

The Unknown Ives, Volume 2

“I’ve got to make them understand!”

So insisted Charles Ives (1874–1954) at Mary Howard’s recording studio in 1943. Then he sat down at the piano and recorded virtuosic updates of his sketched but incomplete piano works: studies, marches, revised episodes for the *Concord Sonata* (see CRI CD 810, *Ives Plays Ives*). The pieces had been written primarily between 1901 and 1925 but they still occupied Ives in his late years, when he continued to battle poor health, injustice, and musical convention. His concern for the life of his compositions remained fervent.

The urgency of Ives’s music is as relevant today. Discovering the depth of his work is still not as simple as opening the sheet music and beginning to play. The process of excavation required to bring Ives’s remarkable piano works to light reveals not only multiple layers of the music, but of Ives the man, the time he lived in, and the tensions that his music created.

Ives began making trips to recording studios in London and New York City in the 1930s. Mary Howard recounted to historian Vivian Perlis in *Charles Ives Remembered*:

Ives was absolutely full of beans and it wasn’t bad temper. It was just excitement. I remember that he sang one phrase from the *Concord Sonata* over and over. “Now do you get that?”—and he’d pound and pound and Mrs. Ives would say, “Now please take a rest.” He drank quantities of iced tea, and he’d calm down and then go back at it again, saying, “I’ve got to make them understand!”

Ives’s fervor had been prompted by recent inquiries about his music. The works he had started composing more than thirty years earlier were alive in his mind and jumping from his fingers. Finding all the original sketches and making clear legible copies of them was another matter. During his busiest years, while simultaneously building an insurance enterprise, he had created a flurry of works, always diligently sketched and revised. Multiple scores and patches lay scattered about. These manuscripts told visually of white-hot inspiration, impetuous correction, internal dialogue, and musical determination. The finished state of the works, however, remained somewhat open.

This did not frustrate Ives. With a transcendentalist view, he took a degree of satisfaction in the unresolved nature of his manuscripts. He posited that unfinished works fulfill an artistic end, always striving toward greatness—perhaps more nobly than neatly polished compositions:

I don’t know as I ever shall write them out, as it may take away the daily pleasure of playing the music and seeing it grow and feeling that it is not finished. (I may always have the pleasure of not finishing it) and the hope that it never will be—although shortly I think I shall make a record, perhaps playing each movement two or three different ways. (*Memos*)

That is not to say that he did not want his works played. And his stance wasn’t purely a philosophical one. Ives recast the *Emerson Concerto* into *Four Emerson Transcriptions*, various Studies, and two published versions of the *Concord Sonata* because of practical concerns of getting the music played, and because there were many forms small and large through which he wanted to hear alternatives of the same material.

Clearly, behind his noble posture and these musical transformations, he yearned to hear his compositions and see them in print. Interest in his music was growing and Ives was responding. He supported a cadre of adventurous young composers, funded concerts and journals, made his recordings, and sent copies of his music to eminent musicians. He welcomed, with characteristic reserve, the opportunity to have his music transcribed, edited, and championed by a burgeoning group of followers. The quote above continues:

[I will make the record] more for my own satisfaction and study, and also to save the trouble and eyesight of copying it all out. After the record is made, Mr. Henry Cowell, Mr. Nicolas Slonimsky, or some other acoustical genius, could write it down for me—probably better than I can.

His sketches for the works, in various states of completion, reveal an expert craftsman. Ives's compositional skill bursts from the manuscripts. They show a composer making careful choices about his materials. Marginalia fill the leaves with Ives's prickly humor and didacticism. The colorful asides don't, however, strip the miniatures, tone poems, and diversions of their genuine brilliance. Indeed, they were stowed ripe for later reception.

Pinning down an exact designation or, for that matter, title and date for any individual piece is contrary to the constructive process of Ives's works. It was the path, the stages of change, that defined his approach. This is particularly true of the experimental studies and short piano works. During his most creative years, a few adverse reactions and rejections from professional musicians dissuaded Ives from sharing his music. His works far exceeded the expectation and abilities of the time.

Ives succeeded as an insurance executive by day, working privately as a composer by night. Early in his career, he churned with ambivalence about a path in music. Ruggedly independent and fiercely proud, he was serious, though publicly reticent, about his art. Working "against the grain" (as Joseph Reed puts it in his excellent book *Three American Originals: John Ford, William Faulkner, & Charles Ives*) of what was established in the arts and the puritanism of pioneering America, he cultivated a defiant musical pose and a diffident persona. Ives publicly revealed himself in acceptable societal terms: the patriotic insurance man and champion of political causes. Behind the pose, unstoppable, ticked the ever-evolving constructions of an iconoclast. Keeping his constructions private allowed him to let individual works gestate. It also meant that he lost track of parts of them.

It wasn't until after Ives ceased to start new works that he earnestly circulated some of them. Interest was gradually piqued in the late 1920s. Ives caught the attention of a growing circle of visionary younger composers and performers that included Henry Bellman, Clifton Furness, and Jerome Goldstein. In the 1930s, Lou Harrison, Henry Cowell, Nicolas Slonimsky, and John Kirkpatrick became his boldest advocates. Urged by them, Ives began to create worklists, search for missing manuscripts, and attempt to put his house in order.

Ives was grateful for the efforts of these editors and performers. He told Slonimsky, who conducted the 1931 premiere of *Three Places in New England*, "You're the only conductor that ever asked me to do anything. This score would never have gotten off the shelf, if it hadn't been for you. . . ." In 1944 his wife, Harmony, wrote to Elliott Carter on Charles's behalf, "he cannot find words to express his great appreciation of all you, Henry, [and] other kind friends are doing on his behalf. . . ."

Aiding his editors, to recall the specific evolution of a given work, Ives apparently started with its genesis, the initial burst of inspiration that sparked its creation. With distance of time and clarity he entered remembered dates and places of composition, and revised the numbered ordering of grouped works in the manuscripts. The circumstance that he attached to composing a particular piece was personally meaningful, and he often noted that on the score. It also helped furnish his editors with clues about a composition's development (and possible links to additionally dispersed pages) over the years.

As to exact accounting of the dates, it appears he was mistaken at times—both recalling years too early *and* too late for various works. (Recent Ives scholarship dates works at their latest state.) This is symptomatic of the difficulty Ives had in collating and sorting music after his health (particularly his eyesight) had faded, long after his most creative years. The pressure to provide definitive final editions was a counterweight to the imaginative flow of variants that marked Ives's habit of daily composition throughout his early years. However, his early constructions readily point toward the intended ultimate stages of a work. The thought processes that matured a given piece are evidenced through written instructions, overlapping versions, annotated copies, and revisions. The finished state of a work is indicated by these clues.

The first of the shorter piano works published in 1949 (edited by Henry Cowell) had programmatic titles that more readily struck the day's modernist fancy: *The Anti-Abolitionist Riots; Some Southpaw Pitching; Three Protests* (later called *Varied Air and Variations*). The more abstract studies and daunting excursions did not begin receiving critical attention until the 1970s, after Alan Mandel's 1967 Town Hall concert. The work of John Kirkpatrick in the 1980s, and of David Porter, Thomas Brodhead, and others since, contributed to the evolution of the remaining studies, marches, and student pieces that I edited for this recording.

To hear these constructions of Ives is to take a tour of his artistry. The works on *The Unknown Ives, Volume 2* include some of his best and most searching experiments: fragments, personal explorations, cerebral excursions, and works of unabashed amusement. What emerges from their juxtaposition is a sense of canon. The spectrum of pieces, from adolescence to maturity, simple to complex, illustrates the boundaries of the complete oeuvre. From fragment to complete work, gestures meld, and motivic detours begin to describe a broad musical profile of Ives the complete musician.

This recording completes the catalogue of Ives's short, though substantial, piano compositions presented on *The Unknown Ives* (see the liner notes to that CD for more information). Honing the unpublished manuscripts has brought to light some 40 piano works, two hours of music, apart from the two major piano sonatas of Ives. Hearing them illumines a more complete picture of Ives the composer. Meeting that music on its own terms is a fitting tribute to the composer who desired to make music that had a life of its own roaring volition.

This recording includes published pieces that I have re-evaluated and revised. Many were initially edited by my teacher John Kirkpatrick (1905–1991), the American pianist, editor, and ardent champion of Ives. His meticulous efforts to identify, index, and catalogue loose manuscript sheets after Ives's death unquestionably comprise one of the heroic achievements in twentieth-century American music. Kirkpatrick's fastidious quest to divine playable editions of the music is a fascinating and at times problematic counterpoint to the compositions' rough edges. But essentially, Ives's volcanic nature and ambivalent attitudes likely served to obstruct public hearings of the music during his life; Kirkpatrick's asserting influence brought much of that music to light, including this recording. After Ives died, Carl Ruggles wrote to Kirkpatrick about a posthumous performance of the *Fourth Symphony*: "It's a good thing, a most fortunate thing that *you* are on the job. Order out of Chaos!"

Notes on the works

***Varied Air and Variations* (1922)**

Varied Air and Variations is a short yet far-reaching set of variations. The theme is a two-hand unison melody, three octaves apart (or, to the organist Ives, "Trisdiapason"). Ives describes the theme as "The old stone wall around the orchard—none of those stone eggs are the same size." Yes, rocks and pebbles have their own beauty!

Ives was a fiercely independent composer at a time in America when musical sponsorship tended toward the genteel and being an avant-garde artist was regarded as tomfoolery. His biting satiric marginalia in the score of *Varied Air*, accompanying the New England hardscrabble theme, makes light of this state of affairs. The programmatic description still acts as a successful foil: It is easy to be hoodwinked by Ives's prickly spirit and allow his polemical text to obscure a deeper musical expressivity. But taken in the right vein, Ives's verbal jabs offer insights into the piece's deeper craft.

Surrounding each variation is a "protest," the moans of "box belles" when a "man comes on stage" or a "sissy's" reaction to the gritty music. The middle variations are marches, with the intervening "protests" taking on a more intriguing chorale-like character. The searchingly beautiful slow variation is marked: "16 nice measures . . . All right, Ladies, I'll play the rock line again and harmonize it nice and proper." That is slyly followed by "applause," a rollicking blast of C major chords which introduces a finale, where, Ives writes, "[the pianist] gets mad and starts to throw things . . . he ought to be polite for he will not be engaged and paid at the nice afternoon TEA concert!"

Despite the apparent discord between the "protests" and the variations, the punching atonal pitches of the theme actually revolve around the soft tonality of the chordal respites. The two musics are joined in the first variation ("Follow the stone wall around the mountain/Things and sounds in the distance"). Thus, behind the bluster, Ives's music seeks common ground. Underneath Ives's mocking stance of the C-major "applause" and the ensuing ruckus (erupting after the solemn core of his work) is triumph: celebration of the piece's successful expressivity, allowing for a coda of unabashed creative emancipation.

***Waltz-Rondo* (1911)**

Waltz-Rondo sets out, after a brief introduction, with a refrain in the style of a waltz that is equally funny and mesmerizing. The main tune alternates between two keys in a kaleidoscopic way, so one's point of reference is constantly shifting. A rondo, the refrain alternates with seven episodes. Ives develops the episodes with increasing activity, introducing musical quotes from popular and patriotic songs. The final coda is a digest of all that has occurred up to that point, with Ives challenging the listener to keep up with the ever-complex hilarity, which, he reminds us from time to time and at the close, is based on the most common of chord changes.

Invention in D (1898)

The impetus for the more simple Allegretto may well have been an assignment by Ives's Yale composition teacher Horatio Parker to write in the style of Bach. (Kirkpatrick posthumously supplied the title *Invention in D*). Amid snippets that evoke imitation counterpoint and Bach 3-Part Inventions are touches of barbershop quartet harmonies and a homespun melody that bring the Baroque example down to earth as Ives knew it.

Study No. 1 (1911), Study No. 2 (1911), Study No. 11 (1916); *Storm and Distress* (1910)

Each of these works is a singular expansion of scenic episodes from the *Concord Sonata*. Ives's exploration of ideas in that work originated with the *Emerson Concerto* (recently reconstructed by David Porter and premiered by pianist Alan Feinberg), and later pursued in the *Emerson Transcriptions*, two published versions of the *Concord Sonata*, and the Studies. Each setting allowed Ives to avoid permanently excising material. Instead, alternate versions can be heard in large and small-scale settings. The Studies particularly gave Ives a vehicle for testing his own piano mastery and improvisations.

There were two major inspirations for the music: the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson, and the speeches of Wendell Phillips, the Massachusetts Abolitionist. About Emerson, Ives wrote (in *Essays Before a Sonata*) that he is "America's deepest explorer of the spiritual immensities—a seer painting his discoveries in masses and with any color that may lay at hand—cosmic, religious, human, even sensuous . . .," a pretty good description of Ives's own music! David Porter speculates that the dreamy Study No. 11, an extension of the *Emerson Transcription No. 4*, was revised in the 1930s from an earlier sketch. A single page of that manuscript exists. The critical edition was constructed using Ives's meditative improvisations.

David Porter explains that Studies Nos. 1 and 2 were adaptations of "Centrifugal Cadenzas" in the *Emerson Concerto*. The only surviving manuscript leaf for Study No. 1 appears to be a last page. Porter edited the study by appending music from the *Concord Sonata* before the analogous section where the Study No. 1 sketch resumes. Ives captures the compelling grandeur of Emerson's oratory in this short scene where chordal music pulls inexorably toward a processional close.

Study No. 2 is a tempestuous excursion that complements Study No. 9, *The Anti-Abolitionist Riots*. Ives's grandfather, George W. Ives, chartered territorial rights to a railroad line later affected by the anti-abolitionist riots that spread through the Union in the mid-1800s. Ives loved the example of an orator inspired on the spot, amid a cacophony of dissent, to persuade pro-slavery sympathizers to change their minds. Phillips's spontaneous speech at Boston's Faneuil Hall attacked "the tyranny of this many-headed monster, the mob . . . [which] deprives not only the individual and the minority of their rights, but the majority also. . . ."

Storm and Distress is also evocative of the tempest of a crowded throng. This study plays on the multiple timings of scurrying feet on early twentieth-century Wall Street. The study is excerpted as the piano cadenza from the work *Scherzo: Over the Pavements* (and Study No. 23), where Ives plays out varying speeds of busy city commuters.

***Impression of the “St. Gaudens” in Boston Common* (1915)**

Like many of Ives’s large-scale works, the music for *St. Gaudens* first percolated in his mind and through his fingers to the piano. The piano version sketch, in its relative bare simplicity, summons the spirit which must have driven Ives to play it for people as “my Black March” before he made the orchestral version. In the *Memos* Ives recalled: “I also played this Black March (almost in the shape that it’s in today) . . . this was either in the fall of 1910 or 1911. . . .”

When Ives began writing the “St. Gaudens in Boston Common” he considered it for a piano sonata’s culminating movement. On the work’s first leaf he wrote, quoting Hawthorne in the last five words,

for Piano Sonata #3 m[ovement] III. 1. The common (Largo) (Emerson + Park Church) 2. The abolitionists (Allegro) Wendell Phillips—Fanueil Hall 3. “The St. Gaudens” (Adagio–Andante) moving marching faces of souls.

Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1848–1907) was the American sculptor who designed the Adams Memorial, the Peter Cooper and John A. Logan Monuments. His masterpiece was the bas-relief in the Boston Common (across from the State House), commemorating Colonel Robert Gould Shaw and his Black Regiment, who fought for the Union in the Civil War. Described as Saint-Gaudens’s “symphony in bronze,” this masterpiece took fourteen years to complete.

Ives’s ruminating music captures the suggestive power of the St. Gaudens sculpture. It depicts the trudging stamina of the troops, both in its earthly maneuvers and heavenly ascent. Ives hoped to bring the sculpture to life through performance. At one pivotal moment in the score, at a key change, he wrote,

whatever holding back and variation in tempo let it be but little and not a marked contrast. When a mass of men march up a hill there is an unconscious slowing up tho the drum seems to follow the feet rather [than] the feet the drum in case as on level ground.

St. Gaudens would later become the first movement of the orchestral work *Three Places in New England*. Rather than the more swirling coloristic impressionism of the orchestral writing, the piano’s percussive rhythm brings the persistent “slow march” of Colonel Shaw’s regiment to the fore. On keyboard, one hears the clipped inflections of the marchers, and a tonality that anticipates the blues.

***The Celestial Railroad* (1925)**

(Note adapted from the preface to the Critical edition by Thomas M. Brodhead)

The evolution of *The Celestial Railroad* especially displays the extent to which Ives crafted and re-shaped his musical materials over twenty-five years.

The history of *The Celestial Railroad* is most directly intertwined with that of the second movement of Ives’s Fourth Symphony. The origin of both pieces can be traced to the first decade of the century, when Ives began a group of overtures and concertos in tribute to his (and his wife Harmony’s) favorite writers. He dubbed the prospective series collectively “Men of Literature,” and it was to include an *Emerson Overture*, a *Hawthorne Piano Concerto*, and an *Orchard House Overture* (named for the New England home of the Alcotts).

In the early 1910s, Ives abandoned this orchestral project, but not without finding uses for the musical materials he had created. Between approximately 1912 and 1915, he reworked the “Men of Literature” pieces as the first three movements of his Piano Sonata No. 2, “Concord, Mass., 1840–60.” He simplified many of the passages as he reworked the materials, perhaps fearing that the original music would be too complex for the public (and performers) of the day, or simply to clarify the outline of the work. At the same time that the sonata was taking shape, Ives composed his Fourth Symphony and put the *Hawthorne Piano Concerto* into it as the Allegretto movement.

After having the *Concord Sonata* printed in 1921, Ives apparently became dissatisfied with the compromises he had made in recasting its musical materials and went back to work on them. He selected passages from the “Emerson” movement of the *Concord Sonata* as printed, and restored to them the harmonic complexity of the seminal *Emerson Overture*. These were

grouped together and became the piano solo *Four Transcriptions from "Emerson."* (The same passages were subsequently incorporated as revisions in the 1947 second edition of the *Concord Sonata*). Also, as a companion piece to *Four Transcriptions from "Emerson,"* and in an effort to create a "Concord Suite," Ives crafted a transcription of the "Hawthorne" movement of the *Sonata* sometime between 1921 and 1923 (the last ink sketch is from 1925). As with the *Emerson Transcriptions*, the "Hawthorne" transcription restored passages of the *Concord Sonata* to the shape they must have had in the *Hawthorne Piano Concerto*.

Ives apparently saw the new transcription as an improvement on its sources: He removed the *Hawthorne Piano Concerto* from the Fourth Symphony, orchestrated the "Hawthorne" transcription, and replaced the second-movement Allegretto of the symphony with the new orchestration. He did not, however, abandon the "Hawthorne" transcription as a piano piece but gave it new life under a fresh title: *The Celestial Railroad*.

The Celestial Railroad (which he titled "Phantasy" on one manuscript) is a musical depiction of the short story "The Celestial Railroad" by Nathaniel Hawthorne. In Hawthorne's tale (which is a satirical take on Bunyan's book *The Pilgrim's Progress*), a man falls asleep and dreams of a fantastic train that speeds its passengers in nineteenth-century comfort to the Celestial City. Befriended by "Mr. Smooth-it-away," the narrator boards the train with others just before it springs into motion. The train passes many horrible sights, makes stops at temptation-filled towns such as Vanity Fair, and finally comes to rest at Beulah Land on the river Jordan. Here, one faintly hears solemn hymns across the river. Everyone leaves the train to take a ferry toward the Celestial City. Once the boat is in motion, however, the narrator discovers that "Mr. Smooth-it-away" is no longer with him but back on the shore, having reverted to his true demonic form. The narrator realizes that all has been a hoax and flings himself into the water in hope of escape. The shock of the impact wakes him, and the comic nightmare comes to a close. In the finale of Ives's *Celestial Railroad*, the composer lends the ending a hometown twist: The man awakens to the sound of Fourth of July celebrations at Concord, Massachusetts. As quickly as he is jolted awake by the high spirits of the town marching band, the music recedes, and the marchers evaporate in the distance.

***Minuetto, op. 4* (1886)**

Composed in 1886, the *Minuetto* is Charles Ives's earliest surviving piece for piano. At age twelve, Ives was becoming versed in tonal harmony and counterpoint. This foray into Haydnesque minuet-writing demonstrates Ives's mix of traditional grounding and intuitive originality. The opening phrase already truncates the standard eight-bar phrase into a wry six-bar shortened close. The ink score, copied by his father George Ives, is marked "Op. 4 Minuetto C. E. Ives." When George began the copy, he attempted to regularize the opening line to make a standard eight-bar phrase. But he decided against pedantry, flipped the page upside down, and re-copied the minuet as Charlie had written it (as John Kirkpatrick put it, "he decided to leave it in all its six-measure awkwardness"). A note added [later?] by Ives at the head of the source reads: "played Xmas 1886." The manuscript was found in a buckram cover used as a folder which included a sheet with a demurring memo: "none of these any good I just kept for curiosity."

Study No. 4 (1908), Study No. 5 (1913)

For those who might still deride Ives as a dabbler in musical quotation and collage, these pieces are for you! These pages are among the most rigorous workings of tone rows and contrapuntal devices in Ives's canon. They are abstract and unforgiving in their demands. The most experimental of the smaller piano works, Ives provides the opportunity, as he writes in the margins, "to Strengthen & give more muscle to the ear, brain, hearts, limbs & Feat. . . . atta boy . . . knock 'em out—put 'em over the ropes!"

Study No. 4 is a final page fragment (it seems the first two of three pages are missing) and serves as a brief introduction to Study No. 5, which follows on the same manuscript leaf. (Ives numbered and re-numbered the Studies over the years, probably aiming for the Chopin 27). No. 4 shares some of the rhythmic identity and gathering strength of *Rough and Ready*, the "Take-off" on the Mark Twain story, *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*. No. 5 is in four-part counterpoint throughout, with atonal rows perpetually voiced in canon, inversion, and retrograde inversion. The effect of striving and the triumph that comes from that effort is noteworthy.

By the end of the piece, the arching tunes and plaintive striving of Ives's long melodic threads are what endure. The contrapuntal techniques Ives applies to the study allow for continual reworking of the long melodic lines, to hear them from all angles and perspectives. The cumulative effect of what are essentially repeated variations is to make the shocking dissonance more and more familiar as they gather in strength.

***Three Quarter-Tone Pieces for Two Pianos* (1924)**

Ives crafted the *Three Quarter-Tone Pieces* in 1924 from sketches he made in 1904–14. His curiosity about extensions of standard tuning came naturally. Ives's father was a notorious tinkerer and loved to experiment with sound:

. . . my father had a weakness for quarter-tones—in fact he didn't stop even with them. He rigged up a contrivance to stretch 24 or more violin strings and tuned them up to suit the dictates of his own curiosity. He would pick out quarter-tone tunes and try to get the family to sing them, but I remember he gave that up except as a means of punishment— though we got to like some of the tunes which kept to the usual scale and had quarter-tone notes thrown in. . . .

Father had "absolute pitch," as men say. But it seemed to disturb him; he seemed half ashamed of it. "Everything is relative," he said. "Nothing but fools and taxes are absolute." A friend who was a 'thorough musician'—he had graduated from the New England Conservatory at Boston—asked why with his sensitive ear he liked to sit down and beat out dissonances on the piano. "Well," he answered, "I may have absolute pitch, but, thank God, that piano hasn't."

Ives's curiosity was thorough. He meticulously considered theories of quarter-tones, and produced tables of quarter-tone scale possibilities. (The standard Western scale is comprised of 12 semi-tones). Charts of ratios between harmonic overtones, resembling the actuarial tables of his insurance business, fill the early sketches for the quarter-tone works. When he turned to these sketches to write the *Three Quarter-Tone Pieces*, he also produced an essay, "Some Quarter-Tone Impressions."

Ives was pedagogic, but not polemical, about writing music outside the realm of conventional tonality. "Why tonality as such should be thrown out for good, I can't see. Why it should always be present, I can't see." Rather, the pieces derive from a desire to expand his hearing: ". . . if an addition of a series of smaller tone divisions is to be added to our semi-tone system 'to help round out our souls,' how much of a fight will the ears have to put up?" He concluded about the stacked chords he constructed, ". . . if listened to several times in succession, it gathers a kind of character of its own—neither major, minor, nor even diminished."

Movements i and iii were originally conceived for one piano with two keyboards tuned a quarter-tone apart. Eventually, Ives adopted the two-piano approach (one piano tuned a quarter-tone apart from the other). Ives's focus in movements i and iii is primarily harmonic, as he broadly sets out processional and hymn-like music, allowing the ear time to absorb the complexities of the strange quarter-tone hybrid chords. Above the chordal accompaniment, Ives spins a cantabile line that bounces between the two differently-tuned pianos. Singing out his Yankee independence, Ives borrows motivically from "America" ("My country 'tis of thee"), particularly highlighting the words "land where my fathers died!"

The high-spirited second movement splits rhythmically between the two pianos. The quarter-tone interplay bends the ear and tickles the mind. It features quick ragtime vamping and polyrhythms.

Ultimately the three movements are an homage to his inventive father:

The quarter-tone family, like most other families, has a sense of humor. But that's a rather dangerous thing to refer to; it depends as much on where the catcher's mitt is as on the pitcher's curves.

Fourth Fugue (1891) (George E. Ives)

Ives built his musical foundation under the early tutelage of his bandmaster father. George Ives encouraged inventiveness and musical exploration. But he believed first and foremost in a well-grounded understanding of traditional music theory.

I had to practice right and know my lesson first, then he was willing to let us roam a little for fun. . . . Father had kept me on Bach and taught me harmony and counterpoint from [when I was] a child until I went to college. . . . Father used to say, “If you know how to write a fugue the right way *well*, then I’m willing to have you try it the wrong way—*well*. But you’ve got to know what [you’re doing] and why you’re doing it. . . .

The *Fourth Fugue* was one of George Ives’s teaching pieces, a quick excursion in fugal counterpoint, probably mastered by the young Charles Ives on the family upright. The piece stuck with Ives. Thirty years later, it would become the prime source material for his Violin Sonata No. 4, where, quoting verbatim his father’s fugue and expanding the materials, Ives depicts a fantasy around his childhood musical memory. In movement I, titled “Children’s Day at the Camp Meeting,” Ives recounts “the boy who played the melodeon . . . practicing his ‘organicks of canonicks, fugaticks, harmonicks and melodicks.’ ”

Marches for Piano

Flexible in form, Ives’s marches were adaptable for whatever instrumentation was at hand. Ives would turn often to his early marches and their air of populist pomp. Whether adapted in full for voice and piano (“Son of a Gambolier” and “Circus Band”), arranged for pick-up theater orchestras or symphonic band, or freely excerpted for programmatic effect into larger works (*Fourth of July*, the Fourth Symphony, *The Celestial Railroad*), they form an integral part of Ives’s musical core.

Ives’s father had also been a noted bugler and bandleader in the Civil War and, after the war, led band activities in the town of Danbury, Connecticut, where he raised his children. So it is no surprise that young Charlie Ives inherited an early expertise in scoring marches. Although they are traditional in form and tonal in harmony, the marches show an ingenuity of melodic quotation, counterpoint, and humor. Remarkably, these arrangements, with discursive melodies and marching bass figures, foresee the nineteenth-century military marches’ evolution toward twentieth-century Dixieland and jazz.

Ives created some seventeen marches, including seven in piano form, during his teenage years in Danbury and college years at Yale. They offered him the chance not only to learn the craft of musical arrangement and form, but to compose for a social context. Ives must have been happy for these interactions. At age eighteen he began a traditionally academic (i.e., European-based) course of study at the newly formed Yale University music department. His teacher was the established composer Horatio Parker. Parker, the sober pedant, could not have provided a starker contrast to Charlie’s misfit father. The transition was stressful; furthermore, George Ives died during Charlie’s freshman year.

Putting popular tunes into the marches—bawdy drinking songs such as “Bingo” (“Here’s to Good Old Yale, Drink it down, Drink it down!”) or maudlin airs, like “Annie Lisle” (“Pure as the forest lily/Never thought of guile/Had its home within the bosom/Of sweet Annie Lisle”), was a respite. Whether to celebrate a football victory (“Hail, the Conquering Hero Comes”) or college hijinks (“Omega Lambda Chi”), the marches were communal in nature, free in spirit.

March No. 1 for Piano, with “Year of the Jubilee” (1895)

March No. 1 was originally sketched for piano solo with the title “March or Two Step No. 1 in F and B.” Later, Ives adapted the march for “standard orchestra” for performance at the 1890 Danbury Fair. The march freely paraphrases the popular Southern tune *Year of the Jubilee*. Added to the second strain is the counter-melody, *That Old Cabin Upon the Hill*, particularly featuring a melodic nugget set to the words “where I was bred and born,” which resembles the phrase “Should auld acquaintance be forgot” in *Auld Lang Syne*.

March No. 2 for Piano, with “Son of a Gambolier” (1895)

Ives adapted the 1873 popular tune “Song of a Gambolier” for March No. 2, playfully (and perhaps a little autobiographically) truncating the title to “Son of a Gambolier.” As humorous as a drinking song (“I’m a rambling wretch of poverty, from Tipperary town I came!”), the collegiate Ives would, nevertheless, prove to subscribe deeply to the ditty’s revelled cry, “I am bound to get my livelihood or lay me down and die!” Out of college, he pursued a successful insurance career on Wall Street instead of a full-time career in music.

This current rendition of the march was realized by adapting the published song version of “Son of a Gambolier” according to patches Ives left in his sketches toward a solo piano version. After a rousing fanfare, the tune is first stated in the bass and gradually moves higher in register, becoming more rambunctious. The final section indicates playing that is to emulate “Kazoo chorus, flutes, fiddles and flageolets,” later adding, “piccolos, ocarinas, and fifes.” From the busy score, one gets a glimpse of Ives’s powers as an improviser who could draw legions of marchers out of the piano.

March No. 3 for Piano, with “Omega Lambda Chi” (1896)

According to the Yale Concert Band records, Omega Lambda Chi was a fictitious fraternity created by some Yale sophomores in the 1870s. Freshmen were pledged to a nonexistent society so they would buy the sophomores cigars and drinks. By Ives’s freshman year in 1892 the name Omega Lambda Chi applied to a spring evening of campus pranks. Students paraded (sometimes with a band) singing, shooting firecrackers, and cheering through the buildings of the Old Campus. Climaxing the rough-and-tumble evening was the “Pass of Thermopolae.” In this brutal affair, the freshman class ran the gantlet through the large stone Phelps Gateway while receiving whacks from upperclassmen. By 1900, the Omega Lambda Chi had become too rowdy and was outlawed by the faculty.

This march was probably written during Ives’s Christmas vacation in 1895 and completed on his return to school. The tune “Omega Lambda Chi” is loosely derived from “Sailing, Sailing” (“Sailing, sailing over the bounding main”).

March in G and C for Piano, with “See the Conquering Hero Comes” (1897)

“See the Conquering Hero” begins with a bumptious treatment of the eponymous Handel chorus from *Judas Maccabeus* and proceeds merrily from there. At the foot of the score is one of Ives’s burlesque exercises, which I include as a coda to the march. It is marked: “Gay at Reilly again!! After HGS [Hopkins Grammar School, Ives’s prep school] game 1893.” Taken together, the quick-step tunes, drum corps interlude, madcap trio, and burlesque coda collectively exude the triumphant celebration of victory.

March for Piano: “The Circus Band” (1899)

One of Ives’s most often performed songs, “The Circus Band” began as a piano march. Ives adapted his own words to the march twenty years later as part of the set “Five Street Songs” for the publication of *114 Songs*. (“Where is the lady all in pink?/Last year she waved to me I think”). The march’s tune is original, and notable for its playful syncopation and mock grandiosity.

March No. 5 for Piano, with “Annie Lisle” (1895)

March No. 5 was later orchestrated as *March Intercollegiate* for performance by a local band at the Danbury Fair. With a nod to the folk origins of the Gaelic air “Annie Lisle,” the work begins in a lilting 6/8 meter in D major. After presenting the main tune in the bass, the piece modulates toward a high-kicking Trio and blaring Finale.

March No. 6 for Piano, with “Here’s to Good Old Yale” (1896)

Ives wrote three manuscript versions of March No. 6 for piano. Forty years later, still engaged with the piece, he performed improvised variants for the recording session of 1943. His freewheeling recorded performance is notable for fist smashes in the lower register of the piano that capture the sound of a marching band drum corps (a device mastered in his boyhood). For the present edition, I transcribed Ives’s performance and inserted his appended trio and variations into the mostly complete second ink edition.

After an opening fanfare, Ives takes the quick notes of the quoted tune, “Here’s to Good Old Yale,” and spreads them out while a busier counter-melody strides underneath. The march, marked “presto galop,” quickly moves through episodes in different keys, with a detour into F-sharp minor reminiscent of the Russian-dance inspired variation of the organ work “Variations on ‘America.’” The closing roulade is lifted right out of Ives’s performance.

—Donald Berman

Donald Berman’s recording *The Unknown Ives* was named among the best of 1999 by *Fanfare* magazine and *The Boston Globe*. Continuing his work in researching and performing important unpublished works, New World Records will release *The Uncovered Ruggles* in 2005. He was Artistic Director of the American Academy in Rome series at Carnegie Hall. A prizewinner of the 1991 Schubert International Competition and member of Boston’s Dinosaur Annex, Berman’s work has ranged from Mozart concertos to American Music retrospectives, to recitals of new music and its links to older repertoire. He has been presented as a featured recitalist by Miller Theatre, League/ISCM at Merkin Hall, *Masters of Tomorrow* in Germany, French Cultural Services (Fauré Sesquicentennial), the Goethe Institute, and many other international presenters. He created *Firstworks* for First Night Boston and *Pioneers and Premieres*, programs that feature commissioned works. His recent appearances include Zankel Hall’s *When Morty Met John* concerts, NPR programs, and with the Martha Graham and Mark Morris dance companies. Berman teaches at Tufts University and studied with Leonard Shure, John Kirkpatrick, George Barth, and Mildred Victor. For more information please visit www.donaldbermanpiano.com.

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

Holidays Symphony. Chicago Symphony Orchestra & Chorus, Michael Tilson Thomas conducting. Sony Classical SK 42381.

Ives Plays Ives. CRI CD 810.

Piano Sonata No. 2 (“Concord, Mass., 1840–1860”). Marc-André Hamelin. New World Records 80378-2.

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Symphony No. 2. New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein conducting. Sony Classical SMK 60202.

Symphony No. 3. Concertgebouw Orchestra, Michael Tilson Thomas conducting. Sony Classical SK 46440.

Symphony No. 4. Chicago Symphony Orchestra & Chorus, Michael Tilson Thomas conducting. Sony Classical SK 44939.

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Invention in D. Unpublished. Ives Society critical edition by John Kirkpatrick.

Studies Nos. 1, 2, 4, 11; *Storm and Distress*; Minuetto; *Impression of the "St. Gaudens" in Boston Common*, Fourth Fugue (George Ives). Awaiting publication. Ives Society critical editions by David Porter.

The Celestial Railroad (1925). Awaiting publication. Ives Society critical edition by Thomas Brodhead.

Study No. 5. Merion Music, Inc. Ives Society critical edition by Alan Mandel.

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Minuetto; Marches Nos. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6; March in G and C for Piano, with "See The Conquering Hero Comes"; March for Piano: "The Circus Band". Awaiting publication. Ives Society critical edition, edited by Donald Berman.

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