

### *Musical Mercury* (1934-1939)

An organ of the Edwin F. Kalmus publishing company,<sup>1</sup> the quarterly *Musical Mercury* [MME] was published in New York City for seventeen years, from 1934 through 1949. During its first six years of publication, (volumes I through VI, no. 3-4, 1934-39) the journal contained articles on a wide variety of musical subjects ranging from conducting techniques, orchestration, and analysis of compositions, to history, musicology and biography. The journal also contained during these years, miniature scores of complete compositions and single movements of major works published by the Kalmus firm. Beginning with Vol. VI, no. 3-4 (March-May 1938), a change of policy led to the elimination of articles and to the exclusive publication of music. Clearly, the primary purpose of the journal was to promote sales of works published by the Kalmus firm. The present RIPM publication treats the contents of the journal during its initial six years.

The publication of the quarterly issues of each volume was not confined to a single year.<sup>2</sup> In fact, the somewhat irregular publication schedule appears to have required an explanation on the part of the editor.<sup>3</sup> In all, each single issue contains from twenty-four to thirty pages of prose text; the final issue, a double issue, contains fifty-three pages. The journal's page numbering is continuous through each volume. The pages of the scores are treated as *hors texte* and numbered independently. Among the scores published (1934-1939) are the overtures to Handel's opera *Rinaldo* and the incidental music to Handel's masque on Smollett's *Alceste*; the first movement of Beethoven's Symphony no. 5 "with piano reduction underneath"; the overture to Bizet's *Carmen*, Copland's Symphony no. 1 (first movement) and Interlude from *Music for the Theatre*; Sibelius's Symphony no. 2 (first movement); Glière's "Russian Sailors' Dance" from *The Red Poppy* ballet, "The Entrance of the Gods into Valhalla" from Wagner's *Das Rheingold*, and the introduction to Act III of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*.

The first editor of the journal's prose section was the composer, critic and music educator Arthur V. Berger (1912- ).<sup>4</sup> This responsibility was shared with Bernard Hermann (1911-1975), the prolific composer of radio and film scores, for the first two issues of 1934. Beginning with Vol. I, no. 3 (August 1934) Dorothy Veinus was named as associate editor, a position she held until Vol. V, no. 3 (September 1936). Berger alone edited Vol. III, no. 4 (January 1937) through Vol. V, no. 2 (December 1937). Benjamin Grossbayne with the editorial assistance of Mary H. Hellman succeeded Berger<sup>5</sup> and edited Vol. VI, nos. 1 and 2 (September 1938 and January 1939). No editor is named for Vol. VI, no. 3-4 (March-May 1939), the final issue treated in this RIPM publication.

<sup>1</sup> W. Thomas Marrocco and Mark Jacobs, "Kalmus, Edwin F.," *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music* II: 607.

<sup>2</sup> The fourth issue of vol. 3 (1936) was not issued until January 1937.

<sup>3</sup> See MME III, no. 4 (January 1937): 63 for an explanation of the journal's publication schedule.

<sup>4</sup> Charles H. Kaufman, "Berger, Arthur (Victor)," *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music* I: 189-90.

<sup>5</sup> The musical credentials of Grossbayne and Mary Hellman are not known.

A native of New York City, Arthur Berger was educated at the City College of New York and at New York University, from which he graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1930. Subsequently he attended the Longy School of Music and Harvard University. At the latter institution he studied with the well-known theorist and composer Walter Piston and the musicologist Archibald Davison, and received an MA degree in 1936. In the years following his association with the *Musical Mercury*, Berger was an active critic associated with a number of important American periodicals and newspapers including *Modern Music*, *Perspectives of New Music* (as a co-founder), *Score*, and the *Boston Transcript*. In his compositions Berger was greatly influenced by the music of Schoenberg and Stravinsky.

Berger's contributions to the *Musical Mercury* consist of articles of wide-reaching interests: eighteenth-century English music,<sup>6</sup> the instrumental music of François Couperin,<sup>7</sup> the Greek drama,<sup>8</sup> a study of Aaron Copland's Variations for piano,<sup>9</sup> an overview of the songs of Charles Ives,<sup>10</sup> an analysis of Alban Berg's Violin Concerto,<sup>11</sup> and reviews of new recordings and newly-published books. Bernard Hermann's single contribution is a record review of Prokofiev's First Symphony.<sup>12</sup> Dorothy Veinus, the associate editor, contributes several articles dealing with eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century topics: Geminiani's development of violin technique;<sup>13</sup> the Parisian reception of Pergolesi's *La Serva padrona*;<sup>14</sup> and Beethoven's treatment of folk songs.<sup>15</sup>

The journal treats a wide range of historical topics. On early music subjects, American musicologist Hugo von Leichtentritt examines issues raised in editions of music of the Netherlands's school,<sup>16</sup> Anthony Sheppard discusses instrumental music of the sixteenth century,<sup>17</sup> and Stephen D. Tuttle explains William Byrd's dance forms.<sup>18</sup> In the field of eighteenth-century music studies Israel Citkowitz deals with the man Haydn,<sup>19</sup> and,

<sup>6</sup> Arthur V. Berger, "Excursus on English Music and the Eighteenth-century Theatre," MME I, no. 1 (January-February 1934): 1-4.

<sup>7</sup> Berger, "François Couperin (1668-1733)," MME I, no. 2 (April-May 1934): 28-30, 61-62.

<sup>8</sup> Berger, "Music in the Greek Drama," MME II, no. 3 (September-October 1935): 39-46.

<sup>9</sup> Berger, "The Piano Variations of Aaron Copland," MME I, no. 3 (September-October 1934): 85-86.

<sup>10</sup> A. V. B., "The Songs of Charles Ives," MME I, no. 4 (October-November 1934): 97-98.

<sup>11</sup> Arthur Berger, "A Requiem for the Twelve-tone System," MME IV, no. 1 (April 1937): 1-8.

<sup>12</sup> Bernard Hermann, "Discs," MME I, no. 2 (April-May 1934): 63.

<sup>13</sup> Dorothy Veinus, "Geminiani's opus I. Its Role in the Enlargement of Form and Technique in Violin Music," MME III, no. 2 (June 1935): 28-31.

<sup>14</sup> Dorothy Veinus, "*La Serva padrona* in Paris," MME III, no. 1 (March-April 1935): 23-34.

<sup>15</sup> Dorothy Veinus, "Beethoven's Volkslieder," MME I, no. 3 (August-September 1934): 73-74.

<sup>16</sup> Hugo von Leichtentritt, "On Editing Nederland Music," MME II, no. 1 (March-April 1935): 5-11.

<sup>17</sup> Anthony Sheppard, "Instrumental Music Before 1600. The Historical Approach," MME II, no. 3 (September-October 1935): 47-55.

<sup>18</sup> Stephen D. Tuttle, "The Pavan-galliard Form of William Byrd," MME III, no. 4 (June 1937): 51-58.

<sup>19</sup> Israel Citkowitz, "A Note on the Personality of Haydn," MME III, no. 3 (September 1936): 33-36.

Raymond Hull, with the music of Pergolesi.<sup>20</sup> Margaret Prall discusses Alessandro Scarlatti's string quartets, one of which is given as a music supplement in the same issue.<sup>21</sup> Four writers—Paul Goodman, Arthur V. Berger, Delmore Schwartz (the well-known poet) and Herbert Schwartz—explore the “nature of music.”<sup>22</sup> There is also a two-part series treating Charles Burney's opinions about Handel.<sup>23</sup>

Nineteenth-century topics include a book review of André Gide's study of Chopin (translation from *La Revue musicale*)<sup>24</sup> and Manuel De Falla's discussion of Wagner's contribution to music.<sup>25</sup> Soviet musicologist Paul Lamm offers an overview of the autographs of Mussorgsky's compositions, and gives details about the complete edition of the composer's works.<sup>26</sup> R. D. Darrell investigates the New York Public Library's holdings of Gottschalk's music,<sup>27</sup> while Egon Wellesz examines Mahler's orchestration.<sup>28</sup> Of considerable interest is the translation of Michail Mikhailovitch Ippolitov-Ivanov's autobiography *My Half Century with Russian Music*.<sup>29</sup>

Important among the articles devoted to twentieth-century music are Arthur Waldeck and Nathan Broder's explanation of Heinrich Schenker's theories of analysis,<sup>30</sup> and Paul A. Pisk's tribute to musicologist Guido Adler on the occasion of his eightieth birthday.<sup>31</sup> Nicolas Slonimsky contributes a biographical sketch of Shostakovich, based on the writings of Soviet critic Dmitri Sollertinsky.<sup>32</sup> Juliet Danziger discusses the “altruistic” nature of three American music publishers: Wa-Wan Press, Henry Cowell's New Music Society of California and the Cos Cob Press.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Raymond Hull, “Pergolesi Revalued,” MME V, no. 4 (May 1938): 112-17; VI, no. 4 (September 1938): 1-4.

<sup>21</sup> Margaret Prall, “The String Quartets of A. Scarlatti. A Note on the Musical Insert and Some Observations it Suggests,” MME III, no. 1 (May 1936): 1-6.

<sup>22</sup> MME III, no. 1 (May 1935): 6-15, and III, no. 2 (June 1935): 17-27.

<sup>23</sup> Charles Burney, “Handel as Seen by Dr. Burney,” MME III, no. 1 (March-April 1935): 7-11; no. 2 (June-July 1935): 30-38.

<sup>24</sup> Harold A. von Arx, “André Gide on Chopin,” MME III, no. 3 (September 1936): 36-39.

<sup>25</sup> Manuel De Falla, “Richard Wagner: A Reconsideration,” MME II, no. 1 (March-April 1935): 1-3.

<sup>26</sup> Pavel Lamm, “Notes on Mussorgsky's Autographs,” MME I, no. 4 (October-November 1934): 89-92.

<sup>27</sup> R. D. Darrell, “An Early Pan-American Exhumed,” MME I, no. 1 (January-February 1934): 18-21.

<sup>28</sup> Egon Wellesz, “The Instrumentation of Gustav Mahler,” MME I, no. 3 (August-September 1934): 65-68.

<sup>29</sup> Michael Mikhailovitch Ippolitov-Ivanov, “My Half Century with Russian Music,” MME V, no. 1 (September 1937): 1-2; V, no. 2 (December 1937): 46-52; V, no. 2 (February 1938): 76-83; V, no. 4 (May 1938): 118-27; VI, no. 1 (September 1938): 12-22.

<sup>30</sup> Arthur Waldeck and Nathan Broder, “Musical Synthesis as Expounded by Heinrich Schenker,” MME II, no. 4 (December 1935): 56-64.

<sup>31</sup> Paul A. Pisk, “Guido Adler and his Orbit. The Founder of Musicology at Four-score,” MME II, no. 4 (May 1936): 1-6.

<sup>32</sup> Nicolas Slonimsky, “Dmitri Shostakovich,” MME II, no. 2 (June-July 1935): 25-27.

<sup>33</sup> Juliet Danziger, “Altruistic Music Publishing in America,” MME II, no. 2 (June-July 1935): 92-96.

Several issues contain reviews of books on music and phonograph recordings<sup>34</sup> and all issues contain advertisements for Kalmus publications.

<sup>34</sup> See, for example, Ethel Louise Lyman, "How to Systematize your Collection of Phonograph Records," MME VI, no. 1 (April 1937): 16-20.