

Ernest Bloch: The Cleveland Years (1920-25)

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Ernest Bloch (1880-1959) spent the summer of 1919 teaching music to young children, including his daughters Suzanne and Lucienne, at the school founded in Peterboro, New Hampshire by Joanne Bird Shaw. Its purpose was to provide an alternative education for her children and for those of some of her neighbors. Toward that end, she engaged persons prominent in the arts to teach there. A stenographic account of Bloch's classes,¹ including comments by the instructor and his pupils, offer striking testimony to the fact that, even at this juncture in his fledgling career in the United States, the composer had little regard for traditional textbooks. He advocated instead direct access to the works of the masters. With his youthful charges, emphasis was placed on aural training and eurhythmics.²

His reputation secure as a composer, the result of successful performances of the works comprising the "Jewish Cycle," most notably *Trois Poèmes juifs*, *Schelomo*, and *Israel*, Bloch, after spending the 1919-20 academic year teaching at David Mannes's³ newly established music school in New York, accepted a "call from the wild," to serve as founding director of the as yet unformed Cleveland Institute of Music. It is of no little moment that Mannes observed that Bloch, who was anxious to develop his career as a composer, was "born to create and not to observe a teacher's schedule and a routine scholastic

*It is my distinct pleasure to be a contributor to the special edition of *Min-Ad* in honor of Professor *Emerita* Bathia Churgin, who celebrated her 80th birthday last year.

Professor Churgin's scholarship has been widely respected and admired for many years; indeed, the *Journal of Musicology* published a *Festschrift* (Winter 2001) in her honor. Her work on the symphonies of Giovanni Battista Sammartini, beginning with her PhD dissertation at Harvard University in 1963, was prescient, as it foretold what was to come in the years that followed. Further, her equally valuable insights into the mind and work of Ludwig van Beethoven have established her as a leading light in the world of historical musicology.

Professor Churgin, who founded the Department of Music at Bar-Ilan University, has been among those who have brought musicological studies to an extraordinarily high level in the State of Israel. I had the pleasure of lecturing at Bar-Ilan University in 1987 on the topic "Ernest Bloch: A Retrospective," during which time I heard from members of the faculty as well as students about the high esteem in which Professor Churgin was held on her home campus—a true testimony to her exemplary gifts as a scholar, teacher, and administrator. Since that time, Professor Churgin's stature has increased exponentially; it is, therefore, fitting that *Min-Ad*, a prestigious journal in her own country, dedicate this edition to her in recognition of her life of achievement.

¹ *A School in Action: A Symposium* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1922), 145-234. F.M. McMurray, professor of elementary education at Teacher's College, Columbia University, wrote the introduction for the book.

² Eurhythmics, a method of teaching music, particularly rhythm, by means of bodily movements and gestures, was developed by Émile Jaques-Dalcroze (1865-1950), one of Bloch's early teachers in Geneva, Switzerland.

³ David Mannes (1866-1956) founded the David Mannes School of Music in 1916, the year of Bloch's arrival in New York.

timetable.”⁴ Paradoxically, at yet another fledgling music school, his administrative role increased exponentially, while his teaching responsibilities expanded beyond the world of theory and composition. The eastern establishment, to be sure, saw Cleveland as a cultural backwater, in need of a massive infusion of arts education. During the summer of 1920, the city’s *Sunday News-Leader* carried the headline, “Ernest Bloch to Head Music Conservatory.”⁵ The ensuing story contained the information that, in addition to Bloch, the officers and directors of the company designated to promote the new school included William M. Clapp, president; Mrs. D.Z. Norton, Mrs. W.R. Warner, and Warren S. Hayden, vice presidents; Victor Sincere, treasurer; and Mrs. Frank Muhlhauser, secretary. By December, ads were placed in the printed media proclaiming that classes would commence on 3 January 1921. They would include theory, pianoforte, violin, viola, and violoncello. Mrs. Franklin B. Sanders was named executive director. The school’s address was listed as 3446 Euclid Avenue.

The Cleveland press filled many pages over the ensuing months with stories about the new enterprise and its director. One such example took the form of a review by Wilson G. Smith of Bloch’s *Symphony in C-sharp minor*, which was rendered by the Cleveland Orchestra conducted by the composer just days before the opening of the Institute. A few of Mr. Smith’s telling comments follow:

To have so splendid and I may say monumental work given to us thru and by one who is now a resident of the city, is something of which we, who are interested in civic assets, may be proud.... Had he written nothing more than the stupendous fugal development of the last movement it were enough to put him in the category of master technicians; and to clothe it with such emotional intensity as he has done shows that even technic can not divorce one from inspiration....

As to the playing, it would seem that the batonic presence of the composer inspired the players, since it was rendered in a manner that surprised even the orchestra’s most ardent admirers. The personality of the man seemed to throw out magnetic waves of incitement from his baton. Not only is Bloch a composer of eminence, but his directorial talent compels equal admiration—which coincidence of talents is rarely found.⁶

Having thus cemented his reputation in Cleveland before actually assuming his official duties, Bloch began also to engage the public in the enterprise he had undertaken by appearing as a lecturer, both at the Institute and before such groups as the Women’s City Club—the point being that the lay public get involved in the learning process with the clear implication that, in order to

⁴ David Mannes, *Music is My Faith* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1938), 243.

⁵ *Sunday News-Leader* (11 July 1920), Photoplay-Dramatic Section, 1.

⁶ Wilson G. Smith, *Seventh Symphony* [sic], *Cleveland Press* (31 December 1920), 18. On the same program, Nikolai Sokoloff, conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra, appeared as violin soloist in Chausson’s *Poème* for violin and orchestra with the orchestra’s assistant conductor, Arthur Shepherd, wielding the baton. Shepherd also conducted Chabrier’s *Bourrée fantasque*.

appreciate music, one must understand it, to the best of one's ability to do so. His thoughts on this subject were quoted in the city's *Plain Dealer*:

I do not believe in the efficacy of books on music, treatises on harmony and counterpoint and all this scholastic rubbish of rules without life which is used in the official schools. These things are on the border of true life and true art. We do not teach horseback riding in a drawing-room, or swimming by book. The pupils at the Cleveland Institute of Music will have the most direct kind of harmony and counterpoint instruction for they must attend the Cleveland orchestra rehearsals; it is obligatory. They will then learn at first hand the different instruments and their harmonizing. Deep and assiduous study of the great works of all times seems to me to be indispensable to one who wishes to have a thorough knowledge of any art, music especially. It is the only way to penetrate to the sanctuary.

The first instruction should be directed to the acquisition of rhythm—"In the beginning was rhythm," said Hans von Bülow. To make the child realize the necessity of setting limits on time, of placing milestones in accordance with our own limitations, is essential. I have started, therefore, with the study of the measure in order to arrive at that rhythm, first an instinctive and then an intellectual process.⁷

With his interest in choral music already established in New York,⁸ the Cleveland version of the "People's Chorus" was inaugurated in the city's Museum of Art. Masterworks of Renaissance polyphonic music were introduced once again to American audiences. This time the roots took hold, whereas in the cultivated environs of New York the effort was short lived. Bloch also founded and conducted the CIM's orchestra (see Figure 1); with that aggregation he exposed his students to works of the standard repertoire as well as the creative efforts by their peers, among them Bernard Rogers, Quincy Porter, and Bloch's assistant, Roger Sessions.



Figure 1 Bloch conducting the CIM Student Orchestra, early 1920s

⁷ "Many Pupils at Music Institute," *Woman's Society Section, Cleveland Plain Dealer* (19 December 1920), 4A.

⁸ See Paul Rosenfeld, "Palestrina on Twenty-second Street," *The New Republic* (8 March 1919), 177-79.

Doffing the hat in which he felt most comfortable, Bloch's creative energy followed in a variety of directions, each of them a vast change from the route of the earlier epical musical canvasses of the "Jewish Cycle." The *Sonata No. 1 for violin and piano*, for example, a work begun in New York but completed in Cleveland in November 1920 and dedicated to Paul Rosenfeld, served notice that its composer was far more than a "Jewish composer," a point made a year earlier with the *Suite for viola and piano*, winner of the Coolidge Prize. The three-movement work (*Agitato, Molto quieto, Moderato*), was viewed by commentators on Bloch's music as containing a host of extra-musical references that begged for elaborate exfoliation. It is of more than passing interest that these depictive evocations include such interpretations as the following:

Ernest Bloch's sonata for violin and piano calls to mind certain pages of "La Tentation de Saint Antoine." It calls to mind the adamant page where the devil slings the saint upon his horns, and carries him out into the empyrean amid the planets, and makes him to perceive the infinitude of matter; thought encased in matter; and matter higher than sight however high one lifts one's eyes.⁹

As another interpreter would have it:

The violence and automatism of the first movement, coupled with the eastern motive of renunciation and expiation in the second, seem to have unconsciously led Bloch's mind, in the Finale, to a realistic and merciless yet symbolic illustration of this insensate doom of man. Here it is decreed by ancient conquerors and priests in a scene of dark savagery and sacrifice in some heartless rite of the childhood of the world...¹⁰

Lest one perceive that "objective" works such the *First Violin Sonata* received only creative or psychological analyses, more traditional interpretations can be found by those inclined to seek other perspectives.¹¹

The *Second Violin Sonata* is a one-movement essay that, in its quiescence and lofty spirituality, offers a vastly different message, but one common to the composer, viz. the idea that there is a oneness that informs all faiths and cultures. Thus, it is not unusual that Bloch could write to the annotator, David Hall, the following:

... I felt that, at No. 15, the recitative of the violin has a "jewish" [sic] character, somewhat related to similar expressions in my "jewish" [sic] works...but...it turns to the *Credo* of the Gregorian chant...and, later (No.

⁹ Paul Rosenfeld, "The Bloch Violin Sonata," *Musical Chronicle* (1917-23) (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1923), 131.

¹⁰ Alex Cohen, *Three Concerts of Chamber Music by Ernest Bloch* (London: Ernest Bloch Society [of London], 1937), 11.

¹¹ See Harold Berkeley, "The Ernest Bloch Sonata," *Etude*, vol. 72, no. 10 (October 1954), 25, 51, for a descriptive analysis, and, for a Schenkerian-Salzer stylistic analysis, consult Edward Radtitz, *The Analysis and Interpretation of the Violin and Piano Works of Ernest Bloch (1880-1959)* (PhD dissertation, New York University, 1975), 109-80.

17), to the *Gloria* of the mass *Kyrie fons bonitatis*, which I used partially...but faithfully including even the marvelous *Amen*....¹²

Alex Cohen, in his comments on this work, refers to it as “an expression of pure serenity, of spiritual exaltation, and of the calm conviction that all the multitudinous protean faiths of man are one.”¹³ The point is well taken, despite the expansion of the two faiths referenced by Bloch, i.e. Jewish and Catholic, to “multitudinous.” Incidentally, Cohen closes his program notes with the unusual, for him, remark, “...the work ends on a triumphant affirmation of Yea!”¹⁴

While only seven students enrolled when the Institute first opened its doors, the student body had risen to 200 when, in October 1921, the conservatory opened the doors to its own building at 2827 Euclid Avenue. Recognizing the necessity to staff the school with artists of the first rank, Bloch and the directorate hired members of the Cleveland Orchestra and such other musicians as pianists Beryl Rubinstein and Nathan Fryer, and the Swiss violinist André Ribaupierre, who, like Bloch, was a pupil of Eugène Ysaÿe. The Director himself taught advanced composition and personally supervised all classes in music theory.

With regard to the Genevan-born dynamo’s creative energies, apart from the two violin sonatas cited previously, a perusal of the works created in Cleveland indicates that the composer was moving in several diverse directions simultaneously. Large-scale chamber music, for example, includes *Baal Shem*, three pictures of Hassidic life, for violin and piano (orchestrated in 1939), and *Quintet* (No. 1) for piano and strings. While the former is one of several works from this period in which Jewish subject matter is observable, the *shtetl* life of more modern times rather than biblical epics of the “Jewish Cycle” order is *de rigueur*. *Baal Shem* (1700-60), generally known as *Baal Shem Tov*, i.e. Master of the Good Name, was born Israel ben Eliezer. Father of the Hassidic movement, he eschewed the scholarly approach to Judaism fostered by the Talmudists. Instead, likely because of his lack of immersion in traditional Jewish studies, he taught that God is everywhere in nature, and that the best way to commune with Him was through simplicity and joyfulness. A believer in the healing power of herbs, he became known to his many followers, mainly the poor, the uneducated, and the downtrodden, as a healer upon whom they could count in times of trouble. The followers of the “Besht” (the name derived from an abbreviated form of *Baal Shem Tov*) came to oppose nationalism and secular education. Bloch, whose own formal education ended with his Bar Mitzvah, and who was wary of intellectualism as an approach to creativity, may well have felt an affinity for such a teacher.

The three movements of the suite are entitled, respectively, *Vidui* (Contrition), *Nigun* (Improvisation), and *Simchas Torah* (Rejoicing in the Holy Scriptures). The second movement, with its rhapsodic flights of fancy, open fifths, and dotted rhythms, along with its sensitivity to the tonal capacities of the violin, is often performed as an individual piece and, indeed, has taken its place as a staple of the violin repertoire. *Simchas Torah*, however, reveals the ecstatic revelry implicit in the Hassidic form of reverence for the *Pentateuch*. Its

¹² David Hall, jacket notes for a recording of the two *Violin Sonatas*, performed by Rafael Druian, violin, and John Simms, piano, Mercury LP MG50095.

¹³ Cohen, op. cit., 6.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

immersion in *Yiddishkeit*, moreover, is well illustrated by the quotation of a frenzied fragment from Mark Warshawsky's (1848-1907) wedding song, *Die mizinke oisgegeben* ("The Youngest Daughter Married").

The Yiddish orientation is observed also in the poignant *Méditation hébraïque* and *From Jewish Life* for violoncello and piano; the former is dedicated to Pablo Casals, but edited by Hans Kindler, while the latter is dedicated to and edited by Kindler. The three short movements of *From Jewish Life*, respectively entitled "Prayer," "Supplication," and "Jewish Song," conjure up imagery associated with ghetto, or *shtetl*, life. The employment of Hebrew *shtaygers* and the subtle use of quarter tones in both works (see Examples 1 and 2) add to the Ashkenazic Eastern European flavor that again marks the departure from the sweeping grandeur of the prophets and monarchs suggested in the "Jewish Cycle." In short, in a sense, Hebraica becomes Judaica.

Example 1 *Méditation hébraïque*, p. 15, score 3, mm. 1-3. The left to right slash indicates a quarter tone below the written pitch. Originally published by Carl Fischer, 1925. This example comes from *Ernest Bloch: Music for Cello and Piano*. Published by Carl Fischer in 2000.

The sign \sphericalangle before a note indicates 1/4 tone below that note

Example 2 "Prayer," *From Jewish Life*, p. 5, score 4, mm. 1-5. Published by Carl Fischer, 1925.

Works of a neo-classical bent and without Jewish references, despite the insistence of some commentators on finding them, include the powerful *Piano Quintet* (No. 1)¹⁵ and *Concerto Grosso* (No. 1) for string orchestra and piano obbligato.¹⁶ The *Quintet* drew far-flung interpretations from noted commentators

¹⁵ A *Second Piano Quintet* was composed in 1957, and published by Broude Brothers.

¹⁶ A *Second Concerto Grosso* was composed in 1952, and published by Broude Brothers

despite Bloch's disavowal of any such program. David Ewen proclaimed the work to be "the most successful of Bloch's attempts to give expression to his race,"¹⁷ and, indeed, to evoke more clearly than the works that preceded it, presumably those with well-defined Jewish subject matter, the essence of Judaism. And yet, Alex Cohen, whose prolix prosody is well-known to "Bloch-heads," avers that Bloch had no such program in mind when writing this work, yet, when harmonics in the strings appear in the slow movement, he informs us that:

Here is the old dream of far horizons, of the vague magic isle in the Pacific that has so often haunted Bloch, of the foam-bathed, drowsing shores of Melville and Mallarmé, of coral tamarind and coco-tree, of aromatic scents, mysterious calms and violent storms, of the mingled seductions of Baudelaire's *Vie Antérieure* and *Parfum Exotique*.¹⁸

Further on, when the third movement arrives, there are references to "...shores where free, frank-eyed and happy savages dwell, where original sin is unknown and where the deceptions, intrigues and moral hypocrisies of civilisation have not yet been born."¹⁹ But, lo and behold, at bar 14, in the 'cello and viola, there emerges a "Caribbean theme" that, according to Cohen, is traceable to Bloch's days as a youth. Somehow, the savages of the Pacific have re-emerged in the Atlantic. Cohen also echoes Bloch's oft-stated harangues against the materialistic society of the modern age as part of his "analysis" of this creation.

The Italian scholar, Guido Pannain, addresses the work from a Christian perspective by referring to Jews as "the misplaced progeny of Jacob,"²⁰ but asserts that "Bloch's music speaks to us because it has the dramatic sense of a rejected humanity."²¹ Yet, he is willing to state, without equivocation, that the *Piano Quintet* is "the masterpiece of modern chamber music."²² It is, therefore, futile to inject interpretations that rely on Judaic underpinnings or suggestions of oceanic islands as a means by which to understand works such as this one. The language of the music *per se* is what unites the composer and the listener.

In three movements, *Agitato*, *Andante mistico*, and *Allegro energico*, the *Quintet* possesses features common to other works of this period as well as to others that come later. The cyclical treatment of themes, a life-long trait of the composer's, insinuates itself from the outset, while the harsh, if not barbaric, propulsion of material, so aptly described by the movement's heading, *Agitato*, not, significantly, a tempo marking but a statement of character, suggests, yet again, features that illuminate also the two violin sonatas. The melodic fourths and sevenths, the changes of meter, tempo, and dynamics, and the inclusion of quarter tones illustrate well Bloch's ability to take similar compositional characteristics and apply them very differently according to the stylistic and emotional needs of the individual work. The bittersweet use of quarter tones in

¹⁷ David Ewen, "The Music of Ernest Bloch," *Menorah Journal*, vol. 26 (January-March 1938), 42.

¹⁸ Cohen, op. cit., 14.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Guido Pannain, "Ernest Bloch," in *Modern Composers*, translated from the Italian by Michael R. Bonavia (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1933), 209.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid., 213.

the intimate Jewish expressions, for example, are here biting and rough-hewn (Example 3). The C major tonal center of the opening movement becomes A minor with the *attacca subito* as the second movement begins its languid course. Successful special effects, such as the alternating *sul ponticello* and *modo ordinario* markings in violin II along with *una corda* in the piano at the outset, and, later, the conjunction of *con sordino*, *sul ponticello*, and *pizzicato* in the strings and *staccato* chords in the piano (p. 52, s. 2, mm. 1-5) create a *misterioso* musical environment if not a vision of an exotic island locale. The third movement recalls materials from the first movement, and, in its frenetic *Allegro energico* momentum, induced Cohen to envision a “joyous orgy of savages beneath a tropical sun.”²³ Bird-call figures, tremolos, a C major pedal in the piano bass, and a *Molto calmo* close convey the emotive breadth of what is surely an example of expressivity unencumbered by representational specificity. The cover of the score informs the reader that the work is dedicated to Harold Bauer and the Lenox Quartet. It also includes the by now familiar Star of David with the letters EB encased within it, a symbol Schirmer felt impelled to display in order to convey the message that Bloch, if not the music, was Jewish (Figure 2).

Example 3 *Piano Quintet* (No. 1). First movement: *Agitato*, mm. 1-3. Published by G. Schirmer, 1924.

The sign ♯ before a note indicates 1/4 tone above that note

Ernest Bloch

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello
Piano

Agitato ♩ = 160

p *ma marcato*

²³ Cohen, *ibid.*



Figure 2 Star of David on cover of *Piano Quintet* (No. 1)

By way of contrast, yet still within the neo-classical frame of reference, the *Concerto Grosso* (No. 1) for string orchestra with piano obbligato, composed, at least partially, for the purpose of demonstrating to students at the Cleveland Institute of Music that older forms and genres were not passé, displays, within its four movements, several of Bloch's divergent compositional leanings. Movements one and four, for example, are, respectively, a prelude and a fugue, while movement two is a "Dirge," and movement three is entitled "Pastorale and Rustic Dances." This commingling of abstract Baroque forms with depictive and nationalistic features create a type of eclecticism that results in a unique approach to a genre associated with such masters as Corelli, Handel, and Bach. The "Pastorale," with its solos in violin I, viola, and violoncello and its thirty-second-note triplets serves as an introduction to the "Rustic Dances," suggestive of life in the Swiss countryside (Example 4).

Example 4 Beginning of “Rustic Dances,” p. 19, score 1, mm. 1-6. Reprint published by Broude Brothers, 1982. Original published by C.C. Birchard, 1925. Reproduced by arrangement with Broude Brothers Limited.

The image shows a musical score for the beginning of "Rustic Dances" by Ernest Bloch, measures 1-6. The score is for a string quartet and piano. The tempo is "Allegro giocoso" with a metronome marking of 114. The instruments are Violin I (VI.), Violin II (II.), Viola (Violo), Violoncello (C.B.), and Piano (Piano). The piano part is marked "pizz." and "sempre marcato". The string parts are marked "sempre marcato" and "segue".

The piano obbligato, here and throughout the work, receives considerably more attention than the customary Baroque harpsichord, and the tutti-soli conventions of the eighteenth century are largely bypassed.

The Cleveland die, however, is not so well cast that other hues are totally abandoned. The *Three Nocturnes* for piano, violin, and violoncello, with the exception of the closing “night piece,” *Tempestoso*, is idyllic in nature. The tripartite structure of the first two movements and the absence of technical “fireworks” suggest that the composer was thinking in terms of appealing to student chamber ensembles at the Institute. But even the final movement, which utilizes material drawn from the second movement, closes in a state of tranquility, its tempest having been quelled. Yet, certain compositional characteristics associated with “Jewish” creations, having by now become ingrained in Bloch’s general stylistic profile, make their appearance here as well, viz. the “shofar calls,” the “Bloch rhythm” (the short-long patterns akin to the Scotch snap), and the augmented intervals. It would be a stretch to characterize the *Nocturnes* as Jewish night pieces, but a neo-classical characterization does seem apt.

There are yet other smaller-scaled efforts from Cleveland for string quartet that reflect atmospheric influences induced by nature’s diversity. *In the Mountains* consists of three movements, entitled, respectively, “Dusk,” “Rustic Dance,” and “Night.” *Paysages* also conjures up three landscapes with the titles “North,” “Alpèstre,” and “Tongataboo.” The last piece of the first set, “Night,” and the first piece of the second set, “North,” were influenced specifically by Robert J. Flaherty’s silent documentary film, “Nanook of the North.”²⁴ A single work, *Prelude*, was, according to the composer’s daughter, Suzanne Bloch Smith,

²⁴ The New York premiere took place on 11 June 1922. The film was reissued in 1947 in a sound version with music by Rudolph Schramur. In 1976, David Shepard restored “Nanook...” to its original silent version with subtitles; an original score was composed by Stanley Silverman and performed by Tashi.

...composed...late at night at his desk, right after he had severed his ties to the Cleveland Institute of Music after an association of five years. Those particular struggles to maintain his artistic integrity had come to an end. This is not a sorrowful work but rather one of melancholy, of looking back, wondering whether all his efforts had been worth the battle and finding comfort in writing this music in solitude.²⁵

The piano compositions from the Cleveland period are generally small-scaled and diverse in purpose and in musical content. *Enfantines*, for example, is a set of ten cameos for children in which each miniature includes an illustrative drawing by Bloch's daughter, Lucienne, a teenager at the time.²⁶ Various pedagogical issues are treated in an appealing manner so as to capture a child's interest. "Joyous March" (Example 5), the fifth of the pieces, treats alternating meter, C and 3-4, alternating fingerings on the same notes, *staccato* touch, and dynamic gradations. This particular selection was dedicated to Beryl Rubinstein, a member of the piano faculty at the Institute and later, 1932-52, its Director. It is of some interest to note that each of the ten pieces in the collection is dedicated to a person who taught piano at the school with the exception of the first and third, which were dedicated, respectively, to Bloch's daughters, Suzanne and Lucienne.

Example 5 "Joyous March" from *Enfantines*, p. 12. Published by Carl Fischer, 1924.

The image displays a musical score for "Joyous March" by Ernest Bloch. The score is written for piano and consists of three systems of music. The first system begins with the tempo marking "Allegro giocoso" and a quarter note equal to 128 (♩ = 128). The key signature is one sharp (F#). The score includes dynamic markings such as *mf*, *dim.*, *pp*, and *cresc.*. The music features alternating meters of common time (C) and 3/4, and includes various fingering numbers (1-5) and articulation marks like accents and slurs. The composer's name, ERNEST BLOCH, is printed at the top right of the first system.

²⁵ Suzanne Bloch Smith, "Prelude," *Ernest Bloch: Creative Spirit*, in collaboration with Irene Heskies (New York: Jewish Music Council of the National Jewish Welfare Board, 1976), 66.

²⁶ *Enfantines* (New York: Carl Fischer, 1924). For a descriptive analysis of the complete set of pieces, see David Z. Kushner, "Ernest Bloch's *Enfantines*," *College Music Symposium*, 23 (2) (Fall 1983): 103-112.

Five Sketches in Sepia, which tilts toward French impressionism in style, reveals, in its title, something of the composer's interest in photography.²⁷ Many of his photos dating from the 1920s have a sepia-colored finish. With the exception of the opening "Prélude," notable for quartal harmonies and a subdued musical atmosphere, the other "sketches" are evocative of their titles: "Fumées sur la Ville," "Lucioles," "Incertitude," and "Epilogue." The mix of French and English became a standard *modus operandi* following Bloch's arrival in America.

The *Four Circus Pieces*, though also marked by their brevity, are satiric and parodistic. For the listener, their titles illuminate something of the intent of these trifles with a message: "The Homeliest Woman" (subtitled "Invitation to the Waltz") is a vulgar parody of the classic Viennese dance, "The Two Burlingham Brothers" is reminiscent of a burlesque or vaudeville show, "Dialogue and Dance of the Heavyweight and the Dwarf" has a whiff of social commentary, gleaned from the composer's remark about the "joy of the crowd" on observing the dwarf's demise, while the final piece, "The Clown," dedicated to Charlie Chaplin, is replete with captions associative of the various moods that marked a Chaplin performance. This suite reveals in capsulated form a theme that runs through its creator's life, viz. a distaste for the injustices that are inflicted on the less fortunate by those who should know better.

Poems of the Sea, a cycle of evocative and impressionistic works for piano, was inspired by the verse of Walt Whitman.²⁸ The three movements, entitled *Waves*, *Chanty*, and *At Sea*, as with other works by Bloch, incorporate compositional techniques and devices associated both with Jewish themes as well as with other referential or, for that matter, non-referential subject matter. In "Waves," for example, the *Yishtabbah shtayger*, with its characteristic diminished fifth, C-flat, followed by perfect fifth, B-flat, at the beginning of the piece, reminiscent both of cantorial chanting and the rocking movement of waves, and the *Adonai Malakh shtayger*, with its C natural major second (Example 6), produce a bimodality that is inherent in much of the composer's creative mind-set. Noteworthy also is the 3-4 meter in the right hand against the 9-8 meter in the left hand. The brief second movement, "Chanty," marked *Andante misterioso*, is, with its modal flavoring, more cryptic than the traditional sailor's work song associated with the title, but it does contain the associative Scotch-snap or "Bloch rhythm." "At Sea," the third movement, is a rollicking dance of the hornpipe family, but the bimodality, including the natural minor, and the use of several *shtaygers*, make for a coloristic pianistic feast; indeed, Bloch orchestrated the complete work during the same time period.

²⁷ A collection of Bloch's photographs is located in the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona in Tucson. See David Z. Kushner, "Appendix: Ernest Bloch as Photographer," in *The Ernest Bloch Companion* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 159-77.

²⁸ "In Cabin'd Ships at Sea," in *Inscriptions*, from *Leaves of Grass*, 1891-92 edition (New York: Penguin Books, 1954), 31-32.

Example 6 “Waves,” from *Poems of the Sea*, p. 3, score 1, mm.1-3. Published by G. Schirmer, 1923.

Poems of the Sea
I. Waves

Ernest Bloch

Piano

Danse sacrée, *In the Night*, and *Nirvana* are other evocative piano works from the half-decade in Cleveland. Because the first of these derives its material from the unfinished opera, *Jézabel*, it is not surprising to observe the use of *shstaygers* as well as a scale that alternates whole- and semi-tones; in addition, the Middle Eastern atmosphere is enhanced by the ever-present augmented fourth, C-F-sharp. A “love poem,” *In the Night* is a tripartite evocation in which bi-tonal combinations, long pedal points, and the “Bloch rhythm” make their expected appearance. *Nirvana* is given an explanation of intent by the composer in the score: “...*Sans désir, sans souffrance...Paix, Neant...*” The musical means by which the intended effects are produced include open fifths, fourth chords, poly-chords, bass *ostinati*, and series of major thirds a minor third apart.

The variety of works composed during the Cleveland years informs us of the changing musical environment of the time and of the influences that impacted upon, and, as importantly, did not impact upon Bloch. Exoticism, including occasional use of quarter tones, mixed with neo-classical formal ingredients, are the paramount imprints on his thinking of that period, while a residue of his earlier Hebraic stamp remains, as it did throughout his life. The music of the Second Viennese School, however, seems to have found general disdain and disrespect.

Given the educational and public relations aspects of a position as head of an important conservatory, and considering Bloch’s interest in educating the lay public as well as independent music teachers and public school music educators, it is not surprising that his regimen went well beyond what, for him, was always his paramount activity—composition. In Summer 1922, for example, the Institute provided a six-week term (July 8—August 12) for teachers and advanced students, in which prominent members of the faculty were the master instructors: Giulio Silva, voice; Beryl Rubinstein, piano; André de Ribaupierre, violin; and Edwin Arthur Kraft, organ (see Figure 3).

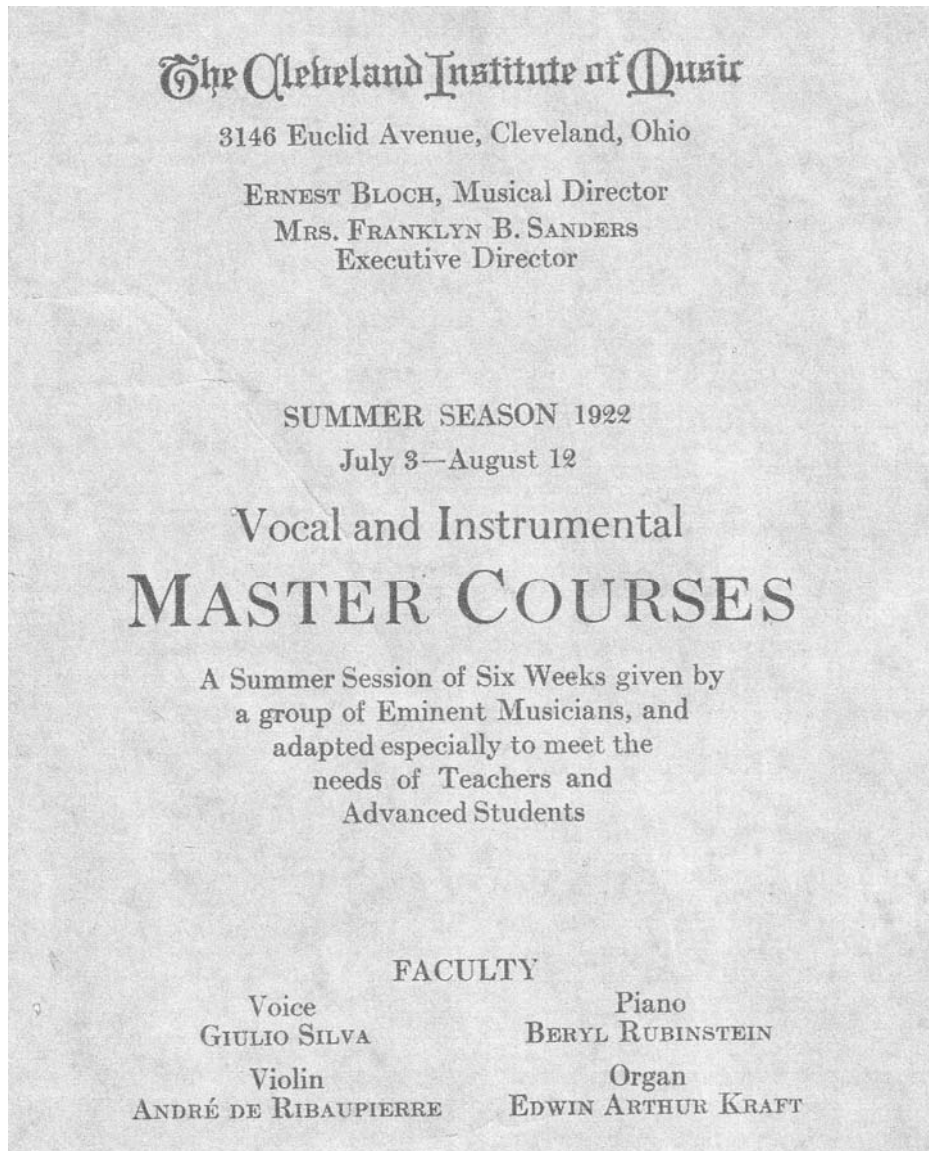


Figure 3 Flyers for the Summer 1922 Master Courses at the Cleveland Institute of Music.

Bloch himself offered a ten-lecture series for the general public from 6 December 6 1921 through 25 April 1922 at the Institute. Entitled “Vital Questions in Music,” the presentations, held on Wednesday afternoons at 4 p.m., featured Bloch as lecturer and illustrator at the piano, along with members of the faculty, students, and the Institute’s chorus and string orchestra (See Figure 4 for the list of topics and their description).

The Cleveland Institute of Music

2827 EUCLID AVENUE
ERNEST BLOCH, MUSICAL DIRECTOR

Vital Questions in Music

A compressed course for the Appreciation of Music, in ten Lectures given by Mr. Bloch on Wednesday afternoons at four.

The lectures will be illustrated at the piano by Mr. Bloch, Faculty Members, Students, and the Chorus and String Orchestra of the Institute.

- 1 December 6 The Foundation of Musical Appreciation
A practical demonstration in solfeggio and theory, musically illustrated.
 - 2 December 20 Colors, Values, Drawing in Music
An explanation of melody, counterpoint and harmony, illustrated at the piano.
 - 3 January 10 Proportions, Dynamics and Structure in Music
A discussion of musical form, illustrated.
 - 4 January 24 Good Performances and Bad
Correct practise the basis of good performances; how to study. A practical demonstration.
 - 5 February 14 Interpretation and Musical Taste
Revivifying crystallized beauty the task of interpretation. Musically illustrated.
- Note: The first five lectures lay the basis for the comprehension of the last five discussions.*
- 6 February 28 Johann Sebastian Bach
Analysis of some piano works.
 - 7 March 14 Johann Sebastian Bach
Analysis of some orchestral works.
 - 8 March 28 Beethoven
A symphonic analysis.
 - 9 April 11 Chopin and Schumann
An analysis of typical works.
 - 10 April 25 Debussy
Analysis of orchestral and piano works.

Figure 4 *Vital Questions in Music*, Bloch's Lecture Series at the Cleveland Institute of Music in 1922.

One is struck by the leap forward in thinking in the American manner, i.e. in the notion that compression and focus on a few central figures would likely satisfy the needs of those who desire a bare acquaintance with the masters and their masterworks. Given that Bloch had been enamored with Renaissance choral music, it is striking that in his treatment of composers he begins with the High Baroque via J.S. Bach, omits the central figures of the Viennese Classical School as well as operatic titans such as Verdi and Wagner, for whom he professed enormous admiration, and concludes with Debussy, whose passing in 1918 qualifies him as a modern master. This engagement with the public was surely a worthy precursor of later incarnations of the genre, some of which, such as

Leonard Bernstein's lectures for the young, proved to be a significant way in which to build audiences for art music.²⁹

In his ever-expanding role as an educator, Bloch wrote a series of pedagogical articles during the Cleveland years which, to a large degree, were expansions on the ideas he expressed in *A School in Action: A Symposium*. In general, he makes the point that technique alone is not sufficient for the understanding and interpreting of a work of art. Spiritual nourishment, he averred, was an essential component of being a complete musician. In one example of his teaching philosophy, he asks that the student, before approaching a piece of music,

... try to grasp its shape, its rhythm, its key, melody, nuances. It will be excellent for him to sing it, to get accustomed to the melody, its expression. In brief, he will find what the interpretation ought to be. When the conception is perfectly clear in his brain, the fingers, being led by a higher will, will undoubtedly obey and be drilled in half the time. And instead of an incorrect, arbitrary, impersonal, half-dead performance, there will be understanding, life and musicality in his playing.³⁰

Apart from writing for national journals, Bloch also got into the trenches on a state-wide level; on one such occasion, he wrote as follows for a publication in Akron:

There are, of course, a few good books, but much better than the books is the direct study of the works. This is the reason for which, in the Cleveland Institute of Music, we do not use theoretical books. To go directly to the works of the master, this is the surest way of leading the student to think by himself, to observe, to analyze, to compare, to judge,—in a word, of giving him, as soon as possible, self control, independence and understanding.³¹

The basic tenets of his ideas on teaching were consistent no matter the age of the student. His comments on music in its larger aspects were conveyed through his column, "Music Week," which appeared in the *Cleveland Press*. In these brief commentaries, Bloch's observations, while astute and telling, are also provocative. And that, after all, created interest on the part of his readers. A few samples reveal how a transplanted Swiss writes about European masters from his

²⁹ Leonard Bernstein's "Young People's Concerts," seen on television in the United States and Canada during the period 1958-72, revealed the conductor as master educator. In this series, he taught about composers and compositions featured in his weekly concert series. With the 1958-59 season and extending through 1964, he taught his adult audiences, in his "Thursday Evening Previews," about the style and compositional school of a composer featured on that night's program. This approach was a forerunner of the now-commonplace pre-concert lecture.

³⁰ Ernest Bloch, "Securing the Best Results from Piano Study," *The Etude*, vol. 41 (September 1923), 591.

³¹ Ernest Bloch, "Proper Music Education," *Woman's Forum* (Akron, Ohio, 15 March 1922), 11. For additional pedagogical writings by Bloch, see "Ernest Bloch Surveys the Problem of Musical Education," *Musical America*, 28 (21 May 1921): 3, 40; "The Pitfalls of Memorizing," *The Musician*, 28 (April 1923): 11-12; and "How and When to Begin Musical Training," *The Musician*, 24 (April 1924): 29.

new perch in Cleveland. With regard to England, the following statements are thrust upon the readers of the column:

I have often said that Shakespeare is the greatest English musician. I cannot find anyone among the so-called musicians of England who embodies the soul of the nation as he does.

In spite of many notable musicians, it is true of Great Britain as of France and America that music is not thus far the natural language in which the soul of the British people expresses itself.

Handel, the German by birth, spent the greatest part of his life in England. He might also be said to be an Englishman, by adoption. His music has nowhere been so much admired and understood, and perhaps he, more than any other musician, has embodied the soul of modern England.³²

Early English masters such as John Dunstable, John Taverner, Thomas Tallis, Christopher Tye, John Jenkins, and Henry Purcell, and those of later eras, among them Sirs William Sterndale Bennett, Charles Hubert Parry, Charles Villiers Sanford (born in Ireland), and Edward Elgar did not emerge within Bloch's prism.

In speaking about Italy, Bloch noted the identification of composers such as Palestrina, Monteverdi, Corelli, and Scarlatti with certain cities, as opposed to the nation as a whole. Giuseppe Verdi, on the other hand, is associated with the *Risorgimento*, and his music is identified with the unification of his country. Bloch mentions the posters that were seen throughout nineteenth-century Italy, on which were written "Viva Vittorio Emmanuele Re D'Italia" (Long live Victor Emanuel, King of Italy), words wherein the first letters, after "Viva," spell Verdi. Although the composer was a man of the soil, Bloch pronounces the view that:

He is a patrician, an aristocrat; there is a dignity in his music, even when it is most "popular" in character. "Aida" seems fresher, more colorful, more original today than a vast quantity of so-called "modern" works.³³

With regard to France, Bloch holds the notion, as with England, that the country's writers, painters, and sculptors represent it better than any of its composers. He puts it as follows:

France, to be sure, has produced her great musicians. But Rameau and Couperin, for instance, represent a period; so after all does the romantic Berlioz, the "Impressionist" Debussy. Chabrier embodies very much of the characteristic French humor. But none of them represents France in a complete sense.³⁴

Curiously, Bizet, though not seen as *the* French musician, fares better:

³² Ernest Bloch. "Music Week," *Cleveland Press* (6 May 1924), 26.

³³ Ernest Bloch, "Music Week," *Cleveland Press* (7 May 1924), 7.

³⁴ Ernest Bloch, "Music Week," *Cleveland Press* (8 May 1924), 13.

Bizet, too, cannot be called a complete representative of France. And yet there is perhaps more of the French landscape, the French temperament, in his music than in any other. “L’Arlesienne” has a color of its own which is unlike all other music. When one listens to it, one is feeling the sun, the perfumed air of southern France.³⁵

While these newspaper tidbits are capsule commentaries, they did serve as antecedents of today’s television sound bites except that, by focusing on music, they served to, perhaps, whet the appetite of a lay audience for an art form that then, as now, needed stoking. A variety of issues that reach “front burner” status in today’s musical academies created a major stir between Bloch, his Board of Trustees, and his primary assistant, Executive Director Mrs. Franklin B. (Martha) Sanders. One area of discord surrounded the composer’s educational philosophy with regard to teaching methodology and curricular choices, along with the purposes and motivations for having a distinguished composer at the helm of a conservatory. This phase of the Bloch-Cleveland story is related succinctly by Roger Sessions:

...His very name was from the start capitalized for advertising purposes; he was, moreover, expected to devote to the gaining of enrollments or subscriptions his force of conviction, and his immense persuasive powers—powers already strained in the defence [sic] of fundamentals of his educational policy. Even his proposal to establish a Theory Department met with some opposition at first; it was considered a quite unwarranted addition to a “practical” curriculum. What, then, of solfeggio? What of the “fixed *do*,” long established in Europe as the basis of musical instruction, but regarded in America as difficult and unproductive of quick results? The convincing demonstration, by means of musical tests, of Bloch’s accuracy of judgment in these matters, was of no real avail in lessening the obstinacy with which certain of his pedagogical principles were opposed. A system of instruction which, eliminating “marks” and text-books, took as its point of departure the direct musical experience of the pupil, and sought constantly to enlarge, to co-ordinate this experience through observation rather than rules: such was Bloch’s aim. But to the majority of those with whom he had to deal, such a conception was quite incomprehensible, and its methods of procedure unheard-of innovations.³⁶

With regard to off-campus activities, Bloch believed that they would not only enhance his reputation as a composer, conductor, and teacher, but that they would accrue to the image of the new music school he was charged with developing. This meant that there would be periods in which he would not be available to deal with pressing matters at home. In the case of an administrator, this presumes a good working relationship with those who are vested with the responsibility of seeing to it that the Director’s wishes are observed. If and when there are conflicts or misunderstandings, these must be addressed via direct communication with the aim of reasonable resolution. There are, obviously,

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Roger Huntington Sessions, “Ernest Bloch,” *Modern Music*, 5(1) (May-June 1928): 9-10.

times when egos, personal agendas, or simply intervening or unforeseen developments get in the way of a smooth settlement. And herein arose a challenge that the major figures were unable to meet.

In January 1925, Bloch was given verbal assurance that his contract would be renewed for the 1925-26 academic year. On 1 February, the *Rochester Herald* announced that Bloch would be visiting their city's famed music school:

Mr. Block [sic], who will open a five week, five course, musical lectureship series in the Eastman School of Music Monday, delivered a lecture at Kilbourn Hall yesterday afternoon in which he outlined his courses. Each course is offered in five, two-hour periods, 9 to 11 o'clock each morning, Monday to Friday inclusive. The courses are designed to help the teacher and the student acquire a method for application of his own musical work, be it teaching, interpretation or composition. They are also designated to be of great value to the musical amateur in adding to knowledge and appreciation of music. Emphasis will be laid on the study of the masterpieces and to giding [sic] the student to develop capacity for individual work.³⁷

The essence of this teaching approach was consistent with the many previous statements the composer had uttered verbally and in print over a goodly period of time. It is the very philosophy that created a negative stir at his home base in Cleveland. During the time Bloch was in Rochester, the Cleveland Institute of Music began a series of significant and diverse events for the general public, including a program on 13 February by Nadia Boulanger; her topic was "Modern Music and its Evolution." On 27 February, Loraine Wyman gave a recital of vocal works that included Kentucky mountain songs, Negro spirituals, and old folk songs from France and England. Later in the term, on 16 March, Wanda Landowska presented a harpsichord recital at the CIM during her first tour of the United States. Bloch's assistant director, Martha B. Sanders, wrote to him on 18 February commenting that:

Nadia Boulanger has come and gone and left behind her a wonderful impression. She is truly a personality and would be, I fancy, a remarkable teacher. On the afternoon of Friday I had a long visit with her and approached her on the subject of which we spoke.

In the first place she has two young men pupils of hers to suggest for Cleveland, either one of whom she thinks would be very good for the place. My proposal was that the one chosen should come here the middle of the term next year to be here from February on while Roger [Sessions] was still here. This seemed to strike her as feasible.³⁸

The letter goes on to say that Boulanger had received several offers, including one from a school in New York, which Sanders conjectures is Juilliard, for a sum of at least \$10,000. Boulanger is reported to have responded that she would

³⁷ "Observation is Neglected, Says Teacher," *Rochester Herald* (1 February 1925), 10.

Curiously, Bloch's name is spelled incorrectly, with a k, throughout the article.

³⁸ Letter from Martha B. Sanders to Ernest Bloch (18 February 1925) in the Ernest Bloch Collection, Library of Congress.

prefer Cleveland to New York, but that less than \$10,000 was not acceptable. A meeting with the Executive Board, according to Sanders, yielded no positive results and so the idea of hiring Boulanger was dropped.

In the same letter Sanders suggests that Sessions offer a course of lectures during the summer entitled “The Materials of Music,” consisting of the following topics:

1. Consonance and Dissonance
2. Melody
3. Rhythm
4. Tone Color and what it is
5. The Texture of Music; Harmony, Counterpoint, and Tonality

This series was endorsed by Sanders due to the fact that a potential association with the “School of Education” fell through and Sessions, who had a twenty-hour contract, was not to be with the Institute too much longer. She also mentions that the Board was interested in pursuing the idea of summer concerts by members of the faculty.

Sanders reports as follows re the requests of Victor de Gomez:³⁹

Mr. de Gomez requires a six hour contract for the month of July, being willing to take the month of June as it comes. He also holds out for a \$300 guarantee for concerts or lectures. You see when one starts the others follow but I thought we could safely offer this in view of the fact of the summer concerts. If we can only use him twice he would like to give four lectures for the other \$100 and I think the experiment of seeing what drawing power he might offer would be worth gambling \$100 on him. It would be fine if we could develop another lecturer.⁴⁰

The letter closes with the comment that the performance teachers are willing to present summer concerts as part of their contracts and that the money that accrued from them would go toward the establishment of a scholarship fund. In the event that these concerts did not pay for expenses, the loss was to be charged “to advertising as it might prove to be the most valuable advertising we could have.”⁴¹

Bloch’s return letter states agreement with the decision not to pursue a contract for Nadia Boulanger and rejects the idea of summer concerts or lectures by faculty. A testy tone enters into the reply as it progresses:

The conditions of Mr. de Gomez are absolutely unacceptable and I am not willing to make any guarantee for Concerts or Lectures.

I think that under the conditions I have more or less bound myself for my projected summer courses, it would only be fair not to have any other lectures during the Summer Courses as it would conflict with mine. If you cannot wait till I return, you can bring the case to the committee and

³⁹ Victor de Gomez was principal ’cellist with the Cleveland Orchestra and an adjunct teacher at the Cleveland Institute of Music.

⁴⁰ Letter from Martha B. Sanders to Ernest Bloch (18 February 1925) in the Ernest Bloch Collection, Library of Congress.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

if they want to have other lectures advertised, I will then beg you to stop immediately all advertising about my Courses and to advise me in order that I may, without losing time, make plans for these Lectures somewhere else.⁴²

The letter closes with the news that he is to conduct the Rochester Philharmonic during the following week in his symphonic poems, *Winter* and *Spring*. Howard Hanson, “who is the most charming man,” is reported to have asked him to assist in the “arduous task” of selecting works for a projected concert of American music and that, at this point in time, he “already looked over forty of them, hard and discouraging job” (sic).

On the same day, Ms. Sanders had sent to Bloch a draft of a circular advertising the summer courses that Bloch was scheduled to teach. She also explains and defends her decisions regarding the summer season. Bloch’s reply on 23 February includes remarks to the effect that the formatting for his lectures are to be revised according to a set of instructions he provides to her. It also contains the following comments, the tone of which is clearly less than endearing:

...The fee of \$300 for Concerts is not possible. Have you guaranteed anything to Ribaupierre or Beryl? If not, we cannot make any favor to anyone. It is a matter of principle. Mr. de Gomez is fair and will understand. This can certainly be settled in a satisfactory way to all. Perhaps in raising a little his guarantee (including the Concerts). Of course I would like to have Mr. de Gomez for the Summer School.

When did you make such a contract with Roger? Last year’s proposals were based on the engagement at the School of Education. If any contract was made this year before having any certitude about other engagements, allow me to tell you that it was very poor business.

I am not willing, being given the conditions of my cooperation—no guarantee—giving my name to the School and jeopardizing perhaps my Summer—to have any other Lectures advertised than mine. We will try to make the Courses successful and they must be given the proper advertising without delay.⁴³

Mrs. Sanders begins her reply, handwritten instead of typed as in her previous correspondence, as follows:

Dear Mr. Bloch —

Your extremely courteous letter has just been brought in to me.⁴⁴

An exchange of telegrams follows in which Sanders asks, with the approval of Sheldon Cary, Chairman of the Executive Committee, that owing to the impasse

⁴² Letter from Ernest Bloch to Martha B. Sanders (19 February 1925) in the Ernest Bloch Collection, Library of Congress.

⁴³ Letter from Ernest Bloch to Martha B. Sanders (23 February 1925) in the Ernest Bloch Collection, Library of Congress.

⁴⁴ Letter from Martha B. Sanders to Ernest Bloch (25 February 1925) in the Ernest Bloch Collection, Library of Congress.

regarding the offerings and faculty for the summer classes, Bloch return to Cleveland from Rochester at the Institute's expense, to resolve outstanding issues.

Bloch's response follows:

My coming unnecessary and impossible on account of rehearsal and performance on works on Sunday. Cannot see any difficulty in arranging Summer School program provided you follow my instructions and plans instead of putting yours over.

[signed] Ernest Bloch

On the same date, Bloch writes to Charles E. Briggs, President of the CIM, reiterating what has transpired, and concluding with the following remarks:

Now, I will beg you, as sorry as I am to bother you with these matters, to remind Mrs. Sanders once more that I am the Director and that she has to obey my instructions. My study of the conditions here—which in spite of all the money and the wonderful equipment, are not what they could be, and in many regards do not compare with Cleveland—show me once more that real accomplishments are only compatible with a strong, unique, and energetic direction.⁴⁵

Bloch's internal issues with officials of the Institute reached an all-time low point during May, the details of which Bloch describes in a letter to Victor Sincere, a former member of the Executive Committee, and chief executive officer of the Bailey Company, a division of National Department Stores, Inc. After reporting that Sheldon Cary and Charles Briggs came to see him on 12 May, after "a secret meeting of the Executive Committee," and asked for his resignation, citing as the reason the fact that the Executive Committee believed that he was unpopular in the community and that, because of this fact, the Institute was not able to raise the funds needed for its maintenance. Bloch then writes as follows:

I asked these gentlemen whether it was fair, after having engaged me in January 1925 for another season (which fact was reported in the minutes), to kick me out in such a way three weeks before the end of the season, at a time when I could not possibly find a job and when the teachers who would be inclined to follow me would not be able to do so for the same reason. I asked them whether it was fair to impose upon my confidence because I had not asked them for a written contract as a result of their repeated assertions that their word was just as good. I asked them whether it was fair to treat an artist who had given five years of his life and effort to community in such a way. To these questions Mr. Cary simply said that "he was not at liberty to answer."

I told them that I did not want to impose myself upon them if we were not in sympathy, although I was rather surprised that never, during these

⁴⁵ Letter from Ernest Bloch to Charles E. Briggs (25 February 1925) in the Ernest Bloch Collection, Library of Congress.

five years, no mention of these reasons was brought to my attention; that however I did not want to resign and be accused of abandoning the Institute at a critical period; that my dismissal must come from them. All this did not seem to please them very much. They told me it would be more advantageous for me to resign.

I did not make any decision, however, and yesterday morning went to see my attorney, Mr. Newton D. Baker. He will confer today with Mr. Cary and will then see what steps have to be taken. Yesterday afternoon, Mrs. Sanders, who had postponed the signing of all contracts for the last two months, rushed all the people to have them signed.⁴⁶

In his response, Sincere is obviously surprised and without prior knowledge that this turn of events was in the offing. His letter contains the comments enumerated herein:

I can hardly believe it possible that men of the standing of Mr. Cary and Dr. Briggs would come to you at the close of the season and demand your resignation under the circumstances of your allying yourself with some other institution at this late date.

I attended the last meeting of the Trustees of the Institute and am sure that nothing occurred at that meeting which could have given the slightest hint that any such consideration was in the minds either of the Trustees or the Committee, and unless there is some vital reason, almost bordering on bad faith, which caused their action, I am absolutely at a loss to understand it.

Your presence in the musical life of Cleveland has added to the growth of music in our community, and I am always proud when I travel about to have people who take an interest in music express to me the good fortune which Cleveland has in having you make your home there, and this together with the far reaching efforts that you have made by your presence in other cities has only brought back, in my mind, a wealth of interest in our advancement in music.⁴⁷

During the turmoil that existed in Bloch's life at this time, he was notified of his election to the post of first vice president of the Ohio Music Teachers Association; despite the unsettling nature of his daily existence, he gave assurances that he would be as helpful as possible despite time constraints.⁴⁸

The pace of activity re Bloch's interaction with CIM accelerated, and, in his letter to Victor Sincere on 18 May, Bloch provides further "enlightenment" on his situation:

⁴⁶ Letter from Ernest Bloch to Victor Sincere (14 May 1925) in the Ernest Bloch Collection, Library of Congress.

⁴⁷ Letter from Victor Sincere to Ernest Bloch (15 May 1925) in the Ernest Bloch Collection, Library of Congress.

⁴⁸ The letters from John A. Hoffmann, president of the Ohio Music Teachers Association, to Bloch. (29 April 1925) and Bloch's reply to Hoffmann (7 May 1925) are in the Ernest Bloch Collection, Library of Congress.

You say that you had no hint of what was going on. Neither had I and even in May an article appeared in the *Musician*, written by Mrs. Sanders, wherein the highest praise of myself is made and the success of the Institute attributed to me. They would not have acted in this way if they had had any idea of getting rid of me, as the last Board meeting was in the middle of April. Mrs. Sanders urged me to accept the presidency [sic] of the Ohio State [sic] Music Teachers Association which was offered to me. As a result of these two occurrences, I am convinced that some one has offered them the money providing I was dismissed. This is probably on account of a personal grudge and although I have no evidence I strongly suspect who they (sic) are.

The entire School is in a turmoil and a part of the City and there is much indignation. Legally, nothing has happened as I told you I have refused to resign. Newton D. Baker asked Mr. Cary whether they had engaged me. "Yes, we have," answered Mr. Cary, "but he has no legal contract." "You have made the most sacred of all contracts with him," answered Mr. Baker.

I am ashamed that people who pretend to be the leaders of this community, the old stock, the one hundred per cent Americans who want to make this country a better place to live in, have to be reminded of such elementary principles of ethics. This is not a good example to place before a newly made citizen.

I have not had word from the Committee yet although they are conferring and they probably will try to make some arrangement as I have not resigned. I may be obliged and of course would fulfill my engagement already made although I must confess it would be very painful for me to sit at the same table with people who considered their word as a scrap of paper.⁴⁹

After turning over his single share of stock in the Institute to Martha B. Sanders via Newton Baker for the purpose of assisting a deserving student with tuition costs, a headline in the *Cleveland Press* on 22 May 1925 came as a metaphorical thunderbolt to an unsuspecting musical world: "Institute Has Row; Bloch Out." The story mentions that the Institute's enrollment had grown to 500 students, and includes the composer's formal statement:

I think that after having given the best of my life and work to the Institute for such a long period of time, it may be a greater advantage for the musical development of this country for me to broaden my activities as lecturer, conductor and pedagogue.

I owe to myself more time for my creative work, which has more or less suffered in expending so much energy in purely administrative affairs.

It is my earnest wish that, in the future, as in the past, the Cleveland Institute of Music will continue its growth with the same spirit of true

⁴⁹ Letter from Ernest Bloch to Victor Sincere (18 May 1925) in the Ernest Bloch Collection, Library of Congress.

devotion to artistic education and thus fulfill its mission toward the community of Cleveland and in the advancement of art in America.⁵⁰

The article contains further information anticipating questions the public might well have asked:

No one has been mentioned as a possible successor to Bloch. The complete administration of the Institute will be taken over by the executive director, Mrs. Franklyn B. Sanders.

Bloch's plans for the immediate future are not definitely settled. He will remain here for the summer and give his master course at the institute during the summer session.

In the fall he plans to go to California. He will supervise the San Francisco Conservatory of Music during the winter. His wife and two daughters will accompany him.⁵¹

It is instructive to note that Bloch had become friendly with Ada Clement and Lillian Hodghead, founders of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music; indeed, he offered a five-week course at that institution during the summer of 1924.

Personal relationships, not a national search, created what became another five-year position at a newly minted school of music. Despite the rather tumultuous atmosphere that enveloped the personal and professional aspects of Bloch's life, his resourcefulness was such that he could still conduct the premiere of his *Suite*, as the *Concerto Grosso* for string orchestra and piano obbligato was called at the time, on 29 May at Cleveland's Hotel Statler. The Institute's string orchestra, comprised of both students and faculty members, and faculty pianist, Walter Scott, were conducted by the composer.

In an effusive epistle to Romain Rolland on 19 July of the same year, Bloch relates the events concerning his resignation from the CIM, and then, as was his wont, wanders off into assorted other matters that were of concern to him. These include his interest in the Scopes "Monkey Trial" in Dayton, Tennessee, the path to success of the immigrant, who, in Bloch's view of the world, reaches the level of a capitalist, and then becomes an oppressor much as he had been oppressed, and the manner in which the artistic world operates:

In Art, it is industrialism, the big bluff, "business" first. Everything is in the hands of women, females I should say—rich, inactive and sexually unsatisfied. Next, there are clubs, associations, federations, etc.! Then the "managers"—and the music journals.⁵²

It was not only Bloch's musical style during the Cleveland years that proved, for some, to be provocative despite the fact that, in general, its tenor was tamer than that of many of his contemporaries; his unabashed pronouncements on life, art, and the state of the world also rankled those who preferred to wear "rose-colored glasses." And then, too, there are aspects of the personal life of the Director that

⁵⁰ "Institute Has Row; Bloch Out," *Cleveland Press* (22 May 1925), p. 1.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² José-Flore Tappy, ed., *Ernest Bloch/Romain Rolland Lettres (1911-1933)* (Lausanne: Editions Payot Lausanne, 1984), 150.

may have been a contributing factor in his departure from the Institute. His not very well hidden affair with a young piano teacher at the school, Anita Frank, to whom the final piece, “Dreams,” in *Enfantines*, is dedicated, had reached the level of local gossip and was known to Bloch’s family, among others.⁵³ It can surely be argued that Bloch’s tenure in Cleveland was not only a learning experience in the ways of the academic musical world, but also in the ways in which that world revolved around the larger axis that formed life in America.

As 2009 marked the fiftieth anniversary of Bloch’s passing, it is important to note how much of his multitasking in Cleveland still contains truisms that can provide instruction for our own time.

⁵³ Joella Werlin, compiler, *Suzanne Bloch Recollections* (Portland, OR: Familore, 2007), pp. 64-67.