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Researching Southern Gospel Music in Kentucky and Tennessee

By Kevin Kehrberg

In the early twentieth century, “convention” gospel singing was a widespread pastime in America. Spread through singing schools and songbooks utilizing a seven shape-note system, convention gospel music (also called “southern gospel”) became the most popular form of amateur musical engagement in many areas, particularly in rural regions of the southern and southeastern United States. Participants gathered regularly to sing at community “singings” and singing conventions, and certain localities could often boast several well-polished church choirs, singing groups, and/or gospel quartets that used convention songbooks (issued each year with new songs) as the basis for their singing. Thanks to their wide use among early radio and recording artists (e.g., string bands, professional quartets, country singers), many convention songs became extremely popular among the national populace as well.

Despite its former popularity and continued practice, convention singing—a major component of America’s lesser-known white gospel tradition—remains largely untouched by scholarly scrutiny. There are, however, a handful of institutional collections devoted to American vernacular and popular music that contain holdings connected to this tradition. Two such collections have been particularly useful in my recent research on this topic: the Southern Appalachian Archives at Berea College (Berea, Kentucky) and the Center for Popular Music at Middle Tennessee State University (Murfreesboro, Tennessee).

The Southern Appalachian Archives

The Southern Appalachian Archives resides within the Special Collections and Archives Department at Berea College’s Hutchins Library. It houses organizational records, personal papers, oral histories, and photographs that document the history and culture of the Southern Appalachian region. These archives also include Berea’s massive and unparalleled Appalachian Sound Archives, largely consisting of non-commercial material and profuse in such areas as fiddle and banjo field recordings; ballad singing; folktales and legends; and Old Regular Baptist services. Specific collections include the Appalachian Ballad and Folk Music Collection, 1911-1975; John C. Campbell Folk School Collection, 1909-1981; John Harrod Kentucky Fiddle Music Collection; Reuben Powell Early Country Music Collection, 1910-1982; and the William H. Tallmadge Baptist Hymnody Collection, 1968-1980.

In 2005, Berea College began its Appalachian Music Fellowship Program, an initiative that supports graduate students, faculty, public school teachers, and/or performers in one to three month residencies for the purpose of conducting research in the Appalachian Sound Archives and to promote the preservation of and access to its contents. For my fellowship project during the summer of 2007, I worked primarily with the John Lair Papers, 1930-1984. Lair was the famous impresario behind the Renfro Valley radio barn dance programs broadcast from Renfro Valley, Kentucky, that began in the late-1930s. During the 1940s and ‘50s, Lair’s Renfro Valley produced some of the most successful country music radio programming in America. The gospel singing groups captured on the archive’s numerous non-commercial recordings of Renfro Valley radio programs were the main foci of my research.

The bulk of audio material I examined had been converted from its original format (transcription discs, reel tapes, etc.) to high-resolution digital files and stored on Berea’s dedicated server. The sound archive’s contents are fully searchable via an online database available through Hutchins Library’s Sound Archives webpage. In addition, many selected audio

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recordings from the more than 90,000 entries in the Appalachian Sound Archives can be downloaded online through the Digital Library of Appalachia (www.aca-dla.org). The DLA is a remarkable web resource that gives online access to archival and historical materials (recordings, documents, photographs) related to the Appalachian region and its culture. Its contents come from the special collections of twelve Appalachian College Association member libraries joined in a mutual effort to make such materials more available for public use. Through the DLA, rare and unique performing arts media from Berea's Southern Appalachian Archives is now available from any computer with online capabilities. In addition to its meticulously organized collections, the Southern Appalachian Archives possesses an extremely knowledgeable staff. Thanks to their help, my completed residency work included adding new oral histories of former performers who had worked at Renfro Valley and uncovering some 1950s radio broadcasts in need of preservation (portions of which are now accessible via the DLA). Information on Berea College's Southern Appalachian Archives, the Appalachian Music Fellowship Program, and the Appalachian Sound Archives can all be found at www.berea.edu/hutchinslibrary/specialcollections.

The Center for Popular Music

Established in 1985, the Center for Popular Music at Middle Tennessee State University (headed by Paul Wells, SAM's president from 2001-2003) is a research library and archive dedicated to the study and preservation of American popular music from the colonial era to the present. The CPM's mission, as stated on its website, is to "promote research and scholarship in American vernacular music, and to foster an understanding and appreciation of America's diverse musical culture." In addition to being a research center, the CPM also presents public concerts and events and sponsors research projects of its own for publication.

The CPM's collection is divided into nine subgroups: sheet music and broadsides; rare books; sound recordings; music trade catalogs; the reading room collection (reference works, discographies, and other published books); periodicals; performance documents; archives/manuscript collections; and photographs. Most of these subgroups are conveniently searchable online via the Center's special collections databases. Areas of particular depth include rock and roll and its musical roots, the music of Tennessee and the southeast United States, and various forms of vernacular religious music. It also deserves mention that the large private collection of the late Charles K. Wolfe, who passed away in 2006, is gradually being processed and catalogued into the CPM's holdings. A longtime MTSU faculty member, Wolfe was a prolific author, scholar, and one of the foremost authorities on American music, especially country and gospel music.

I visited the CPM to conduct research in its strong collection of vernacular religious music. My dissertation's main focus is the twentieth-century gospel song composer Albert E. Brumley ("I'll Fly Away," "I'll Meet You in the Morning," "Turn Your Radio On"). Without question, Brumley was the most recognizable composer to emerge from the convention singing tradition. However, most of his five hundred-plus published works appeared only one or two times, and Brumley himself kept poor record of his compositions. Thus, the annual convention songbooks from the 1920s to the 1970s—published by such firms as the Stamp-Baxter Music Co., the James D. Vaughan Music Publishing Co., and the Hartford Music Co.—remain the best resource in which to find Brumley's music. The CPM is one of the few institutions realizing the importance of this greatly understudied area of American music. As a result, they currently own the largest collection of convention shape-note songbooks amassed by any public entity. Moreover, all of these songbooks have been catalogued in their rare books database and are searchable online. As with Berea, the staff at the CPM was very helpful and willing to assist my research in any way possible. For more information on the Center for Popular Music and to browse its collections, please visit their website at http://popmusic.mtsu.edu.

American music history is becoming increasingly effective as a lens through which to view and interpret our complex culture. However, as we have pro-<ref>See, for example, William Lynwood Montell, Singing the Glory Down: Amateur Gospel Music in South Central Kentucky, 1900-1990 (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1991).

1. http://popmusic.mtsu.edu
2. This article previously appeared in a slightly different format in the Spring-Summer 2008 issue of Performance! the Society of American Archivists performing arts newsletter.

Kevin Kehrberg is a Ph.D. candidate in musicology at the University of Kentucky. He is currently completing a dissertation titled "'I'll Fly Away': The Music and Career of Albert E. Brumley and the Cultural Impact of his Most Famous Composition." A webpage for the Appalachian Music Fellowship project that he completed at Berea College exists at http://www.berea.edu/hutchinslibrary/specialcollections/amfpkehrberg2007.asp.
A Note from the 2009 Program Chair

On behalf of the Society for American Music, I would like to thank a number of individuals whose wonderful work and assistance helped assure the success of the 2009 Denver conference. First are the members of the program committee, Michael Pisani, Ann Sears, Patricia Woodard, Mina Yang, and Cecilia Sun. We were very pleased at the high quality in general of the approximately 270 proposals received, and because of this level of excellence were glad to be able to accept a large number of them. We scheduled 126 papers in 45 regular sessions on an incredibly wide range of topics. 12 scholars shared their research in poster form in two poster sessions. We had four lecture-performance sessions, which featured New Mexican traditional song, American piano music, a Siegmeister centennial celebration, and a session in honor of Sylvia Glickman and Hildegard Publishing. Our three special concerts featured Native American music, choral music of American composers, and Buffalo Bill’s Cowboy Band Wild West Show, all of which related closely to our main theme for the conference, namely Native American music and music of and in the West. We also had numerous Interest Group and several other special organizational meetings, all of which enriched our proceedings. We were particularly pleased to be able to offer 7 sessions on Native American/First Nations/indigenous musical life and traditions. This is first for the society, and it bodes well for the future. The papers in these seven sessions and several others covered a huge geographic and thematic territory, from the far north in Canada, to areas throughout the United States, and indigenous music in northern Mexico. They represented the very wide range of peoples, repertories, and traditions that constitute Native American music and society, and underscore the fact that we as American music scholars need to understand much more about this important aspect of musical life.

I would also like to thank Mariana Whitmer, Executive Director of SAM, and Larry Worster, Local Arrangements Chair, and his fine committee, for their excellent work in making this conference a success. Mariana and Larry did a wonderful job in seeing to all of the hundreds of small details that go into conference planning. And they did this cheerfully and without fuss.

I am especially gratified that our international members, from Canada, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand, Britain, Germany, and other countries continue to support the goals of the society through their attendance at our annual meetings. This represented a significant financial and time commitment for them, as it did for all conference attendees. And, finally, I am very grateful to all of you on the committee for your diligent and hard work, and for the wonderful job you did.

John Koegel

Report on American Music from the Music Library Association meeting

The 2009 Annual Meeting of the Music Library Association in Chicago programmed a variety of papers, roundtables, keynote addresses and workshops pertinent to the study and understanding of American music. Two sessions engaged elements of the host city’s rich musical heritage; the plenary session, “Music in Chicago” featured papers on Jazz, Blues and Gospel, Folk Music, and House Music while a stimulating roundtable discussion about the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians closed with an exceptional performance by two active members of the AACM. Three other roundtables, “American Women: Composing, Conducting and Singing the Blues,” “Preserving America’s Black Gospel Heritage,” and “Music and Social Change: Settlement Music Schools to Songs of Protest” yielded lively discussions and were strongly attended. The panels, “New Jewish Music: Composition, the Downtown Scene, and New Directions,” which featured the music of Steven Danker and John Zorn, and “Music of Changes, Music of Challenges: The John Cage Collection at Northwestern University,” drew attention to specific streams of more recent American music.

A particularly prescient 9 a.m. plenary session, “Copyright: Is There a Chance for Change?” opened some bleary eyes in the large, but standing room-only Chicago Ballroom of the Downtown Marriott. One of the three panelists, Tim Brooks, discussed the copyright reform efforts, spearheaded in part by the Association of Recorded Sound Collections (ARSC), aimed at making more available record works before 1972, which as many scholars of American music have unhappily discovered, rarely achieve the Public Domain status enjoyed by other types of materials.

Mark Tucker Award for Outstanding Conference Paper

The Mark Tucker Award committee received seventeen submissions, nearly double the amount from the previous year. Given the uniformly high quality of the papers, it was not easy to determine a winner. In the end, however, the committee agreed that the most deserving paper was Christine Fena’s “The ‘Piano Technician’ and his ‘Unfortunate Piano’: Henry Cowell in the Machine Age.”

The committee found Fena’s paper to be strikingly original, blending solid reception history with nuanced cultural analyses and musical observations. Fena brings a new perspective to a well-documented chapter of Cowell’s career: his notorious piano experiments of the late 1910s/early 1920s. In particular, she examines the critical invective that was frequently leveled at Cowell’s piano recitals, and how this reflected societal fears of the machine age and the uncertainties about artistic creativity in this new milieu. Addressing the complex intertwining of performer and instrument, “man” and “machine,” Fena reveals how the piano came to be viewed metaphorically and sympathetically as a battered and bruised human body, subject to Cowell’s abusive mechanical impulses. Well written and clearly argued, Fena’s paper adds new insight to our understanding of early twentieth-century American musical modernism.

The committee members were Theo Cateforis, chair; Dale Chapman, Tammy Kernodle, Peter Mercer-Taylor and Annie Randall.

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The Society for American Music

The Society for American Music promotes research, educational projects, and the dissemination of information concerning all subjects and periods embraced by the field of music in American life. Individual and institutional members receive the quarterly *Journal of the Society for American Music* (JSAM), the Bulletin, and the annotated Membership Directory. Direct all inquiries to The Society for American Music, Stephen Foster Memorial, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA 15260; (412) 624-3031; SAM@american-music.org.

Officers of the Society

President: Thomas Riis
Vice-president: Denise Von Glahn
Past President: John Graziano
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Members-at-large: Sandra Graham, Charles Garrett, Tammy Kernodle, Beth Levy, Michael Pisani, Daniel Goldmark

Executive Director: Mariana Whitmer

Editor, *Journal of the Society for American Music*: Leta Miller
Editor, SAM Website: Patrick Warfield

Standing Committee Chairs:


Appointments and Ad Hoc Committees:

ACLS Delegate: Michael Broyles; Archivist: Susan Koutsky; Committee on Publication of American Music: Judith McCallooh; SAM History Project: Denise Von Glahn; US-RILM Representative: Denise Von Glahn; Registered Agent for the District of Columbia: Samuel Brylawski.

Interest Groups:

American Band History: Susan Koutsky; American Music in American Schools and Colleges: Christine de Catanzaro and James V. Worman; Connecting Outside the Academy: Joseph Horowitz; Dance: Renee Camus; Early American Music: Nicholas Butler; Folk and Traditional Music: Ron Pen; Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transgendered: David Patterson; Gospel and Church Music: Roxanne Reed; Historiography: Michael Pisani; Music of Latin America and the Caribbean: Paul Laird; Musical Theatre: James Lovensheimer; Popular Music: Philip A. Todd; Research on Gender and American Music: Melissa de Graaf; Research Resources: Alisa Rata; Twentieth-Century Music: David Patterson.

Electronic Resources

Listserv: sonneck@list.pitt.edu
Website: http://www.american-music.org

Annual Conferences

36th Annual Conference, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
Michael Pisani, Program Committee Chair
James Deaville, Local Arrangements Chair

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intellectual property. Those members of SAM who attended the Denver meeting will recall Mr. Brook’s brief and positive update on the issue at the Annual Business Meeting, but copyright issues clearly remain formidable obstacles to the careful preservation and interrogation of the history of American music.

As the Chicago meeting demonstrated, the MLA maintains a strong interest in and commitment to preserving, cultivating, and investigating all facets of American music. I encourage the SAM membership to explore those resources that the MLA provides to scholars of American Music by visiting their website, http://www.musiclibraryassoc.org, where the full program of the 2009 Annual Meeting can also be found.

Jonathan Hiam
Head, American Music Collection
New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

Silent Auction Report from Denver

I am pleased to announce that the 2009 SAM Silent Auction netted $2,401 this year, a 30% gain over last year’s total. This addition will certainly allow the Student Travel Fund to remain healthy in 2010. Given the backdrop of an uncertain economy, the support shown by this year’s donors and bidders was truly overwhelming. On behalf of outgoing Student Forum co-chair Vilde Aaslid and all of the travel award recipients, I would like to extend a hearty thank you to Local Arrangements Chair Larry Worster for organizing the auction space and offering his home as a storage site for the donations; Joice Gibson for coordinating the workers and offering support; Mariana Whitmer and Kendra Leonard for acting as cashiers; all of the donors, including exhibitors, who unselishly gave away many treasures; and finally the bidders, who graciously contributed their hard-earned dollars to this worthy cause. I’m looking forward to next year’s auction!

Douglas Shadle
2009 Silent Auction Coordinator

STUDENT FORUM
Dear Friends and SAM members,

I write this letter amidst challenging circumstances that we are all too familiar with. Our activities are up, but our finances are down. Fortunately pleasant memories of our recent excellent meeting in Denver linger. Hearing the eloquence of Tony Isaacs, our newest Honorary Member, and the wonderful gathering of shape-note singers at Trinity Church were personal highlights for me. But the string of stimulating papers, poster sessions, interest-group discussions, and social activities that filled the time are colored with deep sadness at the recent passing of Adrienne Fried Block. Many things seem uncertain, including employment prospects for our newest American music scholars. Still, I remain hopeful for the future of our vibrant organization.

As I reflect back on nearly three decades of involvement with the Sonneck Society and American music scholarship in general, I recall many special--and sometimes startling--encounters with Adrienne that may strike a chord with some of you. In the 1980s, she always seemed to have an interest in every project. It came as no surprise to me when Adrienne was presented with SAM’s Lifetime Achievement Award in 2004. It was perfectly fitting.

Thanks to Adrienne and her family’s generosity SAM will continue to grow and support American musical research through the Adrienne Fried Block Fellowship, which John Graziano announced in March. If you wish to make a gift to SAM in Adrienne’s honor, I strongly suggest that you do so through this fund. Fellowships will be granted, on application, to publication projects devoted to studying the “musical life in large urban communities,” concerned with the various persons and organizations that fostered our great cities’ cultural growth and development.

And speaking of growing SAM, I am most pleased to note that we chalked up the largest attendance ever at a national meeting, with some 330 registrants tallied. Because of the exceptional turnout, together with a impressive number of contributed books, CDs, and music sheets, and the hard work of the Student Committee chairs Vilde Aaslid and Doug Shadle, the Silent Auction brought in a record total of $2400 (35% higher than last year). It is gratifying to know that forbidding costs and travel distances appear not to have deterred our dedicated membership from coming out to a Rocky Mountain Western venue. Fortunately, the fair weather gods cooperated beautifully.

We are already planning for 2010 in Canada (and exchange rates are looking good). But I want to express again my appreciation for the dedicated and professional preparation that went into the Denver conference. Larry Worster and his Local Arrangements team were nearly faultless in tech support--not to mention friendly and cheerful throughout. John Koegel’s Program Committee, having sifted through an unprecedented number of abstracts, produced a program marked by high quality and a staggering range of topics, times, places, and perspectives. (I counted no fewer than five separate sessions taking up, in part or in whole, the neglected realm of Native American music, to cite only one example of this diversity.) Throughout the weekend, the vigor and youthful spirit of the Society was everpresent, even as we honored and remembered veteran members and those who have passed on. We were especially blessed by the presence of James Boyer to accept SAM’s Lifetime Achievement award on behalf of brother Horace Boyer, gospel musician extraordinaire.

Joice Gibson, our new Conference Coordinator, worked hand in glove with Executive Director Mariana Whitmer to guarantee a smooth production all around. I am especially grateful to have Joice serving in this vital role. Thank you one and all for a tremendous effort.

Inspired by hard-working board members, volunteers, colleagues, an experienced executive director, and enthusiastic members, I look forward to serving as your president for the next two years. I think Oscar Sonneck (with whom I share a birthday) would have been proud of us all. See you in Ottawa!

Best Regards,
Tom Riis
Boulder, Colorado
The Annual Business Meeting of the Society for American Music was called to order by President John Graziano at the Marriott City Center in Denver, Colorado on 21 March 2009 at 4:03 p.m. Observing that “conferences don’t happen by themselves,” President Graziano welcomed Stephen M. Jordan, President of Denver Metropolitan State College of Denver, and presented him with a plaque of appreciation for hosting the conference.

The minutes of the 2008 Annual Business Meeting (San Antonio, Texas) were approved without correction.

In his opening remarks, President Graziano referred to the challenges of the current economic downturn. Noting that the Society has faced challenges in the past, he reminded members that we have grown over 800 percent in our thirty-five years, recalling the efforts of founding member Irving Lowens (whose widow Margery was at the meeting). Despite present conditions, we have reached seventy per cent of our $250,000 capital campaign, projected two years ago. Graziano encouraged individual contributions and urged members to attend the Ottawa meeting in 2010.

For Memorial Tributes please see box on page 27.

Treasurer Paul Laird also urged continued support. As his report shows, endowments have suffered in recent months but royalties from JSAM totaled over $3,000 and membership remains stable; also, thanks to Executive Director Mariana Whitmer, office expenses have been kept down.

Judith Tick, Chair of the Nominating Committee, thanked committee members Elizabeth Bergman, John Koegel, Ray Knapp, and Tom Owens. A slate of candidates for President, Secretary, and two board members will soon be provided.

Leta Miller, editor of the Journal for the Society of American Music, reported on the diversity of submissions, commenting that twenty-five to thirty percent of articles are accepted, almost always after revision. (The news that editorial decisions are reached in six to seven weeks was greeted with applause.) As a cost-saving and environmentally friendly measure, submissions, referees’ reports, copyediting, and the other day-to-day business of the journal are now completely electronic. Thanks to Sally Hoffman of Cambridge University Press, subscribers can now enjoy audio and video streaming. Miller urged members to make sure their institutions subscribe.

Kendra Leonard, the new editor of the Bulletin, thanked former editor Sandra Graham for leaving the publication in excellent condition. Reviews are available both in the print and online versions. Leonard suggested that members interested in serving as reviewers contact her.

This year’s comic element was provided by Larry Starr and Denise Von Glahn, who interrupted the meeting several times to promote the Silent Auction with inspired numbers such as “Fascinatin’ Auction” and “Oh! What a Beautiful Auction.” Their talents were greeted with laughter and admiration.

Patrick Warfield, Chair of the Website Committee, reported that online web reviews are now available on the website. An RSS feed is also available (instructions on the website). The committee is also developing a members only section. Online proposal submission for the 2010 meeting will be available shortly, for which Warfield thanked Glenn Pillsbury. A section of the website is devoted to American Music research centers, syllabi on American music, and links to the Library of Congress. Warfield welcomed suggestions on future developments for the website.

Denise Von Glahn reported on the History of the Society Project. Inviting contributions, she mentioned that the project will eventually be given to Robin Rausch of the Library of Congress.

Doug Shadle and Vilde Aaslid of the Student Forum thanked Mariana Whitmer and Michael Pisani, Board liaison to the Student Forum, for their support. Also mentioned were Phil Gentry, who will leave his post as moderator, and Judy Brady, who organized the student dinner for two consecutive years. The Student Forum continues to grow as students become an evermore significant force in the Society.

Larry Worster, chair of the Local Arrangements Committee for the Denver meeting, reflected on the tremendous satisfaction of coordinating the conference and thanked the rest of the committee: Joice Gibson, Peter Schimpf, Trudi Wright, Petra Meyer-Frasier, and Leslie Warren. One especially welcome addition at the Denver meeting was the student monitor in every session: likewise, the flow charts Gibson designed to coordinate staff activities proved most effective. Worster expressed gratitude to Mariana Whitmer and Graziano presented Worster with a plaque. Program Committee Chair John Koegel reported that of the 220 proposals received, 126 papers were heard in 45 regular sessions; seven of these were devoted to Native American music, a first for the Society. The Denver meeting also featured two poster sessions, four lecture-performance sessions, Interest Groups, meetings, and other attractions such as the Buffalo Bill show and the Denver Pow-wow. Koegel thanked committee members Michael Pisani, Ann Sears, Patricia Woodard, Mina Yang, and Cecilia Sun.

In impeccable French, Local Arrangements Chair James Deville invited members to the Ottawa meeting (2010). Canadian composer R. Murray Schafer will be honored, perhaps through an installation or soundscape. Another feature in Ottawa will be the new seminar format, which Program Committee Chair Michael Pisani explained. Details on the seminars to be offered, “The Art of Association: Exploring Institutions as Agents of American Music in Theory and Practice” and “Nineteenth-Century American Music Studies: The State of the Field in 2010,” will be accessible on the website. Pisani urged members to submit proposals on some of the conference’s main themes, including the role of French culture in North American musical life, and “the Idea of North.” Joice Gibson, Chair of the Site Selection Committee, reported that the 2011 meeting would be held jointly with IASPM (International Association for the Study of Popular Music) in Cincinnati, with Bruce McClung (College Conservatory of

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Music at the University of Cincinnati) as Local Arrangements Chair. Gibson thanked committee members Beth Levy, Michael Buchler, Charles Freeman, Vilde Aaslid, and outgoing members Elizabeth Bergman and Michael Pisani.

The Honors and Awards portion of the meeting began with the Sight and Sound Subvention. On behalf of Chair Kip Lornell, Glenn Pillsbury announced this year's recipient: Ben Harbert, a doctoral candidate in ethnomusicology at UCLA for a film project “Follow Me Down: The New Work of Louisiana Prison Songs,” which began filming in December 2008.

On behalf of Jim Lovensheimer, Richard Mook thanked the members of the Johnson Subvention Committee: Alejandro Madrid, Tammy Kernodle, and James Randall. The committee nominated two works to be published by Oxford University Press: Larry Hamberlin’s That Opera Rag: Operatic Novelty Songs in the Ragtime Era and Jim Lovensheimer’s South Pacific: Paradise Rewritten.

Standing in for Theo Cateforis, chair of the Mark Tucker Award for Student Conference Paper Committee, Tammy Kernodle thanked Cateforis and committee members Dale Chapman, Peter Mercer-Taylor, and Annie Randle. She announced that after considering seventeen submissions (double the number from 2008), the committee chose Christina Fena, of SUNY Stony Brook, for her paper, “The ‘Piano Technician’ and His ‘Unfortunate Piano’: Henry Cowell in the Machine Age” for the 2009 award.

Jane Riegel Ferencz, Chair of the Wiley Housewright Dissertation Award Committee, thanked committee members Alejandro Madrid, Felicia Miyakawa, Glenn Pillsbury, and Gillian Rodger, who read twenty-eight entries. This year’s winner is Ayden Adler (Eastman School of Music), whose dissertation is entitled “Classical Music for People Who Hate Classical Music: Arthur Fiedler and the Boston Pops, 1930-1950.” Adler, presently the Education Director for the Philadelphia Orchestra, thanked her advisor Kim Kowalk, her family, teachers, colleagues, the award committee, and the Society itself, which, she observed, knows how to reach beyond its core audience—like Fiedler himself.

Sarah Schmalenberger reported for Bonny Miller, Chair of the Lowens Article Award Committee. The committee, which also included Mary Jane Corry, Charles Freeman, and John Howland, reviewed over 100 articles, Festschrift essays, and chapters. This year’s winner is Nancy Yunhwa Rao, whose “Ruth Crawford’s Imprint on Modernism” appeared in Ruth Crawford Seeger’s Worlds: Innovation and Tradition in Twentieth-Century Music, edited by Ray Allen and Ellie Hisama (University of Rochester Press).

Neil Lerner, Chair of the Lowens Book Award Committee, announced that twenty-one books representing eleven presses were examined in two rounds of deliberations by committee members Elizabeth Bergman, Gayle Magee, Larry Hamberlin, and Anne Danielsen. The award went to Michael Broyles and Denise Von Glahn for their Leo Ornstein: Modernist Dilemmas, Personal Choices (Indiana University Press, 2007). Von Glahn thanked the Ornstein family for their generosity with materials and Broyles thanked Indiana University Press, students past and present; both expressed deep gratitude to the Society.

Amy Beal, Chair of the Cambridge Award Committee, recognized fellow committee members Judith Tick, Paul Attinello, and Christopher Shultis. Beal commented that no prize would be awarded this year but encouraged future submissions.

President Graziano then announced a new award, endowed in honor of Adrienne Fried Block. It will be given to support research leading to publication on topics that explore musical life in large urban communities. (Further details are forthcoming.) It is hoped that the first Adrienne Fried Block Award can be made at the 2010 meeting.

Kay Norton presented the Distinguished Service Award to Ronald A. Pen. Having chaired numerous committees and served as member of the Board of Trustees and Review Editor for American Music, Pen has also received teaching awards and directed the John Jacob Niles Center for American Music Folk and the Appalachian Studies program at the University of Kentucky. Pen thanked the Society and received a plaque of appreciation.

The Lifetime Achievement Award went to singer, scholar, pianist, theorist, teacher, arranger, and preacher Horace Clarence Boyer and was presented by Wayne Shirley to Dr. James Boyer, the recipient’s brother. As a young man, Horace Boyer performed with Clara Ward and Mahalia Jackson and later taught at several post-secondary institutions, including the Eastman School of Music. President Graziano invited members to take advantage of the video camera to verbally congratulate Horace Boyer.

Retiring Board members, officers, and committee chairs were acknowledged: John Graziano (who now becomes Past President); Mary Dupree (Vice President); Paul Laird (Treasurer); Gayle Magee and Howard Pollack (Board Members); Mary Wallace Davidson (Chair, Honors and Awards Committee); Bonny Miller (Chair, Irving Lowens Article Award Committee); Neil Lerner (Chair, Irving Lowens Book Award Committee); Jane Ferencz (Chair, Wiley Housewright Dissertation Award Committee); and Theo Cateforis (Chair, Mark Tucker Student Paper Award Committee). Newly elected Board members are Denise Von Glahn (Vice President); Doug Bomberger (Treasurer); and Daniel Goldmark and Tammy Kernodle (Board members).

The new president of the Society, Tom Riis, made it his first order of business to recognize John Graziano, calling attention to his years of service and commitment to both the human and musical aspects of the Society. New business involved forming an ad hoc committee, chaired by Stephanie Jensen-Moulton, to investigate accessibility issues. Jensen-Moulton invited members to join the committee and/or send her their concerns. Riis also announced that the Board had recently agreed to financially support an effort to change copyright law as it applies to historical recordings and copyright permissions. Tim Brooks then announced that the MLA and the Historical Recording and Access Coalition (HRPAC) thanks the Board for this action, which will require the copyright office to hold a public inquiry into issues related to access to and preservation of pre-1972 recordings, which must then be followed up by a report to Congress. For more information members can visit www.recordingcopyright.org.

With no further new business, President Riis adjourned the meeting at 5:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol A. Hess
Adrienne Fried Block, born on March 11, 1921, died peacefully in her beloved New York City apartment on April 5th, surrounded by family and friends. Filled with plants, paintings, and books, the living room has a fine grand piano at its core, an instrument that was the center of music making in her life. Stacked in piles on the left shelf near the keyboard were volumes of Bach’s Well Tempered Clavier, Brahms’s intermezzi, Bernstein’s sheet music from On The Town, and of course, songs and piano music by Amy Cheney Beach.

Block had a career as a practicing conductor before she trained as a musicologist. In 1958 she received her B.A. from Hunter College in Music Theory and Music Education. Then followed a Certificate from the Dalcroze School of Music, which proved to be her professional base for the next three decades. Beginning as a teacher in the Dalcroze Method in 1957, she served as the School’s Choral Director from 1964 through 1985. From 1960 to 1969 she also served as the Assistant Choir Director at St. George’s Episcopal Church, in New York—one of the most famous Episcopal churches in the city. A fine pianist as well as conductor, Adrienne relished opportunities to make music with friends and family, especially her grandchildren, throughout her life.

Adrienne entered the doctoral program in musicology at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York in 1969, the year it was founded under the leadership of Barry S. Brook. In 1978 she finished her dissertation, later published as The Early French Parody Noel by UMI Press (1983). After that, she invested herself in the burgeoning field of American music studies. Its anti-authoritarian ethos in the 1970s and early 1980s attracted her kind of intelligence and she found ways to link her passion for social justice with the women’s history movement, especially in relation to American musical life. Thus two significant intellectual revolutions of the 1970s in American musicology were fused in her many contributions.

One of the last pieces of advice Adrienne gave me was the suggestion that I reread Barbara Tuchman’s article, “Biography as a Prism of History” (1986). In many ways Block’s own life can function as a prism of women’s history in American higher education. She knew the contingent nature of welcome for women in the academy during the 1970s: just barely good enough to train, rarely good enough to hire or tenure. But a door was opening. She pushed. She pushed others to push. And she soared into exemplary achievement, becoming a major feminist scholar and leader for three decades. During her lifetime the number of women awarded doctorates in musicology increased from ca. 14% to about 46%.

We met at the Music Division of the New York Public Library in 1971, by chance sitting on opposite sides of a long wooden table with our call slips scattered around us. I was just discovering a lost literature about the “new woman” in American music around 1900. Who was this woman reading what I was reading? And why? In the early 1970s Adrienne founded and chaired a newly formed Committee on the Status of Women for the College Music Society and the next week not only was I on the committee, about which I knew nothing, but I was in her apartment working on a report for a newsletter about the CSW’s activities. On many occasions I watched her get standing ovations in grass roots meetings of academic women, exercising her political charisma and ability to inspire others to action.

By the mid 1970s Adrienne had achieved a remarkable coup, convincing the NEH to support a documentary project to recover a lost history. The composer Judith Lang Zaimont wrote this tribute to its impact:

“As I write this, I have on my desk a copy of Women in American Music: A Bibliography of Music and Literature, the big book created, compiled and edited by Adrienne Fried Block and Carol Neals-Bates during their time together centered at CUNY. It’s copyright 1979, but was worked on all through the middle-70s. It’s a foundational text which served as springboard for so many of the narrower-focus books/articles/essays that appeared over the following decade and a half. (Liz Wood interviewed me personally for the book — I was amazed that the editors were so attuned to what was brewing in the profession that they’d even include someone early in her career. -That’s a mark of how current their horizon was.) Though a scholar-to-the-bone (and therefore someone whose judgments were arrived at after a time of sifting, reflection and thought), Adrienne was unlike other scholars who prefer the safer road of dealing solely with creative figures of the past. She was on the mark in her assessments of music then current, and was not altogether reluctant to express these opinions (!).

In the mid 1970s, simply knowing that such a project was being underwritten by the NEH helped the newly emerging field of women’s history in music. Block followed that with sociological profiles of the field. First came “The Status of Women in College Music, 1976-77: A Statistical Study” compiled by Barbara Hampton Renton; it was edited and introduced by Adrienne (College Music Society, 1980). Then Adrienne continued the project by publishing statistics about women’s status in academic music as of 1986-87 (published in Women’s Studies/Women’s Status (CMS, 1989).

Zaimont was also paying tribute to the sense of cultural responsibility that led Adrienne to support the activities of living female composers. Adrienne remained active on the board of the New York Women Composers, Inc., to name one such group. She also organized various events at the CUNY Graduate Center. One flyer dated May 2, 1980, reads “Women in the Arts V: Composers. A concert with Vivian Fine and Meredith Monk and Amina Claudine Myers.” It was followed by the inevitable panel where she was joined by myself, Anna Burton, and Elizabeth Wood. We were charged with discussing “the place of women composers in music history, the creative process, and the experience of being a woman composer.” The rhetoric offers yet another prism—this one into the historical energies of second-wave cultural feminism. As always Adrienne secured the funding, relying on multiple sources, among them the Center

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for the Study of Women and Sex Roles, Meet the Composer, The New York State Council on the Humanities, and the Ph.D Program in Music, courtesy of Barry S. Brook.

Block’s biography of the pianist and composer Amy Cheney Beach (Oxford University Press, 1998) culminated many years of scholarship about Beach’s life and work. She made a remarkable contribution to American Music Studies through her impeccable and humane scholarship about this composer whom few took seriously and whose music they did not know. Mrs. Ha Ha Beach, they called her. Not any more. Her splendid biography of Amy Beach (Oxford University Press, 1998) won numerous awards—among them an Irving R. Lowens Award from SAM—and widespread recognition for its significance, originality, methodological richness, and literary quality. She also edited a volume devoted to Beach’s String Quartet in the series Music of the United States of America (1995).

In the last several years Block was absorbed, indeed fascinated by, the project Music in Gotham, which focused on documenting the musical life of New York City in the 1860s. Together with the co-project leader John Graziano, they centered their work at the CUNY Graduate Center, winning major grants to support their vision. Together they mounted important conferences and published proceedings of this new work in 19th-century urban American Studies. The Music in the Gotham project turned into a leadership site for many scholars working in aspects of 19th-century American music history.

I was surprised that Adrienne chose to designate this area—Urban American Music Studies—as a focus for the research award that she and her family endowed through SAM. How much more predictable it would have been for her to acknowledge the role of women’s history, biography, and gender studies. She knew what I was thinking even if this thought went unsaid. She told me how important it was to her to support an integrated view of musical life, not top-down, not hierarchical, but a vision of collaborative mutuality, of creative expression. And she said, when you look at the roots, women are there. She is a root of a tree of scholarship whose welcoming branches will [shelter how about “sustain” or “inspire” instead?] innovative work in our field for decades to come.

SAM also notes the passing of

Ruth Rowen
Hugh McElrath
Rosemary Killam

Resources of American Music History 2

Resources of American Music History 2 will be an interactive, edited online directory (search engine) of collected resources (both material and electronic) generated by or about musical activity in what is today the United States from pre-colonial times to the present. It will incorporate resources from all genres, styles, and applications of music without restriction, wherever in the world they may be collected.

Musicologists, librarians, archivists, and information specialists gathered at the University of Pittsburgh April 27-28 to plan for a digital, sustainable, and vastly expanded version of Resources of American Music History: A Directory of Source Materials from Colonial Times to World War II (RAMH), compiled by D.W. Krummel, Jean Geil, Doris J. Dyen, and Deane L. Root (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1981), the first reference work designed to provide access to the primary materials of American music history. The conference, funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, was hosted by the Center for American Music, part of Pitt’s University Library System, in collaboration with the Society for American Music, a constituent member of the American Council of Learned Societies. The Society maintains its headquarters at the University of Pittsburgh, and the staffs of the two organizations work closely together.

The audience for an electronic version of RAMH will be international, including students and scholars of American studies throughout the world. Within the United States, it will include music and public librarians, the growing numbers of college students and faculty of American music, as well as K-12 teachers and students who work with source documents. No other bibliographical tool provides descriptions of the source materials for research and study for the full field of American music.

Since RAMH appeared three decades ago, American musicology has changed profoundly. Increasing numbers of graduate students and scholars are working in topics related to music in America, affecting faculty hiring trends, proposals for conference presentations and doctoral dissertations on American topics, and the publication initiatives of scholarly societies. The new RAMH2 will help meet the needs of today’s scholars by providing a search engine for primary sources in American music, whether in libraries, museums, historical societies, or private collections. RAMH2 will engage the wider scholarly community in building these resources so that the end result will be available to all online, will incorporate the needs of all who study these primary source materials in American music, and will continue to meet these needs in the future.

The planning conference focused on four main topics: scope, sources, primary users, and searching services. Additional discussion addressed long-term maintenance and ongoing support.

Discussion of scope included whether to include different types of resources, what limits to set for chronology and geography (how to define “American”), and whether to incorporate discrete items or simply describe collections of materials. The consensus was to start with core collections, particularly those in the original RAMH, but soon expand out through an open-ended process of contribution. Resources would not be limited to those on paper but would include artifacts (including instruments) and born-digital resources. Broadly defined, potential resources include anything involved in the creation, publication, distribution, and reception of American music. Private as well as public collections will be sought, in any location and addressing any time period.

RAMH2 will acquire descriptive information from collections, linking if possible to the collection’s own online
Specifications and Rates for Advertisements

The Bulletin of the Society for American Music is the regular conduit for keeping members updated on the state of the discipline. It contains short articles and open discussions relating to American music, and occasional reviews of books, recordings, and web resources. It also includes information regarding conferences and performances, along with news relating to member activities. It is sent to members three times per year. Circulation: 1,000 copies. About 100 of these go to libraries.

SUBMISSION DEADLINES:
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Submit jpg, gif, or pdf files to: SAM@american-music.org
Berea College Appalachian Sound Archives Fellowships 2010

The purpose of the Berea College Sound Archives Fellowship Program (formerly Music Archives Fellowship) is to encourage scholarly use of Berea’s non-commercial audio collections that document Appalachian history and culture. These recordings are especially strong in the areas of traditional music, religious expression, spoken lore and radio programs. They include extensive documentation of fiddle and banjo tunes; ballads and songs; Old Regular Baptist singing and preaching; folktales and legends; and related interviews with musicians, preachers, and storytellers, 1950 to the present. Radio material heard in the region for the years 1936 to the mid 1950s, documents a wide range of Kentucky, national, and world political figures and events. Entertainment programs include country music, soap operas, musical variety shows and sporting events.

Fellowship awards are made for a period of one to three months in support of research projects that will contribute to the preservation or promotion of these resources. The fellowships must be taken up between July 2009 and June 2010. Fellows are expected to be in residence during the term of the fellowship and are encouraged to participate in campus and community activities. Stipend: $3000/month.

Deadline for proposals: June 1, 2009 for July through December 2009. December 1 for January through June 2010.

There is no application form. Applicants are asked to submit a proposal that addresses (1) their interest in the particular subject area, (2) description of the project specifying which Berea collections will be made use of, (3) anticipated research outcomes (e.g., print publications, audio / video documentaries, tune transcriptions, lesson plans, public performances, web based resources), (4) the length of time needed for the project (one month minimum, three months maximum), and (5) preferred dates of residence. Also required are three letters of recommendation from colleagues familiar with the applicant’s work. For graduate degree candidates, the recommendations must include those of the professor directing the applicant’s research. Applicants are responsible for contacting all persons providing recommendations.

For information about Berea’s Sound Archives and other traditional music collections, see www.berea.edu/hutchinslibrary/specialcollections/specialsound.asp

Proposals or inquiries should be sent to

Harry Rice
Special Collections & Archives
Berea College
Berea, KY 40404
harry_rice@berea.edu

CONFERENCE CALENDAR

CFP: Kiss Me Again: Mapping the Life and Legacy of Arthur Russell, October 10, 2009, NYU, New York. Suitable themes for papers include but are by no means restricted to Arthur Russell and his collaborators; Arthur Russell and the downtown scene; Arthur Russell and composition; Arthur Russell and genre; Arthur Russell, sexuality, race and sound; Arthur Russell and performance; and Arthur Russell and the contemporary music market. Papers might also consider specific recordings, including “Kiss Me Again” by Dinosaur, Arthur Russell’s first record release, which came out on Sire Records in 1978. Papers should last for 20 minutes. Abstracts of 250 words should be submitted to Tim Lawrence (tlawrence1@mac.com) or Peter Gordon (petergordonmusic@mac.com) by July 15, 2009. Decisions will be circulated by July 31, 2009.


**Fellowships:** Purpose and Nature of Fellowships. The National Humanities Center offers 40 residential fellowships for advanced study in the humanities during the academic year, September 2010 through May 2011. Applicants must hold doctorate or equivalent scholarily credentials. Young scholars as well as senior scholars are encouraged to apply, but they must have a record of publication, and new Ph.D.s should be aware that the Center does not support the revision of a doctoral dissertation. In addition to scholars from all fields of the humanities, the Center accepts individuals from the natural and social sciences, the arts, the professions, and public life who are engaged in humanistic projects. The Center is also international and gladly accepts applications from scholars outside the United States.

Areas of Special Interest. Most of the Center’s fellowships are unrestricted. Several, however, are designated for particular areas of research. These include environmental studies and history; English literature; art history; French history, literature, or culture; Asian Studies; and theology.

Stipends. Fellowships are individually determined, the amount depending upon the needs of the Fellow and the Center’s ability to meet them. The Center seeks to provide at least half salary and also covers travel expenses to and from North Carolina for Fellows and their dependents.

Facilities and Services. Located in the Research Triangle Park of North Carolina, near Chapel Hill, Durham, and Raleigh, the Center provides an environment for individual research and the exchange of ideas. Its building includes private studies for Fellows, conference rooms, a central commons for dining, lounges, reading areas, a reference library, and a Fellows’ workroom. The Center’s noted library service delivers books and research materials to Fellows, and support for information technology and editorial assistance.

**BOOK REVIEWS**


– Olivia Carter Mather

In the field of folk music studies, recent scholarship has focused almost entirely on the “the great boom,” when folk revivalism reached mainstream America in tandem with Civil Rights and the anti-war movement. If scholars venture out of this period, they do so to trace the roots of the revival in earlier musical and political movements, but they neglect events after the 1960s (the “post-boom” era). It would seem that the cultural influence of the music lay in the glory days of Washington Square Park and the Newport Folk Festival, before the movement fragmented and fell to various fates. By the 1970s, folk music had apparently “sold out,” turned from the communal to the personal in the form of “soft rock” singer-songwriters, or, like the anti-war movement, succumbed to political disillusionment.

With *The Never-Ending Revival: Rounder Records and the Folk Alliance*, Michael F. Scully devotes an entire study to the folk music movement from 1970 to the present. He tells the story of the post-boom through the lens of two organizations: the independent record label Rounder Records and the North American Folk Music and Dance Alliance, a trade organization established in 1989 to unify local folk music societies. Grounding his work in dozens of interviews with musicians, label executives, and members of the Folk Alliance, Scully has written a cultural history that shows how the folk music movement has navigated through shifts in the recording industry and changing meanings of “folk music.” Because the discourse around the definition and meaning of this music has historically been linked to its relationship to commerce, the author dedicates much of the book to economics, especially the recent changes in the structure of the record industry. Per the book’s title, the author wants us to view the post-boom era as an extension of the revival that began in the 1950s, not as a wasteland between the 1960s and the success of the *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* soundtrack.

Scully chose Rounder Records because it was one of the few labels that concentrated on folk music after the boom while achieving financial success relative to peer labels such as Folkways, Elektra, and Arhoolie. He describes in great detail the history of the label in an effort to show how it responded to commercial success, increasing industry consolidation, and a retail crisis while still valuing local and regional music. Founded in 1970 by three music fans, Rounder first released new recordings of bluegrass and old-time. The label quickly moved into other kinds

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of folk music, broadly defined, including zydeco, singer-songwriter, topical songs, and feminist music. Rounder’s first “hit” album was George Thorogood’s 1977 debut, an electric blues record that stylistically strayed far from Rounder’s main acoustic catalog. By the mid-1990s, when label darling Alison Krauss re-presented bluegrass to a wider country and pop audience, selling one million albums, Rounder had established itself as one of a few indie labels with long-term viability. Perhaps the most contentious issue in the study of folk music and folklore is commercialism. Folk movements typically begin as expressly anti-commercial efforts and as such celebrate local styles as a critique of mass-marketed popular music. Of course, the popularity of folk music problematizes a clean division between “authentic” music and “commercial” music. Attempting to categorize music as belonging to either camp risks overlooking the cultural power of popularity as well as the diversity of style and approach inherent to such a wide-ranging movement. Conscious of these debates, Scully avoids their pitfalls. The author approaches Rounder as a historian; he is less interested in pronouncing record-ings, labels, movements, or people as either authentic or commercial and more concerned about how Rounder survived industry-wide restructuring. What matters to Scully is that through its eclectic catalog, Rounder “helped shape an expanding definition of folk music in the contemporary world” (89). Critics of Rounder have accused the label of “selling out,” citing what they see as a trajectory of increasing commercialism and diminishing authenticity. In contrast, Scully sees an adjustment to new market forces that has allowed the label to keep its commitment to vernacular musics.

Aside from his obvious contributions to the history of folk music in the United States and his implicit critique of its historiography, Scully also supplements the small body of work on the history of the recording industry. His description of Rounder Records offers a refreshing alternative to narratives of corporate consolidation that focus only on major labels and their purchase of independents. As a corrective, Scully highlights a label that ultimately did not have to choose between acquisition and obscurity. Scully’s single chapter on the Folk Alliance, though illuminating, feels out of place in a book largely about historiography and Rounder Records. He chronicles the formation and history of the Alliance, paying special attention to claims about the definition of folk music (as stoked by the growing presence of “contemporary folk” artists, otherwise known as singer-songwriters). Scully may intend for his history of the Alliance to serve as a parallel story to that of Rounder, showing how anxiety over commercialism in the post-boom era affected the entire folk community. Or perhaps this section is a support for Scully’s implicit argument that the folk movement was more ideologically diverse than we have conceived it to be. In reality, participants in the folk revival, whether during the “boom” or the “post-boom,” quarreled over basic issues like politics, commerce, the importance of historical styles (i.e. bluegrass and old-time), the place of singer-songwriters, and performance. However, the importance of the Alliance to the movement is unclear, as is its relevance to his larger points about Rounder. What is clear is the importance of the post-boom era to the history of folk music, whether that includes the narratives of record labels, musicians, or folk alliances. Scully’s commitment to this story clears a new path of scholarship in an essential sub-field of American music.


— Stanley Pelkey

The soundtrack to Boogie Nights and recordings by Anonymous 4 seem worlds apart; nevertheless, Adam Krims brings together these and many other diverse examples in Music and Urban Geography as he explores ways that the discipline of urban geography can illuminate the study of music. Three key premises form the foundation of this compelling and well-written study. First, the character of cities throughout North America and Europe have changed since the 1970s as their economies have shifted from heavy manufacturing to service industries and “cultural-based regeneration” (xvii). Second, cities, modes of production, expressive culture, and listeners exist within networks of “mutual conditioning” (153). Third, music functions as a “spatializing practice” because it shapes how one experiences space (xv). Krims acknowledges that a Marxist perspective is central to his arguments, but he rejects the view (prevalent, he says, in both Marxist scholarship and cultural studies) that expressive culture simply reacts to social contexts and forces.

The book consists of an extended introduction and five wide-ranging chapters in which Krims works out the implications of his core premises. Representation of urban environments through music is the main concern in chapters 1 and 3. They are also the chapters in which music’s role as a “spatializing practice” may at first seem the most apparent. In chapter 1, “Defining the Urban Ethos,” Krims investigates the “set of representations of who can do what in the city and with what degree of autonomy from the effects of space” (20). A surprisingly varied assortment of recordings and music videos from across four decades and multiple popular genres provides his evidence. The numerous representations of the city that Krims discusses have been used for “staging” identities through music (21). Some are positive, some negative, and race, gender, and socio-economic conditions in urban spaces are operative in them. In chapter 3, “Mourning the Impossible Libidinal City in Boogie Nights,” Krims offers a very insightful reading of diegetic and nondiegetic musical materials in the titular film, coupled with a broader investigation of the reception of disco during the 1990s. These support his argument that the city has lost its imaginative identity as “a space of possibility and promise . . . since roughly the time of disco’s demise . . .” (75).

The remaining chapters foreground relationships between patterns of capital accumulation and musical culture, and between these and consumers. As such, they can be read as case studies of the mutual conditioning that Krims believes exists between production and musical

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This book contains essays on a diverse set of topics related to blues practice, meaning, and history. Editor David Evans, professor of music at the University of Memphis, has been in the forefront of blues scholarship for decades. His books on Tommy Johnson and the transmission of Johnson’s “Big Road Blues” are indispensable to any student of the blues. In addition to contributing a chapter, Evans introduction assesses the present state of blues scholarship and provides a summary of the essays in the collection. As the subtitle of the book suggests, Evans objective “is to offer new perspectives on the blues by exploring previously neglected aspects, reinterpreting familiar material, conducting broader and more scientific surveys, and exploring specific...
blues performances in great depth and detail” (3). The contributors represent a wide range of disciplines, and the inclusion of three European authors suggests the international reach of contemporary blues scholarship.

The first chapter is “Bourdon, Blue Notes, and Pentatonism in the Blues: An Africanist Perspective” by Gerhard Kubik, a scholar of African music and author of the book Africa and the Blues. Kubik believes that scales, “microtonal wavering” and “blue” notes of delta blues vocalists are the result of an inherently West African way of hearing. Offering a corrective to the idea of blues melody as a blend of Western fixed diatonic scales and African practice, Kubik postulates that “the excessive use of melisma has often been misunderstood as ‘instability’ in intonation or purposeful off-pitch phrasing, and the rough timbre qualities of the declamatory west-central Sudanic voice style misunderstood as an aesthetics of ‘dirty tones’” (21). With a convincing hypothesis and a clear argument, Kubik demonstrates how tonic riffs and pentatonic scales in blues are consistent with West African concepts of pitch vocalization. He concludes with a brilliant analysis of Skip James’ recording of “Devil Got My Woman”.

The second and third chapters of the book are discussions of early commercial blues. Chapter two, “They Cert’ly Sound Good to Me: Sheet Music, Southern Vaudeville, and the Commercial Ascendancy of the Blues” by independent researchers Lynn Abbott and Doug Sotiroff is a fascinating study. They clarify the role of southern vaudeville in popularizing blues by citing previously overlooked early black newspaper accounts. Chapter three, “Abbe Niles, Blues Advocate” is by Elliot S. Hurwitt, an expert on W. C. Handy. Niles, who was a Wall Street lawyer and student of African American folk-song, befriended Handy in 1925. Over the next three decades, Niles became Handy’s legal adviser, collaborator, and a magazine columnist. Utilizing archival material held at the Watkinson Library at Trinity College, Hartford, Hurwitt provides a detailed picture of the relationship between the two men. As Hurwitt observes about Niles, “He had the wit to grasp Handy’s seminal role in transmitting the blues to the American mainstream, and the eloquence to convey his excitement over Handy to the general public” (138).

Chapters four and five are statistical studies: Andrew M. Cohen’s “The Hands of Blues Guitarists” and David Evans’ “From Bumble Bee Slim to Black Boy: Nicknames of Blues Singers.” Cohen, a guitarist, has tabulated the right hand position and its effect on the thumb’s role in finger picking technique by region and time period through first hand observations, videos, and photographs. Although Cohen develops a refined definition of regions in the south, he admits that well traveled bluesmen can present exceptions to his categories. Citing Texas bluesman Blind Lemon Jefferson, Cohen writes: “On his records it sounds as if he availed himself of a range of techniques so broad as to encompass most of what is found elsewhere” (160). Unfortunately, his sample was limited to ninety-seven players, leading Evans to conclude in the introduction that “Cohen’s visual and aural judgments need to be confirmed or revised by other scholars, and the sample needs to be enlarged” (6). On the other hand, Evans survey of nicknames of blues singers is a sample of over three thousand artists active between 1920 and 1970. He carefully sets the parameters of his study, and recognizes the multiple meanings that nicknames can have. His intention is clear, stating his “categorization and interpretation of blues nicknames is based on their cultural meaning during the time period” (187). Evans reaches several illuminating conclusions about gender differences and changes between pre-war and post-war nickname practice.

The three following chapters are studies of individual blues recordings: Luigi Monge’s “Preachin’ the Blues: A Textual and Linguistic Analysis of Son House’s “Dry Spell Blues;” James Bennighof’s “Some Ramblings on Robert Johnson’s Mind: Critical Analysis and Aesthetic Value in Delta Blues;” and Katharine Cartwright’s “Guess Those People Wonder What I’m Singing: Quotation and Reference in Ella Fitzgerald’s ‘St. Louis Blues’.” Although each author’s approach is markedly different, all three essays are rich with valuable insights into their respective subjects. Monge, who has contributed to both English and Italian blues publications, applies the discipline of textual linguistics to his analysis “to provide the blues with a new critical method and at the same time to demonstrate that this system is valid in this particular case” (236). He succeeds in both endeavors by showing how House’s personal dilemma between his religious convictions and the blues is reflected in the lyric as well as elucidating the remarkably detailed structure of this unusual blues composition. Bennighof, a professor of music theory at Baylor University, has provided a penetrating analysis of Robert Johnson’s “Ramblin’ on My Mind” with an eye to its aesthetic value. Contrasting musicological methodology in Western art music and the blues, he believes that “a critical analysis [of Johnson’s recording] should somehow address the music’s often mentioned emotional intensity and visceral appeal, and it should interpret aesthetic qualities in the context of cultural, stylistic, and technical circumstances” (259). Cartwright, an assistant professor of music at Northwest Vista College in Texas, aptly demonstrates how a great jazz vocalist not closely associated with the blues reveals a deep understanding of the meaning of a great blues composition. She also catalogs the subtle ways in which Fitzgerald’s encyclopedic knowledge of past jazz instrumental improvisations informs her performance.

The final two chapters are historical studies: Bob Groom’s “Beyond the Mushroom Cloud: A Decade of Disillusion in Black Blues and Gospel Song,” and John Minton’s “Houston Creoles and Zydeco: The Emergence of an African American Urban Popular Style.” Groom, a British blues journalist, surveys post-war blues lyrics that reveal a growing mood of protest and disillusion with American society. He provides an insightful glimpse into African American points of view in the years between the end of World War II and the rise of the civil rights era in the late 1950s. Minton, a professor of folklore at Indiana-Purdue University Fort Wayne, has contributed an outstanding essay on the origins of zydeco, the unique blend of post-war rhythm and blues and French Creole folk music from Louisiana. He convincingly demonstrates the importance of the Creole community in the city of Houston, Texas, in the creation of the style.

Ramblin’ on My Mind: New Perspectives on the Blues is a collection of first-rate essays from a variety of viewpoints. The book is an indispensable addition to the literature on the blues, and will be an invaluable resource for future researchers.
Members in the News

Carol Baron will address the special success of concert performances of the music of Johann Sebastian Bach in the United States from 1948 through 1998 in the 2009 summer issue of the Newsletter of the American Bach Society.

Joe Horowitz announces the Naxos release of a DVD version of the classic 1939 documentary “The City,” with a fresh recording of Copland’s score by the Post-Classic Ensemble in DC, of which Horowitz is the Artistic Director. This is a sequel to the earlier Naxos DVD similarly treating “The Plow that Broke the Plains” and “The River,” with the Thomson scores newly recorded.

Cheryl Keyes has received a 2009 NAACP Image Award in the category of “Outstanding World Music Album” for her debut CD Let Me Take You There (Keycan Records, 2008). Keyes, who serves as Executive Producer for this CD project, also composed, orchestrated, arranged, and performed on all tracks. For more information, please go to websites http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/awards/2009/02/secret-life-of.html and www.cherylkeyes.com

Louis Goldstein performed two solo recitals at the University of North Florida as part of a class titled “The New York School: Poets, Painters, Composers.” On February 26, 2009 Goldstein performed an all Cage concert consisting of 4’33” and Sonatas and Interludes. The following evening he played an all Feldman concert containing Two Intermissions, Intermission 5, and For Bunita Marcus.

Mark Gridley recently published “Trait Anger and Music Perception” in Creativity Research Journal, 2009, vol. 21, 137-139; “Misconceptions in Linking Free Jazz with the Civil Rights Movement: Some Dangers of Teaching Jazz History in Sociocultural Context” in College Music Symposium, vol. 47, 139-155; and Concise Guide to Jazz, 6th Edition (Prentice-Hall). Gridley is also running a seminar at Case Western Reserve University this semester on the Psychology of Jazz. In it, students explore how jazz is perceived in terms of timbre, rhythm, social context, musical tastes, temperament of the listener, imposed emotion and meaning.

Kendra Preston Leonard has been awarded the Thornton Wilder Fellowship in Wilder studies by the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Yale University. She will be in residence at Yale this fall conducting research on Louise Talma’s opera with Wilder, The Alcestiad.

Call for Submissions
Society for American Music
March 17-21, 2010

2010 Program Committee: Michael Pisani, chair; Drew Edward Davies, Robin Elliott, Larry D. Hamberlin, Mary Ingraham, Felicia M. Miyakawa, and Gillian M. Rodger

The Society for American Music invites proposals for papers, papers on one of two seminar topics (see “New Seminar Format” below), additional panels of 2-3 papers, concerts, lecture-performances, and scholarly posters for its 36th Annual Conference. The conference will be held in Ottawa, Ontario (Canada) March 17-21, 2010. The submission deadline for all proposals is Monday, 15 June 2009.

In addition to proposals on the topics of the seminar panels, we welcome proposals involving all facets of musical life in the Americas and manifestations of these cultures anywhere in the world. For this conference we especially welcome proposals addressing:

- Cultural politics and the nation: the role of federal policies, government institutions, and public organizations in the creation, performance, and reception of music
- The role of French culture in shaping North American musical life, with a focus on Quebec, but also including Acadian and Creole cultures.
- “The Idea of North” (to cite Glenn Gould). [Are there measurable aspects of an identifiable “Northern culture” in music, comparable to the U.S.’s “Western” or “Southern” traditions?]
- Cross-border musical relations in the Americas (affecting musicians, institutions, organizations, cultural policies, etc.)
- The impact of immigration on musical life in the United States and Canada
- Music in Canada, including classical, popular, aboriginal, and traditional music (considered either in isolation or in contact with each other)

Guidelines

Presenters are required to register for the entire conference. The committee encourages proposals from those who did not present at the 2009 Denver meeting, but all proposals will be judged primarily on merit. With the exception of concerts or lecture-performances with accompanying audio-visual materials, all proposals must be submitted electronically using the online submission form (see below).

Proposers for all except lecture-recitals must specify whether the proposal is for 1) paper, 2) poster, or 3) either presentation format, the latter to be determined by the Program Committee as it builds sessions. Individual or joint papers should be no longer than twenty minutes. Lecture-performances should be no longer than thirty minutes. For complete session proposals, the organizer should include an additional statement explaining the rationale for the session, in addition to abstracts for each paper.

New Seminar Format

Of the proposals submitted in January, 2009, the two selected by the program committee for the 2010 conference in Ottawa will be: 1) “The Art of Association: Exploring Institutions as Agents of American Music in Theory and Practice” and 2) “Nineteenth-Century American Music Studies: The State of the Field in 2010”. Unlike regular SAM sessions, in which papers are read, papers for the conference seminars will be posted at a password-protected location in advance of the conference, where they may be read by all interested SAM members. The bulk of the conference session will be devoted to discussion of the papers as they relate to the general theme. Since papers will be posted electronically on the web, we would like to encourage materials that are recently published or “in press” as one kind of submission that would be appropriate for the seminar structure. These papers may be full articles, up to 20 pages, and should include notes, examples (where relevant), and bibliography. All proposals should be submitted in the usual way by the regular SAM deadline, except that the specific seminar topic should be clearly specified. Unless the author specifies otherwise, abstracts not accepted for either of the two
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**Research Poster Sessions**
The poster format provides an opportunity for SAM members to meet informally with authors and discuss research. Each author attends his/her respective 90-minute session, distributes abstracts, and answers questions. Supporting sound and/or video examples (on personal computers and utilizing battery, rather than AC power) will be coordinated with other presenters once sessions have been formed by the Program Committee. Further poster guidelines may be found at [www.american-music.org](http://www.american-music.org).

**Interest Groups**
Interest Groups with a guaranteed slot for 2010 are requested to convey a brief description of their plans to the Program Committee using the online submission system by June 15, if possible. To ensure proper scheduling and room assignments, Groups should indicate by this date whether they would prefer a lunchtime slot (12:45-1:45) or a longer evening session. Please note that all the information that will appear in the conference program book (participant names, titles, 100-word abstract) must be submitted not later than August 5. Interest Groups without a guaranteed slot for 2010 may submit panel proposals via the online submission system if they wish, but acceptance or rejection of these proposals will be at the discretion of the Program Committee. All Interest Group submissions (guaranteed or not) should use the “Panel” option below.

Include the following for **all** submissions:
1. 250-word proposal
2. 100-word abstract suitable for publication in the conference program
3. Audio and visual needs selected from the following list only: CD and audiocassette player, overhead projector, VHS/DVD player, LCD projector. Due to logistics and the high cost of renting this equipment, **we cannot accommodate AV changes once a proposal is accepted**.

For **Lecture-Performances**, please include the above-mentioned materials, plus:
1. Seven copies of a recording (CD and DVD preferred, but cassette or VHS tapes also accepted)
2. An addressed, stamped mailer if you would like the recordings returned
3. A list of special needs (e.g., piano, music stand, space for dance demonstration, choral risers)

All materials must be electronically date-stamped (online submission) or postmarked (mail submission) by **15 June 2009**. Questions about the submission process may be sent to Michael Pisani at mipisani@vassar.edu. Postal submissions should be addressed to: Michael Pisani, SAM 2010 Program Committee Chair, Vassar College, Box 595, Poughkeepsie, New York, 12604-0595.

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**The Society for American Music** is pleased to welcome these new members

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<tr>
<th>Institutional members:</th>
<th>Post-Graduate:</th>
<th>International Student Members:</th>
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<tr>
<td>J D Williams Library, University of Mississippi</td>
<td>Vivian Montgomery, Newton, MA</td>
<td>Michael MacDonald, Edmonton, AB, CANADA</td>
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<td>Hampson Foundation</td>
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<td>Kati Szego, St. John’s, NF, CANADA</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Students:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>International Student Members:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sarah Shewbert, Seattle, WA</td>
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<td>Marcia Ostashewski, Regina, SK, CANADA</td>
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<td>Sarah Finer, Buffalo, NY</td>
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<td>Kristin Force, Toronto, ON, CANADA</td>
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<td>Matthew Mugmon, Elkridge, MD</td>
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<td><strong>Spouse/Partners:</strong></td>
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<td>Matthew Valnes, West Fargo, ND</td>
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<td>Karen Shadle, Durham, NC</td>
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<td>Kimberly Francis, Carrboro, NC</td>
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<td><strong>International Individual Members:</strong></td>
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<td>Matthew Buchbinder, South Lyon, MI</td>
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<td>Toshiyuki Ohwada, Tokyo, JAPAN</td>
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<td>Tim Miller, Durham, NC</td>
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<td>Suzanne Robinson, Northcote, AUSTRALIA</td>
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<td>Russell Huiskamp, New York, NY</td>
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<td>Glenn Colton, Thunder Bay, ON, CANADA</td>
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<td>Gabriela Praetzel, Lincoln, NE</td>
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<td><strong>Students:</strong></td>
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<td>Robin Pentland, Kenmore, WA</td>
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Further information is available at the website ([www.american-music.org](http://www.american-music.org)) or by contacting the SAM office.

**H. Earle Johnson Bequest for Book Publication Subvention**
This fund is administered by the Book Publications Committee and provides two subventions up to $2,500 annually. Application deadline is November 15th.

**Sight and Sound Subvention**
This fund is administered by the Sight and Sound Committee and provides annual subventions of approximately $700-$900.

**Irving Lowens Memorial Awards**
The Irving Lowens Award is offered by the Society for American Music each year for a book and article that, in the judgment of the awards committee, makes an outstanding contribution to the study of American music or music in America. Self-nominations are accepted. Application deadline is February 15th.

**Wiley Housewright Dissertation Award**
This award consists of a plaque and cash award given annually for a dissertation that makes an outstanding contribution to American music studies. The Society for American Music announces its annual competition for a dissertation on any topic relating to American music, written in English. Application deadline is February 15th, for dissertations completed between 1 January and 31 December of previous year.

**Student Travel Grants**
Grants are available for student members who wish to attend the annual conference of the Society for American Music. These funds are intended to help with the cost of travel. Students receiving funds must be members of the Society and enrolled at a college or university (with the exception of doctoral students, who need not be formally enrolled). Application deadline is January 1.

**Mark Tucker Award**
The Mark Tucker Award is presented at the Business Meeting of the annual SAM conference to a student presenter who has written an outstanding paper for delivery at that conference. In addition to the recognition the student receives before the Society, there is also a plaque and a cash award.