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A Historical Overview of Soul Music in Chicago

by Robert Pruter, Elmhurst, Illinois

Chicago was once a major center for the production and recording of soul music, that "gospelized" variant of rhythm and blues that emerged in the early 1960s and dominated black music for the next decade. During the 1960s and 1970s Chicago-style soul music was produced by such major labels as Vee Jay, Chess, ABC-Paramount, Curtom, Okeh (a Columbia subsidiary), Brunswick (a Decca subsidiary), and Mercury. There were numerous lesser lights, many mere mom-and-pop operations, that also helped fuel the soul explosion in the city—Brainstorm, Formal, Cortland/Witch, Nike/Tip Top, St. Lawrence/Satellite, Giant, Four Brothers, One-derful—a veritable laundry list of names.

Many of the world's major soul acts—such as Jerry Butler, the Impressions, Gene Chandler, the Chilites, and the Dells—called Chicago their home. At one time, as many as one-third of all the records spun on the city's black radio stations were locally produced (Pruter 1987). Internationally, Chicago was putting as many records on the charts as such

soul factories as Detroit, Memphis, and New York.

Michigan Avenue, just south of Chicago's downtown, was the city's "Record Row" and the center of its flourishing music scene (Dachs 1964, 176). There the offices of Chess, Vee Jay, One-derful, ABC-Paramount, and a host of record distributors were located. The distribution firms and the local radio stations worked in symbiotic fashion to contribute immeasurably to the growth of the local record industry.

In the Black Belt of the city's south and west sides were the theaters and nightclubs that were the venues from which the record companies discovered and drew their talent. The biggest and brightest venue was the Regal Theater (47th and King Drive), which was the equivalent of New York's Apollo Theater. Other theaters of note were the Capitol (79th and Halsted), the Tivoli (63rd and Cottage Grove), and the Trianon Ballroom (62nd and Cottage Grove). The most famous clubs were the High Chaparral (77th and Stoney Island), the Club (55th and State), and the Sutherland (47th and Drexel).

The first Chicago company to experience great success in the emerging soul market was Vee Jay, founded in 1953 by Vivian and James

A full-length book treating this subject, *Chicago Soul*, by the author, is scheduled to be published by the University of Illinois Press in November 1990.

Bracken. For most of its history, as the largest black-owned record label before Motown, the company was headed by Ewart Abner, Jr., but in 1963 he left to form Constellation. Several of Vee Jay's key artists moved to Constellation.

When the 1960s arrived, Vee Jay was one of the nation's largest independents, and the company's creative department, under the direction of Calvin Carter, was in a strong position to make its presence felt in soul music. Some observers claim that Chicago's first soul record had indeed come out of Vee Jay—"For Your Precious Love" (1958) by Jerry Butler and the Impressions (McEwen 1980, 143). The company was so impressed with Butler's soulful baritone that within months Carter split the young singer from the group and promoted him as a single artist. He went on to become one of Chicago's biggest hitmakers, scoring with such standouts as "He Will Break Your Heart" (1960), "Need to Belong" (1963), and "Giving Up on Love" (1964).

Dee Clark was Vee Jay's biggest act of the late 1950s, but most of his best hits were soul-styled songs from the 1960s. At Vee Jay, Clark hit with "Raindrops" (1961), among others; and at Constellation, he hit with "Come Closer" (1964), "Warm Summer Breezes" (1964), and "Heartbreak" (1964). For a time in the 1960s, another Vee Jay star, Betty Everett, was one of the hottest female vocalists in the soul field, with such classics to her credit as "You're No Good" (1963), "It's in His Kiss" (1964), and "Let It Be Me" (1964), the latter a duet with Jerry Butler.

Gene Chandler's one claim to rock 'n' roll fame is "Duke of Earl" (1962); but as a soul star Chandler was a giant, having had more than twenty-five national pop hits during the 1960s and 1970s. His best records with Vee Jay besides the "Duke" were "Rainbow" (1963) and "Man's Temptation" (1963). But the singer came into his own at Constellation with a bevy of masterful songs, notably "Think Nothing About It" (1964),

"Just Be True" (1964), and "Nothing Can Stop Me" (1965), most of which were composed by Curtis Mayfield and produced by Carl Davis.

Okeh was Columbia's long-time, independently distributed R&B subsidiary. By the early 1960s, however, the label was practically moribund, and in 1962 Columbia hired Carl Davis to serve as producer and A&R director of the label. He brought his own team of musicians and arrangers (principally Johnny Pate, Riley Hampton, and most importantly, writer Curtis Mayfield) and within a year rejuvenated Okeh.

Many of the world's major soul acts—such as Jerry Butler, the Impressions, Gene Chandler, the Chi-lites, and the Dells—called Chicago their home.

The most successful Okeh artist was Major Lance, for whom Davis employed a deep brass sound to enhance Lance's reedy vocals. The most memorable Lance hits were "Monkey Time" (1963), "Hey Little Girl" (1963), "Um Um Um Um Um Um" (1964), and "Rhythm" (1964). Davis also discovered Billy Butler, brother of Jerry Butler. Working with his neighborhood pals in a vocal group, the Chanters, Butler hit with "Found True Love" (1963), "I Can't Work No Longer" (1965), and "Right Track" (1966). Another Okeh artist was Detroit native Walter Jackson, the master of the love ballad, whose best records include "It's All Over" (1964), "Welcome Home" (1965), and "Speak Her Name" (1967).

After a dispute with Columbia executive Len Levy, Davis left Okeh in late 1965. Following several years of futile attempts to maintain the label, Columbia shut it down in 1970.

When the 1960s began, Chess Records, owned by Leonard and Phil Chess, had a group of bluesmen (such as Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf) and rock 'n' rollers (most notably Chuck Berry and Bo Diddley).

The company could hardly be said to be ready for the coming soul era. But the Chess brothers adapted by bringing in from Detroit Billy Davis as A&R head and by beefing up their in-house production, arranging, and writing staff.

Etta James was Chess Records' first big soul star. She hit with such melodramatic ballads as "At Last" (1961) and "Stop the Wedding" (1962) and such soul shouters as "Pushover" (1963) and "Tell Mama" (1967). James was followed by a host of gospelized wailers, notably Mitty Collier, who hit with "I Had a Talk with My Man" (1964) and "No Faith No Love" (1964), among others, and Sugar Pie DeSanto, who hit with "Slip-in Mules" (1964).

In the softer soul vein was Billy Stewart, a Washington, D.C., native whose recordings were virtually all done at Chess. His unique style of vocalizing, which he called doubling of words, was put to marvelous use on "Strange Feeling" (1963), "I Do Love You" (1965), and "Sitting in the Park" (1965). The Dells were a veteran group of some fifteen years by the time they began a magnificent hit string at Chess in the late 1960s with "Ooo I Love You" (1967), "There Is" (1968), and "Stay in My Corner" (1968).

The Radiants were one of the earliest pacesetters in the emerging Chicago soul sound. At Chess they created a spirited and highly melodic, yet sophisticated form of soul. Their best work was done when the group consisted of a trio—Maurice McAlister, Leonard Caston, Jr., and Wallace Sampson—which used marvelous switch-off lead work to create durable hits in "Voice Your Choice" (1964) and "It Ain't No Big Thing" (1965).

Chess picked up a number of acts from St. Louis, all associated with the Oliver Sain Band. Teaming the acts with Chess writers, arrangers, and producers resulted in a load of hits, the best known being "We're Gonna Make It" (1965) by Little Milton, "Don't Mess Up a Good Thing" (1964) by Fontella Bass and Bobby

McClure, and "Rescue Me" (1965) by Fontella Bass.

Chess also produced records featuring young sopranos, as did a lot of the other companies in the city. The best and most successful of these records were Jan Bradley's "Mama Didn't Lie" (1962), Jackie Ross's "Selfish One" (1964), and JoAnn Garrett's "Stay by My Side" (1966).

By the late 1960s Chess was producing few hits, except for the Dells with producer Don Davis in Detroit. The in-house production team lost its touch and gradually drifted away from the company, a few joining Motown in Detroit. Chess folded in 1975.

ABC-Paramount was based in New York, but in 1961 signed the Mayfield-led Impressions, which resulted in its signing a number of other Chicago acts. By the early 1960s Mayfield had fully developed as a songwriter, and the Impressions hit with their very first ABC release, "Gypsy Woman" (1961). In the years hence, the group delivered hit after hit employing distinctive three-part switch-off leads of the three members of the group—Mayfield, Fred Cash, and Samuel Gooden—and tasteful horn-punctuated arrangements by producer Johnny Pate. The most outstanding hits were "It's All Right" (1963), "Keep On Pushing" (1964), and "People Get Ready" (1965).

Mayfield also had considerable success recording acts for his own labels—Mayfield and Windy C—and got hits with the Fascinations and the Five Stairsteps. ABC had one other significant Chicago-based act, the Marvelows, whose doowop-styled soul hits—"I Do" (1965) and "In the Morning" (1968)—were produced by Johnny Pate.

A harder side of Chicago soul was provided by George Leaner in his One-derful operation. He specialized in southern-style hard soul, best typified by Otis Clay with "I Testify" (1966) and "That's How It Is" (1967). Leaner had other big sellers with McKinley Mitchell's "The Town I Live In" (1962), Harold Burrage's "Got to Find a Way" (1965), the Sharpees' "Do the 45" (1965), and the Five Du-

Tones' "Shake a Tail Feather" (1963). The act that had the most hits for Leaner, much to his dismay, was an all-brother dance team from St. Louis, Alvin Cash and the Crawlers, who chanted their way through a bevy of funky dance records, notably "Twine Time" (1964).

Other records besides those from Leaner's artists helped to make Chicago the leading spawner of black dances during the 1960s. Chicago producers made it a habit to scan the dance floors at the city's high schools and teenspots for the latest dance creations and raced to get the dance rhythms on wax. Some of the biggest dance records were "The Watusi" (1961) and "Sloop Dance" (1964), both recorded by the Vibrations; "The Gorilla" (1963) by the Ideals; "The Bird" (1962), an early Carl Davis production by the Dutones; and "Boo-Ga-Loo" (1965) by Tom and Jerrio, who helped launch the Boogaloo dance craze.

A harder side of Chicago soul was provided by George Leaner in his One-derful operation. He specialized in southern-style hard soul.

As with the dance records, Leaner did not monopolize Chicago's hard soul market. Syl Johnson, who developed as an artist in the city's blues community, hit continuously on Twi-night Records from 1967 to 1972 with funky aggressive songs distinguished mostly by his sharp piercing vocals. His best records were "Come On Sock It to Me" (1967) and "Different Strokes" (1967). Other hard soul records of note include Jimmy Robins's "I Can't Please You" (1966), Johnny Moore's "Your Love's Got Power" (1966), and Darrow Fletcher's "The Pain Gets a Little Bit Deeper" (1965).

For the 1970s the story of Chicago soul was basically that of Carl Davis and his productions at Brunswick. Outstanding releases early in Davis's tenure at Brunswick, before the 1970s

had even arrived, were the Artistes' "I'm Gonna Miss You" (1966), Jackie Wilson's "(Your Love Lifts Me) Higher and Higher" (1967), and Barbara Acklin's "Love Makes a Woman" (1968). During the next decade Davis was unable to achieve much success for these artists, but two acts—Tyronne Davis and the Chi-lites—became international superstars while at Brunswick, outstanding hits being Davis's "Turning Point" (1975) and the Chi-lites' "Have You Seen Her" (1971).

Curtis Mayfield's Curtom label was also active in the 1970s, recording the Impressions, Natural Four, Leroy Hutson, Linda Clifford, and at least a dozen other acts besides Mayfield himself. But aside from Mayfield's own solo work, notably his *Superfly* soundtrack from 1972, there was very little that was truly distinguished about the company's output.

Despite considerable achievements by Chicago recording artists and companies during the 1970s, the decade was the story of the decline and disappearance of a recording industry. The growth of the major labels on both coasts effectively squeezed out first Chicago's independent distributors and then the city's independent labels. Most of the mom-and-pop labels were gone by the time Curtom closed its doors in 1980, and Carl Davis shut down his operation in 1984.

Today, on Michigan Avenue's "Record Row," virtually nothing remains of what was once a vital, creative center and industry. Chess, Vee Jay, One-derful, and others have long had their offices shuttered, and the street looks like a backwater. Farther south, in the great Black Belt where the Regal, Trianon, and other legendary venues used to stand, only piles of rubble remain. The club scene is only a shadow of its former self, and the talent produced by the few remaining niteries is signed to the major companies on both coasts. Virtually nothing is left of the thriving soul scene that made the city so exciting for popular music in the 1960s and 1970s.

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Chicago Gospel

by Horace Clarence Boyer, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Students of gospel music discover early on that a knowledge of Chicago gospel is absolutely paramount to any serious research in the field. In fact, Chicago is to gospel as New Orleans is to jazz. To be sure, while cities other than Chicago were witnessing the development of the music that was to become known as gospel, it was in Chicago that gospel musicians established and refined a workable solo style, formed both backup-singers and independent vocal groups, and created a gospel piano style, borrowing from ragtime, barrelhouse, blues, and Protestant hymns.

The Founding Years: 1921-1944

Gospel, like several other types of black music, had its origins in the South and was brought to Chicago with the people as they migrated. Chicago was an ideal location for an urban music development, for

One important precondition for the growth of black music [including gospel] in Chicago was the so-called Great Black Migration from 1916 to 1920, when around 50,000 Southern blacks took up residence in Chicago, creating the Black Belt (Robinson 1986, 422).

Among those already in Chicago before 1916 was Charles Henry Pace (1886-1963), who arrived there at age thirteen by way of a circuitous route

from his birth place of Atlanta, Georgia. Pace studied music in Chicago and by the 1920s had begun a career in black church music at Beth Eden Baptist Church, later becoming the musical director for Liberty Baptist (Tyler 1980, 9). At Liberty, Pace was expected to continue the musical tradition of singing standard Protestant hymns in the style of white congregations and directing a monthly musicale of great European choral works, which had been established by black "Old line" churches such as Olivet, Ebenezer, and Pilgrim Baptist and Quinn Chapel and Bethel A.M.E. (Spear 1967, 91-96, 174-178). While continuing this tradition, Pace also introduced a kind of gospel music into the church, which development is not as significant as is the fact that he composed the music. He therefore became the leader of a group of composers who would establish the Chicago gospel music center, unlike other centers such as Philadelphia, Detroit, and Los Angeles, all of which were established by singers.

Composers and Publishers. Pace is remembered as the composer of such gospel standards as "Bread of Heaven," "Hide My Soul," and "Nobody But You, Lord," and as a music publisher. He opened his Pace Music House in 1910 to sell Negro spirituals and European art music. In the twenties he began to publish his gospel compositions. Lillian Bowles (ca.

1872-1945), from Memphis, Tennessee, opened the Bowles House of Music in 1926, but sold sacred and secular music. Bowles is also counted among the early Chicago gospel composers, for though her catalog is small, in 1939 she composed "God's Gonna Separate the Wheat from the Tares," which became the first song recorded by Mahalia Jackson.

Another Georgian, Thomas Andrew Dorsey (b. 1899) from Villa Rica, arrived in Chicago for the first time in 1916 and, after returning to Atlanta for the winters of 1917 and 1918, settled in Chicago in 1919. After writing in 1921 his first gospel song, "If I Don't Get There" (Southern 1983, 452), Dorsey oscillated between the composition of blues and gospel music until the end of the decade, when he elected to devote himself full time to gospel. Composer of over five hundred gospel songs, Dorsey is regarded as the "Father of Gospel Music." Among his first songs in the genre are "Take My Hand, Precious Lord" (1932), "Peace in the Valley" (1937), and "The Lord Will Make a Way Somehow" (1943). In 1926 Pace published Dorsey's "How About You?" and "If You See My Savior" (Tyler 1980, 23). In 1932 Dorsey opened his publishing house, Thomas A. Dorsey, Publisher, and became the first black American to open a publishing house exclusively for the sale of black gospel. By publishing only his own compositions or

arrangements, Dorsey led the way for black gospel music publishing houses.

By 1939 Roberta Martin (1907–1969), who came to Chicago from Helena, Arkansas, as a teenager, had served a tutelage under Dorsey, establishing a reputation as a gospel singer and pianist, and opened her own publishing company, the Roberta Martin Studio of Music, through which she published her songs, as well as those of other budding composers. Her compositions from this early period include "God's Amazing Grace" (1938) and "Try Jesus" (1943).

Kenneth Morris (1917–1988) came to Chicago to play jazz in the 1934 Chicago Exposition but became ill. While recuperating, he was hired by Bowles as a scribe to replace Charles Pace, who had left Chicago for Pittsburgh. Because Sallie Martin (1896–1988) wanted to open a publishing house and needed a composer as a partner, the Reverend Clarence H. Cobb (1907–1979), pastor of the First Church of Deliverance, brought the two together in 1940 and advanced the money for the opening of Martin and Morris Music. In the first period of Chicago gospel, Morris composed such standards as "Just a Closer Walk with Thee" (1940), which he transcribed from the singing of William Hurst and to which he composed additional verses; "Yes, God Is Real" (1944); and "King Jesus Will Roll All Burdens Away" (1944).

Other composers of the founding period were Theodore R. Frye (1899–1963) of Fayette, Mississippi, who is remembered for his 1939 song "Sending Up My Timber;" Emma L. Jackson of Birmingham, Alabama, whose "I'm Going to Die with the Staff in My Hand" (1941) and "Don't Forget the Family Prayer" (1945) are still popular and who opened the Emma L. Jackson Studio of Music in 1941; and Magnolia Lewis Butts (ca. 1885–1949), whose "Let It Breathe on Me" (1941) has become a standard.

Choirs. As the Chicago center was unique for its founding by composers

rather than singers, it was also unique in that choirs, rather than soloists, introduced the music. Both Pace and Dorsey organized choirs to introduce their music. It has been generally accepted that the first gospel choir was organized by Thomas A. Dorsey and Theodore Frye at Chicago's Pilgrim Baptist Church in 1932 with Roberta Martin as pianist. Recent research, however, has uncovered the fact that Metropolitan Community Church, where Magnolia Lewis Butts was director of music, organized a chorus in 1928 (Smith 1989). By 1930 the name of the group had been changed from "chorus" to "Gospel Chorus," and it was singing Dorsey songs. An appearance by this choir at Pilgrim inspired its pastor, Junius C. Austin, to invite Dorsey and Frye to organize a choir at Pilgrim (Smith 1989). In any event, by 1932 both Ebenezer and Pilgrim had gospel choirs, and by 1933 Roberta Martin was the director of the gospel choir at Ebenezer, and Dorsey, at Pilgrim. Not long afterwards gospel choirs were organized at Salem Baptist Church, where Prince Johnson was pianist and director, and at the First Church of Deliverance, where pianist Kenneth Morris introduced the Hammond organ in 1939.

The crowning choral activity of this early period was the organization in 1932 of the National Convention of Gospel Choirs and Choruses, Incorporated, by Dorsey, Magnolia Lewis Butts, and Sallie Martin. The gospel choir became a fixture not only in Chicago but in Baptist churches throughout the nation.

Soloists, Groups, and Keyboardists. While Dorsey attempted to introduce his music with soloist Rebecca Talbert, and Magnolia Lewis Butts was singing his "How About You?" at Metropolitan, it was not until 1929, when Sallie Martin arrived in Chicago from Pittfield, Georgia, by way of Cleveland, Ohio, that he found his "demonstrator." Nineteen twenty-nine was also the year that Mahalia Jackson (1911–1972), considered the world's greatest gospel singer, ar-

rived in Chicago. In 1932, after an unsuccessful attempt to sing with a choir in Chicago, Jackson accepted the invitation of the three Johnson brothers (Robert, Prince, and Wilbur, sons of the pastor of Greater Salem Baptist Church) to join with them and Louise Lemon to form the Johnson Singers. One of the first gospel groups in Chicago—Dorsey organized his female trio the same year, 1932—the Johnson Singers began as an *a cappella* group but later persuaded Prince to serve as pianist. Jackson left the group in 1937 to pursue a solo career and to serve as Dorsey's demonstrator in her free time.

In 1933 with the assistance of Theodore R. Frye, Roberta Martin selected young men from the gospel chorus at Ebenezer, including twelve-year-old Eugene Smith, to form the Martin-Frye Quartet, for which Martin served as pianist. By 1935 the group had chosen the name Roberta Martin Singers. Sallie Martin organized the Sallie Martin Singers in 1940 and, within its first year, hired Ruth Jones (1924–1963), originally from Tuscaloosa, Alabama, as pianist and soloist. When Jones left the group in 1943, she changed her name and became famous as Dinah Washington.

Unaccompanied male quartets were popular in Chicago in the 1920s, but they were patterned after the Fisk Jubilee Quartet and sang Negro spirituals and concert music. This changed in the early forties when the Blue Jay Singers from Birmingham, Alabama, settled in Chicago. They were soon joined by Rebert H. Harris (b. 1916) and the Soul Stirrers, who made the move from Houston, Texas.

The Golden Age: 1945–1965

The war years stimulated growth in the American economy. Almost two million southern rural Blacks abandoned their low-paying domestic, sharecropping, tenant-farming jobs for work in factories located throughout the country. In the cities, both Black Americans and whites

earned the highest wages in American history. So Americans, especially Black Americans, had much to celebrate during the post war years (Maultsby 1986, 6).

Gospel music, along with rhythm and blues, was the most celebrated music of the war years. While before the war gospel music could only be purchased in Chicago, after the war agents around the country made sheet music available in local towns. While earlier very few pianists could capture the gospel style, after the war gospel musicians began to teach the style to pianists who before had played only Bach and Beethoven. The most important change of all was that before the war such large recording companies as Victor, Columbia, and Okeh controlled the market for black music; after the war small, independent record companies entered the field, and by 1945 gospel singers began recording in large numbers.

Composers and Publishers. Chicago composers were still supplying the nation with new songs, and those composers from the founding years were joined by several others who made significant contributions to the literature. Among them were Virginia Davis Marshall, who wrote "I Have a Friend Above All Others" (1945) and "I Call Him Jesus, My Rock" (1950); Sylvia Boddle, composer of "Now Lord" (1948) and "Each Day I Grow a Little Nearer" (1949); Robert Anderson (b. 1919), a former member of the Roberta Martin Singers, known for his "I Know Prayer Changes Things" (1947) and "Oh Lord, Is It I?" (1953); and the Reverend A. A. Childs, who wrote the lyrics for "Sow Righteous Seeds" (1945) to the music of Robert Anderson and "How Much I Owe for Love Divine" (1945). Willie Webb (b. 1920), also a former member of the Martin Singers, contributed "I'm Bound for Higher Ground" (1945) and "He's All I Need" (1947), while the singing preacher, Sammy Lewis, penned "Jesus, the Waymaker" (1949) and "Hold the Light" (1956).

The two most popular composers of the Golden Age were Alex Bradford (1927-1978) of Bessemer, Alabama, whose 1953 composition and recording of "Too Close to Heaven" revived the piano-accompanied male group, and James Cleveland of Chicago, who has composed over three hundred gospel songs, the best known of which include "His Grace Is Sufficient for Me" (1950) and "He's Using Me" (1962).

The composers of the earlier period continued to supply choirs and groups with new songs. Dorsey composed "Search Me, Lord" in 1948 and in 1955 contributed "Standing Here Wondering Which Way to Go," while Kenneth Morris composed "Christ Is All" (1946) and "Dig a Little Deeper in God's Love" (1947). Roberta Martin composed "What a Blessing in Jesus I've Found" in 1948 and used the song to introduce Delois Barrett (b. 1926). In 1959 she composed her most popular song, "God Is Still on the Throne." Lucy Smith Collier, the traveling pianist for the Martin Singers, composed for that group such songs as "He's So Divine" (1956) and "Whisper a Prayer" (1965).

Gospel music publishers joining the Chicago center included Robert Anderson, who, while having his office located in Gary, Indiana, served the Chicago public from his Good Shepherd Music House, established in 1952, while the H&T Music House and Publishers was opened in 1945.

Choirs. By 1955 Chicago had become known as the gospel-choir city, for in addition to the choirs organized during the founding period, the "radio choir"—a choir consisting of the better voices from a given church, which was used for the broadcast of church services—introduced new songs almost weekly. Among the most popular of these was the radio choir of First Church of Deliverance, where Ralph Goodpasteur had replaced Kenneth Morris as choir director. (This choir was selected to accompany Nat King Cole on a 1959 recording.) Robert Anderson con-

ducted the choir at Greater Harvest Baptist, Willie Webb was the director at Southside Community Church, and Anna Broy Crockett (b. 1916) conducted the choir at St. Paul Church of God in Christ. The Reverend Clay Evans founded Fellowship Baptist and the Fellowship Radio Choir with his sister, LuDella Reid, as the first pianist-director.

Soloists, Groups, and Keyboardists.

James Lee, a native of New Orleans, introduced the concept of the male soprano gospel singer at the beginning of the Golden Age and influenced Alex Bradford when he organized the Bradford Specials in 1951. In addition to his own falsetto, which extended up to high C, Bradford included a male soprano in his group. Bradford was also known as one of the most outstanding pianists of the period.

Mildred and Evelyn Gay formed the Gay Sisters and created a sensation with their recording of "God Will Take Care of You." Mildred served as pianist for the sisters and also served in that capacity for Mahalia Jackson.

Albertina Walker (b. 1930), a native of Chicago, left the Robert Anderson Singers in 1952 to form the Caravans. This group later had such stellar members as Inez Andrews (b. 1928), Bessie Griffin (1922-1989), and Shirley Caesar (b. 1938). Among the pianists who accompanied the Caravans were James Cleveland, Eddie Williams, and James Herndon. Cleveland, who joined the Caravans in 1954, also sang for a while with Dorothy Norwood and the Gospel Chimes.

Kenneth Morris organized the Martin and Morris Singers, and a mixed group from Argo, Illinois, the Argo Singers, became a part of the Chicago scene. One of the most popular and enduring groups from the Golden Age is the Staples Singers.

In this period, male quartets, unaccompanied or using guitar, began to flourish, one of the earliest to organize being the Highway Q.C.'s. Sam Cooke (1931-1964) replaced Rebert

Harris in the Soul Stirrers after having apprenticed in a family group (the Singing Children) and the Highway Q.C.'s. The Soul Stirrers and the Highway Q.C.'s also counted as a former member soul singer Johnnie Taylor (b. 1938). Other quartets were the Norfleet Brothers, the Windy City Four, and the Pilgrim Jubilees.

The gospel organist emerged during the Golden Age, and Louise Overall Weaver, along with Gerald Spraggins, accompanied choirs and singers throughout the city. No doubt the best-known organist from the Chicago center was Ralph Jones, who combined with Mildred Falls, the pianist for Mahalia Jackson, to form the Falls-Jones Ensemble, traveling all over the world with Jackson.

Recording Companies. During the Golden Age of gospel, Chicago became an important recording center for black music, and several local and national gospel groups were recorded. The United, Aristocrat, Chess, and States recording companies all had headquarters in Chicago. James and Vivian Bracken, along with Calvin Carter, formed Vee Jay Records and were particularly partial to gospel music. Though short-lived, the label was one of the most successful in Chicago.

The Fusion Years: 1965–

By 1965 several other cities had joined Chicago as gospel music centers. Philadelphia had the Ward Singers, Davis Sisters, and Angelic Gospel Singers, along with the male quartet the Dixie Hummingbirds. Detroit had Mattie Moss Clark, Charles Craig, and the Meditations; and Los Angeles would enter the field in a few short years. In addition to the establishment of centers in other cities, a new kind of gospel was emerging. The new gospel would borrow as much from rhythm and blues and soul as the older gospel borrowed from Negro spirituals and the Baptist lining-hymn. The older style of gospel was called "traditional," while the newer style was called "contem-

porary."

Composers. Both Dorsey and Morris began to direct their energies elsewhere in the sixties. Dorsey wrote a few songs during this period, the most popular of which was "Sometimes My Burdens So Hard to Bear" (1968), but Morris concentrated on distribution. Roberta Martin, who would live only until 1969, composed "There'll Be Joy" in 1965, "Just Jesus and Me" in 1966, and in 1967, "I Am Not Alone." Jessie Dixon (b. 1938) from San Antonio, Texas, contributed "The Failure's Not in God" (1964), "Bring the Sun Out" (1979), and "Satisfied" (1982). Clyde Bradley composed the popular "I'd Trade a Lifetime," and among Marvin Yancey's compositions is the well-known "Sign Me Up for the Christian Jubilee." Melvin Smothers and George Jordan are among the newest cadre of gospel composers.

As gospel became more popular and the concept of playing by "ear" became common, the need for sheet music diminished, and the once strong dynasty of publishers in Chicago gave way in the face of musicians learning songs from recordings and tapes. Only one publisher opened a business in the fusion age—Sallie Martin, who dissolved her partnership with Morris in 1975. Sallie Martin Music operated for only three years before closing.

Choirs. In 1965, after five years of working with James Cleveland, Jessie Dixon became the director of a choir organized by Melvin Brunson called the Thompson Community Choir. Recording with the choir under the name of the Chicago Community Choir, Dixon inspired the transition from traditional to contemporary gospel among choirs in Chicago. Even recording under the name of the Chicago Community Choir, the group still used the name Thompson Community Choir locally and after a few years began using that name on recordings. Not only did the group become the leading choir in the Chicago area but became one of the lead-

ing choirs on the national scene. The "Tommies," as they are called, were soon joined by such other choirs as the Apostolic Church of God TV Ministry Choir, under the direction of Betty McDaniels; the Choir of St. Paul Church of God in Christ, directed by Charles Geiger; Greater Holy Temple Choir, under the direction of James Lenox; the choir of Cosmopolitan; the choir of Christ Universal Temple, the church of the Reverend Johnnie Coleman, where Robert Mays is the director; and the choir of Christian Tabernacle, pastored by the Reverend Maceo Woods, who is remembered as one of the leading gospel organists of the 1950s. Despite the loss of their principal composer, the Reverend Marvin Yancey, the choir of Fountain of Life enjoys great popularity.

The most unique choral group in Chicago is the Soul Children of Chicago, a choir of honor roll students from the ages of seven to seventeen. The group is under the direction of Walter Whitman.

Soloists, Groups, and Keyboardists. Even as Delois Barrett Campbell maintained her membership in the Roberta Martin Singers, with whom she had been associated since the age of seventeen, she and her sisters, Billie and Rhodessa, were winning accolades as the Barrett Sisters. The sisters were celebrated in the very popular 1982 documentary *Say Amen, Somebody*.

The choir of Christian Tabernacle has produced several outstanding soloists, including Doris Sykes, Melvin Smothers, and George Jordan, while the "Tommies" produced Ethel Holloway. DeLeon Richards gained a national reputation as a child gospel singer but has since combined her singing with television acting. Two outstanding contemporary groups of the city are the L.S.D. (Love, Salvation, and Devotion) Singers and the Love Holiness Singers. Calvin Bridges is the most well known of the Chicago singers, due to a successful recording career.

Well-known pianists of the Fusion

Era are Jessie Dixon, Marvin Yancey, Gregory Scott Cooper (who accompanied Sallie Martin during the last five years of her life and now accompanies Robert Anderson), Richard Gibbs (pianist for his mother, singer Inez Andrews), and Charles Pike (pianist and music director of the Barrett Sisters). Percy Bady and Darius Brooks, from the "Tommies," are pianists and organists.

Recording Companies. While California appears to have a near monopoly on recording contemporary gospel, Chicago is the home of *I Am* records. Calvin Bridges is the most popular artist on the label, and the Barrett Sisters, who still retain traditional gospel elements, are also popular. Other artists on the label are Pop Staples of the Staples Singers and Ethel Holloway of the "Tommies."

Festivals/Media/Research Institutions. For the last several years the Chicago Gospel Festival, sponsored by the Project of the Mayor's Office of Special Events, has drawn national attention. This festival, usually held on

Father's Day Weekend, is to gospel what the Newport Jazz Festival was to jazz. Not only are gospel stars of the United States presented in a series of concerts spanning several days, but gospel stars of the United Kingdom have been introduced to the American public by way of this festival.

Vicki Winans, gospel singer and wife of Marvin Winans of The Winans (four brothers), is the host of *Singspiration*, a weekly television show (CBS, Sunday morning, 7:30 A.M., Central Time). The Stellar Awards, gospel's answer to the Grammy, were conceived and first produced by Don Jackson of Chicago, and the city houses the Gospel Music Archives at DuSable High School. The Center for Black Music Research at Columbia College has begun a drive to collect manuscripts, scores, and recordings of all aspects of black American music and has emerged as one of the principal research facilities in the country.

From Charles Pace and Thomas A. Dorsey through Roberta Martin and Mahalia Jackson; from James Cleve-

land and Albertina Walker through Jessie Dixon and Melvin Brunson; from Marvin Yancey and the Barrett Sisters through Calvin Bridges and the Soul Children, gospel developed and has flourished in Chicago. If one is to know gospel, one has to know Chicago gospel first.

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Jazz in Chicago: A Historical Overview

by Richard Wang, University of Illinois at Chicago

The early history of jazz in Chicago is partly obscured by legend and myth. For example, there is the legend that jazz arrived in Chicago on Mississippi riverboats when in fact it came up on the Illinois Central Railroad and got off at the Twelfth-Street Station (Wang 1988, 101-102); the myth that W. C. Handy's Mahara's Minstrels played at Chicago's 1893 World's Columbian Exposition (Travis 1983, 9), when in fact Handy arrived in Chicago in 1892 only to find the Chicago Fair had been postponed for a year (he left immediately for St. Louis) (Handy [1941] 1970, 28); and, most egregiously, the myth that Chicago jazz is just a subspecies of New Orleans jazz and Chicago a mere way station on the journey

from New Orleans to New York. Behind the legends and myths, however, is a substantive history that has never been fully documented.

The purpose of this article is to present an overview of Chicago jazz and its institutions and to indicate some of the directions future research might take. Hopefully, future accounts of Chicago jazz will not only dispel the legends and myths of the past but will replace fiction with fact and informed judgement.

In the 1920s the area around State Street between Thirty-first and Thirty-fifth Streets, known to the black community as "The Stroll," was the mecca of the jazz world—a veritable rialto of theaters, cabarets, and dance halls that featured

America's black entertainment music, jazz. This area was the heart of the South-Side entertainment district, and there were more theaters and cabarets there than could be found in the Loop around Randolph and State.

Located at 3110-12 South State Street, the Grand Theater was a vaudeville house, seating one thousand, which opened in the first decade of the century and was in continuous operation into the 1930s. Some of the biggest names in show business appeared there in the teens and twenties, including Butterbeans and Susie, Ethel Waters, Bessie Smith, and Cab and Blanche Calloway. The Calloways appeared there in one of the most successful

musicals of the 1920s—*Plantation Days*. The “official” history of jazz in Chicago also began at the Grand on February 1, 1915, when the Creole Band from New Orleans (via Los Angeles) appeared. This group was led by bassist Bill Johnson and featured the legendary cornetist Freddie Keppard.

Across the street from the Grand stood the Vendome Theater. This was the home of Erskine Tate’s fifteen-piece “Symphony Orchestra,” which performed on the stage and in the pit from 1918 to 1928. In 1925, shortly after he returned to Chicago from playing with Fletcher Henderson in New York, the young Louis Armstrong joined Tate’s orchestra as a featured soloist. During this same period, Fats Waller was the intermission organist for Tate.

South of the intersection of Thirty-fifth and South State was one of the most opulent of the area’s jazz cabarets—the Dreamland Cafe. There, Lil Hardin Armstrong, Louis Armstrong’s second wife, led a band of which her husband was a member in 1925–1926. Young Louis reports that the even-younger Benny Goodman came down to the Dreamland to sit in at the after-hours jam sessions, where he would “help us tear up the joint” (Armstrong 1975, 42). Many of the nightclubs and cabarets were “black and tans,” where the clientele was racially integrated. The after-hours jam sessions were also racially mixed, and the young white musicians of Chicago were drawn to The Stroll to learn all about this new music called jazz. Among these were the members of the so-called Austin High School Gang: Bud Freeman, Jimmy and Dick McPartland, Frank Teschemacher, and Jim Lanigan.

In the late 1920s several events led to the gradual decline of The Stroll and the relocation of the black entertainment center farther south. Beginning in 1927, when “talkies” were introduced to the public by Al Jolson’s movie *The Jazz Singer*, the need for live musicians in the theaters began to decline; farther south near the intersection of Forty-seventh and South

Parkway (renamed Martin Luther King Drive in 1968), the Savoy Ballroom, accommodating four thousand dancers, opened in 1927; in 1928 the 3,500-seat Regal Theater opened a few doors north of the Savoy, featuring talking pictures and stage shows. The opening of these two venues was mainly responsible for shifting the center of black entertainment to Forty-seventh and South Parkway. Although in later years Chicago would have other areas where jazz would flourish, “The Stroll” was unique; never again would there be so many important jazz clubs and musicians concentrated in so small an area.

What may have been the first jazz festival/concert in the United States (or in the world for that matter) took place on June 12, 1926, at Chicago’s venerable Coliseum on South Wabash Avenue at Fourteenth Place. The Consolidated Talking Machine Co. (Okeh Records) and Local 208 of the American Federation of Musicians—the first black local in the A.F. of M.—sponsored a “Race Artists Festival” which featured fifteen bands and was attended by about twenty thousand people (Steiner and Sengstock 1966, 6/19/1926). Among the artists and bands appearing were Erskine Tate, King Oliver, and Louis Armstrong’s Hot Five, who “broke it up” with their hot playing.

Another historic Chicago concert took place on Easter Sunday 1936 in the Urban Room of the Congress Hotel when Benny Goodman brought Teddy Wilson from New York to join Gene Krupa and himself in the concert debut of the Benny Goodman Swing Trio. Thus it was in Chicago that Goodman began his pioneering efforts toward racial integration in his band. This concert was sponsored by the Chicago Rhythm Club—Chicago’s first “hot club.” American “hot clubs” were inspired by and modeled after the Hot Club of France begun by Charles Delaunay and Hughes Panassié. Chicago pioneered in the formation of these clubs; in the 1940s John Steiner of Paramount Records and Arnold Gingrich

of *Esquire* magazine produced an important series of concerts for the Hot Club of Chicago.

During the 1920s the Melrose Brothers firm—“The House that Blues Built”—was committed to the publication of the best of Chicago jazz. Among the composers represented in their catalog were such legendary jazzmen as Jelly Roll Morton, Kid Ory, Louis Armstrong, and King Oliver. During his Chicago years, Jelly Roll Morton helped the firm establish itself through the popularity of his published piano solos and the jazz band arrangements made famous by his Red Hot Pepper recordings. One of the most interesting Melrose publications was what must have been the first collection of transcribed jazz solos: *50 Hot Choruses* by Louis Armstrong (1927). This publication, advertised as “hotter than the devil’s kitchen,” had a play-along feature if one had also purchased the companion stock arrangement. Melrose also published Armstrong’s *125 Jazz Breaks for Cornet* (1927), in which Armstrong was advertised as “the world’s hottest and most eccentric cornetist. All his tricks are in this book.” With publications and advertising like this, it is not surprising that Melrose became a pioneer in jazz publishing.

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Long before jazz was an accepted study within the music curriculum, a black South-Side band director was busy preparing his students for professional careers in this music. Beginning in 1931 with his appointment as the band director at Wendell Phillips High School, Captain Walter Henry Dyett trained more than fifteen thousand musicians until his retirement from DuSable High School thirty years later. He was a commanding leader and a demanding taskmaster—a teacher who would accept

nothing less than the best his students were capable of producing. The list of famous jazz musicians who passed thorough his program is legion: saxophonists Gene "Jug" Ammons, Johnny Board, Von Freeman, Johnny Griffin, Bill Adkins, Pat Patrick, Joseph Jarman, and Clifford Jordan; trumpeters Sonny Cohn and Paul Serrano; trombonist Julian Priester; bassists Wilbur Ware, Richard Evans, Richard Davis, and Victor Sproles; pianists Dorothy Donegan and John Young; drummers Wilbur Campbell, Phil Thomas, and Walter Perkins; violinist Leroy Jenkins; guitarist George Freeman; and vocalists Dinah Washington and Johnny Hartman. The list could go on and on. Dyett-DuSable alumnus Joseph Jarman of the Art Ensemble of Chicago, reflecting on the legacy of Captain Dyett, stated: "He was like this eternal spirit manifested in living form. One had to experience his vibrancy. We can talk about his vision, but for him to look at you with those eyes, to smile at you, for this giant to say you're cool . . ." (Freedman and Cesario 1980, 33).

In the late 1940s Chicago's famous Blue Note jazz club was located at 56 West Madison Street; in 1954 it was moved to 3 North Clark Street—both

Hopefully, future accounts of Chicago jazz will not only dispel the legends and myths of the past but will replace fiction with fact and informed judgment.

locations were in the heart of Chicago's Loop. Engagements at Frank Holzfeind's Blue Note played a crucial role in the development of jazz artists like Sarah Vaughan, Dave Brubeck, Ahmad Jamal, George Shearing, and Erroll Garner, all of whom appeared there at pivotal points in their careers. All the jazz greats played the Blue Note, but it was the annual Christmas residencies of Duke Ellington that Chicagoans remember most fondly. Over an

eleven-year span beginning in March 1949, Ellington appeared at the Blue Note on eighteen different occasions for a record-setting total of forty-five weeks (Caine 1989, 33).

Ellington's close relationship to Chicago goes beyond his appearances at the Blue Note. He chose Chicago's McCormick Place and the 1963 Century of Negro Progress Exposition for the premiere of his extended composition *My People*. In 1967 his *Second Sacred Concert* was performed in Rockefeller Chapel of The University of Chicago. During his first visit to Chicago in 1931, Ellington composed his *Creole Rhapsody* while appearing at the Oriental Theater in the Loop. Interest in the music of Duke Ellington is sustained by the members of the Ray Nance Chapter of the Duke Ellington Society, which hosted a national conference of the society at the University of Illinois at Chicago in 1984.

The successor to the Chicago hot clubs of the 1930s and 1940s is the Jazz Institute of Chicago (JIC). Founded in 1968, the JIC charter states that its goals are "to perpetuate jazz in all its forms." Some of the founding members who are still active in the Chicago community include pianist Art Hodes, historian Dr. John Steiner, impresario Joe Segal, saxophonist Franz Jackson, and record producer Bob Koester. Since it produced its first program at the Field Museum in 1969, the JIC has presented more than eighty programs in which jazz of all styles has been showcased. Since those early years the JIC has expanded its activities to include producing a jazz education program (The Jazz Express) in cooperation with the Chicago Public Schools, contributing to a jazz archive at The University of Chicago, commissioning and presenting original jazz compositions, programming the Chicago Jazz Festival since its inception in 1979, sponsoring master classes and workshops for young musicians, maintaining a jazz hotline, publishing a *Jazzgram* for its members, creating an exhibit entitled "Memories of Chicago Jazz" for the

1982 Chicago Jazz Festival, and initiating an oral history program for its DeMicheal Archives.

One of Chicago's unique jazz institutions is Joe Segal's Jazz Showcase, located in the Blackstone Hotel. In 1946 Segal began to promote jam sessions at Roosevelt University featuring the emerging young stars of bebop, including the already-famous Charlie Parker. Since then Segal has been the "keeper of the flame" for more than forty-five years, during which he has presented almost every major jazz artist and many outstanding local jazzmen. One of the special events at the Showcase is the annual August tribute to Charlie Parker—a month-long celebration of Parker's art. In 1982 the Jazz Institute of Chicago honored Segal with a concert by artists who came to prominence because of their appearances in his club. A number of National Public Radio broadcasts have originated from the Jazz Showcase, and several live recordings have been made there.

In May 1965 the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM) was chartered as a not-for-profit corporation in the State of Illinois. The AACM is the most important and long-lived black musicians' cooperative in the country and as such was the forerunner and model for the collectives of the 1970s: the Black Artists Group of St. Louis, Boston's Society for the Creatively Concerned, and Strata-East of Detroit. The AACM's charter was a symbol of the commitment that a group of South-Side musicians were making to raise the level of recognition and opportunity for what came to be known as "Great Black Music."

The AACM is an outgrowth of the Experimental Band led by Muhal Richard Abrams, one of the founders of the AACM, in the early 1960s. It began as a rehearsal band, meeting on the "off-night" at a South Cottage Grove Avenue nightclub and later at the Abraham Lincoln Center—one of Chicago's oldest South-Side settlement houses. As Joseph Jarman, one of the band's early members recalls:

"If you wanted to have something tested . . . you'd take it there." Abrams's impact upon the growth and development of the AACM is legendary. He was, and to some extent still is, the artistic fountainhead of the organization.

Almost every year since its founding, the AACM has presented an anniversary festival that brings together for several days members now living in New York and Europe as well as Chicago. There is a seriousness of purpose and purity of vision which permeates both the organization and its audience.

The Chicago Jazz Archive of The University of Chicago is dedicated to the preservation of Chicago jazz. It collects and catalogs a wide range of

primary sources, including audio and video recordings, printed and manuscript music, books and periodicals, and any other material that gives substance to the history of jazz as it was created and played in Chicago. The establishment of the archive was inspired by a visit to the university by Chicagoan Benny Goodman, who came there to lecture on the "Art of the Jazz Conductor." The Chicago Jazz Archive provides sources for the courses offered by the Department of Music and is also accessible to other scholars by permission of the Music Librarian.

The history of jazz in Chicago has a richness and diversity to which the individuals, events, and institutions described here have contributed.

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Florence B. Price and Margaret Bonds: The Chicago Years

by Rae Linda Brown, University of California, Irvine

By 1925 Florence Price (1887-1953), married with two children, had established a successful piano studio in Little Rock, Arkansas. She was also composing piano music, organ music, and art songs; arranging spirituals; and writing children's pieces for piano and violin with piano accompaniment. In May 1926 she won her first major composition award: she tied for second prize with Edmund Jenkins in the *Opportunity* magazine's Holstein prize for her piano piece "In the Land o' Cotton" ("Awards" 1926, 157).

In 1927, following the path of hundreds of Negroes from the South, the Price family moved from Little Rock to Chicago.¹ The racial tension in Little Rock had become intolerable, and

like all southern states, the government was in the process of disenfranchising Negroes. Price, too, was subjected to the overt racism. When she applied to the Arkansas Music Teachers Association, in spite of her impeccable academic and teaching credentials—an honor graduate of the New England Conservatory of Music and teaching tenures at Shorter College in North Little Rock and Clark University in Atlanta—she was denied admission because of her color (Green 1983, 32).

When Price and her family arrived in Chicago, they found a vibrant and culturally rich African-American community. The city had its own music schools for black children, including the Coleridge-Taylor Music School and the National University of Music. Black churches were the center of most activity. At least once a month, the Metropolitan Community Center Church, Olivet Baptist Church, Grace Presbyterian, and Bethel A.M.E. Church held musicals where fine talent could be heard.

By the mid-1920s the two branches

of the National Association of Negro Musicians (NANM)—the Chicago Music Association (founded in 1919) and the R. Nathaniel Dett Club (founded in 1922)—had become prominent musical organizations. They regularly sponsored African-American artists in recital, members gave lectures on black music throughout the city, and they generally promoted the work of African-American composers. Price became a member of the R. Nathaniel Dett Club on April 2, 1922 (R. Nathaniel Dett Club 1987, 5). This club, which met bi-monthly at the National University of Music, had a membership of about one hundred and included mostly younger and not yet well-established black musicians and composers. In addition to Price, some members of the club—La Julia Rhea, opera singer, and Orrin Clayton Suthern, II, organist—were later to establish themselves nationally.

Although Price was an active member of the Dett Club, holding various offices including chair of the composition committee, she was

1. Conflicting evidence exists about when the Price family moved to Chicago. Correspondence to the Arthur P. Schmidt Publishing Co. regarding her submission of "Impromptu," for piano, dated June and September 1926, carries Price's Little Rock address. However, transcripts from the Chicago Musical College indicate that she took courses there during the summers of 1926 and 1927.

equally active and became more visible through her activities in the Chicago Music Association. It was through this organization that Price met the most distinguished members of the black community, including Maude Roberts George, music editor of the *Chicago Defender* and later president of NANM (1932); Estelle Bonds, organist and teacher at the Coleridge-Taylor Music School; and Anita Patti Brown, concert singer.

Price and Estelle Bonds formed a special relationship. During the 1930s, Bonds's home became a gathering place for African-American musicians who conspired to support each other. Mrs. Bonds was a generous woman, and she was known to help anyone who fell upon hard times during the Depression. At one time, Price, her daughters, and concert singers Louis and Helen White and their daughter all lived under Estelle Bonds's roof. Mrs. White said that Bonds just "took people in," and while no one paid rent, they did contribute food (White 1988).

In Florence Price, Margaret Bonds found a sympathetic and interested teacher who encouraged her work.

When Price arrived in Chicago, Margaret was only fourteen, but Price could see that the young girl had special talents. Bonds received her first music training in piano from her mother. Under the tutelage of Martha B. Anderson, with whom she began to study at age five, Bonds won several contests and scholarships at the Chicago Musical College. When she was about eight, Bonds studied under T. Theodore Taylor of the Coleridge-Taylor School of Music, where her mother was on the faculty.

Bonds was active as a performer and an officer in the youth department of the Chicago Music Association. On numerous occasions, she was asked to represent the branch at the national conventions. In return, the organization gave Bonds scholar-

ship money to help her pursue her studies. Bonds studied piano at Northwestern University.

Throughout her teenage years Bonds was seriously interested in composition. She had opportunity to spend a great deal of time with concert singer and actress Abbie Mitchell, who shared with Bonds vocal literature by classical composers as well as art songs and spiritual arrangements by African-American composers. Bonds greatly admired Mitchell, who taught the young girl "the importance of the marriage between words and music" (Bonds 1967, 191).

Because of her young age, Bonds received little support to pursue composition. It was Price who accepted her as a composition student. In Price she found a sympathetic and interested teacher who encouraged her work (George 1932a, 15).

Bonds also had an opportunity to study composition with William Dawson, who arrived in Chicago in the summer of 1926, around the same time as Price (Spady 1981, 16). Shortly after he arrived in the city, Dawson took courses in harmony and orchestration at the Chicago Musical College and at the American Conservatory of Music, where Price also studied. Although there is no extant evidence that suggests that Dawson and Price spent any social or professional time together, they surely must have known each other.

In Dawson Bonds found a teacher who had mastered European forms and techniques, arranged spirituals, and played jazz. Bonds's predilection for jazz-flavored harmonies in her compositions may have been inspired by her work with Dawson. Dawson left Chicago in 1933 to direct the Tuskegee Institute School of Music.

While residing at the Bonds's, Price worked steadily and in 1932 her hard luck changed. She won first prize in the Rodman Wanamaker Music Composition Contest in two categories: first prize for her Symphony in E Minor, which carried the welcome prize of \$500, and honor-

able mention for *Ethiopia's Shadow in America*. She also won first prize (\$250) in the piano composition category for her Sonata in E Minor. In addition, she won honorable mention for a *Piano Fantasia*. Bonds, now a senior at Northwestern University, won the remaining prize money (\$250) for *The Sea Ghost*, an art song she had submitted for course work.

Bonds and Price worked together on numerous occasions through the 1930s, and their collaborations continued to earn recognition.

It was this competition that brought Price's music to the attention of Frederick Stock, who would conduct the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in a performance of the symphony on June 15, 1933.

Bonds and Price worked together on numerous occasions through the 1930s, and their collaborations continued to earn recognition. In late 1932 Price's *Fantasia Negre* for piano attracted the attention of a Russian ballet teacher who was working with Katherine Dunham with an eye toward forming a permanent dance troupe. The ballet, choreographed by Mme Ludmilla Speranzeva of the Chicago Art Theater, was performed at the Beaux Arts Ball in December 1932 with Margaret Bonds at the piano (George 1932b, 15).

In the spring of 1933 Price was especially busy. She withdrew from all activities in order to copy the parts of her symphony, which was to be performed in June. She was present, however, at the premiere performance of the Florence B. Price A Cappella Chorus in April, organized and directed by Grace W. Thompkins, secretary of the Chicago Music Association. On the occasion, several soloists rendered selections, the choir sang, and Maude Roberts George installed the officers of the choir. Price "acknowledged in a very beautiful way the honor which had been bestowed upon her in the naming of their group" (George 1933a,

15).

The time was busy for Bonds, too. In addition to helping Price copy the parts of her symphony, Bonds was preparing the solo part of John Alden Carpenter's *Concertino for Piano and Orchestra* for a performance with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra on the same evening. And in May Bonds performed her senior class recital at Northwestern University. She played a challenging program which included music by Franck, Debussy, Villa Lobos, and a two-piano arrangement of Carpenter's *Concertino*.

June 15, 1933, was a day to remember for black Chicagoans. The Auditorium Theater was filled to capacity in anticipation of the evening's program to be performed by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Frederick Stock. Chicago Fiskites were especially excited that Roland Hayes was chosen as special guest soloist for the event. The program included John Powell's Overture *In Old Virginia*, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's *Bamboula*, John Alden Carpenter's *Concertino for Piano and Orchestra* with Bonds as soloist, Price's Symphony in E Minor, and four selections by Roland Hayes—Berlioz's aria "Le Repos de la Sainte Famille" from *L'Enfance du Christ*, Coleridge-Taylor's aria "Onaway, Awake Beloved" from *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast*, and two spirituals, "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," arranged and orchestrated by Harry Burleigh, and "Bye and Bye," arranged and orchestrated by Hayes. Price's symphony won critical acclaim and marked the first symphony by a black woman composer to be played by a major American orchestra. Bonds became the first black soloist to appear with the Chicago Symphony.

Price steadily gained recognition as a composer. In late June she was asked to perform several of her own compositions, including the Sonata in E Minor and *Dances in the Canebrakes*, on a program of original compositions organized by members of the American Conservatory faculty (George 1933b, 15).

During July, Price performed her own music (violin and piano, art songs, part-songs, and piano music) and lectured for the National Council of Women and at the Illinois Host House at the Century of Progress Exhibition. These honors included Price as one of the recognized composers of Illinois. In August, Price was honored, with concert singer Anita Patti Brown and concert pianist Hazel Harrison, at the International Congress of Women at the Stevens Hotel (George 1933c, 15; 1933d, 15; 1933e, 15; 1933f, 15). Price also directed her Treble Clef Club (glee club) on several occasions.

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When the NAACP convention met that summer, Bonds performed several selections for them and she performed Price's *Fantasia Negre* for the overflow crowd at the International Congress of Women meeting. Bonds was active also as an accompanist for such noted singers as Etta Moten.

Only one year elapsed between the successful performance of Price's symphony and the completion of her next major orchestral work, the Piano Concerto in One Movement. The concerto was first performed, with the composer at the piano, in Orchestra Hall on June 24, 1934, at the commencement exercises of the Chicago Musical College, where she took post-graduate courses.

The concerto was performed again in a two-piano arrangement in August at the fifteenth national NANM convention in Pittsburgh. For this program, Price played the solo part and Bonds played the orchestral reduction. In addition to Price's concerto, the program included selections by Lillian Evanti, soprano, ac-

companied by William Duncan Allen, and Louis Vaughn Jones, violinist, accompanied by Camille Nickerson. The program won critical acclaim and, interestingly, was reviewed in both the major Pittsburgh newspapers (Lissfelt 1934, 27; Lewando 1934, 27).

The concerto received widespread attention later that year when it was performed on October 12, by the Chicago Women's Symphony, under the direction of Ebba Sundstrum, at the Ford Symphony Gardens, Century of Progress Exhibition. For this performance, Bonds played the solo part. The review reads:

A nationalist in my attitude toward the art, it is pleasant for me to record the brilliant success of Florence Price's piano concerto as presented by Margaret Bonds and the orchestra. . . . [I]t represents the most successful effort to date to lift the native folk-song idiom of the Negro to artistic levels.

It is full of fine melodies deriving from this source directly or by imitation. The quasi-symphonic treatment of these ideas shows abundant resource, both harmonic and orchestral. Finally the piano part is expertly set upon the keyboard and was brilliantly played by Margaret Bonds (Gunn 1934, 17).

Price and Bonds collaborated in various activities throughout the 1930s. Although each of them pursued their own careers, they continued to appear on programs together and to support each others' endeavors. Their success stands as a testimony to their enduring friendship.

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Chicago Imprints in the CBMR Database

by Samuel A. Floyd, Jr., Center for Black Music Research, Columbia College Chicago

From the 1890s to the present day, Chicago has been a leader among United States cities in the publishing of works by black composers. Consisting of jazz, blues, spirituals, gospel songs, ragtime, and concert music, the works published in Chicago run the entire gamut of black music and include compositions by some of the major figures in the history of black music, including Jelly Roll Morton, Florence Price, Margaret Bonds, N. Clark Smith, Sheldon Brooks, Clarence Williams, R. Nathaniel Dett, and William Dawson.

Included here is a list of Chicago imprints held by repositories whose holdings are cataloged in the CBMR Database of the Center for Black Music Research. The depositories hold either originals or photocopies of the titles. This listing, which includes only items published in Chicago between 1854 and 1942, is presented in the hope that it will stimulate interest and generate ideas for research projects. The names of the composers of the music, the names of the publishing houses, and the titles of many of the works should prove provocative.

Consisting of jazz, blues, spirituals, gospel songs, ragtime, and concert music, the works published in Chicago run the entire gamut of black music

A local source for the study of Chicago imprints is the J. Francis Dris-

coll Collection of Historical American Sheet Music, housed in The Newberry Library. This collection consists of more than 200,000 titles and includes thousands of items by black composers (Floyd 1974). Good national sources for original copies of Chicago imprints are the United States Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center at Howard University, Washington, D.C.; and the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York, New York.

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Black Musicians in the Claude Barnett Papers

by Otha Day, Williamstown, Massachusetts

The papers of Claude Barnett and the Associated Negro Press (ANP) are not generally known to scholars of black music history. However, for forty-five years the ANP served as a hub from which there are connections to many of the major and minor figures in the black music and entertainment worlds. This brief article will introduce the Claude Barnett Papers as a useful collection for those interested in studying a primary resource for the lives of black musicians.

In the decades of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, blacks increasingly chose to leave the socially, economically, and politically repressive rural South for the cities of both the North and South. In the urban environments many black

newspapers were founded to help ease the process of adjustment to city life. These newspapers provided a sense of belonging and pride that the local white newspapers did not offer to black communities. The black newspapers were usually regional and operated on very small budgets. Many of them had access to no dependable and timely source for national and international news and events that were relevant to the black community.

In Chicago in 1919 Claude Barnett (1889-1967) founded the Associated Negro Press. Operating until 1964, it was the oldest and largest of the black press services, with correspondents worldwide. These correspondents submitted "news stories on affairs concerning black citizens, opin-

ion columns, features, poetry, book and record reviews, cartoons and occasionally photographs" (Evans 1983, 44). The ANP would then compile these articles and send them on a weekly, and eventually more frequent, basis to the black newspapers that subscribed to the service. In so doing, the ANP "helped to create a national black culture and increased black awareness of trends and events in the nation at large" (Evans 1983, 45). Among the major black newspapers that used the ANP news services were the *Chicago Defender*, the *Pittsburgh Courier*, the *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, the *New York Age*, the *New York Amsterdam News*, the *Afro-American* of Baltimore and other cities, the *Philadelphia Tribune*, the *Houston Informer*, and the *Black Dispatch* of Okla-

homa City (Evans 1983, 46).

Barnett used his position as director of the ANP to encourage and support the careers of many musicians. He corresponded regularly with a wide variety of people involved in the music and entertainment industry. Fortunately, a significant portion of these letters have been saved and are now housed at the Chicago Historical Society. The Claude A. Barnett Papers consist of 320 boxes of correspondence, news clippings, and other papers, dating from 1918 through 1967, and 107 boxes of Associated Negro Press news releases from 1928 to 1964 (Evans 1983, 56).

Claude Barnett corresponded regularly with a wide variety of people involved in the music and entertainment industry. Fortunately, a significant portion of these letters have been saved.

In the collection there are a number of letters to Barnett from Marian Anderson, Will Marion Cook, R. Nathaniel Dett, Carl Dittus, Nora Holt, Caterina Jarboro, Clarence Muse, Andy Razaf, and Charles "Luckey" Roberts. Barnett corresponded less frequently with numerous other figures, including Josephine Baker, Margaret Bonds, Cab and Blanche Calloway, Nat King Cole, Rudolph Dunbar, Duke Ellington, H. L. Freeman, O. Anderson Fuller, W. C. Handy, Roland Hayes, Alberta Hunter, Eva Jessye, J. Louis Johnson, Harold Norton, Florence Price, Ernest L. Rucker, Noble Sissle, and William Grant Still. In the collection the letters from some of the musicians are gathered into separate files. However, to ensure that all of the letters of any one person are located, a thorough search of the folders labeled "General and Miscellaneous Correspondence" would be necessary.

Many of these letters, which often include "enclosed materials" such as press releases, tour dates, and some-

times photos, are concerned primarily with business matters. Often, the letters that are the most interesting are those that were used as the basis for ANP press releases. A close and detailed reading of these letters can reveal new facts about the lives of their authors. However, their primary value lies in providing a sense of the lives and cultural contexts into which these musicians fit. Additionally, the musicians' own descriptions of well-known events can provide interesting insights.

Some of the letters offer biting social comments. In September 1938 Will Marion Cook writes,

Am working overtime and hope some of what I'm doing will help us to become men and not the substitutes we've been since death of Douglass and advent of the super whisperer super double crosser super [handkerchief-head].

Booker Washington—whom even my great son "Mercer" (but not my grand son Mercer III) thinks was a leader. I call him a Miss-Leader.

Barnett often used his connections to focus public attention on the racism faced by black musicians. On New Year's Day 1935 the team of Norton and Margot wrote asking for advice and publicity about an encounter they had with the notorious Ed Fox, owner of Chicago's Grand Terrace Cafe. After weeks of abuse, they approached Fox requesting their back pay, whereupon "Mr. Fox assaulted Norton, his 'flunkies' there in the club closed in on him with guns and knives, so that the only sensible thing for him to do was to get out of the place as best he could." Blanche Calloway, in a letter dated June 10, 1937, describes a situation in which "a girl friend, my husband and myself [were] humiliated, embarrassed, molested and fined"—and jailed because they used the bathroom at the Shell gas station while passing through Yazoo City, Mississippi. In both of the above instances, Barnett helped the musicians obtain legal counsel.

In 1934 Barnett married concert

singer and actress Etta Moten and began to manage her career. The many folders of correspondence relating to her career are an important part of the Barnett Papers. But even before his marriage to Moten, he began a close correspondence with several concert and opera singers, including Caterina Jarboro and Marian Anderson. While in Poland for a period of time, Jarboro wrote on January 19, 1936, describing a busy schedule of opera tours and singing Aida in Polish, Italian, and Latvian. She also says, "for many reasons being over here is much better than being in America for I have learned to make myself happy over here, life is very nice and gay in my work but . . ."

In 1935 Toscanini heard Marian Anderson sing in Salzburg, Austria. In a letter to Barnett, she describes the experience of meeting the famous conductor:

Of the summer concerts, Salzburg was of course, the high point and Toscanini's attendance or rather presence gave it an extra importance, needless to say it was thrilling to talk with him and though everyone wanted to know what he said to me, I was so out of myself that I can't remember. Toscanini was marvelous.

In the mid-1940s Carl Dittus joined the executive staff of the ANP as a music correspondent and contributed many articles about black concert life in New York City.

Will Marion Cook, in his letters of the late 1930s and early 1940s revealed a still vibrant and musically active personality, who felt forgotten by the music world. "Luckey" Roberts and Andy Razaf also wrote letters describing a sense of isolation after serious illnesses and deaths in their lives. However, as each of these musicians describe their individual efforts to remain creatively involved in music and to write and publish their autobiographies, there is the sense that they realize their importance and place in music history.

William Grant Still describes the

reasons for his resignation from 20th Century Fox as the supervisor of music for the 1943 film *Stormy Weather*. He writes,

I did not approve of Newman's [the music director's] ideas that in order to be authentic, Negro music had to be crude and Negro dancing had to be sexy. . . . Those are the sort of misconceptions that help to breed misconceptions in other people's minds and indirectly influence the lives of our 13 million people.

He resigned after six weeks of a ten-week contract, without being paid.

One gem is a letter dated August 20, 1950, from Eva Jessye to Etta Moten Barnett, revealing the close friendship the two women had for many years. Jessye had a wonderful eye for detail and a strong, descriptive voice. She writes:

Saw Pearl Bailey this week for the first time. . . . nothing to have a fit over. . . . clever in style of insinuation, and a good, husky coon style voice. . . . mighty good stage appearance. But I don't like the Uncle Tom manner. . . . might call it a flat-footed shuffling voice.

She goes on to say,

Muriel Rahn is facing her big chance on Broadway in "The Barrier" . . . co-starred with Lawrence Tibbett, no less. . . . he is no doubt on the way out, but still rates enough to draw. . . . I am glad for her. I saw the trial performances at Columbia University. . . . she was truly sensational and those who say she cannot sing are wrong. Her trouble is that she seems to be showing off all the time . . . lacking in sincerity. Goodness knows she has gone thru enough to have depth, and I think she has. . . . she has been so near death that I think her attitude could result from being so darned glad to be alive . . . and rejoicing rather than being profound. . . . O, one never can tell what is in the soul of another, so why try.

Barnett received letters from fledgling concert booking agencies and recording companies seeking advice about establishing themselves in the music world. Many of them entered the business for reasons similar to those of the Indianapolis-based Ferguson Brothers Agency, whose founders expressed their desire in

1942 to address the issue of "exploitation of Race entertainers (tops in the field in many instances) by white booking offices of the country." The Crescent City Booking Agents of New Orleans described another problem. They wrote in June 1949 asking Barnett to publicize the trend of black performers such as "Cab, Dizzie, King Cole, Lionel Hampton, Jordan, Hadda Brooks, Sister Rosetta Tharpe, and many others," who performed in New Orleans for white promoters but ignored the black agencies.

In the Claude Barnett Papers may be found treasures that broaden our understanding of the lives of many musicians. While few of the letters reveal a strong gift for writing, they all highlight the dogged determination of the musicians to make a life for themselves in music.

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Jubilee Singing Groups in Illinois: A Research Note

Robin Hough, Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, Michigan

The Illinois Writers Project (IWP), sponsored by the W.P.A. in the late 1930s and early 1940s, produced a lengthy document entitled "The Negro in Illinois," in which the primary concern is the documentation of contemporary matters such as the economic conditions and the types of churches in Chicago during the late 1930s. Within this document, however, are to be found nineteen references to the appearances of African-American jubilee singing groups in Illinois from 1874 to 1891. The sources consulted by the IWP researchers, for this part of their project, were *The Chicago Evening Journal*, *The Inter Ocean*, *The Peoria Transcript*, and *The Kewanee Courier*.

The two earliest citations recorded by the IWP researchers (February 17 and May 23, 1874) concern concerts by "The Tennesseans" reported in *The Chicago Evening Journal*. The report from May 23 concludes with the ambiguous comment, "some like their songs, and others don't, it being purely a matter of sound judgment in either case."

The same newspaper carried the advertisement for the June 16-18, 1874, concerts of "The Hampton Colored Students" at McCormick Hall in Chicago. In a glowing review of the first night's concert, the reporter concludes, "the singers are superior to the Tennesseans, and their songs are of the same characteristic nature."

After the concert on June 17, Rev. Robert Collyer of Evanston Methodist Church proposed, on behalf of "the citizens of Chicago," a resolution of support for the fund-raising efforts of the Hampton singers, which concluded, "resolved, that, in our opinion, those who hear the Hampton Singers get the worth of their money anyhow."

The IWP writers noted five references in *The Inter Ocean* during March 1875 to a group identified as "The Hallalujah Band," said to be comprised of singers who were "formerly slaves in the South." They performed at the Oakland M. E. Church, at the Halstead St. M. E. Church, at Farwell Hall for the Women's Tem-

perance prayer meeting, and at an undisclosed location for the Sunday School Teachers' meeting.

There are several concert announcements from *The Inter Ocean* (March 25, April 3, and August 16, 1875) that identify the performers in rather general terms, as "the Knoxville, Tennessee colored Jubilee Singers," or "the colored Tennessee Jubilee Singers." As there were several touring groups at the time that might have been designated in such a manner, these citations are obscure. The August 16 announcement refers simply to "a grand jubilee concert and tableaux" with no citation for the group, despite the provocative comment, "the program is an excellent one, and the singers and actors deserve success."

The IWP papers on "The Negro in Illinois" clearly include valuable references to the presence of quite a variety of jubilee groups operating in Illinois between 1874 and 1891.

The *Peoria Transcript* of February 13, 1879, carried a review of the concert by "The Temperance Colored Jubilee Singers," which concluded, "There was quite a variation from the program given by them at the same place last Sunday evening. There was a strong spice of pure fun and jollity, and some excellent character singing that was highly appreciated."

A review in *The Inter Ocean* from April 4, 1879, concentrates, in a similar vein, upon the comic abilities of a group identified as "The Louis Cowen Concert Combination, a troupe of colored singers," who performed at Quinns' Chapel in Chicago. After listing all of the personnel, the review concludes, "Mr. Boshen is a good buffo singer and a man with a keen sense of the humorous."

There are two references to "The Jubilee Singers" under the direction

of F. J. Loudin. The IWP researcher recorded the dates (May 5, 1880, and February 25, 1882) but neglected to give the sources of the information. The second of these references is a rather lengthy report of a performance before an audience that included President Chester A. Arthur and a certain Dr. Rankin, who introduced the singers to the President. The review concludes,

Their singing is strangely moving, with its plaintive spirit and sometimes wierd [*sic*] strains. All present were affected by it. The President soon became deeply moved and endeavored to brush away the tears with his hands, but, soon taking from his breast pocket his handkerchief, he burst into uncontrollable tears, weeping like a child. The last note died away and the President, drying his eyes, advanced and warmly shook each by the hand, and turning to Dr. Rankin said: "Doctor, I have never in my life been so deeply moved."

The report of the meeting between Loudin's troupe and President Arthur ends with Arthur's invitation for the troupe to "call and see him whenever they visit Washington."

The Inter Ocean of April 23, 1886, carries a review of a concert at the Central Music Hall in Chicago by "The Jubilee Singers from Fisk University" led by three members of the original troupe, Mrs. Maggie Porter-Cole, Miss Georgia Gordon, and Miss Jennie Jackson. After a brief history of the Fisk Jubilee Singers, there is a detailed discussion of the program, naming thirteen of the sixteen selections. After the religious selections, three secular numbers are cited: "Old Folks at Home," "The Cows Are in the Corn," and "The Last Rose of Summer." The review concludes, "their enunciation is wonderfully marked and telling, and the purity and power of their pianissimo effects might be emulated by more pretentious singers."

A surprising entry from the October 14, 1887, issue of *The Inter Ocean* reports that "The Freedman Choral

Union made its first public appearance last evening at the Chicago Avenue church. The organization began work last March under C. M. Leslie, and is the only chorus of colored people in the West, being 175 in number." The review of the performance of this especially large chorus concludes with the following:

The singers displayed voices of both talent and culture. The programme was long but varied, and the audience listened with interest until the last. "The Soldiers Chorus" opened the concert after "Who Built the Ark?" . . . There was a vocal selection by Miss [Millie] Marshall and six numbers by the union.

The final entry in the IWP papers comes from the April 15, 1891, issue of *The Kewanee Courier*, announcing the upcoming concert of the "the Jingers, colored jubilee singers." According to the announcement, "this company includes the original male quartet who made a national reputation during the campaign of '88." This may refer to the Presidential campaign of that year. The advertisement concluded with the boast that The Jingers "have established the reputation of being the finest combination of colored singers ever before the public."

The IWP papers on "The Negro in Illinois" clearly include valuable references to the presence of quite a variety of jubilee groups operating in Illinois between 1874 and 1891. It is likely that some of the entries are excerpts from longer newspaper accounts, and for that reason researchers might wish to follow to their sources the leads provided by the IWP writers, where that is possible. Nevertheless, the IWP writers performed a real service in examining the available nineteenth-century newspapers from Illinois for documentation of the early African-American jubilee groups. The complete IWP papers, on five rolls of microfilm, are located in the Vivian Harsh Afro-American Collection of the Carter G. Woodson Regional Library in Chicago.

1991 National Conference on Black Music Research

Abstracts of Papers

The Center's 1991 National Conference on Black Music Research, to be held in Chicago during October 10-13, will focus on black music in Chicago. Following are abstracts of the papers to be presented at the meeting. The entire schedule of events will be announced in a brochure for the joint meetings of the Center, the College Music Society, the Society for Ethnomusicology, the Chinese Music Society of North America, the International Association for the Study of Popular Music, and the Association for Technology in Music Instruction.

Fair Representation: Performances of Black Music by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, 1900-1933
Brenda Nelson-Strauss, Chicago Symphony Orchestra Archivist

On June 15, 1933, a unique concert was presented under the auspices of the Friends of Music as part of the Century of Progress Exposition—an all-black program performed by members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Frederick Stock. Featured soloists included Roland Hayes and Margaret Bonds, and the concert concluded with Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's *Bamboula: Rhapsodic Dance for Orchestra*.

This paper will address the extent to which black music was represented in Chicago Symphony Orchestra concerts during the Stock era with particular emphasis on the events that led to the apparent culmination of such programming at the world's fair. Questions to be addressed include the following: to what extent was black participation either inhibited or facilitated? what role did Chicago's black community play in seeking musical representation? how did prevailing social definitions of race and culture influence the performance and packaging of black music

in the concert hall? what was the relationship of this programming to the nationalistic movement of the early twentieth century? and to what extent did inclusion in Chicago Symphony Orchestra programs further the promotion of black music in Chicago?

To date, these issues have not been adequately addressed. Recent studies have only just begun to document the phenomenon of the early world's fairs as cultural displays. Several articles have addressed in particular black protests of inadequate representation at Chicago's Century of Progress Exhibition, but none have taken a musical point of view. There has also been a proliferation of publications in the last decade concerning the black role in classical music, some focusing on the performance history at particular concert halls but none specifically documenting Chicago concert halls or orchestras.

Through interviews and a thorough study of local archival resources, an attempt will be made to deepen our understanding of the role of blacks in the classical music scene of that era and the role of black music in a major Chicago cultural institution—the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Black Women Composers in Chicago: Then and Now
Helen Walker-Hill, University of Colorado

The careers of several black women composers were furthered by a number of environmental conditions unique to Chicago. The city developed a particularly strong and independent black community between 1890 and 1920. Numerous music clubs and religious institutions, such as the Berean Baptist Church with its choirs and orchestra, provided stimu-

lation and opportunities to many musicians. Such individual contributions towards cultural life as William Hackney's "All Colored Composers Concerts" at Orchestra Hall brought Helen Eugenia Hagan to Chicago in 1915 to perform her Piano Concerto. Estella Bonds's Sunday afternoon salons in the 1920s and 1930s gave young black students the chance to meet and hear artists, writers, and musicians of the Black Renaissance.

It is no accident that the earliest black women composers to gain widespread recognition—Florence Price (1888-1953) and Margaret Bonds (1913-1972)—emerged from this milieu. Price was one of the pioneer black symphonists. Her Symphony in E Minor was performed at the Chicago World's Fair in 1933 by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under Frederick Stock and was the first work by a black woman composer to be performed by a major American orchestra. Bonds received her B.M. and M.M. degrees from Northwestern University. She built a career as a concert pianist, teacher, and composer in New York and later in Los Angeles. She collaborated with Langston Hughes in stage works (*Romey and Julie, Shakespeare in Harlem*) and set many of his poems as art songs. Her *Credo* for baritone, chorus, and orchestra was performed by the Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra under Zubin Mehta shortly after her death in 1972.

Others were also products of this environment. Betty Jackson King (b. 1928) has amassed an oeuvre that includes piano, organ, and other instrumental works in addition to numerous choral and religious works. Margaret Harris (b. 1943) has become nationally well known as a conductor, music director, and composer. Irene Britton Smith, a retired school

teacher, pursued a life-long avocation in composition; her works include a *Sinfonietta* for orchestra, a number of chamber works, choral anthems, art songs, and piano works.

Other composers, such as Lena McLin, brought enrichment to the city from elsewhere. McLin (b. 1929), a native of Atlanta, spent many childhood years in the Chicago home of her uncle, Thomas A. Dorsey. She returned to Chicago in 1951 after graduation from Spelman College. She had her own opera company for many years, and her public-school teaching career has produced award-winning choirs and voice students. Many of her choral works have been published, including her cantata *Free at Last: A Portrait of Martin Luther King, Jr.*

New talent continues to grow here, as demonstrated by the work of Regina Harris Baiocchi, whose compositions include a number of choral, chamber, and piano works. This paper will survey the contributions of these composers and will illustrate with examples of their works.

Music Criticism of Nora Douglas Holt in *The Chicago Defender*, Saturday Edition, 1917-1923

Rawn Wardell Spearman, University of Lowell

Words about music are a very poor substitute for the creative art of music per se. Nevertheless, if we accept the argument that music is a tonal representation of intrinsic human experiences and values, then its elements and qualities must depend upon words for its meaning and existence. Historically, this function and responsibility has become that of music critics, a small but select group of misunderstood arbiters of musical tastes who work hard to "establish a line of communication between the creative arts and the public." This study focuses upon just such a person—Nora Douglas Holt (1885-1974), one of the most highly esteemed pioneers of music criticism of recent years.

Holt's weekly music reviews began

to appear in the Woman's Page of the *Defender's* Society section under the name of Lena James Holt. Her first feature article, "Cultivating Symphony Concerts," appeared in the *Defender* on November 10, 1917. Her articles were written against the backdrop of World War I, which had already impacted the social, economic, and political viewpoints carried in *The Chicago Defender*, particularly noted in the by-lines of its style, policy, format, and printing. All across the nation black newspapers were becoming a forum for the advancement of the "Negro Race," fostering the fight for freedom, abolishing discrimination, and demanding integration in all phases of life.

For this paper, the content, viewpoints, and styles of selected feature articles in *The Chicago Defender* from 1917 to 1923, the period of Holt's tenure as music critic, were examined to determine what subjects and opinions she felt were of greatest importance to her reading and listening public, revealing a focus upon the following: (1) her responsibility to music as an art form, (2) the inspiration and promotion of young artists, (3) her leadership in creating an awareness of a history of Afro-American and European music to the public and society as a whole, and (4) the advancement of music criticism.

Holt served the black community, its listening audience, and performing artists by "teaching" them about the important aspects of music. For the young artist, she was a staunch advocate of "Good Musicianship." She directed her criticism particularly to vocalists, advising that harmony be a "requirement for vocalists—musicianship demands that musicians be thoroughly familiar with music rhetoric—vocalists should be thoroughly acquainted with the composers of the songs they sing, knowing the school to which they belong and their particular style."

Holt was quick to announce the opening of major operas, symphonies, and recitals, and she followed the career growth of many young

black artists like Roland Hayes and Marian Anderson while they were still studying and developing their vocal craft. (From 1943 to 1952, as music critic for the *New York Amsterdam News*, Holt would review many of these same artists again.) Other important concerns were black composers, pianists, conductors, accompanists, and opera singers.

The role of the music critic in the black community may have been her most challenging responsibility. Unlike the appraisals of white music critics during the same era, Holt found the responsibility of informing her readers about the technical aspects of the art of music to be one of the most needed in the black community. The fine line between teaching and educating a sensitive black community about "cultural advancement" required caution, patience, and a tremendous musical knowledge, with all of which Holt was well endowed.

The Music of George W. Thomas
Michael Montgomery, Southfield, Michigan

The influence of George W. Thomas, Jr. (1883-1937) on early American blues and jazz music, via recordings and compositions, is considerable but not generally recognized. Through his efforts, beginning in 1923, his younger sister Sippie Wallace (1898-1986) was among the earliest blues singers to record. Her Okeh records are classic jazz performances partly because well-known musicians like King Oliver, Louis Armstrong, Johnny Dodds, Sidney Bechet, Clarence Williams, and Buddy Christian recorded with her. Through George's encouragement and guidance, his younger brother Hersal Thomas (1906-1926) became an amazingly rich, full-keyboard blues pianist as a teen-ager. Hersal also made Okeh recordings with Oliver, Armstrong, Dodds, and his sister Sippie. Even George Thomas's daughter Hociel Thomas (1904-1952) made Okeh records with Armstrong, Dodds, and Johnny St. Cyr as well as

with her uncle Hersal. Today, all three of George Thomas's protégés—Sippie, Hersal, and Hociel—are better known to jazz researchers and scholars than Thomas himself. So, despite being an active pianist, performer, composer, publisher, and the musical godfather of the Thomas family, George W. Thomas remains a shadowy figure.

Between 1915 and 1933, Thomas was involved in the composition or co-composition, the copyrighting, and in a few cases, the publishing of more than 110 songs and instrumental numbers. Some of these numbers—including "New Orleans Hop Scop Blues" (1916), "The Houston Blues" (1918), "Sweet Baby Doll" (1919), "Muscle Shoals Blues" (1921), "The Fives" (1921), "The Rocks" (1922), "Shorty George Blues" (1923), "Up the Country Blues" (1923), and "Adam and Eve Had the Blues" (1925)—are classics and are well known to serious traditional jazz musicians, blues singers, and solo pianists today. But history so far has kept Thomas himself out of focus. The only known formal portrait of Thomas appears in a 1940 blues folio published by Clarence Williams in which the "Hop Scop Blues" is reprinted. Descendants of the Thomas family do not currently hold an original photograph of this image. No other copies are known to exist.

At Thomas's death in March 1937, Sippie Wallace went to Chicago to retrieve his business papers and the remnants of the George W. Thomas Music Company. These remnants consist of a few posed publicity photographs, numerous copyright documents, a few music manuscripts, carbon copies of business correspondence between Thomas and record company officials, royalty agreements and contracts, a few piano rolls of Thomas's compositions, inventories of musical merchandise once kept in stock to fill mail orders, three 78 rpm test pressings, and miscellaneous ephemera. These fascinating materials often raise more questions than they answer, but they do shed insights into the popular music

industry during the 1920s in general and into the independent musical efforts of George Thomas in particular. The aim of this paper is to document George W. Thomas's musical legacy using these archival materials.

Chicago-Style Jazz: Does It Exist? Richard Wang, University of Illinois at Chicago

Between the arrivals in Chicago of King Oliver (1918), Jelly Roll Morton (1922), and Louis Armstrong (1922) and their departures for New York (Oliver in 1927, Morton in 1928, and Armstrong in 1929), Chicago was a mecca for the world of jazz. Chicago-style jazz has been treated by most historians as merely a subspecies of New Orleans jazz and has been associated with the young white musicians who flocked to the South Side in the 1920s to listen to, and learn from, the black New Orleans jazzmen. However, the impact of Chicago and its theaters, cabarets, ballrooms, radio stations, recording and publishing industry on the emigrant jazzmen themselves was profound. Their response to the changed conditions of their cultural environment led to changes in repertory, tempo, instrumentation, and most importantly, style. Chicago became the incubator of the new virtuoso solo style and the place where the foundation for the swing style of the 1930s was laid. Although, for comparison purposes, there are no recordings of New Orleans jazz made in New Orleans before 1927 and no Chicago recordings by the black emigrants before 1923, the recordings that do exist, the autobiographies, and the oral histories testify to the changes that took place after jazz moved north.

Riverboat Musicians and Chicago David Chevan, Brooklyn, New York

A large number of the musicians who worked on the Mississippi riverboats continued their careers in the major urban centers of the United States. While Chicago is often addressed in various published jazz his-

tories as a main source of jazz development, little research has treated the relationship of Chicago to its surrounding territory. In his two jazz histories, *Early Jazz* (1968) and *The Swing Era* (1986), Gunther Schuller isolates Chicago from the surrounding territory. In contrast, interviews conducted by Samuel A. Floyd, Jr., with musicians such as Hayes Pillars suggest that Chicago was very much a part of the Mississippi Valley territory. This conflict suggests the need for research that will describe with greater accuracy the role that the Mississippi Valley musicians, especially those who played on the riverboats, played in the development of black music in Chicago.

This paper will explore social and musical relationships between black musicians and bands playing on riverboats in the Mississippi Valley and their counterparts in the city of Chicago. The most well-known riverboat musicians to play in Chicago were Louis Armstrong, the Dodds brothers, and Johnny St. Cyr, all sidemen in Joe "King" Oliver's Creole Band. The early Creole Band recordings will be analyzed for musical influences of the riverboat experience.

The paper will look at other riverboat musicians who moved to and worked in Chicago following their riverboat tenures. For example, one former St. Louis riverboat musician, Charles Creath, is known to have moved to Chicago and opened a nightclub, but to date his activities have never been traced.

The final topic to be treated will be a discussion of the relationship between territory/riverboat bands and Chicago. Some of those bands include the Jeter-Pillars Orchestra and Eddie Johnson's "Crackerjacks."

Earl Hines's Piano Style in the 1920s: A Historical and Analytical Perspective.

Jeffrey Taylor, University of
Michigan

Few jazz musicians have been as closely tied to Chicago as has Earl Hines. The pianist was only twenty-

one when he first moved to the city, and unlike many of his peers who left in the 1930s to explore the booming musical life of New York, Hines remained in Chicago, building a career there which spanned several decades.

Hines was the first jazz pianist to achieve international fame. As a piano soloist, his influence on succeeding generations of jazz musicians has been immeasurable. Great talents such as Teddy Wilson, Art Tatum, and Errol Garner, to name just a few, have repeatedly spoken of his contribution to their own work. With his highly linear style, stunning rhythmic independence of hands, and masterful use of articulation and phrasing, Hines revolutionized jazz piano, and his contribution is still felt today. Although the literature on Hines is fairly extensive, there is still a need for a comprehensive study that examines specifics of harmonic and melodic content, rhythm, dynamics, tempo, and articulation in order to discover what has made that contribution unique.

Working from a basis of extensive transcriptions and knowledge of recordings, I will provide a detailed discussion of Hines's early style. I will combine techniques of musical analysis with my own experiences as a jazz pianist in examining both his recordings with Jimmie Noone and Louis Armstrong in 1927 and 1928 and his first solo sessions in December of the latter year. I will address in particular the idea of "trumpet-style" piano; for although this adjective has frequently been applied to the work of Hines, its meaning and applicability have never been examined in detail.

The study will explore several influences on Hines's mature style. Like that of most great artists, his playing represents a synthesis of an innovative approach with much that had come before; as Gunther Schuller has written, he was evolutionary as well as revolutionary. In order to understand fully the development of Hines's technique, it is necessary to

look first at the ragtime and stride players he heard in Pittsburgh and New York. This paper will also examine the work of other pianists active in the Chicago area during the 1920s, such as Jelly Roll Morton, Teddy Weatherford, and a host of lesser-known figures. In the cases where recordings by these musicians are scant or non-existent, a partial picture of their work will be pieced together from piano rolls, contemporary reports, and oral histories by Chicago musicians. Finally, the crucial influence on Hines of non-pianists—particularly Louis Armstrong and cornetist Joe Smith—will be examined.

Hines never ceased growing as a musician. He kept abreast of most of the musical developments that occurred during his lifetime, incorporating into his later style many elements of swing and bebop. Yet it was his early work that had the most profound effect on other pianists. Examining Hines's style in the 1920s provides a crucial step toward the understanding of jazz in Chicago and the history of music in general.

The AACM Aesthetic: An Interpretation

Ronald M. Radano, University of Wisconsin-Madison

This paper will offer an interpretation of the aesthetic ideals of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians, the principal musical force in Chicago's black arts movement of the 1960s. Early recordings and published commentary by leading members—Muhai Richard Abrams, Roscoe Mitchell, Joseph Jarman, and Anthony Braxton—show that the organization had embraced a coherent aesthetic doctrine by the time it had emerged publicly in 1966. The musical manifestations of this doctrine are obvious and well known: an exaltation of linear elements (melody and rhythm) over vertical (harmonic) structure and the application of unconventional sounds and sound sources, from extreme-register pitch distortions to non-

pitched colorations of found objects (commonly identified by members as "little instruments").

Early critical interpretations of linear, marginally tonal "free" improvisations typically advanced the view that free jazz expressed, in musical form, the most radical objectives—or perhaps more accurately, media portrayals of the same objectives—of the black power movement. As a result, the AACM's performances acquired similar associations, while its most accessible expressions (notably, those of the Art Ensemble of Chicago and, for a time, Anthony Braxton) were made to fit conventional views of jazz music's consistent and uninterrupted stylistic evolution. Analysis of the members' commentary from the 1960s suggests, however, that the AACM's agenda expressed a unified conception of artistic and political vanguardism, rejecting mainstream critical values while advancing legitimately "artistic" concerns. Its embrace of the language of modernism serviced a cultural nationalist agenda: linear-oriented and rhythmically enlivened improvisation represented "spiritual" elements that stood in opposition to the harmonic shackles of a normative and institutionalized jazz mainstream. Furthermore, the particular advances of textural experiment and rhythmic innovation first introduced in concert music in the early twentieth century reinforced the AACM's commitment to traditional Afro-American musical expression, which, I will argue, is informed on a deep structural level by the same essential elements.

Thus, the AACM's brand of modernism represented a kind of sonic syncretism, a fusion of elements stemming from modernist concert music and traditional black music, elements that had been previously revitalized in early free jazz. What might be called the "spiritualist ideology" of the AACM stood as a metaphor for liberation—it became an artistic bulwark, a defense against the values and aesthetics of mainstream jazz. Significantly, this fusion

took place at the brink of the postmodern, when the hierarchy of high and low culture was being seriously questioned. As such, the AACM's vanguardist doctrine carries broad implications not only about the aesthetics of the era but also about the way we interpret subsequent jazz practices and expressions.

From Mississippi to Chicago: The Transition of the Blues

Jon Michael Spencer, Bowling Green State University

After slavery, a different master-slave dialectic emerged in the context of the abject economic exploitation of the postbellum plantation. Some could in fact claim that the South had won the war. Together, Jim Crow and Social Darwinism found reason and means to give blacks unequal (indeed inferior) education, deny them the vote, and relegate them to traveling in the railroad's "nigger cars" and the steamboats' "Jim Crow stalls," to sitting in the cinemas' "buzzard roosts," and to living in the "darktown slums" which lacked basic public services. Furthermore, governing the black areas was a different kind of law, the "negro law," which had its antecedent in the antebellum "slave code." A quasi-juristic criminal justice system run by vigilantes, Judge Lynch's court operated with popular consent and judged alleged black criminals.

These are the conditions that led to the migration of more than one million blacks from the southern states northward in what has come to be called the Great Migration (1916–1930). Hence, when the blues singer sings "Jim Crow Blues," we see that it is not at all profane. In the context of the "dark journey" through the Jim Crow age, it is sacred, as sacred as Mississippi's black diaspora during the Great Migration:

I'm tired of this Jim Crow,
gonna leave this Jim Crow town,
Doggone my black soul,
I'm sweet *Chicago bound*,
Yes, I'm leavin' here,
from this old Jim Crow town.

Some black Southerners believed that migration would mean the end of the blues, at least the end of its reflection on the problem of evil and suffering. But black migrants would find that such northern cities as Chicago would offer them neither economic equality nor social justice. In addition to poor working conditions, long hours, low wages, and exclusion from the labor unions, blacks also faced hostility from whites who became increasingly apprehensive and angry as the number of black migrants increased. What Chicago blues singers had to say about these conditions in their post-migratory home in the North will be the central topic of this paper.

Mama Yancey and Aspects of the Revival Blues Tradition

Jane Bowers, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and William Westcott, York University

In *Big Road Blues*, David Evans has conceptualized the folk blues tradition as consisting of concentric circles expanding outward from an individual practitioner into his local tradition, thence to the regional tradition, and all contained finally within the folk blues tradition as a whole. The elements of tradition (repertoire and musical style) are seen as normally traveling in both directions through these circles from one level to the next. It is also possible for material of an especially influential performer to leap across more than one boundary at a time. This model has been used successfully to describe the blues tradition in its first stages of development and as it continues to exist in the rural South to the present time.

Later urban blues traditions were fostered and maintained under somewhat different conditions. Confronted by a more competitive environment, city-based blues singers and pianists may have felt the imperative to develop an individual style more strongly than their rural forebears and contemporaries. Given the plurality of urban culture, they also had added incentives to expand their

competence into jazz and gospel idioms. An inevitable result was the rapid emergence of new styles and a tendency to hybridization of different idioms.

With the advent of swing, bebop jazz, and rhythm and blues, the traditions of folk and city blues diminished in prominence but in no way disappeared. Blues in the recorded tradition of the 1920s and 1930s persisted in the hands of old and young musicians of both races through the 1970s and even down to the present. The nature and dynamics of this "revival" or latter-day tradition is the primary concern of this study. It is suggested that the post-war revival blues tradition consisted of many small overlapping traditions centering around individual songs and/or the emulation of the style of venerated examples.

Estelle "Mama" Yancey (1896–1986), the wife of famed blues pianist Jimmy Yancey (1900–1951), provided a nucleus around which a later urban blues tradition developed. In the years following the death of her husband, Mama Yancey's vocal style changed demonstrably to include the use of greater melodic variety, increased rhythmic complexity, and a "shouting" style. Possible stylistic influences include those mentioned above and the "hot jazz" revival in Chicago.

On the other hand, all of Mama's recording accompanists were men who were part of, or inherited, a specific Chicago blues piano tradition centering around Jimmy Yancey in the 1930s and 1940s. These men all replicated Jimmy's personal style in some respects when accompanying Mama Yancey, especially on those tunes that she had originally sung with her husband. Through comparative analysis of her performances with these men (including her husband), it is possible to describe Yancey's later vocal style within a matrix of developing contemporary idioms, the self-conscious perpetuation of a specific tradition by blues accompanists, and her own personal creative impulses.

Four Decades of French Blues
Research in Chicago: From the
Fifties into the Nineties
André J. M. Prévos, Pennsylvania
State University

The purpose of this essay is the documentation of the efforts of several French blues researchers who have studied and documented the Chicago blues. This essay does not claim to be exhaustive but, instead, includes materials culled from interviews from significant French researchers who visited the Windy City during the post-war decades.

Among those who were interviewed for the essay are Jacques Demètre and the late Marcel Chauvard, who were among the first to document the Chicago blues in the 1950s and introduce it to both French and American audiences, renowned discographers (like Kurt Mohr), dedicated photographers (like Emmanuel Choissnel), professional musicians and filmographers (like Jacques Lacava), scholarly-minded musicians and students (like Sebastian Danchin), and amateur blues musicians (like Marc Loison, Alain Françoise, Thierry Anquetil, and François Marie) who went to Chicago to play with local blues artists and explore a world they knew only indirectly.

These individuals were interviewed during the summer of 1989, and their responses will compose the central documentation of the essay. In addition, there will be a brief description of publications and other productions—from doctoral theses to movies—that resulted from the efforts of these individuals. It will thus become clear that, parallel to the better-known French jazz researchers and their renowned publications, there is an identifiable body of French blues researchers whose efforts have resulted in an identifiable body of documentation and analysis of the Chicago blues.

The Theatricality of the Blues
Jacques Lacava, Chicago, Illinois

This paper will discuss the theatricality of blues, including its ritualistic

aspect. It assumes (1) that the only way to document the blues effectively is to view the performers through audio as well as visual media and (2) that the aesthetics of the blues influenced a wide range of artistic expressions from the stage theatrics of rock and pop bands to a certain extent to the modern aspect of performance art. The paper will treat and investigate the following: the historic role of the classic blues singers who traveled in "tent-shows" and vaudeville acts; the use of blues in the urban landscape, such as the flea market of Maxwell Street, several street corners, or the Delta fish market; and the great bluesmen as "showmen" who are able to play, sing, act, and dance.

The theatricality of the blues is reminiscent of musical theater. In blues theater, live bands interact with these actors to create rich and stimulating plays that might be called "bluesicals." In that sense, blues can be a model for playwrights in search of a genuine folk expression bearing modern aesthetics.

In examining how the blues became a theatrical expression, I will consider the remote origins of the blues in the musical expressions of Africa.

Blind Boone's Chicago Piano Rolls
Warren C. Swindell, Indiana State
University

John William "Blind" Boone already had developed a fine reputation as an excellent pianist when he made his piano roll recordings for the QRS (Quality Reigns Supreme) Company of Chicago in 1912. When he signed a contract on August 28, 1912, with QRS, he became the first African American to make a piano roll. The contract stipulated, among other things, which pieces he was to record. Some of the songs recorded were "Dixie," "Swanee River," "Old Black Joe," "Massa's in the Cold, Cold Ground," "Camp Meeting Medley No. 1," "Rag Medley No. 2," "Woodland Murmurs," and "When You and I Were Young, Maggie."

These were among the most popular songs of that era. Thus, QRS aimed the rolls at a broad and general audience.

Although Boone's first manager, John Lange, was still living in 1912, Boone went to Chicago with Wayne Allen, a music publisher and the owner of a flourishing music store in Columbia, Missouri. Allen accompanied Boone to Chicago specifically to record the rolls, only to be told by QRS officials that someone else had been hired to make the recordings. Allen, however, exclaimed that Boone could out-play anyone. Company officials challenged him to prove his claim; whereupon Allen wrote a check for \$1,000 and proclaimed, "If this man is not as great as I said, I will sign the check." Tension was running high since the other pianist had traveled to Chicago from California. The stage was set for a battle of pianists.

The Californian played first and performed one of his original compositions for half an hour. Boone applauded enthusiastically for him and then walked unassisted to a second piano, which he located by hearing the sympathetic vibrations of the overtones. While still standing, Boone said: "Your performance was very good. This is the part I like best." He then played through the middle section of the piece without a flaw. Everyone in the room shouted with glee and astonishment! The Californian shook Wayne Allen's hand and said, "My God, I'd go to hell and back for that man." Boone was then awarded the contract for making the rolls.

The following day, in addition to the pieces listed above, Boone recorded his composition entitled "The Marshfield Tornado," but he played so rapidly and with so much strength that he stripped the gears in the machine. Thus, his most important composition was lost to the world. Chicago, nevertheless, was very kind to Boone. Music critics received him well and his career profited handsomely as a result of his visits there.

Portrait of a Black Flutist

by Charles Walthall, Washington, D.C.

This handsome portrait first came to my attention in Michael Brenson's article "Black Musicians in Art: Stereotypes and Beyond" (1988). Anything but a stereotype, this cultivated black musician proudly peers at us across two centuries. Few nobles were ever rendered with greater skill.

The interesting *Times* article reviewed a then-current exhibit (July 1–August 28, 1988) entitled "The Portrayal of the Black Musician in American Art," on display at The Studio Museum in Harlem (which graciously provided the photo and catalog of the exhibit). This fascinating exhibit was organized by The California Afro-American Museum in Los Angeles and consisted of 44 works in various media from 1830 to 1970 (the present portrait looks earlier than 1830 to me).

The portrait of a black flutist, entitled simply "The Flutist," is by an unknown late 18th-century artist, in oil on canvas, measuring 35 by 28 inches. It presently hangs in The Walter Thurston Gentleman's (Reception) Lounge, Diplomatic Reception Rooms, U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C. (which kindly allowed me to view the painting, and gave permission to publish the photo). The State Department indicates:

It has been suggested that the flutist is American Revolutionary War soldier and fifer Barzillai Lew (1743–1822) of Boston, or one of Lew's sons. The portrait, formerly attributed to Gilbert Stuart, is by an yet unidentified artist who apparently used the canvas to paint a full-length figure [resembling George Washington for whose portraits Stuart was famous] still faintly visible to the left of the subject's head.

Barzillai (Barzillia, Barzillah) (nickname: Zelah, Zeal) Lew (Lieu, Lue) was born November 5, 1743, Groton, MA, and died either January 19, 1821 (Southern 1982, 243) or January 18, 1822 (*Vital Records* 1907, 287). The sonorous forename, while seemingly South American or West Indian [hence "Brazillai" in the *Times* article], or related to Italian "barzelletta," turns out to be Biblical and refers to two men in Second Samuel. Its meaning, "man of iron, strong," certainly fits the determined countenance of the portrait. Lew's residence was variously at Chelmsford and Dracut, which are near Lowell, Mass. (not Boston). He worked as a cooper and

regimental fifer (also drummer). He served as fifer intermittently from 1775 to 1777 at Bunker Hill, Ticonderoga, and elsewhere.

I question the identification of this portrait as Mr. Lew for several reasons. One, the sitter holds a flute, not a fife—not that any flutist couldn't play both. Second, the portrait depicts a cultured gentleman, not a regimental fifer. Is it likely a cooper/regimental fifer could have afforded such a quality oil portrait? Although some artist could have painted him simply because of his striking figure. Several persons to whom I have made inquiry about the portrait also doubt that Lew is the sitter, including



The Black Flutist. Courtesy of the U.S. Department of State

Eileen Southern (Harvard Professor Emerita) and H. Diack Johnstone (Oxford Professor).

Turning to the "Six Duets by W. Shield" as the obvious next clue, we find the portrait in no wise resembles the portly, white English theater composer William Shield (1748–1829). (Of course, he could be some other W. Shield.) And while this Shield wrote two sets of six duets, one of which was for flutes, the rest for violins, the music depicted does not resemble any of the twelve duets. In fact, the depicted quote goes below middle C down to G, completely out of the flute range. Possibly the artist only meant to suggest music in general, not an actual quote (despite the frequency of accurate de-

pictions in paintings).

Even if the *Six Duets* by William Shield are intended, why is the sitter holding these? Is he merely trying to show his competence or familiarity with a current popular piece? Or, could he possibly be the flutist for whom the work was written? Several favorite players of William Shield are known, but none of them is a flutist.

Dr. H. Diack Johnstone, specialist in 18th-century English music, suggests there might be some connection between this portrait and Ignatius Sancho (1729–1780). Unfortunately, there is no resemblance to the known portrait of Sancho (Wright 1981), and his sons were not musicians. Nevertheless, in Sancho perhaps we have the prototype of the kind of person

the sitter might have been: a slave, brought from Africa probably via the Americas to England, patronized and educated by the nobility, who rose to a position of some prominence.

Special thanks to all the above who gave input to this article.

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Dvorák and African-American Musicians, 1892–1895

by Maurice Peress, Aaron Copland School, City University of New York

While I must justly say that [Dvorák's] name and works will ever live endearingly in the hearts of the best white people of America; if it were possible the Afro-American musicians alone could flood his grave with tears (*The [Indianapolis Freeman]* June 4, 1904).

The celebrated Czech composer Antonín Dvorák (1841–1904) lived and worked in the United States from September 1892 until April 1895. In contemporary newspapers and periodicals, one finds Dvorák encouraging American composers to utilize their own folk music—that of Native Americans and especially the plantation songs and spirituals of African Americans. With these they had "all that is needed to create a great and noble school of music" (*New York Herald* May 21, 1893), not unlike that which Dvorák himself had achieved with his own native Czech music. Dvorák went further, composing several American-inspired works of his own, the most celebrated being the "New World" Symphony. All this has been well documented in the

standard American-music research literature, but the extent to which his three years in New York City impacts directly upon the history of America's black music and musicians has yet to be fully uncovered.

One public concert in particular underscores Dvorák's reach. On Tuesday, January 23, 1894, the Metropolitan Opera Company was performing Wagner's *Lohengrin* at the Brooklyn Academy, while an intriguingly titled work, Imre Kiralfi's *America*, was being performed at the Metropolitan's new opera house on 38th Street and Broadway. Tony Pastor's was offering two vaudeville teams in a "splendid bill of comedy, mirth, and melody." *Charley's Aunt* was enjoying its "fifth crowded month." And Lillian Russell was appearing in the next-to-last performance of *The Princess Nicotine*.

That same night a benefit concert for the *New York Herald's* Free Clothing Fund was being given by the National Conservatory Chorus and Orchestra, under the direction of Antonín Dvorák, in the Madison Square

Garden—not the one from which telecasts of the Nicks vs. the Boston Celtics now originate, but the landmark sporting-and-entertainment palace erected in 1889 to a design of Stanford White.

Dvorák had been enticed by Mrs. Jeanette Thurber, a bold and forward-thinking musical patron, to move from Prague to New York City and become the Director of the National Conservatory of Music of America, beginning with the autumn semester of 1892. The Conservatory, founded by Mrs. Thurber, had been chartered by Congress in time for the 400th anniversary of Columbus's landfall in the New World. Mrs. Thurber had a clear agenda for the Conservatory which was heartily supported by the distinguished Czech composer: to create a national music founded upon the native music and language of America. They both made a special effort to attract African-American teachers and students to the Conservatory, and the Madison Square Garden concert of January 23, 1894, was a clear demon-

stration that they had succeeded. *The New York Herald*, being the sponsors of the Free Clothing Fund, gave the concert prominent coverage (see Fig. 1).

The pre-concert article began by recounting the donations already received to provide clothing for the poor, mostly immigrant, families of the city. It then described in detail the actual concert program, which has several surprises of importance (see Fig. 2). An African-American student from the Conservatory, Harry Thacker Burleigh, whom we know as the principal source of Dvorák's deep respect for spirituals and plantation songs, was to be the concert's baritone soloist, along with the featured guest star of the evening, Sissieretta Jones. Mme Jones, a celebrated soprano also known as "Black Patti," had already distinguished herself at the White House and at Chicago's World Columbian Exposition where she appeared with Sousa's Band. Mme Jones, Burleigh, and the Conservatory Choir would sing together Dvorák's own setting of Foster's *Old Folks at Home*, which was described by Dvorák in the article as a very beautiful American folk song "that he [Foster] happened to write down. . . . American music is music that lives in the hearts of the people, and therefore this air has every right to be regarded as purely national" (*New York Herald* January 23, 1894).

We should remind ourselves that Dvorák was at the height of his success here in the United States. Only five weeks earlier his "New World" Symphony had been premièred and received critical and popular acclaim. Imagine, therefore, the honor bestowed upon two more of his students, both of them African Americans, when at the concert he turned over his baton and invited them to the podium: Maurice Arnold (whose surname was really Strothotte), who led the orchestra in his own composition *American Plantation Dances*; and Edward H. Kinney, organist and choirmaster of St. Philips Episcopal Church, the second-oldest African Methodist Episcopal diocese in

America. Kinney directed the orchestra and the 130-voice all-black choir, among them the boy sopranos and altos from St. Philips,¹ in the "Inflammatus" from Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, with Mme Jones as soloist.

Seated prominently among the violins was the black composer Will Marion Cook, who came to the Conservatory after having studied under Joachim in Berlin. There were more than six hundred students at the Conservatory, at least one-sixth were black. No doubt there were other seeds planted and nourished by the Conservatory and Maestro Dvorák. Josef Skvorecky, a Czech historical novelist with an unquenchable curiosity about music and especially jazz, wrote a novel about Dvorák's American sojourn, *Dvorák in Love* (1987). Skvorecky "improvises" upon actual events. Having found the name Bailey listed among the students at the Conservatory during Dvorák's time, the author invents a scenario in which Bailey's future son turns out to be the famous virtuoso jazz clarinetist Buster Bailey. It is hard to imagine that there are not actual interconnections such as this we still might discover. Unfortunately, the records of the National Conservatory have yet to be located.

Dvorák's influence went far beyond the students at the Conservatory. Through example and encouragement, he propelled into action a slowly emerging, if still intimidated, generation of American composers. By 1901 Arthur Farwell and a group of like-minded composers decided to "accept Dvorák's challenge and go after our own folk music." They formed the Wa-Wan Press to publish their own works, many of which were based upon the music of Native Americans (Chase 1955, 395).

What became of the African Americans in Dvorák's composition class? By 1898 Will Marion Cook had

HEAR THE "OLD FOLKS AT HOME."

It Will Be Rendered To-Night
for Charity as It Has
Never Been Before.

DVORAK'S OWN ARRANGEMENT.

It Will Be Sung Entirely by Negroes, of
Whom Mme. Jones, the "Black
Patti," Is Soloist.

AID FOR THE CLOTHING FUND.

Donations Are Still Coming in, but
There Is Still a Great Need
of Women's Wear.

Figure 1. Madison Square Garden Concert,
New York Herald, January 23, 1894

left the Conservatory, putting aside the violin to compose, orchestrate, and conduct *Clorindy, the Origin of the Cakewalk*. Among the first non-minstrel music-theater entertainments by an all-black creative team, *Clorindy* had a marked success, and Cook was launched. Harry T. Burleigh carried on the legacy he inherited during his early years in Erie, Pennsylvania, where he learned from his blind grandfather, Hamilton Waters of Maryland, the plantation songs and spirituals that later infused his compositions and inspired his classic arrangements for choir, as well as for solo voice and orchestra. There are still among us people who remember his long and distinguished career as the baritone soloist in two of New York's most prominent congregations, St. George's Episcopal and Temple Emmanuel.

An account about the Burleigh imprint on Dvorák appears in a 1922 letter from the great Victor Herbert to Carl Engel, then chief of the music division at the Library of Congress. We remember Herbert, of course, as a

1. The St. Philips Choir would later appear at the historic 1912 Clef Club concert in Carnegie Hall, "the first concert of all-Negro music" performed entirely by black singers and instrumentalists.

- Overture, "Midsummer Night's Dream" Mendelssohn
Conservatory Orchestra. Dr. Antonín Dvorák, conductor.
- Stabat Mater, "Inflamatus" Rossini
Mme. Sissieretta Jones and members of St. Philip's choir.
Conductor, Mr. Edward H. Kinney (pupil of Dr. Dvorák).
- Hungarian Fantaisie Liszt
Miss Bertha Visanska.
- Serenade for string orchestra (two movements) Volkmann
- American Plantation Dances Maurice Arnold
Conducted by the composer (pupil of Dr. Dvorák).
- "Old Folks at Home" Arranged by Antonín Dvorák
For soli, chorus and orchestra.
Mme. Jones, soprano; Mr. Harry E. Burleigh, barytone;
Conservatory Orchestra and colored chorus.

Figure 2. Concert Program, Benefit Concert for the New York Herald's Free Clothing Fund, New York Herald, January 23, 1894

master composer in his own right, but he was also active as a solo cellist, which instrument he taught at Mrs. Thurber's Conservatory. Herbert describes Dvorák in some detail:

"Dr. Dvorák was most kind and unaffected and took great interest in his pupils, one of which, the very talented Harry Burleigh, had the privilege of giving the Dr. some of the thematic material for his Symphony 'From the New World.' I have seen this denied—but it is true. Naturally, I knew a great deal about the symphony, as I saw the Dr. two or three times a week and knew he was at work on it" (quoted in Waters 1955, 87).

Victor Herbert was also the principal cellist of the New York Philharmonic which gave the première of the symphony. He remained Burleigh's lifelong friend. As a founder of the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP) along with Irving Berlin and John Philip Sousa, Herbert invited Burleigh to become a charter member.

Neither Edward H. Kinney nor Maurice Arnold (Strothotte), the two pupils that Dvorák featured at the Madison Square Garden concert, ever

became as visible as did Cook and Burleigh. Their names do not yet appear in Eileen Southern's *Bibliographical Dictionary of Afro-American Musicians* (1982) or JoAnn Skowronski's *Black Music in America: A Bibliography* (1981). Kinney, the organist and choirmaster of St. Philips, was identified in the *New York Herald* coverage of the Madison Square Garden concert as a Dvorák (composition) pupil (*New York Herald* January 23, 1894). It is possible the reporter assumed this. He is listed, however, along with Burleigh and Strothotte, as being a member of the faculty in the 1894–1895 catalog of the Conservatory (Aborn 1965, Addenda). A study of the archival material from St. Philips, which still remains in boxes at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, might reveal more about him.

As for Maurice Arnold (Strothotte), there is an entry for him in *Baker's Biographical Dictionary* (Baker 1978, 67) and in the American Supplement of *Grove's Dictionary* ("Maurice Arnold" 1928, 66). He had a long professional career conducting for the musical theater here and abroad and was composing actively until his death in 1937. With the exception of

his *American Plantation Dances*, I have not been able to locate any of Arnold's works that are listed in the Baker article. Arnold appears not to have been a member of ASCAP. A few of his works do appear in the catalog of the Library of Congress and the New York Public Library Music Division, and a tantalizing list of eighteen published works are listed in the British Library catalog of printed works. These include a *Valse élégante pour 2 pianos à 8 mains* and *Danse de la Midway Plaisance*, both written in 1893. The latter had to have been inspired during an appearance of Burleigh, Cook, and Arnold—all three of Dvorák's black students—at the "Day for Colored People" presented at the Chicago World Exposition on August 25, 1893. The Midway Plaisance, a prominent part of the fair, was an amazing mix. Indian-American and Dahomeyan native villages stood side by side with exotic exhibitions such as high divers and Chinese acrobats. There were foreign restaurants from Austria, Turkey, and Hungary, each with its own orchestra. They created an Ivesian din trying to attract crowds to their establishments. It is also very possible that Cook's most successful musical, one that traveled from Broadway to Europe in 1903, *In Dahomey*, was likewise inspired by the community of sixty-seven West Africans that he observed at the Midway.

Despite Arnold's relative obscurity, it nevertheless appears that he made a much greater impression on Dvorák than has been reported to date. In an interview for the February 1895 issue of *Harper's*, Dvorák bemoaned the difficulties American composers had in getting their works published: "When one of my pupils last year produced a very creditable work, and a thoroughly American composition at that, he could not get it published in America, but had to send it to Germany, where it was at once accepted." Simple deduction tells us this was Maurice Arnold's *American Plantation Dances*, première at the 1894 Madison Square

Garden concert. The carefully instrumented piano/conductor's score at the New York Public Library, was published by P. L. Jung in 1894 under the title *Amerikanische Tänze*. There is also a later two-piano score at the Library of Congress. The second of the "thoroughly American" movements features an utterly charming humoresque-like tune scored for a solo clarinet. Its 3/4 character and phrase lengths resemble Dvorák's celebrated *Humoresque*, the seventh of a group of eight he published in 1894. Do we detect influences on Dvorák by yet another African-American composition student? Dvorák's *Eight Humoresques* were written just after Arnold's *American Plantation Dances*.

It is significant that from among the works of the six non-black composition students of Dvorák—William Arms Fisher, Ruben Goldmark, Harvey Worthington Loomis, Harry Row Shelley, Henry Waller, and Camille W. Zeckwer—we find titles like *The Ogallallahs* and *Old Black Joe*, both of them operas, and *The Call of the Plain*, *Indian Dances*, *Lyrics of the Red Man*, and *A Negro Rhapsody*. If, in the words of the unnamed reviewer of the Madison Square Garden concert, "Mr. Dvorák is the apostle of national music," all of the composers he taught were his disciples (*New*

York Herald January 24, 1894).

We marvel at Dvorák's spirit and vision. Zeckwer (1919, 702) quotes him as having said in class, "In one hundred years America will be the musical center of the world." Yet the generation of Americanists he helped spawn did not break the grip that Eurocentric—and, too often, racist—academics and critics had on the musical community. This hold would only begin to weaken at the end of the 1920s with the unquenchable new music of Ellington, Gershwin, and Copland, each of whom studied formally or informally with a member of Dvorák's composition class at the Conservatory—Ellington with Will Marion Cook (Duke called him "His Conservatory") and both Gershwin and Copland with Ruben Goldmark. As for Sissieretta Jones singing at Madison Square Garden instead of at the new Metropolitan Opera House, that national disgrace would take even longer to erase. But caveats aside, we have much for which to be thankful and much to learn about Dvorák's impact on the history of black music and, thereby, American music. Taking a leaf from Skvorecky, I can easily imagine at least one of the St. Philips boy sopranos who sang at Madison Square Garden in 1894 being on the stage of Carnegie

Hall in 1912 with the Clef Club and, six years later, in the trenches at Argonne with Jim Europe's "Hell Fighters."

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