PACIFIC SOUTHWEST CHAPTER

• OF THE •

AMERICAN MUSICOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Winter Meeting

February 20, 2016
Pomona College

Program

8:45 – 9:25 AM Breakfast and Registration

9:25 – 9:30 AM Welcome from the President

9:30 – 11:00 AM **Session 1**, Music and Media in Mid-century America
Alexandra Monchick (CSU Northridge), Chair

Singing on Screen: Opera for the Mass Public in Contemporary America
Daniela Levy (University of Southern California, Los Angeles)

Radio Enchains Music: The 1940 ASCAP Radio War and Music Festival
Elissa C. La Barre (University of California, Santa Cruz)

11:00 – 11:15 AM Break

11:15 AM – 12:00PM **Session 2**, Music and the Mass Public
Alfred Cramer (Pomona University), Chair

"Every Evening at 8": The Promenade Concerts and Cultural Hierarchy in Late-Nineteenth Century Boston
Kenneth H. Marcus (University of La Verne)

12:00 – 1:40 PM Lunch
1:40 – 2:00 PM PSC-AMS Business Meeting

2:00 – 3:30 PM **Session 3**, Composers in Context
Amy Bauer (University of California, Irvine), Chair

The Same Old Song and Dance: Carlos Surinach and the American Commission Process
Robert Wahl (University of California, Riverside)

Heimat is Where the Heart Is; or, How Hungarian Was Goldmark?
David Brodbeck (University of California, Irvine)

3:30 – 3:45 PM Break

3:45 – 4:30 PM **Session 4**, Panel Discussion: What Else is Out There? Opportunities in Public Musicology
Susan Key (Chapman University, Orange) and Kristi Brown-Montesano (Colburn Conservatory of Music, Los Angeles)

4:45 PM Reception for all presenters and attendees

Chapter Officers

ABSTRACTS

Singing on Screen: Opera for the Mass Public in Contemporary America

Daniela Levy (University of Southern California, Los Angeles)

Much like operatic characters who spend a good deal of time singing about dying without actually expiring, opera itself has been repeatedly pronounced moribund while continuing to survive. The need to draw larger audiences to ensure opera's existence has animated many democratizing efforts, but the strategies employed have differed markedly. In America since the mid-twentieth century, popularly oriented opera in the visual mass media has taken one of two paths: one that rejects opera's traditional elite elements, and one that embraces them. Although scholars have studied mediatized opera, particularly its relationship to live performances in the opera house, this significant shift in emphasis in popularly oriented opera has remained almost entirely unexamined. Yet studying this change is integral to understanding the trajectory of opera's status in American culture. It illustrates the tension in the democratization rhetoric between access – the public's ability simply to experience opera – and accessibility – the public's ability to understand and enjoy the genre.

To explore this development, I first analyze several examples of the accessibility-centered approach around the mid-twentieth century that presented opera in abridged versions or in English translation: the *NBC Opera Theatre*, *Opera Cameos*, and segments on the *Ed Sullivan Show*. I then consider instances of the growing dominance of opera since the mid-1970s that underscores ease of access to an exclusive experience. Examples of such productions characterized by a sense of glamour and the complete original score and libretto, and often broadcast directly from the opera house, include *Live from Lincoln Center/Live from the Met*, the San Francisco Opera's *Opera at the Ballpark*, and the Metropolitan Opera's *The Met: Live in HD*.

Despite similarities in democratizing rhetoric, the differences in these approaches to mediatized opera reveal major changes in elite ideology regarding the value of opera for the mass public. Moreover, scrutinizing these changes has relevance for an understanding of the status and value of not only other musical genres but also other forms of so-called "high culture" that many fear will disappear from the American cultural scene.

Radio Enchains Music: The 1940 ASCAP Radio Music Festival

Elissa C. La Barre (University of California, Santa Cruz)

In September 1940, a bitter conflict between American radio networks and songwriters was well underway. Since 1932, the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) had contracted with major broadcast networks but now ASCAP wanted to renegotiate its licenses to deal with affiliates rather than the networks. After a meeting in San Francisco, the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) decided to boycott ASCAP members' music and created a rival organization, BMI. The1939–1940 battle between the National Broadcasters Association and ASCAP for the airwaves and control of the popular song used radio as a weapon and public forums to spar and fashioned beloved American-produced music as artillery.

ASCAP assembled its famous membership to present a highly publicized musical protest in the form of a two-part concert series at San Francisco's Golden Gate International Exposition. ASCAP President Gene Buck announced that this music festival would be "the greatest group of creative talent ever in one spot in the history of the world." ASCAP's intention was to show their unification and strength to the American public and radio networks during a time of key contract negotiations. But the protest failed. Instead of adding pressure to the networks, this act of defiance proved to be one of the factors that led to the eventual boycott of ASCAP-affiliated music in 1941. Using recordings and reviews, this paper will shed new light on the issues of mass culture and radio, musical protest, and the reaffirmation of the American popular music canon in the final years before the United States' involvement in WWII.

"Every Evening at 8": The Promenade Concerts and Cultural Hierarchy in Late-Nineteenth Century Boston

Kenneth H. Marcus (University of La Verne)

"Every Evening at 8" the *Boston Globe* declared in publicizing a major event in the city's cultural life: the launching of the Promenade Concerts at Boston Music Hall on July 11, 1885. One method that historians and musicologists have employed in understanding concert music is to consider the role of music institutions in relation to the "sacralization of culture." Advanced originally by sociologist Paul DiMaggio and adopted or critiqued by such

scholars as cultural historian Lawrence Levine and musicologist Ralph Locke, this idea argues that a cultural divide between "high" and "low" culture emerged at the end of the nineteenth century in American arts institutions, especially for opera, theater, and orchestral music. These scholars drew strongly, in turn, on Pierre Bourdieu's notion of "cultural capital," or the prestige that is conferred upon various styles and genres that are socially valued. In considering why the Promenade Concerts in Boston achieved popularity, this paper offers a different perspective: to apply the concept of what we could call "desacralization," or the breaking down of barriers between allegedly "high" and "low" art. What alternative to traditional concert music did the Promenade Concerts offer? And what kinds of audiences were attracted to these concerts?

The Pops format took place in an environment decidedly different from that of the symphony concerts during the regular concert season, despite being in the same venue. In essence, this paper argues, the Promenade Concerts offered an alternative to art music concerts by combining a wide variety of orchestral music, food and drink, and marketing techniques that attracted a broad audience. Based on archival research at the BSO Archives, as well as a study of illustrations and newspaper reviews of the concerts, the paper argues that the "Pops," as they were soon called in late-nineteenth century Boston, succeeded precisely because they appealed across barriers of class, gender, and age differences. An analysis of the origins of the oldest, most continuous series of "light music" concerts in American history, I argue, can thus contribute to our understanding of cultural hierarchy—or the means to transcend that hierarchy—in nineteenth century urban America.

The Same Old Song and Dance: Carlos Surinach and the American Commission Process

Robert Wahl (University of California, Riverside)

"Sometimes when the choreographer has ideas about (an existing score) I have to do nothing, and I am very happy to do nothing, because to write for a choreographer can be a little annoying."1
-Carlos Surinach, 1985

Carlos Surinach was born March 4, 1915 in Barcelona where he attended operas and concerts at the Gran Teatro Liceu and would eventually study at the local conservatory. On scholarship, Surinach traveled to Düsseldorf, Cologne, and Berlin on the eve of World War II to pursue advanced studies in composition and conducting, including courses with Richard Strauss. Before immigrating to New York in 1951, Surinach returned to Barcelona to conduct the orchestra at the Gran Teatro Liceu and lead the Barcelona Philharmonic for several years, but he spent his last four years working in Paris. It was not long after his arrival to the U.S. that the affable composer acquainted himself with leading figures such as Virgil Thompson, Aaron Copland, Henry Cowell, and Peggy Glanville-Hicks. Fortunately, composers were not the only ones enamored by his thick accent and distinctly Spanish style, but also choreographers and patronesses.

Although Surinach's compositional output ranges from solo guitar and accordion works to full- scale symphonies and ballets, it's unified by the prevalence of Spanish themes and ties to the world of modern dance. This paper traces the development of his *Ritmo Jondo* (1952) from its earliest arrangement on a percussion-based program at the Museum of Modern Art through two full-length ballet adaptations, each with highly successful runs and toured internationally. By examining concert reviews, scores, and interviews, I will reveal the transformative process this piece underwent from its original commission by Glanville-Hicks through the ballets *Ritmo Jondo* (1953) and *Feast of Ashes* (1962) commissioned by Batsheva de Rothschild and Rebekah Harkness, respectively. These ballets introduced Surinach to the most important figures of American modern dance and opened the door to more successful collaborations with figures like Martha Graham, Paul Taylor, and Pearl Lang.

Heimat is Where the Heart Is; or, How Hungarian Was Goldmark?

David Brodbeck (University of California, Irvine)

On January 2, 1915, the once-celebrated composer Carl Goldmark died in Vienna at the age of 84. The Viennese press gave the story of his passing the kind of coverage that one would expect for a figure who was described as a "great composer and Austrian," whose timeless works had "honored the fatherland and greatly increased the cultural heritage of humanity." To read the obituaries that appeared in Budapest, by contrast, is to be told that Hungary, not Austria, was Goldmark's fatherland. Here, in effect, both halves of the Dual Monarchy were fighting over the same man's legacy—the former, primarily on the basis of his Hungarian birth and childhood; the latter, on the basis of his long residency in Austria and the central role he played in the musical culture of late Habsburg Vienna.

The Hungarians' claim on Goldmark was of relatively recent origin. Unlike Liszt, Goldmark never made an effort to cultivate a Magyar identity, a virtual requirement for full membership in the Hungarian nation, as the ethnonationalists of the nineteenth century understood it. Based on evidence found in the Budapest press beginning at the end of the century, I raise the possibility that these activists embraced Goldmark—once derided in their circles as a "Viennese German composer"—as a fellow Hungarian only when they determined that the cultural prestige he could bestow on the nation trumped his lack of genuine Magyar credentials. I then consider Goldmark's self-perception as indicated in his memoirs (published posthumously in 1922), paying special attention to his use of the expression *Heimat* (home), what he meant when he wrote that he was *Ungar*, and his claim to be a composer of *deutsche* music. Using correspondence recently unearthed in the archive of the Hungarian Academy of Music, I conclude by arguing that all these fine distinctions were lost on the Hungarian neo-nationalists in the years following historic Hungary's humiliating dismemberment after defeat in the First World War, when it became a matter of state import to assert Goldmark's Hungarianness in the face of claims that he properly belonged to the German cultural nation.

What Else is Out There? Opportunities in Public Musicology

Susan Key (Chapman University, Orange) and Kristi Brown-Montesano (Colburn Conservatory of Music)

Talk of "public musicology" is everywhere in musicological circles these days. Initially fueled by concerns about the academic job market, more recently the dialogue has reflected a growing recognition that engagement with a broader audience through collaboration with performing arts presenters, museums, and other institutions has the potential to transform a scholarly culture – and a musical curriculum – that have become insular and self-referential. The challenge is that, having "grown up" in this academic context, many faculty and graduate students struggle to figure out how to begin to address both the cultural change – attitudes, assumptions, and rhetoric -- and practical steps – curriculum, networking, and career counseling – that would make reforms realistic and sustainable. If it's true that "all politics is local," then I submit that a good place to start this process is in local AMS chapters.

I propose an informal discussion in two parts:

1. Brief presentation of current projects by Kristi Brown and Susan Key;
2. Discussion of practical steps the chapter can take to bring public musicology opportunities to chapter members, both those committed to working within academe and those interested in exploring other career opportunities.