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BLACK MUSIC RESEARCH NEWSLETTER

FISK UNIVERSITY



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Taking the Broad View in Black Music Research

by John Storm Roberts

My dabbings in black music, which began at the age of thirteen with a Bessie Smith record, have led me into contemporary African urban styles and the Latin idioms of the United States. The process has left me with the profound awareness that the black musical diaspora is indeed one subject, and that an essential ingredient in studying it is breadth of vision.

There are several ways in which broad research could enrich our studies. The first is in linking up the various areas that are studied in depth. Our understanding of the Afro-American musical diaspora seems to me like a landscape dotted with artesian wells, each representing some deep but narrow research area: gastro-sexual symbolism in the blues of the lower Mississippi delta, say. But we tend to ignore the irrigation canals linking these wells which, shallow as they are, will make the entire landscape fruitful.

True, certain areas have been pretty well cultivated. Jazz is an obvious example. True, many areas lack even wells—the music of the small islands of the Caribbean, for instance. But I believe our greatest lack is in cross-cultural linkages. So much that would otherwise remain speculative becomes clearer when one moves beyond one's own field. An example: the drumming style of the English-speaking Mummies of the Dominican Republic goes a long way to support the otherwise untenable theory about the twin origin of New Orleans jazz-drumming. Here was a drumming style quite without apparent links to

New Orleans, in which elements of English late-medieval fife-and-tabor music and patterns from early military tattoo were quite unmistakably present (along with snatches of English mumming-play text), and just as unmistakably modified by West-African-derived displacements and tugs toward polyrhythm that underlie what used to be called "hot" rhythm. Nevis, in fact (for it is from Nevis that the Dominican mummies tradition originally came) acts as a kind of control to the theory about New Orleans drumming.

Another example of the broad picture's benefit—even at the cost of some accuracy of detail and a certain rigorousness of proof—comes from my one time involvement with modern African urban music of the kind often called (with or without disapproving sniff) "westernized."

The relationship of the African and western elements in this music—and the potential significance of the mutual reinforcement between imported elements and compatible elements in the host idiom—become much clearer when one compares West, Central, Eastern, and South African urban styles, and studies the pattern of dominance (and feebleness) of Latin music as against jazz in light of the basic characteristics of the host style. The extraordinary direct influence of Cuban music on parts of Africa, as well as its indirect influence through Zairian music, is another example of a significant factor that only becomes clear on the broad scale.

The ability to look beyond such categories as "black US," "Carib-

bean," and the like, is essential in certain specific areas of black music. One example of crucial research that has been totally ignored is the relationship between Black and Latin Caribbean music and Louisiana during the 18th and 19th centuries. Henry Kmen has shown the continuing contacts between the mainland and the island at the level of concert music. There is also suggestive evidence that these contacts were enormously important in black popular music also. The leader of a very early black band in New Orleans was one Perlops Nuñez and, since mestizo and white Cubans and Mexicans tended to work with white bands, I suspect that he was a black Cuban. Moreover, many pre-jazz and early jazz musicians of New Orleans were Cuban or Mexican and not the creoles with whom jazz histories normally classify them, and the "Spanish" pianists, whom Jelly Roll Morton listed among the players in a famous passage recorded by Alan Lomax, were probably in fact Cuban ("Spanish" is still frequently used even now to mean "Latino" in certain contexts). This entire linkage remains virtually unexplored because neither jazz US nor Caribbean/Latin musicologists are interested in each other's bailiwick.

Another form of breadth (length?) that we need to understand in the context of our own particular research is the chronological. Especially in African music it has been difficult to study the development of style, because earlier idioms and techniques are not usually preserved. (Hugh

Tracey's recordings of southern African music were particularly valuable in that he recorded some developments over three generations.)

Some simple aspects of the chronological approach are, of course, universally used. The real problem comes where "ethnomusicological" and "popular" areas meet. When I began research into modern African guitar music, I found that the musicologists' hostility to each stage in its development was remarkable. Those who did not damn it whole cloth as "westernized" deplored its development out of what was in fact only a brief transitional stage, the acoustic guitar idioms of the 1950s.

This tendency has left academe looking slightly foolish time and time again. Steel band music, high life, electrified blues, ska, all met the pursed lip in their time. The effect has been, in the words of Roberts' Law, that the degree of academic interest in a given style is in inverse proportion to the interest retained by its original public. (The opposite fault is endemic among musical journalists, many of whom seem to regard 1950 as the year in which history began.)

Ultimately, of course, understanding our subject demands a much greater breadth even than this. It demands a commitment to full cooperation with both literary and historical researchers. An example, from just beyond our own fence, shows the deformation that can result when this interdisciplinary approach is lacking. Seven or eight years ago, a collection was issued called *Swahili Poetry*. Only in a rather brief couple of paragraphs did the author acknowledge the fact that this was in fact a collection of song lyrics to be sung with musical accompaniment (true, there are some grey areas between song and declamation, but this was not one).

The importance of cooperation between historians and musicologists may be less obvious (except to the oral historian, particularly in Africa). But it is the historians who can explain the otherwise totally mysterious appearance of fragments from English mediaeval mumming plays among English-speaking blacks in the Dominican Republic.

There are various ways in which we can move toward the kind of breadth I am discussing. One, of course, is to show it in our own studies. Another is to have the courage to speculate more (while of course labeling speculation

as speculation and fact as fact). Another is to learn to dance: just as there are dimensions of African music that only African musicologists can grasp, so there are dimensions to salsa or to Zairian guitar music that only a night on the dance floor will reveal.

Those who feel themselves too old to frolic (in however scholarly a cause), but who have become eminent enough to sit on the boards of grant-giving bodies, can do their bit by considering whether they are not overwedded to a destructive form of safety-first. My own experience suggests that the lesson of New Orleans jazz studies—that one must do the interviewing before musicians die or become too old to remember—has not been learned. With the noble exception of the Smithsonian Institution we are now allowing the oral history of

U.S. Latin music—the last great neglected U.S. idiom—to die unrecorded for lack of grant funds.

But the problem goes well beyond U.S. Latin music, which I confess to be a bee in my personal bonnet. Granted that there is always more to be learned, there are still areas about which we know more than others. The Mississippi country blues has been studied in at least three ethnomusicological generations. Yet who will doubt which scheme would get the grant: yet another Mississippi Blues project or an investigation of the music (if any) of the black crabbers of the Chesapeake Bay? An old theorem propounded by Agatha Christie hold all to good in our own field: "Never Be First." To the extent that it continues to do so, Black Music Research will be unworthy of its subjects.

Fisk University Archival Collection of Recorded Black Music

by Darius Thieme
Fisk University

This collection, housed in the Fisk University Library, is rich in the variety of musical song-types recorded, the kinds of folk-documentary recordings that are included (interviews, reports of customs, historical anecdotes, etc.), and the insights offered by the informants into the practice of music making and aesthetic communication. One is also struck by the broad range of the performances themselves. These range from informal singing in the course of an interview, to singing and music-making in the oral tradition of folk music, to formal church and concert performances before an audience. The performers include musicians of a broad range of talent and ability (folk, amateur and professional).

The collection comprises 119 recordings and approximately 100 hours of recorded examples. It includes vocal and instrumental music, interviews, folk tales, customs, information concerning rural and urban life and recorded documentaries on black music and black history. The informants are persons from all walks of life: former slaves, workers, field hands, musicians, and composers. The interviewers include Alan Lomax, John W. Work III, and Dr. Charles Johnson. This historical period covered is from about 1860 to

1945; the majority of the material is from about 1935 to 1945.

The significance of the collection to music history lies in its breadth and scope, covering the genres of spiritual, gospel, long meter, ring shout, sacred harp, and other religious song types; worksong, field holler, street cry, and other folksong types; African music, blues, instrumental music, folklore, and folk tales. A large number of the recordings are unique or the only surviving copies, recorded on aluminum or glass-based discs.

Sources for the collection include the U.S. Library of Congress Archive of Folk Song, the Walter Garwick Collection of Negro Songs and Folklore, private recordings made at Fisk, commercial recordings by various producers, and a CBS documentary done during World War II concerning Afro-American life and history.

The Collection has been dubbed onto six 7" reel-to-reel tapes, re-recorded at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ i.p.s. for archival purposes. An annotated shelf list, compiled by the present author, gives titles and contents notes for the entire collection. For study purposes at Fisk, the tapes will be the principal source, as the original recordings are irreplaceable, in a deteriorating condition, and are difficult to play back. In addition, all are breakable, and the glass-

based recordings, which comprise a major portion of the collection, are extremely fragile.¹

The collection includes 73 recordings on professional 12" discs, and many of these are glass-based discs. There are also 29 aluminum-based recordings; these include private recordings made at Fisk. There are 14 commercial recordings made by various producers, and 3 U.S. Library of Congress Archive of Folk Song recordings, made for public issue. The majority of the records in the collection are 12" in diameter; ten are 10" in diameter. All were recorded at 78 r.p.m., but some 17 have grooves recorded running inside-out (reverse of the present normal procedures). About 5 recordings were broken or otherwise unplayable, and many had various problems: deterioration of the coating or the base, non-standard grooves, warping, and speed fluctuation or irregularity.

Regarding subject content, one may, for purposes of overall description, speak of "collections within the collection." There are 21 records from the Walter Garwick Collection of Negro Songs and Folktales. These were recorded in the field during church services and during other live performances of spirituals, ring shouts, religious songs, shape note or sacred harp songs and hymns. Sermons, folktales, solo songs, street cries, and interviews concerning folk beliefs, superstitions, and customs are also included in this group of records.

There are ten records consisting of broadcast transcriptions of a series of programs by the Columbia Broadcasting System, Western Division, entitled "These Too Are Americans." The programs, recorded and broadcast during World War II, present an overview of the accomplishments of Afro-Americans, and were sponsored by the Los Angeles County Commission for Home Front Unity. The programs included classical music, jazz, spirituals, dramatized narratives concerning African background, the Afro-American contribution to industry, and discussions of integration and related social issues.

About 70 records (some are not identified as to source) are disc copies, of field recordings by the Archive of American Folksong at the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. The majority are of Afro-American folk music, folklore, and folk tales.

Spirituals, religious songs, gospel songs, blues, and folk music are included as are interviews with performers and other informants (including former slaves). This group of records represents a prime source for in-context documentation of music and its role in black culture. Researchers responsible for the AAFS field recordings include Bess and Alex Lomax and John W. Work III.

Another group of about 8 records was recorded privately, evidently at Fisk University by Dr. Charles Johnson. These include folk music, interviews, performances by the Fisk University Choir and individual faculty members, some speeches (including a commencement address), and some group discussions by faculty members and others. These add recorded documentation to the role of Fisk in education at a particular period in its history.

There is also an interesting group of records of African music, recorded in

Africa and issued commercially, primarily by Parlophone Records in Monrovia, Liberia. These records supply added documentation to the subject of the African influence on Afro-American music. Such musical factors as polyrhythms, polymetric accompaniments, syncopation, off-beat phrasing, and call-and-response vocal forms are readily apparent.

In summarizing the descriptive notes given above, one must stress that the present source should be viewed as an impressive documentary collection of great historical significance. The significance comes by virtue of several factors. First, field recordings are a unique source in documenting music history. Second, a wide range of styles, performers, and abilities is displayed, enabling one to see a broad variety of performances and genres, representing a musical rainbow of many shades and hues. Comparative analysis within

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Hazel Harrison: Premiere Pianist

by Jean Cazort, Fisk University and Constance Hobson, Howard University

The name of Hazel Harrison has all but disappeared; yet for seventeen years she was a full-time concert pianist in this country, widely known and acclaimed, and referred to in the press as "the premiere pianiste of the colored race." Her career as a musician actually extended into the 1960s, but from 1914 until 1931, when she began a college teaching career, she was without doubt one of the great pianists performing in America, making annual tours around the country and playing to appreciative audiences, large and small. That she was a successful artist at a time when her race and sex were such formidable barriers attests to the quality of her artistry: it simply floated above those obstacles. She never waved a banner; she just sat down and played.

Hazel Harrison was born in La Porte, Indiana, in 1883. Her unusual talent was soon recognized, and she began piano lessons before she was five. Growing up in La Porte, she frequently appeared on local programs, and as early as age 13 was playing two-steps and quadrilles for dances, often until 2 A.M. Except for the determination of her mother that she pursue a concert career and her good fortune in being put into the

hands of an able and perceptive teacher, she might well have become a dance-hall pianist.

Before finishing high school, Hazel became the pupil of Victor Heinze, well-known pianist and pedagogue, who began to direct her talent toward a concert career, having her appear in solo recital and with orchestras in Chicago as often as it could be arranged. After she completed high school in 1902, Hazel remained in La Porte, giving piano lessons and intensifying her preparation for a concert career. In 1904, at age 21, she appeared with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. This prestigious engagement took place in that great musical capital on October 22, at the Singakademie, with August Scharrer conducting and Hazel playing the Grieg A minor and the Chopin E minor concertos. A black pianist was an oddity in 1904 Berlin, a fact which was reflected in the response of two critics. The reviewer for *Die Morgenpost* concluded his review by saying, "All in all, the little mulatto amounted to a sensation." The *Musical Courier* noted that she was very gifted, and wondered if it were "the Caucasian blood in her veins that is doing the work, for she is not a full-blooded

negress." Berlin audiences were critical and sophisticated; however, she cleared that obstacle easily. The general consensus of the reviewers was that she showed great talent, excellent technique, and unusual musical comprehension, coupled with great promise for the future.

Returning to La Porte, Hazel resumed her schedule of teaching, studying, and performing. After a 1910 recital in Chicago, critic W.L. Hubbard of the *Chicago Tribune* noted that "her technique, always commendable, has gained in certainty, in fluence, and in brilliancy, and is now of a kind and degree which enables her to play with finish and authority" and that she had gifts which made "unquestionable her more than usual aptitude for the career of concert pianist."

The opportunity for a European tour came in 1911, when she was booked by the Hermann Wolff concert agency to give a series of recitals in Germany, opening in Berlin. When Ferruccio Busoni—then one of the world's most famous pianists—heard her play he offered to accept her as a pupil, even though he had previously decided not to accept new pupils. She became a "regular" in the Busoni household, where she met many of the eminent musicians of the day, engaged in ensemble playing, and extended her education through reading German literature and philosophy. When Busoni left Berlin for a stay in Bologna, Hazel's studies continued with his most important pupil and interpreter, Egon Petri, and thus was formed a friendship that lasted many years, until his death in this country in 1962.

When the war broke out in the summer of 1914, Hazel reluctantly returned to the United States, where she was welcomed as "the premiere pianiste of the colored race" and "the world's greatest pianist." She entered a U.S. musical scene in which such outstanding black artists as Roland Hayes, Harry Burleigh, Azalia Hackley, Kemper Harreld, Joseph Douglass, Clarence Cameron White, Melville Charlton, Florence Cole Talbert, and others were appearing regularly before the public. For the remainder of the decade and throughout the twenties and into the thirties Hazel Harrison crossed the country many times in the course of her recital tours. Her name became widely known among the musical cognos-

centi as well as the public at large, and she was the unrivalled pianist of the day for the nation's black music-lovers.

In 1919 she appeared under the concert direction of F. Wight Neumann, Chicago impresario, who managed many of the foremost musicians of the day, such as Rachmaninoff, Caruso, Casals, and Kreisler. After her Kimball Hall recital in Chicago, Herman DeVries of the *Chicago American* praised Mr. Neumann as "the Abraham Lincoln of musical impresari" for affording opportunity to "a woman whose talents are certainly more to be considered than the hue of her skin." It had been suggested that, in order to circumvent the obstacle of race ("she is a negress, which closes many doors for her here") Hazel might adopt a name with a Spanish flair, and a big future would open up before her. She had rejected the idea early on. As it was, she was attracting capacity audiences, and she never felt it necessary or desirable to be anything but Hazel Harrison, pianiste.

More and more, Hazel Harrison was emerging in the press as one who was in the absolute front rank of American artists. After another Kimball Hall recital, one critic wrote that "she is the last word in musical artistry and belongs in the galaxy of premier virtuosos of today. Her magnificent playing combined the technique of Godowsky, the toneism of dePachmann, the romanticism of Hofmann, the architecture of Bauer, the power of Busoni, and the imagination of Paderewski." The *New York Age* noted that F. Wight Neumann billed her as a *pianiste*, not as a Negro pianist, and that in his prospectus her picture was next to Rachmaninoff's. Her artistry was on a level where the color line did not exist. Lucien White, reviewing a 1922 recital in the *Age*, said that it was "a musical treat as has not been set forth in New York within the memory of the reviewer. . . . The most taxing demands upon her technique were met with an ease that approximated nonchalance; the most intricate harmonic figuration was given a clarity and clear-cut definiteness that brought out each note as the master craftsman brings out the beauty of each jewel set in its frame of gold. . . . Hazel Harrison is in a class by herself, and that a class at the head of all the others."

The 1920s found her busily engaged

in giving concerts—some in black churches, some in high school gymnasias, and others on black college campuses. Although her repertoire was molded in the great classical and romantic tradition of Bach, Brahms, Liszt, etc., it also reflected her interest in the music of her time. She was a champion of the lesser-known composer, regularly performing works by her contemporaries. One notable example, very popular with audiences, was Laszlo's "Color Impressions," a composition in which the music was equated to a color. Among other compositions in her repertoire were the brilliant Liszt and Busoni transcriptions and the "Arabesque on the Blue Danube," the Schulz-Evler arrangement of Strauss' famous waltz which became her "signature tune," for it was demanded as an encore at concert after concert by her adoring public. Her appearance at Tuskegee in 1924 before an audience of 1500 persons was hailed in the *New York Age* as "a musical evening of rare excellence. The still, hushed moment following her numbers before the appreciative applause revealed best the charm and spell of her performance, which is sympathetic, finished, and radiant." This decade closed with her being honored at the University of Chicago in 1929.

Harrison's 1930-31 concert season began with a Town Hall debut, to positive critical acclaim, followed by an engagement at Jordan Hall in Boston. Meanwhile, William Dawson had been given *carte blanche* to assemble the finest faculty available for Tuskegee's new school of music. Harrison, then 47, accepted his offer to head the piano department, and thus, in 1931, began a long career of full-time teaching—first at Tuskegee, then at Howard University, and finally at Alabama State College. She would continue, however, to concertize for many years to come, and to inspire admiration and awe in generations of students and music lovers. But her fullest flowering was during that period from 1914 to 1931 when she was the undisputed "premiere pianiste."

[Information regarding the life and career of Hazel Harrison has come from reading back files of the *Chicago Defender*, *New York Age*, *La Porte daily Herald*, and the *Musical Courier*, as well as from programs, letters,

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Black String Musicians: Ascending the Scale

by Caldwell Titcomb
Brandeis University

Most major practitioners of jazz have been, and continue to be, black musicians. In the field of classical music, however, the picture changes. Few black performers have overcome all the barriers to a notable classical-music career. Singers, especially women, constitute the only exception.

Among instrumentalists, the one black superstar is pianist André Watts (b. 1946), who burst on the music scene at 16 and has since fully merited his worldwide acclaim; he has been for some years one of the four or five finest pianists in the world.

But few realize that the plight of black players in recent decades has been worse than it was several generations ago. Several past notable violinists include José White (1833-1920), who was a concerto soloist with the New York Philharmonic more than once in the 1870s; Joseph Douglass (1869-1935), grandson of the legendary Frederick Douglass and the first black violinist to tour the United States as a recitalist; and Clarence Cameron White (1880-1960), who was active as a composer in addition to his concertizing.

Only in the past few years have there been signs that things are looking better for black string players. Part of the evidence is a handful of recent recordings.

In the world of the violin we have Sanford Allen (b. 1939), who entered the Juilliard School of Music at ten, and by twenty was accomplished enough to play as a substitute violinist in the New York Philharmonic. In 1962 he became the first full-time black player in that orchestra. Over the years he gave occasional recitals, and in 1977 he courageously decided to give up his guaranteed income from the Philharmonic in favor of a career as a freelancer and soloist.

Allen shows what he can do on the fourth of nine disks that Columbia Records issued in its Black Composers Series, a project that the firm unfortunately seems to have discontinued. With the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, led by black conductor Paul Freeman, Allen gives a stunning performance of the Violin Concerto (1962) by black composer Roque Cordero (b. 1917), a native of Panama

who for some years has been professor of music at Illinois State University.

The concerto combines twelve-tone serial procedures with traditional structural designs. From a sonata-form first movement, it moves through a ternary slow movement to a rondo finale. He uses a 12-tone row, both forwards and backwards, but the piece is still easier to follow by ear than most serial works. Cordero's orchestration is so skillful that even the rambunctious finale never swamps the solo violin. Like its famous Alban Berg predecessor of 1936, this work is a rare masterpiece among serial violin concertos.

Having played the violin and viola in his youth, Cordero fashioned a highly idiomatic solo part. Nevertheless the writing twists fiendishly and Allen plays equal to every demand. His intonation is absolutely secure in huge leaps, and he always maintains control of his bowing arm. He negotiates all the double stops, harmonics, left-hand pizzicati and tricky rhythms without a hitch.

The one flaw is a 72-bar cut in the recapitulation of the first movement. Though the cut was sanctioned by the composer, it would have been preferable to present the work whole, since the concerto surely will not be recorded again soon. This aside, the performance is definitive; and the disk, filled out with Cordero's *Eight Miniatures for Small Orchestra*, won for Allen the Koussevitzky Recording Award from an international jury. But outlets for Allen's dazzling abilities will depend on the colorblindness of concert managers and audiences.

On the other hand, no past black musicians carved notable careers as viola soloists. Enter one Marcus Thompson (b. 1946), who holds three degrees from Juilliard and has taught music at M.I.T. since 1973.

Thompson interspersed his academic duties with appearances in chamber-music concerts and as guest soloist with numerous orchestras, following his professional New York debut in 1968. He has performed such staples of the viola repertory as Berlioz' *Harold in Italy*, and in 1976 was soloist in a New York performance of the Viola concerto by the late Harvard

professor Walter Piston. Two years ago he gave the premiere of a work by a black composer from Ghana, Samuel Johnson, with an orchestra led by black conductor Karl Hampton Porter.

Early this year, Thompson was a winner in the National Black Music Competition at the Kennedy Center in Washington. As a result he and violinist Yehudi Menuhin are scheduled to perform the Mozart double concerto with the Chicago Symphony this coming season.

Thompson recently released a disk on which he plays three works in collaboration with the M.I.T. Symphony Orchestra, conducted by David Epstein. Thompson himself has provided insightful jacket notes on the music.

Side one is devoted to Paul Hindemith's *Der Schwanendreher* (1935), the third of his four pieces for viola and orchestra. The work is a three-movement concerto, which uses four German songs from the Renaissance for much of its thematic material, a feature that illustrates Hindemith's lifelong interest in early music.

Hindemith was also a professional viola soloist and gave the work's premiere, later recording the piece with Arthur Fiedler after he emigrated to America. The performance by Thompson and the M.I.T. forces is perfectly acceptable, but there is no reason to prefer it since the work is currently available in four other performances with professional orchestras.

The music on the other side, by two recent Swiss-born composers, Ernest Bloch (1880-1959) and Frank Martin (1890-1974), makes this disk welcome. Bloch's oeuvre contains about a dozen works of avowedly Jewish flavor, the most famous being the *Schelomo* rhapsody for cello and orchestra (1915). The last of the Jewish works was set of five *Pièces Hébraïques* (1951), for viola and piano, three of which Bloch orchestrated the next year under the title *Suite Hébraïque*. The Thompson disk is the only current recording with the revised scoring. Though not from Bloch's top drawer, the work still stands solid and serious; and Thompson gives it a full-throated expressiveness.

The underappreciated Martin is represented by his *Sonata da Chiesa* (1938) for viola d'amore and organ. The composer authorized the use of a flute instead of viola, and later scored the keyboard part for string orchestra. A Musical Heritage recording of the flute-and-organ option features Jean-Pierre Rampal and Marie-Claire Alain. But the flute cannot execute the double stops and many other subtleties possible on the viola d'amore, a little-used instrument with more strings than the normal viola. In this piece Martin fused serial and tonal procedures skillfully, and Thompson's interpretation particularly emphasizes the work's pain.

On a disk entitled "Computer Generations," Thompson performs a work expressly written for him. *Synapse for Viola and Computer Pastoral*, and "Connecticut Country Fair" (better luck next time, Rhode Island). Moore plays almost perfectly, though the work makes no inordinate demands on its performers.

In the 1970s the cello world lost three of its supreme practitioners—two to death (Pablo Casals and Gregor Piatigorsky) and one to incapacitating multiple sclerosis (Jacqueline DuPré). At the same time two superb young artists came to the fore: Nathaniel Rosen (b. 1948), who two years ago won the Gold Medal at the International cello competition in Moscow; and Eugene Moye (b. 1951).

As a black child of eight, Moye immediately showed an aptitude for the cello, and his subsequent training was largely financed by the Epstein Memorial Foundation. In the early seventies, the U.S. State Department chose young Moye to tour the Caribbean, South America, and Africa (he is the only black cellist ever to perform in South Africa, where he insisted on nonsegregated audiences).

In 1977 he captured attention at home by playing the David Baker cello concerto with the New York Philharmonic. A few weeks later he gave his recital debut, which the New York Times called "the kind of performance that musicians making their debut must dream of: technically, polished, interpretatively mature and consistently expressive. . . . This was a debut that Mr. Moye could hang on his wall like a trophy."

Now everyone can hear what the shouting was about, since Columbia issued Moye's first recording last year

with pianist Mary Louise Vetrano as the cellist's gifted partner. Moye offers a program of six works, and the result is utterly breathtaking.

The most substantial work on the disk is the D-major transcription of Brahms's G-major violin sonata, Op. 78, published shortly before the composer's death. Experts still dispute whether this version was written by Brahms himself, Julius Klengel, Paul Klengel, or someone else. Some people denounce the transcription; but Brahms himself loved the mellow low range, which makes this version a valuable alternative.

Schumann's three *Fastasiestücke*, Op. 73, were composed for clarinet, but the composer authorized performance by violin or cello. Moye imbues the work with proper impetuosity. Moye has also resurrected a pleasant three-movement Sonata in G Major by the little-known Jean-Baptiste Bréval (1756-1825), who published many such pieces in the 1780s.

Lastly, Moye pays tribute to our century's greatest cellist by filling out the disk with three short works associated with Casals: the Siloti transcription of the second movement from Bach's organ *Toccata, Adagio and Fugue*, and Casal's own arrangement of the ever-lovely Fauré song "Après un rêve," both of which demonstrate Moye's marvelous legato bowing; and the dashing encore piece *Requiebro* that was written for and dedicated to Casals by his one-time student Gaspar Cassadó.

Moye made his Boston debut this April in Jordan Hall, playing Saint-Saëns' celebrated A-minor concerto at the season's final event offered by Concerts in Black and White, where black conductor Wendell English leads the multiracial orchestra. The concert was the best by the orchestra this year. And Moye's performance was impeccably elegant—an impression confirmed when WGBH broadcast a tape of the program the next month. Regrettably, none of the Boston newspapers reviewed the event, but a musical genius like Moye ought to be brought back soon—by someone. [Reprinted from the August 1, 1980 issue of the *Harvard Crimson*.]

[Since this article first appeared, there has become available a record on which Thompson can be heard in performances of Dohnányi's *Serenade* for string trio and second piano quintet.—C.T.]

ARCHIVAL COLLECTION

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the collection is thereby enhanced. Third, documentation of the historical and social context of the Afro-American music and its African background supplies a frame within which one can view the musical elements in depth and perspective.

Taken as an entity, therefore, this collection may be appreciated as forming a kind of mosaic, giving a panoramic view of the music in its social and historic context. This is documentation in its broadest meaning. Researchers who wish to use this collection are encouraged to apply in writing in advance of their visit, to Dr. Jessie C. Smith, University Librarian, Fisk University.

A brief comment concerning technical factors and transcription procedures needs to be made. The records were copied from a 3-speed Newcomb Edit-10 record player to a TEAC 3300S reel-to-reel tape recorder. The vast majority of the records posed no major problems in the copying process, and most of the copies are therefore of good quality. Because of the historic significance of the material, however, attempts were made to also copy records with cracks in cases where visual inspection gave some hope of success. In some cases, serviceable copies were obtained; in others, a distorted copy resulted; in still others, a copy could not be obtained. In some cases a microgroove needle was used, in others a standard 78 r.p.m. needle was used. The addition of a very slight amount of weight was helpful in some cases (generally 2 to 3 grams of pressure was added).

A variable speed player unfortunately was not available. Consequently, minor speed fluctuations had to be tolerated, but these did not affect the sound quality of the copy. In at least one case there was a problem of the disc apparently having been recorded at a non-standard speed. Here, the speed of the record player was adjusted manually, with the resultant copy being somewhat closer to correct speed and standard pitch (Tape 1, last recording on Side A and first item on Side B). The result, in summary, is set of copies of the recordings in the collection that is quite serviceable for study purposes. Virtually all of the copies that were obtained are useful for documentation whereas the original recording, in some cases, is no longer playable or poses substantial archival problems. Also, the final product is a serviceable collection utilizing a single recording medium and playback mode.

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reviews, and interviews with friends and former pupils. Published biographical information is scanty, the most recent being Josephine Harrel Love's article in *Notable American Women: The Modern Period* (Harvard University Press, 1980)]