

Venus Lands In Leeds

on 4 December, when Opera North premieres *One Touch of Venus* (James Holmes, conductor; Tim Albery, director). Featuring Karen Coker as Venus, Christianne Tisdale, Ron Li-Paz, and Loren Geeting, the production will also tour to Sheffield, Hull, Salford Quays, Newcastle, Nottingham, and Norwich (through 19 April 2005).



Opera North's poster for *One Touch of Venus*

2004-2005 Season Overview

The cultural season starts off with a bang with a new production of *Die Dreigroschenoper* at Vienna's historic Theater in der Josefstadt (premiere 16 September), closely followed by Opera Omaha's production of *The Threepenny Opera* on 1 October (six performances through 10 October; conducted by Hal France and directed by Dorothy Danner). Two days later, on 3 October *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* returns to Nuremberg, in a production that premiered in July (review on page 20). HK Gruber leads the Ensemble Modern in the celebrated concert version of *Dreigroschenoper* which has been recorded by BMG, on tour to Turin and Rimini (15 and 17 September), continuing in November to Gütersloh, Hanover, Essen, and Vienna (3, 5, 6, and 7 November). With *Kurt Weill's Berlin*, the New York Festival of Song begins its season on 14 October (Constance Hauman, soprano; Kimberly Barber, mezzo-soprano; Peter Kazaras, tenor; and Steven Blier, piano). Darmstadt premieres its *Aufstieg* (Raoul Grüneis, conductor; Philipp Kochheim, director) on 22 October. Last season's all-star *Dreigroschenoper* at Hamburg's St. Pauli Theater is televised by the NDR on 19 December. Other Weill opera outings include Pforzheim's *Aufstieg* (premiere 4 February 2005), *Happy End Songspiel* and *Mahagonny Songspiel in Weill in Weimar 1929* at Edmonton Opera (1-6 March), and *Die sieben Todsünden* at the Calgary Opera (10-19 March). The Semperoper in Dresden opens Harry Kupfer's staging of *Aufstieg* on 6 May (Sebastian Weigle, conductor).

In Weill's hometown of Dessau, the 2005 Kurt Weill Fest takes place 25 February through 6 March (schedule of events on page 7a). Cité de la Musique in Paris hosts a series entitled *The Third Reich and Music*, which includes the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France in a concert of *Die sieben Todsünden* and Symphony No. 2 (Kirill Karabits, conductor, Nancy Gustafson, soprano) on 9 October 2004; Ensemble Intercontemporain playing *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*, Weill's violin concerto, and *Mahagonny Songspiel* on 25 November; and a screening of G.W. Pabst's *Dreigroschenoper* film on 26 November.

Conductor Joel Cohen and the Boston Camerata present *Johnny Johnson*, celebrating the Camerata's fiftieth anniversary with a reprise of their 1997 Erato recording (7 November 2004, at Harvard's Sanders Theater). On 11 December, Ingo Metzmacher leads the Rotterdam Philharmonic in *Das Berliner Requiem*, with the Nederlands Kamerkoor. At New York's Alice Tully Hall, Ann Panagulias sings Anna in the Riverside Symphony's *Seven Deadly Sins* with George Rothman, conductor, and Hudson Shad as the family quartet (22 January 2005). The intrepid HK Gruber conducts Symphony No. 2 and songs from *Der Silbersee* with the Essen Philharmonic (17 and 18 March) and *Die sieben Todsünden* and Weill songs with the Gothenburg Symphony on 14 and 15 April. Also on 15 April, the BBC Symphony Orchestra plays *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik* with Rumon Gamba conducting. At the season's end, Yakov Kreizberg programs *Die sieben Todsünden* with the Vienna Symphony and Nancy Gustafson, soprano (29 and 30 May).

Weill's *Royal Palace* and *Der neue Orpheus* Released on CD by Capriccio

On 2 March 1927, Kurt Weill celebrated his twenty-seventh birthday at Berlin's Staatsoper unter den Linden, where Erich Kleiber was conducting the premiere of two Weill works with texts by the Alsatian poet Iwan Goll, the one-act opera *Royal Palace* and the cantata *Der neue Orpheus*. Seventy-seven years later, the first recording of *Royal Palace* is finally available—paired with *Der neue Orpheus*—with the August 2004 release of a new CD from Capriccio featuring the BBC Symphony Orchestra and conductor Sir Andrew Davis. Both works were recorded live during the BBC Symphony's January 2000 Kurt Weill Weekend. The *Royal Palace* cast includes Janice Watson, Stephen Richardson, Ashley Holland, and Richard Coxon. *Orpheus* soloists are Kathryn Harries and Michael Davis. *Royal Palace/Der neue Orpheus* (Capriccio 60 106, reviewed on page 21) is the latest installment in Capriccio's Weill series, following *The Firebrand of Florence*. The latter recording of the collaboration between Weill, Ira Gershwin, and Edwin Justus Mayer was released in August 2003 and has won several awards.



Kurt Weill Foundation Programs

In pursuit of its mission to promote greater understanding of the lives and accomplishments of Kurt Weill and Lotte Lenya through research and performance, the Kurt Weill Foundation offers several funding opportunities to individuals and non-profit organizations.

2005 Kurt Weill Prize

The Kurt Weill Prize for distinguished scholarship on twentieth-century musical theater has been awarded biennially since 1995. In fall 2005, two prize awards of \$2500 and \$500, respectively, will be presented to the author of an outstanding book and the author of an outstanding article. Eligibility is limited to work first published in 2003 or 2004; entries may include books, major scholarly articles or essays (or chapters of larger volumes), critical editions, or publications in other media, including audio or video recordings. Cosponsors of the prize are the Modern Language Association, the American Musicological Society, the American Society for Theatre Research, and the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music. Nominations, including five copies of the nominated work and contact information for the author, must be received by 30 April 2005 at the offices of the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music, 7 East 20th Street, New York, NY 10003.

2005 Lotte Lenya Competition for Singers

Applications must be received by 10 January 2005 for the eighth annual Lenya Competition. Artists born after 31 December 1972 and before 1 January 1986 are eligible to apply, and regional auditions will be held at the University of Rochester's Eastman School of Music (22 January 2005), the Lyric Opera of Chicago (1 February), and Dicapo Opera Theater, New York City (11 and 12 February). Finalists selected from the regional auditions will participate in the finals, to be held on 9 April 2005 at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester. Each contestant will be asked to prepare two contrasting theatrical selections by Kurt Weill, plus two non-Weill selections—an opera/opera aria and a selection chosen from the American musical theater repertoire. All selections must be performed in their original language. Regional winners will each receive an award of \$500, plus a \$500 stipend to pay for travel to the finals in Rochester. The finals judges will award prizes of \$7500, \$5000, and \$3000, and the winners will be presented in a concert in New York City in spring 2005.

If contestants are unable to participate in any of the scheduled regional auditions, they may instead submit a videotape, which must contain all four of the required repertoire selections, by 1 February.

Annual Kurt Weill Foundation Grant Program

The Kurt Weill Foundation for Music funds scholarly research pertaining to Weill and Lenya and performances of complete musical works by Weill. Applications are accepted in the following categories: research and travel, symposia, publication assistance, dissertation fellowships, college/university performance and production, recording projects, broadcasts, and professional performance and production (two divisions, depending on the level of support requested). The annual application deadline is 1 November for projects taking place in the following calendar year or cultural/academic season, except for the professional performance (over \$5000) category, for which there is no set application deadline.

Mid-Year Professional Performance Grants

Upon the recommendation of the independent grant review panel, the Board of Trustees of the Kurt Weill Foundation has awarded three 2004 Mid-Year Professional Performance grants. Grant winners were Opéra Décentralisé Neuchâtel, for staged performances of *Das Berliner Requiem*; Celebrity Series of Boston, for the Boston Camerata performance of *Johnny Johnson* in concert; and The Opera Group, for a British tour of *Mahagonny Songspiel*.



Brand in *Johnny Johnson* (1936)

Phoebe Brand, the First Minny Belle (1907-2004)

Johnny Johnson veteran Phoebe Brand died on 3 July 2004 at the age of ninety-seven. A founding member of the Group Theatre, Brand played in the premiere productions of Clifford Odets' plays *Waiting for Lefty* (1935), *Awake and Sing!* (1935), and *Golden Boy* (1937). In 1936 she created the role of Minny Belle in the Weill and Paul Green collaboration, *Johnny Johnson*, appearing with such talents as Morris Carnovsky, Lee J. Cobb, Elia Kazan, and Luther Adler. After the Group disbanded in 1941, Brand married Carnovsky and the couple moved to California, where he pursued a film career and she taught at the Actors' Lab Workshop. Blacklisted in 1951 by the House Committee on Un-American Activities, the couple returned to New York, where they resumed their theatrical careers. In 1992 Carnovsky died at age 95, and shortly thereafter the 86-year-old Brand made a belated screen debut in Louis Malle's 1994 film *Vanya on 42nd Street*. She continued to teach acting until her death, and she was a charming speaker at a number of events held in connection with Kurt Weill's centenary in 2000.

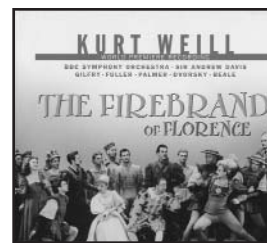
KWE Chamber Music Is Published

European American Music Corporation and the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music have published Kurt Weill's complete chamber music. Edited by Dr. Wolfgang Rathert (professor of musicology at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich) and Jürgen Selk (Managing Editor, Kurt Weill Edition), the new publication makes available musical works by Kurt Weill which, while forming only a small portion of Weill's oeuvre, played a considerable role in his formative years (1919–24). The new edition includes the two string quartets as well as two discarded movements for string quartet, the sonata for violoncello and piano, the song cycle *Frauentanz*, and the vocal-instrumental miniature *Ich sitze da—un esse Klops*.

The relative obscurity of Weill's chamber music can be partially explained by the overshadowing success of his first stage works, beginning with the acclaimed one-act opera *Der Protagonist*. However, the compositional quality and aesthetic appeal of these works of "absolute music" have also been obscured by their uneven publication and performance history, which partly explains their absence from the mainstream of the concert repertoire. This is regrettable, as some of these pieces are of considerable ingenuity and may rank among the outstanding German musical works of this period.

The new edition of Weill's *Chamber Music* makes this body of work available in one volume. Several of the chamber music works included in the new edition have never before been available in print. Published with an accompanying critical report volume, *Chamber Music* constitutes the fourth volume in the Kurt Weill Edition, a collected critical edition of his completed works. Subscriptions to the Edition and individual volumes are available from European American Music. The next volume in the Kurt Weill Edition, currently in production, is the critical edition of Weill's one-act opera *Der Protagonist*, scheduled for publication in 2005.

Firebrand Recording Wins 2004 Echo Klassik Award



The Deutsche Phono-Akademie has named the BBC Symphony Orchestra/Sir Andrew Davis Capriccio recording of *The Firebrand of Florence* as Best Opera Recording of the past year. *Firebrand* shares honors in the category with Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, a period-instrument recording conducted by Emmanuelle Haim. The 2004 Echo Klassik prizewinners will be honored at a ceremony at Munich's Philharmonie am Gasteig on 24 October.

Out in Paperback

Readers who don't already have hardback copies of two recent Weill books now have the opportunity to buy them in paperback. *Kurt Weill: A Life in Pictures and Documents*, by David Farneth with Elmar Juchem and Dave Stein (Overlook Press, 2000), is now available in book stores and direct from Overlook (Phone: 800-473-1312) at \$35.00. Foster Hirsch's *Kurt Weill on Stage: From Berlin to Broadway* (Knopf, 2002) has been reissued by Limelight Editions at \$20.00.

Kurt Gerron's Story on Screen

Nominated for a 2002 Academy Award in the documentary feature category, Malcolm Clarke and Stuart Sender's *Prisoner of Paradise* tells the story of Kurt Gerron, who played Tiger Brown in the premiere of *Die Dreigroschenoper* and Sam Worlitz in the first *Happy End*. It has now been released commercially in the United States.

"The strange story is how a pitilessly fraudulent 1944 German propaganda film called *The Führer Gives a City to the Jews* came to be made about a place called Theresienstadt. The stranger story is how a man named Kurt Gerron, a major star in prewar Germany as well as a Jew, came to make it. . . . That town in Czechoslovakia was hardly a utopia but rather a concentration camp where all of the residents were eventually sent to death camps farther east, and the attempt to portray it as anything else was a cynical Nazi hoax. . . . *Prisoner of Paradise* not only tells a gripping story but touches on several provocative areas. It provides more concrete answers than we usually get to broad questions about where turning a blind eye to history can lead you and, more pointed still, it shows us what making a deal with the devil looks like in the most mundane, day-to-day terms."—Kenneth Turan, *Los Angeles Times* (16 April 2004)

Cabaret and Chicago Lyricist Dies

Broadway lyricist Fred Ebb died on 11 September 2004. In a lifelong professional partnership begun in 1965 with *Flora, the Red Menace*, Ebb and the composer John Kander continued their work together with the Broadway musicals *The Happy Time*, *Zorba, 70*, *Girls, 70*, *The Act*, *Woman of the Year*, *The Rink*, *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, and *Steel Pier*, as well as the iconic *Chicago* and *Cabaret*. Ebb won three Tony awards (for *Cabaret*, *Woman of the Year*, and *Kiss of the Spider Woman*) out of a dozen nominations. The concept musical *Cabaret*, set in Weimar-era Berlin, is widely considered to have been inspired by Weill's work, and the role of Fräulein Schneider was conceived for Lotte Lenya. Said Ebb of Lenya: "When she walked on the stage, she brought with her the validation of the period and the sound. She personified the authenticity of what we were doing."

News from the North—Opera North, That Is

After producing the European premiere of Weill's *Love Life* in 1996, Opera North of Leeds now takes on three Weill stage works in as many seasons. *The Seven Deadly Sins* was part of the innovative "Eight Little Greats" spring 2004 series of mix-and-match one-act operas programmed in Leeds and on tour. This season the company presents *One Touch of Venus*, with nine performances in Leeds (4 December 2004–24 February 2005), plus touring performances in Hull (9 and 11 February), Sheffield (18–19 February), Salford Quays (1, 3, 9 March 2005), Nottingham (8, 10, 19 March), Norwich (31 March), and Newcastle (12, 16, 19 April). And Opera North's 2005–2006 season will include the first British stage revival of *Der Kuhhandel* since its 1935 production as *A Kingdom for a Cow* at the Savoy Theatre in London. A co-production with the Bregenz Festival, *Der Kuhhandel* is currently scheduled for spring 2006.

In a program aimed at 1,000 secondary-school students, Opera North's education wing will bring *One Touch of Venus* to day-long workshops across northern Britain, exploring the musical, dramatic, and design elements that contribute to the stage production. Students will work in groups with professionals to learn music and stage scenes to gain understanding of the process of creating music theater, then attend a performance of the show.

The Seven Deadly Sins, in Leeds and on tour (14 May–26 June 2004)



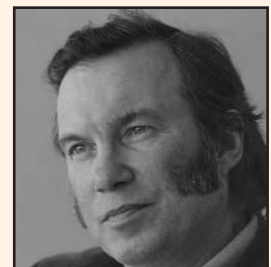
Photos: Clive Barda

"[Bertolt Brecht] would love David Pountney's bloody reincarnation of *Seven Deadly Sins*. Playing it in English reinforces the impression of a subverted, scabrous American music, and it packs more violence and heavy sarcasm into its thirty-five minutes than you'd think possible. Rebecca Caine and Beate Vollack sang and danced the role of split-personality Anna with exhausting involvement, and her vile trailer-trash family was brought to horribly vivid life. Flamingly anti-American as it is, this great piece is more full of disgust at all of modern mankind and our sacrifice of humanity in the pursuit of our dubious ends. Weill's faux-innocent music, pressed into the service of rabid social critique, is conducted with a light touch by James Holmes."—Robert Thicknesse, *The Times* (18 May 2004)

"Pountney's staging updates this most cutting of all Weill/Brecht collaborations to somewhere closer to the present, enacting the two Annas' humiliations as a cartoon-like boxing match. Many moments match the savagery of the piece, others are merely gratuitous, but Rebecca Caine's Anna I makes every word of Michael Feingold's translation count, while Beate Vollack's Anna II throws her whole body into her own brutal choreography."—Nick Kimberley, *The Evening Standard* (25 June 2004)

"Both Rebecca Caine and Beate Vollack were superb actresses and Caine a great voice for a musical, if not full-scale opera. James Holmes' conducting of a complex score with a small orchestra worked well, even if this was a disturbing work to watch and, later, to think about."—Glyn Mon Hughes, *Liverpool Daily Post* (10 June 2004)

David Pountney's directing career has taken him from Scottish Opera to English National Opera, the Metropolitan Opera, Vienna Staatsoper, and the Royal Opera House, among others. He staged *Street Scene* at Scottish Opera in 1989, a production which then transferred to the ENO, and Opera North's *Seven Deadly Sins* in spring 2004. In his new position as Artistic Director of the Bregenz Festival, Pountney chose to focus the 2004 season on lesser-known Weill stage works, and he himself directed the operetta *Der Kuhhandel* to great critical acclaim. The *Kuhhandel* production will be seen in an English translation at Opera North.



David Pountney. Photo: Bregenz Festival/Festspiele/Karl Forster



James Holmes

James Holmes joined Opera North as Head of Music in 1996 after more than 20 years at English National Opera. At ENO, his broad conducting repertoire stretched from Mozart to Britten and Stravinsky, encompassing the British premiere of Sondheim's *Pacific Overtures*, *Street Scene* (staged by David Pountney and shown on BBC television), and *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*. In 1995 he was asked to conduct *Street Scene*'s Berlin premiere, in a co-production of Theater des Westens and Houston Grand Opera which was later broadcast on German television and released on DVD. Holmes' varied conducting repertoire at Opera North has included the spring 2004 production of *The Seven Deadly Sins*, and this fall Holmes and director Tim Albery collaborate on Opera North's new production of *One Touch of Venus*.

***The Threepenny Opera*, Theatre Workshop Edinburgh, at Glasgow's Tramway (17–19 June 2004)**

Additional performances in Aberdeen (26 June) and at the Edinburgh Theatre Festival (1–3 July)

“What Rae has set out to do, in the most ambitious show of his ten-year artistic directorship, is use the political position of his company of disabled actors as a mirror of, and a metaphor for, the social exclusion and ‘freak’ status enjoyed by Brecht’s cast of beggars, prostitutes, pimps, people-traffickers and rogues. . . Just as Nazism rejected and sought to ‘cleanse’ the kind of city low-life portrayed in *The Threepenny Opera*, so it sought to eliminate or sterilize the physically imperfect; and this production, which uses Hugh MacDiarmid’s 1973 version of the text, is bracketed in political material of the Nazi period that deftly points up these parallels and ends with a brief reminder of the horrific fate of disabled people in the Third Reich. . . it produces a show that works on every level, from the vehement and glittering intensity of the performances, to the ferocious intimacy of its relationship with the screech and rasp of Weill’s magnificent music. . . As a production on the cusp of community and professional theatre, this *Threepenny Opera* has to live with the occasional patch of awkward acting; the disabilities of some of the actors have an inevitable effect on the show’s pace, contributing to its formidable, although sustainable, three

and a half hour length. . . . But the production’s difficulties are completely overwhelmed, in the end, by its terrific sense of purpose and occasion and by the brilliance of Rae’s staging, which makes superb use of contemporary film projected on huge screens above the seating-banks, and of a fifteen-strong acting company, backed by a ten-piece band, to conjure up a seething sense of city life at its most violent and politically threatening. The music, directed by Tim O’Leary, is superb throughout, with the kind of dissonant texture and raucous, desperate singing these great songs were made for. . . . As for the acting—well, there’s some fine work in the leading roles, from Ysabel Collyer as Jenny Diver, Carrie Burnell as Polly Peachum, Garry Robson as her evil old dad, and the gorgeous Sally Clay as the pianist/narrator; and if Scottish theater sees a better performance this year than Nabil Shaban’s magnificent, stylish, haunted, and heartrending Macheath, the doomed hero with the flick-knife and the addiction to whores, then we’ll be fortunate indeed.”—**Joyce McMillan, *The Scotsman* (23 June 2004)**

Opera Omaha Seminar

In connection with its production of *The Threepenny Opera*, on 2 October 2004 Opera Omaha is presenting a seminar entitled “A Political and Theatrical Evolution: Kurt Weill, *The Threepenny Opera* and *The Beggar’s Opera*.” Creighton University of Omaha will host the seminar, which features Weill experts Stephen Hinton of Stanford University and Jonathan Eaton of Carnegie Mellon University, along with Opera Omaha’s artistic team: Hal France, conductor; Dorothy Danner, director; and Peter Harrison, designer. The Creighton University Chamber Choir performs selections from *The Beggar’s Opera*.

Bregenz Festival Ancillary Events

Throughout this summer’s Bregenz Festival, the lobby of the Festspielhaus, venue for the production of *Der Protagonist/Royal Palace*, was filled with a Weill exhibition created by Kurt Weill Foundation staff members Elmar Juchem and Dave Stein. Twenty-five large posters provided a broad overview of Weill’s theatrical career. During the weekend of 6–8 August, the “Bregenzer Frequenzen” seminar provided interested opera goers a chance to deepen their understanding of the Weill works being presented. After an introduction to Weill from Juchem, lectures were presented by Stephen Hinton, Giselher Schubert, Guy Stern, Ricarda Wackers, and Antony Beaumont.

Choosing from the new *Unsung Weill* album published by European American Music, music director/pianist James Holmes crafted an informal song concert on 8 August in collaboration with two leading cast members in the Bregenz production of *West Side Story*.

“Kurt Weill is all over town, again reminding us how much of his work from the years before his escape from the Nazis in 1933 and subsequent Parisian exile we have yet to discover. . . . You could try *Unsung Weill*—seventeen songs from a recently published anthology—in the blessedly air-conditioned Seestudio. These gems were dropped from Weill’s American musicals before the shows hit Broadway, or were created for films, or for *Lunchtime Follies*, a second world war propaganda revue. The lyrics are by the likes of Langston Hughes, Ira Gershwin, and Alan Jay Lerner. Even Stephen Sondheim would be jealous of Ogden Nash’s lyric for a schizophrenic: “How do I feel today? I feel abominable. And is it the result of disturbances psychiatric rather than abominable?” Marisol Montalvo has a supple, silvery soprano, a smile to melt glaciers and sex appeal to burn; Alexander Franzen has a creamy lyric baritone and suave, boyish charisma; together, their chemistry is palpable. They could land this act in any cabaret in London or New York and run for a year.”—**Larry L. Lash, *Financial Times* (18 August 2004)**

News Flashes

The 2005 season of Canada's Shaw Festival will include a revival of the festival's hit 2003 production of *Happy End*, which returns to the Royal George Theatre on 15 May 2005 for seventy performances ending 28 October.

The newly-reopened opera of Bari has scheduled *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* for its opening season, in a co-production with Rome Opera and Teatro Romolo Valli of Reggio Emilia. Performances are 4 and 6 March 2005, conducted by Jonathan Webb and directed by Daniele Abbado.

On 21 June 2004, *Newsweek* magazine listed *Here Lies Jenny*, Bebe Neuwirth's Kurt Weill revue at the Zipper Theater, as one of four best summer-season offerings in the New York theater.

In a 30 May 2004 profile published in *The New York Times*, Metropolitan Opera music director James Levine expressed a strong interest in regularly programming 20th-century works. On his select list of "keep-in-front-of-the-public" pieces was *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*, an opera he called a masterpiece from the last century that he would like to see as integral to the Met's profile as *Tosca*.

"Godfather of Soul" James Brown recorded a unique jazz-funk version of "September Song," arranged by Oliver Nelson, in 1969 with the Louie Bellson Orchestra, featuring top players like Ernie Watts, alto saxophone, Maceo Parker, tenor saxophone, and Ray Brown, bass. Previously unreleased, "September Song" is included in the big-band album *Soul on Top*, reissued by Verve in July 2004.

In a 22 September 2004 interview with *Financial Times Deutschland*, Karen Mantler, half of the Dresden Dolls punk duo, cited Kurt Weill and Weimar-era German cabaret as major influences on her work, adding that many Weill songs were in her repertoire. Mantler comes by her interest in Weill naturally: her mother is jazz pianist and composer Carla Bley, who arranged "Lost in the Stars" for Hal Willner's well-known compilation album of the same name.

In an interview with *Billboard* magazine, the folk-rock singer and songwriter Donovan revealed that the inspiration for his 1968 hit song "Lalena" was Lotte Lenya. He said he was fascinated with *The Threepenny Opera* as a socially conscious musical and with the iconic woman portrayed by Lenya in the Pabst film version.

Die Dreigroschenoper, Theater in der Josefstadt, Vienna (premiere 16 September 2004)

"Wolfgang Gratzler, together with Hanspeter Hornisch, has polished the shark's teeth and made him grin. The announcer introduces the scenes like a clown who wants to build anticipation for the next gag. And when Brecht starts to moralize, the lights go on and the magnificent theater with its dressed-up audience can look at itself in a psychedelically shimmering mirror. That's something. Brecht hasn't been taken all that seriously; rather, he serves as a precondition and, fortunately, he hasn't been updated. At the center of this revue-like staging are the songs by Kurt Weill which made the piece an overnight hit and also took on a life of their own. Fast-paced scenes deliver the plot in between. . . . Somehow it's quite delightful to see and hear the Josefstadt ensemble, ordinarily at home with Schnitzler and Nestroy, in different territory. Herbert Föttinger is a temperamental, playboy-like Mack the Knife who puts a lot of charm into his songs. Erich Schleyer portrays the beggar king Peachum with shabby elegance. Tatja Seibt, too, succeeds as his wife with austere tranquility. Martin Zauner portrays a slimy, *gemütlich* police commissioner who always knows how to arrange things. Chris Pichler's Polly looks like a cute, comical Marilyn cut-out, but several passages in the music prove to be treacherous for her. On the other hand, Sona MacDonald (whom Gratzler had signed for the Josefstadt) is irresistible, precise, and clear; her Jenny bares her teeth and, with penetrating eyes and sharp grimaces, throws accusations and songs at people as if she had inhaled Brecht. This makes you forget some imprecise playing from the pit. Cheers and applause."—Caro Wiesauer, *Kurier* (18 September 2004)

"This time, the shark has only false teeth. . . . Indispensable for the success of such an artistic venture are actors who have more than a vague idea about singing."—RR, *Kleine Zeitung, Graz* (18 September 2004)

"With the exception of the restrained, heart-filled voice of Jenny (Sona MacDonald) and Mackie's coarse shouting, the remainder of the ensemble shakily tiptoes through the multi-strophic songs, accompanied by the increasingly fading verve of the orchestra (led by Michael Rüggeberg). The endearingly sweet Polly (Chris Pichler) is at least capable of talking a hole through the vest of her unfaithful Mack with the help of her strong speaking voice. Her singing, however, seems to be modeled after the mice of the London docks."—Ronald Pohl, *Der Standard* (18 September 2004)

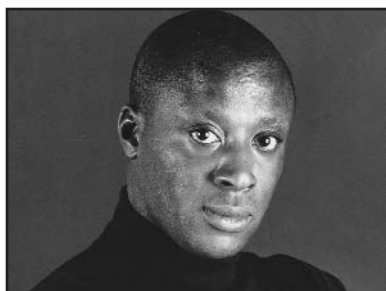


Macheath and Tiger Brown
Photo: Maritz Schell

Dessau Preview

2005 Kurt-Weill-Fest

The German premiere of *The Firebrand of Florence* in concert and stage productions of *Happy End* and *Street Scene* highlight the 2005 Kurt-Weill-Fest in Dessau. *Firebrand*, with an all-star cast including Rodney Gilfry in the title role, Anna Maria Kaufmann, Kim Criswell, and Christian Baumgärtel, will be conducted by Wayne Marshall, the festival's 2005 Artist-in-Residence. Baritone Dietrich Henschel, cellist David Geringas, soprano Julia Migenes, and the vocal group Hudson Shad are other noted performers. Although not all events have been finalized, as of 30 September the schedule was as follows:



25 February *Happy End* (premiere). Anhaltisches Theater Dessau, Herbert Olschok, director; Golo Berg, conductor. 7:00 pm, Anhaltisches Theater.

26 February Saxofourte, saxophone quartet. Works by Weill, Piazzolla, Zappa, and Bernstein. 7:00 pm, Palais Dietrich.

26 February Jazz with pianist Wayne Marshall. 10:00 pm, Bauhaus.

27 February Recital: David Geringas, cello, and Kalle Randalu, piano, in Weill's cello sonata, Krenek, and Mendelssohn. 11:00 am, Schloss Georgium.

27 February Recital: Dietrich Henschel, baritone, and Tatjana Blome, piano, in Weill's "Walt Whitman Songs" and songs by Eisler, Busoni, and Dessau. 3:00 pm, Schloss Köthen.

27 February Dresdner Sinfoniker, Celso Antunes, conductor, with soprano Julia Migenes in Weill songs, 6:00 pm, Anhaltisches Theater.

4 March *The Firebrand of Florence*. MDR Sinfonieorchester and MDR Rundfunkchor; Wayne Marshall, conductor; and soloists Rodney Gilfry, Anna Maria Kaufmann, Kim Criswell, and Christian Baumgärtel. 7:00 pm, Anhaltisches Theater.

4-6 March Symposium: "Großstadt als Heterotopie." Organized by the Universität Köln, Bauhaus Dessau, and Kurt-Weill-Gesellschaft e.V. Bauhaus.

5 March *Street Scene* (revival of 2004 production). Anhaltisches Theater Dessau, Golo Berg, conductor; Nicholas Muni, director. 5:00 pm, Anhaltisches Theater.

5 March *Weill—Comedian Style*. Hudson Shad in music by Weill, the Revellers, and the Comedian Harmonists. 7:30 pm, Marienkirche.

6 March *Unsung Weill*. Songs cut from Broadway shows and films, with winners of the Lotte Lenya Competition for Singers. 11:00 am, Schloss Köthen.

6 March *Happy End*. 5:00 pm, Anhaltisches Theater.



Photo: Michael Putland/Retna



Photo: George Landis



From top: Wayne Marshall, Dietrich Henschel, Julia Migenes, David Geringas, Rodney Gilfry, Hudson Shad

New Publications

BOOKS



Fetthauer, Sophie. *Musikverlage im "Dritten Reich" und im Exil*. Hamburg: von Bockel Verlag, 2004 (Musik im "Dritten Reich" und im Exil, vol. 10).

Greene, Alexis. *Lucille Lortel: The Queen of Off-Broadway*. New York: Limelight, 2004.

Kander, John and Fred Ebb. *Colored Lights: Forty Years of Words and Music, Show Biz, Collaboration, and All that Jazz*. New York: Faber & Faber, 2003.



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SCORES

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Drew, David. "Royal Palace and Its Critics." In *Words on Music: Essays in Honor of Andrew Porter on the Occasion of his 75th Birthday*, eds. David Rosen and Claire Brook. Hillsdale, N.Y.: Pendragon Press, 2003, pp. 91–119.

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Jansen, Wolfgang. "' . . . die Doppelschichtigkeit der menschlichen Seele': Die deutschsprachige Erstaufführung von Kurt Weills *Lady in the Dark* (*Das verlorene Lied*) 1951 in Kassel," *Musicals* no. 108 (August 2004), pp. 56–58.

Katz, Curtis L. "Isaac Van Grove—Chanukah, Romance, and The Eternal [Rail]Road," *Chicago Jewish History*, summer 2004, pp. 4–7.

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Morris, Mitchell. "Cabaret, America's Weimar, and Mythologies of the Gay Subject," *American Music*, spring 2004, pp. 145–157.

RECORDINGS



Brown, James, *Soul on Top*, Verve 000197802 (reissue; includes previously unreleased version of "September Song").

Royal Palace and *Der neue Orpheus*, Janice Watson, Stephen Richardson, Kathryn Harries, et al., BBC Symphony Orchestra, Sir Andrew Davis, cond., Capriccio 60 106.

Die sieben Todsünden and *Quodlibet*, Anja Silja, SWR Rundfunkorchester Kaiserslautern, Grzegorz Nowak, cond. Hänssler CD 93.109

Die sieben Todsünden, Marianne Faithfull, Vienna Radio Symphony, Dennis Russell Davies, cond., RCA Red Seal 82876-60872-2 (reissue).

O'Callaghan, Patricia, *Naked Beauty*, Marquis 7 74718 13152 2 (includes "Lost in the Stars")

Zachos, Ellen, *Green up Time: Ellen Zachos Sings Botanical Broadway*, Plantiques SSC1127 (includes "Green-up Time").

