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Toward an American Opera, 1911-1954 New World NW 241

The search for the Great American Opera is analogous in its futility to the search for the Great American Novel, so aptly symbolized by Moby Dick, the elusive Great White Whale that stars in one of the prime candidates for the honor. In fact, the futility with respect to opera is even greater, for until very recently opera has not enjoyed anything like the importance that the novel has had in American society. Both were imports from abroad, but the novel established itself much more securely than opera did. Opera—and by this term what was meant was “grand opera”—looked to Europe for its roots and its aesthetic, and the native touches were essentially cosmetic.

The complex nature of opera had much to do with this situation. Because of the length of time often needed for its creation and because of the breadth of forces (vocal—both solo and choral—orchestral, scenic, and even balletic) needed for its presentation, we tend to think of opera as a separate enclave in the musical landscape, and this conception is usually reinforced by the ballyhoo attendant on first performances of new operas. But opera, no less than any musical form, must grow from fertile soil; and opera, because of the specialized demands it makes on composer and librettist to fashion a work that is dramatic and stageworthy, needs a soil different from that of other musical forms. Most great opera composers served an apprenticeship in the field, learning from their failures and from the direct experience of working under theatrical conditions. If there are few theaters in which to work, the composer wishing to write opera will be to a significant extent hobbled before he begins. If, nevertheless, he chooses to write an opera, is lucky enough to see it produced and

publicized, and it is a failure, for whatever reason, then he cannot be blamed for taking his talent elsewhere, while the impresario, ever mindful that success is the key to his own future, will return to the tried and true.

This situation existed in the United States at least until very recent times. The production of operas was limited to a handful of companies in major cities that preferred to put on museum works from the European repertory or novelties from abroad that stood a chance of attracting top singers and critical and audience enthusiasm. A very few American operas were programmed either as a duty or for the publicity the performances would engender. It is no wonder that little memorable work was created.

But these obstacles did not prevent critics from envisioning an indigenous school of opera, separate from Europe and, if not as successful, yet part of the American musical and cultural scene. The question was: what would set this American opera apart? Critics usually emphasized the superficial: American subjects and the use of native American musics (first Indian music, later American Negro music—see notes to New World Records 80542-2, *Works by Arthur Farwell, Preston Ware Orem, Charles Wakefield Cadman*, and 80228-2, *Works by John Alden Carpenter, Henry F. Gilbert, Adolph Weiss, and John Powell*). Yet, of course, the mere use of Americanisms did not guarantee success, either at the box office or as an “American” product.

Although Victor Herbert’s *Natoma*, written on an American subject and employing Indian themes, garnered many more performances than Horatio Parker’s non-nationalistic *Mona*, this was not because of its Americanisms but because Herbert was a far better-known composer who

had worked extensively in the theater. Herbert wrote operettas. Here we come to another aspect of opera (and one not confined to the United States): its inborn snobbery. “Grand opera” has long been considered something separate and distinct from “musical comedy,” something artistically more elevated. Since grand opera was a thing apart, closer to a symphony or an oratorio in its artistic seriousness, it followed that a composer trained in that music and versed in those forms could create a work of an order denied to the denizens of Tin Pan Alley. This assumption was justified by a number of specifics, familiar to those who have studied the stratified concepts of opera versus operetta versus comedy-mixed-with-arias that have marked the history of the form in France. If it’s light in tone, it’s not opera; if there is spoken dialogue, it’s not opera; if it’s by a composer of musicals, it’s not opera—unless, like *Natoma*, it apes the outward forms to the point of fossilism.

This dichotomy persists through the century. According to some, *Porgy and Bess* is not an opera, merely an inflated Broadway show; *A Little Night Music* cannot be seriously considered by the Metropolitan Opera (the composer, good heavens, did not even orchestrate the score!); Marc Blitzstein’s *Regina* is an opera, but his *The Cradle Will Rock* is not. And what is one to say about such a hybrid as Leonard Bernstein’s stage-piece, *Mass*?

As long as the obstacles of categorization and lack of outlets for what could be termed “mainstream opera” persist, the form, however narrowly or broadly defined, will not prosper. Recent developments, outlined below, suggest that today’s audience is not as finicky about categories as its predecessors. Just as ballet broke free of the story line and elaborate productions developed in the nineteenth century, opera is breaking free. If these trends continue, we may see a truly indigenous opera, reflective—in the sense that Charles Ives’s music was—of its European roots but at the same time wholly a product of the New World.

In considering the excerpts from American opera from 1910 to 1954 on this album, it must be stressed that this record does *not* represent, nor is it intended to represent, the full range or the quality of American opera of those years. Rather, it supplements the considerable number of recent American operas currently available on disc by restoring to circulation some important material

for the study of the subject: on the first side, virtually all the recordings of American opera made before World War II, and on the second, representative excerpts from three later recordings of important works. The Discography lists many other recordings of works both central and peripheral.

The choice of excerpts on Side One was, in effect, made for us by the managers of Victor Records at the time and thus does not necessarily represent the musically or historically most interesting passages (although, in partial compensation, they do document original protagonists and contemporary performing styles). Obviously, the excerpts from *Natoma* were recorded because of the composer’s fame and because Herbert himself as composer-conductor made a number of recordings during his career (see Side One, Band 1, of New World Records NW 272, ... *And Then We Wrote: American Composers and Lyricists Sing, Play, and Conduct Their Own Songs*). But Herbert’s biographer, Edward N. Waters, calls the two arias “tedious and boring” and “bloated and pompous” respectively, and not representative of the merits of the work. Similarly, critics were unanimous in praising the choral writing of Howard Hanson’s *Merry Mount*, which is indeed superior to the excerpt recorded at the time. We owe much of what recorded performance we do have not to any decision to present the strengths of individual American operas but to the sales potential—reinforced by film celebrity—of a genuine American opera star, Lawrence Tibbett, and the Act I close of Deems Taylor’s *The King’s Henchman* reflects this star-turn mentality.

The first important impetus for the gestation and presentation of American opera was the appointment of Giulio Gatti-Casazza as general manager of the Metropolitan Opera. Gatti came from an Italian impresario tradition that still believed in repertory as an amalgam of revivals and new works. At the turn of the century, major Italian composers like Puccini, Mascagni, Leoncavallo, and Giordano and lesser ones like Italo Montemezzi, Alberto Franchetti, and Riccardo Zandonai were regularly producing works for the lyric theater, and Gatti tried to carry over this tradition and implant it in the New World, not only by producing new European works in the United States (the world premieres of Puccini’s *La Fanciulla del West* and *Il Trittico* being the leading examples) but by encouraging indigenous opera.

The first American opera the Met produced was

Frederick Converse's one-act *The Pipe of Desire*, on March 18, 1910. At the time, the Met was also sponsoring a contest for an American grand opera, with a prize of ten thousand dollars for the winner, to be judged by a panel composed of the conductor-composer Walter Damrosch, the composers George W. Chadwick and Charles Martin Loeffler, and the Metropolitan Opera conductor Alfred Hertz. The winning entry was *Mona* (which was presented on March 14, 1912), although Damrosch—and, one suspects, the other judges—expressed privately “a feeling of chagrin that all our travail should have brought forth such a tiny mouse.

Undaunted by Damrosch's chagrin, Gatti continued to present American works: Damrosch's own *Cyrano de Bergerac* (February 27, 1913), Herbert's one-act *Madeleine* (January 24, 1914), Reginald de Koven's *The Canterbury Pilgrims* (March 8, 1917), Charles Wakefield Cadman's *Shanewis* (March 23, 1918), Joseph Breil's *The Legend* and John Adams Hugo's *The Temple Dancer* (both March 12, 1919), Henry Hadley's *Cleopatra's Night* (January 31, 1920; on the previous evening, the Chicago Opera had presented De Koven's *Rip Van Winkle* at the Lexington Avenue Opera House in New York).

Leaving aside *Natoma*, the first relative hit came with *The King's Henchman* (February 17, 1927), which the Met commissioned in 1925. Its success (fourteen performances in three seasons) led to a further commission for Taylor, with help from the Juilliard Foundation, and his *Peter Ibbetson* (February 7, 1931) racked up sixteen performances in four seasons. With these two operas, Taylor holds the record for an American composer for number of performances at the Met (Samuel Barber is second).

Louis Gruenberg's *The Emperor Jones* (January 7, 1933), Howard Hanson's *Merry Mount* (February 10, 1934), and John L. Seymour's *In a Pasha's Garden* (January 24, 1935) rounded out Gatti's contributions to American opera—and, notably, Tibbett appeared in all these and the Taylor operas. Until the advent of the New York City Opera, Gatti's largely Sisyphean labors were the main sustained effort at encouraging American opera, and in this effort he utilized the best American singers and stage designers (of the latter, Joseph Urban, Norman Bel Geddes, and Jo Mielziner).

The only competition to Gatti's string of American operas was the various attempts by the Chicago company. Besides De Koven's *Rip Van Winkle* (January 2, 1920), Chicago produced Hadley's *Azora* (December 26, 1917), Ethelbert

Nevin's *A Daughter of the Forest* (January 5, 1918), Hamilton Forrest's *Camille* (December 10, 1930), Gruenberg's *Jack and the Beanstalk* (November 14, 1936), and, more recently, Raffaello de Banfield's *Lord Byron's Love Letter* (November 21, 1955) and Vittorio Giannini's *The Harvest* (November 25, 1961).

After Gatti, American operas presented at the Met were Richard Hageman's *Caponsacchi* (premiered in Germany in 1932 but given in English for the first time at the Met on February 4, 1937—again with the indefatigable Tibbett), Damrosch's *The Man Without a Country* (May 12, 1937), Gian Carlo Menotti's one-act *Amelia Goes to the Ball* (March 3, 1938, a year after its world premiere at the Academy of Music in Philadelphia), another Menotti one-acter, *The Island of God* (February 20, 1942), and Bernard Rogers' *The Warrior* (January 11, 1947). A long hiatus followed until Barber's *Vanessa* (January 15, 1958), the American premiere of Menotti's *The Last Savage* (January 23, 1964), Barber's *Antony and Cleopatra* (September 16, 1966), and Marvin David Levy's *Mourning Becomes Electra* (March 17, 1967).

But by this time the Met was hardly the cradle of American opera—if it ever had been. Individual works had been presented elsewhere, not only by established companies but as separate productions. Two of the most influential of the latter were Virgil Thomson's *Four Saints in Three Acts* (Hartford, February 8, 1934, and George Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* (Boston, September 30, 1935).

The New York City Opera, first at City Center and later in Lincoln Center, provided a focus for new American opera. In many cases the company did not originate the works, but its commitment to American opera enabled pieces premiered elsewhere to be staged in New York. The list is long, attesting to the continuing vitality of a form that has been denigrated as minimal in importance to American music. The following partial list (world premieres are asterisked) gives a sample of the richness: Gian Carlo Menotti's *The Old Maid and the Thief* and *Amelia Goes to the Ball* (April 8, 1948), William Grant Still's *Troubled Island** (March 31, 1949), Menotti's *The Medium* (April 8, 1949), David Tamkin's *The Dybbuk** (October 4, 1951), Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (April 9, 1952) and *The Consul* (October 8, 1952), Marc Blitzstein's *Regina* (April 2, 1953), Aaron Copland's *The Tender Land** (April 1, 1954), Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah* (September 27, 1956), Douglas Moore's *The Ballad of Baby Doe* (April 3,

1958), Leonard Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti* (April 6, 1958), Kurt Weill's *Lost in the Stars* (April 10, 1958), Vittorio Giannini's *The Taming of the Shrew* (April 13, 1958), Robert Kurka's *The Good Soldier Schweik** (April 23, 1958), Menotti's *Maria Golovin* (March 30, 1959), Weill's *Street Scene* (April 2, 1959), Lee Hoiby's *The Scarf* and Moore's *The Devil and Daniel Webster* (both April 5, 1959), Floyd's *Wuthering Heights* (April 9, 1959), Robert Ward's *He Who Gets Slapped* (April 12, 1959), Norman Dello Joio's *The Triumph of St. Joan* (April 16, 1959), Hugo Weisgall's *Six Characters in Search of an Author** (April 26, 1959), Moore's *The Wings of the Dove** (October 12, 1961), Ward's *The Crucible** (October 26, 1961), Abraham Ellstein's *The Golem** (March 22, 1962), Floyd's *The Passion of Jonathan Wade** (October 11, 1962), Jerome Moross' *Gentlemen, Be Seated** (October 10, 1963), Hoiby's *Natalia Petrovna** (October 8, 1964), Jack Beeson's *Lizzie Borden** (March 25, 1965), Ned Rorem's *Miss Julie** (November 4, 1965), Giannini's *The Servant of Two Masters** (March 9, 1967), Weisgall's *Nine Rivers from Jordan** (October 9, 1968), Menotti's *The Most Important Man** (March 7, 1971), and Leon Kirchner's *Lily** (April 14, 1977).

The impetus for much of this activity came from the Ford Foundation, which from 1958 to 1960 made about a million and a half dollars available, first to the New York City Opera and then to companies throughout the United States, for commissioning and performing American operas. In the case of the New York City Opera, the Ford Foundation also provided money for the company to tour American operas.

The Bicentennial celebrations also saw the creation of a number of operas, and today opera is probably more active than at any other time in American history. Hugo Weisgall, Marvin David Levy, Thomas Pasatieri, Dominick Argento, Alva Henderson, Conrad Susa, Stanley Silverman—composers who devote most of their time to working in the theater or writing operas rather than composers who produce an occasional opera—attest to the new vitality of the form. Part of this activity is doubtless because composers no longer consider “opera” to mean “grand opera” or a work tailored for established repertory companies. The free-form concept, heralded most notably by Thomson's *Four Saints in Three Acts* and *The Mother of Us All* (New World Records 80288-2), has meant that opera can be performed by small ensembles with minimal scenery, so that the crushing burden of costs entailed for a limited number of performances has been to an extent obviated. If a work like Robert Wilson and Philip Glass's *Einstein On the Beach* still requires a substantial outlay, pieces like Susa's *Transformations* and Silverman's *Elephant Steps* can be produced on a shoestring.

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THE RECORDINGS

Side One

Bands 1 and 2

VICTOR HERBERT

NATOMA

(Libretto Joseph Deighn Redding)

I List the Trill

Alma Gluck, soprano; orchestra conducted by Victor Herbert. Recorded June 10, 1912, in New York. Originally issued on Victor 74274 (mx # C-12103).

No Country Can My Own Outvie

John McCormack, tenor; orchestra conducted by Victor Herbert. Recorded April 3, 1912, in New York. Originally issued on Victor 74295 (mx # C-11822).

Victor Herbert (born February 1, 1859, in Dublin; died May 26, 1924, in New York) is one of the major figures in American music, both serious and popular. He studied cello at the Stuttgart Conservatory and in 1886 came to the United States, where his wife had been engaged by the Metropolitan Opera. He became a cellist in the Met orchestra and also composed serious works. From 1889 to 1891 he was associate conductor of the Worcester Festival, from 1893 to 1898 he led the Twenty-second Regiment Band, and from 1898 to 1904 he was conductor of the Pittsburgh Symphony.

Herbert made his most important contribution in operetta. From 1894 to 1917 he wrote thirty-five, the most notable being *Babes in Toyland* (1903), *Mlle. Modiste* (1905), *The Red Mill* (1906), *Naughty Marietta* (1910), and *Sweethearts* (1913). These were in the tradition of the Viennese operetta, and Herbert (along with Sigmund Romberg and Rudolf Friml) is considered to have formed the basis from which composers like Jerome Kern, Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, and Richard Rodgers developed the American equivalent.

From 1900 on, Herbert was a powerful force in American music, not

only as composer and conductor but as a recording artist for the fledgling phonograph. He used his position to foster a society to guarantee royalty payments to all composers, not only for the sales of sheet music but for performances. He and a small group founded the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) informally at a famous dinner in Luchow's restaurant in October, 1913, and more formally at a meeting in the Hotel Claridge in February, 1914. ASCAP's early years were a time of near-failure because of united opposition from, among others, hotels and restaurants with dance bands, but the Supreme Court, in an opinion by Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, upheld ASCAP in the landmark case of *Herbert v. Shanley* (1917). Herbert was not alone in his efforts but because of his prestige as a national figure and his untiring work on behalf of his fellow artists, he is considered the founder of the organization.

Herbert wrote only two operas, the second of which, *Madeleine*, is generally considered closer to operetta. *Natoma*, his sole grand opera, came about through Oscar Hammerstein's interest. Hammerstein had set up the Manhattan Opera Company to challenge the Metropolitan and wanted an American work for it; but before Herbert had finished, Hammerstein's company was dissolved through an agreement with the Met. Herbert offered the work to the Met, which declined, and it was taken by the newly formed Philadelphia-Chicago Opera Company. Mary Garden was selected to sing the title role, with a cast that included John McCormack, and the work was first presented in Philadelphia on February 23, 1911, and brought to the Met in New York three nights later.

Natoma's libretto was confected by Joseph Deighn Redding (1859-1932), a wealthy California lawyer who dabbled in the arts—even to the extent of writing an opera, *Fay-Yen-Fah*, which was performed in Monte Carlo in 1925. Besides the story, he gave Herbert some

California Indian musical themes for the work. Although stoutly defended by Herbert, the libretto was well characterized by *Musical America* as “one of the most futile, fatuous, halting, impotent, inane and puerile ever written.” It deals with a noble Indian maiden, Natoma, who saves from abduction her lifelong friend, the white girl Barbara, by killing the villain Alvarado. Natoma is spared retribution by converting to Christianity and becoming a nun, while Barbara is betrothed to Lieutenant Paul Merrill, a young American naval officer.

In the tradition of individual arias, the two excerpts (both from Act II) have nothing to do with the plot. “I List the Trill” is sung by Barbara as an apostrophe to springtime. The music, clearly intended for an ingenue operetta soprano—Barbara is supposed to be eighteen—is sung in an overripe “operatic” fashion by Alma Gluck. Paul's salute to Columbus, an entrance aria, is well put forward by McCormack.

(For other performances by Alma Gluck and John McCormack see New World Records NW 247, *When I Have Sung My Songs: The American Art Song 1900-1940*; and for Victor Herbert conducting see NW 272, ... *And Then We Wrote: American Composers and Lyricists Sing, Play, and Conduct Their Own Songs*.)

I List the Trill

BARBARA

I list the trill in golden throat
Of yonder bird on wing afloat,
Bearing the message far and near,
“Awake, my love, the Spring is here!”

The tiny rill adown the vale
Unto the brooklet tells the tale;
Singing together, on they go
To join the river far below.

Across the field of ripening grain
The zephyrs bear the same refrain,
From every bough, from every tree,
I hear again the melody.

The wind that plays within the sheaf
Carries the tale to silver leaf;
The drowsy poppy hears the bee
Humming the song in ecstasy.

Fly forth, ye minions of the sky!
Our happiness sing out on high,
Bearing the message far and near:
“Awake, my love, the Spring is here!”

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No Country Can My Own Outvie

PAUL

(RECITATIVE) My commander as
envoy bids me come, to tender you
his compliments and ask you to
accept the good-will of his govern-
ment. Here upon this far-off shore,
where Nature spreads with open
arms the treasures of her fields, we
would salute your sovereign flag,
the noble pennant of historic Spain!

No country can my own outvie
In tribute to the one
Who held the flag of Spain on high
Toward the setting sun.

His noble figure stands apart
In sacred trust to hold;
Upon our shield, upon our heart
His name is stamped in gold.

Columbus! Led on by hand divine!
Columbus! My country's love is thine!

The sail that fills with fav'ring wind
Is guided by command
Of some immortal Goddess kind,
Who bids us where to land.

The spirit that directed thee,
Great Captain, safe to shore,
Is Goddess of our Liberty,
Whose name we all adore.

Columbia! Bright Goddess of the free!
Columbia! We pledge our love to thee!

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Bands 3 and 4

DEEMSTAYLOR

THE KING'S HENCHMAN
(*Libretto* Edna St. Vincent Millay)

Oh, Caesar; Great Wert Thou
Lawrence Tibbett, baritone; Metro-
politan Opera Chorus and Orchestra,
Giulio Setti conducting.

*Recorded April 5, 1928, in New
York. Originally issued on Victor
8103 (mx # CVE-43613).*

Nay, Maccus, Lay Him Down
Same as above. (mx # CVE-43614.)

Joseph Deems Taylor (born
December 22, 1885, in New York;
died July 3, 1960, in New York) is
better known for his other musical
activities than for his composing. He
studied at New York University and
was at various times a music critic,
the editor of *Musical America*, a
consultant on music for the
Columbia Broadcasting System, a
well-known commentator for
Metropolitan Opera and New York
Philharmonic broadcasts, president
of ASCAP, and the narrator of the
Walt Disney movie *Fantasia*. While
with CBS he was involved in com-
missioning music for them. Besides
his operas he wrote a number of
works, the most famous of which is
the suite *Through the Looking
Glass* (chamber version 1917-19,
orchestral version 1922), after Lewis
Carroll's book.

Taylor's first two operas, *The
King's Henchman* and *Peter
Ibbetson*, are discussed in the intro-
duction to these notes. His third
opera, *Ramuntcho*, was premiered
by the Philadelphia Opera Company
on February 7, 1942.

Though hardly original, Taylor's
operas reveal a definite theatrical
flair. This is most evident in *Peter
Ibbetson*, but the adroit ending of
Act I of *The King's Henchman*,
recorded here, is a good example
of his abilities.

The noted American poet Edna St.
Vincent Millay (1892-1950) provid-
ed the libretto. Its unfortunate close
resemblance to that of *Tristan und
Isolde* was immediately evident to
operagoers, and its larding of Anglo-
Saxonisms (the opera is set in tenth-
century England) makes for trying
reading. But behind the hedge of the
syntax lurks a strong libretto, not
least because of its emphasis on
characterization.

King Eadgar of England wishes to
wed Aelfrida, the daughter of the
thane of Cornwall. Eadgar cannot
leave his duties, however, and sends

Aethelwold, his friend and foster
brother, who is a confirmed misogy-
nist. Aethelwold reluctantly goes.
Aelfrida finds him asleep under a
tree, and they instantly fall in love.
Aethelwold sends back a message to
the King that Aelfrida is not beauti-
ful enough, but can he (Aethelwold)
wed her? They are married, and
Aethelwold wishes to leave for the
Continent but is forestalled by the
arrival of the King. Aethelwold
instructs his wife to look her ugliest
but on being informed for the first
time that she could have been
queen of England, Aelfrida comes
to the King in all her beauty.
Eadgar immediately perceives the
treachery of his henchman, and
Aethelwold kills himself.

In fact this tale is some distance
from the Tristan myth, despite its
superficial resemblance. The distinc-
tion lies in the character of Aelfrida,
whom Millay clearly sees as a beauti-
ful, vain, and rather empty-headed
girl taking her pleasure where she
finds it and not thinking or caring
about its consequences.

“Oh, Caesar” (the Act I finale), a
canny bit of stagecraft by both
Millay and Taylor, is a vaguely folkish
drinking song with choral refrain. In
the final stanza Aethelwold's horse
is brought onstage; the henchman
mounts and rides off to the choral
farewell. The catchiness and swing
of the tune is one of Taylor's best
inspirations, and its deliberate sim-
plicity is appropriate for the
moment. One critic attacked the
piece as obvious in its modulations,
but surely this is the point.

A certain amount of the finale's
impact is sacrificed by the concert
version used in the recording, with
all the solo material assigned to
Tibbett—whose voice is, however,
in splendid shape. The recording is
an excellent example of his early,
more lyrically free singing, and one
can sense how important he was,
both as a voice and as an American
singer, to the Met. The Metropolitan
men's chorus sounds like a cryptful
of Bela Lugosis.

The second excerpt is a *scena*
with chorus from Act III, the close
of the opera, after Aethelwold's
death. Here Taylor's deficiencies are

more evident, for he cannot give the threnody for a mighty warrior sufficient weight to cap the opera.

Oh, Caesar, Great Wert Thou

MACCUS

Oh, Caesar, great wert thou!
And Julius was thy name!
That furrowed thy way through a fallow
spray,
And to stormy Britain came!
But I would not stand in thy stead,
For I'd liefer be quick than dead!

LORDS

But I would not stand in thy stead,
For I'd liefer be quick than dead!

[EADGAR]

Oh, Caesar, great wert thou!

[ÆTHELWOLD]

And Claudius was thy name!

EADGAR and ÆTHELWOLDJ

That said, "To be rid
Of what Julius did,
I'll go and do the same!"
But I would not stand in thy stead,
For I'd liefer be quick than dead!

LORDS

But I would not stand in thy stead,
For I'd liefer be quick than dead!

[ÆTHELWOLDJ]

Oh, Caesar, great wert thou!

[EADGAR]

And Hadrian was thy name!

[EADGAR, ÆTHELWOLD] and LORDS

Thine eye did itch
Till a Roman ditch
Was dug in British shame!
But I would not stand in thy stead,
For I'd liefer be quick than dead!

[EADGAR, ÆTHELWOLD,] LORDS and
LADIES

Caesar, thy day is done!
Whiles ours is but begun!

LORDS and LADIES

Farewell!

Fare thou well, and God be with thee!
Fair weather and good roads!
God keep thee from all fear!
God be with thee!
Farewell!

Nay, Maccus, Lay Him Down

EADGAR

Nay, Maccus,
Lay him down.
What man hath met the thrust of
Æthelwold,
And spoke again?
He will not answer thee.
Nor me.
Not ever.

Have done, Ælfrida.
Thou hast not tears enow in thy narrow
heart

To weep him worthily.
Nor all of us here,
Nor all of England weeping,
Should weep his worth,
That was so young and blithe and fair,
Whom the thorn of a rose hath slain.
Wherefore let us save our tears for a lit-
tle sorrow,
And weep not Æthelwold at all.

The axe ringeth in the wood.

LORDS

And thou liest here.

EADGAR

The boat shoves off from shore. The
child of the boatman
Dippeth her hand in the sunny water of
the sea.

LORDS

And thou liest here.

ALL MEN and WOMEN

Wo—lo—woe!
Was it the wind in the tree?
He that spoke but now is no longer in
the room.
Forth-faréd is he.

EADGAR

So. Bear him softly hence.
And bury him deep, with his warm
sword beside him.
Doughty of heart was he.
This day hath he dared two kings:—
Myself and Death.

ALL MEN and WOMEN

Wo—lo—woe!
Hearst thou the wind in the tree?
He that spoke but now is no longer in
the room.
Forth-faréd is he.

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Band 5

LOUIS GRUENBERG

THE EMPEROR JONES

*(Libretto Kathleen de Jaffa,
founded on the play of the same
name by Eugene O'Neill)*

Standin' in the Need of Prayer

Lawrence Tibbett, baritone;
Metropolitan Opera Orchestra,
Wilfred Pelletier conducting.
*Recorded January 19, 1934, in
New York. Originally issued on
Victor 7959 (mx # CS-81087-1).*

Louis Gruenberg (born August 3, 1884, near Brest Litovsk, Russia; died June 9, 1964, in Beverly Hills, California) came to the United States as an infant, but later returned to Europe to study piano and composition with Ferruccio Busoni. In 1919 he gave up the piano to become a full-time composer and returned to the United States. He wrote a number of operas and operettas (including *The Witch of Brocken*, *The Bride of the Gods*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, and *Queen Helena*), the most famous of which is his setting of Eugene O'Neill's play *The Emperor Jones* (libretto adapted by Kathleen de Jaffa).

Gruenberg edited several books of Negro spirituals and was a founder of the League of Composers and president of the American section of the International Society for Contemporary Music. He settled in California and wrote several film scores, but his concert and stage works were rarely performed after World War II. At his death he left the manuscript of an opera, *Antony and Cleopatra*.

The Emperor Jones was to have

had its premiere in Berlin under Erich Kleiber, but Germany's unsettled political climate forced its postponement, and it was first given at the Metropolitan Opera at the matinee of January 7, 1933, under Tullio Serafin, on a double bill with Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci*. It was presented in Amsterdam the next year and, after the war, at La Scala, again under Serafin.

Largely because of Lawrence Tibbett's recording, "Standin' in the Need of Prayer" is certainly the most famous aria from any American pre-World War II opera and arguably one of the half-dozen most famous excerpts in all American opera. This is ironic, for the song is not Gruenberg's at all but a spiritual he inserted just before the final scene. Brutus Jones, an escaped slave, has set himself up as emperor of a tropical island, but the natives have rebelled against his erratic rule. He has taken to the forest in an attempt to escape. The encircling natives and the ghosts of Jones's past drive him beyond civilization back to savagery, and he sings his *pietà* in a final lucid moment before he is hunted down. The opera's last line, spoken over Jones's dead body by Henry Smithers, a Cockney trader, stands as Jones's epitaph: "Dead as a 'erring. Well, God blimey, yer died in a grand style any'ow."

Tibbett sings the piece in a concert version, with a third chorus added to make a strong climax. The orchestra here omits the offstage ostinato drumbeats that made so powerful an impression in both the play and the opera.

BRUTUS JONES

(Jones is seen running wildly. His pants are in tatters, his shoes cut and misshapen, flapping about his feet. He gradually slows up and looks about him with hunted, fearful glances, then sits down in a tense position with his face toward the audience, ready for instant flight. He holds his head, and rocks back and forth, moaning to himself miserably.)

Oh, Lawd, Lawd. Oh, Lawd, Lawd!

Lawd Jesus, heah my prayer. I'se a po' sinner, a po' sinner! I knows I done wrong, I knows it. When I catches Jeff cheatin' wid loaded dice my anger overcomes me, and I kills him dead. Lawd, I done wrong. When dat guard hits me wid de whip, my anger overcomes me, and I kills him dead. Lawd, I done wrong. And down heah whar' dese fool bush niggers raises me up to the seat O' the mighty, I steals all I could grab. Lawd, I done wrong. I knows it. I'se sorry. Forgive me, Lawd.

(Then, with overpowering religious fervor)

It's a-me,
It's a-me, Oh, Lawd, standin' in the need
of prayer.

It's a-me,
It's a-me, Oh, Lawd, standin' in the need
of prayer.

It's not my brother,
It's a-me, Oh, Lawd.
Standin' in the need of prayer.
It's not my sister,
It's a-me, Oh, Lawd.
Standin' in the need of prayer.

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Band 6

HOWARD HANSON

MERRY MOUNT

(Libretto Richard Stokes)

'Tis an Earth Defiled (Act I)

Lawrence Tibbett, baritone;
Metropolitan Opera Orchestra,
Wilfred Pelletier conducting.
*Recorded January 19, 1934, in
New York. Originally issued on
Victor 7959 (mx # CS-81086).*

Howard Hanson (born October 28, 1896, in Wahoo, Nebraska) studied at the Institute of Musical Art in New York and at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. An American Prix de Rome took him to that city from 1921 to 1924, after which he became head of the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York.

He remained there for forty years and shaped it into one of the leading conservatories in the United States. But his influence went beyond the administrative. Beginning the year after he came to Rochester, Hanson presented festivals of American music both new and old at the school.

Hanson is one of the best-known conservative composers. His music derives strongly from Scandinavian and Russian composers like Sibelius and Mussorgsky. His long list of compositions includes chamber and choral music, several symphonic poems and concertos, six symphonies, and one opera.

Merry Mount, commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera, was premiered at the Met at the matinee of February 10, 1934, although a concert version had been given in Ann Arbor, Michigan, on May 20, 1933. Contrary to its title, the opera is decidedly serious. The libretto, by Richard Stokes, is based on Nathaniel Hawthorne's story "The Maypole of Merry Mount" and involves witchcraft and sexual obsession among Puritan settlers in New England. In this version, the straitlaced Puritans are set against the Stuart Cavaliers. The story centers around Wrestling Bradford, the fanatic clergyman who heads the Puritan congregation. His faith is being tested by wild, strongly sexual dreams, and although he is advised to get married, his urges cannot be so simply satisfied. He believes the demon Ashtoreth, who haunts him, to be incarnate in Lady Marigold Sandys, who is to be married to the Cavalier Sir Gower Lockland. The hedonism of the Cavaliers conflicts with the puritanism of Bradford's congregation and results in Bradford killing Lockland. Indians raid the village and destroy it, and Bradford, in a frenzy, equates the destruction with Ashtoreth's possession of Marigold. To the horror of his followers, he renounces his religion, seizes Marigold, who longs to die now that her fiancé is dead, and carries her into the flaming church, where they are immolated as the populace intones the Lord's Prayer. The overwrought passions of the

libretto are mirrored in the modal-oriented music.

The excerpt is from Act I, when Bradford confesses his obsession to Praise-God Tewke. Tewke's brief interjections are here omitted. Hanson's *scena* is more strongly projected than Taylor's but is not as memorable as his choral writing elsewhere in the opera. The development of Tibbett's voice from lyric to dramatic baritone is clearly evidenced.

BRADFORD

Oh, 'tis an earth defiled whereon we live!

There is no leafy bow'r, no dale or grot,
But is a sty for most pernicious devils;
No flow'ry mead but wafts a stench of
brimstone,
No cloud but is a nest of hellish vultures!

[TEWKE]

[The God of Peace
Under our foot shall bruise the Serpent's
head!]

BRADFORD

By night I hear them post upon the
wind
To clang of arms and yelp of demon
laughter.
Anon the cursed rout besets my chamber,
And there with blazing iron and lash of
scorpions
They harrow me to sign the Devil's
Book,
The which I spurn, for love of Christ,
our Lord!
Then of a sudden is the dark aflame
With execrable shapes,
The fair lascivious concubines of Hell,
With dewy flanks and honey-scented
breasts,
Who tug away the covers, prick my
flesh
With hands of fire.

[TEWKE]

[Softly, softly!]

BRADFORD

Hear me, or I go mad!
Last night came One
That paced adown the stairway of the
sky,
Like unto Ashtoreth, Queen of the

hornèd moon!
She spoke: "Belovèd, come, and taste
with me
The Vine of Life!"
The kisses of her mouth
Were as the lightning and the clash of
swords;
And with the dulcet agony thereof,
I awoke in tears!
Ah, dear God, save me,
Save me from Evil Spirits,
Or else my soul is damned forevermore!

Note: Bracketed lines not included in recording.

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Side Two Band 1

AARON COPLAND

THE SECOND HURRICANE (Libretto Edwin Denby)

Two Willow Hill. Sextet. Jeff's Song. Queenie's Song

Soloists and Chorus of the High School of Music and Art; New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein conducting. Recorded April 30, 1960, in New York. Originally issued on Columbia MS-6181.

The contributions of Aaron Copland (born November 14, 1900, in Brooklyn) to American music have been detailed in the notes to New World Records NW 277, *Aaron Copland: Works for Piano 1926-1948*. Although vocal music forms a relatively small part of Copland's oeuvre, he has written two operas.

The Second Hurricane (1937) is a good example of a genre that has had an important vogue, particularly in the twentieth century. This is opera for a school or workshop—simply set and performable for, and usually by, amateurs, music students, or those interested in learning about opera. Though rarely given productions by professional companies, these works have received far more performances than more celebrated operas because they are within the resources of schools or conservatories. The list of such pieces is long, and the Central Opera Service cata-

logue of American operas shows how many have been written in the past few decades. The prototypes were Paul Hindemith's *Wir bauen eine Stadt* and Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill's *Der Jasager* (both 1930); more recent examples include, from England, Benjamin Britten's *Let's Make an Opera* (1949) and *Noye's Fludde* (1957) and, from America, Weill's *Down in the Valley* (1948).

The Second Hurricane, written for the Henry Street Settlement Music School, is moreover a good example of the didactic work so popular in the twenties and thirties. The instruction here has two aims: teaching the music and teaching the moral of the piece. Brecht's plays and his librettos for Kurt Weill, and American social dramas of the thirties form the soil from which Copland's "play opera" sprang, and the somewhat naive optimism of its message is perfectly in tune with the New Deal and the WPA projects of that time. The libretto is by Edwin Denby, one of the first and most distinguished American dance critics.

The story is very simple. A hurricane has devastated a region, and a group of schoolchildren has volunteered to help out by flying into a flood-stricken area (the implausibility of this is ignored by the librettist and composer). The plane develops engine trouble, sets the children down on a hill, supposedly in safety, and flies off. On the hill the group meets another child lost in the storm. But a second hurricane is approaching, and the children, cut off, are forced to rely on their own resources. At first they behave irresponsibly, refusing to fix the radio transmitter and eating up their food supplies, but the reality of their danger forces them to group and work together. Thus the "dignity and importance of collective heroism" win out, and the children mature through their ordeal and emerge triumphant.

The excerpt here is from Act II, after the hurricane has struck. The Grown-ups' Chorus acts as a Greek chorus, commenting on the plight of the children. (As recorded, there is a short cut in this opening chorus.)

One of Copland's most personal—and lasting—gifts is his ability to write elegantly in what could be termed a “folk” style. This ability, which he shares with his colleague Virgil Thomson, is clearly evidenced in his ballet scores of enduring popularity (*Billy the Kid*, *Rodeo*, *Appalachian Spring*). The style is descended from certain nationalistic styles of the early twentieth century and the sonic landscapes of Sibelius, but with a French sense of refinement.

The unadorned elegance of the *Second Hurricane* extracts is an excellent example of a type of writing that appeals to both the amateur and the seasoned composer. Copland's deft part writing is accomplished with cunning ease, and not the least felicity is the way the Sextet moves from its opening triadic simplicity to more complex writing. The insinuation of the dance rhythm, which arrives with Queenie's “We'd be tuning in on a dance band” but is signaled earlier by the dotted rhythms, is typical of Copland's total assimilation of the popular into his compositional style (and is perfectly in tune with Leonard Bernstein's style as well, as evidenced by the relish with which he conducts it). The succession of Jeff's and Queenie's songs is likewise well judged in terms of the overall continuity. Indeed, the long flowing lines of Queenie's song form the ideal contrast to the earlier anxiety and exhilaration, ending the excerpts on a moment of otherworldly repose. (I wonder whether Denby and Copland were aware of the “Crane Duet” in the Weill-Brecht *Mahagonny*, for both words and music recall it.)

Two Willow Hill

GROWN-UPS' CHORUS

Butch, Fat, Gyp and Lowrie,
Gwen, Queenie and Jeff, they're safe on
Two Willow Hill.

Safe in the midst of the flood.
Safe together, together in the dark of
night.

Safe? No, they are not safe, they are not
safe yet.

Nobody knows where they landed,
Nobody knows where they are.
Nobody knows yet that they're in the
midst of the flood,

That around them a flood is rising, ris-
ing, rising in the dark of night.

* * * * *

MEN'S CHORUS

Butch, Fat, Gyp and Lowrie,
Gwen, Queenie and Jeff.
Waiting in the midst of the flood,
Waiting on Two Willow Hill.
They talk a little now and then, perhaps.

GROWN-UPS' CHORUS

But it's their thoughts that sing together
in the dark of the night.
The thoughts of their hearts that sing in
the dark.

SEXTET

GYP

We're sitting together,
We're cold, hungry and tired.
We can't make a fire to show where we
are,
We haven't a match for a fire.

GWEN

They've sent out planes to find us,
We heard one, but it was too far off.

QUEENIE

FAT

Way off over there.

GYP

All we have is a rubber boat we can't
blow up,
And a single flashlight.

TOGETHER

All around us, —
They didn't see us. —
The flood's there. —
We don't hear it —
It doesn't make a sound. —

We don't see it. —
They passed without seeing us. —
But we know it's there in the dark. —
We're waiting, we're hoping,
We're hoping for a plane.
Will another come before morning?

GYP

Will we last till another can find us?

FAT

Well, we're safe together here for a
while.

LOWRIE

We're sitting together,
Safe for a while,
Safe here together.
Butch, Fat and Gyp,
Gwen and Queenie and Jeff and me.
Safe for a little while in the rising flood.

QUEENIE

Let's pretend we've saved our radio.
Lowrie could have fixed it,
We all would have helped.
We'd be sending out calls,
We'd be hearing from the rescue planes.
We'd be tuning in on a dance band.
Ta ta ta ta, *etc.*

Jeff's Song

JEFF

You was all mighty mean when you first
come;
I'se mighty scared of you all.
Now you'se all mighty nice and I'se not
scared at all.
I'se not scared with you aroun',
I'se not scared that we can drown,
Come on, river, show what you can do.
Jefferson Brown ain't scared of you.

ALL SIX

I'se not scared with you aroun',
I'se not scared that we can drown.
Come on, river, show what you can do,
All of us together ain't scared of you.

Queenie's Song

QUEENIE

I never knew that I could feel the way I
do and have it real.
It's like a dream of floating in the sky,
A lovely dream when you seem to fly.
You dream along the sky with others,
too.
It's so easy to fly, and all of us do.

In the dream we meet we're side by side,
It's so strange and sweet the way we glide.
I'll keep my dream, you can have it too,
It's a wonderful dream, and I know it's true.

Somehow it's clear, I don't know how,
Just sitting here as we are now.
It's like a dream of floating in the sky,
A lovely dream when you seem to fly.
You dream along the sky with others too,
Da da da dee da, *etc.*

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Band 2

GIAN CARLO MENOTTI

THE CONSUL

(*Libretto* Gian Carlo Menotti)

To This We've Come

Patricia Neway, soprano; orchestra conducted by Lehman Engel. Recorded April 11, 1950, in New York. Originally issued on Decca DAU-769 (transferred to LP DX-101).

Librettist and composer Gian Carlo Menotti (born July 7, 1911, in Cadegliano, Italy) has been one of the major forces in opera in the United States, certainly in the years 1946 to 1960. Although he is the quintessential conservative composer, he has not restricted his output to the major opera houses. The Metropolitan, for instance, has produced only two of his works, *The Island God* (1941), one of his very few failures and which he has withdrawn from his catalogue, and *The Last Savage* (premiere Paris, 1963; Met production, 1964), a satire on contemporary civilization that reflects the beginnings of Menotti's polemically solipsistic later libretto—if not musical—style. He has written grand operas and simple operas, operas for radio and for television, and has been one of the very few opera composers whose works have held the stage on Broadway. As such, Menotti has blazed a path for American composers by taking the stigma of “grand opera” out of the

composition of lyric works. *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (written for television and first produced in 1951) has become a Christmas classic.

But opera is only part, if a major part, of his creative work. He has written other music (for example violin and piano concertos and the ballet scores *Sebastian* and *The Unicorn, the Gorgon and the Manticore*), the librettos for *Vanessa* and *A Hand of Bridge* for Samuel Barber, two plays, and film scripts. He has directed plays and is widely known as a director both of his own and of other operas, and he conceived and still directs the Festival of Two Worlds at Spoleto in Italy, which in 1977 expanded to Charleston, South Carolina. He is one of the most astute judges of young artistic talent and has fostered dozens of careers through his contacts.

Aside from the operas mentioned above, he has written *Amelia Goes to the Ball* (1937), *The Old Maid and the Thief* (1939), *The Medium* (1946), *The Telephone* (1947), *The Consul* (1950), *The Saint of Bleeker Street* (1954), *Maria Golovin* (1958), *Labyrinth* (for television, 1963), *Martin's Lie* (1964), *Help! Help! The Globolinks* (1968), *The Most Important Man in the World* (1970), *Tamu-Tamu* (1973), and *The Hero* (1976).

This *scena* from *The Consul* is probably the most famous excerpt from a Menotti opera. Menotti's method is obviously based on Italian *verismo* models of Puccini and others, and although the music is less clearly separable into individual numbers, he, like Puccini, always retains the forms, be they ensembles or arias, that are so integral a part of repertory opera.

Magda Sorel's cry from the heart, which occurs at the end of Act II, Scene 2, is a splendid example of the individual utterance that is at the same time wedded to the unfolding of the story. Menotti's form is a free adaptation of the nineteenth-century cavatina-cabaletta, but with an extended accompanied recitative in the middle. The softly begun cavatina develops into a long

central portion that steadily builds in power (through the repetition of word and phrase as much as through the surge of the music) to the cabaletta “Oh! the day will come.” The scene is intensified because the audience is aware of the plight of Magda Sorel, who is trying to leave the tyranny of an unnamed country to join her fugitive husband but is constantly foiled by the bureaucracy of an unnamed consulate. At this point in the opera her patience, weakened by anxiety and emotional exhaustion, finally snaps, and the unloosed flood of her anger spills from the stage and carries the audience with it. Indeed, this excerpt is so powerful a statement that, although carefully placed in the context of the story, it transcends the bounds of the melodramatic plot and can legitimately stand as a protest against all bureaucratic injustice. The twentieth-century orientation adds to this power, for Magda Sorel is not contending with a villain like *Fidelio's* Pizarro or *Tosca's* Scarpia but with faceless and amorphous rules and regulations, in the manner of Kafka's Joseph K. in the novella *The Trial*.

The excerpt, from the recording of the original Broadway production, features the American soprano Patricia Neway, one of the most active protagonists in the service of American opera, in the role that catapulted her into stardom. She has also appeared as Leah in Tamkin's *The Dybbuk* and Nellie in Floyd's *Wuthering Heights*; later she appeared on Broadway in Rodgers and Hammerstein's *The Sound of Music*. Lehman Engel has had a long and fruitful career as composer, choral conductor, administrator, and author of books on the musical theater as well as musical director for numerous shows and operas.

MAGDA

To this we've come:
that men withhold the world from men.

No ship nor shore for him who drowns
at sea.

No home nor grave for him who dies on
land.

To this we've come:
that man be born a stranger upon God's
earth,
that he be chosen without a chance for
choice,
that he be hunted without the hope of
refuge.

To this we've come;
(to the Secretary)
and you, you, too, shall weep.

If to them, not to God, we now must
pray,
tell me, Secretary, tell me,
who are these men?

If to them, not to God, we must pray,
tell me, Secretary, tell me!

Who are these dark archangels?
Will they be conquered? Will they be
doomed?

Is there one—anyone behind those
doors
to whom the heart can still be
explained?

Is there one—anyone who still may
care.
Tell me, Secretary, tell me!

*(She questions the Secretary in desper-
ate earnestness, with almost a
touch of madness in her voice.)*

Have you ever seen the Consul? Does he
speak, does he breathe?
Have you ever spoken to him?

*(She breaks down and turns away to
control herself)*

VERA BORONEL, MR. KOFNER

Oh, do we hope and wait in vain? Sec-
retary, speak! Is there no one in that
room? Secretary, speak!

SECRETARY

I don't know what you're talking about!
Of course you can see the Consul... But
he's a very busy man... The appoint-

ment must be made in advance...
You can begin by filling this form
and then I'll see what I can do for
you. Sign here. I said... sign here.

MAGDA

*(Magda snatches the paper from her
hand.)*

Papers! Papers! Papers!
But don't you understand?
What shall I tell you to make you under-
stand?
My child is dead... John's mother is
dying...
My own life is in danger. I ask you for
help.
And all you give me is... papers!

What is your name? Magda Sorel.
Age? Thirty-three.
Color of eyes? Color of hair?
Single or married? Religion and race?
Place of birth? Father's name? Mother's
name?
Papers! Papers! Papers!

*(Tearing the paper she holds in her
hand, Magda rushes to the desk,
takes up a great stack of papers
from there, and hurls them about
the room.)*

Papers! Papers! Papers!
Look at my eyes, they are afraid to sleep.
Look at my hands, at these old woman's
hands.

(after a long pause, to the Secretary)

Why don't you say something?

Aren't you secretaries human beings
like us?

(with mounting anguish)

What is your name? Magda Sorel.
Age? Thirty-three.
What will your papers do?
They cannot stop the clock.
They are too thin an armor against a bul-
let.

What is your name? Magda Sorel.
Age? Thirty-three.
What does that matter?
All that matters is that the time is late,
that I'm afraid and I need your help.
What is your name? What is your name?
What is your name?

This is my answer:
My name is woman.
Age: still young.
Color of hair: gray.

Color of eyes: the color of tears.
Occupation: waiting.
Waiting, waiting, waiting!
Waiting, waiting, waiting!

Oh, the day will come, I know,
when our hearts aflame
will burn your paper chains!
Warn the Consul, Secretary, warn him.
That day neither ink nor seal
shall cage our soul.
That day will come!

*(She stumbles back to her place on the
bench.)*

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Band 3

AARON COPLAND

THE TENDER LAND
(Libretto Horace Everett)

*It Promises To Be a Fine Night.
The Promise of Living*

Joy Clements, soprano; Claramae
Turner, mezzo-soprano; Richard
Cassilly, tenor; Richard Fredericks,
baritone; Norman Treigle, bass; New
York Philharmonic, Aaron Copland
conducting. *Recorded July 31,
1965, in New York. Originally
issued on Columbia MS-6814.*

The Tender Land is a pastoral
work, akin to Copland's ballet
scores and Virgil Thomson's music
for the film *Louisiana Story*. The
story of a young girl's graduation,
her falling in love with an itinerant
harvester (who leaves her rather
than commit himself), and her
escape from the farm to the outside
world has points of contact with
Gustave Charpentier's city-oriented
Louise, but here the focus remains
as much on the world of the family
as on the story of Laurie. In some
respects, *The Tender Land* (libretto
by Horace Everett) is spiritually
close to William Inge's pastoral play
Picnic (1953): both works involve
the growing up of older and
younger sisters in summertime, and
in both the ambience of rural life is
vividly set forward.

The excerpt is the close of Act I.
The folk-like theme and words
("The promise of living"), derived

from hymns and akin to Copland's use of the Shaker tune "The Gift to Be Simple" in *Appalachian Spring*, are an apotheosis of the values of living close to the land and thus form a fitting end to this record. For in *The Tender Land* Copland distilled the qualities of Americanism that so obsessed early critics of American operas and that composers as disparate as Herbert, Damrosch, Taylor, Hanson, and Moore strove to realize.

GRANDPA

It promises to be a fine night.

MARTIN

(begins to sing as if to himself, with simple dignity)

The promise of living with hope and thanksgiving
Is born of our loving our friends and our labor.

Laurie, Martin

The promise of growing
With faith and with knowing
Is born of our sharing
Our love with our neighbor.

Laurie, Ma, Martin

The promise of living
The promise of growing
Is born of our singing
In joy and thanksgiving.

GRANDPA

For many a year I've known this field
And know all the work that makes her yield.
Are you ready to lend a hand?

TOP

I'm ready to work, I'm ready to lend a hand.
We'll bring in the harvest, the blessings of harvest.

GRANDPA

By working together we'll bring in the harvest,
The blessings of harvest.
We plow and plant each row with seeds of grain
Bring out from the land,
Bring out the blessings of harvest.

MARTIN

We plant each row with seeds of grain
And Providence sends us the sun and the rain;
By lending a hand, by lending an arm,
Bring out, bring out from the farm,
Bring out the blessings of harvest.

Laurie *(exalted)*

Oh, let us be joyful,
Oh, let us be grateful,
Come join us in thanking the Lord for his blessing.
Oh, let us sing our song, and let our song be heard.
Let's sing our song with our hearts, a promise in that song.

Ma Moss *(exalted)*

Give thanks there was sunshine,
Give thanks there was rain,
Give thanks we are here to deliver the grain.
Oh, let us be joyful,
Oh, let us be grateful to the Lord for His blessing.
Oh, let us sing our song, and let our song be heard.
Let's sing our song with our hearts, and find a promise in that song.

Martin, Top, Grandpa

The promise of ending
In right understanding
Is peace in our own hearts and peace with our neighbor.

TOGETHER

The promise of living,
The promise of growing,
The promise of ending is labor and sharing and loving.

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- Barber, Samuel. *Antony and Cleopatra* (two arias). Price; New Philharmonia, Schippers conducting. RCA LSC-3062.
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- _____. *Vanessa*. Steber, Elias, Resnik, Gedda, Tozzi; Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Mitropoulos conducting. RCA ARL2-2094.
- Beeson, Jack. *Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines*. Wilcox, Jones, Green; Kansas City Lyric Theater, Patterson conducting. RCA ARL2-1727.
- _____. *Hello Out There!* Gabriele, Reardon, Worden; Columbia Chamber Orchestra, Waldman conducting. Desto 6541.
- _____. *Lizzie Borden*. Faull, Lewis, Beattie, Krause, Elgar; A. Coppola conducting. Desto 6455/7.
- _____. *The Sweet Bye and Bye*. Kansas City Lyric Theater, Patterson conducting. Desto 7179/80.
- Bergsma, William. *The Wife of Martin Guerre* (extracts). Judd, Harbachick, Sarfaty; Waldman conducting. CRI 105.
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- _____. *Trouble in Tahiti*. Williams, Butler, Patrick, Clarke, Browne; Columbia Wind Ensemble, Bernstein conducting. Columbia KM-32597.
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- _____. *The Tender Land* (slightly cut). Clements, Turner, Cassilly, Treigle, Fredericks; New York Philharmonic, Copland conducting. Columbia MS-6814.
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- Gershwin, George. *Porgy and Bess*. Dale, Albert, Smith; Houston Grand Opera, De Main conducting. RCA ARL3-2109. Mitchell, White, Boatwright, Quivar; Cleveland Orchestra and Chorus, Maazel conducting. London 13116. Williams, Matthews, Long, Winters; Engel conducting. Odyssey 32360018E.
- Giannini, Vittorio. *The Taming of the Shrew*. Kansas City Lyric Theater, Patterson conducting. CRI SD-272.
- Glanville-Hicks, Peggy. *Nausicaa* (extracts). Stratas, Modenos, Ruhl, Steffan; Athens Symphony Chorus and Orchestra, Surinach conducting. CRI 175.
- _____. *The Transposed Heads*. Nossaman, Harlan, Pickett, Anderson, Suppon; Kentucky Opera Association Chorus, Louisville Orchestra, Bomhard conducting. Louisville 545/6.
- Hanson, Howard. *Merry Mount* (choral and vocal excerpts). Crawford, McDevitt, Fleck, Cullen; Eastman School of Music Chorus, Eastman-Rochester Symphony, Hanson conducting. Mercury 90524.
- Herrmann, Bernard. *Wuthering Heights*. Beaton, Bowden, Bambridge, Ward, Bell, Rippon, et al.; Pro Arte Orchestra, Herrmann conducting. Unidorn UNB-400.
- Hoiby, Lee. *Beatrice*. Kentucky Opera Association, Louisville Orchestra. Louisville 603.

Joplin, Scott. *Treemonisha*. Balthrop, Allen, White; Houston Grand Opera, Schuller conducting. Deutsche Grammophon 2707083.

Kirchner, Leon. *Lily* (extract). Hoagland; Columbia Chamber Soloists, Kirchner conducting. Columbia M-32740.

Kurka, Robert. *The Good Soldier Schweik*. Candide CE-31089.

Levy, Marvin David. *Mourning Becomes Electra* (aria). RCA LSC-3076.

Menotti, Gian Carlo. *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. King, Yaghjian, McCollum, Patterson; chorus and orchestra, Grossman conducting. RCA LSC-2762.

_____. *Amelia al Ballo* (in Italian). La Scala Chorus and Orchestra, Sanzogno conducting. Angel 35140.

_____. *The Consul*. Powers, Neway; Engel conducting. Decca DX-101.

_____. *Help! Help! The Globolinks* (excerpt, in German). Electrola C-195-29107/9.

_____. *Maria Golovin*. Chookasian, London; New England Conservatory Chorus, Boston Symphony, Leinsdorf conducting. RCA LM-6142.

_____. *The Medium*. Resnik, Blegen, Derr, Patrick, Carlson; Washington Opera Society, Mester conducting. Columbia MS-7387.

_____. *The Saint of Bleeker Street*. Poleri, Lane, Ruggiero; Schippers conducting. RCA LM-6032.

The Telephone. Keller, Powers, Dame, Mastice, Cotlow, Rogier; Balaban conducting. Columbia OSL-154.

Mohaupt, Richard. *Double Trouble*. Riesley, Pickett; Kentucky Opera Association, Bomhard conducting. Louisville 545/12.

Moore, Douglas. *The Ballad of Baby Doe*. Sills, Bible, Cassel; New York City Opera, Buckley conducting. Deutsche Grammophon 2709061.

_____. *Carry Nation*. Wolff, Patrick; New York City Opera, Krachmalnick conducting. Desto 6463/5.

_____. *The Devil and Daniel Webster*. Festival Orchestra and Chorus, Aliberti conducting. Desto 6450.

Nabokov, Nicolas. *The Holy Devil*. Kentucky Opera Association, Louisville Orchestra, Bomhard conducting. Louisville 594.

Silverman, Stanley. *Elephant Steps*. Soloists and ensemble, Thomas conducting. Columbia M2X-33044.

Thomson, Virgil. *Four Saints in Three Acts* (extracts). Matthews, Greene, Bethea, Robinson, Dorsey; chorus and orchestra, Thomson conducting. RCA LM-2796.

_____. *The Mother of Us All*. Godfrey, Dunn, Vanni, Atherton, Booth; Santa Fe Opera, Leppard conducting. New World Records 80288-2.

Ward, Robert. *The Crucible*. Bible, Ludgin, Brooks; New York City Opera, Buckley conducting. CRI SD-168.

Weill, Kurt. *Down in the Valley*. Drake, Wilson, Atkins; Levine conducting. Decca 74239.

Weisgall, Hugo. *The Stronger*. Meier; Aeolian Chamber Players, Weisgall conducting. CRI SD-273.

_____. *The Tenor*. Young, Coulter, Cassilly, Kuhn, Ludgin, Cross; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Grossman conducting. CRI 197.

Side One Total time 25:37

VICTOR HERBERT: NATOMA

1 "I LIST THE TRILL"3:11
(publ. G. Schirmer, Inc.)

Alma Gluck, soprano; orchestra conducted by Victor Herbert.

2 "NO COUNTRY CAN MY OWN OUTVIE"3:29
(publ. G. Schirmer Inc.)

John McCormack, tenor; orchestra conducted by Victor Herbert.

DEEMS TAYLOR: THE KING'S HENCHMAN

3 "OH, CAESAR, GREAT WERT THOU"4:05
(publ. Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp.)

Lawrence Tibbett, baritone; Metropolitan Opera Chorus and Orchestra, Giulio Setti conducting.

4 "NAY, MACCUS, LAY HIM DOWN" 4:32
(publ. *Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp.*)

Same as above.

5 LOUIS GRUENBERG: *THE EMPEROR JONES*—
"STANDIN' IN THE NEED OF PRAYER" 5:01
(Copyright held by *Mrs. Louis Gruenberg*)

Lawrence Tibbett, baritone; Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Wilfred Pelletier conducting.

6 HOWARD HANSON: *MERRY MOUNT*—
"TIS AN EARTH DEFILED" 4:46
(publ. *Warner Bros. Music*)

Lawrence Tibbett, baritone; Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Wilfred Pelletier conducting.

Side Two Total time 24:42

1 AARON COPLAND: *THE SECOND HURRICANE*—
"TWO WILLOW HILL"; "SEXTET"; "JEFF'S SONG"; "QUEENIE'S SONG" (Stereo Recording) 10:53
(publ. *Boosey & Hawkes, Inc.*)

Soloists and Chorus of the High School of Music and Art, New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein conducting.

2 GIAN CARLO MENOTTI: *THE CONSUL*—
"TO THIS WE'VE COME" 7:50
(publ. *G. Schirmer, Inc.*)

Patricia Neway, soprano; orchestra conducted by Lehman Engel,

3 AARON COPLAND: *THE TENDER LAND*—
"IT PROMISES TO BE A FINE NIGHT"; "THE PROMISE OF LIVING"
(Stereo Recording) 5:40
(publ. *Boosey & Hawkes, Inc.*)

Joy Clements, soprano; Claramae Turner, mezzo-soprano; Richard Cassily, tenor; Richard Fredericks, baritone; Norman Treigle, bass; New York Philharmonic, Aaron Copland conducting.

Full discographic information and a list of the performers for each selection may be found within the individual discussions of the works in the liner notes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our thanks to RCA Records for "I List the Trill"; "No Country Can My Own Outvie"; "Oh, Caesar"; "Nay, Maccus, lay him down"; "Standin' in the need of prayer"; and "Tis an Earth Defiled"; to CBS Records for "The Second Hurricane"; and "It promises to be a fine night"; to MCA Records for "To This We've Come."

We wish to thank David Hall for his invaluable assistance.

Program consultant: David Hamilton

Rerecording engineer: Jerry Bruck, Posthorn Recordings

Cover art: Reginald Marsh. "Grand Tier at the Metropolitan." Engraving. Private collection.

Cover design and calligraphy: Elaine Sherer Cox

Library of Congress Card No. 78-750046

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