REVIEWS

A New Orpheus: Essays on Kurt Weill. Edited by Kim Kowalke. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986. [374 p.; $35.00]

Fifteen of the seventeen papers assembled in *A New Orpheus* were first delivered at an international conference on Kurt Weill held at Yale University in November 1983, organized under the joint sponsorship of the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music and the Yale University Library, which—through the efforts of Kim Kowalke, the Foundation's indefatigable President—had acquired Lotte Lenya's personal archive of manuscripts, correspondence, and memorabilia pertaining to her own and her husband's careers. The conference thus signaled, in Kowalke's words, "the beginning of a new era in Weill scholarship." This was no hyperbole, and hearty congratulations are indeed in order. The Weill/Lenya Archive, along with the Weill-Lenya Research Center maintained by the Foundation in New York, have created the means to support primary research on Weill and his times on an unprecedented scale. Among the earliest beneficiaries of these newly favorable conditions have been the authors of the pieces included here, many of which, as Kowalke informs us in his Editor's Preface, "have been revised and substantially expanded from the versions initially presented at Yale and benefit from access to material in the Weill/Lenya Archive."

This first harvest of the new era impresses first of all by virtue of its seriousness and its scholarly rigor, the latter worn in many cases anything but lightly. The pervading, occasionally annoying, undercurrent of academic overkill, along with the slightly embattled or defensive tone adopted by some of the contributors, are perhaps understandable in a newly emergent branch of musicological endeavor that is centered around a figure of proverbial ambiguity, and may reflect some lingering insecurities or unsettled ambivalences about Weill's status vis-à-vis the academy. It strikes me, an outsider to Weill research who has been honored with an invitation to review this collection of Weilliana for the Foundation's newsletter as something of a designated denizen of the academy, that one of the primary objectives of the "new era" might well be the exorcism of some of the demons, survivors from the old era, that continue—needlessly, in my opinion—to haunt these essays.

One demon, of course, is Brecht. Weill scholars have become inordinately sensitive about what the index to this volume lists as the "Weill-Brecht collaboration, myths on"—the chief one being that Weill was, as Stephen Hinton phrases it (p. 75), merely the "musical executor of Brecht's ideas and inspiration." To be sure, Brecht may have unfairly cast Weill in that light when Weill was no longer in a position to retort; and, as Hinton continues, it may be that "Brecht exegetes" have reinforced the invidious notion in "their reams of literature" (though that stricture surely does not apply to the Brecht scholars whose work appears here). But no musician will believe it who knows anything of the pre- or post-Brecht Weill, and the most persuasive way to combat the myth in a publication for musicians is by implication, as by-product of an intelligent exposition of Weill on his own terms—something the Brecht exegetes have not the wherewithal to do. Explicit denials have a ring of special pleading; nor is it persuasive factitiously to overdraw Weill's independence of his librettist, as Douglas Jarman seems to do when he concludes a very interesting discussion of "*Lulu* as Epic Opera" by partly bracketing the Brecht in Weill/Brecht: "The musical language of *Lulu* bears little relationship to the musical language of Weill, and yet the ends to which this language is put seem to be totally [!] Weillian. ...It is unfortunate that Weill...did not live to see the extent to which his own 'new opera' was to influence Berg's second opera" (p. 156). None of the evidence presented in the body of the article justifies the assertion of Weill as single-handed influence on Berg; but Jarman is looking for poetic justice (viz., with respect to Demon no. 2; see below.)

Still less persuasive are the attempts one finds scattered here to invert the myth, casting Brecht as Trilby and Weill as Svengali. Ronald K. Shull, for example, is eager to parlay the circumstances surrounding the creation of *Die sieben Todsünden* into a "watershed," the "historical point at which Weill succeeded in establishing his dominance over his alter ego" (pp. 215-16), the proof being the absence of any later collaborations between the two—surely an original employment of the *argumentum ex nihilo*. Matthew Scott quotes without comment Weill's sleeve note to the original cast recording of *Street Scene*, in which the Brecht collaboration is accounted for as one of the many fruits of Weill's "decision...to get the leading dramatists of our time interested in the problems of the musical theater" (p. 292). Had this been a comment of Brecht's on Weill, one feels sure, there would have been comment aplenty. The ultimate turnabout comes in the last essay in the collection, Larry Stempel's (again on *Street Scene*), where Weill's relationship to Brecht is characterized as one in which the composer "virtually dictated the kind of texts he wanted his lyricist to write" (p. 329).

One understands this partisanship, but it does lower the level of discourse. One sympathizes all the more when one reads John Fuegi's absorbing essay on the business aspects of the Brecht/Weill partnership, in which the librettist is portrayed as an unmitigated monster, the composer as a sacrificial lamb. And yet, the fact that a leading Brechtian can write so unflinchingly about his man's darkest traits shows up the still fairly hagiographic work of the Weillians, some of whom are no doubt constrained by bonds of affection to Lenya if not to her husband, and many of whom seem troubled at the prospect, or the potential consequences, of tarnishing an image they should be varnishing. Fuegi's almost gleeful candor implies utter confidence in Brecht's unshakeable place in the pantheon; one can find something like it in musicology with respect to Wagner, say, or Stravinsky. The attitude of Weillians seems more akin to the nervousness one used to encounter among apologists for the Soviet Union, or that encountered among apologists of the state of Israel today: if there are faults, let it not be spoken aloud lest it comfort our enemies. A case in point is John Graziano's clearly embarrassed yet resolutely brave-fronted treatment of the crushingly banal *Down in the Valley*, which abounds in equivocations like "Whatever one thinks of it as a work of art, *Down in the Valley* is a compositional tour de force" (p. 302); or, "Perhaps one can question the validity of Weill's complex harmonizations, but his settings are no more idiosyncratic in their way than those of Aaron Copland, Virgil Thomson, or Roy Harris" (p. 315—cf. the miser's epitaph: "His brother was worse"); or, "While some critics have quibbled about whether or not [*sic*] Weill's settings of the folk tunes are too sentimental, too sophisticated, or too 'Hollywood,' *Down in the Valley* appears to succeed on an artistic level appropriate for its intended audience despite any objections" (p. 315—cf. any network executive's defense of his prime time programming). One gets the uneasy feeling, reading sentences like these, that Weill scholarship may still be a long way from an authentic Weill criticism.

And this brings us to a second demon: Weill's bad reputation among many whose reputations, at least in academia today, are unassailable. First and foremost among the latter is Schoenberg ("[Weill's] is the only mu-

sic in the world in which I can find no quality at all''), followed by Webern (''What do you find of our great Middle-European tradition in such a composer?'') and Adorno (''Weill believed himself to be a kind of Offenbach of his century, and as far as swiftness of social-aesthetic reaction and lack of real substance go, the analogy is not without foundation''). An altogether excessive amount of space in *A New Orpheus* is devoted to flailing about in response to these captious views, in an attempt to counter them on what I take to be questionable grounds.

A fruitful way of dealing with such assertions is to turn them back on their asserters, an artist's attitudes toward his fellows and rivals being often a powerful lens through which to view and characterize him. Editor Kowalke actually does this rather effectively with respect to Schoenberg, in an editorial preface to an article by his colleague Alan Chapman, marshalling a number of quotations both from Schoenberg and from Weill to place them within contrasting aesthetic traditions. One, which Kowalke calls ''shocking'' (p. 103), is especially revealing of the aristocratic backgrounds and pretensions of the modern movement—something literary and fine arts critics have known for centuries, of course, and familiar enough to musicologists who have investigated the Parisian varieties of musical modernism: Schoenberg, in 1924, bewails the passing of the ''fairest, alas bygone, days of art when a prince stood as a protector before an artist, showing the rabble that art, a matter for princes, is beyond the judgement of common people.'' Small wonder Schoenberg found the *Dreigroschenoper* offensive, to say nothing of the journalistic effrontery of its composer, who so enjoyed puncturing with his pen the smuggeries to which aristocratic modernists like Schoenberg subscribed.

But, alas, there is more. The Schoenbergian modernists occupy the seats of musical-academic power today—nowhere more so than at Yale, home of the Archive and host of the Conference—and Kowalke, evidently feeling he could not let the matter rest merely by delineating the lines of battle, was impelled to do his best to smooth the battle over. Twice, for example, he intrudes into Jarman's footnotes to suggest that it had all been a misunderstanding. In one case he impugns the status (as ''accurate exposition of Weill's aesthetic'') of the most nettlesome piece of all—the wicked little ''classroom lecture'' concocted at the request of a Berlin newspaper and circulated widely thereafter in whole or in part, the very piece that elicited Schoenberg's heaviest vituperations. (Another aspect of this document that may render it uncongenial to Weill scholars of the new era is the explicit avowal in it that ''[Weill] hat sich darum jener Theaterbewegung angeschlossen, die am stärksten die künstlerischen Forderungen unserer Zeit erfüllt, und die von Bertolt Brecht...begründet worden ist''—see the facsimile in Alexander Ringer's article, ''Schoenberg, Weill and Epic Theater,'' in the *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute*, IV [1980], p. 85.) In the other intrusion, he presses an arch and patently ironic reference to *Die Dreigroschenoper* by Berg, quoted by Hinton elsewhere in the volume, into service to support the contention that Berg was not opposed to Weill; indeed the remark is ''not unfavorable,'' as Kowalke puts it—but only because it is altogether non-evaluative. In his preface to Chapman's piece Kowalke musters every favorable comment about Schoenberg he can find in the correspondence of Weill's student and prentice years, notes the fact that Schoenberg had nominated the pre-*Dreigroschenoper* Weill for membership in the Prussian Academy of Arts in 1927 (*recte* 2 January 1928; Kowalke neglects to mention that Weill was one of eight nominees), and concludes that ''their erstwhile...admiration for each other's music suggests that, for a time at least, their musical idioms were not altogether antithetical'' (p. 106)—a pretty craven litotes, and a non sequitur into the bargain.

I must say I find distasteful this attempt to purchase for Weill a measure of academic respectability on such demeaning and, when all is said and done, irrelevant terms; for Weill and Schoenberg can be musically compared only on levels that leave their respective essences untouched. Meanwhile, missing altogether from the volume at hand is any substantial consideration of Weill vis-à-vis Hindemith, his true musical kinsman—or should I say rival?—of the twenties, with whom he actually collaborated (*Der Lindberghflug*, 1929); and what could be more ironic in a Yale book? Proof positive of Schoenberg's irrelevancy to Weill criticism is the article to which Kowalke's lengthy preface is attached: Chapman's ''Crossing the Cusp: The Schoenberg Connection,'' an altogether regrettable affair in which it is revealed that both Weill and Schoenberg made use in their music of a couple of three-element pitch class sets (3-5 and 3-9 in Forte's nomenclature). The comparison is factitious in the extreme, characterized by the same crudities and blind spots one encounters time and again in this kind of analysis. To name a few of them: the three-element sets are in almost every instance arbitrarily segmented out of larger constructs without any explanation or justification; all spacings and voicings are regarded *a priori* as equivalent, likewise inversions (and whereas all the Schoenberg citations show open spacings—fourth/fourth, fourth/tritone—many if not most of the Weill spacings are close—fourth/(major or minor) second; whence the assurance that these are in fact identical harmonies with their respective musical contexts?); voice leading is ignored on principle. Music ''idiom'' and ''harmonic language''—the matters with which Chapman purports to deal—are at least as much artifacts of usage as they are of vocabulary. The latter is only so much inert material; style consists in actual, active deployment in context. To assume otherwise is to hold, say, that *Tristan* speaks the ''harmonic language'' of Reinhard Keiser's *Octavia*, or that *Petrushka* shares the ''idiom'' of Strauss's *Elektra* or Ravel's *Jeu d'eau*. Chapman ends his essay with the fatal admission that he cannot determine as yet whether the similarities he has uncovered between Weill and Schoenberg ''were not merely elements shared by a whole generation of composers'' (p. 129). He hasn't done his homework. Had he read Van den Toorn he would know that set 3-5 is a fundamental harmonic component of *The Rite of Spring*. Had he read Antokoletz (or Perle, or Treitler) he would know that it is an equally fundamental component of any number of works by Bartok. And is there any composer in the early generation of modernists who did not use what Perle calls the ''interval 5 cycle'' (which generates set 3-9)?

As for Adorno, his comment quoted above irritated David Drew—the dean of Weill studies today, and a man who thinks and writes on a level far beyond that of most of his companions here—into producing a pearl of an essay on one of Weill's obscurest works, *Der Kuhhandel*, that is at once the longest, the widest-ranging, and easily the most provocative in the book. Arguing that this unproduced, unpublished operetta holds the key to the puzzling metamorphosis in Weill's creative outlook that paralleled his transplantation to these shores, Drew really sinks his teeth into the central Weill problem: viz., Where did the American Weill come from? And yet, even he must do his share of flailing, it seems. He cannot quote Adorno (pp. 218-19) without reflexively offering eulogistic pap from Maxwell Anderson by way of antidote (p. 217—that he puts the antidote ahead of the poison disguises but does not alter the ploy). And with reference to Weill-as-Offenbach, the defense seems to be 1) that that was a fine, subversive thing to be (pp. 221ff), 2) that Weill's humanity took him willy-nilly far beyond Offenbach's heartless frivolity (pp. 232ff), and 3) that his Offenbach-affinity was actually a ''tribute''

born of Jewish solidarity in the face of Hitler (p. 245—cf. the schoolboy's defense on being chastised for damaging a library book: "First of all I never borrowed it; second of all it was damaged when I got it; and third of all I returned it in perfect condition"). In the end, though, content with none of these, Drew unexpectedly invokes Weill's inborn Germanic seriousness, which rendered him fundamentally incapable of operetta, after all. The author thus purchases Weill's exemption from Adorno's strictures at a desperate price, indeed; for the only way to have Weill "succeed" against his critic is to have *Der Kuhhandel* fail: "Every musical idea that is dispatched to the playing fields where parody traditionally lays its booby traps finds itself rerouted toward the front-line trenches and sooner or later it is mown down—whether by a sense of the hostile realities it is consciously confronting, or by an unseen adversary from behind the lines, who is none other than Weill himself, instinctively defending the German heritage he is trying to disavow" (p. 246).

So beautifully sustained is the metaphor that one almost forgets that the Weill therein described is a figment, a strawman-*contra*-Adorno. And yet note how subtly Drew's portrait of Weill as parodist *manqué* prepares the ground for Weill the Broadway sentimentalist. The essay is a veritable masterpiece, albeit one of casuistry. Its strategies are echoed in Ian Kemp's almost equally nimble essay on *Der Silbersee*, where, with what Stravinsky would have called "thickly bespectacled hindsight," the author points to the way that "in its melodramas, Weill began to disentangle the components of his inner conflict, the ruthlessness and the charm, and in the process to announce [!] the gradual retreat of the former and the growing strength of the latter" (p. 139). This is bad history, if you agree with Hinton, elsewhere in the same volume, that "it cannot be a historian's task to describe past events using terms defined according to connotations subsequently acquired;...rather the task should be to restore to past events the openendedness in which they occurred" (p.71).

But then, the Broadway Weill—the third demon I mean to discuss—brings out the casuist in practically everyone who writes about him (or even merely adumbrates him), and this seems primarily due to our academic brainwashing in which we are trained to place the highest of all premiums on unity. The unity of Weill's career, though most writers pay it lip service, has thus far eluded formulation, and most Weill scholars simply duck the issue. Hardly less than did the editor's own pathbreaking monograph of 1979, the present volume centers on "Kurt Weill in Europe," with only three contributions out of seventeen devoted to Weill-in-America—and of these only one is devoted to the "pure" Broadway output, the others to his east/west, popular/classical "fusion" pieces (*Down in the Valley, Street Scene*), the very items that have proved importable back to Europe.

The imbalance may have come about, as the Editor says (p. xiii), "by default, not by design," since, as he admits, "few *musical* scholars have been attracted to either analytical or rigorous historical study of the repertoire of the American musical theater." But the emphasis is misleading: the contributors to this book are not all musical scholars. Kowalke's appeal to default implies that it will be eventually remedied. Elsewhere (p. 13) he brands as "another longstanding myth" the notion that the music of the Broadway period (he loads the dice by calling it the "post-Brecht" period) "lapses into sentimentality [or] caters to commercialism." But, on the evidence of the three pieces in this very volume that treat the period in question, only special pleading can support the charge of myth-making. And the default, I fear, will never be remedied from within a scholarly community that recoils instinctively from notions of sentimentality or commercialism. In other words, as long as Weill scholarship remains committed *a priori* to unifying Weill's career under the aegis of approved modernist values, he will ever remain an unsolved problem.

If anything, these values seem stronger now than when David Drew wrote his *New Grove* article on Weill, in which he posited flat out and with seeming equanimity that the two Weills were irreconcilable, the second having decisively renounced and rejected the first. Now, it seems, a pesky modernist superego personified in Adorno has been pressing Drew himself back from this view toward one that locates the seeds of Weill's American style in the horrors of Nazism and holocaust, which overwhelmed the ironically detached modernism of the Weimar period and fostered a new escapism.

That's no explanation, though, only an excuse. John Rockwell, happy label-slapper that he is, thinks he's found a solution to the quandry by dubbing Weill the first "post-modernist" (p. 51). That's one way of exorcising a demon, all right—learn its name, which then becomes your amulet. "Post-modernism" won't work for Weill, though, because it was a completely domesticated, bourgeois "populism" he embraced in what was still pre-modernist America, adapting himself to a completely established theatrical code without in any way challenging its conventions (I await the revisionist retort). And Rockwell goes completely off the rails at the end of his paper—an undigested lump from his Berkeley dissertation on the political vicissitudes of the Berlin State Opera—with the outrageously pat suggestion that since Hans Curjel, the dramaturg of the Kroll Opera in Berlin, confessed to Weill that he "constantly ponder[ed] whether the moment ha[d] not come to set up an uncompromising musical theater on a private basis" (that is, beyond the reach of bureaucratic interference), then, ergo, "the commercial musicals Weill composed in New York were a direct [!] consequence of the failure of state-mandated operatic reform in Berlin." This won't wash. Whatever the "private" theater was that Weill composed for in America, it was not uncompromising, and neither was Weill.

There is no way, in short, that the American Weill can be subsumed under the rubric "A New Orpheus." The title of the book already proclaims its modernist commitment, like the text of the eponymous 1925 Weill-Goll cantata. That text comes in for a fair amount of analysis in the book, first in a series of strained parallels by the Editor (pp. 2-5), and later by Hinton in a very stimulating discussion of the Berlin Weill in the context of the modernist shibboleths of his day—*Neue Sachlichkeit, Gebrauchsmusik*, and so on. The upshot is that Weill was committed to the rejection of the romantic idea of art as narcosis or hypnosis (or opiate-of-the-masses) in favor of an alert, wide-awake receptivity to, and hardboiled critique of, the dynamics of actual contemporary life (as socially experienced). Perhaps *Die neue Sachlichkeit*, a famous untranslatable with which Hinton wrestles briefly in a footnote, might best be rendered in English as "the new actuality." In any case, it was the rendering of social experience that demanded the use of popular genres (e.g., what Weill called "elements of jazz... which superficially produce a more or less strong resemblace to the melodies of 'light' music," and also the *Kleinkunst* and *Küchenlied* Alexander Ringer discusses so engagingly and authoritatively in connection with "The Socio-Musical World of Kurt Weill"). And hence, too, the famous tone Weill himself called attention to ("Die Oper—Wohin?", quoted by Hinton on p. 73 and again by Stempel on p. 331) as appropriate for a truly actual musical theater—"thoroughly serious, bitter, accusing, and, even in the most pleasant context, ironic."

That is just what Weill's Broadway pieces are not, as Matthew Scott tells us in no uncertain terms in his piece about "Weill in Amer-

ica.'' If *Knickerbocker Holiday* (1938) was ''still European in many aspects of idiom and structure''—but not of tone, which often disconcertingly contradicts the musical idiom (who could guess from hearing the ''September Song'' as a separate cabaret number—lifted, by the way, from *Der Kuhhandel*, as I was both fascinated and somehow relieved to learn—that its import within the show was so completely bright-eyed and innocent?)—by the time of *Lady in the Dark* (1940), ''the composer's voice had changed, and with this change, he scored, by accident or design, a great success with major implications'' (p. 287). Mr. Scott's ''by accident or design'' exhibits some lingering modernist *pudeur*, but he does go on unflinchingly to observe: ''Severing his already tenuous connections with the world of 'serious' music, *Lady in the Dark* also irrevocably detached Weill from his only alternative to Broadway, the socially or politically conscious 'fringe' theater in America. The philosophical outlook and political priorities of the Group Theatre and the Federal Theatre Project could not have been more removed from those of Moss Hart, Ira Gershwin, and producer Sam Harris. If Weill had any doubts about his choice of options, the success of *Lady in the Dark* was certainly a persuasive, if temporary [whoops! he does flinch after all] bulwark against any second guessing of his new *Linie*.''

I daresay academic musicologists will have a hard time reconciling themselves to this view. Kowalke, by calling it a myth, tries to second guess it out of existence. As long as we remain shackled, on the one hand, by allegiance to values Weill rejected, and on the other, by our cursed inability to accept as valid and disunified entity, be it a sonatina movement or a life's work, the American Weill will remain a demon to be locked up in Pandora's box, or else a blot that disfigures the whole career in retrospect (Drew ends his *Grove* article by calling Weill ''one of music's great might-have-beens'').

It is only by facing up to the demon and acknowledging both his opportunistic sentimentality and his commercial instinct that he will be exorcised. Larry Stempel performs just such a ruthless act of criticism on *Street Scene*, Weill's ''Broadway Opera,'' and it is in the end a moving and redeeming act of love—perhaps the best essay in the book. With reference to Weill's 1929 prescription for contemporary opera (quoted above), Stempel states forthrightly that ''it would be futile to look for these qualities in the show tunes of *Street Scenes*. ... These songs no longer merely resemble 'the melodies of ''light'' music,' but, by abandoning any irony, they have become such melodies themselves'' (p.331). Anticipating the casuistries we have already sampled, Stempel checks them: ''Popular songs, simply by their presence in *Street Scene*, may be taken as an indication of the continuity with the European operas that Weill asserted, but there can be little doubt that such songs, their purposes, and the attitudes that inform them really represent something quite different'' (p. 332). His willingness to approach the work on its own terms—even as he subjects the terms to a rigorous critique—enables Stempel to make point after trenchant point about the incompatible genres the composer had set out to hybridize. His conclusion, that ''the confrontation of musical styles in *Street Scene* doesn't seem to have much point to it'' (p. 333), and that ''the result is a work whose fascination lies more with its discovery of 'new grounds' than with any artistic riches they were to yield'' (p. 334), ultimately does more to justify a view of Weill's career as continuous than the sort of special pleading that we are more accustomed to read—a pseudo-criticism that arises not so much out of direct contact with the work as out of contact with other critiques. The composer of *Street Scene* as Stempel reveals him is no longer a manufactured rebuttal to a modernist attack—what one might call a ''countercaricature''—but a composer still restless, still looking for new grounds. It is Stempel, unfazed by the modernist issue, who finally convinces us that, within Weill's own purview, the grounds were new, and the quest valid.

I seem, now that I have reached the end of what I wanted to say, to have made on balance a rather surly response to the friendly request from the editor of this newsletter for comment on this collection of essays. But as I hope will be evident, I found the book to be enormously stimulating and provocative, and I now find myself, for having read it, far more interested in Weill and his work than I was before. The next time one of his pieces is revived—be it *Der Protagonist*, *The Eternal Road*, or (*pace* Mr. Scott!) *Lady in the Dark*—I hope to be there, eager to measure the work itself against all I have learned about it.

RICHARD TARUSKIN
Columbia University

Symphonies 1 & 2. By Kurt Weill. BBC Symphony Orchestra; Gary Bertini, conductor. London Enterprise 414660-4. Stereo.

The present recording of *Symphony no. 1* and *Symphony no. 2* of Kurt Weill offers one the opportunity to listen to both of Weill's works in this genre. Weill's notable approaches to the challenge of twentieth-century symphonic form are demonstrated in the conceptions and realizations of these works. Coincidentally, the dates of composition, 1921 and 1933-34, provide a chronological frame for Weill's career in Europe, a period of political and social significance in Germany — the Weimar Republic.

In this recording by the BBC Orchestra under the direction of Gary Bertini, the stylistic contrast in these compositions becomes evident and instructive. The earlier of the two, a symphony in one movement (1921), demonstrates in its three main parts elements reminiscent of Mahler, Strauss, of the early works of Schoenberg, as well as of the music of Busoni. Episodes of veritable chamber-music transparency are set against full textures of late nineteenth-century orchestral texture: the contemporary ideal of reduction struggles with the influence of the "romantic" style. Bertini's competent interpretation ensures, on the one hand, a stimulating revelation of the overall structure, and, on the other, convincing expression of an implied *concertante* quality. Moreover, one has the feeling that a conscious attempt is made to define clearly the symphony's harmonic and tonal structure. In this regard, it is unfortunate, however, that the technical quality of the recording is not satisfactory throughout, especially the fidelity of the chord clusters in the "motto-theme."

At the time Kurt Weill composed his *Symphony no. 2* — begun in 1933 and completed at Paris during 1934, on a commission from the Princesse Edmond de Polignac — he could look back upon more than a decade of experience as an established composer. The success of his operas, and the evolution of the "song-style," influences this symphony in a distinctly lyrical fashion. One observes in Weill's second symphony the integration of various and wide-ranging stylistic elements into a fully developed orchestral idiom. The contours of the melodic lines often bear a resolute quality, and in many cases gain a formal integrity through rhythmically vital patterns.

Bertini and the BBC Symphony achieve a superb realization of these well-defined designs. In the introductory allegro movement, one is struck by the quality of playing in the slower passages, and by the impressive performance of the woodwinds. The affecting second movement — a funeral march —

contains quotations, mostly through harmonic suggestions, from earlier works. The conductor gives the finale a turbulent and stirring performance.

Symphony no. 2, a work of Weill's maturity, is clearly the most interesting of the two compositions in the genre, and the most attractively presented, both in terms of performance and recording. Although one is grateful for this reissue, it is hoped that new interpretations will continue to be recorded. The singular merit of these symphonies as part of the twentieth-century symphonic repertoire justifies this wish.

GÜNTHER DIEHL
Frankfurt-am-Main

Stratas Sings Weill. Teresa Stratas, Y Chamber Orchestra, Gerard Schwarz, conductor. Nonesuch 79131.

If Lotte Lenya was a unique, irreplaceable interpreter of Kurt Weill's songs, so is Teresa Stratas. That much was made clear by Stratas's performances of Jenny in the Metropolitan Opera's 1979 production of *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*, by her two recitals of rare Weill songs at New York's Whitney Museum during that run of *Mahagonny* performances, and by the Nonesuch recording that emerged from the Whitney recitals without quite duplicating their material. Now comes a new Stratas-Nonesuch enterprise, recorded during the winter of 1985-86, and devoted, unlike the first recording, entirely to theater songs, with the composer's own orchestrations played by the Y Chamber Symphony under Gerard Schwarz. (True, there were a couple of gaps of several bars each in the orchestral materials, but the extrapolations sound seamless.) The new LP disc contains fifteen numbers that represent four German theater works, four American, and one French. It's Stratas's special talent to find the heart of each song, each style, each mood, and to become a different singer, a different person, with every number. Lenya, on the other hand, would transform any given character into the self-created—not Weill-created or Brecht-created and certainly not Maxwell Anderson-created—persona of smoke-voiced, tigress-eyed, tentacle-armed *Angst* that is the legend of Lenya. There was always one Lenya. There seems to be dozens of Stratases, all equally real.

This is not to say that the soprano avoids a consistent approach when a character, be she Venus, Lilian Holiday, or the Jenny of *Mahagonny*, has more than one song. The two songs from the 1943 musical, *One Touch of Venus*—"I'm a Stranger Here Myself," which happens to take its title from a book by its lyricist, Ogden Nash, and "Foolish Heart"—both boast a posh-urban sophistication nicely flavored with a warm intimacy that reminds you of Mary Martin, the show's piquant Venus. I'm not altogether happy with Stratas's zooming to a higher octave for emphasis at certain points, and the two songs are not highlights of the score. I'd much rather have heard Stratas curl her voice around the cool, insinuating tune of "Speak Low." But unwanted ascensions aside, she recalls some of the quality of an unjustly neglected show.

The "Havanna-Lied" and "Denn wie man sich bettet" from *Mahagonny* surely raise the spirits of us who sorely miss Stratas's Jenny at the Met. The latter song retains the singer's unforgettable blend of cold calculation, smiling pity, and sad self-recognition. The former seems nastier than ever. When Stratas, on the recording, sings "Ach, bedenken Sie, Herr Jakob Schmidt!", the "m" in "Schmidt" is drawn out as if the blood is being drained from it, and the "idt" snaps like a trap.

Fennimore's forlorn "Ich bin eine arme Verwandte" from *Der Silbersee* (lyrics by George Kaiser for his great, much abused play) is never allowed to get maudlin, even though the music almost conspires toward such a result. Sentimentality is also neatly avoided in "It Never Was You" from *Knickerbocker Holiday* and "Lonely House" from *Street Scene*. (The former boasts Anderson's most moving, least pretentious poetry, and the latter lyric is Langston Hughes on a rare, soppy bummer.) And while I'm in a complaining mood, I must say that Stratas's cheery zest doesn't quite mitigate the empty slickness, in both music and Ira Gershwin's words, of "One Life to Live" from *Lady in the Dark*.

But the three numbers from *Marie galante* (1934 text by Jacques Deval) are a delight. "Le roi d'Aquitaine" begins with Stratas invoking the three ducks of the fable with the sort of sassy quacks that might have been quacked by Edith Piaf, but a suavely inviting soprano sound soon coats the barbs with sugar. "J'attends un navire" reaches a fascinating midpoint between the anger of "Seeräuber Jenny" in *Die Dreigroschenoper* and the innocent wonder of "My Ship" from *Lady in the Dark*, and, oh, to hear Stratas do both of those on yet another record some day. The singer sustains well the long, devious line of the third Deval song, "Le train du ciel," a transplanted spiritual, by sticking to her guns in the very slow passages and shrewdly pacing the accelerations.

Peachum's "Das Lied von der Unzulänglichkeit menschlichen Strebens" (more easily printed, I dare say, in Marc Blitzstein's translation as the "Useless Song") from *Threepenny* is taken over with authority by the present singer, and it's the only time on the record that she sounds like Lenya. I can't imagine that it's anything other than an act of homage, and it surely succeeds.

RECORDINGS

Which brings us to three songs from *Happy End:* Lilian's "Surabaya-Johnny" and "Der kleine Leutnant des lieben Gottes" and Bill Cracker's "Das Lied von der harten Nuss." Stratas gives that last number a light cabaret bounce that shows Brecht's lighter side, in sharp contrast to the fury of his similar lyric in *Threepenny.* Her "Surabaya-Johnny"—the piece may be the greatest torch-song ever written—co-exists with the differently ferocious and piteous realizations by Lenya, Bettina Jonic (a justly acclaimed London Lilian in the late 1950s), and, yes, Meryl Streep. Stratas successfully risks the high, notated *Sprechstimme* for the repeated line, "Nimm doch die Pfeife aus dem Maul, du Hund!" ("Take the pipe out of your mouth, you animal!") once screeching the words, finally pleading.

After the screech, Stratas begins the next refrain with the sultriest of chest-tones, and the last occurrence of the refrain is slowed to a self-torturing pace. She treats the masterly song with the audacity of a real artist who knows just how much "treatment" the music and words can legitimately take. The third *Happy End* song ends the record with evangelistic force. The Good Lord's little lieutenant in the Brecht-Weill Salvation Army becomes one with the opera singer who more than once has gone off to work with Mother Teresa's dying patients in India. Never mind that the central stretches of the long (five and a half minutes) marching song taxes her voice like nothing else on the record. Listen all the more intently to the reiterations of "Obacht, gebt Obacht" in Stratas's soft, staccato summons from afar.

Schwarz and his chamber orchestra, based at the artistically historic YM-YWHA at Lexington Avenue and 92nd Street in Manhattan, give the singer strong, finely nuanced support from beginning to end, and the miking is such that the words are almost never lost. Of course, the singer's diction should also be saluted. I wish, however, that Nonesuch had produced album liner-material worthier of the music and the musicians. All the songs are printed in the original texts and two (uncredited) translations, so that everything is in German, English and French. But the translations, particularly the English, are neither singing, nor literal ones and are quite awkward. And there is no indication whatsoever of the songs' context, no clue (except for Fennimore) as to who is singing or why. There is, however, an interview with Stratas (interviewer unnamed) generous in artistic insights and intense humanity.

LEIGHTON KERNER
New York

Supply and Demand. Dagmar Krause. Hannibal HNBL 1317.

Ooh Wallah Wallah. King Kurt. Stiff SEEZ 52.

There's Nothing Quite Like Money. The Happy End. Circus RING L100.

What has Hal Wilner's *Lost in the Stars* wrought? That is not the question. Rock-oriented performers have been listening to and recording Weill compositions long before Hal Wilner started his series of tribute albums, but certainly the critical acclaim accorded to his latest project will focus some much needed attention on Weill's role in creating the popular song forms that are the basis of many rock compositions.

Sadly, the burgeoning American independent labels have not been exploring this avenue, but several small British labels have released Weill-related product in the past year. 1985 saw the Happy End, an overtly political 26-piece band feature two songs from the work of the same name, as well as "Kanonensong," and several Brecht-Eisler collaborations on their first record. King Kurt, a more commercially-oriented band whose primary focus is its lead singer's haircut, issued "Mack the Knife" as their first single, but got no farther into the Weill oeuvre than that. Ironically enough, it is the former group's album which is entitled *There's Nothing Quite Like Money.*

The Happy End is a sincere outfit whose liner notes provide their customers with the proper political background of each of the thirteen songs on their debut. (The significance of Weill & Brecht's *Happy End,* for instance, is that it offended not only the Nazis, but the German theatergoing public as well). Despite good intentions, exuberance overwhelms talent and they simply blare when they should be highlighting the arrangements (chaotic as they are) of Glenn Gordon and Matt Fox, behind singer Sarah-Jane Morris. King Kurt isn't too up on subtlety, either. "Mack the Knife" is prefabricated dreck with a beat. They need talent, and need to change their name, which is, in fact, not a homage to Weill. Their album is called *Ooh Wallah Wallah.*

1986 has brought us *Supply and Demand* on Hannibal Records, an album of Brecht/Weill and Brecht/Eisler from Dagmar Krause, a soprano featured on the A&M *Lost in the Stars* compilation, whose talent and astute choice of producers deftly steps through the political shackles of the record's title. Joe Boyd, known for his work with the Fairport Convention, and later, for Richard and Linda Thompson, stays true to his folk roots by recording Krause and the twelve-piece ensemble clearly and simply. Richard Thompson's electric guitar fits neatly within the revised, but strongly reminiscent arrangements, and his contributions prove unexpectedly vital. Jason Osborn, musical director and pianist, relishes the gloomy surroundings of Ms. Krause's song selection, including what is, to the best of my knowledge, the only recording of "At Potsdam 'Unter den Eichen' " in English, here translated by John Willett. Her rather harsh soprano voice works more on this defined, singable melody than on a justifiably screechy, but still unpleasant "Lily of Hell."

With better-known material, she recalls Lenya in passing, sure to ruffle the feathers of some listeners, but generally succumbs to the melodrama school of Weill-interpretation, hitting home with her bloodcurdling "Moritat," but missing badly in a drippy "Benares Song" from *Mahagonny.* Ms. Krause's record is the first product of the renewed interest in Weill that has been fostered by the efforts of Hal Wilner and Paul Young. This reviewer looks forward to other such projects.

JAMES LYNCH
New York

PERFORMANCES

The Threepenny Opera. Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Ashland, Oregon. 1 March-30 October 1986.

Set in Ashland—just north of the California border in the idyllic Rogue Valley—the Oregon Shakespeare Festival has been justly acclaimed (and sometimes decried) for offering abundant, consistently good, sometimes great, theater which stays close to the script, eschewing the revisionist fancies of self-indulgent directors. Andrew Traister's well-oiled production of *Threepenny Opera*—furnished with imaginative rollaway sets against a backdrop of tenements by William Bloodgood, and superbly realistic costumes by Jeannie Davidson—ably realized the self-aware conventions of epic theater but was often embarrassed by the work's musical demands.

Several distinguished actors of necessity became singers: one was compelled to admire the valor with which they rose to the occasion even as one suffered a musically undernour-

PERFORMANCES

A confrontation in Peachum's shop during the Oregon Shakespeare's Threepenny Opera.

ished performance. Despite brave talk about the refreshing quality of the untrained voice, it must be obvious by now that not every novice will blossom into a Lenya. For instance, Joe Vincent as Macheath—who is accustomed to acquitting himself in such roles as Jack Tanner in *Man and Superman*, Ulysses in *Troilus and Cressida*, or Kent in *King Lear*—was perhaps the weakest voice of the evening: though routinely applauded, his numbers lacked the punch and authority of his spoken lines—the "Cannon Song" was almost genteel. On the other hand, Linda Alper as Polly—and an enchanting Rosalind in this season's *As You Like It* exhibited a pleasant, light soprano and the rudiments of vocal training. Although the Blitzstein version gives "Pirate Jenny" to Jenny, this production followed the original script by assigning the song to Polly. Ms. Alper's performance afforded shivers. The remainder of the cast fell between these modest extremes. Helped out with mugging and lame soft-shoe, the virtue born of this necessity was clear diction—flattening melodic lines, now and then, and revealing the occasional awkwardness of the Blitzstein adaptation. Surprisingly, under the circumstances, all of the numbers—including the "Ballad of Sexual Dependency"—were kept, though (as noted) with some shuffling.

The six man band (in an apparently unauthorized arrangement for electronic keyboards, percussion, bass, trumpet, trombone, and reeds), visible through a scrim stage left, produced the bare bones, carrying the show briskly—at times to the point of the perfunctory. The overture, for instance, was lightly hurried, as if to prevent its grating harshness from biting. One missed both the telling detail and the unique timbres of Weill's own instrumentation.

With the score given short shrift, one witnessed a brilliantly staged farce, studded with musical comedy, which blunted Brecht's satire as it muted the provocative ambiguity of Weill's knowing and compassionate art—an evening's entertainment, then, vivid and one-dimensional.

ADRIAN CORLEONIS
Klamath Falls, Oregon

Johnny Johnson. Odyssey Theatre Ensemble, Los Angeles. 28 June-25 September 1986.

Conventional wisdom about *Johnny Johnson* runs something like this: Kurt Weill's first Broadway musical was ground out in 1936 to keep the pot boiling while the show he'd come to New York to do with Max Reinhardt—*The Eternal Road*, a huge biblical pageant to a Franz Werfel text—solved its production difficulties; the text by Paul Green, an earnest but hopelessly simplistic anti-war allegory written in the shadow of Hitler's emergence, would be embarrassing on a modern stage; the demands of the play, a cast of 30 and something like 200 costumes, no way justify the merely antiquarian interest in a revival. The fact that a Broadway restaging in 1971 flopped dismally doesn't help its reputation, either.

Thus, the hugely successful production of *Johnny* at Ron Sossi's Odyssey Theatre this past summer in West Los Angeles wasn't merely a matter of another terrific show in town; it came on as an equally terrific surprise—that the piece can, indeed, be made to work not merely well but stunningly. Sossi is no stranger to the Weill-Brecht repertory; he has in years past produced a decent *Threepenny* and a wretched *Mahagonny* (the mucked-up Berliner Ensemble version). *Johnny Johnson* was done straight and complete, simply and imaginatively, with the datedness of Green's play balanced by Sossi's marvelous pacing. He neither romanticized nor trivialized Johnny's homespun silliness, but expertly melded what remains potent and moving in the piece—the fable of the common peacenik buried under the way of the world—into the more blatant elements—the heavy-handed satire of the bloated generals who run wars for their own glory, or the fake psychiatrist who do the same with lives. The stage was, for the most part bare except for a couple of movable, all-purpose scenic units; time after time a charming flash of exactly the right color in Gayle Susan Baizer's imaginative costume designs made its compelling point.

So, of course, did Weill's music. What astonishing, fresh stuff it is! It came over clear and strong at the Odyssey even with only a piano to stand in for the composer's own rich, plangent orchestration (plus a few taped interludes here and there). Here is a score like none other by Weill, an honest-to-Pete transitional work reflecting his exuberance at working in an Americanoid medium on its own soil, so to speak, but still rooted in the haunting, purplish lyricism of the late European scores. Weill never completely lost this latter quality, of course; later Broadway songs like "Speak Low" and "Stay Well" float unforgettably in the same dark juice. But the mix in *Johnny* is vibrant, unique.

There is, of course—or at least, *was*—the recording of the full score (originally on MGM, later reissued on Heliodor), with a good cast under Samuel Matlowsky, worth any amount of ferreting through used record stores. Yet it all sounded even better at the Odyssey. Songs I never expected to make sense, genre pieces like the "Rio Grande" song of the Texas soldier, were nicely integrated into the flow of Sossi's unerring pacing. The large cast, sparked by the immensely likeable, goofy Johnny of Ralph Bruneau and Michelle Chilton's Minny Belle—a touch there of Bernadette Peters, not the world's worst notion—worked nicely together. The best of their achievement was to put across the sense that, with all of its obvious faults, all *Johnny Johnson* really needs to parade its true, brilliant colors is a degree of faith and belief in the work as Green and Weill conceived it, a level of honesty and sincerity worthy of Johnny himself.

ALAN RICH
Los Angeles

Lost in the Stars. Long Wharf Theatre, New Haven. 18 April-1 June 1986.

Lost in the Stars. 92nd Street Y, New York. 31 May 1-3 June 1986.

Partisans of Weill and Anderson's *Lost in the Stars* have recently had not one, but two opportunities to reassess the work in performance (a fully-staged production at the Long Wharf Theatre and a concert production at the 92nd Street Y). While the sudden resurgence of interest may be in part due to our dawning realization of the treasures in the American musical theater repertoire, it is likely due even more to the relevance that this nearly forty-year-old story has to today's despairing situation in South Africa. But whatever the reason, it is a joy to encounter again this searingly emotional work in the theater, where it belongs.

Any production of *Lost in the Stars* must cope with certain pitfalls. Anderson's rudimentary expositional technique makes slow going of a good deal of the first act. His sudden reconciliation of the two fathers at the finale is awkward and unsupported by character (as opposed to the novel, where the senior Jarvis' conversion to his murdered son's racial views is persuasively drawn). The dramatic use of music is inconsistent. While the choral commentary is stunningly effective, taking already potent emotion and, in effect, heightening and exploding it, the use of dramatic character material, at least among the supporting characters, is ill-chosen. By the time Irina sings both ''Trouble Man'' and ''Stay Well,'' we already know what she is going to say. (''Trouble Man'' might more effectively be used as Irina's attempt to convince Absalom not to participate in the robbery). ''Who'll Buy?'' is flavorful, but needlessly halts the dramatic action. ''Big Mole,'' however charming, is essentially a divertissement (though its use as a duet for the two boys might allow a more visceral accomplishment of the scene that follows). And, the lack of any musical materials for Absalom is mystifying and reductive of character. Nonetheless, the scope and weight of the score, Anderson's ability to write strong individual scenes, and the emotional strength inherent in the subject matter combine to make *Lost in the Stars* a show of considerable power.

Arvin Brown's Long Wharf production tapped that power. His direction was clean and straightforward, eliciting the emotional truth of each scene with force and clarity, drawing from his actors the kind of psychologically solid, multi-layered performances more often associated with realistic drama. His choice of integrating the chorus as part of the dramatic action, rather than placing them to the side, or in the pit, as in the original Broadway production, helped to smooth the stylistic clash of realistic drama and presentational commentary, as well as to heighten the emotional effect of that commentary. His elevation of the secondary issue of father-son alienation to one of prime importance helped to make the final reconciliation between Stephen Kumalo and James Jarvis personal, specific, and moving.

As Stephen Kumalo, Michael V. Smart gave us a man almost arrogant in his beliefs and sure of his position of primacy in both village and home, who is suddenly, without warning cut completely adrift from all that has sustained him. His soliloquy, ''O Tixo, Tixo Help Me,'' was not merely sung brilliantly, but acted with an intelligence and depth that incites delirium in those who believe in music theater as a synthesis of equals. In the title song, his presentation of a man unable to believe in his own despair was poignantly moving.

Janet Hubert and Michael Wright as Irina and Absalom gave the lovers an appealing and palpable sense of sexual energy. Ms. Hubert's singing was hampered by a voice that, while not unappealing, sounded thin and was occasionally inaudible. Mr. Wright wisely resisted any temptation to play Absalom as a hero. His Absalom was an overwhelmed, frightened, and unremarkable boy whose decision to tell the truth about his crime suggested itself as more a search for coherence than a consciously noble act. His lack of awareness of his own courage made him that much more tragic. In their final parting scene, the two lovers were physically wrenched apart by others, as the chorus thundered ''Cry the Beloved Country'' in counterpoint to the action. What could have easily toppled over into excess was instead tremendously powerful because of the unsentimental and rigorously honest performances. Other supporting performances were of equally high caliber, from William Swetland's nicely understated work as James Jarvis to Tommy Hollis' wryly cynical machine politician and Kobie Powell's charmingly innocent grandson. Joel Stedman made a vivid impression in the brief role of Arthur Jarvis, which helped intensify the impact of this character's murder. Less successful was Thomas Young as leader of the chorus. Although blessed with a strong voice, his stage presence lacked authority.

Musically, the production was more erratic. With the exception of Ms. Hubert, the voices were more than equal to the music, but the choice of presenting the show on a thrust stage without amplification posed some insuperable problems. Although it was a tremendous pleasure to hear the sound of unamplified voices in a theater, actors singing with their backs to sections of the house could not be heard throughout the theater. The chorus, usually unable to see the conductor, was too often muddy and ragged. The orchestra, under the direction of Tom Fay, frequently seemed unduly tentative and the ensemble between orchestra and voice suffered.

The physical production was intelligently spare. Michael Yeargan's set exhibited a welcome touch of imagination in the use of painted blinds to mask the upstage background of a lurid street in Shantytown. When down, the blinds formed a setting for the

Ralph Bruneau (Johnny), Michelle Chilton (Minny-Belle), and Susan Kohler (Villager) in a scene from Johnny Johnson **at the Odyssey Theatre.**

countryside. Their use in transitions was particularly effective. Half open, they cast the ominous shadows of prison bars, while the harsh sound of their abrupt raising or lowering punctuated entrances and exits to good effect. Jennifer Von Mayrhauser's fine costumes neither made pretty nor exaggerated the characters' poverty. Ronald Wallace's lighting was particularly helpful in making the transitions from dialogue to music effortless and natural.

* * *

The 92nd Street Y's production marked the premiere of Maurice Levine's concert adaptation. Mr. Levine originated the highly praised Lyrics and Lyricists series at the Y, and also conducted the original production of *Lost in the Stars* on Broadway. Clearly, his concert version was a labor of love, which made its failure twice as disappointing as it might have been.

Mr. Levine's idea seemed promising. Alex Kumalo (Stephen Kumalo's nephew) has grown up, become a civil rights activist, and been imprisoned for his activities. To a cheering group of supporters greeting his release from confinement, he recounts the story of *Lost in the Stars* as an example of the understanding that is possible between individuals of both races. He then urges his followers to continue their struggle.

However, a major problem lurks in this approach. Forty years ago, *Lost in the Stars* was a story of a last chance. Today it seems more like the story of a chance lost. Mr. Levine's stated intention is to leave us "to ponder the unpleasant and gnawing question of whether or not any real progress has been made in all these years." The answer to that question can be found daily in newspapers and on television. The real unpleasant and gnawing question is how should the blacks of South Africa respond to forty years of no progress. To have a contemporary black character suggest that they take heart in the story of *Lost in the Stars* seems naive at best.

The problem was compounded by the flat writing of Alex's monologue. Burdened by a succession of political platitudes, the character was never allowed to come to life. It was difficult to believe that, at a tumultuous moment, Alex would choose to tell such a long and complex story. It was even harder to believe that his following (intrusively personified by taped voices) would actually request him to continue it. When recounting the story of *Lost in the Stars*, the monologue frequently became mired in excessive detail, particularly in its use of quoted dialogue. The dramatization of scene snippets was frustrating, leaving one even more impatient with the lengthy narratives. Most unfortunate of all, the power of the score was diminished. Many of Weill and Anderson's settings are intended to underscore dramatic scenes, much in the manner of a film score. Shorn of all dramatic counterpoint, these sections of the score seemed episodic and oddly truncated.

Musically, Mr. Levine's conducting seemed surprisingly uncertain for someone who had conducted the original production. Evidently he lacked adequate rehearsal time. In the role of Stephen Kumalo, James Tyeska sang beautifully but acted poorly. He seemed to lack a basic understanding of the character. His heroic version of the title song, imbued with an optimistic fervor more suitable to "The Impossible Dream" than to a man facing the loss of his faith, was misguided. Marilyn Moore sang Irina's songs creamily but stodgily. Chinyelu Ingram did have fun with "Big Mole," although at times the proceedings threatened to turn into an audition for *The Tap Dance Kid*. As the chorus leader, Reginald Pindell provided another wonderful voice. Yet, his bearing seemed stiff, particularly when searching for high notes. Only Priscilla Baskerville, in a sassy rendition of "Who'll Buy" and an elegant solo reading of "A Bird of Passage" managed to successfully integrate singing and acting. The stage direction lacked a clear vision and the performers seemed to improvise their stage actions. Earl Grandison, as the non-singing adult Alex, was confined behind a lectern at the extreme side of the stage. He made a valiant attempt to compensate for the lack of character development in this role.

Maurice Levine and Arvin Brown brought radically different approaches to the task of improving an imperfect piece of musical theater. Mr. Levine's choice to minimize the book proved a mistake. It may have glossed over some of the problems, but it also destroyed too many of the virtues. Mr. Brown managed to emphasize these virtues through an approach which allowed portrayals of emotional honesty and through rigorous attention to character development. A third approach, as yet untried, might be to revise the book. True, most musicals cannot be fixed merely by tinkering with dialogue and structure. *Lost in the Stars*, however, is a piece of such inherent strength that maybe, just maybe, this might prove to be the most satisfactory approach of all.

ERIK HAAGENSEN
New York

LONDON SINFONIETTA ZAGROSEK, QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL

Few of the many pieces by Kurt Weill encountered by the London Sinfonietta during the past decade can have had quite the chilling impact of that composer's *Das Berliner Requiem*, written for radio in 1928. During its course it parodies popular marches, waltzes, even a Bach recitative, but not so much for the sake of making bitingly witty political comment as for that of uttering a genuine, despairing lament.

For this is grim, deathly music, partly inspired by the political murder of Rosa Luxembourg, partly by the consequences of the First World War; and all those parodies conspire to form a ritualistic, starkly defined procession. It made quite a contrast to the lighter, though in their way equally penetrating, songs of *Happy End*, also heard here, though both works were sung idiomatically and often powerfully by a team consisting of Maureen Brathwaite, Linda Hirst, Alexander Oliver, Stephen Roberts and Terry Edwards.

Stephen Pettitt
The Times
19 August 1986

AN OPPOSITE POLE

Enthusiastic applause was received by Peter Keuschnig and his ensemble Kontrapunkte for their conscious opposition to the usual concert offerings during the weeks of the Vienna Festival. Their evening in the Brahms Hall was dedicated exclusively to the works of Kurt Weill. Such an evening could hardly have begun in a more amusing fashion than with the *Threepenny Suite*, and hardly have continued in a more informing fashion than with the *Concerto for Violin and Winds*, which in its architecture reminds one of Gustav Mahler's Seventh Symphony, yet, never denying, in its "melos," the Busoni pupil Weill. The essential orientation of the work, nonetheless, also documents that Weill was an ardent admirer of Stravinsky.

Happy End, a lively "comedy with music" ended the concert with more than a final piece of fun, especially because Keuschnig and his ensemble realized a performance on the highest level.

Presse
Vienna, 13 June 1986

SELECTIONS FROM CURRENT REVIEWS

German to English Translations by Lys Symonette

MAHAGONNY IN LISBON

On March 20 Brecht and Weill's *Mahagonny* had a belated first performance in Portugal and still managed to shock the conservative faction among the São Carlos public. The opening night was something of a scandal, but the other performances were fervently acclaimed. João Lourenço, a specialist in Brecht, came from the straight theater and scored a major personal success in his debut as an opera producer. He converted the Narrator (João Perry, one of the best Portuguese actors) into a movie director who is filming *Mahagonny*, often interrupting the action to comment or give directions to the performers. Jochen Finke, the designer, recreated the movie set in a highly effective way, greatly helped by the exceptional lighting. The production team achieved several moments of breath taking beauty: the birth of the town, the anguished waiting for the hurricane (here represented by poignant images of nuclear destruction, death, and famine projected on a large screen), the final scene. But the climax was undoubtedly the transformation of the bar into an imaginary boat sailing for Alaska—pure magic.

Fatima Medeiros
Opera
London, October 1985

AN AMUSING SHOW

When the Ensemble Modern comes here—and now for the third time to the auditorium in the Wilhelmshöher Allee, thanks to the initiative of the Kassel Academy and the German Youth Orchestra [der Jungen Deutschen Philharmonie]—the musical scene breaks out of the inflexibility of its conventional museum-style in a most exciting manner...Something as traditional as the Suite from Kurt Weill's opera *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* (arranged by Wilhelm Brückner-Rüggeberg) becomes an adventure in listening, taking one's breath away. Jürg Wyttenbach conducts the 23 excellent instrumentalists and once more this composition startles one as Weill's music—music often disparaged as "soft music"—is still ironically insinuating, suddenly hard-hitting, and sharply clamorous as the warning it was to the complacency of a weary society in 1930.

Bernd Müllmann
Hersfelder Zeitung
5 May 1986

CELLO SONATA

Kurt Weill wrote his cello sonata at the age of 19 before he studied with Busoni, and nonetheless, it shows the characteristics of his musical background: the expressive worlds of Mahler, Reger, and, not the least, Debussy. Still, the third movement makes one sit up and take notice. There appear harmonies and sounds of the late 1920's, foreshadowing the style of the creator of *The Threepenny Opera*. With visible pleasure, Johannes Goritzki and David Levine enjoyed the opportunity to luxuriate in nuances of sound and timbre, and to serve harmonic and rhythmic specialties, e.g., the bi-tonality, and the 7/8 rhythm of the second movement, to the delighted listeners.

Helene Steffan
Traunsteiner Wochenblatt
8 June 1986

WEILL CONCERTO PERFORMED AT THE ASPEN MUSIC FESTIVAL

Kurt Weill's *Concerto for Violin and Winds*, Op. 12, was given a fine performance at the Aspen Music Festival on Wednesday evening, July 30, at the Festival tent. The concerto is an intriguing work, paying homage to composers such as Stravinsky, Debussy, Hindemith and Mahler, as well as giving a foretaste of the popular, well known Weill of *Mahagonny* and the *Threepenny* Opera. The composer's dramatic sensibility is revealed in the interaction of the main character, the violin, with wind and percussion instruments.

The solo violin part was admirably played by Kurt Sassmannshaus. Mr. Sassmannshaus's highly expressive playing and sweet tone were appealing, especially in the second movement, and the *perpetuum mobile* passages seemed effortless. The Aspen Wind Ensemble, made up of students attending the Aspen Music School, provided competent support under the able leadership of Per Brevig.

Jane Vial Jaffe
Aspen, August 1986

CONCERTS OF VIENNA FESTIVAL

"Here rests the virgin Johanna Beck. When she died, her innocence had already died before that time." With sarcasm and cynical frankness, Kurt Weill unmasked the society of his time—the years of the thirties. Now, Peter Keuschnig is performing Weill's *Berliner Requiem* in the Brahms Hall with the Ensemble Kontrapunkte. It is a work that impresses because of the simplicity of its "modern" form and because of the clarity of the vocal writing. Tonal color plays the most important part, as for example, when the saxophone produces the hauntingly beautiful timbres in the "Report of the Unknown Soldier." Keuschnig conducts this music clearly, objectively, and with wit, discreetly urging the "vulgar" sound [Vulgärton] of the singers Heinz Zednik, Peter Weber, and Viktor van Halem into the background. A knife-sharp composition which stood in an intriguing contrast to Ibert's "Concertino."

Krone
Vienna, 3 June 1986

CELUI QUI DIT OUI—DER JASAGER THE OPERA, A CHILD'S GAME, BRECHT-WEILL PERFORMED BY THREE HUNDRED MARVELOUS CHILDREN IN BESANÇON

"I think that the life of a youth is more valuable than the life of an aged."

It is in the large auditorium of the Espace Planoise in Besançon that the adventure [Der Jasager] was performed enthusiastically by three hundred children. A setting of the primitive earth, with slopes, rocky paths, and ravines, tells of the passion of youth, but also of its resignation to the call of blind destiny. Not a socio-political "lecture," but an absolute, lyrical, game—a pure discipline of awakening.

Upon the title-role, the small Esteban Gomez laid his sweetness, his sorrow, his obstinacy, without parallel.

And the rest combined innocence and gravity with astonishing instinct; well-rehearsed, it is necessary to say, by the Ensemble Justiniana (produced by Catherine Neissi), while the orchestra was conducted by Jean-Luc Roth.

Henceforth, it is necessary to bear in mind that, without budget, without means, Catherine Neissi made of her operas for children an uncomplicated dramaturgy. And the pleasure she takes therein is ours.

Roger Tellart
La Croix
Paris, 2 July 1986

PERFORMANCES

AUSTRIA

Das Berliner Requiem, Brahmssaal, Vienna, Heinz Zednik, Peter Weber, Victor von Halen; Ensemble Kontrapunkte, Peter Keuschnig, cond., 3 June 1986

Concerto, violin & winds, Brahmssaal, Vienna, Ensemble Kontrapunkte, Peter Keuschnig, cond., 11 June 1986

Die Dreigroschenoper, Burgtheater, Vienna, Christoph Schroth, prod., Fall 1986

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Brahmssaal, Vienna, Ensemble Kontrapunkte, Peter Keuschnig, cond., 11 June 1986

BRAZIL

Mahagonny Songspiel, Teatro de Cidade de Porto Allegre, Porto Allegre, Teatro Vivo de Cidade de Porto Allegre, 1-10 April 1986

CANADA

Die Dreigroschenoper, University of Toronto, Toronto, The Berliner Ensemble, 21-26 October 1986

Berlin to Broadway, City Stage Theatre, Vancouver, Summer 1986

Berlin to Broadway, Grand Theater Company, London, ONT, To be announced

Mahagonny Songspiel, Canadian Opera Company, Toronto, 23-25 October 1986

Mahagonny Songspiel, McGill University, Montreal, 2 December 1986

DENMARK

Concerto, violin & winds, Aarhus, Hans Stenz, violinist; Aarhus Symphony, Stig Westerberg, cond., 3 July 1986

ENGLAND

Das Berliner Requiem, Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, The London Sinfonietta, 8 August 1986

Concerto, violin & winds, Southwell Minster, Nottingham, Janet Hall, violin; Nottingham Philharmonic Orchestra, Malcolm Nabarro, cond., 5 July 1986

Concerto, violin & winds, Southwell Minster, Nottingham, Beth Spendlove, violin; Nottingham Philharmonic Orchestra, Malcolm Nabbaro, cond., 4-5 July 1986

Happy End, Liverpool, University of Liverpool, students, 26 June 1986

Happy End, Rutland College, Oakham, Rutland College, students, October 1986

Happy End Songspiel, Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, The London Sinfonietta, 8 August 1986

Johnny Johnson, Almeida Theatre, London, Paul Marcus, dir.; John Owen Edwards, cond., 6 August 1986

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, College Wind Orchestra, Timothy Reynish, cond., 27 June 1986

Der Lindberghflug, Manchester, The University of Manchester, students, Ian Kemp, cond., 4 October 1986

Der Protagonist, Bloomsbury Theatre, London, Abbey Opera; John Eaton, dir.; Anthony Shelley, cond., 12 March-15 March 1986

Der Silbersee, Bloomsbury Theatre, London, Abbey Opera; John Eaton, dir., Spring 1987

The Threepenny Opera, Gulbenkian Theatre, Kent, Playcraft and Christ Church College; Glenville Hancox, cond., 29 April-3 May 1986

The Threepenny Opera, Christ Church College, Canterbury, University of Kent, Playcraft, students, 3 April-3 May 1986

The Threepenny Opera, Congregational Hall, Nottingham, Stravaganti XV, 15 July 1986

Der Zar lässt sich photographieren, Bloomsbury Theater, London, Abbey Opera; John Eaton, dir.; Anthony Shelley, cond., 12 March-15 March 1986

FRANCE

L'Opéra de Quat'Sous, Conservatoire, Sevran, 21 June 1986

Der Jasager, Théâtre Musical Populaire, Villeurbanne, 16-17 June 1986

Der Jasager, Montbéliard, L'Ensemble Juliana, 11 July 1986

L'Opéra de Quat'Sous, Théâtre Musical de Paris, Châtelet, Paris, Milva (Jenny), Barbara Sukowa (Polly), Heinz Bennent (Mr. Peachum); Giorgio Strehler, dir.; Peter Fischer, cond., 31 October 1986-February 1987

Song Recital, Fondation Paul Maeght, St. Paul de Vence, Nancy Shade, soprano, July 11, 1986

Ballet, Avignon Festival, Benoit-XIII Salle, Avignon, Jean-François Duroure, Mathilde Monnier, 1-6 August 1986

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny, Pfalztheater, Kaiserslautern, Kaiserlautern Pfalztheater; Wolfgang Blum, dir.; Wilfried Emmert, cond., 21, 27 March, 4, 15, 18, 20, 30 April 1986

Augstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny, Staedtische Bühnen, Hagen, 86-87 Season

Augstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny, Musiktheater, Dortmund, 86-87 Season

Die Dreigroschenoper, Schauspielhaus, Mannheim, October 1986

Die Dreigroschenoper, Frankfurt, 5 June 1986

Die Dreigroschenoper, Theater AG, Langenhagen Gymnasium, Langenhagen, students, June 20, 21, 25, 26 1986

Die Dreigroschenoper, Theater-im-Pott, Oberhausen, Theater-im-Pott, company; Fritzdieter Gerhards, Dir.; Saul Schechtmann, cond., 9 March 1986

Die Dreigroschenoper, E.T.A. Hoffmann-Gymnasium, Bamberg, March 1986

Die Dreigroschenoper, Solingen, guest performance, ensemble from Wuppertal, 12-14 June, 12 July 1987

Die Dreigroschenoper, Theater AG, Alfred-Delp-Schule, Dieburg, students, 28, 30-31 May 1986

Die Dreigroschenoper, Hamburg, Friedrich-Ebert Gymnasium, students, 23-24 June 1986

Happy End, Oldenburg Caecilienschule, Delmenhorst, Das "Freie Ensemble" (Gymnasium an der Max-Planck-Strasse), students, 20 April 1986

Happy End, Gymnasium Theater, Fellbach, students, 30 April 1986

Happy End, Schauspielhaus, Frankfurt, F. Moritz and I. Wasserka, dirs.; 29 May-20 June 1986

Der Jasager, Theater Hamburg, Hamburg, 10, 11 May 1986

Der Jasager, Gymnasium Buettger, Kaarst, students, 13 June 1986

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Friedenskirche, Ludwigsburg, Philip Jones Brass Ensemble, 9 June 1986

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Stadthalle, Winnenden, Georg-Buecher-Gymnasium Sinfonieorchester, Lothar Heinisch, cond., 20 March 1986

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Duesseldorf, Duesseldorf-Ensemble, Wolfgang Trommer, cond., 14 March 1986

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Rathaus, Büblingen Musikschule, 7 June 1986

Lost in the Stars, Herrenberg, Andrea Gymnasium, students, 21-25 November 1986

Mahagonny Songspiel, Werkstattbühne, Solingen, guest performance, Dinslaken Theater-Ensemble, 27 April 1986

Die sieben Todsünden, Stadttheater, Wuerzburg, Wuerzburg Stadttheater ballet, 86-87 Season

Die sieben Todsünden, Landestheater, Coburg, 23 October 1986

Sonata, cello & piano, Kulturhaus, Wiesloch, Walter Michael Vollhardt, cellist; Wolfram Lorenzen, pianist; 26 September 1986

Sonata, cello & piano, Kammermusikfestival, Traunstein, Johannes Goritzki, cello; David Levine, piano, 5 August 1986

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Schwerin, Schweriner Philharmonic, 10 April 1986

GREECE

Die Dreigroschenoper, Deutsche Schule, Athens, students, 5 April 1986

ITALY

Symphony no. 2, Montepulciano, RIAS-Youth Orchestra, M. Fitzgerald, cond., 3 August 1986

NETHERLANDS

Die Bürgschaft, Amsterdam, students, University of Amsterdam, Rietveld Academie, Sweelinck Conservatorium; Margje Scheurwater, dir., March 1987

SCOTLAND

Happy End, Glasgow Academy Theater, Glasgow, March 1986

Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny, Theatre Royal, Glasgow, Scottish Opera, Richard Cassilly (Jimmy Mahoney); David Alden, dir.; Sian Edwards, cond., 5 March-April 1986

SPAIN

Concerto, violin & winds, Madrid, 18 March 1986

SWITZERLAND

Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahogonny, Musiksaellskap, Karlshamn, 12 April 1986

Der Jasager, Gymnasium Kohlenberg, Basel, students, 24 March 1986

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Musikakademie, Basil, students, 12 March 1986

UNITED STATES

Berlin to Broadway, Zephyr Theatre, San Francisco, Bill Bowerstock, Michele Callahan, Karon Kearney, Robert Neches, Sarh Tattersall, Michael Vodde, cast; Paul Hough, dir.; Jack Elton, cond., 7 October with an open run

Berlin to Broadway, New Haven, CT, Ensemble Company for Performing Arts, Yale Summer Cabaret, 25-28 June, 2-5 July 1986

Berlin to Broadway, Parkland Community College Theater, Champaign, IL, Parkland Community College, students; George H. Johnston, dir.; Sandra Chabot, cond., 6-9, 13-16 March 1986

Berlin to Broadway, Florida Repertory Theatre, West Palm Beach, Florida Repertory Theatre cast, 3 April-27 April 1986

Concerto, violin & winds, Milwaukee, Milwaukee Chamber Orchestra; Stephen Colburn, cond.; Ralph Evans, violin, 3 April 1987

Concerto, violin & winds, Fox Point, WI, Milwaukee Chamber Orchestra, 6 May 1986

Down in the Valley, Cape Cod Community College Theater, W. Barnstable, MA, 15, 16 May 1986

Down in the Valley, Norwood High School, Norwood, OH, students; Jack Ward, dir. and cond., 18 April 1986

Frauentanz, Marlboro Festival, Marlboro, VT, August 1986

Happy End, New Mexico Repertory Theater, Santa Fe, 1-9, 12-23 March 1986

Happy End, Toledo, OH, University of Toledo, 1-9 March 1986

Happy End, Los Angeles Theatre Center, Los Angeles, Stein Winge, dir.; Frederic Myrow, cond., 14 January-28 February 1987

Happy End, Catholic Univ., Washington, DC, 1-13 October 1986

Johnny Johnson, Odyssey Theatre Ensemble, Los Angeles, 28 June-25 September 1986

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Eastern Oregon State College, La Grande, OR, 9 March 1986

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Majestic Theatre, Dallas, TX, Dallas Symphony; Kirk Trevor, conductor, 10 July 1986

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Milwaukee, WI, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Joann Falletta, cond., 22 June 1986

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Eastern New Mexico University, Portales, 28 April 1986

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, West Genesee High School, Syracuse, The Syracuse Wind Symphony, Jeffrey Renshaw, cond., 19 April 1986

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, McKenna Theater, SUNY, New Paltz, NY, Music of the Mountains Festival Chamber Orchestra, 19 July 1986

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Glassboro State College, Glassboro, NJ, 19 April 1986

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik, Palace Theatre of the Arts, Stamford, CT, Stamford Chamber Orchestra, Laurence Gilgore, cond., 30 May 1986

Lost in the Stars, Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd St Y, New York City, 92nd Street cast, orchestra; Maurice Levine, cond., 1, 2, 4 June 1986

Lost in the Stars, Caleb Mills Hall, Indianapolis, IN, Indiana Opera Theatre, J. Hatfield, dir.; A.L. Hamilton, J. Wiley, conds., 28, 30 August 1986

Mahagonny Songspiel, Houston, TX, 29 April 1986

Mahagonny Songspiel, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA, 30 April 1986

Mahagonny Songspiel, Greencastle, IN, Depauw Opera Theatre, 6-9 March 1986

Sonata, cello & piano, Varner Hall, Oakland University, Detroit, Detroit Contemporary Chamber Ensemble; Marcy Chanteaux, cello; Robert Conway, piano, 11 April 1986

String Quartet, op. 8, (dance performance) Chicago, IL, Mordine & Company, 7-22 March 1986

The Threepenny Opera, Stamford, Stamford Grand Opera, March 1988

The Threepenny Opera, Chestertown, MD, Actors Community Theatre, 18-20 April 1986

The Threepenny Opera, Angus Bowmer Theatre, Ashland, OR, The Oregon Shakespearean Festival; Andrew Traister, dir., 1 March-30 October 1986

The Threepenny Opera, Country Players Inc., Brookfield, CT, Country Players Inc., 18, 19, 25, 26 April 1986

The Threepenny Opera, The Barn's of Wolf Trap, Washington, DC, Prince George's Civic Opera Company, David Abell, cond., 18-24, 25, 26 April 1986

The Threepenny Opera, The Lyric Theater, Kansas City, Kansas City Lyric Opera, 16, 18, 21 April 1986

The Threepenny Opera, Santa Clara, University of Santa Clara, students; J. Drweski, dir.; H. Mollicone, cond., November 1986

The Threepenny Opera, Denver, CO, Loretto Heights College, students, 14-23 November 1986

The Threepenny Opera, Lafayette College, Easton, Lafayette College students; M. Mrochinski, dir.; B. Melin, cond., 5 November 1986

Street Scene, Marin Community College theater, Marin County, Marin Community College, students; Martin Frick, dir.; Paul Smith, cond., 3, 5, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19 July 1986

Street Scene, Broyhill Music Center, Boone, NC, Appalachian State University Opera Theatre, students; 4, 5 April 1986

Street Scene, Nicholas Music Center, New Brunswick, Rutgers University, students; Valerie Goodall, cond., 30, 31 October-1, 2 November 1986

Kurt Weill Re-Vue, D.C. Space, Washington, DC, June-August 1986

WALES

Happy End, St Donats Arts Centre, Llantwit Major, St Donats Music Theatre; Tony Castro, Wyn Davies, co-conds., 22, 23 August 1986, 13-17, 21-24 Jan 87

Popular Songs, Denbigh, Clwyd, Felson Trio, 6 March 1986

NEWSLETTER RESPONSE FORM

Name _____
Institution _____
Address _____
_____
Telephone Number _____

_____Add my name to mailing list
_____Delete my name from mailing list
_____Update listing

Detach and mail to: Kurt Weill Foundation for Music, Inc. 142 West End Avenue, Suite 1R, New York, NY 10023. Or call: (212) 873-1465.

BOOK ORDER FORM

The Foundation has a limited number of the following books to offer for sale. Please send this order form with a check made payable in U.S. dollars. All books will be shipped by UPS in the United States and by surface rate to Europe. New York residents, please add sales tax.

No. of copies	Title	Price	Total
_____	Kowalke, ed. *A New Orpheus: Essays on Kurt Weill*. Yale University Press, 1986.	$28.50	_____
_____	Kowalke. *Kurt Weill in Europe*. UMI Research Press, 1979.	$20.00 $10.00 (Pbk)	_____ _____
_____	Marx, ed. *Weill-Lenya*. Exhibition catalog, New York Public Library, 1976.	$ 7.50 (Pbk)	_____
_____	Schebera. *Kurt Weill: Leben und Werk*. VEB Deutscher Verlag, 1983.	$15.00	_____
	TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED _____		

Detach and mail with payment to: Kurt Weill Foundation for Music, Inc. 142 West End Avenue, Suite 1-R, New York, NY 10023.

THE KURT WEILL FOUNDATION FOR MUSIC
142 West End Avenue, Suite 1-R
New York, New York 10023
Phone: (212) 873-1465

Non Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
New York, N.Y.
Permit No. 893