

The recent American resurgence of interest in Weill and his greatest collaborator Bertold Brecht was stimulated largely by the 1952 revival of "The Three-Penny Opera" with a new translation by Marc Blitzstein and starring the composer's widow, Lotte Lenya. The opera was first produced at the Theater am Schiffbauerdamm, Berlin, in 1928, while Otto Klemperer was Musical Director of the ambitiously avant-garde Kroll-Oper. The milieu which created the social dynamite of "Die Dreigroschenoper" was influencing Klemperer's productions of such other works of protest as "Fidelio" and "The Soldier's Tale," and in 1933 he, like Brecht and Weill, was driven out of Germany by the rising power of the Nazionalsozialisten. In 1929 Weill prepared the present instrumental distillation of highlights from the score, and Klemperer's name is directly linked to it by 78 rpm recordings he made later with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra, now precious collectors' items.

The instrumentation of the *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik* is a restrained enlargement of the original dance orchestra scoring, without strings. It calls for 2 flutes, 2 clarinets, 2 saxophones, 2 bassoons, 2 trumpets, trombone, tuba, piano, percussion, banjo, guitar and ban-deon (a kind of concertina), and retains the dry, decadent sound of the theater version. In some of the more strophic numbers (especially the Kanonen-Song) Weill has provided musical expansion to compensate for the loss of text. Listeners not familiar with the literary content of each musical number are referred to a text of the play for fullest enjoyment of the suite.