

**AMERICAN MUSICOLOGICAL SOCIETY CAPITAL CHAPTER  
SPRING MEETING**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 17, 2010  
TOWSON UNIVERSITY**

**PROGRAM**

9:30 am Coffee and Tea

**Session I: Lowens Award Competition**

Chair: Jennifer DeLapp-Birkett

10:00 am Matthew Wallace (Catholic University of America), “Crossing Periods: Placing Beethoven’s Septet”

10:35 am Alicia Kopfstein-Penk (Catholic University of America), “Leonard Bernstein’s Young People’s Concerts as Political and Social Activism”

11:10 am Elise Steenburgh (Virginia Commonwealth University): “ ‘Africa’: An Assessment of the Influence of Africa in the Music of John Coltrane”

**Voting for the Lowens Award**

**Lunch**

**Session II: Eighteenth-Century America**

1:30 pm Sterling E. Murray (Williamsburg, VA), “*Love in a Village* and a New Direction for Musical Theater in Eighteenth-Century America”

2:05 pm Bonny H. Miller (Rockville, MD), “A Songbook and a Sea Voyage: The Legacy of Louisa Wells Aikman”

**Session III: French Voices**

2:50 pm Larry C. Taylor (Bridgewater College) and Mary Jean Speare (James Madison University), “The Organ as a Symbol of Evil in Opera”

3:25 pm Sara Jameson (Washington, DC), “ ‘But Where is He, the Pilgrim of My Song’: The Evolving Voices of the Hero and the Artist in Hector Berlioz’s *Harold en Italie*”

4:00 pm **Business Meeting**

**ABSTRACTS**  
**(in program order)**

**Matthew Wallace (Catholic University of America), “Crossing Periods: Placing Beethoven’s Septet”**

While a significant portion of Ludwig van Beethoven’s output is well chronicled and thoroughly analyzed, much of his *oeuvre* remains shrouded and unknown. This is illustrated by the select number of Beethoven’s works generally accepted in the upper pantheon of Western Art music. These works may include, but are not limited to, several symphonies and overtures, *Missa Solemnis*, a number of piano works, and perhaps a few trios and quartets. However, conspicuously absent from this list is his opus 20 Septet in E Flat Major, ironic given that the work’s immediate popularity and success were arguably surpassed only by his ninth symphony. Such was the Septet’s status that it was one of, if not definitively Beethoven’s most popular composition throughout his lifetime. As such, its unique status warrants study in and of itself; when it is added to the lengthy list of features that define the composition one faces an overwhelming mountain of evidence that this work needs greater study.

Perhaps no early work composed by Beethoven is more challenging to the Classical traditions inherited from Haydn and Mozart than his opus 20 Septet. Such challenges include that it is a serenade and is also written for seven instruments, which are techniques rarely, if ever, used in the composer’s works. Other confounding factors include Beethoven’s later arrangement of sections of the work into a clarinet trio; the expansion of forms that are characteristic of his later opuses; his use of thematic adaptation from his other works, and; finally the works overall key structure as it relates to Beethoven’s first and second style periods. The purpose of this paper is to examine the Septet with the level of detail and scrutiny previously reserved for Beethoven’s pinnacle works. The second purpose of this paper is to attempt to place the Septet’s legacy against those of Beethoven’s canonical *oeuvre*.

**Alicia Kopfstein-Penk (Catholic University of America), “Leonard Bernstein’s Young People’s Concerts as Political and Social Activism”**

Leonard Bernstein created brilliant and inspiring music pedagogy with his award-winning Young People’s Concerts, but no one (neither the viewers nor the production crew that helped create the programs) realized that much more was hidden beneath the *façade* of this revolutionary television series. For example, he subtly wove his opinions on the social and political issues of the day into many of the programs. Bernstein was so politically active that he had a running FBI file. But when creating scripts for the Young People’s Concerts, he quickly learned that he had to be very circumspect and avoid controversy—that overt political statements would turn these “kiddie” concerts into political forums, move the focus away from music, and might lead to parents forbidding their children to watch the shows. Yet the Maestro could not allow current events to pass without comment. He chose to use the power of suggestion, which, he said: “is often much stronger than a straight order. That’s because it’s deeper, it’s more subtle; those hints can creep into a deeper part of your mind than a simple command can.” This paper will demonstrate how Bernstein ingenuously chose the pieces performed and wrote the scripts in such a way as to include his thoughts about: civil rights, feminism, hippies, drugs, astrology, the Vietnam War, and the meaning of democracy, thereby hoping to influence his audience and change the world for the better.

**Elise Steenburgh (Virginia Commonwealth University): “ ‘Africa’: An Assessment of the Influence of Africa in the Music of John Coltrane”**

Jazz, since its beginnings, has exhibited close cultural and musical ties to Africa. John Coltrane showed a particularly strong tie to Africa, both in his music and in his musical philosophy. He incorporated many different African musical elements into his music, including African instrumentation, rhythms, texture, forms, and spiritual ideas, especially in his piece, “Africa,” written in 1961. In this paper I will examine the influence of African concepts in Coltrane’s musical life, with particular attention given to “Africa,” a piece that illustrates many of the close musical ties jazz has maintained with its African roots. Through early contact with the ritualized sounds of the African-American church where his grandfather was a preacher, Coltrane was able to absorb many of the African musical traditions that have been preserved by that institution. This led him to experiment throughout his career with different “Africanisms,” ranging from the superficial (naming a piece after an African city or person) to vast conceptual pieces, meant to evoke the spirit of Africa. In “Africa” Coltrane mimics Pygmy vocal calls, employs repetition of passages (combined with a cyclical pattern of individual ostinatos) and a freer concept of time reckoning than was typical to most jazz at the time. He also uses some of the standard African “time-line patterns,” which are common rhythms found in most African music. Coltrane was effectively able to combine all these disparate African elements into a piece that is at once fundamentally African and fundamentally jazz.

**Sterling E. Murray (Williamsburg, VA), “*Love in a Village* and a New Direction for Musical Theater in Eighteenth-Century America”**

In 1765 David Douglass, actor-manager of the American Company, sailed to London in search of new actors and repertory for his troupe. When he returned to Charleston the following year, Douglas brought with him a new addition to the company’s repertory entitled *Love in a Village*. The first American performance took place in Charleston the following winter. It was well received and quickly became a permanent fixture in the repertory of the American Company.

Up to this point, American musical theater was limited to ballad operas in which new words were grafted on to tradition tunes. *Love in a Village* offered something quite new and different. Although attributed to Thomas Arne, this work is actually a *pasticcio*, in which borrowed songs are blended with original music. However, unlike the traditional tunes of ballad operas, the music used in works like *Love in a Village* drew upon fully composed musical settings by composers such as Giardini, Germiniani, Boyce, and Abel. This new style demanded vocalists possessing a level of musical accomplishment beyond that normally expected of the actor-singers of ballad opera. In addition, a full theater orchestra was now not only desirable, but necessary. All of this set a new standard for American musical theater.

This paper reviews the compositional history of *Love in a Village* focusing in particular upon its musical sources. Special attention is allotted to the innovative character of this work and how this new style was to create a “new direction” for early American musical theatre.

**Bonny H. Miller (Rockville, MD), “A Songbook and a Sea Voyage: The Legacy of Louisa Wells Aikman”**

As a teenager in Charleston, South Carolina, Louisa Wells collected song sheets imported from London and bound them into her own songbook before fleeing the city during the American Revolution. She retained her bound volume of sheet music to the end of her life, and her songbook was purchased in 1992 by the Music Division of the Library of Congress. The 109 individual songs exemplify the music that Louisa played and cherished as a young woman. With

the exception of a keyboard rondo, Louisa's music consists of texted songs with a figured bass or keyboard accompaniment. The presence of three previously uncatalogued works demonstrates the value and significance of Louisa's song sheets.

Louisa recorded her perilous departure from the American colonies in *The Journey of a Voyage from Charleston, S. C., to London Undertaken During the American Revolution by a Daughter of an Eminent American Loyalist*. Her father left for England at the outbreak of the war, and Louisa was banished from Charleston as a Loyalist three years later. Her account includes episodes of dangerous weather, leaking ships, captivity, and deprivation. Louisa's handwritten memoir was printed in 1906 by the New York Historical Society, and is now recognized as an exceptional example of nonfiction by an eighteenth-century North American woman writer, as well as a unique primary source for American history. Her song collection holds similar value for the evidence it provides for music making in colonial Charleston, as demonstrated by presentation of specific examples from the songbook and memoir.

### **Larry C. Taylor (Bridgewater College) and Mary Jean Speare (James Madison University), "The Organ as a Symbol of Evil in Opera"**

Beginning with the novel *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* (1910) by Gaston Leroux, the organ has been associated with monsters and evil in twentieth-century popular culture. Not only does Leroux's phantom, Erik, play the organ, but the work being performed at the Opéra in Leroux's novel is Gounod's *Faust*. In the famous church scene of this opera we find that Mephistopheles has, in a sense, taken over the organ, using it as his own instrument, but organ was not associated with evil in opera prior to Gounod's work (although the equivalent church scene in Goethe's *Faust* also calls for organ). Symbolizing holiness and political power (for example in Halévy's *La Juive*), organ music was a special effect reserved for ceremonial scenes in French grand opera (beginning with Meyerbeer's *Robert le Diable*) and its descendants. However, the role of the organ as a representative of the Church also became increasingly sinister, until the twentieth-century anti-religious depiction of it in Dallapiccola's *Il prigioniero*, where it seems to represent evil masquerading as the divine.

We consider three aspects in exploring the changes in the symbolism of organ that led from *Robert le Diable* to *Faust* and beyond: the sonic properties of the organ that make it conducive to the transformation from the sacred to the horrific, the anticlerical movement and its relationship to nineteenth-century works that use the organ to depict weakness and corruption, and the taste for the Gothic in French horror fiction of the nineteenth century.

### **Sara Jameson (Washington, DC), " 'But Where is He, the Pilgrim of my Song': The Evolving Voices of the Hero and the Artist in Hector Berlioz's *Harold en Italie* "**

Inspired by Lord Byron's three-fold narrative technique in the epic poem "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," Hector Berlioz created a symphonic interpretation, *Harold en Italie*, in which the solo voice of the viola (representing Harold), the voice of the surrounding orchestra, and the emerging voice of the composer himself interchange to create an evolving journey from the detached isolation of the hero toward the unifying liberation of the artist. Culminating in the fourth movement of the symphony, "Orgy of the Brigands," the narrative voice is usurped by the composer-conductor himself, who leads the orchestra in a final fiery and bacchanalian frenzy that completely overwhelms the voice of Harold. The voice of Berlioz within the symphony has been minimally explored, particularly because it hinges upon his role as conductor and therefore remains invisible in the confines of the written score. However, through an analysis of Berlioz's memoirs and other writings, I argue that through his manipulation of voice, particularly his own voice as composer-conductor, Berlioz uses the symphony as a medium through which not only to

portray the pilgrimage of Harold but also to enact the ascendancy of the composer-conductor as both creator and interpreter of symphonic music.