

Kurt Weill

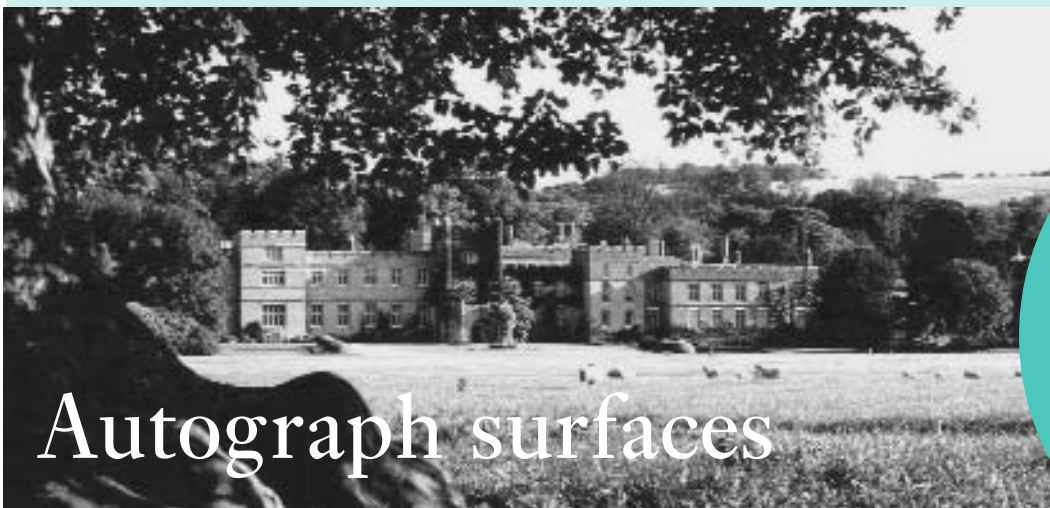
Volume 23

Number 2

Fall 2005

Newsletter

Die erste Niederschrift der
„Lieben Tod sünden“
gehört meinem Freund
Edward James



Autograph surfaces

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*Five books on the
American Musical
Theater reviewed*

*An interview with
David Drew*

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7 East 20th Street

New York, NY 10003-1106

tel. (212) 505-5240

fax (212) 353-9663

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A variety of opinions are expressed in the Newsletter; they do not necessarily represent the publisher's official viewpoint. Letters to the editor are welcome.

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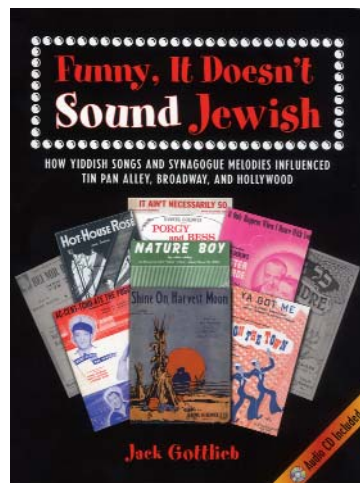
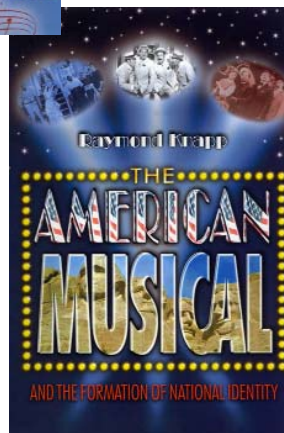
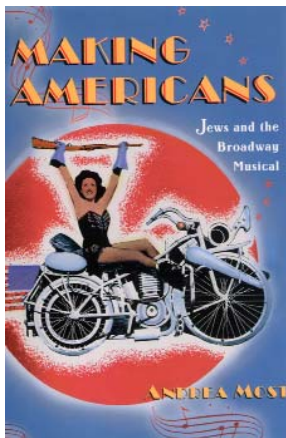
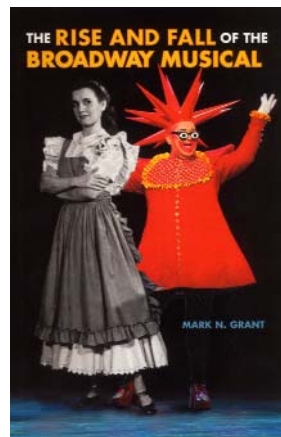
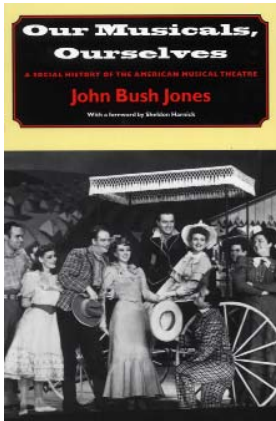
Information: kwfinfo@kwf.org

Weill-Lenya Research Center: wlr@kwf.org

Kurt Weill Edition: kwe@kwf.org

Cover photos: Selections from the title page of Weill's autograph draft of *Die sieben Todsünden*, and the photo of Edward James's estate at West Dean, courtesy of the Edward James Foundation.

Note from the Editor



Scholarship on the Broadway musical, which has been booming for the past decade, is still on the rise. This is all the more surprising since some twenty-five years ago the subject was nearly absent from institutes of higher learning, and libraries' card catalogues offered little to thumb through except a handful of pioneering publications by journalists, practitioners, and aficionados. The genre's mass appeal, the lack of an imprimatur by a single *auteur*, and the sheer number of works were some of the factors that seemed to disqualify it from rigorous academic consideration—a fate long shared by other popular genres (e.g., 18th-century Italian opera). With half of Weill's compositions for the theater falling into that realm, the Weill portraits sketched by music historians—wearing a self-imposed eye patch—were necessarily two-dimensional, lacking depth. Much of this appears in a different light now; horizons have expanded and today's discussions can take place on a more informed level. In this issue, we offer a feature review by someone who was very much involved in bringing about this broadening of musicological perspective: Charles Hamm, a highly esteemed Renaissance scholar who turned to American popular music in the mid-1970s, reviews five new books on the American musical theater.

Another very senior figure can look back on half a century of working on Kurt Weill. The passing of a fruitful period of fifty years—echoing the composer's lifespan—presents an occasion to celebrate and reflect, and we are delighted that David Drew accepted our invitation for an interview.

Finally, we can report from England that a long-lost autograph of Weill's has surfaced: His first complete draft of *Die sieben Todsünden* was discovered among the papers of Edward James, who commissioned and financed the production in 1933. While the new autograph is not likely to change our general understanding of the composition, it represents a crucial artifact that

will inform work on the Kurt Weill Edition—as will rehearsal materials (with markings by the original conductor Maurice Abravanel, among others) that were also part of the discovery.

Elmar Juchem

Opposite page: First page of Weill's pencil draft of *Die sieben Todsünden*
 Right: Edward James, ca. mid-1930s. Photo: Cecil Beaton

Original Sins

Weill autograph surfaces

Hidden under scores of boxes in the back of an unused cellar of a 19th-century flint-faced Edwardian mansion in England lay, undiscovered for over fifty years, the original autographed pencil draft of Kurt Weill's *Die sieben Todsünden* (*The Seven Deadly Sins*). This manuscript, commissioned by Edward James, the British impresario of *Les Ballets 1933*, was presented to James in July of 1934. In a letter which presumably accompanied the manuscript, Kurt Weill wrote that it was "a small token of my feelings of friendship for you . . . Any pleasure it gives you would be mine as well."¹

The fact that this important document lay undiscovered for such a long period of time is not altogether surprising, for on his death in 1986, Edward James had left, in various parts of the world, a collection of tattered leather suitcases, battered steamer trunks, aged wooden packing crates and rows of old filing cabinets, their contents known only to James. Inside these containers, which numbered well over a thousand, were found beautifully wrapped tissue-paper cocoons containing dirty socks, old underwear, unopened packets of sugar and a desiccated piece of chocolate cake, jumbled together in anarchic disorder with paintings and drawings by many of the most eminent artists of the Surrealist movements as well as fragments of letters belonging to James and his family covering a period of over one hundred years. Manuscript fragments made in a selection of colored pens and pencils on napkins, envelopes, matchbooks, and scraps of brightly colored paper of various sizes were placed by James in envelopes, one inside another, arranged without order, address, date, or even addressee. These fragments filled hundreds of the suitcases and shipping crates, and looked as if they had been shuffled together, thrown up into the air, and then picked up by the handful and individually wrapped, interweaving each fragment into a layer of tissue paper, just as they fell. These random batches of material were then packed in trunks and cases and scattered from one end of the globe to the other.

As a consequence, the organization of his archive was much like piecing together a jigsaw puzzle containing over 300,000 colorful pieces constructed from a variety of material—on the one hand, an archivist's nightmare, and on the other, a treasure trove, for from their tissue paper shrouds came not only Weill's July 1934 letter mentioned above (found in Italy), but also his handwritten signed contract dated 4th of April 1933, for the commissioning of the music for *Die sieben Todsünden* (found in Mexico), as well as frag-



ments of the rehearsal scores with the original lyrics of Bertolt Brecht (found in Los Angeles and England). "It is a disorder through which only I could pick my way; and since it is a madness with method, if anyone were to move these things in my absence the method would be lost and only the madness would remain."²

The latest, and perhaps one of the greatest, finds occurred in March when a technician, instructed to clear out an old cellar of Edward James's family home, now West Dean College in Chichester, England, realized that, amongst the rubbish, one of the boxes contained material he felt might be of some significance. Putting it to one side, he left it in the room containing Edward James's archives where it was stumbled upon in the wee hours of the morning. There, under layers of dust and cobwebs, was unearthed a beautiful leather-bound manuscript encased in a box on which was embossed, in gold lettering, *SIEBEN TODSÜNDEN - KURT WEILL. 1933*. The box contained the complete piano-vocal draft of the piece, inscribed to Edward, with text underlay. It is believed that on receipt, Edward had the manuscript hand-bound in a colorful zigzag leather design and most likely stored it at his London home at 35 Wimpole Street. When the home was bombed during World War II, the majority of the contents was quickly packed and moved to West Dean, Edward's country home, where James felt it would be safer from attack. Boxes from Wimpole Street were then rushed down to West Dean and stored in disused barns and motor sheds and, presumably, within any area of the main house where space was available. Due to the circumstances at the time, no inventory was made of the items and a few of the boxes remained, and perhaps still remain, undiscovered. As Edward once predicted, his material would one day "burst forth upon an astonished world."

Sharon-Michi Kusunoki
 The Edward James Foundation

Notes

1. Kurt Weill, letter to Edward James, 19 July 1934 (Edward James Archive)
2. Edward James, letter to Captain Ronald Button, 27 June 1944 (Edward James Archive).

Nach einem halben Jahrhundert . . . Fifty Years of Working on Kurt Weill

Few readers of this Newsletter will need an introduction to David Drew – British writer, editor, music publisher, and recording producer. Half a century has passed since he began to explore, research, and edit the life and works of Kurt Weill. A list restricted to his most important publications would be too long to reprint here, so a few titles will have to suffice: *Kurt Weill: Ausgewählte Schriften* and *Über Kurt Weill* (both Suhrkamp, 1975) and the indispensable *Kurt Weill: A Handbook* (Faber, 1987) have appeared in book form. Drew authored the Weill entries in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1980 and 2001) and published numerous articles, most recently on Weill's *Royal Palace* (in *Words on Music: Essays in Honor of Andrew Porter on the Occasion of his 75th Birthday*, Pendragon Press, 2003). He is an Editorial Board member of the *Kurt Weill Edition* and a recipient of the Kurt Weill Distinguished Achievement Award (1996). Many festivals and recording projects owe their existence to his efforts. Last but by no means least, he was a close associate of Lenya's during the last 25 years of her life. We invited David Drew to reflect on his long association with Weill; the interview coincided with his own 75th birthday.



David Drew, Spring 2005. Photo: Dmitri Smirnov

After half a century working on Kurt Weill, where do you see changes of attitude towards him and his music, and how do you explain them?

From the window beside my desk in South West London, I don't see any such changes, and that worries me. What I see is a large cherry tree that seems to have grown overnight from a sapling, two small apartment blocks where the old terrace houses were 'blitzed' in 1941, and a patch of stubby grass that's used as a playground by a whole assortment of kids. Although their parents or grandparents hail from many lands, the music they play on summer evenings isn't by Weill. For that, there is of course an explanation.

But a simpler way of finding the answer to your question about attitude would be to turn to our national dailies—Rupert Murdoch's *Times*, for instance. Last December, *The Times's* opera critic, John Allison, published a rave review—surely well deserved—of the Opera North production of *One Touch of Venus*. He began, however, with a pun on "Speak Low" and a claim that "highbrow musicologists still pretend that Weill, a refugee from Nazi Germany, was talking down and even selling out to Broadway audiences— . . ."

Who is publishing musicology of that sort in the UK these days?

Not the present editor of *Opera*, anyway.

That would be John Allison?

Exactly. The difference—for him as for his predecessor, Rodney Milnes—is that *Opera* magazine can still address approximately the kind of readership it was designed for in 1950, whereas *The Times* can't and wouldn't. With a registered circulation of around 680,000

and an aggressive marketing strategy, it has to cater for all manner of tastes and conditions unimaginable half a century ago. Allison's "highbrow musicologists" are dummies in both senses of the word. Planted between the traffic lanes, they prepare for the road-works that follow: "—yet it is surely time to acknowledge that his American works represent the peak of Weill's achievement. Where *Die Bürgschaft* can see a terrible schlepp, *Street Scene* is one of the most humane 20th-century operas, and now this first major staging of *One Touch of Venus* confirms once again his mastery of musical theatre."

That's the sort of notice Weill must have been dreaming of once he'd stopped trying to reply to Harold Clurman's "Lost in the Stars of Broadway" and got back to *Huck Finn*.

Except that he'd never really shelved Die Bürgschaft. In fact, it was still somewhere on his agenda.

And perhaps it's still on ours, or at least in our CD collection. But who would argue that there's any mileage nowadays in a gloomy old opera about the occupation of a small and backward country by a Great Power that's seeking new markets in return for scarce natural resources and cheap labor? Not Fox News, for sure. John Allison's chirpy dismissal of *Die Bürgschaft* is, well, a sign of *The Times*. The giveaway is that word "schlepp." Unlike countless other Anglicized Americanisms from every walk of life (including baseball, which we still don't understand) "schlepp" remains unassimilated over here. It's familiar, of course, to a section of that widely traveled middle class which isn't supposed to exist any more (because everyone's joined it, etc. etc.); and it's sending a clear message to the unlucky few who have to "schlepp" their kids to city schools in gigantic SUVs which never see a hillock or a sand dune

from one year to the next. The word encapsulates an entire layer of aspirational Transatlanticism, and yet our ingenious *Times* critic is obviously aware that it comes straight from the Kaplan apartment in *Street Scene*.

Your name has sometimes been mentioned in connection with an attempt to mount a production of Street Scene in London forty or so years ago. It's said that you opposed it. What do you remember about that?

Absolutely nothing. Which isn't to say that I would have voted for a *Street Scene* in the London of the mid-1960s. The time wasn't right for it.

Why not?

An immense question. A shorthand answer might begin with some notes on Weill reception in the UK up to and including the Sadler's Wells *Mahagonny* of 1963, continue with Brecht reception after the London triumph of the Berlin Ensemble in 1956, and conclude with further notes on the status, influence, and marketability of *West Side Story* in particular, and Bernstein in general. The Wells *Mahagonny* [Colin Davis/Michael Geliot/Ralph Koltai] would make an excellent topic for a Ph.D. dissertation, so don't let's anticipate that. From a London perspective in 1965 or thereabouts, *West Side* and its perceived modernity or actuality had a direct bearing on *Street Scene* and its likely reception at that time. As for Brecht, the entire story needs to be rewritten from the ground up, without prejudice. Regarding *Street Scene*, that would entail a proper engagement with the prejudices of such apparently different but oddly interconnected opinion-makers as Kenneth Tynan and Peter Heyworth. In the context of the Cold War and all its ramifications for the UK, not least with regard to the division of Germany, the Brecht phenomenon had assumed almost mythic proportions during that perilous decade; and it held its own until the epoch-changing events of 1989.

That was thirty years after John Willett had published The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht and Martin Esslin Brecht: A choice of evils. How did you relate to those books—or indeed their authors, if you knew them?

Esslin was good friends with a relative of mine who worked with him in the BBC's World Service. We saw each other quite often, and I remember him with affection and gratitude. He was a key figure in that generation which Daniel Snowman researched so ably for his book *The Hitler Emigrés* (2003). Willett, on the other hand, was very much an Englishman of his generation and background, and that included distinguished war service as well as Oxford before the War. Which may partly explain why in the early 1960s I found him "foreign" in a way that Esslin wasn't. Another reason, certainly, was that we were on opposite sides of a very high and well-guarded fence, beyond which John had reserved a compound for what he and others called "Brecht's composers." Once that obstacle to our conversation had been removed, it was soon very clear to me why John was held in such high esteem and affection by so many different kinds of people.

How did he react to the events of 1989 and the reunification of Germany?

I can only guess, because it wasn't until much later that we began to see quite a lot of him and his wife Anne. He's greatly missed. I hope

for his sake that he never saw that epoch-making line in a concert or record review published a few years ago in—here we go again—*The Times*. The critic in question—a real musician, I should add—was prophesying that before long Brecht would be "just a footnote in the biographies of Weill." Wishful thinking, or another unmistakable sign of the times? Probably both. But that was before the New Millennium, and the new world we're all learning to live in. All of a sudden, Schiller and Kleist are big names in the British theatre. Attitudes inconceivable during the three decades of Brechtian hegemony—including attitudes toward Germany itself—are changing out of all recognition. That too has its implications for Weill.

Do you think the Weill Centenary had an impact in the UK?

The timing was a godsend, and it's only the gods who decide such matters. Heaven knows, and even we can guess, how many Western-type composers of one sort or another were born in 1900. But to the best of our knowledge there was only one of them whose life ended abruptly in 1950. That momentary symmetry between life and posterity was a stellar phenomenon at the start of a new millennium; and of course it was presented as such over here. We've all had to learn a lot about marketing opportunities during the last quarter-century. The centenary that arrives too soon after a series of Happy Birthdays can be as deadly as the one that arrives too late for anything to be retrieved from a vanished reputation.

Weill was exceptionally lucky in this respect. Thoughtful planning and good management saw to the rest. So the "impact" and its medium-term consequences are measurable. Less so is the seismology of reception. That's uncontrollable, and often mysterious.

For instance?

Karl Amadeus Hartmann [*b* Munich, 5 August 1905] and Constant Lambert [*b* London, 23 August 1905]. Both with Weill connections, of course—the one a national emblem, the other a precociously gifted and tragically flawed but none-the-less important local hero. With Lambert, we think we know where we stand, despite the continuing poverty of research and scholarship. But with Hartmann we hardly had a clue—and certainly no Barbican Weekend—until Ingo Metzmacher conducted a stunning performance of his Sixth Symphony for a near-capacity BBC Prom audience (say, 5,500 people, young and old) at the Royal Albert Hall on August 11th. It was an audience that had come to hear Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto, flanked by Brahms's *Tragic Overture*, and the Prelude to *Lohengrin*. The Beethoven performance deserved its warm reception. But it was the Hartmann that brought the house down. I just don't know how we can "read" that on the same seismograph which recorded the impact of *One Touch of Venus*.

What are the gaps in Weill reception? Which works deserve more attention?

Knickerbocker Holiday has been an obvious candidate for attention for a long time—it has its libretto problems, of course. I suppose one might say the same of the Second Symphony and its by no means indecipherable program. But the musical argument is more to the point, so long as one isn't looking for the symphonic rhetoric of a Hartmann. The performance of the Symphony at the Proms thirty years ago—under the late-lamented Gary Bertini—was an indisputable hit, but one without the slightest consequence, either for the Proms or for the UK repertory in general.

What have been your major “milestones”?

The publication in 2000 of the German and the Anglophone editions of *Kurt Weill: A Life in Pictures and Documents*; and the exhibition “Musical Stages: Kurt Weill and His Century” with which it was associated. I’ve argued elsewhere that the book belies its handsome coffee-table appearance, and is a major work of imaginative scholarship, in fact a unique one. The exhibition (which I saw in Berlin) remains for me an indelible memory. Together, the book and the exhibition were partly instrumental in my decision, exactly five years ago, to start a new book, with the deliberately banal title, *Kurt Weill at 25*. That occupied me for two solid years, in contrast to the seventeen I’d spent on the unpublished three-volume *LLWRC* (Life & Letters, Works, Reception, Context). I then had to break off to fulfill various commissions, including a Wagner-Régeny monograph, of which the German version will be published before long. At least for me, the completion of *Weill at 25* will certainly be a milestone, and it’s already visible without binoculars. Another would be its sequel—Weill in his middle thirties. That might be reachable with the help of a few trucks and bicycles commandeered from *LLWRC*. Finally—and as of now, somewhere beyond that “blue horizon” which the admirable Harling, Robin, and Whiting copyrighted in the year I was born—*Weill at 50*.

So let’s end with another big question, like the first one: How many Weills are there?

It’s surely the flip side of the same question. For the answer is relative to where we happen to be sitting, standing, or walking at the time of asking. After the Barbican Weekend in January 2000 it seemed to be a matter of general agreement that two of the outstanding events were *Royal Palace* and *The Firebrand of Florence*. Splendidly conducted by Sir Andrew Davis, both performances are now available on CD. That represents a unity inconceivable in musical Europe thirty or forty years ago. In 1971 *Royal Palace* had been performed at the Holland Festival, broadcast across the world, and favorably reviewed in *Opera* (by Arthur Jacobs). A generation later it was still a predictable success. Not so *The Firebrand*, even for those who knew and admired the score years before the Holland Festival had rescued *Royal Palace* and the opera world had lost it again.

Elated by the *Firebrand* performance and its reception at half-time, I was heading for the lobby when I spotted a former colleague and his wife, applauding from their seats next to the aisle. They greeted me with a question whose nuances are not amenable to the printed word: “Did you enjoy that?”, they asked. “Yes I did!”, I replied, in a tone adjusted to whatever might follow, since something surely would. Eyes brightened. “So did we!”, one of them confessed, and then paused for a moment’s thought. “But it’s not the Weill we love, is it?”

I responded with a smile and hoped it would seem sympathetic rather than condescending. Indeed, I was grateful for so poignant a reminder of the context in which I’d begun working on Weill. In the UK of the 1950s and 1960s, the natural audience for Weill’s music—from London and Brighton to Manchester and Leeds, and thence to York and Edinburgh—was one whose post-war profile was shaped by that extraordinarily rich influx from Continental Europe that had ended with the last of the *Kindertransporte* from Vienna in 1939. To that generation of political, economic, and cultural migrants my friends at the Barbican *Firebrand* were directly related. The Weill they “loved” was the one their parents knew

before they arrived here; and the one they were hearing that evening was, well, other. Does that make two Weills? In a sense, yes.

Some months ago, the BBC broadcast a tribute to Furtwängler on the fiftieth anniversary of his death. It was a 5-hour program of performances, interviews, and discussions, so rich in content that I listened to the entire thing again a day or two later. It was during this second hearing that one of the outstanding passages reminded me, all of a sudden, that this was a world from which Weill had effortlessly excluded himself. The voices and testimonials were those of two Elisabeths: Furtwängler’s widow (speaking with astonishing dignity and composure of her husband’s last hours); and Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, in masterly form. Oh what an artist! Incongruously, it was her words that reminded me of Lenya’s story of an informal meeting, probably in London and certainly in the early 60s, with Schwarzkopf and her equally formidable husband, Walter Legge.

His and her domain was of course the Grand Tradition in European classical music, up to and including Strauss (with some allowance, on Legge’s part, for Hindemith, but none for the Schoenberg school). Partly because Legge carried a candle for Busoni, he had a soft spot for Weill. Schwarzkopf apparently did not. According to Lenya, who admired her candor and was much amused, she admitted to a distinct and indeed extreme aversion to all his works. Whether it was “September Song” or *The Seven Deadly Sins*, *Berlin im Licht* or *Lady in the Dark*, she found it equally detestable. There you have it. The One Weill. Trouble Man from start to finish.

Your entry on Weill in Grove 6 (1980) notoriously ends with a section entitled “The Two Weills.” In Grove 7 (2001), that section has vanished without trace, and J. Bradford Robinson has supplied a new one. Did you withdraw its predecessor?

No. Its removal and replacement were the culmination of an extensive re-write of the entire 1980 article by other hands—a complex process already completed before I even got wind of it (by sheer chance, as it happens). “Oh dear, I do hope there hasn’t been a misunderstanding,” was the comment of a much-loved and very senior figure in the Grove hierarchy. Having no reason to doubt his good intentions, I can only hope that there was indeed a misunderstanding; if there wasn’t, it was something rather worse. So let’s draw a veil over it. Or rather, leave the veil just where it was three years ago, when Tamara Levitz [see *Kurt Weill Newsletter* 20, no. 2, (Fall 2002): 4–9] signally failed to raise so much as a corner of it.

We invited you to publish a rejoinder, but you declined.

Unavoidably at the time, but rightly in the longer term—or so I felt the other day, when I reread Levitz’s piece and found that time had been less kind to it than I would have liked to be three years ago. Where were those tears of mirth with which I’d once read that “much has changed in the last twenty years, including David Drew himself”? At long last, the penny has dropped, shiny and severe as a new Euro: Levitz’s “twenty years” are those that had elapsed between Grove’s 6 and 7; and her backhanded compliment had been intended for someone who had done the decent thing by dumping “The Two Weills” and thus renouncing the colonialist and binarist follies of his middle years.

Which all goes to prove the old adage that journalists of every sort—especially academic ones on a Research Assessment Exercise—need to be rigorous in checking their sources. The fear of spoil-

ing a “good” story can best be overcome by the hope of finding a better one which happens to be true. Sure enough, the mysterious disappearance of “The Two Weills” is not in fact an isolated incident, but is symptomatic of a now widespread malaise in editing and in lexicography. “Who cares who killed Roger Ackroyd?” asked Edmund Wilson in his famous essay, much to the annoyance of Agatha Christie’s countless admirers. But at least he asked the question, and they could resoundingly answer, “*we* do!”

Opera North’s *Venus* is a reminder that among the admirers of the original Broadway production was Bruno Walter. According to Abravanel, he became mildly besotted with the show, and couldn’t keep away. Thanks to Opera North, and also indeed to “changing attitudes,” that brief love affair of 1943 is readily understandable. But how many of us gave a thought to it in 1963, while *Mahagonny* was blazing at the Sadler’s Wells Theatre?

In most of the towns and cities toured by Opera North, there are now major “urban regeneration projects.” Smart bars and cool restaurants line the banks of newly dredged canals dating from the first Industrial Revolution. Nevertheless, visitors from London who chance to wander off course will soon discover communities whose representatives are seldom seen at opera performances. That

may change. Attitudes change. Meanwhile, as your Mr. Rumsfeld is telling us, “stuff happens”; and because of it, there’s now another crisis about our so-called national identity.

Yes, it’s been a shock to discover that among the younger generation of Britons there are many who are not only unwilling to distinguish between the responsibilities of parliamentary democracy and the “Hier-darfst-Du” excesses of corporate power, but are prepared to argue (in the presence of TV cameras) that indiscriminate violence against innocent civilians is a logical if regrettable response to the “overwhelming force” with which our present Government chose to be associated, for reasons best known to itself.

Although foreign policy initiatives and national self-interest were never matters of public debate in the City of Mahagonny—that was left to *Die Bürgschaft* and *Der Kuhhandel*—the comprehension gap between Jim Mahoney and Rodney Hatch is as great today as it ever was. Not for the sake of rescuing a binary Weill from the deconstruction teams, nor even in sorrowful recollection of the Adorno Centenary on September 11th, 2003, it’s a gap we need to close. Otherwise there’ll be no friendly conversations in the aisles, nor amicable bargaining in the market-places. Just confusion and bad blood, and ultimately, mayhem.

Omnibus Review

Five Recent Books on American Musical Theater

by Charles Hamm

Jack Gottlieb. *Funny, It Doesn't Sound Jewish: How Yiddish Songs and Synagogue Melodies Influenced Tin Pan Alley, Broadway, and Hollywood*. [Albany, N.Y.]: State University of New York in association with The Library of Congress, 2004. 306 pp. ISBN: 0-8444-1130-2

Andrea Most. *Making Americans: Jews and the Broadway Musical*. Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 2004. 253 pp. ISBN: 0-674-01165-1

Mark N. Grant. *The Rise and Fall of the Broadway Musical*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2004. 365 pp. ISBN: 1-55553-623-9

John Bush Jones. *Our Musicals, Ourselves: A Social History of the American Musical Theatre*. Hanover, N.H. and London: Brandeis University Press, Published by the University Press of New England, 2003. 411 pp. ISBN: 1-58465-311-6

Raymond Knapp. *The American Musical and the Formation of National Identity*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005. 361 pp. ISBN: 0-691-11864-7

Though there is no shortage of books dealing with the American musical theater, new ones continue to appear. This review examines five of the most recent of these, in an attempt to discover in what ways, if any, they differ from and add to the previous literature.

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Jack Gottlieb’s book, which comes with endorsements on the dust jacket from Milton Babbitt, Michael Tilson Thomas, Michael Feinstein, Ned Rorem, and Gunther Schuller, begins by noting that the majority of composers and lyricists of America’s popular music of the twentieth century were Jewish, and therefore, “were it not for composers and lyricists of Jewish origin, the touchstone classics of the American musical theater would be nonexistent. The turning-point works—those that advanced the Broadway musical into the realm of higher art—have not been matched by the output of non-Jewish writers” (p. 1).

Few people would challenge this assertion, and in fact virtually everyone who has written about the musical has noted that most of its composers and lyricists have been Jewish and has suggested, if not discussed, the possibility that its musical style was influenced by Jewish culture. One could trivialize this argument by paraphrasing the often-repeated truism about computers: “Jewish in, Jewish out.”

But Gottlieb, insisting that “few existing books . . . demonstrate Jewish influences on American popular music with actual musical examples; and these examples are only treated incidentally”

(p. xviii), is convinced that the imprint of Jewish music can be traced in many more pieces than has previously been noted. This argument forms the heart of his book, and to make his point he includes some 260 musical examples, each consisting of a phrase or two taken from a piece of American popular music positioned under what Gottlieb takes to be its possible Jewish model. Only melodic lines are given, without harmonization, since “throughout history, the music of the Jewish people has been preeminently single-line vocal melody for solo voice or voices singing in unison” (p. 12). A CD included with the book contains such gems as Marilyn Michaels’s ravishing performance of Abraham Goldfaden’s “Rozhinkes mit mandeln” (“Raisins with Almonds”) and Judy Garland’s amazing version of “Bei Mir Bist Du Schoen” among its fifty items; pieces are sometimes complete, but are usually faded out, frustratingly, after a minute or so.

Gottlieb, a composer of sacred and secular music as well as a lecturer and an author, holds a doctorate from the University of Illinois and is obviously familiar with a vast repertory of Jewish sacred and secular music, as well as the classics of American popular music of the first two thirds of the twentieth century. Though he touches on other issues from time to time—affinities between Jewish and African-American music, for instance, and the Russian/Jewish/Gypsy musical axis—these always lead quickly back to melodic comparisons; even the final chapter, “Society and Musical Politics,” ends with a flurry of eight musical examples. Other excursions include a short chapter devoted to the music of Leonard Bernstein, in which Gottlieb argues that both his classical compositions and his works for the musical stage make extensive use of Jewish elements—shofar calls, Jewish modes, and “a persistent opening and/or closing musical motive that is associated with matters of faith: a descending interval of a 4th followed by a falling whole or half-step” (p. 181), found in the Rosh Hashanah liturgy—and a chapter devoted to Cole Porter, the only non-Jewish songwriter among the “Big Five” (Berlin, Gershwin, Kern, Rodgers, Porter), in which Gottlieb suggests that Jewish influences can be found in his music as well.

Attempts to show that two pieces of music are related to one another, or that one is derived from another, have a long and vexed history and have been the basis of numerous lawsuits for plagiarism. The nearest Gottlieb comes to establishing a systematic basis for relating tunes to one another comes at the beginning of Chapter 3, “Pathways to Americanization,” where he states that “the inroads made by Jewish song idioms into American popular music were mapped out by four different ‘A’ routes: Adaptation, Adoption, Absorption, and Acculturation” (p. 54). “Adaptation” is the process whereby an entire song is cast in a new context; thus “Mack the Knife” is Mark Blitzstein’s adaptation of the Brecht/Weill “Moritat vom Mackie Messer” from the *Dreigroschenoper*. “Adoption,” according to Gottlieb, “utilizes material not naturally one’s own, but put into practice as if it were,” and which “does not embrace a complete song, only a distinctive part of one” (p. 67)—in other words, musical quotation. “Absorption” involves musical anagrams, i.e., the same notes found in two pieces but in a different order; Gottlieb is hard pressed to find even a handful of examples of this process. He defines “Acculturation” as the process whereby Jewish material is adapted, adopted, or absorbed into American popular music in such a way as to leave no “accent,” i.e., characteristic scales, intervals, or melodic motifs that would define it as Jewish.

In practice, however, he usually relates one piece to another on the basis of an identical or similar opening phrase; in a few cases

there are similar internal or final phrases, or a common rhythmic pattern; and sometimes the relationship is simply that the two pieces are in the same mode. His goal is not so much to suggest that certain tunes are “borrowed” from others as to “discover how certain melodic fragments tend to cluster into family groupings and how these groupings have ethnic or allegiant connotations” (p. xv).

Many of his examples are convincing and interesting. The bridge of Irving Berlin’s “How Deep Is the Ocean?” is indeed virtually identical with the beginning of the Hasidic song “A Dudele” (p. 165), for instance, and a series of examples on pp. 40–42 show how the first phrase of George and Ira Gershwin’s “My One and Only” is closely related to the Hebrew song “Numa ferach” and the Yiddish lullaby “Shlof in freydn,” and suggests that all three pieces may be traced back to the Russian lullaby “Spi mladychnits.” And it seems plausible, as Gottlieb suggests, that the interpolated “Da-da, da-da-da, da-da-di-ad!” in Cole Porter’s “My Heart Belongs to Daddy” is a reference to Jacob Sandler’s widely popular “Eli, Eli,” and that Porter was “taking a swipe at the unsavory rich-Jew-with-mistress caricature” (p. 187).

But many other examples are less convincing. In discussing the *Magein avot* (MA) mode, Gottlieb explains that “in general, [its] melodic thrust . . . is an ascending line up to the fifth step where it tends to plateau. Also characteristic of the mode is a routine switch to the relative major and a quick return to the original minor” (p. 131). He then offers several dozen pieces in this mode, among them the Yiddish song “A khazm oyf shabes”; “Vay” chulu” from *The Brandeis Service*; eight “Yingish” [*sic*] songs including “Jake! Jake! The Yiddisher Ball Player” (1913) by Blanche Merrill and Irving Berlin and “At the Yiddisher Ball” (1912) by Joe McCarthy and Harry Piani; Hoagy Carmichael’s “Baltimore Oriole” (1942); “Russian Doll” (1927) by Sonny Miller and Jules Kerwin Stein; Franz Waxman’s theme from the film *Mrs. Skeffington*; “This Land is Mine” by Pat Boone and Ernest Gold from the film *Exodus*; and an Israeli song from the 1948 War, “L’molodet-imah,” by Z. Winchell and Moshe Bik. However, all of these pieces begin with an upwards *leap* to the fifth scale degree, followed by a *descent* from this note to the end of the phrase or section. Elsewhere, his pairing of “The Boulevard of Broken Dreams” by Al Dubin and Harry Warren and Alexander Olshanetsky’s “Ikh hob dikh lib,” from the Yiddish operetta *In gartn fun libe* (p. 97) is based on nothing more than three common initial notes, in different rhythms, after which the two pieces take off in completely different directions, and Sunny Skylar’s “Besame Mucho” and “Azoy vi du bist” by Jacob Jacobs and Alexander Olshanetsky (p. 92) have only three notes in common in the middle of their opening phrases and several quarter-note triplets (with no notes in common) in their bridges. But it may well be that Gottlieb’s familiarity with both Jewish and American popular music enables him to hear connections that he is unable to communicate verbally.

Kurt Weill’s “Barbara Song” from *Die Dreigroschenoper* is cited as one of many pieces beginning with the “Gypsy motif” most famously exemplified by the opening bars of “Otchi chorniya” (“Dark Eyes”). Also, Weill is the first songwriter discussed in Chapter 9, “Sons of Cantors,” where the *Eternal Road* is mentioned and his setting of the “Kiddush” prayer is discussed as “a fascinating amalgam of Germanic stolidity, American blues, and Broadway pop harmony” (p. 155).

Gottlieb’s writing style is amiable, anecdotal, and breezy, and his enthusiasm for his topic is contagious. His book is not a work of disciplined, rigorous scholarship, and despite offering a lengthy bibliography, Gottlieb often proceeds without reference to relevant

literature, as when he discusses the issue of blackface and Jewish performers without mentioning the seminal work of Rogin and Lott.¹ Its large size (12" × 9"), its colorful cover, and its several sections of illustrations, including a "Photo Gallery of Yiddish Songwriters and Poets," facsimiles of sheet music covers, and reproductions of slides made to be projected in the vaudeville theater as backdrops to a given song, give it the appearance of a coffee-table book, appropriately. Gottlieb's book is more to be sampled than studied.

Any thought that *Making Americans* might have something in common with Gottlieb's book, given its subtitle, is swiftly dispelled. Most's book is a series of closely argued theoretical readings of a handful of American musical comedies dating from between 1925 and 1951, focusing on issues of racial and ethnic identity, gender, nationhood, and otherness. As the author herself summarizes the thrust of her book:

During three chaotic decades of depression, war, and societal upheaval, Jewish musical writers imagined an optimistic, meritocratic, selectively inclusive America shaped by self-invention through song and dance. The communities they invented and the anthems they popularized helped to construct a vision of America that Americans could use to understand themselves and their country as the nation emerged as a global power (p. 197).

Most, a professor of English at the University of Toronto, offers no musical examples but instead peppers her book with numerous quotations from the dialogue and song lyrics of the musicals under discussion. She refers to musical comedies as "plays," and in fact the first work she discusses, Samson Raphaelson's *The Jazz Singer* (1925), *was* a play, later made into a sound film. The plot involves a Jewish family in America; the father, a cantor still steeped in the traditions and customs of the Old Country, expects his son to follow in his footsteps, but the latter is drawn to the popular music of his new country. The father's death precipitates a crisis for the son, who temporarily assumes the role of cantor, but in the end he becomes a successful "jazz" singer, which enables him to be assimilated into American society. He is made an American through performance, the trope that runs throughout Most's book.

The first two musicals discussed, *Whoopie* (1928) and *Girl Crazy* (1930), were ostensibly comic shows starring a pair of "savvy Jewish comedians [Eddie Cantor and Willie Howard] whose self-consciously theatrical characters had enormous freedom to determine their places within the social and cultural framework of the stage community" (pp. 39–40). Portraying specifically Jewish characters on stage, they "depend on their wit to ensure their survival. They are always putting on costumes—Indian headdresses, blackface makeup, women's dresses—to get out of trouble (p. 42)," and in the process they "shed light on the tension between two notions of . . . self-definition: racial identity, which is biological and hence immutable, and assimilative (later called ethnic) identity, in which one can adopt the dress, language, and customs of a culture and become a part of that culture" (pp. 63–64).

Babes in Arms (1937), written in the depths of the Great Depression, features a group of teenagers and young adults, the children of professional theater people whose parents are on tour. Facing the prospect of being sent to a New Deal work farm, they "decide that the best way to act is to 'act'—in other words, to put

on a show" (p. 75). Forming a theatrical group themselves, with a racially and ethnically diverse cast, they create a successful play and are thus able to retain their economic freedom. Even though there are black members of the group, these "appear as performers in stereotyped roles that are enclosed within the world of the stage"; thus, "Rodgers and Hart begin to articulate an opposition here between ethnic and racial characters that Rodgers developed more overtly in his later work" (p. 90).

Most sees *The King and I* (1951) as "a rewriting of the basic themes and issues of American immigrant melodramas like *The Jazz Singer*" (p. 185). Anna succeeds in her mission to teach Western values to the royal family, helped by performance—the staging of a version of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, for instance. The final scene makes it obvious that the King's son, who will take over the throne, has absorbed the values of American democracy, but that the King himself, "like the Old World Jewish fathers who never learned to assimilate to American culture . . . must die in order for the new musical community—of new Americans—to emerge" (p. 196).

Oklahoma! (1943) was written at a time when "American popular culture . . . celebrated diversity and heterogeneity as a foundational element of the American democratic system—indeed, as one of the primary reasons for which the war was being fought" (p. 101). Most quotes a directive of 1943 from the Office of War Information to Hollywood producers requesting that they "depict democracy by showing persons of different race, religion and economic status mingling on even terms in factory or other war service and also in settings of everyday life" (p. 101). After agreeing that *Oklahoma!* was a turning point in the history of the American musical because of the integration of its various elements, Most characterizes it as celebrating a "wartime utopia," with "differences meld[ing] into a unified loving American community" (p. 104) in which various factions, even farmers and cowboys, learn to get along together.

Most focuses on two characters who stand out because of their "otherness," Ali Hakim, a "Persian" peddler, and Jud, a hired hand. Ali is a thinly veiled Jewish immigrant who can be assimilated into the community because he is nonthreatening, theatrical, and able to "persuade a chorus to perform with him" (p. 113). Jud, though white, is "dark and evil"—dirty, living in a smokehouse with rats and with postcards of naked women on the walls, sexually threatening. He cannot be assimilated, and his death "cleanses the community of darkness," (p. 117) enabling everyone else to join in the final "anthem," a reprise of the title song.

Most sees *Annie Get Your Gun* (1946) as a reaction to the "naturalness" of *Oklahoma!* in that it "firmly and unequivocally insists that America is *theater*, and only those who understand and embrace America's inherent theatricality are destined for success" (p. 119). "The action of the play takes place almost exclusively in theatrical locations: dressing rooms, stage sets, trains and boats carrying the touring company from one stop to the next," and the show "uses western Americana not to evoke the glories of the vanished frontier, but rather to show and celebrate the pleasures and power of the Broadway stage" (p. 122). The eponymous heroine, endowed with a natural talent for marksmanship but with virtually no education, "learns how to read, how to perform, how to create herself as a marketable and successful American character" (p. 123). She must learn that show business is a meritocracy, a "world in which skill matters and hard work is rewarded" (p. 129), and the story of her eventual success becomes "a metaphor for becoming an American" (p. 131). Sitting Bull, a member of the troupe who becomes her

mentor, is in a position to help her because he has made the transition himself “from natural/immigrant to theatrical/American” (p. 136). “As a representative of the Americanized ethnic immigrant, he can offer Annie the wisdom of theatricality: follow conventions—know your part, learn your lines, sing the notes you are given. If you can do that better than anyone else, you will become a star” (p. 140). And he is the one who resolves Annie’s romantic dilemma; realizing that Frank will never marry Annie as long as she maintains that “I Can Do Anything Better Than You,” he tampers with her gun before a climactic shooting competition, causing her to lose the match but thereby win a husband and remain in the show, albeit in a subordinate role.

Most also reads the play as a “response to the drama of demobilization” (p. 143). For the duration of the war, millions of women had taken jobs normally reserved for men, thereby “defin[ing] themselves outside conventional gender boundaries” (p. 142). With the end of the war and the return of men expecting to take up their old jobs again, many American women “suddenly found themselves constrained by an imposed domesticity.” Most suggests that the ending of the play “offers a disturbing vision of a triumphant actress coerced into playing a constricting gender role,” and that the play suggests that women must accept this subordinate role (p. 151).

Most’s distinction between racial and ethnic stereotyping leads her, surprisingly, to read *South Pacific* (1949) as a racist show, despite the fact that Rodgers and Hammerstein had impeccable liberal credentials and that the show “on the surface, paints an extraordinarily bright picture of a human community that knows no barriers of race or culture” (p. 156). This is a show, after all, in which the two leading romantic couples are an American lieutenant (Joe) and a young Polynesian woman (Liat), and an American nurse (Nellie) and an expatriate and much older Frenchman (Emile) who has two illegitimate children by a Polynesian woman. Yet Most insists that *South Pacific*’s success resulted “not [from] political radicalism but [from] its presentation of familiar racial tropes under a mask of comforting liberal rhetoric” (p. 157). The problem is that the Asian characters in the show are “one-dimensional and largely without agency” (p. 158). Bloody Mary, for instance, “seems to have come directly from World War II film stereotypes of grinning Chinese women with betel-stained teeth. We never learn her real name,” and “her only goal is to make a quick buck” (p. 158). Liat “embodies the classic stereotype of the exotic oriental woman,” and when Joe sings a love song to her, Liat “cannot answer in song because Rodgers and Hammerstein have rendered her voiceless” (pp. 158, 159). Thus, since she cannot perform (sing) she cannot be made an American. Most suggests that “If Rodgers and Hammerstein had made a racially different girl into a marriageable American girl, if they had given the racial other . . . a voice . . . they would have been openly and powerfully advocating miscegenation and integration in an American society still deeply committed to racially different spheres.” As it was, “death [Joe is killed in action] is the neatest and easiest solution” (p. 160).

Most has the gift of presenting complex theoretical arguments clearly and convincingly, and I quote her so often in this review because her writing is so succinct that it does not need to be paraphrased. *Making Americans* is an important addition to the literature on the American musical stage, not only because of its content but also because it can serve as a model for how other shows might be read. But it is not, and does not pretend to be, an overview of the American musical for even the narrow chronological period with which it deals, because many musicals written between 1925 and

1951—*Lady in the Dark*, *The Gay Divorce*, *On the Town*, *Kiss Me, Kate*, and *Brigadoon*, to mention only a few—cannot be read in terms of Most’s tropes.



Mark Grant divides the history of the Broadway musical into three eras: 1866 (*The Black Crook*) to 1926; 1927 (*Show Boat*) to 1966; and 1966 to the present. He calls the middle of these three “the canonical period, the second age, the golden age, the high-water period, [or] the belle époque” (p. 5), and his book constitutes “an inquest into what happened to raise an inconsequential entertainment genre to a level of popular art, and then to lower it back again to an inconsequential entertainment genre” (p. 7). His central argument is that “what eventually came along circa 1925 to raise an entertainment medium to a dramatic medium was a paradigm shift: the writers [of book, lyrics and music] gradually became the gate draw” rather than the performers (p. 94), but “the Broadway musical theater lost its magic at exactly the point when stagers replaced writers as the preeminent players in the creation of the product” (p. 300).

The organization of the book is unusual, and provocative. Rather than proceeding chronologically from one chapter to the next, Grant devotes each of his chapters, or “Acts,” as he calls them, to a discussion of one aspect of musical comedy—vocal production; book, lyrics and music; rhythm; electronics; and the role of directors and choreographers. He does not discuss individual musicals or individual songs written for these shows; instead, he focuses on concepts and on individuals. Thus if one looks for *South Pacific* in the index, one is referred to “auteurship in, directorship of, lyrics in, production design in, soaring melody in, song composition in, song recycling in, team composition of, unmixed performances of, vocal style in,” each of these tossed into its appropriate chapter.

Grant approaches musical comedy as the product not only of lyricists and composers, but also of orchestrators, directors, choreographers, and other members of the production team, and as a result he deals with people who are rarely mentioned in other books on the American musical. An excellent section on arrangers and orchestrators (pp. 175–87) features an extended discussion of the work of Robert Russell Bennett, for instance, and there is a fine appreciation of the pioneering work of director Rouben Mamoulian (“Stage Movement as Seamless Dramatic Integration”) (pp. 237–43). Conductor Lehman Engel is praised for being “the first Broadway working professional to attempt an analysis of what made golden-age Broadway musicals tick” (p. 77), for his role in making historically accurate recordings and for establishing the first school for aspiring writers for the musical stage. Harry B. Smith, who claimed to have written the books for three hundred shows in the early years of the twentieth century, is resurrected from oblivion by Grant. In addition, there are pithy discussions of the work of more famous figures: Agnes de Mille (“The Choreographer as Playwright”) is discussed at length (pp. 258–67 and *passim*), and the several pages devoted to Kurt Weill (“after Victor Herbert the only legitimate composer to sustain a full-time career writing musicals for Broadway”) constitute a thoughtful overview of his career (pp. 73–77).

The final part of each chapter is devoted to one aspect of what Grant sees as the decline of the musical since 1966. For example, in “Act One” (“From Soaring Divas to Growling Rockers: How Changes in Singing Forged and Felled the Show Tune”), he argues that in the first era “the popular [singing] style and the legitimate

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style were thus nearly one and the same” (p. 15), with both featuring a vocal production focused forward in the singers’ “mask,” with stress on vowels, enabling the voice to project throughout the theater but often at the expense of audience comprehension of the text. Al Jolson “liberated the musical comedy voice from the legitimate voice” with “a new kind of singing voice that delivered both melody and lyric equally” (p. 21). But today, “in a pop-dominated world, musical theater sounds like pop music and singers in it sound like pop singers . . . phrasing is not important . . . rawness of vocal utterance is” (p. 44). Likewise, in “Act Two” (“How Mavericks, Highbrows, and Enlightened Collectivism Invented the Book and Lyrics and Tweaked the Music”) Grant tells us that “the late nineteenth century [was] an era noted for chaotic books, illogical scene changes, wild jumps of plot, and inorganic interpolations of songs” (p. 227). Oscar Hammerstein II, Ira Gershwin and their peers established a “high tradition of lyric writing in the golden age” whose products “can be distilled to a statement about the human condition” (p. 86), but *Cats* (1982) “marked the definitive separation in the modern musical theater of word from meaning . . . the words might as well be scat syllables” (p. 93), and “today’s revived operettas or rock poperettas (Andrew Lloyd Webber, Alain Boublil and Claude-Michel Schönberg, Frank Wildhorn) have revived the *subliterate lyrics of yore*” (p. 83, emphasis mine).

After defining the show tune as “dancified song” (p. 115), “Act Three” describes how the march rhythms that dominated musicals of the first era gave way to the foxtrot, which “afforded lyricists and book writers an unprecedented expansion of verbal and dramatic possibilities” (p. 137). But then followed the “Rock Groove Cataclysm,” which “fetter[s] the melody, the lyric, and the drama to its ball and chain” and “is leading to the complete displacement of melody in the musical theater” (p. 164). The subtitle of “Act Four” sums up the chapter’s focus: “The Loudspeakers Are Alive with The Sound of Music: How Electronics Trumped the Artful Acoustics of Broadway.” “Act Five” deals with the replacement of the “belle époque paradigm of composer-lyricist auteurship” by “a new breed of superdirector [Jerome Robbins, Gower Champion, Bob Fosse, and Michael Bennett] who was usurping the places not only of the old-style director and choreographer but also of the lyricist, book writer, and composer” (p. 213). Even Stephen Sondheim, whom Grant regards as the “last inheritor of the golden-age tradition” and whose “shows and lyrics as a body of work embody extraordinary high-end writing for the musical” (p. 97), is criticized for his “extended musical vamps and ostinatos not just as accompaniments . . . but as the essential tissue of his musical material” (p. 98). In other words, he finds that Sondheim crams too many words into a musical phrase, thereby creating recitative-like songs rather than flowing melodies.

Given the many good and interesting things about Grant’s book and his skill as a writer, it’s unfortunate that so much of it comes across as an attack on “the sex, drugs, and rock-and-roll generation . . . [which] gave up on the notion that structure, narrative, and words have meaning” (p. 313). Tellingly, like other writers who have compared works of contemporary popular culture unfavorably with an earlier “canonical” era in the same genre, Grant also implies a negative comparison of the products of today’s culture with the “masterworks” of the “legitimate” or “classical” repertory. Thus he complains that “neither the writers nor the producers on today’s Broadway, unlike the canonical writers of the golden era, are grounded in a culture that knows and respects literature, painting, classical music, and the tradition of the great playwrights” (pp.

308–9), and he finds that “a disrespectful view of art and literature . . . underlies much contemporary popular culture” (p. 96).

It’s evident that Grant disapproves not only of recent musical comedies, but of America’s contemporary culture more generally. His unfortunate and sometimes unfounded rants—what percentage of the songs in recent Broadway shows actually rely on the dreaded “rock groove,” for instance, and haven’t many shows been improved for their audiences by successful, professional “sound enhancement”?—place him squarely in the company of Allan Bloom,² Martha Bayles,³ and William Bennett in America’s “culture wars” of the late twentieth century. And that’s a shame, because a writer of Grant’s talent and enthusiasm for the musical theater should have been able to tell us more positive and interesting things about the contemporary American musical.



John Bush Jones, noting that “prior chronological booklength studies of musical theatre have almost exclusively focused on the development of the shows themselves, with little or no reference to their social setting” (p. 2), proposes to fill this gap with a book that prioritizes “those musical plays that sought not just to entertain but also to advocate a point of view” and that “dramatized, mirrored, or challenged our deeply-held cultural attitudes and beliefs,” in an attempt to “move the audience to see things their way” (p. 1).

Jones makes a distinction between shows of this sort and “diversionary musicals,” which “contain little content of social relevance” but have “always comprised the majority of all professional musicals in the United States.” However, “these too are important, if only to raise the question of why certain decades delivered more ‘mindless fluff’ than others” (p. 1). His book deals chiefly with what he takes to be “non-diversionary” shows, while “diversionary” musicals are consigned to a series of appendices.

Despite its subtitle, this book does not constitute a social history of the American musical theater. It offers, rather, an overview of American history from the late 19th century to the end of the 20th, divided into periods or eras; Jones then suggests social and political issues that characterized each period and mentions or briefly describes musicals whose plots touch on these issues.

Thus, in a section of Chapter 1 (“Patriotism, Xenophobia, and World War I”) subtitled “Techno-Pride,” Jones mentions “the swift development of mass production [which] made the automobile affordable to middle-class Americans” (p. 13), then identifies a number of shows in which automobiles figure in the plot, such as *The Vanderbilt Cup* (1906) and *The International Cup* (1910). An American race driver is the winner of a race in each, and Jones concludes that audiences responded to these shows because “man or woman *and* machine triumph over adversity,” thus symbolizing “victory for American pluck, sportsmanship, and technology” (p. 15). At the beginning of Chapter 5, “From Isolationism to Idealism in the Cold War Years,” Jones suggests that the years immediately following the end of World War II were marked by political conservatism, the threat of nuclear war with the Soviet Union, and “America’s concerns, even paranoia, over a clear and present danger *within* the United States underscor[ing] feelings of isolationism” (pp. 163–64). *Brigadoon* (1947), a musical that “depicts an isolationist utopia, and a pretty scary one at that” (p. 165), dates from this time. As Jones puts it, “*Brigadoon’s* opening followed two world wars, a twelve-year depression, and the communist triumph in eastern Europe. Is it any wonder that the thought of a Brigadoon-like retreat brought comfort and solace to many Americans in 1947?” (p. 166). He further notes that the film of the show was released in

1954, during “those archconservative years when Senator Joe McCarthy was at the height of his popularity with the American public,” and a major revival of the show took place in 1986, during “one of the most isolationist [administrations] of the century” (p. 168).

And so it goes, chronologically from the American premier of *Pinafore* in 1878 to *Urinetown* (2001). If Jones finds that the plot of a musical touches in some obvious way on social or political concerns of its time, he incorporates it into his narrative; if not, off it goes into the appropriate appendix. He is not interested in readings of shows that go beyond the obvious; thus *Babes in Arms*, to which Most devotes an entire chapter, is here relegated to an appendix. He is most comfortable discussing shows in groups: “Leisure-Time Musicals” of the “Roaring Twenties” (pp. 61–66) are defined by the subject matter of their plots (golf, social dancing, boxing); “The Emergence of Jewish Musicals” (pp. 205–15) deals with shows defined neither by their music nor by the fact that they were written by Jews, but only by the subject matter of their books; “techno-musicals” of the 1980s, shows whose writers, “bereft of real ideas, and perhaps taking their cue from [the] revolution in telecommunications . . . owed their longevity largely to awestruck audiences oohing and aahing at elaborate and seemingly miraculous technical effects” (p. 322); and “Fragmented Musicals,” a.k.a. “non-plot” or “concept” musicals—*Hair*, *Company*, *Follies*, *Godspell*, *A Chorus Line*, and *Working*, for instance—are discussed as products of “the splintered, inward-turning tendencies of the ‘Me Generation,’” with their “intentionally fragmented form and content . . . [that] catered to audience narcissism, since introspective people enjoy watching themselves” (p. 270).

Unlike the other books under review here, *Our Musicals, Ourselves* attempts an overview of the American musical for the entire twentieth century, even if some shows are merely consigned to an appendix. Thus a strength of the book, in addition to the author’s obvious enthusiasm for his subject matter, is that it has *something* to say about dozens of shows that are not even mentioned by the other four authors. This “something” usually consists of information about the writing and production team of the show, its reception (as measured by length of run and whether or not there were revivals), a summary of the plot, and Jones’s comments on events in American life that might have a bearing on the show’s creation and reception. Some of this information is quite useful, as for instance the detailed account (pp. 251–56) of the various legal challenges to *Hair*, from the first one in Boston to the Supreme Court ruling that settled the issue for once and for all and made possible, Jones believes, the eventual production of such shows as *Equus*, *The Elephant Man*, *Otherwise Engaged*, and *Curse of the Starving Class*.



Raymond Knapp’s book, based on his course on the American musical taught at UCLA, is aimed not only at students but also at “a much wider constituency . . . those myriads who love musicals, but have been frustrated by the books on the subject currently on offer” (p. xv). Part One discusses the European roots of the popular musical stage, the earliest American shows, and the development of American popular song; these chapters are overviews, mostly summarizing existing literature. The heart of Knapp’s book is contained in Part Two, “Defining America,” which is “arguably, *the* central theme in American musicals” and Part Three, “Managing America’s Others,” in which “other themes relate [to this theme] in both obvious and subtle ways” (p. 8). He offers readings of sixteen shows, ranging chronologically from George M. Cohan’s *Little*

Johnny Jones of 1904 to Stephen Sondheim’s *Assassins* (1991), in support of his contention that the American musical has been concerned with constructing “mythologies” about America, and that it has “done more than merely *interact* with its local—that is, its American—context. It has played a significant part in *shaping* that context, as well, by addressing both the ideals of America and its realities, and helping us deal with the frequent disparity between them” (p. 284).

Knapp’s discussion of *Oklahoma!* will serve to illustrate his approach. With its “vital images of people cheerfully and energetically ‘making do,’ overcoming conflicts and adversity, forging an enduring larger community, and offering homespun folk-wisdom in common, direct, everyday language—America saw itself in a microcosm and acquired a vision of what it could offer the rest of the world” (p. 124). Yet the show “recall[s] neither of the two sustained tragedies of the state’s actual history, for there are neither Indians nor dust storms in its re-imagined landscape” (p. 126), and Knapp goes so far as to suggest that America’s treatment of Indians in Oklahoma, under the doctrine of Manifest Destiny, differed little from the policies of America’s enemies of the World War II era, Germany and Japan.

Knapp’s readings are not dissimilar to those of Andrea Most, though he tends more towards feminist theory—not surprising for a colleague of Susan McClary. One important difference between the two books, though, is that Knapp, as a musicologist, can and does use musical analysis to support his readings. Thus he describes in some detail how “Oh, What a Beautiful Morning” sets the tone of *Oklahoma!* with remarkable deftness, with its waltz tempo and its “apparent verse-chorus alternations” suggesting that this is a song “of a simpler type and from a simpler time.” The song also hints at impending trouble. Sung first by a cowboy (Curly) and then by a farmer’s daughter (Laurey), with both expressing an “appreciation of, emotional ties to, and oneness with [the] landscape,” it establishes that “both cowman and farmer have just claims to this land,” thus setting up a conflict that must be resolved by show’s end (pp. 127, 128). The eventual consummation of the relationship between Curly and Laurey is an example of what Knapp calls the “marriage trope,” which he sees as playing a critical role in most musicals.

Knapp’s discussion of *The King and I* is concerned largely with issues of gender. He explains that while power relations between the West and the non-European cultures usually tend to feminize the latter, matters are reversed here, with a female (Anna) representing the West and a male (the King) the East, or, more generally, the Other. However, “the gendering here also follows familiar tropes, with the woman representing the softening influence of civilization on the forceful but primitive male (a dynamic also familiar from mythologies of the American West)” (p. 261). Like Most, Knapp assumes that certain musicals set in foreign lands and with no Americans among the characters should nevertheless be understood as dealing with American life and culture. Thus Anna is a surrogate American, and the values she tries to impose on the King, his family, and his court are American values. Knapp also underlines the disparity between American ideals and the less than perfect realization of them, both in the show itself and in its reception. Despite the many feel-good aspects of the book, “the show on the whole inevitably patronizes: we are invited to enjoy our superiority, to contemplate as a curiosity a far-away kingdom of harems, slavery, and barbarity, and even to mourn the passing of that culture with the death of its king” (p. 264). He suggests that America of the 1950s “had not progressed beyond the ready-made fantasyland of picturesque courts and harems in its ability to conceive of the

Other. Nor did America in 1951 want to do so, for the image was at once too titillating and too comforting to leave behind” (p. 268). And he agrees with Most’s suggestion that America was not yet ready for the “scary premise” (p. 267) of miscegenation, arguing that the scene in which Anna and the King dance together raises the specter of a “marriage trope” involving the racially-different couple, but then backs away from such a development.

Knapp’s reading of *Show Boat* (1927) is a detailed and finely nuanced essay on racial politics in America, during the period in which the show is set as well as at the time of its first performance. As he puts it, “the two ‘problems’ that *Show Boat* confronts are, first, the difficulty of achieving true racial blending in America and, second, America’s enchantment with fantasy and make-believe, which impairs its capacity to distinguish between appearance and reality” (p. 185). He discusses the mixed-race marriage trope involving Julie and Steve (though she has only a small percentage of black blood and is “passing” as white), the easy interactions between Magnolia and the black staff of the ship, including the scene in which they try to teach her their style of singing and dancing, and the post-slavery relationship of the black crew members to their white “bosses.” He argues that Kern and Hammerstein have written music and lyrics drawing on the style of both white and black popular music; the black characters are often given music based on the pentatonic scale, a familiar device for representing folk or non-European derived music. His analyses of “Ol’ Man River” as a pseudo-spiritual and “Can’t Help Lovin’ Dat Man” as a pseudo-blues (pp. 188–92) are convincing, leading us to believe that “within the fantasy world of music-making, whites and blacks can indeed ‘get along’” (p. 192). But, as elsewhere, he stresses the disparity between the ideals and the realities of American life, concluding that “despite the extended representations of the plight of American blacks in *Show Boat*, the show’s dramatic focus remains resolutely on its white population, whose problems are at each turn placed in the foreground” (p. 194).

As befits a textbook, *The American Musical* comes with a great deal of supplementary material. Appendix B, “Additional Resources,” contains, for each of the sixteen shows, a plot summary, a list of songs in the show, important recordings, films and videos, books dealing with the show, and information on published musical scores. There are no musical examples in the text, but Knapp has created a website containing audio examples, and in some cases additional printed and visual material, keyed to the appropriate place in the text.

This is an intelligent, extremely well-written study which, like Most’s book, is as valuable for its demonstration of how musicals may be read as for its own insightful readings. But the book falls short of offering a comprehensive history of its subject. Offering a selection of individual works to represent an entire genre is a common way of writing musical history, of course, yet what Knapp chooses to leave out inevitably distorts this history. For example, Knapp mentions Kurt Weill only in passing; a short analysis of Irving Berlin’s song “Always” is the only nod to that composer in the entire book; and the book has nothing to say about *Carousel*, *Sweeney Todd*, and many other landmark shows. Even though Knapp insists early on that “we must take due note from the outset of the relatively high proportion of (often closeted) gay men within the central communities of the American musical theater, as creators, performers and devotees” (p. 5), in fact this theme almost never figures in his subsequent discussions and readings. And though Knapp shows no signs of sharing Grant’s antipathy for contemporary American popular culture, only one of the sixteen shows

discussed in the book dates from the last quarter of the twentieth century.

Assuming that these five represent current trends in scholarship on the American musical, it seem to me that two points can be made. First, several of these books are among the first to offer readings of musicals based on the approaches of critical theory, or what has been called in our field the “new musicology,” and I have accordingly given more attention to them in this review. Tellingly, their bibliographies include writers such as Judith Butler, Paul DiMaggio, Robert Fink, Matthew Frye Jacobson, Chuck Kleinhaus, Richard Leppert, and Mitchell Morris, in addition to the more standard literature on the musical.

Secondly, there is an almost complete absence in these books of meaningful commentary on American musicals of the past three decades. Gottlieb, convinced that “where once the Jewish songwriter prospered, now he flounders” (p. 5), offers only a single musical example from recent years, a fragment of Sondheim’s “Send in the Clowns”—not because it “sounds Jewish” but only to illustrate how an interior phrase of one song can resemble that of another (p. 145). Most and Knapp have chosen to write about shows from the first two-thirds of the century, with the single exception of Knapp’s discussion of Sondheim’s *Assassins*. Grant has a great deal to say about the contemporary musical theater, but most of it is too negative and polemical to be of much use. Only Jones deals with contemporary shows, but in a more descriptive than analytical way.

Notes

1. Michael Rogin, *Blackface, White Noise: Jewish Immigrants in the Hollywood Melting Pot* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); and Eric Lott, *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

2. *The Closing of the American Mind* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987).

3. *Hole in Our Soul: The Loss of Beauty and Meaning in American Popular Music* (New York: Free Press, 1994).

Books

Kurt Weill-Symposion: Das musikdramatische Werk Zum 100. Geburtstag und 50. Todestag

Edited by Manfred Angerer, Carmen Ottner, and Eike Rathgeber

Vienna: Doblinger, 2004 (Beiträge der Österreichischen Gesellschaft für Musik, vol. 5), 89 pp.
ISBN: 3-900695-63-6

Among other things, the Weill centenary in 2000 was a fertile year for Weill research. Several monographs and compilations bear witness to a veritable boom of scholarly activities that also manifested itself in a number of conferences and symposia held to honor the composer. One of these was a symposium in Vienna in May 2000—a one-day event from which it took three editors four years to produce an 89-page booklet containing six essays. Such a late bloomer of a publication raises doubts that the conclusions presented are still current. Let's take a look.

The essays are assembled under the banner of studies of the musico-dramatic oeuvre, though not all of them fit the bill. Topics include the aesthetics of an elevated art for the masses, as it emerged from Weill's early writings about the new medium of radio; and Weill's relation to fellow composers who also worked in the area of musical theater. His American and European years receive equal attention.

Gisela Schubert, for instance, looks at the rivalry between Weill and Richard Rodgers. She argues that it was caused by similar concepts of musical and especially dramatic qualities in a musical play, as well as by the desire of both composers to raise the artistic standards of this popular genre. Schubert offers us a concise view of the nature, the producing conditions, and the changes of the genre in a period stretching from the 1920s to the early '50s. The direct comparison of a composer such as Rodgers, who operated "seamlessly in the tradition of Broadway's musical theater," thereby shaping it, to the newcomer Weill, who needed "to catch up to the tradition, to create it for himself" (p. 80), is highly informative and ties in nicely with the preceding article by Elmar Juchem. Taking Weill's essay "The Future of Opera in America" (1937) as a point of departure, Juchem gives us a compelling, albeit short, account of Weill's theoretical reflections on and compositional endeavors toward the creation of genuine American opera (for Broadway). He places Weill's comments in the context of a larger debate about musical theater going on at the time and portrays the—ultimately thwarted—hopes that Weill had attached to *The Firebrand of Florence*. With the help of *Street Scene*, the first true Broadway opera and "most important step toward an American opera" (p. 75), he illustrates the criteria which Weill used to distinguish between opera and Broadway opera, leading in the composer's opinion to a foundation for the new American genre. Juchem calls the fact that Weill deliberately set out to address a mass audience "probably the central axiom of Weill's aesthetic" (p. 76)—thereby stating in a nutshell the underlying current of nearly all the volume's essays.

Two articles focus specifically on this "central axiom," though it should be added that Nils Grosch's essay is a lightly revised version of a previously published article. Employing a number of striking examples, he illustrates Weill's unconventional approach to commercial theater both in the Weimar Republic and in the United States. At the same time, he makes it clear that Weill did not want to be popular at any cost, always insisting on approaching the commercial entertainment world with "enormous artistic ambitions" (p. 33). This refers to his persistent attempts to shape every aspect of a production according to his (musical) concepts, be it a film or a Broadway show. As examples, Grosch lists legal battles over the film version of *Dreigroschenoper*, the struggle for music in the film *You and Me*, and the production process of *One Touch of Venus*. Particularly noteworthy is a passage where Grosch discusses a project that was planned in collaboration with the Berlin impresario Erik Charell. Grosch points out that this plan came to naught because Weill feared for his artistic integrity, and that precisely this attitude also prevailed in his American works: "The issue of the artistic merit was especially on his mind when he dealt most intensely with the conditions of an 'industrialized culture,' and the decision to participate in this culture without giving up his artistic integrity was part of what he brought with him into exile" (p. 40). Thus Grosch succeeds in pointing out the unity of Weill's German and American works, and the essay acts as the hinge, as it were, of the conference proceedings, connecting the essays about the European works with those about the American works.

In the volume's first contribution, Erika Hitzler takes up Weill's ideas, efforts, and compositions for German radio. Regrettably, she hardly goes beyond the presentation of well-established facts. The intriguing idea of comparing Weill's notions of an "absolute radio art" with French experiments with *musique concrète* in the 1940s and '50s remains unexplored. Other passages that are simply asserted would seem to require at least some discussion: "The assurance with which Weill addressed large audiences with *Mahagonny* or *Dreigroschenoper* was without question a result of his long experience as a radio critic and theoretician" (p. 27).

Readers are likely to put down the book with a sense of satisfaction. Fears that the prolonged gestation of the book might have rendered the content obsolete are unfounded; overall, the contributors took care to draw on the latest editions and publications. Only Ines Katenhusen seems to have worked with obviously dated sources when she explored the hostile reception of *Der Protagonist* in 1929 in Hanover. When we see the amount of new information in this publication, it appears that we can gather a few more pieces of a jigsaw puzzle whose image is already clearly visible. Such a piece is, for instance, the essay by Eike Rathgeber. She sheds light on the connection between Weill and Alexander von Zemlinsky, who conducted the Berlin premiere of *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* in 1931. Rathgeber tells us that it was during the rehearsals for *Mahagonny* that Zemlinsky began work on a new opera [*Der Kreidekreis*, after Klabund] that showed Weill's influence—"a symbiosis with the pinnacle of the modern, that is, the musical language of Kurt Weill" (p. 67).

Finally, the volume exhibits a remarkable interrelation among its half-dozen essays, producing a clear picture of Weill, his works for the musical stage in Europe and the U.S., and especially of the composer's "unity." Thus the volume might serve as a welcome additional step toward a complete picture of the "one" Weill for European readers.

Ricarda Wackers
Saarbrücken

Books

Musikverlage im "Dritten Reich" und im Exil

Sophie Fetthauer

Hamburg: von Bockel Verlag, 2004, 586 pp.
ISBN 3-932696-52-2

Academics engaged in studying musical life during the Third Reich have long recognized the important role played by music publishers in supporting and bolstering the regime's ideological program. Yet until the appearance of this mammoth study, relatively few scholars have explored the subject with the same depth and attention to detail shown here. In this respect, Sophie Fetthauer's book certainly builds upon the valuable research on the activities of Universal Edition and Schott during this period which has already been undertaken by Kim Kowalke (*Modernism/Modernity* 8, no. 1 [2003]: 1–41).

To understand the sheer magnitude of Fetthauer's area of inquiry, it should be remembered that, despite the economic deprivations of the 1920s, Germany continued to maintain its position as the preeminent center of music publishing in Europe even during the early years of the Nazi era. Given that a multitude of different companies had secured a very specific niche in the market, Fetthauer was faced with the tricky task of having to focus her attention on a limited number of case studies. Thus, certain important publishers such as Breitkopf und Härtel and Bärenreiter play essentially a subsidiary role in her argument. Frustrating though this may be for those who are particularly interested in exploring the ways in which these particular companies responded to the changing political climate, it nonetheless avoids the danger of diffusiveness.

As a necessary prelude to her survey, Fetthauer also examines the step-by-step procedures by which the music publishers and the different performing rights' organizations were brought under the aegis of the *Reichsmusikkammer*. Utilizing a plethora of documentary material supported by numerous statistical tables detailing such matters as the annual output of new music publications between 1928 and 1936, she patiently guides the reader with considerable skill through the minefield of bureaucratic complexities and internecine factionalism that accompanied such developments.

Of more immediate interest, however, are the sections which deal with the aryanization, liquidation, and appropriation of specific music publishers on racial and political grounds. The climate of anti-Semitism appears to have been ruthlessly exploited by a number of unsavory opportunists, not least Hans Brückner, who established the journal *Das Deutsche Podium* in 1933, with the intention of spreading a virulent propaganda campaign against publishers of Jewish origin. In contrast, Hans C. Sikorski, whose publishing house is best-known these days for its rich output of Russian and Soviet music, may have been less overt in his public actions, but nonetheless after the *Anschluss* eagerly transferred the assets of such well-established publishers as the Vienna-based Josef Weinberger into his own coffers.



Given the declared aim of the Nazi regime to expunge all vestiges of Jewish modernism from the face of the earth, it is hardly surprising that the fate of Universal Edition occupies such a central place in Fetthauer's book. The propaganda campaign against Universal appears to have reached its chilling climax in 1940, when the Gestapo visited the firm's offices and seized almost 30,000 printed examples of music and books, including works by Eisler, Weill, and Rathaus as well as Heinrich Schenker's analytical studies *Der freie Satz* and *Kontrapunkt*. Divested of the repertory of the major composers to which it had been most firmly committed, Universal became a pale shadow of its former self, submerged into a shady and dubious alliance with Peters Edition and Schott and publishing music by composers of questionable merit.

An inevitable and damaging consequence of the proscription and appropriation of so many Jewish-owned music publishers was the forced exodus from Germany of a number of important and influential entrepreneurs. In the second half of her book Fetthauer explores this theme, assessing the impact such figures had on the musical life of the countries in which they settled. Judging by the wealth of material that she has assembled, Great Britain benefited immeasurably from the presence of Kurt Eulenburg, Alfred Aber, Ernst Roth, Alfred Kalmus and Erwin Stein, all of whom effected a profound change of outlook from the provincial and isolationist attitudes of earlier eras. Likewise, in the United States, Hans Heinsheimer and Walter Hinrichsen established distinctive profiles for the respective music publishing organizations in which they worked.

Although Fetthauer's book is essentially a reproduction of her doctoral thesis, and as such is constrained by the conventions of academic presentation (schematized divisions of chapters and an astonishingly large number of footnotes), it is nonetheless written in an approachable and accessible manner. Because of its layout, readers are more likely to dip in and out of specific sections, rather than read the text as a continuous narrative. Particularly valuable is the inclusion of an extended biographical dictionary of exiled music publishers backed up by detailed bibliographic references, though in the interests of balance, it might have been equally helpful to provide a similar survey for those figures in the music publishing world that were enthusiastically complicit with the regime.

Erik Levi

Royal Holloway, University of London

Recordings

Die sieben Todsünden Quodlibet, op. 9

Anja Silja, soprano
SWR Rundfunkorchester Kaiserslautern
Grzegorz Nowak, conductor

Hänssler Classic CD 93.109

If we are to believe the biographers of Anja Silja, she was already singing professionally when Lenya made her legendary recording of *Die sieben Todsünden* in 1956.

More than a decade ago, a recording of Silja performing the work at age 52 was included in a large set of live performances commemorating the Cleveland Orchestra's 75th anniversary (it garnered a mixed-to-negative review in these pages). A recent CD offers Silja's 2002 commercially recorded treatment of Weill's *ballet chanté*. She was 62 at the time of recording, five years older than Lenya when she made her unique statement, and thus the oldest recorded performer of the *Todsünden*.

I feel that these lists of years and ages are important when listening to Silja's latest: it helps add perspective to the experience.

I first heard Lenya in 1968, when she was performing the role of Fräulein Schneider in the Broadway production of *Cabaret* long after the other original 1966 cast members had decamped for other projects (she was 69). I first heard Silja in 1972, when she was performing the role of Leonore in *Fidelio* at the Metropolitan Opera (she was 31).

The voices of both Lenya and Silja are best labeled as "acquired tastes." I needn't try to describe Lenya's for anyone who is reading this. Even in her earliest recordings from the 1960s, Silja always had some pitch problems, a tendency to wobble when forcing, a loss of vocal color the higher she sang, and strident high notes. And that was 40 years ago.

Silja had—and emphatically continues to have—a controversial career, beginning with her selection by no less than Wieland Wagner to sing Senta in his production of *Der fliegende Holländer* at Bayreuth when she was 20. Now 65, she remains in high

demand, continuing to tour as the 337-year-old Emilia Marty in a 1995 Glyndebourne Festival production of Janáček's *Vec Makropulos* acclaimed by audiences and critics throughout the western hemisphere (she took the Brooklyn Academy of Music by storm; the production most recently played at a Janáček Festival at the Opéra de Lyon in May 2005, where *Financial Times* critic Francis Carlin observed, "the event could easily have turned into a spotlight on the show-stopping veteran Anja Silja, whether you like her piercing top notes or not"). In October, she will star in a new production of Janáček's *Osud* at the Vienna Staatsoper.

The new recording, featuring the distinctly un-euphonious SWR Rundfunkorchester Kaiserslautern under the direction of Grzegorz Nowak, contains absolutely nothing commendable. Nowak's tempi are turgid and listless, his interpretation lacking in humor, irony, and bite. While the orchestra doesn't embarrass itself, the best I can say is that they hit most of the notes as written without any semblance of the spirit or style of the work. (The filler, the 1923 Quodlibet—in only its second recording—is an opportunity missed, marred by indifferent, less than precise playing, and the same bizarre miking of isolated instruments and boomy acoustics which pervade the entire disc.) The male quartet slogs through its assignment with a too-light basso and an overly nasal tenor.

Silja chose the original key, but such a decision seems irrelevant. From the opening phrase, the disrepair of her instrument is evident in every word, and I doubt if lowering the notes by a fourth would alter much of anything.

Syllables are shot out staccato, the voice unable to sustain a tone at any pitch without wobbling. There is a marked break between the bottom and the middle register. She aces a few of the higher notes and does a swell job of putting the text across, but the sound is underpowered. Perhaps



the most jarring deterioration since her 1992 stab at the *Todsünden* is the necessity of employing a harsh glottal attack to move the voice upward. All this from the "Prologue"!

By the time we are at "Anger," the second sin, Silja is scooping more, her tone dry and throaty, and some sounds are nothing less than scary. In "Lust," she interpolates what I suppose was meant to be a laugh, but it also sounds like she is choking. When "Envy" grandiloquently marches in, she recalls Anna Russell's description of "a voice like a vegetable grater."

Although I haven't heard them all, I daresay that any one of the 13 other singers, chanteuses, and discuses whose interpretations have been available on CD must have something more valid to offer. The fact that you have Stratas, von Otter, and Réaux (in the original key), Lenya, Faithfull and Lemper (transposed down) all readily available makes this unrewarding enterprise all the more puzzling (I would be quite happy to go to a desert island with only Gisela May's recording). Silja's catalogue of vocal sins are merely grotesque and embarrassing, sort of like seeing your grandmother naked.

Larry L. Lash
Vienna

Performances

Die sieben Todsünden

Centre Chorégraphique National
de Grenoble
MC93 Bobigny

Premiere: 10 May 2005

Stage director Hans Peter Cloos and choreographer Jean-Claude Gallotta's new production of *Die sieben Todsünden* came as close as any I've seen to fusing the work's famously disparate components. The production, sung in German with French titles projected on a screen overhead, originated in Grenoble, then traveled to Bobigny, a not-yet-gentrified Parisian suburb, where streets still are named for Marxist luminaries; I attended the performance on 25 May.

Here at last was an interpretation that wasn't clouded by cynicism and *Weltschmerz* from the downbeat. Music director Peter Ludwig kept orchestral textures light and spacious, always lilting. (The instrumental performance, by the Ensemble Estrada Monaco, was prerecorded.) And his Anna I (Meret Becker) deployed a girl-

ish soprano sound that resembled neither the barking *diseuses* nor the classical divas who have taken the role in recent years. The work benefited from this lighter touch. These girls truly believed their simple "morality" would bring success, and at evening's end, when they reckoned the true cost of their journey, the effect was rightly devastating—as it never is when the girls are jaded from the get-go.

The evening didn't begin so auspiciously, and Cloos and Gallotta apparently had to work the cynicism out of their systems with an unadvertised curtain-raiser (in military terms, an "ambush"), *De la séduction des anges*, a mish-mash of Brecht's musings on capitalism and prostitution, which are, *selbstverständlich*, really the same thing.

(Am I alone in finding that this stuff hasn't aged well? Wasn't Brecht just looking to justify his brothel expenses? Isn't the *Mahagonny Songspiel* the logical companion to the *Todsünden*?)

As these exercises go, the *Séduction* was painless. Ingratiating actors Maryse Poulhe, a slinky blonde, and Christophe Delachaux, a slinky blonde in drag, recited Brecht's texts, to Peter Ludwig's minimalist score, while members of Gallotta's dance troupe gambled about the steel-gray, mostly bare set. Meret Becker quickly emerged as the cast's standout, playing the musical saw, wielding a mean Hula-Hoop, performing a striptease, and singing "Nannas Lied" (in a setting that demonstrated that Ludwig had heard Weill's version and determined not to copy it).

At last we got to the *Todsünden*, when Becker delivered the most engaging, least expected performance of Weill's music I've heard since Anne Sofie von Otter took on this role. Though she can't manage the power a classically-trained singer can call upon in the harrowing declamations of "Neid," Becker didn't cheat, either, by shouting or going off-key. (She was closely miked, which surely helped.) Her instrument is more even and secure than was that of the young Lenya, yet it's wonderfully suited to Anna's character, and probably closer than most to the sound Weill had in mind as he wrote. Throughout the *Todsünden*, Becker conveyed a spirited balance of innocence and toughness; she's a genuine star, and I'm eager to see her in other roles in the Weill repertoire.

Mathilde Altaraz, who slightly resembles Lenya in middle age, proved an affecting Anna II, bringing to the role a gentle earthiness that, by evening's end, had been thoroughly beaten down: in the "Epilog," she was little more than a beast of burden, on all fours. The Family (Simon Bensa, Bruno Boulzaguet, Wahid Lamamra, and Delachaux) were amusing, yet here the lack of trained voices emerged as a substantial drawback: their neo-Lutheran moralizing lacked authority.

Marie Pawlowsky's costumes reflected authentic American style, particularly in the Mother's sundress and sneakers. Designers Jean Kalman and Elsa Ejchenrand used simple items, such as plastic sheets and cottony red clouds, to demarcate the different stops along the Annas' route; most effective was the outline of a house in metal tubes that wobbled and collapsed when Anna's shenanigans jeopardized the construction. Kalman's lighting explicitly evoked Fellini's *La Strada*, with strings of bald carnival lights and glaring spots.

Choreography in both the *Séduction* and the *Péchés* was typified by slashing gestures and, most notably, an abruptly aborted helical spin, as if the dancers were unscrewing themselves from the floor, then hurrying away. As befits contemporary dance, there was plenty of running but very little leaping; ballroom and balletic movements were quoted ironically, if at all.

For the most part, Cloos (a veteran of West Germany's Rote Rube troupe) and Gallotta eschewed direct representation of the Annas' adventures: there was no horse, no movie set, and not much anger in "Zorn," for example, though Fernando the lover was on hand for "Unzucht." In this age of instant stardom and crass consumerism, the work could hardly seem more topical, but the directors resisted the temptation to hammer at political points, allowing Weill's and Brecht's damning social critique to speak for itself.

Just as I was beginning to think somebody really understood the *Todsünden*, I saw the program notes, which focused on Brecht, exaggerated his contributions to the piece, and described Weill's masterpiece as "these seven songs."

Well, you can't have everything.

William V. Madison
Paris



Anna I (Meret Becker) and Anna II (Mathilde Altaraz).
Photo: Guy Delahaye

Performances

Street Scenes

Singapore Lyric Opera

26–27 August 2005

For those like myself who, thanks to Singapore rush hour, slid into their seats at the Victoria Theatre as the house lights dimmed without having a chance to open the program, the Kurt Weill evening presented by the Singapore Lyric Opera late last August was a bit disorienting. Gathered around an upright piano at the front of the stage were five singers engaged in faux cocktail-party chatter, each in turn stepping forward to sing a classic song from the Weill catalog. Audience members expecting to jump right into the evening's featured billing, a performance of the *Street Scenes* concert sequence devised by Lys Symonette and Kim Kowalke, could instead empathize with soprano Elisa Wilson singing "I'm a Stranger Here Myself."

Judging by the chatter at intermission, Weill himself is a bit of a stranger in Singapore, so perhaps it was appropriate that the evening opened by introducing a handful of the composer's most famous songs, each for the most part featuring a different lyricist. Following Wilson's rendition of "Stranger," baritone William Lim sang "September Song," soprano Yuki Ip performed "My Ship," baritone Reuben Lai offered "Speak Low," tenor David Quah crooned "Mack the Knife," and Wilson and Ip joined together in "Song der beiden Verkäuferinnen" from *Der Silbersee*. Unfortunately, this cozy twenty-minute makeshift segment intended to round out the program told us nearly everything we needed to know about what was to come.

It wasn't that the singers were bad, exactly. But for most of the evening the cast members generally had a hard time either summoning the technique for proper vocal production, or keeping their technique from getting in the way. Once into the proper *Street Scenes* portion of the evening, Lim sang Frank Murrant with such foggy tone that it made you want to go at it with a cloth. Ip's charm as Rose Murrant was a little too hard-fought, with a constant over-enunciation of the text that refused to let it

speak for itself. Lai, on the other hand, as Harry Easter, carried over his effortlessness from the earlier cocktail-set when a little more dramatic effort would have been preferable. More often than not though, the problem was simply an accumulation of untapped vocal sound that made the listener want to reach down a few throats and pull it out.

To be fair, this was not entirely the fault of the cast, which was struggling against the combined forces of the Singapore Lyric Opera Orchestra and the Philharmonic Winds under the direction of Robert Casteels. This was a young ensemble, or at least it played like one, with frequent difficulty maintaining a balance in the instrumental lines. While it would probably

have made a serviceable pit band, here the instrumentalists were on stage, front and center. The singers never had a chance.

They did, however, move well, making full use of whatever limited stage was left to keep the story in play. So too did the Singapore Lyric Opera Chorus, their risers positioned in the back of the stage, make the most of their limited time in the spotlight. Nowhere in the program book, however, was a director listed for the production.

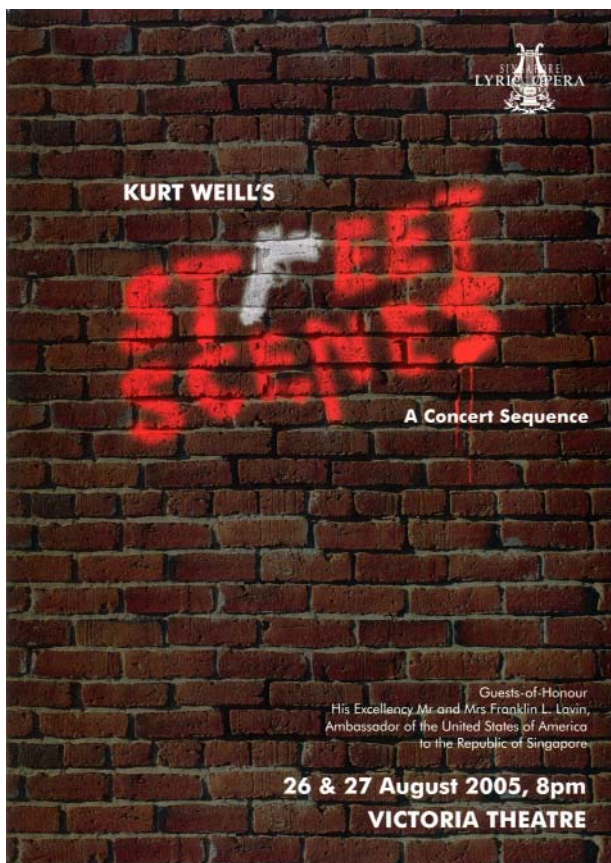
About Weill himself the program notes were much better. In fact, few productions have been better served by such a clear and terse synopsis, not only of the main event but also for each of the introductory songs and their original stage context.

For all its focus on the standard operatic repertory, the Singapore Lyric Opera has made some impressive forays into lighter fare, including a *Merry Widow* last season that benefited greatly from the idiomatic assuredness of American sopranos Robin Follman and Lea Woods Friedman and the comic presence of Covent Garden veteran Colin Morris. This production, which needs even more sensitivity to the idiom, relied on even fewer singers with any obvious exposure to it. Only the Australian-born Wilson as Anna Murrant brought any freedom to the musical line.

This was indeed a shame, since whatever Singapore's natural affinity may be for Weill, audiences should clearly have a soft spot for *Street Scene*. There were, nonetheless, some obvious casting dilemmas—having a Kaplan and so many Murrants played by obviously Chinese performers may remain within the bounds of operatic suspension of disbelief but it obviously undercuts much of the work's theatrical tension. Nor does the American understanding of immigration ring true in quite the same way here.

The essence of the show, however, remains starkly familiar. Singaporeans, whether Chinese, Indian, or Malay, are well aware of the daily, if not hourly, cultural negotiations required when ethnic groups overlap, and on that level alone they are equipped for a heartfelt production of this show. Perhaps someday they'll get one.

Ken Smith
Hong Kong



Performances

Die Dreigroschenoper

Long Beach Opera
Long Beach, California

Premiere: 11 June 2005

Continuing Long Beach Opera's reputation for updated interpretations and innovative stagings, director Christopher Alden and dramaturge Peter Littlefield have created *Threepenny*-lite. The cast is small, the set is plain, the text is spare, the staging is fluid, and the music is quick. Total playing time: just under two hours.

They have also coupled lean with mean. Set "now, in a modern, plastic world," this free adaptation of Robert David MacDonald's English translation includes some of Brecht's 1931 revisions, plus a few additional references to *Happy End* and *Mahagonny*. Even so, it largely strips away explicit, verbal polemics in favor of implied ones. Gone, also, are what might have been considered burdensome or opaque references to theology and *Threepenny*'s literary ancestors. Heather Carson's unrelenting, harsh lighting reinforces Alden's uneasy juxtaposition of commonness and brutality. Nearly every scene depicts some form of violence, including screaming, slapping, punching, body slamming, hair pulling, groin shots, or rape.

Alden holds the audience's attention with plenty of graphic and contemporary imagery. Andrew C. Holland's minimal set for the first act evokes a ubiquitous middle-American hotel banquet room sparsely furnished with two round tables, one plastic potted palm, a portable video camera, a microphone, and an old-fashioned portable projection screen. A bored, preppy-looking waiter leans against the wall, occasionally filling water glasses. After the overture, a sleazy, leisure-suited Macheath and a tastefully dressed Polly treat the audience to an impassioned bit of S&M-tinged foreplay before Macheath takes the microphone to sing "Ballad of Mack the Knife" into the video camera, his face projected on the

screen in the corner. Then follows a quick segue on the same set to Peachum's "Morning Chorale." Filch strips naked as he is inducted into Peachum's army, and the Peachums shout-sing a rushed "No, they can't."

And so it goes. Polly valiantly sings "Seeräuberjenny" in German. Macheath and Tiger Brown portray their master-slave relationship in a brutally staged "Cannon Song." Macheath rapes Polly, leaving her lying on the floor to sing "Barbara Song" into the video camera while the Peachums watch her performance on the screen. Mrs. Peachum performs "The Ballad of Sexual Dependency" topless, while lying upside down over the edge of a hot tub in the brothel. The waiter (surprise!) is Jenny, who joins Macheath in the overcrowded hot tub to recount the history of their obviously homosexual relationship in "The Tango Ballad," without offering an expla-



Polly (Suzan Hanson) sings the "Barbara-Song" as her parents (Philip Littell and Constance Hauman) look on. Photo: Keith Ian Polakoff

nation for the biological impossibility of Jenny's pregnancy.

A few stage antics remain puzzling, such as Polly's habit of vomiting into her purse (morning sickness?) and the minor characters' penchant for eating ice cream-on-a-stick when standing around with nothing to do.

The action in Act Two centers on a real-life black-and-white Los Angeles County police car. Macheath sings his songs while restrained in the back seat, and Polly and Lucy slide over the top of it while struggling through the "Jealousy Duet." Macheath makes an awkward escape, and Lucy-in-keepads performs fellatio on Constable Smith, while her father, Tiger Brown, looks on from the front seat of the police car (perhaps a reflection on the infamous scene in *Powder Her Face* by Thomas Adès, which the company presented in 2001). Macheath becomes a lounge lizard to croon "The Second Threepenny Finale" into the microphone. Macheath is relieved, but then

Lucy, in a final expression of violence and contemporary reality, takes a revolver from her purse and pumps three rounds into him. Macheath falls dead into the trunk of the police car. Happy ending.

Unfortunately, the performance was even more depressing than the concept. On the plus side, the company's artistic director and conductor, Andreas Mitisek, rendered the music faithfully, leading a crack band of nine talented musicians. But the fast-paced and garbled musical numbers were dead-on-arrival and received only polite, unenthusiastic applause, if any at all. The uneven cast of mostly singing actors delivered some strong individual performances, but the production never jelled. Light-voiced Hans Tester made for a uniformly despicable Macheath but seemed uncomfortable in the role and vocally strained. Suzan Hanson played a glamorous and sophisticated Polly (a cross between Martha Stewart and Kathleen Turner) and delivered the best singing of the night, but she failed to surround the big songs with a special aura. Philip Littell, an accomplished writer, actor, and director, portrayed Mr. Peachum as a snappily dressed, quick-witted huckster. Even soprano Constance Hauman's energetic and idiomatic Mrs. Peachum failed to drag the rest of the cast along. (She can be heard in the recent Naxos recording of excerpts from *The Eternal Road*.)

With the exception of Hauman, the cast seemed completely unaware of any of the performance traditions associated with Weill's or Brecht's works.

The only satisfying moment of the evening came with John Altieri's thoughtful and stoic performance of "Solomon Song." Sung by a gay man while slowly traversing the entire length of the stage, the song transformed Jenny from a minor, undeveloped role into one of the most complex and sympathetic characters in the play. It made one think of how Lenya worked magic with the same mix of vulnerability and survival at the Theater de Lys some fifty years ago. For some traditions we can be thankful.

David Farneth
Getty Research Institute

Publisher's Note: The alterations to text and music in the Long Beach Opera production were not authorized and violated the terms of its license from European American Music.

Performances

Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny

*Sächsische Staatsoper
Dresden*

Premiere: 6 May 2005

When I mentioned I would be running to Dresden for a new *Mahagonny*, a colleague asked, “Who’s directing?” An overbooked schedule caused a memory lapse, so I joked, “Some old communist.” Moral: Be careful what you wish for.

The imagery of veteran confrontationist Harry Kupfer remains strong, but its meaning has grown muddled and contradictory. A life-size military helicopter crashes onto the stage, remaining there for the duration of the opera like a production of *Miss Saigon* gone wrong. Leokadja Begbick and her accomplices emerge in American military camouflage. Scattered around the periphery are shells of various bombed-out German edifices, including the Reichstag, a block of apartments, and the Brandenburg Gate (the production premiered as cities throughout Germany and Austria are reflecting on the 60th anniversary of the Allied bombings). Jenny and the girls, also in camouflage, enter via parachutes. A quick rip of Velcro and they are in 1980s disco slut outfits with big hair, skirts too tight, and heels too high (Jenny wears something which Cyndi Lauper wouldn’t be caught dead in). Moses and Willy get a jogging suit and a leisure suit respectively, and Begbick appears to have inherited the wardrobe of the late Divine, the 500-pound transvestite who starred in many a John Waters film (a zebra-striped number is straight out of *Female Trouble*).

Ordinary Joes enter through the audience in street clothes and whiteface. Johann Ackermann and his lumberjack buddies arrive in oilskins carrying battered suitcases but, with another snap of Velcro, transform into suited businessmen wielding

briefcases. As capitalism in Mahagonny thrives, the ruins disappear and are replaced by modest houses and cottages. When the new middle class grows fearful while watching news of the approaching storms on TV, they sing “Where is the wall that will protect us?” and, sure enough, up goes the Berlin Wall, complete with graffiti and “Verbot” posters. And who should break through with a pickax but—big surprise—Johann.

Post-typhoon, the houses are replaced by modern office towers, some resembling New York’s World Financial Center (I kept expecting to see the Statue of Liberty at any moment). It took barely a second to realize the inevitable: the towers would be blown up by the end of the opera (they were). During “Benares Song,” red ban-

favorite one reads on the front, “Gegen mich!,” on the back, “Für mich!”). In the final moments, the entire stage begins to sink, the curtain falls, and the Narrator escapes through the auditorium, inexplicably leading a hitherto unseen little boy. Amidst this deadly dull polemic devoid of humor, I kept fantasizing about how *Mahagonny* would look in the hands of the new generation of *Regietheater* practitioners like Claus Guth, Tatanja Gurbaca, or (especially) the dynamic duo of Jossi Wieler and Sergio Morabito.

Blessedly, Sebastian Weigle and the Staatskapelle were on hand to honor Weill. Weigle favored fast tempi, but never at the expense of poetry. Tiny details brought one joy after another: a bluesy clarinet, some pungent piano punctuation, a wistful slide guitar, a lowdown dirty sax. I have never heard the horn flourishes during Johann’s “Du darfst es!” rant played better.

While no single strong characterization emerged, Brigitte Christensen’s singing as Jenny was a dream: hers is a creamy, reedy voice not unlike that of Renée Fleming, equipped with a natural trill and lovely decrescendo. Douglas Nasrawi lacked absolutely everything for Johann, from stage presence to voice. Singing behind the beat, wobbling, and gurgling, he might be passable as a provincial Herodes, but his grating, pinched character tenor is simply ugly. I dreaded his approaching aria and was rewarded with a scream where a high note ought to have been. Leandra Overmann could probably sing Begbick’s music well enough and does so with the upper half. But there is a fatal register break and Overmann has been instructed to yell, scream, bark, and otherwise aggress upon the vocal line with a vengeance that makes Nina Hagen sound like Julie London. The result is both monstrous and monotonous. The rest of the cast was capable, if never inspired. Kupfer’s vision might have been noteworthy 25 years ago, but in 2005 it is hopelessly out of touch, dated, and, ultimately, irrelevant.



Begbick (Leandra Overmann) stands atop the helicopter with Trinity Moses (Rolf Tomaszewski) and Willy (Tom Martinsen). Photo: Matthias Creutziger

ners fill the stage and the protagonists wear red T-shirts adorned with faces (the Semperoper apparently decided that a reviewer for the *Kurt Weill Newsletter* was only worthy of a seat in the third balcony, so I am not totally sure, but I think I discerned the visages of Lenin, Ché Guevara, Castro, and Brecht).

There is the usual parade of placard bearers through the auditorium and across the stage, but with a nice twist: each sign carries an opposing rant on the back, and the marchers kept flipping them. Among the pros and cons are slogans referring to Germany’s unemployment crisis, problems with racism, and political extremism (my

Larry L. Lash
Vienna

Performances

Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny

Theater Basel

Premiere: 14 September 2005

Of all the collaborations between Weill and Brecht, *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* appears to be the most resistant to staging. While capitalism, greed, and skepticism about the progress of technology are as timely as ever, an overtly moralistic treatment of these issues seems somewhat dated after World War II, the Cold War, and particularly after 1989. The directors of some of the most important recent productions—Graham Vick (Florence, 1990 and Paris, 1995), Ruth Berghaus (Stuttgart, 1992), Peter Zadek (Salzburg, 1998), and Jérôme Savary (Buenos Aires, 2002)—were very well aware of this risk.

The British celebrity director Nigel Lowery, who not only directed but also designed the sets and costumes of *Aufstieg* for the opening of the 2005–06 season at the Theater Basel, avoided a literal rendering of the 1920s libretto and set the opera in the early 21st century. Given his reputation (or notoriety), it is hardly surprising that Lowery's staging does not begin with a deserted landscape and a broken-down truck as directed by Brecht and Weill. On the contrary, we are confronted with an abandoned city in which rats dash up and down the empty streets. The three protagonists on the run from the police—Begbick, Fatty and Dreieinigkeitsmoses—come up through a trapdoor in space suits; presumably they have landed on another planet or entered into a space ship. Soon they discover a discarded control booth with blinking lights and a skeleton on the floor. The apocalyptic setting changes as Jenny Hill arrives with “six girls,” all dressed like Disney's Snow White. A little later, Jim and the rest of the gang turn up wearing stylized cowboy outfits.

Lowery uses two devices extremely effectively, a revolving stage and a giant video screen installed over the control booth. Stage center is dominated by the revolving stage on which a grand piano materializes for a honky-tonk version of

“Gebet einer Jungfrau” (“Snow White”)—Jenny is followed by her loyal “disciples,” the gold diggers in astronaut helmets). Later the stage accommodates a toilet stall doing triple duty as bordello, the box office for the

boxing match, and finally the execution chamber for Jim. Lowery owes a debt to Caspar Neher, who used slide projections for the 1931 production in Berlin at the Theater am Schiffbauerdamm, but in the Basel production the slides have been modernized as short video clips. The big screen displays biting commentary which complements the stage action. For instance, Barbie and Ken dolls are involved in a wild sex orgy and later in a vigorous boxing match. At other times the videos are integrated into the action: during Jim's trial a soccer game—a proven means of sedating a crowd—is shown, and all the Mahagonny denizens watch the big screen eagerly. The grotesque costumes reach their limit at this trial: Dreieinigkeitsmoses is dressed like a bishop and Begbick as the Queen of England.

However, towards the end of the production Lowery's witty ideas, which often are a bit scattershot, fall short of the mark. During Jim's execution Brecht's *Verfremdungseffekt* seems to be switched off. We must not feel any sympathy for Jim, who did not behave much differently in Mahagonny from all the other men, except that he could not pay his bill. Nevertheless, we do feel compassion for him, mostly because Daniel Kirch sang and played the part excellently, almost too realistically. Unfortunately, in the scene following the execution, Lowery stages the riots without tension or excitement. In the libretto, Brecht and Weill ask the demonstrators to hold signs in the air with slogans like “FOR MONEY” or “FOR THE WAR OF ALL AGAINST ALL,” and so forth. In Lowery's production the rioters walk around aimlessly until some of them form a single row facing the audience. Then they



Jenny (Maya Boog) in the control booth. Photo: Sebastian Hoppe

open their jackets, so that the watchwords are visible on their T-shirts. This seems an odd departure from a well-conceived idea by Brecht and Weill; brandishing placards makes for a much more effective symbol of the protesters' growing rage.

The opera ends with a giant orange box slowly descending onto the rioters and imprisoning them. On the box is written, “Game Over.” How do we interpret this conclusion? Did we only see a game, like the video games on the big screen? Did this “rise and fall of the city of Mahagonny” only take place in cyberspace? Are the emptiness, shiny appearance, greed, and vulgarity of the superficial city of Mahagonny to be taken lightly? Is a serious critique of capitalism and the drive for technological progress not timely anymore? The audience was baffled and paid their tribute to the artists with rather tepid applause. No wonder! Despite Jürg Henneberger, who conducted the Sinfonieorchester Basel with great discipline, a certain boldness and edge were missing. In other words, Henneberger's musical interpretation matched Lowery's smooth staging. Jenny (Maya Boog) also suffered from the same slickness: the “Alabama-Song” sounded innocent, as if it were indeed sung by Snow White, cleansed of any erotic allusions. Not a bad production on the whole, but we would have liked to see a few more rough edges.

Michael Baumgartner
Milton, Mass.

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