

# Institute for Studies in American Music

## NEWSLETTER

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### REPLIES TO THE I.S.A.M. QUESTIONNAIRE ITEM THREE

In Vol. 1, No. 1, of the *I.S.A.M. Newsletter* we reported on the responses we had received to the first two items of a questionnaire distributed widely last spring by the I.S.A.M. Item 3 asked, "Does your department include personnel who are engaged in any of the areas [of study in American music]?"

Among the many—remarkably many—who answered "Yes" to that question and who went on to cite areas of study, the responses were so diverse that a simple statistical summary of the latter would be meaningless. It may be more useful here to make some gross generalizations about the favored areas of study and coordinate these with mention of some sources of information and materials that are new, relatively unknown, or sometimes overlooked.

*Composer studies.* Predictably, studies of individual composers (and some critics) head the list of favorite topics, with a definite bias toward those active in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. . . . One problem with such studies is to get at comprehensive repositories of materials (other than major research libraries like the Library of Congress's Music Division, for example). One such repository—of both materials and information—is the American Music Center, Inc. (2109 Broadway, Suite 15-79, New York City 10023). The Center has an extensive library of scores and some tapes, mostly by 20th-century member-composers (who number approximately 800 at the moment), which are all available for consultation. The Center's librarian, Andrew Galambos, has up-to-date listings in all categories, arranged by composer. . . . Another important repository of materials—choral music, in this case—has recently been given to the Drinker Collection of the Free Library of Philadelphia: this is the collection of scores amassed by the American Choral Foundation.

*Regional and genre studies.* Studies of the music of a given region or locality, and studies of a specific genre of American music, seem also to be highly favored; and, without question, if we are ever going to see the American musical past in the round, such studies are of paramount importance. . . . The wide-open opportunities for such studies are revealed clearly in Part 1 of Rita Benton's *Directory of Music Research Libraries: Canada and the United States* (Iowa City: The University of Iowa, 1967). This contains extremely useful summaries of the music holdings of 297 United States and 36 Canadian libraries, public, academic, and private (with their addresses and telephone numbers). What is remarkable is the high proportion of American libraries that have apparently been concentrating quietly on acquiring American music, or have become repositories of it by bequest. . . . Other sources of regional music materials are all around us: historical and genealogical society collections, local college collections, even local antique dealers (who often, as one of our respondents notes, have music and books in dark corners). . . . Some university presses are specializing in regional studies. One is the University of North Carolina Press (Box 510, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514), which has embarked on a series of monographs on music in American cities, and is seeking specialists in their musical histories. . . . Sacred music, especially rural hymnody and contemporary folk-pop idioms, interests a number of researchers and teachers. Notable for the breadth and depth of its catalogue, both of scores and recordings in the field, is the Gregorian Institute of America

(2115 West 63rd Street, Chicago, Ill. 60636). And if you think that shape-notes are a thing of the past, you're wrong: the catalogue of Word, Inc. (Waco, Texas 76703) offers many contemporary works printed in shape-notes as well as in conventional notation.

*Jazz, rock, and pop music.* Taken together, these areas of study are among the most popular, for both research and teaching. Our respondents who teach courses in one or another of them emphasize the need for texts and/or readings that are comprehensive and well-balanced critically; also for scores and transcriptions in easily available form. Recordings are perhaps not much of a problem. We might mention, however, that one helpful source especially of recordings and re-pressings of early jazz, and of recorded anthologies of bands, jazz eras, regional styles, and individual instruments is Biograph Records (P.O. Box 109, Canaan, N.Y. 12029); their catalogue is exceptionally broad. Yet another source of materials in jazz—both books and records, especially in the area of swing (and also musical comedy)—is the Nostalgia Book Club (525 Main Street, New Rochelle, N.Y. 10801). . . . One new repository of jazz recordings is the Phi Mu Alpha-Sinfonia Society, whose Sinfonia Foundation recently acquired a substantial collection; it is housed at the society's headquarters (Lyrecrest, 10600 Old State Road, Evansville, Ind. 47711) and will be available to researchers as soon as cataloging is complete. . . . Ragtime is having a revival, and materials for its study are on the increase. Publishers are reprinting early rags: one historic venture is the publication recently by the New York Public Library of reprints of the complete works of Scott Joplin, in two handsome volumes. (Joplin thus joins Stephen Foster as the only American composer thus to be honored with a complete, if not critical and scholarly, edition. The Foster edition, distributed by the Lilly Foundation in the 1930's and, like the Joplin, consisting of reprints of early publications, is long out of print.) Rags are also being recorded in considerable numbers—freshly, as with two LPs issued by Nonesuch Recordings, and in re-pressings. One LP recently issued by Herwin Records (Box 306, Glen Cove, N.Y. 11542) contains fifteen performances of *Maple Leaf Rag* by various pianists and bands, originally recorded over a span from 1907 to 1969.

*Black and Indian music.* Interest in studies of black music (some prefer the term "Afro-American") is high. Research and teaching in this wide field is being facilitated not only by re-pressings of many early "race records" but by the activities of the Black Music Center at Indiana University (Bloomington, Ind. 47401) and by such publications as Eileen Southern's two recent books, *The Music of Black Americans* and *Readings in Black American Music* (both from W. W. Norton, Inc.). . . . A number of respondents to the I.S.A.M. questionnaire indicated interest in Indian music studies. Several pointed to the journal, *Ethnomusicology*, as an often-neglected resource, particularly its record reviews (in view of a sudden flood of Indian music issued by such manufacturers as Canyon Records and Indian House). The yearbooks of the International Folk Music Council (University of Illinois Press, Urbana, Ill. 61801) are another. And a unique source of books and periodicals in the field is the Indian Historian Press (1451 Masonic Avenue, San Francisco, Cal. 94117).

*Folk music.* Studies in American folk music other than that of the ethnic groups mentioned above are numerous. The Institute has been informed of research being carried on in folk hymnody, dances, banjo and fiddle music, bluegrass music, urban folk music, and other types. For all of these, a paramount resource is the Archive of Folk Song in the Music Division of the Library of Congress (Washington, D. C. 20540), which offers, on request, a good deal of bibliographical material. Another source of folk-music information in Washington, often overlooked by researchers, is the Smithsonian Institution, especially its divisions of Performing Arts and Musical Instruments (Washington, D. C. 20560). (The latter division is presently displaying a particularly handsome and elaborate exhibition of "Music Machines: American Style," ranging from various mechanical instruments through player-pianos to sophisticated contemporary synthesizers. The exhibition is scheduled to run for several more months.) . . . It's not always easy to keep up with the output of folk music on records. One particularly helpful catalogue is that of Rounder Records (727 Somerville Avenue, Somerville, Mass. 02143), which includes listings of over twenty smaller manufacturers as well as the larger ones. Rounder Records also offers information on periodicals devoted to folk, country, and

bluegrass music; and they issue their own newsletter. . . . The liner notes of Folkways Records, which are loose inside the record jackets, have a way of getting lost. Replacement copies may be requested from the manufacturer (701 7th Avenue, New York City 10036).

*Latin American music.* A few respondents to the I.S.A.M. questionnaire indicated interest in Latin American music. An informative letter from Professor Donald Thompson of the University of Puerto Rico mentions two important projects now in progress, relating to music of the Caribbean: an annotated bibliography of Puerto Rican music, by Annie Figueroa de Thompson (nearing completion); and his own "Sources for Musical Research in the Caribbean." Professor Thompson points to the need for studies of Puerto Rican music in New York and other large American cities. . . . Hopefully, further studies in Latin and South American music will be stimulated by the publication in 1973 of a new book on the subject by Gilbert Chase and Gerard Béhague, tentatively titled *The Music of Latin America* (Prentice-Hall).

*Summary.* Summarizing the responses to our questionnaire's Item 3 is not easy, in view of the many areas of research and teaching interest evidenced. However, our general impression is that although "John Jones: His Life and Work" is the sort of study being undertaken preponderantly, ethnomusicological and socio-musicological studies are on the increase, especially in music of the late 19th and 20th centuries. All over the country, there seems to be a growing concern with music as a *social* phenomenon, not simply a self-conscious, cultivated art.

## NEWS AND INFORMATION

Following are some items of news about American-music studies that have come across our desk in recent months, and some information in response to questions asked us more than once.

*Music and the U.S. Bicentennial.* The Bicentennial of the American Revolution is nearer than you think, and already many organizations and communities are beginning to make plans for its observance in 1976. The American Musicological Society has had a committee at work for over a year. Among the projects recommended by the

committee for A.M.S. support are a complete critical edition of the works of William Billings, Revolutionary-era Boston composer; a computerized, comprehensive record of music, musicians, and musical life in Philadelphia, *ca.* 1750 to *ca.* 1850; and a series of practical, annotated bibliographies and discographies of early American music available in print and on records. . . . The National Music Council, composed of representatives of almost 60 varied national music organizations, will devote its meeting of June 8th to discussion of ways in which the musical community might participate in the Bicentennial.

*S.P.A.M.H. lives.* It has been assumed, and with reason, that the Society for the Preservation of the American Musical Heritage was moribund: after several years of issuing non-commercial recordings of American music, especially of the 19th and early 20th centuries, S.P.A.M.H. issued no recordings in 1970 and announced in March, 1971 that no new releases were contemplated "for the immediate future." Now, however, that has changed. S.P.A.M.H. is alive and well at P.O. Box 4244, Grand Central Station, New York City 10017. They write: ". . . There are plans for future recordings, and the [earlier] recordings will be available for purchase so long as the stock . . . is not exhausted."

*A new Grove's.* A 6th edition of *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, almost wholly rewritten and considerably expanded over the 5th edition (1954), is in preparation. An international board of editors is directing the work, with many more American scholars participating than did in earlier editions of *Grove's*. Area editors for American music, responsible for recommending entries and their authors to the editor-in-chief at Macmillan's in London, are John Beckwith (University of Toronto) for Canadian composers, Gerard Béhague (University of Illinois) for Central and South American, and H. Wiley Hitchcock (I.S.A.M., Brooklyn College) for those of the U.S.A. Entries on folk music and other ethnomusicological topics, including the Americas, are in the charge of Mantle Hood (U.C.L.A.).

*C.M.S. Bibliographies.* The College Music Society's Publications Committee, chaired by Frederick Freedman (Music Library, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N.Y. 12601), has hopes to sponsor several

series of bibliographies in American music: one on individual composers; another on regions and cities; another on types of American music; others.

*American music reprint series.* A series of reprint editions of American musical scores, sponsored by the Music Library Association, will begin to appear shortly from Da Capo Press under the general title *Earlier American Music*. Among the first scores to be reprinted will be John Knowles Paine's *Symphony No. 1*, Anthony Philip Heinrich's *Dawning of Music in Kentucky*, Supply Belcher's *Harmony of Maine* (1794), Ira D. Sankey's *Gospel Hymns*, songs by Edward MacDowell, *The American Musical Miscellany* (1798), and some ten others.

*Early secular music manuscripts.* An important bibliographical project nearing completion is that of James J. Fuld (Room 2100, 300 Park Avenue, New York City 10022). Mr. Fuld is compiling a detailed index of American secular music manuscripts (to 1800). This will be a counterpart of the great bibliography of O.G.T. Sonneck, revised by W. T. Upton, *Bibliography of Early Secular American Music*, which included only printed music.

*Publication possibilities.* The I.S.A.M. has had a number of inquiries about publication possibilities for book-length studies and dissertations in American music. Authors should consider the following in their search for publishers and/or financial subvention:

1. The University of Illinois Press plans to emphasize books on American music in their catalogue. Write to Richard L. Wentworth, Editor (The University of Illinois Press, Urbana, Illinois 61801), enclosing at least a chapter-outline.
2. The University of North Carolina Press is beginning a series of books on the musical history of individual cities. Write to Matthew Hodgson, Director (University of North Carolina Press, Bynum Hall, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514).
3. Pi Kappa Lambda, national music honorary society, awards publication occasionally to meritorious dissertations in American music. Write to Professor William J. Weichlein, president of the society (School of Music, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48105).
4. The Sonneck Fund of the Library of Congress exists, in part, to aid publication costs of works in American music. An author must first engage the interest of a publisher; then author and publisher may join in a request for modest financial subvention from the Fund. Write to Edward N. Waters, Chief (Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. 20540).

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