

CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN MUSIC¹

I

MAY I preface these lectures by saying how happy I am to return to my native state, especially under such auspices as the Rice Institute. Today it is no longer paradoxical to be both Texan and musician; and it is fast becoming even an honor to be American and composer, and artist; it is these facts that I shall attempt to elucidate. The subject of the American composer, his heredity, his environment, his present status, and his future, is an engrossing one, all the more so since we are in a better position to understand these fair-mindedly than ever before, and because a certain new birth of arts, especially music, may have begun in this country; for we have, as we shall see, ample cause for believing we have turned from a debtor to a creditor nation, not only in matters financial, but in matters musical, and that we are moving into a musical stature that is rightfully ours, that has been properly prepared for, and that no one of our time dares justly ignore. Nothing but a complete shattering of the present systems of government and of cultural foundations can now change the course America is destined to take in the art life of the world. Even so, beauty will somehow manage, as it has, to survive the devastations of the ages, and who will deny

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it will continue to do so? Particularly in this nation, buoyant and hopeful and of youthful enthusiasm, there is a natural expectancy born of the same trust and delight a child exhibits when starting on a far journey, or in making some new discoveries. America's opportunity as a music creator has come! Is she meeting it?

Let us now examine the American tone-stage, with its "Main Street", its "Street Scene", its "American Tragedy", its budding Robinson, Frost, Lindsay, Millay, and O'Neill, its landscape and portrait painters in music, its explorers, its scientists, its builders; but let us first understand the conditions that have led us to the position we have today reached in the musical world.

We can unhesitatingly rejoice, and with reason, that we have at present a school of genuine American composition, at least in the making, and that the ever enlarging group of highly gifted young composers is at last attracting the attention of the greatest musicians here and abroad with works of distinction, quality, and significance. This school of composition has crept upon us almost without our knowing it. Here and there, from practically every part of the country, from village and metropolis, has cropped up a young composer with an independence of speech, an exuberance of life, that have unmistakable living qualities. And, what is highly important, they are "carrying through." Without in any manner forcing the issue, there is concerted agreement that "what we must arrive at", as Edward MacDowell has said, "is the youthful optimistic vitality and undaunted tenacity of spirit that characterizes the American man." This vitality and tenacity were never so real in American music as today; never before has the standard of our works reached so high a plane; never before so independent a note; never before has unquestioned origi-

nality given such a bid for immortality or shown the possibility of the advent of genius.

We can frankly confess we dare not boast as yet of eternal masterpieces, of a "Ninth Symphony", a "B Minor Mass", a "Tristan and Isolde", or a "Pelleas et Melisande", nor a set of "Haydn Variations" nor a "Till Eulenspiegel", nor a "Pierrot Lunaire", nor a "Sacre du Printemps." Nevertheless, we can look with confidence and pride at the library of the fresh and encouraging list of compositions written, say, in the last fifteen or twenty years, creations of contemporaneous character that can easily rank with the recent output of Europe. I wonder if this fact is fully realized even by the most ardent musical enthusiasts.

Has this condition come about suddenly? And what has caused us to become creatively conscious, at least from a musical viewpoint? What has helped to bring about our independence? Just what are the forces at work that have brought to pass this long-desired fact?

We can best answer these questions by delving into our musical history. All art, we know, has developed after problems of mere existence have been satisfied and stable governments established; hence it was hardly possible that music could thrive in the early days of our republic. But it did find some crude, though imitative expression. Our early composers did not begin where Europe left off, for they apparently were unaware of the movements of their own day. This retarded their and our own growth, but this seems to have been America's method in many phases of her art life.

Roughly speaking, our musical history can be classified (according to the latest historians) into three periods, though I make bold enough to add a fourth. The first period, dating from the Plymouth Rock days with the "Bay Psalm Book", printed in 1640, culminated in Francis Hop-

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kinson, now credited as our first composer, and William Billings. These men have for us only a historical interest. Hopkinson wrote to George Washington, concerning his songs: "If this attempt should not be too severely treated, others may be encouraged to venture on a path, yet untrodden in America, and the Arts in succession will take root and flourish amongst us." Hopkinson was correct in his prophecy. The Arts *will* flourish!

The second period of American music is from 1800 to 1860. Political refugees from France and Central Europe brought with them their love of music; the "Handel and Haydn Society" was formed in Boston and there were early attempts at formations of opera companies and orchestras. Lowell Mason began his work, the minstrel show gained popularity, and Stephen Foster wrote his melodies, which probably, because of his lack of musical training, many term folk songs. Had Foster had the schooling and opportunities of the young Mozart, he undoubtedly could have been a great composer. In this second period, historians stress the fact that alien musicians were in the foreground. (What say historians of the foreground today?)

The third period reaches from 1860 to about 1920. Boston is now the hub of culture and a distinguished group of learned musicians, trained mostly in European centers, struggled to develop a native music. The list, from John K. Paine, Chadwick, Parker, to Foote, Whiting, and others, was one well equipped, but apparently more learned than inspired, being too far from the heart-throbs of America that were pulsating here and there, in inaccessible nooks, in unintellectual environments, in folk idioms and accents that were unknown or ignored by the cultured Bostonian of that day. For the folk and primitive element does not spring from, or find abode in, aristocracy or centers of education.

As we well know, Edward MacDowell emerged from these men and women by his sheer individuality. A man of enormous gift, with foreshadowings of real genius, his life was of a short span, but he awakened America to his tonal imagination, and seems to embody in thought and action our needs better than anyone ever has. While he was attracted to the Norse and Celtic, and liked to picture the forest life of the Germany he knew as a student, yet he showed in his "Indian Suites" that he desired to speak with a native accent. MacDowell's life, ideals, and work, his Americanism, should ever be an inspiration to all our composers, irrespective of any final verdict on his compositions, which still seems a debatable question in so far as the larger works are concerned.

But these solid musicians prepared the stage for the next group of composers, starting some ten or fifteen years ago, and now springing, as we shall see, not from any one city and state, but from every part of our land, from the west, the east, the north, the south. At last our entire country was becoming articulate, and even though the lingo or dialect or brogue was still evident, each could understand the other and recognize something common in the manner of speech, qualities that could have sprung from no other people. At last America has somewhat expressed herself and is still panting with excitement that her polyglot tongue is at once understood here and abroad as American music. We are on the threshold of the establishment of a national, universally-expressed, art!

Now we know that there were definite reasons why the great masters were enabled to appear down the centuries, if genius can be explained. (1) There was cultivation of art by the nobility and government; (2) there were possibilities of performance, of commissions for compositions;

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(3) there were sympathetic backgrounds of family and national traditions; (4) and then, there was the folk basis from which a music could feed. Our government has, as we realize only too well, never supported the arts as in European countries. Our moneyed class has bought paintings, sculpture, and fine books, has established universities, libraries, art museums, has sent expeditions on archaeological and geological surveys, and has organized foundations for manifold purposes, but never gathered within its circle musicians, quartets, or other ensembles. We have had no court musicians. Only until quite recently the possibilities of performance were slight. Even today they are by no means what they should be. Serious composers must still wait patiently for proper presentations of their compositions. Of family and national traditions there were little or none. Of folk songs, though there is an abundance, yet our composers, with few exceptions, have not been aware of them. The great composers all had the legacy of folk song and employed it. It was their starting point, and we have no evidence that it ever prevented or limited their individual expression, and it will never obstruct ours. It does not mean we must write Indian, negro, or cowboy music. Just as poets and dramatists use the root-tongue of their birth, so must we use our musical root, which may not be evident in any conscious way, even to the composer, but which provides means for a spontaneous mode of speech, of inevitable sincerity and naturalness.

Let us ask ourselves frankly, have we a real folk basis? Despite the widespread belief to the contrary, the answer is yes; and one of the richest and most varied any nationality has ever had. Percy Grainger, the Australian pianist-composer and folk enthusiast, over the radio recently made this same statement. Being the large nation that we are, and with

transportation and communication not always what they are today, naturally our composers could not be conscious of a national folk speech, especially the serious group of composers centered around Boston. And there are, even now, some city-bred composers who claim we have no folk music, or ask where it is to be found. The majority of our folk songs are from the south and west, but little from the east, and it is only in the last few years that published collections have made them available. The variety and abundance of our folk material should not confound us; rather should it help to produce a music of remarkable breadth of conception.

Lest we differ as to what constitutes real folk song, especially American, let me quote from *Afro-American Folksongs*, by H. E. Krehbiel: "Similarities exist between the folksongs of all peoples. Their overlapping is a necessary consequence of the proximity and intermingling of peoples, like modification of language. . . . Folksongs are echoes of the heart-beats of the vast folk and in them are preserved feelings, beliefs and habits of vast antiquity. . . . Music cannot lie. . . ." In particular, Mr. Krehbiel believes the negro spiritual is the product of this country. He says: "Is it not the merest quibble to say that these songs are not American?" He adds that to deny they are American betokens "a carelessness of mind which should not exist in a scientific investigator, and justifies a challenge of the statement that the songs of the American negroes are predominantly borrowings from European music. They contain idioms which were transplanted hither from Africa, but as songs they are the product of American institutions; of the social, political and geographical environment within which their creators were placed in America. . . ." "Nowhere save on the plantations of the South could the emotional life which is essential to the development of true folksong

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be developed; nowhere else was there the necessary meeting of the spiritual cause and the simple agent and vehicle. The white inhabitants of the continent have never been in the state of cultural ingenuousness which prompts spontaneous emotional utterance in music."

It would be indeed interesting and illuminating could I go further into this matter and into details, for it is a subject in itself. I must content myself, however, with a résumé from John Tasker Howard's *Our American Music* of its very considerable though incomplete list of numerous works on folk songs, of which the following is a general summary: (1) under "Indian Music" are listed thirty-nine published collections, essays, and reports, from authorities who have recorded tribal melodies and who have studied and lived with the tribes of the American Indian, including bulletins from the Bureau of American Ethnology in Washington. (2) Under "Negro Music" forty-nine volumes are catalogued, from such authorities as Natalie Curtis, James Weldon Johnson, R. Nathaniel Dett, and from such institutions as Fisk University and Hampton Institute. (3) Under "Miscellaneous Folk Songs" are placed Virginia ballads, cowboy songs, Kentucky tunes, frontier ballads, folk songs from the Southern Appalachians, South Carolina ballads; also songs from the Vermont hills and Maine lumberjacks. Many well known enthusiasts such as John A. Lomax, Carl Sandburg, and Cecil Sharp have edited these forty volumes. (4) Under "Popular Music", "Minstrel Songs", "Songs of the World War", etc., are given some twelve books. (5) Under "Jazz", eight works are named. Besides these are listed, under different headings, a great number of books and articles which pertain to the development of various sections of the country, and for the musicologist offer an immense field of investigation. Can we name an American

who is thoroughly grounded in all this folk music or a considerable portion of it? I venture to say herein lies at least one avenue of access to genuine American music. The great majority of these books and articles have been issued, as I have said, in the last ten to twenty years, so that there is a huge amount of material which must be musically digested by composers of today and tomorrow.

Is it not a startling array? But some will say they are so dissimilar, so varied, that one cannot apply the term "American" without getting into difficulties with others. Let us ask at once: Is there any concrete evidence that this mass of folk material has been assimilated consciously or unconsciously by our nation as a whole, as well as our composers? Have the causes that prompted these folk utterances not been understood or generally experienced, or have they been isolated, unimportant outbursts? Has education petrified and dwarfed the significance of these folk idioms? Is there no evidence that our nation has responded in every fibre to these ever-recurring primitive impulses? Yes, I am happy to say, there is! Whether we wish it or not, we must be honest. Roughly and bluntly speaking, it is jazz, Composers have been, and are primarily, looking at this effect, jazz, instead of the sources. Why? Because, as we have seen, these sources were not until recent years available generally, and because lately folk music has been rather out of fashion among all living composers. The employment of folk song, or any reliance on it, has been interpreted by some as lack of thematic fertility and weakness in invention, though history does not corroborate this. Internationalism has pervaded music as in government, and national lines, at least in music, have been almost demolished. But jazz, as we know it today, and as our historians show, was a growth, sectional at first, but finally a full blown national phenom-

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enon, as welcome in our smallest hamlet as in the most fashionable of night-clubs.

Europeans sensed this even before we did, for jazz and America were synonymous terms, from a musical point of view. Stravinsky, the Russian, Ravel, the Frenchman, Krenek, the German, Tansman, the Pole, Milhaud and Honegger, Frenchmen, and hosts of others, began using jazz effects and rhythms and orchestrations. George Gershwin went over to Paris to study with Ravel, but Ravel discouraged his desire. We can now understand this, for Ravel has generously borrowed some of Gershwin's distinctive devices and tricks. Nevertheless, we Americans can smilingly sit back and realize that, despite their masterful technique, none of these composers can get the spirit of jazz, of the effervescent life of which it is the embodiment, because they have not the background. They may speak the language, but it is not like a native. It is not in their musical bones. In some instances it has almost spoiled their individual style, often characteristic of their respective nations.

But do not let Americans be fooled either. It behooves all of our composers to go back, every so often, to the source, the soil, that they may better understand our heritage and what these European masters so admire and imitate. And with the quantities of published folk material, as well as environments that produced them still intact in many instances, this is possible today. All should make it a duty to masticate musically these collections and those to come. This should be done in years of apprenticeship, such as all the great masters went through (Wagner, for example, wrote several early operas) by composing work after work until the composer finds himself. The waste-baskets of great geniuses were always full. Frankly, we have never seemed to believe in apprenticeship in America, yet it is absolutely

necessary; and I dare say that if folk material were freely employed in these uncertain years it would not be so easy to go astray musically, or to fall into the trap of quoting European models, or to overvalue the personal equation.

Is jazz a true expression, a composite mirror of our folk background, or is it a distortion of city life with its artificiality, its materialism? Is it but a passing phase, or can it find a living place in our musical literature? These questions admit of much discussion, but some acknowledgments must be made. Jazz is crude, and frankly a sterile, physical, not a spiritual expression. It is music aesthetically and emotionally suppressed. Probably it had to come to prepare the way for spiritual soaring. But it is the first type of American music that seems to speak to every part of our land, no matter what the folk product may be. Jazz is indigenous only to America. The rhythms are joyous, exhilarating, vital, and something new, or at least additional, to music; the jazz band has shown new possibilities of orchestration and color. The tendency on the part of many composers to use the small orchestra and thin orchestration may be attributed to the remarkable scoring by jazz arrangers. Moreover, the rhythmical problems met with ease by jazz players have aroused the envy of symphony performers. And the fact remains, that even if one says our Indian, negro, minstrel, cowboy, Carolina, Kentucky, or Appalachian songs are derivative, none can deny these have been forged and forged, until a certain American expression, jazz, has emerged, to urge us, if for no other reason, to a fuller and nobler, a more uplifting and deeper felt national language. A nation that can produce the most popular of popular music, jazz, from this folk background *can*, in time, produce such a national language.

We emerged, only a few years ago, from what I am prone

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to call the "Age of Respectability" in American music. Our composers had to help make music a respectable study and respectable profession, and even today its wonderful educational value is just beginning to be seen and acknowledged. Our composers were of necessity compelled to write, first of all, according to respectable tradition in order to be accepted and recognized. The public of the past not knowing the classics (and not so long ago at that) was in no mood for experimentation, and no artist or conductor could afford to give any radical composer (had there been any) encouragement. The excitement of a first performance is tremendous, and we must learn to share in the trials and the enthusiasm of the composer. The foreign musician has inherited this enthusiasm, this forward-looking outlook, and has a courage, which even today is too rare among native Americans. The listener and artist, as well as the composer, must become creative-minded, and we must not forget this is a matter of training and cultivation, if not intuition.

While Beethoven was receiving the plaudits of the audience at the first performance of the "Ninth Symphony", and Richard Wagner was creating his music dramas, our nation was still engrossed in commercial expansion and our railroads were active in exploring new regions. The arts, especially music, as we have seen, were cherished and preserved by a few cultured Americans, but mostly by those of foreign parentage. And what do we find in the other arts? A few painters broke through, but they preferred to live abroad, not here. Whistler loved his United States, but lived in London. Our poets, our novelists and philosophers produced a highly respectable literature; a few revolutionaries emerged, such as Bret Harte, Mark Twain, and Whitman. We produced a Washington, a Lincoln, makers of our constitution, great engineers and architects, great inventors,

builders of railroads, great soldiers and financiers. But we have had no Rembrandt, no Michelangelo, no Goethe, no Milton, and, of course, no Shakespeare. And we have had no Palestrina, no Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, or Brahms. Unless such art seers appear down the centuries, no nation can be said to have made any *real* progress, despite much so-called prosperity. Indeed, in music, as we have seen, we were barely audible, barely productive. Music was not yet sufficiently cultivated in the home, and there were not many concert halls to lure young musicians, hence a professional career in music was unworthy of consideration. Even if one did feel the calling he was shipped post-haste to Europe, as even our Prix de Rome men are today.

Strangely enough, America, though naturally a leader in ideas of government, architecture, engineering, and invention, has always been in music from two to three-score years behind the advanced and most cultured nations of Europe. Why has this been? Well, the American people have never accepted music as an integral part of our life and education, and have, until recently, shown little interest in our composers. Then, in literature our schools have always taught the greatest poets and writers, but in music we evidently waited for so-called culture to develop, using the "popular classics," instead of the best music, to feed our audiences. So, today, children should hear and be taught as soon as possible the masterpieces of all time, classic and modern. Let our young hear these from infancy, and we shall never lack listeners and producers and creators.

For many years there was but one orchestra in this country, and Theodore Thomas could keep his orchestra intact only by traveling from city to city. We had as yet few or no opera companies, no great conservatories, and not many great artists visited our land. Richard Wagner, when in-

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vited to the Philadelphia Exposition to conduct his commissioned overture, intimated, you recall, that he would not come to this land of dollars. But a Rubinstein and a Patti soon made history, and slowly and by painful degrees, a musical public was formed.

Naturally, this public had first to be taught the classics, and with certain P. T. Barnum tactics. They were not prepared for new music, for only the educated listener is prepared for the new. But Theodore Thomas did miracles, as his programs show, in introducing many unknown compositions to America, including the first two Brahms symphonies; his daring was well illustrated in his insistence on audiences listening to Wagner whether they liked it or no. Our critics, too, were naturally men of tradition, helping to establish a standard and general level of culture, rather than to espouse the cause of untried, unproven genius. The late Mr. Krehbiel lived to see Richard Strauss acknowledged despite his biting criticism. Henry T. Finck honestly believed Grieg was greater than Brahms; and today the oldest and one of the most distinguished critics (often called the dean), my own friend, Philip Hale of Boston, has hardly overcome completely his dislike of Brahms.

But behold! the American scene has changed. We have a new school of critics growing up with the young composers, and most of them are frankly fed up on the classics, so that new compositions are fresh air to them. There is hardly a city without some of these new men, tremendously awake to all that has taken place in music, and pricking their ears for every possible evidence of American talent that may become genius. They no longer believe, as did so many, that music stopped with this or that composer, and their fresh outlook has often loosened rhetoric into splendid flow of imaginative prose. No longer do these men drag themselves to a con-

cert to hear just another one of those "dull, stupid, derivative American works." And it is no boast to say they now look to us to produce much of the most vital and living and original contemporary music! Some are already secretly and openly declaring, together with prominent artists, that America is one of the musical hopes of the future.

We have orchestras of first rank in almost every large city, and at least one major opera company, as well as smaller ones. Many believe, however, there should be opera companies scattered everywhere, including small towns, as in the case of Germany, where even today, in many instances, the government supports them as municipal assets. And do not be shocked by the fact that these small companies make it a point to produce *new* operas. Why, Gruenberg's opera, "Emperor Jones," was announced for performance in Germany before our own Metropolitan announced it for this season. But I must mention here that this opera will not be given abroad. Germany, like France, England, Spain, and Italy, has decreed that her own composers must be given precedence and preference in new productions. A hint to the wise. May our producers take heed!

We have, today, for the first time in our history, conservatories of highest standing, made possible in some instances by huge endowments from an Eastman, a Mrs. Bok, or a Juilliard. Our students, with the exception of composers, no longer desire to go to Europe. They have finally come to look upon this as a land of musical learning, and no longer fear the outcome of the label "trained in America." Our universities and colleges, too, have strengthened their curricula so that these are more than "crip" courses. Yet our schools of music do not have courses in "contemporary music" that would correspond to courses in "contemporary drama" and "contemporary literature." The composer

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should not be second to the virtuoso, and "contemporary music" must, in the future, become a most important part of music study; then the "grand manner" of the days of Liszt, Paganini, and Chopin may return to us.

But what may be the most important of all: almost every high school, throughout the states, has its own orchestra. And how they can play! and the classics too. Professor John Erskine, president of the Juilliard School of Music, feels that the salvation of American music lies in the "informally organized high school and amateur orchestras of small towns." In a recent address at Yale University he said: "These are completed American institutions. The trombone player chews gum to lubricate his mouth; the conductor is called by his first name and is frequently involved in arguments over his knowledge of music."

The growth of these student orchestras has been phenomenal. Here are our potential audiences, musicians, and music lovers. Who ever dreamed it was so much fun to blow the trumpet or play the clarinet or violin or beat the tympani as in these orchestras? By actual experience and pleasure our boys are proving that music is not to be considered an effeminate pastime, and they ponder in perplexity how such an idea ever became prevalent. Yes, the high school orchestra is solving our musical problem, surely, if nothing else is, and should become a channel for youthful composers. No one can truthfully say as Tolstoy once did that classical music should be abolished because it could not be enjoyed by the plain man.

We have many of the finest artists of our time living with us, and many of them have taken out citizenship papers to be part of us. We have some of the greatest conductors of the world leading our orchestras and at least two of the greatest exponents of modern music in our midst, Dr. Serge

Koussevitzky, of the Boston Symphony, and Leopold Stokowski, of the Philadelphia Orchestra. I could easily give an entire lecture on their unique accomplishments and contributions towards the onward march of music. These two men can be said to have done more to stimulate and encourage American composers and to interest our audiences than any two in our history, though Dr. Stock in Chicago has also done much. Our every town and community have concert courses, our radios flash good music to every part of the continent, enabling all to listen to master-works, especially the orchestral repertoire, six million high school children hear the broadcasts of the Damrosch concerts each week, and our reproducing machines preserve tradition for those who need it. We have a listening public that has already passed the first stages of concert going, that no longer needs the constant "repeats" the masters thought necessary, and that takes for granted the new and unknown on our programs. Let us admit that there are objections, walk-outs, and complaining letters by patrons now and then about Dr. Koussevitzky's or Mr. Stokowski's programs of modernism; still audiences have learned to be receptive, to accept somewhat the conductor's enthusiasm and faith, and to feel it right and proper to hear, if not admire, the latest productions of Americans and Europeans. Modern music, one must remember, has been primarily in the hands of conductors. Probably this is because the orchestra is the finest color palette, and also because of an apparent lack of interest and courage of virtuosi.

No longer are composers entirely dependent on commercial publishers. Our foundations and endowed institutions help to meet the situation, publish works in large form, principally for orchestra, and issue new music irrespective of any sales value. At last the idealism that has saved cul-

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ture for the ages has found some definite musical expression in America. Composers can now feel that their stock has risen in respect and esteem, and that they are befriended today. The Juilliard Foundation, the Eastman School of Music, the Cos Cob Press, *New Music*, and the Society for the Publication of American Music, bring out one or more works each season; those published already form an extensive library. I dare say none of our conductors or orchestras are completely acquainted with this new literature, nor are our audiences. Even European publishers are now interested in our compositions, and conductors actually vie with one another over first performances of new works. Indeed, desire for first performance often works hardship on composers.

There are a large number of fellowships and scholarships available for gifted musicians, creative and executive, which are most valuable and necessary in the formative years, when financial responsibilities should be removed. There have been to date some twelve fellows in music of the American Academy in Rome; the Guggenheim Memorial Foundation has granted twenty musical fellowships; there have been fifteen Pulitzer Traveling Scholarships. These are primarily for composers under thirty; but composers over this age must also be provided for. Various cash prizes have been awarded by the Victor Talking Machine Company, the Paderewski Prize, the Philadelphia Musical Fund Society, *Musical America*, and the National Broadcasting Company, the National Federation of Music Clubs, and the Hollywood Bowl Association. It is a commendable spirit that prompts the offering of these cash prizes, though the general results of such money prizes may be open to question, certainly so long as a gifted man like Griffes, who never entered prize competitions, is allowed to pass away unsup-

ported. Let us hope the tragic loss of Charles T. Griffes to American art will be an object lesson for all time, and that no one of our many talented artists, composers, conductors, pianists, violinists, or singers will be allowed to fall by the wayside, or drift into unprogressive channels, but that all will be encouraged and placed in favorable position for growth to a rightful maturity. Talent expands into genius, and opportunities are essential to, and hasten, this expanding. This is assuredly true of talent for composing.

Again, within recent years, many fine channels for the production of new music have been formed, and the influence of these organizations has been so enormous that hardly any artist or orchestra ventures a program without some attractive novelty. The pioneer work of the American Music Guild and the International Composers' Guild is being worthily carried forward today by the League of Composers, Pro Musica, the Pan-American Association, New Music Society of San Francisco, International Society, Copland-Sessions Concerts, New School of Social Research Concerts, Yaddo Festival of Contemporary Music, and the Elizabeth Coolidge Festivals. Besides these the national musical fraternities and sororities and our conventions of teachers and supervisors give American music programs. Howard Hanson, in Rochester, New York, gives composers the opportunity to hear their works, often for the first time. And modern music has become popular. The League of Composers concerts are always crowded, are reviewed usually at length by the first critics, and the League's productions at the Metropolitan Opera House with Stokowski are frequently sold out each year.

Several enterprising women are devoting a great deal of their time to the furtherance of new music. Mrs. Claire Reis, formerly of Brownsville, Texas, but now living in

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New York, is doing a splendid work of this sort, and is more than a friend to all of us composers. She is a member of the board of the League of Composers, and has edited the two editions of *American Composers* which have gone to a majority of the libraries in this country and many in Europe. Then no one can begin to estimate the value of the remarkable accomplishment of Mrs. Edward MacDowell in her tours throughout the United States spreading her husband's ideals, and in her pioneer work in establishing and preserving the glorious MacDowell Colony at Peterborough, New Hampshire. Mrs. MacDowell, probably more than any one person, has aided us through the medium of the Colony in bringing to a reality an American consciousness, in music, that has for its purpose not merely personal achievement but the reflection of a national spirit in our art, of universal appeal, and a clinching of our creative and cultural instincts that will alone lead to exalted and inspired compositions, to supreme happiness and contentment. This was and is necessary, for the very immensity and vastness of our art currents needed to be made to flow in one channel, deep, broad, and steady. MacDowell's ideals of a brotherhood of art and artists focused the vision upon a national expression that should spring from our own soil but that could be understood, respected, and loved the world over. Upon such a thesis, and not merely on his music, Mrs. MacDowell started the Colony, which this very season is celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary. At the Colony are gathered each summer distinguished, promising, and unknown poets, novelists, dramatists, painters, sculptors, and composers, and here, in six hundred acres of beautiful wooded country with inspiring mountain views, they may work without disturbance or dictation in comfortable studios built by clubs and individuals. Yes, America does do things differently, and

she has ideals too! Such a Colony has no counterpart anywhere in Europe. It is our, MacDowell's, product. If it had produced nothing but the works of Edwin Arlington Robinson it would deserve perpetuation, but the record of colonists is a notable one. Its result is, as I have suggested, a national art consciousness which had to come before real genius could develop, especially in music. It has shown that ideals are immortal and that Edward MacDowell's hopes and longings have helped to weld us into a creative nation.

Since the founding of the MacDowell Colony Mrs. Spencer Trask has dedicated her beautiful estate, Yaddo, at Saratoga Springs, New York, to a similar purpose, and here artists may work the year round. Mrs. Edgar Stillman Kelley, wife of the composer, too has become a figure in our musical life from coast to coast, while Mrs. Coolidge has furthered the interests of modern music with her festivals here and in Europe. I could go on and on, for almost every city that has made musical strides owes it to one or more women, who are trying to keep the torch of beauty ever aflame, and to insure greater opportunities for composers. I assure you that I am as appreciative as I know you are of the magnificent work done for music in Houston and in other cities of Texas by enterprising women possessed of an artist's vision of our needs. This work on their part will surely be reflected in the creations of Texas composers.

Is it at all surprising therefore that under these rich and stimulating influences a school of vital and original composers is working at white heat? The encouragements, the opportunities were never so great and the hopes of many are nearer to fulfillment than ever in our history. These hopes are deeply seated; they must be prompted by as much conviction as reform in ethical codes or a change in life-philosophy are deemed necessary; for music, all art, is but

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the framed outline of living emotions. Living desires always find embodiment!

Our auspicious unfolding of talent, however, exacts a corresponding responsibility of the nation. Our talent *must* be brought to fruition, to a *full* fruitage; it must be nurtured. Our composers must be watched and aided not only financially, but also by such mutual understanding and sympathy between performer and creator as will show where the creative side, yea, the spiritual, must be strengthened. It may well be puzzling to future generations that our public and board of directors could allow a great metropolitan orchestra, under the directorship of leading foreign conductors, to go on year after year without showing any real interest in American compositions, but performing an abundance of mediocre foreign music; and also how great artists could tour our land, taking to their European homes thousands of dollars, yet never seeking to find out our composers of yesterday and today. Without any resentment whatever let us affirm that this condition must change; it is by degrees changing even now. For the foreign musician is fast learning it is not alone sufficient to give us the best of his *finished* art; he must also help America build her *unfinished* musical structure and lay lasting foundation stones. The solution of the problems of today's group of composers must prepare for the problems of those to come, hence those problems must be faced and met with our every effort.

As I view the American scene, the following are some of our present requirements: (1) We need more native conductors of our large orchestras, and foreign conductors who recognize an orchestra not only as a medium for the classics, but a mouthpiece for those speaking the new tonal language. (There is a great distinction, at least to composers, between performing new music perfunctorily, as a

duty, or from the conviction that all channels must be kept open to creators, that creation may not stagnate.) (2) In every city of, say, twenty-five thousand people we need a permanent orchestra. The nucleus may be found in the high school orchestra. (3) Likewise we must have more American artists in every field of music, and of the first rank, and every encouragement should be given such artists. These artists must deem it a privilege, if not obligation, to assist American composers in every way. (4) We need many more opera companies and productions of operas in English and of new American operas. These opera companies must not only stage artistically the classic operas, they must be training schools for young American artists and American composers. (5) We need more great teachers, especially in composition, teachers who have had actual experience as composers and who live with and are in sympathy with the young. (6) We must have a wider recognition of music in our educational system, especially in our universities and colleges, not only as an art, but as a cultural force demanding the highest mental discipline, and composers must not be left out of this educational system. In fact, there should be composers and other creators in all of our schools of higher education, to stimulate study, awaken the imagination, and stir the research and exploring spirit. (7) There should be far more musical amateurs, with the natural consequence, more chamber music in the homes, more participation in and enjoyment of music, old and new, apart from the concert halls. (8) More scholarships are necessary; and after a composer has in some manner proven himself he should be given his time to work, probably through commissions or college grants. Composers must secure a living from their compositions, preferably through performance fees, similar to artists' fees. The profession of a composer must become

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a vocation, not an avocation. (9) A greater spirit of co-operation and interest is essential among all Americans to secure the establishment of a genuine American art. This cooperation must include our commercial publishers of music, who should share the composers' ideals and hopes, as have so many European publishers, as well as acknowledge the national necessity to further American music, and the incalculable assistance they are in position to give. (10) Regular performances of new works by all orchestras should be part of the year's programs; and local composers should be given the opportunity of hearing their works, in rehearsal, if not in regular programs. (11) Chauvinism must, little by little, give place to a world-wide recognition of a genuine American music, founded on artistic integrity and the product of our life. (12) A Secretary of Art or some recognition by the government of the arts must follow as a consequence of the widespread love of music and its allied arts.

Mrs. Claire Reis, in *American Composers* of 1932 has well expressed what should be our standpoint: "To gain a critical viewpoint on contemporary music in this period of quickening thought and action, of kaleidoscopic changes, calls for mercurial processes. In viewing the complete panorama of music with an understanding of its hybrid background, attention is best focused on the present scene without prognostications, with judgment reserved—but with faith untold. This was the profound encouragement which Abraham Lincoln felt in the potential American when he said: 'With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.' "

I personally have high hope and faith untold in our future. We must all be on our guard, though, against becoming too self-conscious in our music and about emphasizing the nationalistic side too much. Our music, like our

novels, poetry, drama, and short story, should develop an Americanism almost without our knowing it. At present a certain emphasis is necessary to assure the American artist and composer a more vital position in our musical life, but at heart we must have before us only the master-works of all time as our goal, and seek to understand how the different nations so enriched and ennobled their lives that Bach could climax a rich and fruitful span of years with an "Art of Fugue", Mozart with his "Requiem", and Beethoven with "Missa Solemnis"; and I do not doubt that we are so learning to spiritualize our national consciousness that we in time can do likewise. Indeed, if our present social system with its ideals is to be saved and carried forward it must be spiritualized, and we can be happy that music, a powerful spiritualizing force, is playing a greater and greater part in our national life. American music must be performed ultimately because it is good and great music, and we must never be satisfied until we have produced great music. I feel certain this great music is a genuine possibility of, say, the next twenty-five to fifty years, if today's promises are fulfilled.

II

Our school of young composers is today highly progressive. It has gone somewhat into our historical background, and understands in a general way the factors that have obstructed the budding and flowering of true genius. Many of these young Americans have joined European contemporaries in looking at our nation with the eyes of Paris, Rome, and Berlin, and have returned to us with a conviction (not to say an aggressiveness) that our assets musically have been entirely overlooked at home. Europe, as we know, has long been wont to respect us in things commercial, governmental, and architectural. Now for the first time our music is proving of great interest and has aroused high expectation, even if no degree of enthusiasm. This has been brought about by our Prix de Rome men and Guggenheim fellowship holders living abroad (by compulsion) and through the use of jazz in restaurants, cafés, and hotels in every corner of Europe. The truth of the last statement was this past summer verified by Olin Downes, music critic of the *New York Times*, who visited such foreign countries as Poland and Russia in the interest of their native folk songs, and who was shocked to hear American jazz everywhere except in out-of-the-way and isolated villages. These facts have naturally awakened a certain pride in our composers abroad, who, acknowledging at once the crudities of jazz, could not but approach their composing with determination to meet this splendid expectation of America's ability to create music expressing something far nobler than our present popular music. Then the fact that all European

festivals of contemporary music are attended by many of our composers and critics has quickened the understanding of what the most progressive of the world's composers are thinking and doing. Our presses here report in detail these festivals, and the most successful productions and epoch-making works are given performances in our various cities, thus keeping the composers at home abreast of the times. Indeed, we keep up with fashions in music today quite as much as in those of dress. While this may be a hazardous adventure for those without sufficient stability to cling to cherished ideals of beauty and truth, it is in reality a sound, basic experience—one long needed in this country. Ideas that cannot stand the boldest sunlight of criticism expire, whereas immortal ideas are no doubt recognized far quicker and by a larger section of the musical world than formerly. This hearing of new music arouses heated debates and discussions, but better enables each composer to psychoanalyze himself, and hurdle himself to Parnassus or oblivion.

Now let us examine just what composers have influenced most the young Americans. With Brahms cults already dated and Richard Strauss and Debussy considered classics, new leaders, new Olympians had to appear. Without question composers today become more readily conscious of styles and various schools than in the past, and this because of international spirit and quick communication. The new Olympians soon entered the musical arena and a tremendous conflict ensued, and is still intense, though its heat of battle has somewhat calmed down now that the world has better understood the issues. Schönberg and Stravinsky have swayed Europe and America and have rocked the very fundamentals of music. Whether for good or bad, time as usual alone will tell. But evidence is fast accumulating that

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while these two men have opened new tonal vistas and vast harmonic, contrapuntal, and rhythmic possibilities, their essential musical value is probably not as great as we had hoped for. They were needed in music, though, just as Berlioz was needed. The performances of Schönberg's "Pierrot Lunaire" surely stopped many American composers from belief that the future of music lay in following Brahms or any of the Romantic composers. The production of Stravinsky's "Le Sacre du Printemps" awakened us to our own rhythmic potentialities that had been hardly dreamed of. Then Hindemith with his reckless, facile, and almost immoral outpourings, moulded in classic models, finally encouraged many in atonal and polytonal experiments. And Edgar Varèse, the naturalized Frenchman, who, whether artist, or charlatan, as some have claimed, certainly stirred the calm of our concert halls with his own works introduced by the Philadelphia Orchestra and those sponsored by the International Composers' Guild. His actual musical influence was slight, but his activities and propaganda exerted enormous influence. Many others such as Kodaly, Bartok, Prokofieff, Szymanowski, Honegger, and Ravel made their impress, but in general their music was more transparent and did not break so completely with the past. The point I wish to emphasize is that all these torchbearers aided in bringing about a new approach in composing, and this "approach" was so in the air no one could possibly escape it. Strangely enough one of the most significant men of the day, and one who is looming larger and larger with the passing of time, Jan Sibelius, the Finnish composer, is hardly considered modern and his influence was and is almost negligible. This may be accounted for in several ways. Sibelius is apparently the only living composer who has remained national, who is still expressing the weird and cold environment of

his native land. He has not denied his birth. It may be this is a significant factor in his emergence as an international figure. Then Sibelius is not just an experimenter. His appears to be a grounded, not a merely personal, message. The public at present, after some ten to twenty years of experimentation, is now ready for deep and lasting music, and is more willing to lend an ear to a man of Sibelius' serious calibre. This lack of popularity among fellow composers may speak all the more for the man, for genius is always lonely. However, this season Dr. Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony are playing all the symphonies of Sibelius, including the new eighth, which, I understand, will have its premiere performance in Boston.¹ In the matter of orchestration it must be recorded that the younger men are amazed at the modern style of Gustave Mahler, who was far in advance of his time, and whose position in musical history still seems problematical.

It would appear that despite their waning importance, Schönberg and Stravinsky are today still the models for most composers and followers of modern music, for when the League of Composers in New York decided to celebrate its tenth anniversary this season, it had many requests for a repetition of Schönberg's "Pierrot Lunaire", and plans are under way to repeat some of Stravinsky's works.

It is pertinent to note that no member of the English school has seriously influenced Americans, though the works of Vaughan Williams, Bax, Delius, and Holst are well known and admired. Similarly, no American has as yet developed a following that could be called a school. This may be a healthy indication, a sign of individual independence and a reflex of a nation of vast sectional influences. A pupil of Schönberg, Alban Berg, in the opera "Wozzeck" given last

¹Sibelius did not complete the eighth in time for performance, as hoped for.

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year in Philadelphia and New York, made a profound impression, although his score was already familiar to many. The opera carries Schönbergian principles to greater heights and with more innate musical value than the master-teacher could have prophesied. Berg is himself a supreme master in his unique idiom, but one wonders how he can go on in his present style without repeating himself or Schönberg, and one can also reasonably ask: Has not he so intellectualized his very musical nature that anything like a spontaneous flow is forbidden?

At this point I wish to make an important observation, and one that should be pondered. I have mentioned the composers who have helped shape the tastes, styles, and technique of our own composers. This shaping has taken place in the *concert hall*, rather than in the *class room*, where radical tendencies are generally still overlooked. We have in musical education no Glenn Frank, no Dr. Meiklejohn, in so far as teaching modern composition is concerned. The majority of our younger composers have obtained their training abroad; and if any few teachers need be mentioned, no doubt Nadia Boulanger of France, Ernest Bloch and Rubin Goldmark in this country have understood best how to lead, guide, and suggest to the individual the fuller and freer tonal speech. Of course, the teaching of composers requires today the most comprehensive understanding of modern educational methods; no longer do classical rules apply; no longer are the textbooks of yesterday those of today, because art has guiding principles, not laws, and these principles are as shifting as time. With all desire to learn, young composers may well ask, and with reason, why learn to emulate the masters if all must be unlearned. Schönberg in *Problems of the Teaching of Art* writes: "Genius learns only from itself; talent chiefly from others. Genius learns

from nature, from its own nature; talent learns from art." Teachers of composition must, more than ever, have sympathy and encouragement for the new, as well as learning; vision of the future, as well as historical grasp and respect.

With gratitude for all foreign instructors it is right that we should hope, for the sake of a purified American art, that in the future our composers will deem it dangerous to lose contact with the mother-soil, and will have a deep-rooted, serious desire to attend our own great music schools, and thereby absorb, in impressionable years, the imprint of American life and culture and tradition. How can this imprint be made lasting if we early cut the ties of national heritage and have a too sudden weaning from the mother-sources, our folk elements, our idiomatic localisms and provincialisms! An early plunging into world thought is always apt to cause us to express ourselves in a confused and mongrel native tongue, which from its very nature must be artificial, unnatural, and not spontaneous. This explains the character of much of our early creative efforts.

But conditions, as we know, have rapidly altered; we are sanguine about the new viewpoints and ideas, and it is right to believe that with the schools of first rank which have been established, and the many fine artists who recognize America as their home at present, our holders of Prix de Rome and Guggenheim and Pulitzer fellowships will be kept right here with us, where, like our forefathers who formed that American document, our Constitution, they will pulse the longing for an American art that, while deeply respecting the glorious heritage Europe has given the world, still demands from this new world, from our composers, not a mere addition or carrying onward, but a new birth, a fuller, more expansive, more encompassing, a more nationally-expressive language, that could come only from America, that could

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come only from this mighty cauldron that has been and is assimilating and constantly absorbing all the culture with which the ages have showered us. Yes, America is a melting-pot in the sense that a supreme poet or musician is a melting-pot of the learning that has come down to his own age. The very fact that we have been able to form a stable government, establish our school systems and universities, form museums and art institutions, and various other civilizing and cultural systems, from such varied and polyglot elements, bespeaks the energetic and youthful spirit of our nation, and holds the prophecy of a musical language expressing not conquest, but joyous achievement; not tragedy of years of national bondage and servitude, but rightful freedom; not the mourning of oppression and hopelessness, but the realization of beauty expressed in faith and courage and hope; not the selfish nationalism that has led to slaughter and brutal conflict, but a national glory that is world-wide in vision, that is builded on world love and world peace.

Such is our hope for the future! That it is not so far from realization as one might imagine I will shortly show. Just as France was finally emancipated from the domination of German music, culminating in the genius of a Debussy, so must we be finally musically emancipated from the old-world domination that has been our art heritage, which we must see as nothing but a heritage.

We have seen that the production of new music has been a vital factor in the rapid development of our composers. The point we must remember is that this production of new music in our country in the last ten or fifteen years has been far in excess of what it formerly was, thanks to courageous conductors, artists, and ensemble organizations. The valuable service these have done can never be overestimated. American artists, too, have helped somewhat, but not as

much as one might imagine or hope for. New creative works demand new creative artists and the coming as well as the present generation of executive artists must learn to be creative-minded and to realize that cooperation greatly speeds and spurs creation. In general, one can say that the greatest performers spring from those nations producing the greatest music, and vice versa. Germany, Austria, Italy, France, and Russia have with few exceptions given us the greatest artists as well as composers. So in this country, a continually increasing cooperation should naturally result in the quickened output of our composers.

We should be negligent in our duty, however, if we did not call to mind the fact that, though many of our composers have been aroused from the lethargy of "respectable contentedness", there are still far too many organizations, powerful and of national scope, whose programs and conventions reflect but little of the daring of our young Americans, and who prefer to rely on the tragic output of the "proverbial American Song" and its fellows. However, these young composers have worked until their output has assumed impressive proportions. It may be that the present school is but preparing the way for truly great American music, but a Rameau, a Scarlatti, a Mendelssohn, yea, a Berlioz, a Massenet, a Bruckner, a Borodin, and a Rimsky-Korsakoff are just as essential in their way to musical history as a Bach, a Beethoven, a Brahms. We already have a MacDowell. Enduring works of art are the product, the flowering of aspirations and ideals of countless and too frequently forgotten pathfinders, and when the Horeb height has at last been revealed, we designate the work as a product of genius, and one of mankind's most cherished conceptions of the divine and the eternal.

It seemed to many when Brahms appeared to be merely

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carrying on the technique and methods of Beethoven that an impasse had been reached in music, and that the possibilities of originality had become fewer and fewer. Surely music had not run its course in the short three hundred years of its history! And of course it had not. Richard Wagner caused a very cataclysm, but when closely examined it was discovered that, while his style was the precursor of much modern chromaticism, it was fundamentally a stem of classic art. So the *fundamentals had to be overturned*, or rather let us say, expanded and extended, in order that every new phase of thought could find speech.

Now what are some of the essential qualities of this expansion and extension practically accepted by the younger composers, even if in varying degrees? Naturally enough they embody some of the principles enunciated by Schönberg, and practised by Stravinsky, Hindemith, Berg, and a host of others. First we find atonality and polytonality. No longer do many composers write in keys. They write in several keys at once. The history of music shows the existence of various scales besides the major and minor, and many have come to believe all these scales fixed and the scales of nature. They are not; they are arbitrary creations of man, which have served well the great masters, but which do not necessarily suffice today. But the tempered system is still the background of all occidental composition. Schönberg himself writes: "Tonality, tending to render harmonic facts perceptible and to correlate them, is therefore not an end, but a means. Its relinquishment, it is true, implies a corresponding relinquishment of the structural process founded upon the very principle of tonality." By the word atonal, he means "works written by means of twelve notes between which no relationships exist other than their relation to one another." Then Schönberg has tried to remove

the distinction between consonance and dissonance, and has evolved a system of harmony built on fourths instead of thirds.

Stravinsky, while not expounding a new system of harmony, has exposed to the expectant public almost each season a new work based on some new theories. Starting frankly from his teacher Rimsky-Korsakoff, and employing Russian folk material in his "Ballets", he has gone on in an amazing manner, each work being a law unto itself, until he finally proclaimed neo-classicism, a return to the eighteenth century with "sound for sound's sake." He stated defiantly that music should have neither emotion nor romanticism, although in his latest works he appears to be entering a phase one might dub neo-romanticism. Stravinsky is a musical giant, of tremendous creative power, and in all his activity speaks a more understandable tongue than Schönberg. Probably the fact that he began with a folk-basis has given him a free spontaneous speech, no matter what his intellectualizings. Stravinsky only recently stated at the premiere of his violin concerto: "The duration of a composition nowadays can no longer be measured by those of the past. For a Mozart, the invention of the theme, or of the themes, represented, if one may say so, the maximum effort; all the rest was made up in great part of certain formalism, or at least technical skill had the upperhand over creative fantasy. . . . With the developments of the theme, the repetitions, refrains, and necessary cadenza, the half-hour was soon reached. But now that in a scholastic sense this development of the theme no longer exists, and still less repetitions . . . proportions have changed, and a concerto of fifteen minutes is already a monumental work. Naturally it would be easy to lengthen the duration, but what would be added would be nothing but padding, inert matter, sound,

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but not music." Small wonder that this man has set the musical world agog.

Logically enough, Americans are using short, concise, compact forms, with a minimum of thematic development and repetition. (Some conductors have set fifteen minutes as the time limit. This is of course arbitrary and unwise, but our age is speedy and too often blunt and sharp.) If there must be a repetition it must not be obvious or too self-evident. Similarly sequences are held in abhorrence, as are the too regular four, eight, sixteen measure groupings; and ordinary cadence is simply taboo. One must find new endings! And as for the old laws of harmony and voice leadings, while all must be grounded in them, they are not even considered, except as foolish traps one should not fall into. Not that our young composers today lack respect for the masters or cannot enjoy their working principles in classic examples, but it is argued that these ideas and methods have already been used and with consummate skill. The music of the future does not lie in their use. Of course we know genius discards nothing valuable, but incorporates in immortal works all that civilization and culture hand to posterity. Fixed, too regular, melody is not at present popular. In its place is put "line", or figure, or contrapuntal motion, and very frequently color or design instead of emotion and deep-seated feeling. This mechanicalized, robot-like labor, with its cold exposé, is easily discerned unless handled by an adept. In sum, one must confess that much modern music has been arrived at by the process of elimination of most of the fundamentals of the past, and it is as true of music today as of the other arts.

There are, probably, comparatively few Americans, outside of composers themselves, who are fully aware of the industry and activity of our many composers at present.

Surely no better catalogue of their works, performances, distinct attributes, and characteristic qualities could be made than the recently published second edition of the catalogue of *American Composers* (listing one hundred and thirty-five composers and containing details of their works in the main body of the book, and two hundred and thirteen in a supplementary list) issued by the "International Society for Contemporary Music", with a grant from the Juilliard Foundation. This volume has already done much to disabuse many here and abroad of the idea that we have no American composers and no American music. In this catalogue one can find orchestra and chamber music of every description, and in general of quality well calculated to grace with dignity and charm the programs of our great orchestras and chamber organizations.

Now in considering our various composers and their works we must repeat we should not for a moment be over chauvinistic, or too boldly declare we have, or are producing, works of genius. That is entirely beside the question. Genius establishes itself. However, we can, with reasonable assurance, proclaim, as we previously have, a new generation of composers, with works, already to their credit, of independent and individual thought, of a character which one can stamp, in many cases, "Broadway" and "City Life", or Southern, or Western, if not American (which we need not define), that are without question highly enjoyable and full of vigorous and robust health, encouraging sanity and ardor, and that are of technical excellence.

For convenience I shall place our composers in one of four schools of classification, without implying that all the works of a composer belong of necessity to one of these categories alone. But as I know personally the majority of the composers as well as their compositions, I believe I

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understand their leanings and tendencies. These schools I shall designate:

1. Jazz School
2. School of Ultra Moderns
3. Legitimists
4. Classical Tradition School

The scope of these lectures does not allow more than a limited mention of some of the works of each school, but I shall attempt to choose a few that seem representative of each composer, and trust these will serve as a cross-section of today's America.

In the Jazz School one can mention George Gershwin, John Alden Carpenter, Louis Gruenberg, Aaron Copland, and Werner Janssen.

No matter what *we* may think, Europe thinks highly of George Gershwin, and he has undoubtedly established a musical epoch, short-lived, it is true, with his "Rhapsody in Blue." Here and elsewhere are abandon, reckless rhythmic intoxication, that is typical of a certain phase of American life. It reflects, as does his "Concerto in F", the carefree humor of our night life, our night-clubs, and the laughter of our musical comedies, rather than the exalted and noble

George Gershwin, *Concerto in F*

Poco meno mosso (♩ = 104)

The image shows a musical score for the piano introduction of George Gershwin's Concerto in F. The score is written for piano (I) and features a glissando in the right hand (R.H.). The tempo is marked 'Poco meno mosso' with a quarter note equal to 104 beats per minute. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 4/4. The score includes a forte (f) dynamic marking and a piano (p) dynamic marking. The right hand part is marked 'glissando R.H.' and the left hand part is marked 'f'.

First system of musical notation. The treble clef staff contains a melodic line with a trill on the first measure and a grace note on the second. The bass clef staff contains a complex accompaniment with many beamed sixteenth notes. A fermata is placed over the final measure of the system.

Second system of musical notation. The treble clef staff continues the melodic line. The bass clef staff has a fermata over the first measure. The text "L. H." is written below the bass staff in the third measure. The system ends with a "Ped." marking and an asterisk.

Third system of musical notation. Both staves feature complex, rapid passages with many beamed notes. The system concludes with a "Ped." marking and an asterisk.

Fourth system of musical notation. The treble clef staff has a melodic line with trills and grace notes. The bass clef staff has a complex accompaniment. The text "cresc. e accel." is written above the bass staff in the third measure. The system ends with a "Ped." marking and an asterisk.

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calmness of an Emerson, a Lincoln; but none the less it is American. His later creations, "An American in Paris" and "Second Rhapsody" are not so compelling and seem transitional, but Gershwin is struggling hard to rise above success to fulfill his promise. These later compositions, like the "Cuban Overture" have in the refining process lost a certain bite and raciness, yet they should and must be taken seriously; he is a composer of significance. In nineteen hundred and thirty, when Albert Coates, the distinguished conductor, made a list of the fifty best musical compositions of all time, he put the "Piano Concerto in F" as America's contribution. When Walter Damrosch first presented this concerto he remarked: "Various composers have been walking around jazz like a cat around a plate of hot soup, waiting for it to cool off, so that they could enjoy it without burning their tongues, hitherto accustomed only to the more tepid liquid distilled by cooks of the classical school. Lady Jazz, adorned with her intriguing rhythms, has danced her way around the world, even as far as the Eskimos of the North and the Polynesians of the South Sea Isles. But for all her travels and her sweeping popularity, she has encountered no knight who could lift her to a level that would enable her to be received as a respectable member in musical circles. George Gershwin seems to have accomplished the miracle."

Louis Gruenberg tried hard to raise jazz "out of the gutter", as he has expressed it to me. Being the superior craftsman that he is, he composed a long list of works that were deliberate efforts to retain the good qualities of jazz and discard the worthless. But he is too sensitive an artist to allow the coarser and more vulgar elements to enter into his make-up, hence the result in his works is humor without boisterousness, sophisticated art rather than an expression of the people. "Jazzberries", "Jazz Epigrams", "Indiscre-

Louis Gruenberg, *Jazz-Epigrams*
largamente

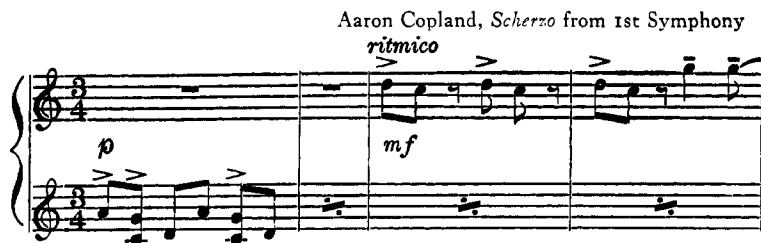
The musical score is for a piano piece in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. It is divided into three systems. The first system begins with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic and a crescendo leading to fortissimo (ff). The second system starts with an 'accel. (subito)' marking and a fortissimo (ffz) dynamic. The third system concludes with a 'Ped.' (pedal) marking. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

tions" for string quartet, "Animals and Insects" with texts by Lindsay, "Daniel Jazz" for tenor and chamber orchestra, "Creation", a negro sermon by James Weldon Johnson, and "Jazz Suite" for orchestra are suggestive titles of the contents of these works. However, while all are interesting experiments and were necessary to convince Gruenberg, as well as others, of the possibilities and limitations of jazz, they would appear to be but stepping-stones in the develop-

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ment of the composer. It is just as well that the falsity of jazz as a basis for American music be fully exposed. So let us be grateful that these and other compositions have helped to clear the polluted atmosphere and set the stage, as it were, for a more genuine American music. Gruenberg's later works, the operas "Jack and the Beanstalk" and "Emperor Jones" are in quite another idiom, although retaining the most vital qualities of his previous works.

Aaron Copland made a deliberate effort in his "Concerto for Piano and Orchestra" to build a large work on jazz motives. Having much technical skill, this proved an accomplishment, but not in the direction hoped for, for like Gruenberg, Copland was evidently at a turning point in his career. Jazz effects are primarily resultants, not causes, hence the more a serious musician works with it, the more he becomes convinced of its deceptive allurements. The ore has a glitter, a sparkle, but little lasting or wearing value. Too much importance cannot be attached to the deliberate experiments of these two men, for Copland, being a sound musician like Gruenberg, quickly showed the fallacies of long cherished theories that had to be exploded. Copland, though still young, has already a number of works to his credit. His "Music for the Theatre" is a *tour de force*, and his two symphonies and chamber music have considerable power and swing, and assuredly promise.



4

(ad lib. faster and faster. Senza misura)

Aaron Copland, 3rd movement from *Dance Symphony*

8va.....

ff

8va.....

8va.....

etc.

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John Alden Carpenter began in the French manner, as his songs show, but cross rhythms and syncopation led him on until jazz, unabashed, appeared in "Krazy Kat", and in fuller and more unique measure in "Skyscrapers", given by the Metropolitan Opera Company in 1926. Carpenter, too, has a very skilled and polished workmanship, but his rhythmic explorations do not seem to have led him into a fully-conscious idiom or clarified style, yet we must class him as one of our most gifted men. Being a merchant may have prevented his true growth.

John Alden Carpenter, *Concertino for Piano and Orchestra, II*
molto legato ed espress.

The image shows a musical score for two piano parts, labeled I and II. Both parts are in G major (three sharps) and common time (C). Part I begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and features a complex, syncopated melody in the right hand with many beamed sixteenth and thirty-second notes, while the left hand plays a simpler, more rhythmic accompaniment. Part II begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and is marked *molto espressivo*. It features a more melodic line in the right hand with some slurs, and the left hand has a few notes. The score is for measures 1 and 2 of the piece.

John Alden Carpenter, *Concertino for Piano and Orchestra, III*

Allegro

The musical score is arranged in three systems, each with two staves. The first system is for the piano, with the right hand (RH) on the upper staff and the left hand (LH) on the lower staff. The second system is for the orchestra, with the Violins (V) on the upper staff and the Cellos (C) on the lower staff. The third system is for the brass, with the Horns (H) on the upper staff and the Trombones (T) on the lower staff. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 5/8. The tempo is marked *Allegro*. The piano part begins with a *pizz.* (pizzicato) marking. The orchestra part begins with a *cresc.* (crescendo) marking. The brass part begins with a *Brass* marking and a *ff* (fortissimo) marking. The score is written for a piano and orchestra, with the piano part on the left and the orchestra part on the right. The piano part consists of two staves, and the orchestra part consists of two staves. The brass part consists of two staves. The score is written in a standard musical notation style, with notes, rests, and other musical symbols. The piano part is written in a treble and bass clef, and the orchestra part is written in a treble and bass clef. The brass part is written in a bass clef. The score is written in a standard musical notation style, with notes, rests, and other musical symbols. The piano part is written in a treble and bass clef, and the orchestra part is written in a treble and bass clef. The brass part is written in a bass clef. The score is written in a standard musical notation style, with notes, rests, and other musical symbols.

I

II

pizz.

'Celli

I

II

cresc.

I

II

Brass

ff

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Werner Janssen, in "New Year's Eve in New York", has written a clever and deliberate attempt at symphonic jazz.

Probably no effort has as yet been made to appraise fully these jazz experiments; and it might be argued we are still too close to the composers. It does not take a particularly keen observer to conclude that not one of these self-conscious efforts has left a lasting impression or any proof that in jazz a firm foundation has at last been found for our music. Any noble, spiritual, or uplifting power seems to be lacking, and this through no fault in the equipment of the composer, but rather from failure to cherish sufficiently and use as freely the folk-heritage and cultural branches that have served to make our national institutions great. In art we can no more confuse cause and effect than we can in physics, chemistry, or mathematics; and if we do, the result is certain to be just as perplexing and inconclusive.

In the school of Ultra-Moderns are such men as George Antheil, Carl Ruggles, Wallingford Riegger, Adolf Weiss, Marc Blitzstein, Henry Cowell, Charles Ives, and at least one woman, Ruth Crawford. They are fine musicians, and I use the term Ultra-Moderns because they do not seem to fit into the other categories but I do not wish anyone to conclude that the composers in the other groups are not also ultra-modern in many cases. Leo Ornstein shocked many in his early works and had a daring which, if coupled with the technique of a Stravinsky, might have led him to a full expression of our mechanistic times. Ornstein undoubtedly has something that should not be lost, though he appears at present to be hesitating, at least from the experimental standpoint. He was one of the country's early explorers. Something crushed him.

Leo Ornstein, *Poems of 1917*

The musical score is presented in three systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (bass clef). The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The first system begins with the vocal line marked *cantando*. The piano accompaniment features complex, dissonant chords. The second system includes a *dim.* (diminuendo) marking in the piano part. The third system starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic in the piano part. The score is characterized by its atonal and polytonal nature, with frequent use of accidentals and complex rhythmic patterns.

This school has a limited following of faithful devotees. Its music is mostly atonal, polytonal, or of newly formed scales, and its rules of art are of its own creation. The yearly festivals of the International Society for Contemporary Music, and capable writers on music and its future, have afforded this group a sufficient wealth of material with which to work; while recent discoveries in science have led certain advanced thinkers to anticipate an ultimate fusion of art and science. In any event, this school of Ultra-

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Moderns has done and is doing a most valuable service for our country, no matter what the final judgment about the actual worth of their works may be. All composers must watch them, nor are these young composers to blame if we have in our midst those who are deliberately old-fashioned, or fallen into ruts.

The younger men have lately "discovered" the oldest of the Ultra-Moderns in Charles Ives, a New York business man. He, they declare, and with undeniable pride, has been doing for over twenty years what the most advanced composers of Europe are doing today. Our most capable conductors are still so baffled they hardly know how to conduct his scores. Ives, some say, believes music is improvisational, the actual notes being only a rough outline. His markings and score-writing are strange and often impractical. John Tasker Howard in *Our American Music*, commenting on one of Ives' scores writes: "If anything were needed to show the machine age gone wrong, this should take several prizes, for the double bass and 'cello glissandos look for all the world like falling elevators." On the cover of the orchestral work, "The Fourth of July", Ives outlines himself the literary idea: "It is a boy's 'Fourth'—no historical orations—no patriotic grandiloquence by 'grown-ups'—no program in his yard! But he knows what he's celebrating—better than some of the county politicians. And he goes at it in his own way, with a patriotism, nearer kin to nature than jingoism. His festivities start in the quiet of the midnight before and grow raucous with the sun. Everybody knows what it's like. The day ends with the sky-rocket over the Church-steeple, just after the annual explosion sets the Town-Hall on fire."

Needless to say a glance at the score will show there is not only one but a series of explosions. Yet one must not scoff at Ives! It is high time some of the major orchestras

were playing his works in order that a fair musical estimate of them may be formed. But mellow age is an impersonal judge and arbiter, and Ives may yet find his place.

Then there is Henry Cowell, who is doing a most valuable work in publishing debatable music in his publication *New Music*. Cowell is a fluent talker as well as composer and is doing his best to convert all to the newest doctrines through his travels in Europe and this country. While a composer of orchestral works, Cowell is best known for his use of the tone-clusters on the piano, playing with the entire arm.

Henry Cowell, *The Tides of Manaunau*

5

The musical score is written for piano and features three systems of music. The notation includes treble and bass staves with various musical markings and performance instructions.

System 1: The treble staff begins with a *gva* (glissando) marking and a *loco* (loco) marking. The bass staff is marked *Basso gva*. The music is in a key with two flats and a 3/4 time signature. The tempo is marked *ff* (fortissimo).

System 2: The treble staff continues with *gva* and *loco* markings. The bass staff is marked *Basso gva*. The music is in a key with two flats and a 3/4 time signature. The tempo is marked *fff* (fortississimo). The instruction *Top notes fff emphasised melodically* is written above the treble staff. The instruction *cresc. e rit.* (crescendo and ritardando) is written above the treble staff.

System 3: The treble staff continues with *gva* and *loco* markings. The bass staff is marked *Basso gva*. The music is in a key with two flats and a 3/4 time signature. The tempo is marked *fff* (fortississimo). The instruction *Slow arpeggios* is written above the treble staff. The instruction *dim. molto* (diminuendo molto) is written above the treble staff.

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Carl Ruggles, one may believe, has in him the making of a real composer, but whether he has clogged himself with fanciful theories and thwarted his natural growth is not yet apparent. One still chuckles about the six fat trumpeters playing very softly his "Angels." Paul Rosenfeld, the writer and critic, says: "Ruggles' harmonic schemes are of the greatest distinction. This quality, neither rich nor magnificent and nevertheless exquisitely refined, and new to harmonic writing, associates itself with early American furniture and Hartley's color, Portsmouth doorways and Hawthorne's prose. His instrumentation timbre is equally this Cape Cod American's own. . . . The melancholy and

Carl Ruggles, *Portals*
molto cresc.

The musical score is arranged in two systems. The top system contains the staves for 7 Cl. (7 Clarinets) and the bottom system contains the staves for C.B. (Cymbals). Each system has two staves, one for the instrument and one for the cymbals. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is marked with *ff* (fortissimo) at the beginning of each staff and *fff* (fortississimo) at the end of each staff, with the instruction *molto cresc.* (molto crescendo) written above the final measures. The notation includes various rhythmic values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The 7 Cl. part features a melodic line with some grace notes and slurs. The C.B. part features a more rhythmic, percussive line with many slurs and accents.

The musical score consists of three measures across multiple staves. The first measure is in 2/4 time, marked *poco rit. ben tenuto*. The second measure is in 4/4 time, marked *Tempo*. The third measure is in 2/4 time, marked *rit. non dim.*. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

smothered passion . . . is as characteristic of the New England countryside as anything by Robinson or Frost. So, too, is the harshness of certain of Ruggles' brazen sonorities."

Ruth Crawford, one of whose works has just been accepted for the International Festival, is surely a thinker and her music is of constant surprises. She is a serious musician and has definite convictions. Antheil, Riegger, Weiss, and Blitzstein are also all good musicians, working industriously to evolve their several idioms, and are engaged in organizations producing new music. As intimated, this school of progressives had its inception in the activities of experi-

Ruth Crawford, *Prelude for Piano*

First system of the musical score for Ruth Crawford's *Prelude for Piano*. The score is written for piano and consists of two staves. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/8. The first staff features a complex, rapid melodic line with many accidentals. The second staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *mp* (mezzo-piano). A *segue* marking is present above the first staff. The system concludes with a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand.

Wallingford Riegger, *Prelude for Piano*

First system of the musical score for Wallingford Riegger's *Prelude for Piano*. The score is written for piano and consists of two staves. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#) and the time signature is 4/4. The first staff features a complex, rapid melodic line with many accidentals. The second staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *p* (piano). The system concludes with a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand.

The first system of the piano transcription consists of two systems of grand staves. The first grand staff (treble and bass clef) begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic in the bass clef and a forte (*sf*) dynamic in the treble clef. The second grand staff continues the texture with piano (*p*) in the bass and fortissimo (*sf*) in the treble, with a crescendo leading to a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic.

Marc Blitzstein, *The Ballet Cain* (Piano Transcription)

The second system is marked *Andante* and features a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It consists of two grand staves. The first grand staff starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic in the bass clef and a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic in the treble clef. The second grand staff continues with a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic in the bass and a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic in the treble, with a crescendo leading to a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic.

The third system is marked *Largo* and consists of two grand staves. The first grand staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic in the bass clef and a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic in the treble clef. The second grand staff continues with a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic in the bass and a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic in the treble, with a crescendo leading to a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic.

The fourth system consists of two grand staves. The first grand staff begins with a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic in the bass clef and a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic in the treble clef. The second grand staff continues with a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic in the bass and a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic in the treble, with a crescendo leading to a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic.

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menters such as Schönberg, Berg, and Varèse (who proved the boldest of the bold), for whom tradition in music is non-existent. The influence of these experimenters is still reflected by the foregoing and other American composers in an utter disregard of public opinion and accepted criteria of musical judgment, yet such boldness, if the sincere impulse of a creative instinct, should lead to heights of unrealized tonal splendor. Music, though, we must always remember, is the result of noble aspirations, rather than of human theories.

Under Legitimists I have classed composers every whit as modern, in many instances, as any in the country, but whose general output would appear to fit into the evolution of music, and whose tendencies do not warrant any special classification. Such fundamentals as evidence of some idea of, or suggestion of, a tonal basis, thematic development, actual and recognizable themes, logical form, emotion, and beauty are apparent in their works, even on first hearing. The creations of Howard Hanson, Leo Sowerby, Frederick Jacobi, Roger Sessions, Roy Harris, Emerson Whithorne, Werner Josten, Randall Thompson, Deems Taylor, John Powell, Robert Russel Bennett, Marion Bauer, Douglas Moore, Walter Piston, Arthur Shepherd, and William Grant Still are already significant contributions to American musical literature, in many cases with an individual note that

one feels could have sprung from nowhere save here, and executed with a technical proficiency that should cause us all

Robert Russel Bennett, *Abraham Lincoln*

Moderato con moto

The musical score is written for piano and consists of four systems. The tempo is marked 'Moderato con moto'. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The time signature changes from 3/4 to 2/4 and back to 3/4. The score includes a variety of musical notations such as eighth notes, quarter notes, and half notes, along with dynamic markings like 'p' (piano) and 'f' (forte). The piano part is written in a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The melody is primarily in the treble clef, with the bass clef providing harmonic support. The score is a transcription of a piece by Robert Russel Bennett, titled 'Abraham Lincoln'.

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to rejoice. America is assuredly coming into her own! Then there is the sterling musicianship of Mark Wessel, Edwin Stringham, Charles Haubiel, who won the Schubert prize, A. Walter Kramer, with his stunning songs, Carl McKinley, Henry Eichheim, who writes Chinese music, Philip James, with his clever radio suite, Albert Stoessel, the versatile con-

Edwin J. Stringham, *Pastel for Piano Solo*

The musical score for "Pastel for Piano Solo" by Edwin J. Stringham is presented in three systems. The first system begins with a treble staff containing a series of chords and a bass staff with a more active melodic line. A *marcato* marking appears below the bass staff. The second system continues the piece, featuring a *slower* marking and a change in the bass staff's melodic pattern. The third system concludes the piece with a *Ped al Fine* instruction, indicating the end of the piece.

A. Walter Kramer, *Cypresses*

The musical score for 'Cypresses' by A. Walter Kramer is presented in two systems. The first system consists of a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate bass staff below it. The music is in 4/2 time and features a variety of notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The second system also consists of a grand staff and a separate bass staff below it. The music continues with similar notation, and a bracket labeled 'L.H. R.H.' is placed above the right-hand staff of the second system, indicating a specific section of the piece.

ductor and composer, Dorothy James, Fanny Dillon, Bernard Rogers, James P. Dunn, and his Lindbergh overture, David Guion, with his folk dances, Alexander Steinert, Wintter Watts, Sandor Harmati, the brilliant conductor, Eric Delamarter, Richard Hammond, Gena Branscombe, with her splendid choral works, Samuel Gardner, Horace Johnson, Edward Collins, Ethel Glenn Hier, Hans Barth, with his quarter-tone concerto, and a number of younger men and women whose work it is not possible to know much of as yet, some of whom are certain to produce masterpieces in the future; and there are naturalized Americans, as Bernard

Charles Haubiel, *Capriccio*

The first system of musical notation is in 4/4 time. The right hand features a series of chords and arpeggios, while the left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The tempo/mood is marked *capricciosamente*. Dynamics include *p* (piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *f* (forte). Pedal points are indicated by *Ped.* and asterisks.

capricciosamente *mf* *f*

Ped. * *Ped.* * *Ped.* *

The second system continues the piece. The right hand has a melodic line with some grace notes, and the left hand continues the eighth-note pattern. Dynamics include *sf* (sforzando), *p*, *pp* (pianissimo), and *esp ma legg.* (espressivo ma leggiero). Pedal points are indicated by *Ped.* and asterisks.

sf *p* *pp* *esp ma legg.*

Ped. * *Ped.* * *Ped.*

The third system features more complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes. Dynamics include *p* and *pp*. Pedal points are indicated by *Ped.* and asterisks.

p *pp*

* *Ped.* * *Ped.* * *Ped.* *

The fourth system concludes the piece with intricate fingerings and dynamic markings. Dynamics include *pp* and *esp*. Pedal points are indicated by *Ped.* and asterisks.

pp *pp* *esp* *pp*

Ped. * *Ped.* * *Ped.* *

Albert Stoessel, *Jota**Allegro con brio*

The musical score is written for piano and bass. It consists of five systems of two staves each. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/8. The tempo is marked *Allegro con brio*.

System 1: The piano part begins with a *p* (piano) dynamic. The bass part starts with *mp* (mezzo-piano) and includes a *Ped.* (pedal) marking. The piano part has a *mf ben marcato* (mezzo-forte, well marked) instruction in the third measure.

System 2: The piano part continues with a *cresc.* (crescendo) marking. The bass part has a ** Ped.* (pedal) marking.

System 3: The piano part features a *f* (forte) dynamic. The bass part has a *p* (piano) dynamic. The system concludes with a *mf sfz* (mezzo-forte, sforzando) marking and a *Ped. ** (pedal) marking.

System 4: The piano part starts with a *f* (forte) dynamic. The bass part has a ** Ped.* (pedal) marking. The system concludes with a *Ped. ** (pedal) marking.

System 5: The piano part has a *f* (forte) dynamic. The bass part has a ** Ped.* (pedal) marking. The system concludes with a ** Ped.* (pedal) marking.

Throughout the score, various performance markings are present, including accents (>), slurs, and fingering numbers (1-5) for both hands.

ff

Ten. I

Booth led boldly with his big bass drum. (Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)

ff

Ten. II

ff

Bass I

Booth led boldly with his big brass drum. (Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?)

ff

Bass II

Trpt.

ff

Tromb.

ff

Dr.

ff

Tamb.

tr

Piano I

Piano II

(X) *Allegro con fuoco* 27m

35

Exp.

12 Fl.

12 Ob.

12 Kl.

12 Fg.

Kfg.

B.Tp.

1 Corp.

12 Trp.

Tb.

Pk.

Bassoon

Cym.

1 Harp.

1

Klar.

col. Piano

(X) *Allegro con fuoco*

Viol.

Ba.

C.

Kb.

(Z) *Maestoso* *ff*

Ten. I

Ten. II

Bass I

Bass II

Trpt.

Tromb.

Dr.

Piano I

Organ

(with closed lips) *ppp*

Hm. . . .

blood of the Lamb? . .)

B.D.

ff

(Z) *Maestoso*

fff sub. *mf* *fff* *mf*

fff *mf*

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Sandor Harmati, *Elysian Idyll*

♩ = 40

14

poco meno p

dim.

The image shows a musical score for Sandor Harmati's *Elysian Idyll*. It consists of four systems of piano music, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 6/8. The first system includes a tempo marking '♩ = 40'. The second system features a measure with a complex chordal texture marked with the number '14'. The third system includes the dynamic marking 'poco meno p'. The fourth system includes the dynamic marking 'dim.' and a slur over a series of chords. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, slurs, and dynamic markings.

David W. Guion, *Turkey in the Straw*

As fast as you can play it

Piano *mp stacc.*

No pedal until marked

Wagenaar, Lazare Saminsky, Nicolai Berezowsky, and Carlos Salzedo, all superb musicians, who besides their own creative industry show the broadest interest in our native music; and the older men, Ernest Bloch and Charles Martin Loeffler, have so entered our life that we speak naturally of them as Americans—I dare say the younger men could not

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have so readily found their every tongue had it not been for their pioneer modernism. Bloch, beyond question, has genius, and Loeffler has a message. Then the older and more conservative composers, as Henry Hadley, Daniel G. Mason, Mrs. H. H. A. Beach, Ernest Schelling, David Stanley Smith, Charles Wakefield Cadman, Frederick Converse, Rubin Goldmark, and Edgar Stillman Kelley, have, through their educational and professional activities, as well as their compositions, helped to make history.

Horace Johnson, *In the American Manner*

Allegro con spirito

Piano

mf

3

3

3

3

poco rit.

The image displays a piano score for Horace Johnson's piece 'In the American Manner'. The score is written for piano and is divided into three systems. The first system begins with the tempo marking 'Allegro con spirito' and a dynamic marking of 'mf'. The music is in 2/4 time and features a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first system includes a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a triplet of eighth notes in the left hand. The second system continues the melodic and harmonic development, with a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand. The third system concludes the piece with a 'poco rit.' (ritardando) marking. The score is characterized by its use of triplets and a rhythmic, folk-like quality.

Bernard Wagenaar *A Tale*

Lento

mp espr.

f

Hold with sust. pedal - -

p

senza Ped.

p

8va - -

pp

mp

simile

pp

8va - -

R.H.

f

L.H.

mf

p

p

rit.

p

espr.

10

sf

mf

f

f

Lazare Saminsky, *The Gagliarda of a Merry Plague*

Poco piu mosso

trb

trb

trb

8

(1) (*Quelques figures bizarres traînent le cadavre.*)

trb

trb

trb

8

Carlos Salzedo, *Sonata for Harp and Piano*

Lumineux

Piano

mf *cresc. molto*

senza pedale

Harp

[Eb Fb Gb Ab Bb C# Db]

f *Ped.* *energico* *ff*

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Ernest Bloch, *In the Night*

Lento assai. espr.

marc. poco *rit. poco*

dim.

Howard Hanson is a serious, dignified composer who has shown consistent growth in his compositions, and has been a devoted friend of American composers in his composer's laboratory concerts at the Eastman School of Music. His two symphonies are solid works that are modern without undue effort, as are the symphonic poems "Lux Aeterna" and "Pan and the Priest." There is a Nordic strain in the creations of this composer of Swedish origin, born in Nebraska, yet this need not hide nor cover a distinctive Americanism that may assert itself in the commissioned opera, "Merry Mount", which he is now completing for the Metropolitan Opera Company.

Chas. M. Loeffler, *Music for Four Stringed Instruments*

Poco adagio

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

f dolce espr.

(1)

Howard Hanson, *The Lament for Beowulf*

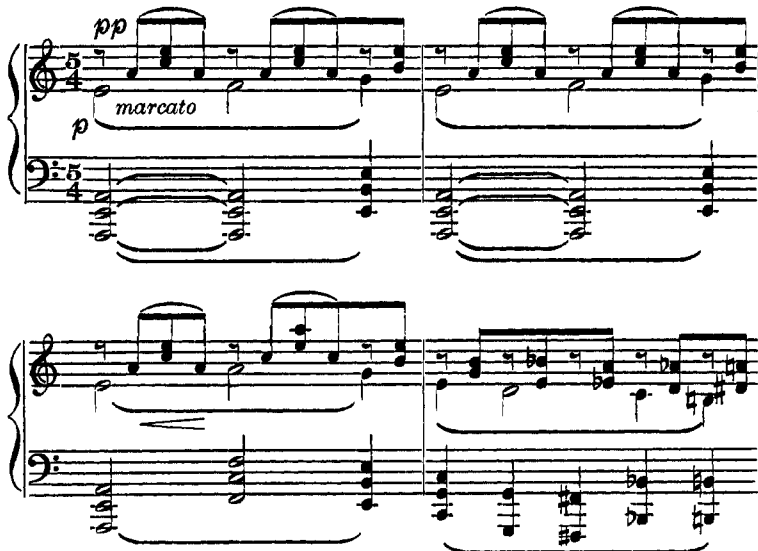
Adagio stoico

The musical score is presented in three systems, each with piano and orchestra staves.

- First System:** The piano part consists of three staves in 12/8 time. The top staff has a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The middle and bottom staves are in bass clef. The orchestra part, shown below the piano staves, includes a double bass line with a *sfz* (sforzando) marking and a woodwind line.
- Second System:** The piano part continues with the same instrumentation. The top staff includes a *sfz* marking and a dynamic marking of *(p)* (piano). The orchestra part includes a woodwind line and a double bass line with a *sfz* marking.
- Third System:** The piano part continues with the same instrumentation. The orchestra part includes a woodwind line and a double bass line with a *sfz* marking.

Deems Taylor is one of the most widely known Americans. His suite, "Through the Looking Glass", can well be considered an American classic; it is beautifully scored, fresh and spontaneous, and is, without doubt, the finest thing he has done. However it does not necessarily smack of our soil. Mr. Taylor has had difficulty in finding suitable librettos for his operas. Why have not composers found inspiration in our rich historical background and its lore? The future operas must not overlook these. The two operas, the "King's Henchman" and "Peter Ibbetson", show a sophisticated musician with a keen stage sense, but hardly a growth musically. This is no doubt due in part to Taylor's lack of sympathy with the moderns and their methods, and also because he declares opera of the future must be drama, and not all music, written by composers with a sense of the theatre. From this standpoint both of his operas have been most successful. In spite of his friendship with George Gershwin, jazz and Broadway are no part of Deems Taylor's artistic make-up.

Deems Taylor, *A Kiss in Xanadu*

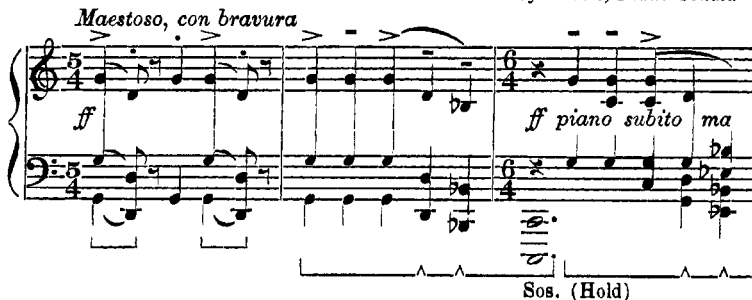


The back curtains part, revealing a balustraded window.



Roy Harris has attracted much attention, some even calling him a genius, to which Harris does not disagree. A certain prairie, cowboy strength, and an intense belief in himself have made many believe in his future. He shows undoubted talent, his works are rough and free-spoken, and one cannot say deliberately imitative. He seems particularly interested in rhythmic problems. His "Piano Sonata" and "Concerto for Piano, Clarinet, and Strings" are certain to lead to greater works. It is interesting to observe that some declare a real Americanism present in his compositions, though there is no jazz or evident folk quality.

Roy Harris, *Piano Sonata*



The image displays three staves of musical notation for piano, likely from a score by Frederick Jacobi. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

The first staff is marked *robusto* and includes the instruction *etc.* below it.

The second staff includes the instruction *f* (forte) and the instruction *Change Sos.* (Change Sostando) below it. The staff also includes the instruction *Sos. Up* (Sostando Up) below it.

The third staff includes the instruction *mf* (mezzo-forte) and the instruction *ff* (fortissimo) below it. The staff also includes the instruction *Change Sos.* (Change Sostando) below it.

The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The first staff is marked *robusto*. The second staff is marked *f* and includes the instruction *Change Sos.* and *Sos. Up*. The third staff is marked *mf* and *ff* and includes the instruction *Change Sos.*

Frederick Jacobi is one of the few who have successfully handled Indian material. Living in Arizona for a time, he imbibed the spirit of the tribes and this resulted in his excellent "String Quartet" and in his "Indian Dances for Orchestra." Indian material has not attracted many composers, probably because the Indian has never accepted our

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code of civilization and entered our life as has the negro. Yet the barbaric rhythmic ingenuity of the American Indian has infused itself in our rhythmic ruggedness more than we might suspect.

Frederick Jacobi, *Synagogue Service for Sabbath Eve*

f Allegro gioioso

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Organ

Tov le-ho-dos le a-do-noy ul' sa-mer le

Tov le-ho-dos le a-do-noy ul' sa-mer le

Tov le-ho-dos le a-do-noy ul' sa-mer le

Tov le-ho-dos le a-do-noy ul' sa-mer le

Tov le-ho-dos le a-do-noy ul' sa-mer le

Emerson Whithorne has reached his finest heights in his "Piano and String Quintet" and his "Poem for Piano and Orchestra." A composer of thorough equipment, whose work should prove more and more valuable, his early "New York Days and Nights" and ballet, "Sooner and Later", express an undeniable Americanism, but his later works not to such a strong extent. Here again, let me remark, if any of our composers do not seem to continue in the line of true

Emerson Whithorne, *Times Square*

Tempo giusto

f deciso

pesante

sfz

Ped. *

American idiom, it must be because of lack of constant contact with our folk material, or because of too much intellectualization in their art. Our garment of learning and our insecure and changing social system can too easily hide the basic currents of our life. We should be all the more on our guard today, for sectionalism has broken down, as well as nationalism, at least in art, and often most valuable idiosyncrasies and unique personal turns of speech are lost. The heart of America, however, cannot be denied voice in our music.

Roger Sessions is a modern, and with a kind of vengeance, yet he seems to have a saneness sufficient to keep him from being thrown off the course of living music, witness his "Symphony", "Piano Sonata", "Organ Chorale Preludes",

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and "Black Maskers." The symphony especially has rhythmic strength and is orchestrated in the modern manner.

Roger Sessions, *Sonata*

Andante

cantabile ma semplice e senza qualsiasi "rubato"
piena voce

p molto tranquillo

(5)

Douglas Moore in his "Pageant of P. T. Barnum" for orchestra has expressed a delicious humor, a certain phase of our living, and in one of the movements uses a spiritual with stunning effect. The whole is beautifully made. Randall Thompson, with two symphonies to his credit, has a

Douglas Moore, *Pageant of P. T. Barnum*



flexible technique, and in some of his choral works, such as "Americana", has given out some homely satire.

Werner Josten is a refined and polished worker, as shown in his noble "Concerto Sacre" and his "Jungle." Leo Sowerby is a prolific writer, and was the first composer to hold a fellowship of the American Academy at Rome. His works are in all forms and have been performed by most of our orchestras. They are characterized by excellent musicianship rather than distinctive American qualities,

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though Sowerby did try his hand at jazz in a few compositions for Paul Whiteman.

Leo Sowerby, *Symphony in G Major for Organ*
Very broadly (♩=58-69 always very freely)

Manual

Gt. (Sw. Ch. coupled to Gt.)
f

Gt. Sw. Ch. coupled to Ped.

Pedal

Marion Bauer has a violin sonata and string quartet which for strength and modernism require no excuse for having been written by a woman. But there lies underneath a lyric beauty, one that gives cause for belief in other works to come of power and originality. Miss Bauer has come

I
Allegro

Randall Thompson, *Symphony*

ff (Horns and Trumpet)

III
Vivace

Randall Thompson, *Symphony*

pp 'Celli
Double basses, *pizz. div.*

Violas

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recently into new fame as writer, with Ethel Peyser, of two musical histories.

Marion Bauer, *Syncope*

Allegro moderato ritmico

f martele e non legato.

sf

mp

ff

f_p subito

The image displays a musical score for a piano piece titled 'Syncope' by Marion Bauer. The tempo is marked 'Allegro moderato ritmico'. The score is written for piano in 2/4 time, featuring a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of three systems of music. The first system begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a 'martele' (hammered) and 'non legato' articulation. The second system includes a mezzo-piano (*mp*) section followed by a fortissimo (*ff*) section. The third system concludes with a fortissimo-piano (*f_p*) section marked 'subito'. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings typical of early 20th-century piano music.

John Powell is very gifted and should have been one of our finest composers, as he is one of the few who are thoroughly grounded in the folk tunes of Virginia, but now he believes the Anglo-Saxon folk song and not the negro spiritual should be our background. Nevertheless his most successful work is his "Negro Rhapsody", a thrilling composition for piano and orchestra built on spirituals. If Powell has erred as to which are our rightful folk elements

to use, it may be because he stresses too much their final value. They should be a natural element of our musical speech, but they need not be relied on or in any way hamper our individual idiom, nor is their particular species of such importance. All the great masters had, as we know, the folk background, and from their national heritage they learned to speak the universal tongue. The only important fact about any folk song is its spontaneous birth from the plain people, its complete freedom from deliberate manufacture; and who dares say which country has produced the most important folk music? Be this as it may, Powell has done much to stimulate interest in folk material, and the festivals now held yearly in Virginia under his sponsorship are helping to preserve a fast-disappearing primitive ex-

John Powell, *Pioneer Dance*

Allegro moderato e humerresco

Piano

pression. In "Horizons", Arthur Shepherd has successfully used western folk tunes, and has given us a valuable orchestra work. William Grant Still's orchestra works have a

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true ring, though oddly enough one could hardly guess from hearing them that he is a negro composer.

Certainly under Legitimists one should name two of the most gifted men our country has produced, and whose untimely passing deprived us of a glory that would inevitably have come: Charles T. Griffes and Henry Gilbert. It was my privilege to know Griffes, and a more refined and retiring nature it would be difficult for one to imagine. While following in the legitimate course of music, he was an explorer, our first real modernist. And though French in style, a personality emerged that was highly poetic and individual, and his piano pieces, sonata, songs, "Poem for Flute and Orchestra", and "The Pleasure Dome of Kubla Khan" for orchestra, have left an indelible impression. He made one folk experiment in his string quartet on Indian themes. An entirely different type was Gilbert who was early attracted

Charles T. Griffes, *Clouds*

Tranquillo

Piano

pp

pp

8

to negro music, upon which he based a number of orchestral works. Gilbert may be said to have been one of the first to vision a national idiom, and this vision will surely linger, if not his music. Gilbert had some of the ruggedness of Walt Whitman.

An important fact we should cherish is that the composers of these various schools are today good friends, deeply interested in one another's progress. Thus is being built up an American tonal fraternity that is cementing us musically and that is making the meaning of the word "American" more tangible. And yet the confidence and cocksureness of many of these young composers is startling. It is more than self-confidence. It may include the secret hope that he is the long-looked-for American genius, which is probably forgivable.

Under what I have termed the Classical Tradition School are sterling musicians, but older than most of the younger composers we have discussed. Their number is extremely large, as is the catalogue of their works. These men and women have helped to build our superstructure, and we must be profoundly grateful to them that today we have an understanding and appreciation equal to any foreign country. There must be those who carry on as well as explore, and were it not for the cruel severity of the demands of art today, the rapid change of ideals, and the abandonment of most of the scholastic traditions, much of their music might seem more alive.

But art has a growing body! It must be newly clothed. The world demands progress, a fresh heralding of truth, an unquestionable American proclamation of our birthright, our freedom, and our independence musically. One can simply not follow in the footsteps of Mendelssohn, Brahms, Debussy, or any other composer today, no matter how

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worthy, and no matter what the technical achievements. These musical demands cannot and will not be thrust aside!

The developments of music in the past twenty years cannot be ignored, even if they have been carried at times to extremes and used by charlatans and impostors. These developments must be seen in their true light, and the world will recognize their worth when a genius speaks. The young composers of America acknowledge this, and from this milepost move towards the future.

In looking back on music's history we can see with clarity the new epoch launched by Palestrina and the early Italians; then a gathering of the loose gold by a Bach and a Mozart; suddenly a gigantic forward movement led by a Beethoven, with a calming and further gathering of the glittering tonal metal by a Brahms; then some side journeys taken into new and strange lands by a Debussy and a Scriabin; finally a volcanic eruption of unexcelled brilliance beginning with a Wagner, a Richard Strauss, and continuing with a Schönberg, a Stravinsky, an Alban Berg, sending sparks and molten iridescent lava into every nook of our life, scattering, as it seemed, all that the few hundred years of musical civilization had built up. Despite the vigorous and quick efforts to rebuild, the world is still shaking and reeking with the smoke of the tremendous upheaval, and one still hears the repercussions, for some of these men are still living and working.

It may soon become clear what the next step in the forward march of music is to be. Let us be happy that the young American composers have been and are calm in this valley world of indecision, that they are picking the chaff from the wheat in the harvest time, and are in the vanguard of music's rebirth and new birth. They have gained a point of vantage from our nation's youthful vigor, and have

reached a point of security from which they cannot be shaken. They have pulsed the hope and need of a great American music, and are viewing the nation from horizon to horizon with a confidence and a sense of obligation that this need and hope will be fulfilled. The hour is at hand!

HAROLD MORRIS

