

topical Weill

Volume 25

Number 2

Fall 2007

A supplement to the Kurt Weill Newsletter

History Repeats Itself



Teresa Stratas at the Met, 1979. Photo: J. Heffernan

When James Levine first brought *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* to the Metropolitan Opera in November 1979, *Opera News* published an editorial beginning: “Kurt Weill at the Met? There are sure to be those who are shocked at such a turn of events.” Maestro Levine defended the work in a *New York Times* feature article: “Yes, I suppose some will object, but I wish those people wouldn’t deal so categorically with musical theater. Besides, whatever people may say about *Mahagonny*, it is not cabaret or musical comedy—it is an opera and the most significant, influential example of its style.” Twenty-eight years later, *Mahagonny* is well established as a repertoire piece in major opera houses around the world, and Levine, now Music Director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra as well as the Met, has decided to conduct the work at the 2008 Tanglewood Festival, featuring the talented young vocal and instrumental fellows of the Tanglewood Music Center. Performances will take place 9–11 August 2008.

Street Scene saw a handful of productions in the 1950s (Düsseldorf’s Deutsche Oper am Rhein in 1955, New York City Opera in 1959) and 1960s, but otherwise the work had been seldom revived since its original Broadway run when New York’s Manhattan School of Music presented *Street Scene* in February 1976, with a young undergraduate, Judith Blazer (seen on Broadway this year in *LoveMusik*), as Rose. This season, during the celebration of the Manhattan School’s ninetieth anniversary, *Street Scene* will be produced again (30 April, 2 and 4 May 2008). Jay Lesenger will direct and Hal France will conduct.

For Future Historians

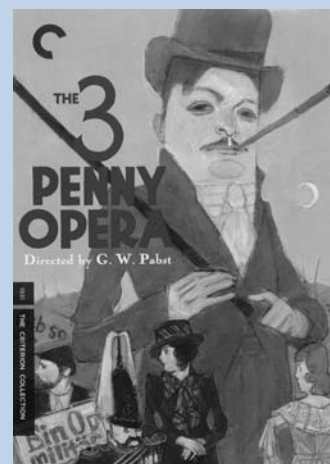
A trio of new recordings documenting outstanding contemporary Weill productions will be released in the immediate future. Los Angeles Opera’s *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*, conducted by James Conlon and starring Audra McDonald, Patti LuPone, and Anthony Dean Griffey, will be available for purchase on DVD from EuroArts Music International on 18 December 2007, the day after audiences in many areas of the United States can see it on PBS television (broadcast dates vary according to local PBS schedules). David Pountney’s production of *Der Kuhhandel*, last seen at the Vienna Volksoper, will be preserved on a Capriccio DVD due out early in 2008. And the original cast album of Broadway’s *LoveMusik*, led by Michael Cerveris as Kurt Weill and Donna Murphy as Lotte Lenya, is due out 27 November from Ghostlight Records.



Audra McDonald and Anthony Dean Griffey in *Mahagonny* at the Los Angeles Opera. Photo: Robert Millard

Dreigroschen Redux

This fall, related events in Berlin and New York hark back to the early days of *Die Dreigroschenoper*. Robert Wilson’s signature staging of the work continues to be performed by the Berliner Ensemble at Theater am Schiffbauerdamm, where *Die Dreigroschenoper* had its premiere on 31 August 1928. In New York, the Criterion Collection has released a deluxe two-DVD set (region 1) including restorations of G.W. Pabst’s German and French film versions of the work, scholarly commentary, and a new documentary made especially for the DVD. Readers wishing to learn more about *Die Dreigroschenoper* can visit the Kurt Weill Foundation’s informational site: www.threepennyopera.org.



Kurt Weill Foundation Programs

Lotte Lenya Competition News

Past Lenya Competition winners continue to light up major opera and musical theater stages, demonstrating the versatility of the contestants. Elaine Alvarez (2003 prizewinner) made a critically acclaimed surprise debut at Lyric Opera of Chicago on 1 October 2007, portraying Mimi in *La bohème*. "Far from displaying any obvious nerves, Alvarez looked and sounded like a poised veteran," wrote John von Rhein in *The Chicago Tribune*. "The voice bloomed under pressure the way you want a Puccini voice to bloom, yet kept its warm tonal finish when she floated the high pianissimos opera lovers wait for in rapt anticipation." Alvarez continued as Mimi through all six October performances, joined on stage by Nicole Cabell (2002) as Musetta.



Elaine Alvarez

Erik Liberman (2005), most recently seen in *LoveMusik* on Broadway, starred in this fall's revival of Sondheim's *Merrily We Roll Along* at the distinguished Signature Theatre near Washington, D.C. *The Baltimore Sun* reviewer reported that "Erik Liberman has a wry, flexible face and an understated charm as Charley, and his rendition of 'Franklin Shepard, Inc.' is one of the show's comic highlights."

Prizes for the 2008 Lotte Lenya Competition for Singers will increase to \$10,000 (First Prize), \$7,500 (Second Prize) and \$5,000 (Third Prize). Applications must be received by 14 January 2008. Artists born after 31 December 1975 and before 1 January 1989 are eligible to apply, and regional auditions will be held in Chicago, IL (1 February), Boston, MA (6 February), Rochester, NY (23 February), Lawrence, KS (29 February), and New York City (7 and 8 March). If contestants are unable to participate in any of the scheduled regional auditions, they may instead submit a DVD or videotape, which must contain all of the required repertoire selections, by 15 February. Finalists selected from the regional auditions and DVDs will participate in the finals, to be held on 12 April 2008 at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester. Further information regarding competition rules and repertoire requirements is available on the Kurt Weill Foundation website: www.kwf.org.

2007 Kurt Weill Prize to Bruce McClung

The 2007 Kurt Weill Prize for outstanding scholarship on twentieth-century musical theater, carrying a cash award of \$2500, has been won by Bruce D. McClung, Associate Professor of Musicology at the University of Cincinnati – College Conservatory of Music, for his book, *Lady in the Dark: Biography of a Musical* (Oxford University Press, 2006). In his production history incorporating scripts, correspondence, clippings from Gertrude Lawrence's scrapbooks, and other artifacts, McClung traces a revolutionary and controversial work through its Broadway run, national tour, and revivals. *Lady in the Dark: Biography of a Musical* also received the George Freedley Award, 2006 Special Jury Prize, from the Theatre Library Association. In addition to the book prize, a \$500 Kurt Weill Prize for outstanding article has been awarded to Elizabeth B. Crist, Assistant Professor of Music at Princeton University, for "Mutual Responses in the Midst of an Era: Aaron Copland's *The Tender Land* and Leonard Bernstein's *Candide*" (*The Journal of Musicology*, Volume 23, Issue 4, fall 2006). In her article Crist compares a pair of stage works critical of McCarthyism, with special focus on two crucial musical ensembles, and examines the works' broader political implications.



The Kurt Weill Prize is awarded biennially for distinguished scholarship on twentieth-century musical theater, and the 2007 prize covered books and articles first published in the calendar years 2005 and 2006. The 2007 four-member selection panel consisted of representatives from the Modern Language Association, the American Musicological Society, the American Society for Theatre Research, and the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music.

2007 Professional Performance Grants

The guidelines for the Kurt Weill Foundation's grant program include a special funding category for major professional projects, for which there is no application deadline. Since the previous issue of the newsletter, upon recommendation from an independent review panel, the Board of Trustees of the Kurt Weill Foundation has awarded the following five mid-year Professional Performance grants:

- Wexford Festival Opera, *Der Silbersee*
(31 May–15 June 2007)
- Cantata Singers, Boston, "Unveiling Weill"
2007–2008 Weill Season
- Opera Theater of Pittsburgh, *Lost in the Stars*
(21–24 February 2008)
- Virginia Arts Festival, Norfolk, *Lost in the Stars*
(23–27 April 2008)
- The Opera Group, London, tour of *Street Scene*
(4 July–1 August 2008)

The Kurt Weill Foundation for Music funds research and performance projects related to Kurt Weill and his wife, actress-singer Lotte Lenya. Grant guidelines, application forms, and further information on the grant program are available on the Kurt Weill Foundation website (www.kwf.org) or by telephone (212.505.5240).

Upcoming Performances

More Mahagonnys in Germany

The current spate of *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* productions in Germany continues with two new stagings, both getting underway in January 2008, in Essen and Mainz. In Essen's Aalto-Theater, conductor Stefan Soltesz and director Barrie Kosky lead a cast including Robert Wörle as Fatty, the role he played in Los Angeles Opera's recent production. The premiere on 26 January will be followed by thirteen additional performances in early 2008. The Staatstheater Mainz production will be guided by Catherine Rückwardt, conductor, and Matthias Fontheim, director (premiere 12 January). On 13 January, the Mainz premiere will be followed by a chamber music concert, "Kurt Weill und die Novembergruppe," including *Frauentanz* (Tamara Gallo, soprano) along with works by Stefan Wolpe and Hanns Eisler. Last season's *Mahagonny* at Komische Oper Berlin, directed by Andreas Homoki, will be revived on 12 April 2008; changes from last year include Hermann Bäumer, conductor, Noëmi Nadelmann as Jenny, and Christoph Späth as Jimmy. Performances continue through 4 June.



Julius Rudel

Lost in the Stars in Pittsburgh, Norfolk

Real-life twins Herbert and Eugene Perry have been cast as Stephen Kumalo and his brother John, respectively, in the upcoming co-production of *Lost in the Stars* at Opera Theater of Pittsburgh (21–24 February 2008) and Virginia Arts Festival in Norfolk (23–27 April). Gretha Boston will portray Irina; Julius Rudel conducts and Jonathan Eaton directs.



Jonathan Eaton

16th Annual Kurt Weill Fest

From 29 February until 9 March, the 2008 Kurt Weill Festival returns to Dessau featuring conductor/chansonnier HK Gruber as this year's Artist-In-Residence. Performance highlights of the festival include the Violin Concerto, with violin soloist Kolja Blacher conducting the Mahler Chamber Orchestra (29 February); *Der Lindberghflug* and *The Ballad of Magna Carta* with Gruber conducting the MDR Orchester and Rundfunkchor (2 March); an evening of songs from tenor Ian Bostridge and soprano Sophie Daneman; and a new all-Weill revue entitled *Broadway Dreams* from soprano Teri Hansen and baritone Nmon Ford (9 March). The Festival will also host an international conference entitled "Germany's Reception of the Broadway Musical" (7–8 March).



Gretha Boston



Nmon Ford

Boston's Cantata Singers Unveil Weill

Boston's Cantata Singers began a season-long series, "Unveiling Weill," with a performance of *Der Lindberghflug* (23 September 2007) at the Collings Foundation Aviation Museum outside Boston (reviews on page 4a). The season proceeds at Jordan Hall, Boston, with "Die Legende vom toten Soldaten" (9 November), *Propheten* (18 and 20 January 2008), the Violin Concerto (14 and 16 March), and Symphony no. 2 (9 May); all concerts are conducted by David Hoose. In addition to the Cantata Singers' main season, chamber concerts incorporating Weill songs will take place at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (17 February) and at Leventhal-Sidman Jewish Community Center (6 April).



Teri Hansen

Symphony No. 2 in Belgium

Conductor Etienne Siebens takes the Symfonieorkest Vlaanderen on a four-city tour through Belgium performing Weill's Symphony No. 2 in early April 2008. Beginning in Bruges on 3 April at the Concertgebouw, the orchestra will travel to the Paleis voor Schone Kunsten in Brussels (5 April) and the deSingel in Antwerp (6 April) before their final concert in Brussels at the Concertzaal De Bijloke on 12 April.

Greek National Opera's Season to include *Sins, Zar*

Athens will see two Weill stage productions mounted in the upcoming months as part of the 2007–08 season at the Greek National Opera. *Die sieben Todsünden* will premiere on 23 November for a week's worth of performances with choreography by Kim Branstrup; Martin André conducts. Beginning 10 April 2008, *Der Zar lässt sich fotografieren* will run for 4 performances through 15 April under the baton of Theodore Antoniou; Tzeni Arseni directs.

Press Clippings

Der Lindberghflug, Cantata Singers, Boston (23 September 2007)

“Weill’s music brims with the imaginative richness of his *Mahagonny Songspiel*, here distilled into wonderfully concise and distinctive episodes for orchestra, chorus, and three male soloists. The sounds of the nightclub mingle with sturdy symphonic traditions; fidgety counterpoint conveys the restlessness of the waiting crowds; a lonely



David Hoose

Lindbergh talks poignantly to his motor over a bed of somber woodwind chords. . . . On Sunday, David Hoose led a surely paced and sharply drawn account, his combined forces sounding strong and well-prepared. As Charles Lindbergh, William Hite sang with a sweet-toned tenor, though relying less on his printed score would have allowed him to inhabit his role more commandingly. David Kravitz excelled in the smaller baritone solos, and Mark Andrew Cleveland was a solid bass soloist.”—Jeremy Eichler, *The Boston Globe* (26 September 2007)

“It’s a gem. The music is inventive and memorable, both ironic and haunting. Some of it echoes recent Weill: Lindbergh is introduced by a tango with a woozy clarinet solo out of *Dreigroschenoper* and *Mahagonny* (“My name is Charles Lindbergh. I was born in America”—in Lys Symonette’s effective English translation, which Hoose chose). . . . The Cantata Singers chorus and orchestra were in top form. And so were the soloists: Bass-baritone Mark Andrew Cleveland narrating, baritone David Kravitz as the voice of New York City (together they have a funny scene as Scottish fishermen convinced that anything made out of iron or steel would fall into the water), and tenor William Hite as a heroic Lindbergh. Hoose built the piece to an inexorable climax. The venue itself contributed to the excitement. This special fundraising benefit took place in a hangar at the Collings Foundation Aviation Museum out in picturesque Stow.”—Lloyd Schwartz, *The Phoenix* (26 September 2007)

String Quartet, op. 8, Bargemusic in Brooklyn (27 June 2007)

“When four string players from the Juilliard School banded together more than ten years ago as a quartet devoted to challenging contemporary works, they chose the name Flux Quartet to convey that music itself is in a constant state of motion and transition. . . . The concert was tremendously exciting, though as always some of the credit goes to the setting for this popular series: an actual barge docked at the Fulton Ferry Landing near the Brooklyn Bridge and seating about 160. . . . Kurt Weill’s String Quartet (op. 8) was written in 1923, when Weill was just twenty-three. It was easy to be lulled by the deceptively sweet melody of the opening movement. Soon it became clear that the tune was floating nervously atop boldly unstable harmony. As this precocious work progresses, you hear hints of Mahler, French Impressionism, even Schoenberg.”—Anthony Tommasini, *The New York Times* (29 June 2007)

The Flux Quartet performed Weill’s String Quartet again on 31 August as part of the Ostrava Days 2007 Festival in the Czech Republic.

Berlin Philharmonic Plays Weill: Violin Concerto (18 May 2007), *Die sieben Todsünden* (1 June 2007)

“Regrettably, the *Threepenny Opera*’s international success and Weill’s infectious ‘song style’ have completely overshadowed his early Violin Concerto with its extremely witty dialogue. People have compared it to the adventurous meanderings of a violinist through the musical landscapes of the early years following the Great War. Indeed, in its constant thirst for adventure, the Concerto draws on a variety of wellsprings from Busoni and Schoenberg. There is a wonderful dialogue with the agitated winds. The work pays a visit to every conceivable possibility for the violin, but it cannot settle on a single spring that might lead to a stream. It makes solid promises for the future, only to toss them overboard in a violin’s heartbeat. The latter is animated splendidly, however, by Kolja Blacher, who shows liveliness, temperament, and a love for the mercurial nature of the piece. He carries it in his hands. Claudio Abbado’s great care ensures a pleasing flow.”—Klaus Geitel, *Berliner Morgenpost* (20 May 2007)

“Kurt Weill’s *Die sieben Todsünden* is a nasty, jazzed-up classical piece, a stroke of genius out of the American gutter with two scintillating protagonists: the sisters Anna I and Anna II. Angelika Kirchschrager voices the dialogue as an inner monologue between conscience and unscrupulousness. She never settles for just sounding beautiful, but instead has the courage to sing with ugliness—without abandoning her vocal technique. The Berlin Philharmonic accompanies all of this rather obediently, as if they need to polish Weill’s cultural criticism to a high gloss, as if they don’t want to dirty their hands with his music. That is astounding coming from Rattle, from whom one would have expected more modernity, more grip, more edge.”—Axel Brüggemann, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (3 June 2007)



The Flux Quartet (l to r): Dave Eggar, Max Mandel, Conrad Harris, and Tom Chiu

***Berlin to Broadway* at Chicago's Light Opera Works (30 September–11 November 2007)**

“In adapting what’s basically a cabaret revue, director Kurt Johns has made the crucial mistake of trying to dramatize, contextualize, periodize or otherwise goose up each of the thirty-two songs. This leads to lots of ludicrous moments—such as when pre-World War II France is denoted by a singer wearing a beret and clasping a footlong cigarette holder—and to even more just plain unnecessary ones, where Weill’s beautiful, powerful, subtle, often disturbing music gets acted into the ground. . . . At its best, *Berlin to Broadway* can take us back to Weill’s epoch-making Weimar style, with its angry, despairing oompah rhythms sounding like the last calliope on



Berlin to Broadway cast (l to r): Brian Herriot, Natalie Ford, Jonathan Wagner, and Beth Gervain

Earth. It can introduce us to such rare gems as *Knickerbocker Holiday* and *Street Scene*. It can remind us of the power of *Lost in the Stars*. Johns had the means to produce that best-case version. His six-member orchestra is tight and his cast is strong. Natalie Ford has a fine, sharp soprano. Beth Gervain’s singing is full of straightforward expressiveness. Despite a misconceived mustache and a tendency to oversell, Jonathan Wagner has one of the show’s few unmitigated successes with a yearning rendition of ‘Lonely House.’ And Brian Herriot seems to take every opportunity to bring Weill’s music back to center stage. He salvages some wonderfully spare passages from ‘September Song’ before it’s turned into another mini-melodrama.”
—Tony Adler, *Chicago Tribune* (10 October 2007)

Symphony no. 2 at the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam (13 September 2007)

“The oldest piece, Kurt Weill’s Second Symphony, whose world premiere in 1934 was given by the Concertgebouw Orchestra, was not the most sensational piece of its day, but it is more original and on the whole somewhat more interesting than the other two works featured on the program. Aside from a few phrases in the brass, Weill is barely recognizable as the composer of that extensive legacy of theatrical works done in collaboration with Brecht. This symphony is primarily a successful example of the neo-classical style which emerged in Germany between the wars. Markus Stenz showed himself to be a fine conductor. Just as with his other appearances directing the Concertgebouw Orchestra, he had all his ducks in a row. Everything went off without a hitch, with the ease you expect from musicians who have mastered the music. Conductor and orchestra executed the works with the requisite emotional charge, structural integrity, and technical mastery.”—Roeland Hazendonk, *De Telegraaf* (18 September 2007)



Markus Stenz

***Die sieben Todsünden*, Teatro Gran Rex, Buenos Aires (18 September 2007)**



Ute Lemper

“The appearance of Ute Lemper generated enthusiasm from the packed audience at Teatro Gran Rex, who attended the compelling local premiere of *Los siete pecados capitales* by Kurt Weill. With the help of supertitles, one was able to follow the incisive, unmistakable, and always valid text of Bertolt Brecht, which through Ute Lemper’s singing voice incarnated the two Annas who cross the United States in order to raise money while confronting human misery. With absolute mastery of her trade, and totally immersed in the music that she illustrated with precise and revelatory gestures, Lemper taught a lesson in the style she has made all her own. The same can be said of Latham-König in his orchestral conception, as well as the magnificent quartet of Argentinean singers, among whom bass Hernán Iturralde and tenor Osvaldo Peroni stood out, proving ideal for their character roles. The only regret, from a purist’s point of view, was the use of electronic amplification, but the German singer’s use of a microphone—as she is not a classical singer—was without a doubt motivated by the necessity to balance her voice with the orchestra.”—Daniel Varacalli Costas, *La Prensa* (20 September 2007)

“Berlin im Licht”—HK Gruber at Carnegie’s Zankel Hall (8 November 2007)

Taking its title from a Kurt Weill song, the “Berlin in Lights” Festival was presented at New York’s Carnegie Hall 2–18 November 2007. Familiar Weill faces such as HK Gruber, Ute Lemper, and Max Raabe and the Palastorchester were featured, alongside up-and-coming singers, in concerts at Carnegie Hall and in cabaret evenings at the Neue Galerie Museum’s Café Sabarsky.

“[HK Gruber] is a riveting interpreter of these sardonic cabaret songs, bittersweet ballads and vehemently socialistic anthems. If theater songs artfully balance words and music, for Mr. Gruber words come first. Take ‘Berlin im Licht,’ with words and music by Weill, which opened the program (and provided the festival’s title). This grimly haunting song suggests that if you want to see Berlin as it really is during a stroll about town, sunshine is not enough. In Mr. Gruber’s performance a line like ‘Komm, mach mal Licht’ (‘C’mon, let’s get some light on it’) comes across in a verbal flourish of sputtered consonants and phlegmy vowels. Yet in his way, Mr. Gruber can also bend a phrase with poignancy, as in his wistful account of ‘Peachum’s Morning Hymn’ from the Brecht-Weill masterpiece *The Threepenny Opera*. The 18 players of the Zankel Band, with crucial roles for accordion, banjo and harmonium, caught the jazzy idioms of the music. . . . Weill’s *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*, an instrumental suite adapted from *The Threepenny Opera*, was a revelation: take away the lyrics, and the sheer musical richness of Weill’s score comes through with new freshness. The protest songs were stunning in more ways than one. Weill’s ‘Mussel from Margate’ tells of a man who once sold painted mussel shells. But an oil tank has been erected on the shore, and a nasty smell pervades the town. Visions of oil burning from “Azerbaijan to Tibet” are evoked. Hearing Mr. Gruber practically shouting the refrain of ‘Shell! Shell! Shell!’—referring to the oil company, not just the little mussel—it was sobering to realize how little things have changed since the ’20s. And what a great song.”—Anthony Tommasini, *The New York Times* (10 November 2007)

Gruber’s 2007–2008 season continues with performances of *Tolvskillingsoperan*, the Swedish title of *Die Dreigroschenoper*, with the Svenska Kammarorkestern in Örebro (30 November–1 December). A return to the Ensemble Modern brings Weill concerts with soprano Ute Gfrerer in Frankfurt (31 December), Essen (2 January 2008), and a concert *Dreigroschenoper* with Greek narration in Athens (22 January). After appearances at the Kurt Weill Fest, Dessau, Gruber includes Symphony No. 2 and *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik* on a 4 April concert with the BBC Philharmonic Sheffield. He leads the Bayerischer Rundfunk Symphony Orchestra in *Die sieben Todsünden*, again with Gfrerer (10–11 April), and rounds out his season with another Symphony No. 2 with Radio Kamer Filharmonie at Amsterdam’s Concertgebouw (31 May).

Weill at Spoleto Festival USA, Charleston

In addition to the well-received production of *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* (review on p. 22), the producers of the 2007 Spoleto Festival USA offered Weill songs in two chamber music programs:

(5 June 2007): “On Music in Time IV we heard an arrangement of Kurt Weill’s ‘Alabama Song’ by Morton Feldman (1926–1987), a New York composer known for lengthy pieces filled with sparse, quiet, slowly developing musical motifs. It was rather startling, but quite enjoyable to hear this savvy, snazzy, harmonically wild transformation for seven-piece dance band, originally written for some of Feldman’s jazz-playing friends in the East village, and only recently rediscovered by his publisher. Tammy Hensrud, who sang the number with appealingly earthy intensity in *Mahagonny*, reprised it here with great aplomb.”—Joshua Rosenblum, *The Post and Courier* (7 June 2007)

(6 June 2007): “Soprano Tammy Hensrud demonstrated, in a superb recital of Kurt Weill songs, that her turn as Jenny in *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* was just the tip of the iceberg in terms of her range as a performer. Communicating the words was her priority, but her singing was unfailingly of the first order. I especially liked the astonishment she displayed in ‘Surabaya Johnny’. . . . Hensrud shared the program with the sonorous baritone Jonathan Michie, who also has the elusive, in-between style of Kurt Weill down perfectly. Michie, still a graduate student at Eastman, sang the rarely heard *Four Walt Whitman Songs* with a vibrant, focused delivery and full dramatic involvement. Then he donned a likeably arrogant persona for ‘This Is the Life,’ a full-fledged solo musical scene from *Love Life*, and delivered the final line ‘I’m free!’ with an absolutely helpless look on his face. So often in Weill songs, people say the opposite of what they mean. In the final piece, a very likable duet from the forgotten Weill/Ira Gershwin musical *The Firebrand of Florence*, Hensrud and Michie both adopted glamorous old-style movie musical personas, and even danced a little waltz during the bridge. Pianist Michael Baitzer played with outstanding affinity throughout.”—Joshua Rosenblum, *The Post and Courier* (8 June 2007)

New French *Lady in the Dark*

The creative team responsible for the 2006 *Signé Venus* (*One Touch of Venus*) seen at Opéra de Lyon and on tour, director Jean Lacornerie and conductor Scott Stroman, will bring a new production of *Lady in the Dark* to France in spring 2008. *Venus* co-producers Théâtre de la Renaissance and Opéra de Lyon will be joined by a new partner, Opéra de Rennes; pit duties will be shared by Orchestre de l’Opéra de Lyon and Orchestre de Bretagne. Tina May leads the cast as Liza Elliott. *Lady in the Dark* will premiere at Théâtre de la Renaissance, in the Lyon suburb of Oullins, on 28 April 2008, with additional performances through 7 May, then travel to Rennes (16–24 May), Orient (26 May) and Vannes (28 May).

Opéra de Lyon will also mount a revival of the 2006 production of *Celui qui dit oui* (*Der Jasager*) as part of its four-opera Japan Festival in March 2008. Nicholas Jenkins conducts and Richard Brunel directs, at Théâtre de la Renaissance (12–15 March).

International News Briefs

Ute Lemper takes *Sins* around the globe



John Mauceri

On 17 April 2008, Ute Lemper performs *The Seven Deadly Sins* with the Hudson Shad vocal ensemble and the Nashville Symphony, conducted by Weill veteran John Mauceri. This year Lemper has sung the saga of the two Annas to audiences in Buenos Aires, at the Teatro Gran Rex, conducted by Jan Latham-König (18 September); Moscow, with the National Philharmonic of Russia conducted by Vladimir Spivakov (5 October); Belfast, with the Ulster Orchestra conducted by Robert Ziegler (26 October); and Dublin alongside the RTE Concert Orchestra, also conducted by Ziegler (29 October).

There *IS* a Place Called Youkali...

According to Weill and Roger Fernay, there is no place named Youkali—it is “un rêve, une folie.” But now the German owner of Boquitas Pinatadas, a hotel in Buenos Aires, has decided to rename his establishment “Youkali.” In the song, Youkali is “le pays de nos désirs,” but Youkali Hotel is somewhat more modest. There are five guest rooms, each named after a famous glacier, and a bar designed to resemble a Berlin butcher shop. To each his own dream!



There Where She Loved

Choreographer Christopher Wheeldon’s dance company, Morphoses/The Wheeldon Company, began its debut season this year with a program featuring Wheeldon’s *There Where She Loved*, a ballet that includes three Weill songs: “Nannas Lied,” “Je ne t’aime pas,” and “Surabaya Johnny.” The company presented three evenings at the New York City Center in October and will appear with the Washington Ballet for five performances in late January and early February 2008.

Weill at the Aspen Music Festival

Three of the four winners of the 2007 Aspen Music Festival Vocal Competition performed Weill arias in a Sinfonia concert conducted by Lawrence Renes on 1 August. Mezzosoprano Sarah Mesko sang “Stay Well,” tenor Alex Mansoori sang “Lonely House,” and soprano Carla Janzen sang “Somehow I Never Could Believe” in a showcase for the winners of this year’s competition.

Songs from Norway



The Norwegian ensemble established in 2004 dedicated to performing Kurt Weill songs, Music for a While, recently released their debut CD, *Weill Variations*, on Grappa Records. In addition to performing with the group, lead vocalist Tora Augestad will join HK Gruber and the Ensemble Modern as Jenny in a concert performance of *Die Dreigroschenoper* in Athens on 22 January 2008.

Carole Farley CD on Naxos

Classic American Love Songs, the latest CD from soprano Carole Farley, was recently released on Naxos American Classics and features five Weill songs. Alongside pianist John Constable, Ms. Farley performs “Love in a Mist,” “The Romance of a Lifetime,” “You Are Unforgettable,” “The River Is So Blue,” and “The Picture on the Wall.”



Carole Farley

Sins at the Teatro Lirico Giuseppe Verdi



Teatro Lirico Giuseppe Verdi

Next spring the Teatro Lirico Giuseppe Verdi, Trieste, will depart from its usual repertoire with a Weill/Bernstein double bill, *Die sieben Todsünden/Trouble in Tahiti* (12–19 April 2008). Daniela Mazzucato will portray both heroines in a production staged by Giulio Ciabatti; Will Humburg conducts.

News from Down Under

Songstress Janet Roddick has taken her all-Weill concert program, which premiered on 6 March 2006 at the New Zealand International Festival, into the recording studio. The resulting CD, *The Songs of Kurt Weill*, issued by New Zealand’s Braille Records, includes eleven Weill songs taken from *Mahagonny*, *Die Dreigroschenoper*, *Happy End*, *One Touch of Venus*, and *Lost in the Stars*.

New Publications

BOOKS

Faßhauer, Tobias. *Ein Aparter im Unaparten: Untersuchungen zum Songstil von Kurt Weill*. Saarbrücken: Pfau, 2007.

SCORES

Die Legende vom toten Soldaten für gemischten Chor [SATB] a cappella. Wien: Universal Edition, c1930 (UE 33 673).

Fünf Songs aus der Dreigroschenoper arrangiert für gemischten Chor [SATB] von Gisela Kanngießer. Wien: Universal Edition, c2007 (UE 33 663).

ARTICLES

Fischer, Ulrich. "Die Marke 'Dreigroschenoper,'" *Dreigroschenheft* 3/2007, pp. 5–10.

Rabel, Robert J. "Odysseus Almost Makes It to Broadway: The *Ulysses Africanus* of Kurt Weill and Maxwell Anderson," *International Journal of Classical Tradition* 13, no. 4 (Spring 2007), pp. 550–70.

VIDEOS

Dawn at Dusk, live recital by Dawn Upshaw with the London Sinfonietta, recorded 1996, Kultur D4198 (includes "Lonely House" and "Saga of Jenny").

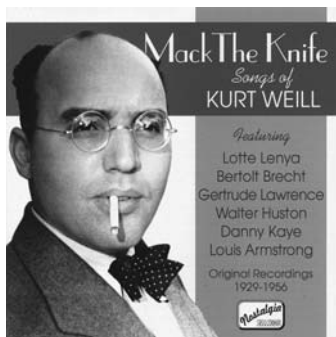
The 3Penny Opera, German and French versions of film directed by G.W. Pabst (1931) with supplementary material, Criterion Collection 405 (2 DVDs).

RECORDINGS

LoveMusik, original cast recording, Michael Cerveris, Donna Murphy, et al., Ghostlight Records 8-4425.

Mack the Knife: Songs of Kurt Weill, various historical recordings, 1929–1956, Naxos Nostalgia 8.120831.

Classic American Love Songs, Carole Farley (soprano), John Constable (piano), Naxos American Classics 8.559314 (includes "Love in a Mist," "The Romance of a Lifetime," "You Are Unforgettable," "The River Is So Blue," "The Picture on the Wall").



The Broadway Musicals of 1945, Karen Mason, Eddie Korbich, Marc Kudisch, et al. (vocals), from the "Broadway by the Year" series, Bayview RNBW039 (includes "A Rhyme for Angela" and "Sing Me Not a Ballad").

In My Own Lifetime, Theodore Bikel (vocals), Jewish Music Group JMG 18053 (includes "Mack the Knife" and "September Song").

Weill Variations, Music for a While, Grappa GRCD 4275 (includes ten Weill songs).

The Songs of Kurt Weill, Janet Roddick (vocals) with ensemble, Braille Records Brai020 (includes eleven Weill songs).

I'm a Stranger here Myself: The Songs of Kurt Weill, Allison Farrow (vocals), private issue, AF001 (fourteen Weill songs).

Das Berliner Requiem, Violin Concerto, *Vom Tod im Wald*, Alexandre Laiter, tenor, Elisabeth Glab, violin, Peter Kooy, bass, Philippe Herrweghe, conductor (reissue of Harmonia Mundi HMC 901422 in the "Musique d'abord" series).

Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny, Line Music 5.00959 (reissue of 1956 recording with Lotte Lenya, et al.).

Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny, Membran Music 223250-311 (reissue of 1956 recording with Lotte Lenya, et al.).

Die sieben Todsünden, selections from *Happy End*, *Die Dreigroschenoper*, *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, Gisela May (vocals), various orchestras and conductors, Berlin Classics 0013752BC (reissues of several recordings from the 1960s).

Bertolt Brecht: Hommage, various performers, historical recordings of songs from *Die Dreigroschenoper* and other plays by Brecht, EPM 985 602.

