

**The "Indianist" Movement in American Music**

by Gilbert Chase

The "Indianist" movement in American musical composition that flourished from the 1880s to the 1920s had its antecedents in nineteenth-century Romanticism, with its cult of "the noble savage" nourished by such writers as Chateaubriand, James Fenimore Cooper, and Longfellow, whose *Hiawatha* was like a magnet for many musicians. On the stage, the famous actor Edwin Forrest starred in the drama *Metamora* (1828) as "the noble Indian chief," who leads his warriors in a desperate struggle for freedom—"Our Lands! Our Nation's Freedom!—Or the Grave."

Romantic writers tended to identify the Indian with the grandeur of Nature. Chateaubriand, a Frenchman, in his novel of the "noble savage" *Atala* gushed on "the soul's delight to lose itself amidst the wild sublimities of Nature." Such writers often lost their heads but seldom risked their lives. The American wilderness, viewed as untamed, primitive, exotic, lured not only explorers and adventurers but also scientists, artists, poets, novelists—and at least one musician who came to know at first hand "the magnificent wilds of Kentucky" about which Chateaubriand rhapsodized. This venturesome musician was Anthony Philip Heinrich (1781–1861), a native of Bohemia who emigrated to America in 1810. From 1817 to 1823 he lived in and around Lexington, Kentucky, calling himself "the Wildwood Troubador." According to a contemporary account:

Heinrich passed several years of his life among the Indians that once inhabited Kentucky, and many of his compositions refer to these aboriginal companions. He is a species of musical Catlin, painting his dusky friends on the music staff instead of on the canvas, and composing laments, symphonies, dirges, and on the most intensely Indian subjects. He would be the very one to set *Hiawatha* to music.

Although Heinrich chose to ignore the hint about *Hiawatha* by 1858 (when the quoted article appeared) he had indeed earned the right to be regarded as a musical counterpart of the artist-ethnologist George Catlin (1796–1872), whose *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Condition of the North American Indians* was published in 1841. Heinrich may well have known this work, as well as Henry R. Schoolcraft's *The Indian in His Wigwam, or Characteristics of the Red Race of America* (1848). We know that he did read John McIntosh's *The Origin of the American Indians* (1843), from which he quotes in the headnotes to several of his scores, notably the orchestral fantasia *Pushmataha, A Venerable Chief of a Western Tribe*. This work has been described as "probably the first attempt in all history to treat in music, in any adequate manner, the idea of the American Indian" (William Treat Upton).

The key word here is *idea*. Unlike the later Indianist composers, Heinrich did not actually use (or misuse) Indian *musical* themes. He was essentially an *imaginative* composer, stirred by the tragic grandeur of the Indian race. He was especially affected by the forced removal of the Indians from their own lands, which occurred in his lifetime during the administration of Andrew Jackson. In all, Heinrich composed eight large orchestral works on Indian subjects, plus several pieces for piano and for voice with piano. On his death his music—often oddly original and bizarre in style—quickly fell into oblivion (there has been a recent revival of interest). Hence there is no continuity between him and the later Indianist movement. Furthermore, between the time of his death and the later

development, significant changes had occurred both in the situation of the Indian tribes and in American culture as a whole.

The rise of ethnology and folklore studies in the second half of the nineteenth century contributed greatly to our knowledge of American Indian cultures. When the American Folklore Society was founded in 1888, its stated purpose was "the collecting of the fast-vanishing remains of Folk-Lore in America"—in particular that of the Indians and the Negroes. The notion that folklore was rapidly "vanishing" was a shibboleth of that period. At least it stimulated the systematic collection and preservation of these presumably "fast-vanishing remains." As the Indians had been settled in reservations, the task of notating their songs, dances, and ceremonies was considerably facilitated.

In 1880 the American musical scholar and lexicographer Theodore Baker transcribed some harvest songs of the Iroquois as well as songs from the Cheyenne, Comanche, Dakota, Iowa, Kiowa, and Ponca tribes—a task he was able to accomplish conveniently because of a meeting of tribal chiefs organized by the Indian Office of the Federal Government. Two years later he published these and other Indian melodies in his doctoral dissertation at the University of Leipzig (it was in German and has never been translated into English). When Edward MacDowell decided to write an orchestral work using Indian themes, he took these from Baker's dissertation. The result was his Second (*Indian*) Suite, Op. 48 (1894), which remains one of his most frequently performed works.

MacDowell was by no means a dedicated Indianist. He once said, "I do not believe in 'lifting' a Navajo theme and furbishing it into some kind of musical composition and calling it American music. Our problem is not so simple as that." The "problem" to which he referred was that of establishing a national identity in American musical composition.

This issue had been brought to a head by the arrival in New York of the famous composer Antonin Dvorák, who, like Heinrich, was a native of Bohemia. He spent from 1892 to 1895 in the United States, teaching, composing, and expressing his ideas on how American composers should go about creating an American "national" music. Although he declared that the "Negro" melodies provided "all that is needed for a great and noble school of music" (a statement that infuriated MacDowell), he also gave some attention to Indian music. He became superficially acquainted with the latter, as is reflected in the Quintet Op. 97, during a stay in Iowa. But his influence was mainly in the challenge he put to American composers: Stop imitating European models and turn to your native sources.

If one took the term *native* literally, in the sense of *indigenous*, that would logically lead to the Indian trail. When the composer Frederick R. Burton declared that he was searching for music "that is truly and wholly indigenous to our soil," he stated the Indianist motivation in its most intense form. But his quest proved to be illusory. After transcribing some Ojibway melodies he transformed them into such picturesquely superficial art songs as "My Bark Canoe" and "The Lake Sheen." These were "truly and wholly indigenous" only to the genteel tradition of the turn-of-the-century decorative picture postcard.

From 1890 to 1910 many books on Indian lore and music were published. Francis La Flesche, an Omaha Indian, collaborated with Alice C. Fletcher in *A Study of Omaha Indian Music* (1893), while Fletcher herself brought out *Indian Story and Song from North America* (1900), with melodies harmonized by the composer John Comfort Fillmore. Natalie Curtis, who worked mostly among the Hopis and Zuñis, published *The Indians' Book* in 1907, and Frederick Burton's *American Primitive Music* appeared in 1909. Ethnologists such as J. Walter Fewkes, Benjamin Ives Gilman (*Hopi Songs*, 1908), and Frances Densmore undertook a more "scientific" study of Indian music, with transcriptions and

analyses. Fewkes was the first to use the phonograph for recording Indian music and speech, among the Passamaquoddy of Maine in the winter of 1889–90. Densmore, working from 1907 under the auspices of the Bureau of American Ethnology, produced the largest body of work in this field. For example, her two monographs on Chippewa music (1910 and 1913) contain a total of 340 songs—the largest collection ever published from one tribe.

Among the composers who became interested in the music of the Indians, some simply lifted their themes from the available publications, while others went to the reservations and did their own notations. A pioneer among the latter was Carlos Troyer (1837–1920), who worked mainly among the tribes of the Southwest. In his "Ghost Dance of the Zuñis," "Kiowa-Apache War-Dance" (both for piano), and *Traditional Songs of the Zuñis* (1904), for voice and piano, his aim was to be as "authentic" as possible.

Harvey Worthington Loomis (1885–1930), who had studied with Dvořák in New York used Fletcher's transcriptions of Omaha themes for his *Lyrics of the Red-Man* (1903–4), for piano. Less concerned with authenticity, he aimed rather at artistic "framing." Charles Sanford Skilton (1888–1941), a New Englander educated at Yale and musically trained in Berlin, became interested in Indian music when he went to teach at the University of Kansas and heard Indian students at the nearby Haskell Institute sing tribal melodies. More than any other Indianist composer, he established the stereotypes of the genre with such works as "Deer Dance" and "War Dance," from the *Suite Primeval* for orchestra (based on songs of the Winnebago, Sioux, and Rogue River tribes).

The Indianist movement also produced a slew of operas, from Arthur Nevin's *Poia* (1909) and Victor Herbert's *Natoma* (1911) to Alberto Bimboni's *Winona* (1926); Charles Wakefield Cadman's *Shanewis* (1918) was the only notable success of the lot. Grand opera and Indian culture were poles apart.

Above all it was a voice and a spirit from the Midwest, in the person of Arthur Farwell (1872–1952), that gave deep and enduring significance to the Indianist movement. Not that his vision was confined only to that aspect of America's musical heritage—he took a "broad and all-embracing view" of the "realities and possibilities of American musical life." In taking up Dvořák's challenge to American composers to create a truly "national" music, he proposed a pluralistic approach that would include "notably, ragtime, Negro songs, Indian songs, Cowboy songs, and, of the utmost importance, new and daring expressions of our own composers, sound-speech previously unheard." Yet there is no doubt that within this broadly humanistic prospect he had a particular affinity with American Indian lore.

Farwell was born in St. Paul, Minnesota. As a youth he showed musical aptitude but with no strong vocational urge. Parental expectations led him to enroll at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, majoring in electrical engineering. What really turned him on to music were the concerts of the Boston Symphony. By the time he got his degree, he knew that music would be his life's work. After several years of musical study in Boston, Germany, and Paris he returned to the United States in 1899 and thenceforth devoted himself to a highly active, varied, and productive musical career that took him throughout most of the nation, from New York to California. His first important enterprise was the founding of the Wa-Wan Press—named after a tribal ceremony of the Omahas—in 1901. Its main purpose was to publish the work of younger American composers, including himself, in whom the established publishers showed little or no interest. Volumes were issued periodically until 1911. They included most of Farwell's Indian pieces, as well as the Indianist

works of Troyer and Loomis previously mentioned. These were usually preceded by explanatory essays describing the relation of the music to Indian tribal lore. They also reveal Farwell's deep affinity for and identification with the underlying symbols and values of Indian life. He had a strong feeling for nature, and his favorite spot for composing was a forest hideaway in view of the Teton range.

For many of his Indian themes Farwell relied on the melodies transcribed by Alice Fletcher; but in other instances he made his own transcriptions, including some from phonograph recordings. He visited a number of reservations, particularly in the Southwest. Most of his Indian pieces were composed from 1899 to 1908; later exceptions include a string quartet (*The Hako*; 1922) and some choral arrangements.

For Farwell, Indian music was neither an exotic novelty nor an ingredient of "native Americanism" but rather a profound and primeval source of inspiration. He saw it as an "innate force" by which we are carried "into a new world of meanings." The Indian melodies, he maintained, are "not in the realm of what is commonly regarded as Art, but only in that which we understand by the term Religion. Song, an invisible agent, is to the Indian the direct means of communicating with his invisible god."

### **PRESTON WARE OREM**

#### *American Indian Rhapsody*

Preston Ware Orem (1865–1938) was born in Philadelphia, where for most of his life he was active as a teacher, organist, composer, and (from 1900) editor for the music publisher Theodore Presser. From 1889 to 1895 he was organist at St. Paul's Pro-cathedral in Los Angeles. Like MacDowell's, his interest in American Indian music was casual—and much more superficial. But Indianism was in fashion, and this no doubt attracted him. His *American Indian Rhapsody* for piano (also orchestrated), published by Presser in 1918, manipulates themes "recorded and suggested" by Thurlow Lieurance (1878–1963), a composer who spent many years collecting Indian melodies and earned a small measure of immortality by adapting one of these for a song that he called "By the Waters of Minnetonka."

Orem's *Rhapsody* is very much a period piece, stylistically conventional and eclectic, post-Romantic and neo-Lisztian in its mannerisms and pretentiousness, its plethora of trills, arpeggios, broken chords, and repeated octaves (often thunderous), and its bravura display of virtuosity, with indications ranging from *molto maestoso* to *allegretto scherzando*, from *andante affetuoso* to *allegro con brio* from *amabile* to *feroce* (the savage!). It is probably the most far-out Indianist composition ever written.

### **ARTHUR FARWELL**

*The Old Man's Love Song*, Op. 102, No.2

*Navajo War Dance*, Op. 102, No.1

In 1937 Farwell made arrangements for unaccompanied chorus of the "Navajo War Dance," "Pawnee Horses," "The Old Man's Love Song," and "The Mother's Vow" (this last from the original *American Indian Melodies* of 1900). He also made another choral version of "Navajo War Dance" (No.2) in 1947, for a concert tour by the Westminster Choir directed by John Finley Williamson. Concerning this, Farwell wrote:

This chorus is so notated as to bring out the inner pulsations of the Indian voice, as observed in the Indians' singing of songs of this type in the Southwest. In ordinary notation, the first measure, for example, would be written as four quarter-notes; but if sung so, would be very remote from the effect of the Indians' singing. The measure will indeed present four major pulses, but each will be followed by a secondary eighth-note pulse of lesser accentuation.

In "The Old Man's Love Song" and "Navajo War Dance," Farwell went far beyond any other Indianist composer in achieving what may perhaps be best described as "creative authenticity."

*Navajo War Dance*, for piano

Concerning this piece, Farwell wrote:

Too many people think of the American Indian only as a "savage." I had in my Indian music depicted many phases of Indian life that were far from savage, but true to its quaint, poetic and picturesque aspects, as well as to its mythological conceptions. Being criticized because of these matters, as being untrue to this "savage" Indian nature, I wrote the *Navajo War Dance* in the hope of gratifying my critics in this respect. . . . I have employed bare 4ths considerably in this work, as I have heard the Navajos sing this war dance in 4ths.

In line with this aim, Farwell directs that the piece should be played "with severe precision of rhythm throughout, and savagely accented." After a brief introduction in 9/8, the music continues in 6/8 to the end. For ears accustomed to the "barbaric" rhythms of Bartók and Stravinsky, this will seem more impressive for its finely controlled artistry than for its "savagery." It was the first of Farwell's compositions to be widely performed and acclaimed.

*Pawnee Horses*, for piano

This piece, like the "Navajo War Dance," was included in the set of pieces for piano titled *From Mesa and Plain*, published by the Wa-Wan Press. A headnote tells us that it was "based on an Omaha melody sung by Francis La Flesche and transcribed by Edwin S. Tracy." The title page also carries a quotation that explains the context of the piece: "There go the Pawnee horses. I do not want them,—I have taken enough." Marked to be played "with motion," it maintains a consistently syncopated pattern throughout alternating between 9/8 and 6/8.

### **Boston, Mrs. Gardner, Fenway Court, & Music**

by Herbert A. Kenny

On April 23, 1906, *Fiorella*, a comic opera with music by Amherst Webber, was mounted for the first time in Fenway Court, a Venetian palace overlooking Muddy Brook in the Fenway section of Boston. The auditorium was the music room of the splendid museum Isabella Stewart Gardner had built as her final home and as a public institution. The cream of Boston society, which had once snubbed her, had vied for invitations along with the intellectual leaders of the community. The composer was a minor figure who without Mrs. Gardner's help would not have seen his inconsequential opera produced. "You are a magician," he wrote to her. Wilhelm Gericke, conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, called her "the genius lady." The evening was a triumph.

Other auspicious performances had preceded *Fiorella* at Mrs. Gardner's, and others would follow. The next year, for example, the Boston Symphony played Charles Martin Loeffler's *Pagan Poem* there.

How could such musical evenings occur in 1906 in any city in the United States—particularly Boston, where a hundred years earlier such performances were deemed immoral, and fifty years earlier any American composer of concert music was hard put to find a publisher, a group to perform his works, and an audience? Mrs. Gardner—Belle and sometimes Busy Ella to her wealthy husband, John Lowell Gardner, Jr.; Aunt Belle to three orphaned nephews; Dear Lady to a scandalous collection of young musicians and painters; Isabella and various sobriquets to her intimates—was a woman of genius and Boston's most flamboyant patron of the arts. She got together in those golden years (before income taxes) with two preeminent men—Henry Lee Higginson, like Mrs. Gardner a transplanted New Yorker, who created out of his own pocket the Boston Symphony and Symphony Hall, and John Knowles Paine, a composer and teacher, who would educate a generation of composers—and their impact, first felt in the 1880s, continues today.

The early-twentieth-century English writer G. K. Chesterton once said that every story should begin with Genesis. The Boston story does, for the Puritan fathers built on the Old Testament a narrow and stern society with no time or sympathy for the arts. At first, psalms could be sung in meetinghouses only by the unaccompanied congregation; soloists and musical instruments were not permitted. Even as the literary flowering began, however, there was a musical quickening. The Unitarian revolt and the Transcendental movement began a happy release from the strictures of Puritanism. Choral groups came first, and Handel's *Messiah* made Protestant divines comfortable in the presence of soloists. The Stoughton Musical Society was founded as early as 1768 by English-speaking America's first composer, William Billings (1746–1800). In 1808 some Harvard students formed a musical group called the Pierian Sodality. Two years later Johann Christian Gottlieb Graupner, who had played the oboe in Haydn's orchestra, formed a musical group and gave some concerts. In 1815 he and some others formed the Handel and Haydn Society, which still prospers. In 1833 Lowell Mason (with G. J. Webb) opened the Boston Academy of Music and was instrumental in having music taught in the public schools. In 1837 some Harvard graduates formed the Harvard Musical Association; when their appeal to Josiah Quincy, president of the college, to establish music courses failed, they undertook public lectures, then formed an orchestra, and later built the long-famous but now gone Music Hall.

Early in the nineteenth century Boston was a provincial town of eight thousand persons with no more than fifty pianos, which gave out nothing but hymns and popular tunes. The sole musical instrument deemed suitable for a man was the flute, and musical groups were formed of massed flute players; the overture to *Don Giovanni* was even arranged for a flute band. In 1840 an orchestra formed by the Academy of Music was the first to play Beethoven symphonies. By 1844 the Harvard Musical Association inaugurated some chamber-music interludes and imported from Germany what proved the largest organ in America. Six months after the end of the Civil War, the Association's own orchestra of sixty-two players, some hired from local theaters, gave its first concert. The orchestra carried on for seventeen years until the formation of the Boston Symphony. In 1867 the New England Conservatory of Music was founded and John Knowles Paine began teaching at Harvard. Hook and Hastings were building organs in the city, and Chickering was making pianos. Foreign opera companies appeared occasionally in packed theaters. In 1872 came the World Peace Jubilee, for which the Irish-horn bandmaster Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore organized an extravaganza where a chorus of ten thousand sang, a thousand musicians sought to play together, and fifty

firemen in red-white-and-blue uniforms pounded out the rhythm of the "Anvil Chorus" with real sledgehammers on real anvils.

About this time Mrs. Jack Gardner bought her first major painting and began to collect writers, painters, sculptors, and musicians. In 1852 she and her husband had moved into 152 Beacon Street, where she would live for forty years and would attract a multitude of artists. In the days before Mrs. Gardner gave her musicales, musicians came and left by the servants' entrance. For her they came as equals; her home, her purse, and her heart were open to them. The list of artists and celebrities she befriended or entertained is enormous: Oliver Wendell Holmes, James Russell Lowell, Henry Adams, Henry James, F. Marion Crawford (a friendship and a flirtation that came close to tragic romance), Owen Wister, Charles Eliot Norton, John Sullivan Dwight, Arthur Foote, Edward MacDowell, Julia Ward Howe, Maude Howe Elliott and her painter-husband Jack, Oscar Wilde, Clayton Johns, Nellie Melba, Lena Little, Wilhelm Gericke, Paul Manship, Joseph Lindon Smith, Dennis Bunker, Charles Martin Loeffler, John Singer Sargent (whose painting of her shocked society), Anders Zorn (who was thought to have painted her in the nude—he didn't), Ignace Paderewski, and on and on. She was host to whole opera casts, engaged the Boston Symphony for her pleasure (her motto was "C'est Mon Plaisir!"), attended prize-fights to the horror of the stuffy, drove lion cubs about in her carriage, had one more liveried footman than any other Bostonian, wore two walnut-size diamonds in her hair, hung her pearls around her waist rather than around her neck, and was the first to ditch the bustle ("Who undressed you?" one wag wanted to know; Mrs. Gardner named a Paris couturier and asked if he hadn't done it well) and wear her skirts above the ankle. She appeared at a Boston Symphony concert with a headband that read "Oh, you Red Sox!" and was in general delightfully unpredictable. She was also highly intellectual, had exquisite, sure taste, and was deeply religious. A devout Anglican, on one occasion she did penance by washing the stone steps of the Church of the Advent (a well-publicized event). In key with her motto, she did as she pleased. Her husband adored and indulged her and endured her indiscretions, and the public loved her. (William Dean Howells, however, found her arrogant and was shocked at her treatment of the workmen building her palace. The period had its ugly side, which Lincoln Steffens, Jacob Riis, Monsignor John A. Ryan, and the muckrakers were exposing.) By the 1890s, Mrs. Jack Gardner was Boston's cultural arbiter.

She was deemed frivolous by many and immoral by some. But she was a dutiful and doting foster mother to her three nephews (her only child had died in his infancy). She was also a true bluestocking and worked on her own education as she worked on theirs.

Charles Eliot Norton's lectures on Dante had awakened her to the cultural life and turned her into a relentless collector. Her love of art and music was genuine and well ahead of her time. She began the construction of Fenway Court to house her art collection in 1899, nine years before the present Museum of Fine Arts was built, and at the time she had the better collection.

In 1900 Henry Lee Higginson built Symphony Hall for the orchestra he had founded in 1881. In 1902 the New England Conservatory moved to Huntington Avenue very near Symphony Hall, and the younger Eben D. Jordan, son of the city's leading merchant, not to be outdone by Higginson, built Jordan Hall adjoining the Conservatory. In 1908 the Opera House was built across the street. It was a time of ferment.

In 1875 Arthur Foote had received from Harvard his Master of Arts degree in music, the first such ever granted in the United States. In 1884 he published his first song, dedicated to the singer Lillian Bailey, the wife of George (later Sir George) Henschel, the first conductor of the Boston Symphony.

Foote was only one of Paine's many students to become a successful composer. Some others were John Alden Carpenter, Frederick Converse, Clayton Johns, and Daniel Gregory Mason. But there were also many composers in the "Boston group" aside from Paine's students, including Charles Martin Loeffler, W. Eugene Thayer, Ethelbert Nevin, Margaret Ruthven Lang, Amy Beach, and Edward MacDowell, the most distinguished. Many were church organists (Foote for more than three decades), and most taught; none received abundant performance. In 1895 Antonin Dvořák wrote in *Harper's New Monthly*:

When I see how much is done in every other field by public spirited men in America—how schools, universities, libraries, museums and hospitals and parks spring up out of the ground and are maintained by generous gifts—I can only marvel that so little has been done for music.

He specifically mentioned "the superb orchestra supported by a public citizen of Boston" as an example of what can be done.

Even in 1900 the American composer's lot was difficult. Orchestras and audiences preferred the Europeans. The Boston Symphony was just about as generous to local composers as it is today. Perhaps the rapid turnover of conductors had something to do with it: Henschel, 1881–84; Gericke, 1884–89; Arthur Nikisch, 1889–93; Emil Paur, 1893–98; Gericke again, 1898–1906; Karl Muck, 1906–08; Max Fiedler, 1908–12; and then Muck again, 1912–18.

Mrs. Gardner befriended them all. When anti-German sentiments caused Muck to be jailed during World War I and then deported, she stood by him and received acrimony and calumny by championing him against superpatriots. She lived through three wars and hated them all; the Civil War, in which her husband and his family and friends sympathized with the South; the Spanish-American War; and World War I, during which, despite her antiwar feelings, she raised money for the charitable efforts of the Knights of Columbus.

Throughout the eighties and nineties and the opening years of the new century Mrs. Gardner engaged musical groups to perform and composers to play their own works. One of the most popular units at the time was the Kneisel Quartet. In 1888 Edward MacDowell had performed his own music with this group and with the Boston Symphony before leaving for New York to become the first professor of music at Columbia University. Also important for composers at the time was the arrival in Boston of Arthur P. Schmidt to publish their works. It was he who published Paine's *Spring Symphony* and many works by Foote, Beach, MacDowell, Chadwick, B. J. Lang, Henry Hadley, and others.

The social meetings between composers and conductors at Mrs. Gardner's Beacon Street home and her other houses no doubt led to more American music being played than would otherwise have been the case. The all-male St. Botolph Club was another gathering place.

Often composers would conduct their own works with the Boston Symphony. Foote was to play the piano with the orchestra eleven times in performances of his own work. In 1890 he dedicated his Violin Sonata to Franz Kneisel, the orchestra's concertmaster and leader of the Kneisel Quartet, as an appreciation. The next year Foote wrote his Quartet for Piano and Strings in C major while staying at the Alhambra, Mrs. Gardner's summer cottage in Prides Crossing on Massachusetts Bay.



When her musicales outgrew the music room at 152 Beacon Street she had her husband buy the adjoining house, build a larger music room in it, and join the houses together. Musicians loved to play there. Clayton Johns, whom she befriended for years (she never turned her back on friends or protégés even if they never fulfilled their promise), was desperately shy and hated playing in public except before twenty-five or thirty guests in the Gardners' music room or a smaller group in Venice at the Palazzo Barbaro, which for a while Mrs. Gardner rented annually. In his *Reminiscences* (see Bibliography) Johns wrote:

Mrs. Gardner wishing to be individual as she wished always to be individual in everything she did, engaged Paderewski to play a recital for herself alone at her house at 152 Beacon Street. Before the recital, Mrs. Gardner, out of the kindness of her heart, smuggled me into an adjoining room where I sat and listened behind the tapestries. After the music was over, I was invited to join the supper party which was composed of Mr. and Mrs. Gardner, Paderewski and myself.

When Fenway Court was built, 152 Beacon Street was torn down. To this day there is no 152 Beacon Street, just as there could not be another Mrs. Gardner.

Fenway Court had its dedicatory concert on New Year's night, 1903, with fifty musicians playing under Gericke. The weather was freezing, and, because of a railroad strike that had stopped coal shipments, the palace was heated only by wood stoves and hearth fires. Mrs. Gardner, radiant, her diamonds flashing against her hair, stood exalted on a platform where two flights of stairs joined at one end of the music room. Guests walked up one flight to greet her and went down the other. Some sniffed at the apparent homage she was demanding, but most were indifferent or amused and marched dutifully up and down. During the concert she sat alone on the balcony. Gericke conducted Bach, Mozart, Chausson, and Schumann. Lena Little sang. After the concert the doors to the great courtyard were flung open and the more than a hundred and fifty guests were admitted to gasp at the beauty of the palace. Mrs. Gardner served two of her favorites, champagne and doughnuts. There was other food, but Edith Wharton denigrated the champagne and doughnuts in an aside in French that Mrs. Gardner caught. On Edith's departure Isabella told her off. There was never any question about her temper. The evening, however, was a great success. William Apthorp glowed about it in an article in the *Boston Evening Transcript*. Charles Eliot Norton gushed in a letter to his hostess. The setting was incomparable, and the evening was not surpassed until the night Nellie Melba sang magnificently from a balcony above the courtyard with its fountain and flowers. Isabella gave her a large diamond.

None of Mrs. Gardner's composer friends' music was played on the opening night, but she had not forgotten them or her other artist protégés. From then on the palace was alive with them. Loeffler was given a room of his own to compose in when he wanted and Sargent lived in Fenway Court while painting Mrs. Fiske Warren and others. Their letters to her were adoring; they all recognized a debt.

Two of the greatest critics in Boston in those years were Philip Hale and H. T. Parker. Hale was scholarly, Parker creative. Hale wrote for the *Boston Herald*, Parker for the *Transcript*. Mrs. Gardner knew them both well.

Perhaps the age was too imitative of Europe, too detached from ragtime, jazz, Negro spirituals, and

the folk songs Dvořák so admired; but it was not inexpert or stale. Foote has been played by the BSO since his death, and Amy Beach's songs are still sung. Since World War II there has been rising curiosity about her, Helen Hopekirk (the Scottish composer and pianist who settled in Boston), and Margaret Ruthven Lang. Mrs. Gardner's dominance of the city's cultural life did not harm the career of any woman in Boston at the time. Among her dear friends were Julia Ward Howe, her daughter Maude Howe Elliott, Nellie Melba, and Lena Little.

Mrs. Gardner was generous to cultural competitors, and no one helped Higginson more in assembling the Boston Symphony and constructing Symphony Hall. When he insisted that it was necessary to go abroad for competent musicians, there was acrimonious dissent. For all her devotion to young Americans, Mrs. Gardner sided with him. Quality was always her aim. While the hall was being built she inspected it with him, and she asked his advice on the construction of the music room in her palace. When tickets were auctioned for the grand opening of Symphony Hall, the highest bid was a sensational \$1,120 for two \$12 season tickets by an agent for an unnamed client. At the opening those seats became the cynosure of excited eyes. The bidder, of course, was Mrs. Gardner (she was attended by George Proctor, who was more or less her pianist in residence), and she almost stole the show from the magnificence of the hall. She rarely missed a performance, and indeed Gericke would not raise his baton until he saw she was seated. When the trustees of the Museum of Fine Arts began their new building, they sought her advice. Her husband, who had died in 1898, had left her his fortune in trust, and money was not as plentiful for her as it had been. No longer could she afford to have the entire company of the San Carlo Opera to dinner, and on trips to Venice she stinted. Nevertheless, after World War I she sent her needy musician friends abroad gifts and money.

Long before Mrs. Gardner moved to Fenway Court, Bernard Berenson was acting as her agent and buying pictures in Italy. Painting began to replace music as her first love. In 1914 she made two rooms of the exquisite music room, chiefly to give Sargent's painting *El Jaleo* the perfect setting. When T. Jefferson Coolidge, who owned the painting and had promised to give it to her sometime, saw what she had accomplished, he gave it to her directly. It portrays a Spanish gypsy dancer accompanied by two guitarists and a clapping caballero. The dancer might well symbolize Mrs. Gardner's beauty and abandon and enchantment with being alive. She had long before determined that others might build hospitals and orphanages; she wanted to create something beautiful. She did. The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum is only part of her magnificent memorial. The vanished musical sounds of that era, the scores that remain, the names and memories are the rest of it. When her young composers are played so many years later, we must try to hear her as well.

### **AMY MARCY BEACH**

*Sonata for Piano and Violin in A minor, Op. 34*

Amy Marcy Beach (1867–1944) was the preeminent woman composer of her day, but before her death her music, except for some songs that have never lost their popularity, was disdained by the anti-Edwardian reaction. Yet the renewal of interest in her music preceded the nostalgic revivals of the 1970s. By 1974 the Beach revival had grown to the point that recordings were made of sixteen piano pieces and the String Quartet in F-sharp minor. The piano pieces were hailed by critics as graceful, tuneful, and technically brilliant, and the Quintet was praised for its integrity and style and favorably compared with the chamber works of Brahms.

In her day it was said that Amy Marcy Beach wrote like a man, an observation that would not sit

well with today's feminists. What was meant, at a time when few women were composing, was that she wrote very well indeed, took on the larger forms, and demonstrated a tough-minded energy in her works. Many critics today prefer her to Foote (although he was deemed her superior in his day), which may indicate that she wrote *better* than a man—better, certainly, than some of her male contemporaries.

The Sonata for Piano and Violin in A minor, Op. 34, is one of Beach's masterworks. Some consider it better than her *Gaelic* Symphony, her Quintet, or her piano concertos. She composed it in six weeks in 1896, after completing her *Gaelic* Symphony. In January of the next year she performed it for the first time with Franz Kneisel.

The piece thoroughly reflects Beach's distinctive musical personality and technical mastery. Her modes of development are common to classic composers, but her sure success in handling such strictly logical methods springs from her own musical convictions. The melodies show the rugged strength we frequently encounter in Brahms, but Beach has her own profundities.

The contrasting themes, muscular and melodious, are skillfully manipulated into a solid structural design. The harmonies are rich, and keys and chords change and merge with flexibility. The contrapuntal texture is as admirable as the general tone, from the stately opening theme through the spirited Scherzo, the Largo, and the close. Yet there is a storm and stress that may betray her youth or the dispatch with which the piece was written.

Each movement has its own themes, each theme its key. But formal as the Sonata is, it has its surprises. In the Scherzo the *più lento* eruption, with its change of key and meter, has an ostinato in the violin while the piano urges the theme the violin will take up before the return to the original tempo. The same technical excellence is sustained in the closing Allegro con fuoco. If there is a Chopin influence, it does not detract. After all, in her debut in Boston at sixteen Amy Marcy Beach played Chopin's Rondo in E flat, and two years later she played Chopin's F-minor Concerto in her first appearance with the Boston Symphony. We can now see, on revival, that Amy Beach's "charming" music went a good deal deeper than that.

## **ARTHUR FOOTE**

*Sonata for Piano and Violin in G minor, Op. 20*

Arthur William Foote (1853–1937), organist, pianist, and composer, was one of the foremost of the Boston classicists who were part of the Romantic movement, and whose music owed much to Germany. While textbooks say that the Boston group did not contribute a great deal of piano music, their work is being reexamined, and Foote's corpus alone is enormous. Outstanding among his piano pieces is *Five Poems After Omar Khayyam*, Op. 41.

Foote's music has widely varied appeal, and although artistic in intent is often instructive as well. Several of his piano pieces are for the left hand alone but are not mere exercises.

His Sonata for Piano and Violin in G minor, Op. 20, is a felicitous and stirring composition. Foote was forty-seven when he composed it. It is dedicated to Franz Kneisel, who had done so much to promote Foote's work.

At the time Foote was writing mostly piano pieces, and the piano has a good deal to say in the Sonata, including eleven measures to itself at the opening of the second movement. In the third movement the violin contributes, in effect, an obbligato to the piano. Frequently the piano speaks with a stentorian voice, but the eloquent violin is not to be denied and closes with the loveliest of themes.

In the first movement, within the G-minor and G-major signatures, Foote shifts through a kaleidoscope of keys to present and re-present delightful themes. His alternation of keys and moods gives a vivacity to the whole. The interruption of the third movement, the Adagio (like Beach he has placed the dance second), will not please those who like their slow movements to stay slow but exemplifies Foote's passion for contrast. Since we know about his years as a church organist, we can hear in the beautiful themes of the fourth movement poignant and aspiring suggestions of hymnody.

## **SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **The "Indianist" Movement in American Music**

- Baker, Theodore. *Über die Musik der Nordamerikanischen Wilden*. Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1882.
- Burton, Frederick R. *American Primitive Music, with special attention to the music of the Ojibways*. New York: Moffat, Yard, 1909. Reprinted Port Washington, NY.: Kennikat Press, 1969.
- Chase, Gilbert. *America's Music*. 2nd rev. ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966.
- Curtis, Natalie. *The Indians' Book*. New York: Harper, 1907. Reprinted New York: Dover, 1968.
- Densmore, Frances. *The American Indians and Their Music*. New York: Women's Press, 1926. Reprinted New York: Johnson, 1970. Densmore's thirteen monographs on music of the North American Indians (1910–57) have been reprinted by Da Capo Press of New York.
- Farwell, Brice (ed.). *A Guide to the Music of Arthur Farwell*. B. Farwell: Briarcliff Manor, N.Y.: 1972.
- Fillmore, John C. *The Harmonic Structure of Indian Music*. New York: Putnam, 1899.
- Fletcher, Alice C. *Indian Story and Song from North America*. Boston: Small, Maynard, 1900. Reprinted New York: Johnson, 1970.
- Howard, John Tasker. *Charles Sanford Skilton*. New York: Fischer, 1928.
- Lawrence, Vera B. (ed.). *The Wa-Wan Press, 1901–1911*. 5 vols. New York: Arno, 1970. Introductory essay by Gilbert Chase.
- Nettl, Bruno. *North American Indian Musical Styles*. (American Folklore Society Publications, "The Memoir Series," Vol. 45.) Austin: University of Texas Press, 1954.
- Upton, William Treat. *Anthony Philip Heinrich*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1939. Reprinted New York: AMS Press, 1967.

### **Boston, Mrs. Gardner, Fenway Court, & Music**

- Carter, Morris. *Isabella Stewart Gardner and Fenway Court*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1925.
- Foote, Arthur William. *Arthur Foote, 1853–1937: An Autobiography*. Norwood, Mass.: Plympton, 1946.
- Howard, John Tasker. *Our American Music, a Comprehensive History from 1620 to the Present*. New York: Crowell, 1965.
- James, Edward T. (ed.). *Notable American Women, 1607–1950*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971.
- Johns, Clayton. *Reminiscences of a Musician*. Cambridge, Mass.: Washburn & Thomas, 1929.
- Johnson, H. Earle. *Symphony Hall*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1950.
- Nutter, Charles Read. *History of the Harvard Musical Association*. Boston: Harvard Musical Association, 1937.
- Tharp, Louise Hall. *Mrs. Jack: A Biography of Isabella Stewart Gardner*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1965.

Whitehill, Walter Muir. *Boston: A Topographical History*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968.

## SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

### Arthur Farwell

Indian Songs for Voice and Piano, Op. 32. William Parker, baritone; William Huckaby, piano. New World 80463-2.

### Amy Marcy Beach

Concerto in C-sharp for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 45. M. L. Boehm, piano; Westphalia Symphony Orchestra Recklinghausen, S. Landau conducting. Vox Box 2-CDX 5069.

Quintet in F-sharp minor for Piano and Strings, Op. 67. Martin Roscoe, piano; Endellion String Quartet. ASV 932.

Trio in A for Violin, Cello, and Piano, Op. 150. Hartley Piano Trio. Gamut Classics GAM 536.

### Arthur Foote

*Five Poems after Omar Khayyám*. Virginia Eskin, piano. Northeastern NR 223-CD.

*Francesca da Rimini*. Louisville Orchestra; Jorge Mester, conductor. Albany TROY 030-2.

*Legend*. Kevin Lawrence, violin; Eric Larsen, piano. New World 80464-2.

Sonata in G Minor for Violin and Piano. Kevin Lawrence, violin; Eric Larsen, piano. New World 80464-2.

*Three Character Pieces*. Kevin Lawrence, violin; Eric Larsen, piano. New World 80464-2.

Producer: Horace Grenell (Orem, Farwell); Andrew Raeburn (Beach, Foote)

Assistant producer: Elizabeth Ostrow (Orem, Farwell)

Engineer: Jerry Bruck

Tape editor: Noel Harrington

Mixdown and equalization: Don Van Gordon, Soundwave Recording Studios (Orem, Farwell)

Recorded at Columbia Recording Studios, 30<sup>th</sup> Street, NYC

Digital mastering: Dirk Sobotka, SoundByte Productions, Inc., NYC

Cover design: Bob Defrin Design, Inc., NYC

**The original recordings were made possible with a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation.**

**This project is supported in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. This recording was also made possible by a grant from Francis Goelet.**

### FOR NEW WORLD RECORDS:

Herman E. Krawitz, President; Paul Marotta, Managing Director; Paul M. Tai, Director of Artists and Repertory; Lisa Kahlden, Director of Information Technology; Virginia Hayward, Administrative Associate; Mojisola Oké, Bookkeeper; Ben Schmich, Production Associate.

### RECORDED ANTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN MUSIC, INC., BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

David Hamilton, Treasurer; Milton Babbitt; Emanuel Gerard; Adolph Green; Rita Hauser; Herman E. Krawitz; Arthur Moorhead; Elizabeth Ostrow; Don Roberts; Patrick Smith; Frank Stanton.

Francis Goelet (1926-1998), Chairman

**AMY MARCY BEACH**                      80542-2  
**ARTHUR FOOTE**  
**ARTHUR FARWELL**  
**PRESTON WARE OREM**

**Preston Ware Orem (1865–1938)**

- 1     *American Indian Rhapsody*    7:56  
      Peter Basquin, piano

**Arthur Farwell (1872–1952)**

- 2     *Navajo War Dance* (for piano) 2:17  
3     *Pawnee Horses*    1:12  
      Peter Basquin, piano  
4     *The Old Man's Love Song*, Op. 102, No. 2 (publ. G. Schirmer, Inc.) 6:43  
5     *Navajo War Dance*, Op. 102, No. 1 (publ. G. Schirmer, Inc.) 3:23  
      The New World Singers; John Miner conducting

**Amy Marcy Beach (1867–1944)**

- Sonata for Piano and Violin in A Minor*, Op. 34  
6     Allegro moderato    9:11  
7     Scherzo: Molto vivace 4:14  
8     Largo con dolore    8:04  
9     Allegro con fuoco    7:22  
      Gilbert Kalish, piano; Joseph Silverstein, violin

**Arthur Foote (1853–1937)**

- Sonata for Piano and Violin in G Minor*, Op. 20  
10    Allegro appassionato    5:15  
11    Andantino grazioso: Alla siciliano 4:26  
12    Adagio    7:39  
13    Allegro molto    8:12  
      Gilbert Kalish, piano; Joseph Silverstein, violin

Originally released as New World Records LPs NW 213 (tracks 1-5) and NW 268 (tracks 6-13)

**NO PART OF THIS RECORDING MAY BE COPIED OR REPRODUCED WITHOUT  
WRITTEN PERMISSION OF R.A.A.M., INC.**

**NEW WORLD RECORDS**  
16 Penn Plaza #835  
NEW YORK, NY 10001-1820  
TEL 212.290-1680 FAX 212.290-1685  
Website: [www.newworldrecords.org](http://www.newworldrecords.org)  
email: [info@newworldrecords.org](mailto:info@newworldrecords.org)

**LINER NOTES © Recorded Anthology of American Music, Inc.**

