

GEORGE GERSHWIN

A Bio-Bibliography



NORBERT CARNOVALE

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GEORGE GERSHWIN



George Gershwin. (Photograph by Emmett Schoenbaum. Copyright©RKO Radio Pictures, June 1937. Courtesy of Marc George Gershwin and the Library of Congress Gershwin Collection.)

To Jo and my three children:
Phylanne, Noranne, and Norman,
with affection

“He is as simple, as unaffected, as modest and as charming a youth as one would desire to meet. There is nothing about him that is forbidding. He wears his unprecedented celebrity as lightly as if it were a cane—that cane which one can hear swinging so jauntily in the opening rhythms of *An American in Paris* . . .”

—Isaac Goldberg, *George Gershwin: A Study in American Music*

Preface

This volume consists of seven main sections, in two parts, as follows:

Part I

(1) An overview of George Gershwin's life in the form of a *Brief Biography*.

(2) A list of *Works and Performances*, arranged by genre, and arranged chronologically by title. Following many titles are listings of premiere and other selected performances.

Cross-references to citations about the work in the *Bibliography* chapters, many times referring to essays about the work, reviews of its performances, and to recordings of the work listed in the *Discography*, are included in the *Works and Performances* list. Each work in the *Works and Performances* chapter is preceded by the mnemonic "W" and the appropriate number **W1**, **W2**, etc., and each selected performance of that work is listed in ascending chronological order and identified by successive lowercase letters (**W1a**, **W1b**, etc.) Works are listed first in their original version (e. g., *Rhapsody in Blue* in the composer's holographs) with subsequent versions following. This section does *not* include overtures for musicals. The symbol * indicates that a listed song is thought to have been published in sheet music format. Details of instrumentation (and dedication) are generally given for the *Orchestral Works* as is the location of holographs when known.

(3) *Individual Songs* are given a section, listing the songs in alphabetical order. Readers so interested will find the name(s) of performers who introduced the songs originally and the names of the stage shows in which they were introduced.

(4) The *Discography* includes a wide selection of sound recordings, both old and new, in all formats as of 1999. Each recorded work or composite recording is preceded by the mnemonic "D" (**D1**, **D2**, **D3**, etc.) References (See: "**B924**," e. g.) are made to commentaries about the recordings made in the *Bibliography about Discography* chapter, and listings of original compositions and arrangements in this section include the "W" number of the work for ease in referring back to the *Works and Performances* chapter. "F" references are to the *Filmography*.

(5) A *Filmography* of works which included significant use of Gershwin's music, listed by title in chronological order.

Part II

(6) *Bibliography by the Gershwins*, including an annotated bibliography of fifteen writings by George which is followed by an annotated bibliography of thirteen writings by Ira.

(7) The classified section *Bibliography about George Gershwin* includes the sections “Biographies”; “Bibliography about Biographies”; “Bibliography about Works”; “Bibliography about Discography”; “Other General Information Sources about the Gershwins”; “Bibliography about Filmography”; “Bibliography about Orchestra Tours”; and “Bibliography about Dissertations and Theses.”

Appendix A affixes copies of *Whiteman and Reisman Orchestra Tour Itineraries*. An **Index** concludes the volume.

Because Gershwin bibliography and discography continued to appear during the final stages of producing this book, I deemed it necessary to insert selected items by using supplementary numbers such as **W52.1** rather than renumber the entire bibliography. The work of a Gershwin bibliographer will truly never be finished!

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to all of the Gershwin scholars who have preceded me, the work of many, some of whose names are acknowledged in the first sentence of the **Brief Biography**.

The University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, assisted in several ways: leaves, grants, and near the end of the work, release time. I am indebted to Charles Elliott, presently Director of the School of Music, for the latter. The University of Southern Mississippi's Vice President for Research Donald R. Cotten and his predecessor Karen Yarbrough both provided generous grants over the protracted period of work. The National Endowment for the Humanities awarded a Travel to Collections grant; numerous mini-grants from the Speakers Bureau of the Mississippi Humanities Council allowed me to present my lecture on Gershwin, a talk which derived much of its substance from this book.

My friends John D. W. Guice and Charles T. Harrison were omnipresent with words of encouragement and support. James W. Pruett, formerly Chief, Music Division, Library of Congress, was my gracious host on one of my several visits to the Music Division. Raymond A. White helped guide me through the George and Ira Gershwin Collection there. Sylvia B. Kennick of Williams College provided valuable information on Paul Whiteman and his bands.

George Marc Gershwin, brother Arthur Gershwin's son, granted an interview and provided insights, as well as permission to use some of the materials in the Collection at the Library of Congress.

Miles Kreuger of the Institute for the American Musical, Los Angeles allowed me full access to his files. Don Hixon, Series Adviser for the Greenwood Press Bio-Bibliographies in Music series, helped and inspired in innumerable ways. Marilyn Brownstein, Alicia Merritt, Pamela St. Clair, and Jane Lerner, Editors at Greenwood, demonstrated remarkable patience and help during the twelve years I worked on this book.

The staffs of libraries at Tulane University; Louisiana State University; the University of California at Los Angeles; the Kenneth Spencer Research Library, Special Collections, University of Kansas; the Academy for Motion Picture Arts and Sciences; the Library of Congress; the Theatre Library at the Goodspeed Opera House; the Library of the City Museum of New York; and the New York Public Library at Lincoln Center were consistently cordial and efficient. Karolyn Thompson, interlibrary-loan coordinator at USM's Cook library; was of substantial assistance in locating materials not present in our local library.

xii Acknowledgements

Annette Farrington sent me a very useful and thorough inventory of Gershwin sound recordings. These are the recordings contributed by Carol and Frank Tuit and housed among the holdings of the rich and fascinating Goodspeed Library of Musical Theatre at the Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam, Connecticut. During the course of my research I was given permission to photocopy a list of recordings that were in Gershwin's library at the time of his death and given to the Library of Congress by Ira Gershwin; Ronald L. Blanc, attorney for the Ira Gershwin estate, granted the needed approval.

Early on, Robert Sherman of WQXR in New York supplied a tape copy for study of the impressive *Gershwin Tribute* aired over that station on March 1st, 1987. Selected newspapers throughout the United States enthusiastically provided me with copies of reviews from a number of cities where concerts were given during the Whiteman and Reisman (1934) tours.

Southern Mississippi assigned me several graduate assistants through the years of the research; all of them were helpful; the last one, Cheryl Morris, deserves special thanks for assisting in bringing the volume to fruition.

Errors or omissions are mine alone and should not reflect on any of the persons or institutions named above.

Abbreviations

Works:

AiP-*An American in Paris*

Cake-*Let 'Em Eat Cake*

Concerto-Concerto in F

OTIS-*Of Thee I Sing*

P&B-*Porgy and Bess*

RiB-*Rhapsody in Blue*

Libraries:

AMPAS-Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Society, Margaret Herrick Library, Los Angeles

DLC-Music Division, Library of Congress

GOH-Goodspeed Opera House Library, East Haddam, CT

NN-L-New York Public Library at Lincoln Center

NNMus-Museum of the City of New York

UCLA-Film and Television Archive, University of California in Los Angeles

Place names:

LA-Los Angeles

NY-New York

Names:

GG-George Gershwin

G-Gershwin

IG-Ira Gershwin

Periodicals:

ARG-*American Record Guide*

LATimes-*Los Angeles Times*

NY Herald Tribune- *New York Herald Tribune*

NYTimes-*The New York Times*

Miscellaneous:

AA- An Academy award

DAI- *Dissertations Abstract International*

DVD- Digital Video Disc

pa. or pf- piano

q. v.- which see

VC- Videocassette, currently available

*****: The song was published in sheet music format.

+: Song published as part of a piano/vocal score

About the Author

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