition. March 1933.

in the English-speaking world as *The Threepenny Opera*. More than one hundred pages of color plates are introduced by scholarly essays authored by three prominent experts on Weill and his legacy: Stephen Hinton, Kim H. Kowalke, and David Farneth. The volume is edited by Edward Harsh, the managing editor of the Kurt Weill Edition, and David Drew provides a provocative Afterword as Introduction to the Kurt Weill Edition as a whole.



For information regarding this facsimile volume and subscription to the Kurt Weill Edition, contact:  
in the United States, music dealers throughout the country.  
in Continental Europe, Schott Musik International, Mainz.  
in the United Kingdom, Alfred A. Kalmus (Universal Edition) London, Ltd.

## Press Clippings



**A milestone in  
Weill scholarship.**

—Erik Levi,  
*BBC Music  
Magazine*

### *Speak Low (When You Speak Love)* *The Letters of Kurt Weill and Lotte Lenya*

Edited by Lys Symonette and Kim H. Kowalke, University of California Press, 1996

*Speak Low (When You Speak Love)* speaks loud and clear through its collection of 296 Weill and 114 Lenya communications . . . . The editors have not only superbly annotated the letters, often tracking down remote references and allusions, they have also provided concise yet far-ranging bridges and commentaries. Possibly the best-edited correspondence I have ever read . . . . [T]he letters and sundry additions constitute a first-rate joint biography of this fascinating couple. An action-packed tribute to a marriage of sometimes untrue bodies, but always true minds.

—John Simon, *New York Times Book Review*

It's great stuff—not only for Weill and Lenya devotees but for all who are interested in the musical theater.

—Roger Harris, *Sunday Star Ledger* (Newark)

The letters are a goldmine of gossipy information about theatrical life in Berlin, Vienna, London and New York. . . . The Weill-eye view of Hollywood and its producers in their golden age is equally illuminating and amusing. At every stage of their relationship the letters are full of intimate erotic endearment.

—Michael Kennedy, *London Sunday Telegraph*

Impeccably edited, generously illustrated . . . . Lenya is an outsize character painted in primary colours. Weill remains elusive, at once shy and absolutely sure of himself, charitable and sharp, worldly-wise yet oddly child-like, essentially serious but with a perky sense of humour.

—Rodney Milnes, *London Times*

The book is compulsively readable . . . . [Y]et for all its gossipy, celebrity-ridden pleasures, *Speak Low* transcends the gossip level. We are drawn into a complex, affair-ridden marriage's inner workings. . . . Graced with an exceptionally eloquent introduction, supplemented charmingly by a glossary of pet names and expressions (everything from "Doofi" to "Mistblume," or "Dung Blossom"), *Speak Low* speaks volumes about two voluminous lives.

—Michael Phillips, *San Diego Union Tribune*

A volume of the highest possible importance for anyone interested in Kurt Weill's music—and, not at all incidentally, an extraordinarily colorful narrative about two difficult people who needed each other very much, but never quite figured out how to get along. Symonette and Kowalke have linked the 393 letters in this volume with extensive yet readable notes that make it possible to read *Speak Low* straight through, just like a really good biography. . . . Considered solely as a human drama, the Weill-Lenya marriage was the stuff of which novels are made, and *Speak Low* also sheds much light on this famously troubled relationship.

—Terry Teachout, *Washington Post and International Herald Tribune*

The human side of Weill and Lenya shines forth brightly . . . in this fine, wonderfully illustrated collection, suffused with a kind of life experience not easily captured in a biography, a shadow world that the telephone and e-mail have all but obliterated from memory.

—Steve Dowden, *Houston Chronicle*

Brilliantly edited and translated, the letters tell a great story about important and politically committed lives in the midst of some of the defining events of our century. But finally all the stars of stage, screen, and the musical world take second place to Weill and Lenya themselves.

—Richard Dyer, *Boston Globe*

The notes provided by the editors and translators . . . are generous, detailed and revealing. They give full biographical sketches of both Lenya and Weill, with fascinating bits that not even the two full biographies of Weill and the single scandalous life of Lenya contain . . . . Ultimately this annotated collection of correspondence is a fascinating record of a marriage.

—Bruce Cook, *Chicago Tribune*

# New Publications

## BOOKS

Bélicha, Roland. *Kurt Weill et la France*. Villejuif: Editions du Reveil des Combattants, 1996.

Grosch, Nils, Joachim Lucchesi, and Jürgen Schebera. *Kurt Weill-Studien*. (Veröffentlichungen der Kurt-Weill-Gesellschaft Dessau, Band 1) Stuttgart: M & P Verlag für Wissenschaft und Forschung, 1996. (ISBN 3-476-45166-6, 202 p., paperback).

### CONTENTS:

“‘Junge Klassizität’ zwischen Fortschritt und Reaktion: Ferruccio Busoni, Philipp Jarnach und die deutsche Weill-Rezeption” by Tamara



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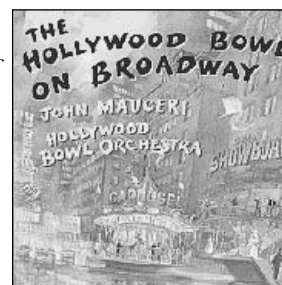
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