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### Black Music Research Newsletter, Fall 1977

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# Black Music Research Newsletter

Southern Illinois University at Carbondale



Volume 1

Number 2

Fall, 1977

## FROM THE EDITOR

\*During the week of August 29-September 2, 1977, the New York Philharmonic sponsored and held a CELEBRATION OF BLACK COMPOSERS at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. The five-day Celebration served as a vehicle for the performance of works by Harriette Davison, Howard Swanson, Undine Smith Moore, Dorothy Rudd Moore, Hale Smith, Olly Wilson, Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson, Talib Hakim, T. J. Anderson, Arthur Cunningham, George Walker, William Grant Still, Adolphus Hailstork, Roque Cordero, Joseph Boulogne, José White, José Nuñez-García, Ulysses Kay, and David Baker. Most of the living composers were on hand to hear their works performed and enjoyed warm receptions from the enthusiastic audiences.

Paul Freeman and Leon Thompson conducted the New York Philharmonic in its three concerts; Leon Bates presented a solo piano recital; and a program of twelve "art songs" featured vocalists Hilda Harris, William Brown, Willis Patterson, and Faye Robinson; pianist Larry Woodard; and cellist Kermit Moore. Solo performers appearing in other programs were Eugene Moye, cellist; Irene Oliver, soprano; Aaron Rosand, violinist; Natalie Hinderas, pianist; and Sanford Allen, violinist.

Highlights of the Celebration were the Nuñez-García Requiem Mass (performed by the Morgan State University Choir, the New York Philharmonic, and singers Harris, Brown, Robinson, and Benjamin Matthews), Wilson's Sometimes for tenor (Brown) and electronic sounds, Walker's Concerto for Piano (with Hinderas as soloist), Perkinson's Toccata for piano (performed by Bates), and Hale Smith's Innerflexions, which received its World Premier by the Philharmonic on the final day of the festival.

In addition to the musical events, a panel discussion on "The Afro-American Influence in Music" was held on Wednesday afternoon. Brazial Dennard served as moderator; Albert J. (Buddy) Johnson discussed "jazz"; Undine Smith Moore dealt with "spirituals"; Raoul Abdul discussed "The Black Idiom in European Music"; and Roque Cordero treated the subject of "Latin American Music." The interaction between panelists and members of the audience contributed to the spirit and success of what turned out to be an effective and enlightening seminar.

Congratulations are in order for all who made the Celebration possible: the members of the program committee (Ulysses Kay, Dominique de Lerma, Hale Smith, George Walker, Paul Freeman, and Leon Thompson), the members of the New York Philharmonic, and the writers of the program notes (Eileen Southern and de Lerma). Special praise is due Leon Thompson who, in addition to his conducting duties, served as principal organizer and logistician for the entire event, and Paul Freeman, to whom one New York newspaper referred as "the guiding spirit" of the affair.



\*Primary-source research in black American music is taking place in locations all across the United States and in Europe. It is a stated purpose of this Newsletter to encourage and stimulate more such activity since it is important to uncover as much information as possible about movements, events, and individuals in the history of black American music. There is much with which to reckon.

Take, for example, the case of W. Henry Sherwood. During the late 1870's, Sherwood apparently lived in Florida. By 1891, when his first collection of songs for Sunday school and gospel services was published, Sherwood had become an evangelist. Although he claimed no direct association with any large black denominations, he did claim the titles "Rev. Dr." and "D.D.," which suggest that he may have graduated from a theological seminary. By 1891, a book entitled Sherwood's Solid Shot Sermons, containing "6 of the strong evangelical sermons of the Negro Evangelist," had also been published. His song collection was printed in Kansas City but was sold through a Mrs. E. Hill in Mobile, Alabama, suggesting that he might have been preaching in one or the other or both locations. By 1893, when his greatly enlarged collection, The Harp of Zion, was published, Sherwood had either established or taken over an orphanage in Petersburg, Virginia. In addition to his role as "Superintendent of Sherwood Orphan School," he was, in his own words, the "Proprietor of Sherwood's Youth Missionary Band," a children's band which consisted of fifteen violins, an oboe, a clarinet, two trombones, a small tuba, a string bass, a drum, and three additional [unidentified] instruments. Sherwood claimed that his Soothing Songs hymnal (1891), which contained a few standard hymns by such men as Lowell Mason as well as fifteen original religious songs by Sherwood himself, was "the only book of its kind ever published by a Negro." His second collection, The Harp of Zion (1893), retained ten songs from the earlier work and included twenty-two new compositions and two new arrangements written by him. In addition, he included many compositions and arrangements by other composers, thus increasing the number of pages from 27 to 140. The Harp of Zion was brought to the attention of the National Baptist Young People's Union, which later republished the work under the title, The National Harp of Zion and B.Y.P.U. Hymnal. Although this church organization merely reprinted the same music in the same order from the same plates, the credit for the selection and arrangement of the compositions was shifted from Sherwood to various committees within the organization. A few selections from Sherwood's collection are "Come Home" (1891), "Mercy is Free" (1891), "Is Not This the Land of Beulah" (1891), "Happy Host of Zion" (1893), and "Take It to the Lord" (1893). [Copyright Samuel A. Floyd, Jr. 1977]

This information on Sherwood was put together solely from statements printed on his publications and from inferences drawn from those statements. The need for further research, in order to document claims, debunk myths, and develop a definitive biographical statement, is obvious. Eileen Southern's projected biographical dictionary will provide much documentation for scholars in the field. In the meantime, however, there are numerous challenges and opportunities for interested researchers. Sherwood is only one example among many.



## RESEARCH NEWS

- \*London G. Branch, Research Associate in Black American Music at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, has begun a study entitled, Black American Music and Musicians in Southern Illinois. The study will explore and emphasize the development and contributions of black musicians from Cairo and East St. Louis, as well as other towns in the area. It will probe the social, cultural, and historical factors that may have had some influence on the music of the time when these cities were important musical centers. Field research techniques will include personal interviews as well as archival investigation. Preliminary inquiry has uncovered information concerning the activities of such figures as Miles Davis, Hamiet Bluiett, Les Hite, Eddie Randall, Dick Wilson, Candy Johnson, and Gene Dinwiddy in the Southern Illinois area. In addition, the study will document some of the activities of Louis Armstrong, King Oliver, and other musicians who visited the area during the 1920's, 1930's, and 1940's.
- \*David Griffiths, of Glamorgan, Wales, Great Britain, is working on a book which will discuss the lives of various New York black jazz musicians.
- \*Clifford D. Harper, of Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, is continuing research, initiated in 1973 by the editor of this Newsletter, on "The Great Lakes Experience," which took place during World War II and involved over five thousand black musicians in the U.S. Navy during the period 1942-1945. The purpose of this project is to produce a book which will examine and delineate the history of the Great Lakes Experience, exploring this event in the larger context of its sociological, educational, and musical significance for America, and especially as it concerns the activities of important men in the history of jazz and of American music in general.
- \*John Hasse, Discography Editor of Ethnomusicology, is editing a scholarly anthology on ragtime music.
- \*Tad Jones, of New Orleans, Louisiana, is doing research on certain figures in New Orleans popular music during the 1950's and early '60's. Artists being interviewed are: Fats Domino, Professor Longhair, Dr. John, Earl King, Allen Toussaint, and Irma Thomas. Other singers may be included in the study as appropriate. The research will not attempt to document the entire history of this period, but will only concentrate on the careers of the subject artists and their contributions to the music of the period.
- \*Howard Litwak, age 23, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Nathan Pearson, age 25, of Ledyard, Connecticut, have received a Humanities Endowment Youthgrant of \$8,568 to interview musicians, club owners, and others involved in the Kansas City jazz scene in order to portray the musical and social atmosphere of the rich period in Kansas City's jazz history from 1924 to 1942. The materials collected will be preserved on tape and in indexed transcripts for scholarly and public use at the Rutgers University Jazz Institute and as part of the Smithsonian Institution's Jazz Oral History Project.
- \*Jim O'Neal of Chicago, an editor of Living Blues magazine, is at work on a book which will deal with the Post-World War II Mississippi Delta blues scene. Co-authors of the book are Bob Eager, Steve LaVere, and Gayle Wardlow.



- \*Daryl Stolper and Victoria Anderson, of Pacific Palisades, California, are presently conducting research to complete a project entitled, Los Angeles as a Culture Hearth for Blues and R & B -- 1941-65.
- \*Martin Williams, of the Smithsonian Institution's Jazz Program, has plans to notate and publish scores of all of the works included on the Smithsonian Collection of Classic Jazz record anthology. The result will be a set of playable scores which may be used for performance, study, and research purposes. Funding for the project is currently being sought.
- \*Apply to your university's internal research program for project funding. According to a recent article published in the Journal of Higher Education (Vol. XLVIII, No. 3; May/June, 1977; pp. 283-293), "Internal Research Programs in Colleges and Universities," by Michael R. Dingerson, per-year expenditures for such programs run as high as \$500,000 in 11% of a sample of 377 institutions. Twenty-nine percent spend between \$75,000 and \$499,000. The article summarizes the functions of university internal research programs as follows:

The internal research program is designed to support two general kinds of efforts. The first is to support all or most of the costs for projects that are considered unfundable outside the institution and to support all or most of the costs of projects needing only a very modest expenditure of funds. The second is to support those researchers who are aspiring to better their respective research opportunities with regard to external funding agencies or with regard to professional competencies. The former effort is achieved by supporting researchers through pilot or "seed" studies designed to provide data necessary to compose an attractive proposal for submission to an external agency. The latter effort is accomplished by supporting unproven researchers at the beginning of their careers.

#### FOUNDATION NEWS

The Foundation Center. There are more than 27,000 grant-making foundations in the United States awarding more than \$2 billion in grant awards annually. To assist fund seekers in identifying the right foundations to approach, The Foundation Center has just published an expanded and revised edition of its successful pamphlet, "About Foundations: How to Find the Facts You Need to Get a Grant." First published in 1975, the 1977 edition incorporates important new information on the philanthropic field and offers two totally new bibliographies.

This practical, illustrated guide is divided into three sections. Section one outlines the procedures for finding all of the necessary information available on specific foundations; section two deals with identifying foundations by their subject interests; and section three describes how to find the appropriate foundations to approach in a particular geographic region. Each section identifies and explains how to use the best printed and microform sources of information in the field, including "The Foundation Directory" and other Foundation Center publications, IRS sources of data, and materials published by specific foundations. An annotated bibliography gives full information on the most important resources in grant seeking and a bibliography of state foundation directories identifies and describes all of the currently available regional directories.



The nonprofit Foundation Center is the country's leading research and publishing agency in the field of philanthropic foundations. Additional information about the Center's publications and free library resources, as well as copies of "About Foundations" (\$3.00 per copy), are available from The Foundation Center, 888 Seventh Avenue, New York, New York 10019.

National Endowment for the Humanities. Division of Research Grants, National Endowment for the Humanities, 806 15th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20506.

Approaching deadline dates for the Division of Research Grants are:

	<u>For projects beginning after:</u>	<u>Applications should be dated no later than:</u>
Research Materials (Research Tools and Editing)	October 1, 1978	November 15, 1977
General Research	October 1, 1978	December 1, 1977

National Endowment for the Arts. The Music Program (Mail Stop 533), National Endowment for the Arts, Washington, D.C. 20506.

The remaining deadline for 1977 is:

	<u>To begin after:</u>	<u>Must be postmarked:</u>
Fellowships for Composers and Librettists	July 1, 1978	November 1, 1977

#### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

- \*John Hasse is trying to track down the following turn-of-the-century music magazines: American Musician and Art Journal (New York), The Intermezzo (St. Louis), Opera Magazine (New York), Brainard's Musical World, Tuneful Yankee, and Cadenza. Mr. Hasse may be reached at the Archives of Traditional Music, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana 47401.
- \*James H. Patterson, of Clark College in Atlanta, is seeking a list of instrumental compositions (for strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion) by black composers.
- \*Jim O'Neal, 2615 N. Wilton Avenue, Chicago, would appreciate receiving any available "interview material," photographs, program schedules, promotional materials, and tape recordings of, by, or relating to Sonny Boy Williamson, Elmore James, Junior Parker, and Robert Nighthawk.
- \*Dominique de Lerma is seeking commercial recordings which include performances by black musicians or music ("concert" or spirituals only) by black composers. Persons or institutions possessing or having access to recordings in these categories which are now out of print are invited to communicate with Dr. de Lerma, at Morgan State University in Baltimore, regarding a cooperative archival venture, credit for which will be cited when the research is published.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- \*Dominique de Lerma (Morgan State University, Music Department, Baltimore, Maryland 21239) is producer of a weekly hour-long program on Morgan's NPR radio station. Materials used on this program represent various aspects of black musical culture through performance of black artists and/or music by black composers. All idioms, countries, and centuries are included (e.g., jazz, spirituals, traditional African and Brazilian music, operas, string quartets, zydeco, gospel). He is currently developing a series of programs, each one of which will spotlight black music activities on a given university campus, providing that campus is willing to lend broadcast-quality open-reel tapes for this purpose, along with printed vitae on local performers and composers represented in the programs. The tapes loaned need not be edited and should be as close to first generation as practical. Full notice of these programs is printed in FORECAST, the monthly FM radio guide for the Washington-Baltimore area.
- \*The Grackle: Improvised Music in Transition, a new magazine which has as its main focus "contemporary creative improvised music generated by the innovations in form and rhythm since the mid-1950's," is available from Ron Welburn. The co-founding editors, Roger Riggins, James T. Stewart, and Ron Welburn, have over three decades' combined experience writing about music. You may have read their work in Black World, Coda, Down Beat, Jazz Hot, Nickel Review, Liberator, Pop Top, the Village Voice, and The Black Aesthetic anthology. In THE GRACKLE you will read a range of their views from physical science and computers to black cultural nationalism. The first two issues, now out of print, contained interviews with Carlos Ward, Anthony Braxton, Marion Brown, and David Murray. The third issue, still available, contains features on Steve Lacy and Herbie Nichols. The single issue price is \$1.35 (\$2.25 abroad) and for \$4.00 (\$7.50 abroad), three issues may be obtained. Checks or money orders should be made payable to Ron Welburn, Box 244, Vanderveer Station, Brooklyn, New York 11210.
- \*The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture acquired The Clarence Cameron White Collection on September 14, 1976. Now available to researchers, the collection is described, in the Journal of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, as follows:
- Between one-half and two-thirds of the Collection is manuscript music: scores; sketches; and librettos, at various stages, of the operas Ouanga and its earlier version Cocomacague (based on the life of Jean-Jacques Dessalines, the slave who led his people in revolt and who became emperor of Haiti). The balance of the music comprises sketches and manuscripts for more than 200 other works. White's numerous violin pieces include selections for Fritz Kreisler and Albert Spaulding.
- \*SYMPHONY OF THE NEW WORLD, conducted by Everett Lee, is planning a 1978 debut tour through the South. This symphony is the only fully professional, integrated orchestra in the United States. Contact Joanne Rile Artists' Management, Box 27539, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19118 (phone 215/248-8100) for information concerning bookings.

\*PHILADELPHIA AMBASSADOR CHORALE AND ENSEMBLE, which includes singers, dancers, and instrumentalists, is planning a debut tour in April, 1978. Their repertoire consists of a program of the History of Black Sacred Music, a program based on Psalm 150, and a program of Theater and Pop Musicals. Contact Joanne Rile Artists' Management for information concerning bookings.

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#### EDITOR

Samuel A. Floyd, Jr.

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