

MUSIC REVIEWS

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Louis Moreau Gottschalk: The Piano Works of Louis Moreau Gottschalk. Ed. by Vera Brodsky Lawrence; biographical essay by Robert Offergeld. [A reprinting of 112 compositions.] New York: Arno Press & The New York Times, 1969. [5 vols., \$225.00]

A couple of years ago, I came out in the columns of *Notes* against Monumenta Americana and *amerikanische Gesamtausgaben* and suggested instead, among other things, selectively reprinting published editions of earlier American music. Arno Press's publication of *The Piano Works of Louis Moreau Gottschalk* is almost exactly the sort of thing I was hoping for: it is an intelligently assembled collection of the most important segment of one earlier American composer's works, presenting in a stunning set of five volumes reprints of Gottschalk's music from editions issued during his lifetime. In size it approaches Monumenta standards; thus it tends to disprove my gloomy view of the prospects for "publishers...who care enough to finance [the] publication" of Monumenta Americana (but Arno Press now seems silent about its earlier plans to publish similar American-music reprint collections, although it has issued, beside the Gottschalk, the entire Wa-Wan Press output). In cost, also, *The Piano Works of Gottschalk* is at a Monumental level, and I am curious about the numbers of "purchasers who care enough to buy" (another requirement I cited for successful, ongoing Monumenta projects). Nevertheless, here they are, all 112 piano pieces of our most flamboyant and versatile pianist-composer of the mid-19th-century, "America's first matinee idol" (as Irving Lowens once dubbed him) and certainly the first American composer to achieve national, continental, hemispheric, and transatlantic recognition—and partly for his music, too.

This is not the place to discuss Gottschalk's *oeuvre* as such, only the merits and demerits of the present reprint edition.

The publication is as clean as spring water. The particular editions of Gottschalk's pieces here reprinted were chosen

first on the basis of authenticity (a German edition of *Le Mancenillier*, for example, was picked over French and American ones since it contains a substantial coda absent from the latter), second on the basis of legibility. The collection is arranged alphabetically by title (problems of dating abound in Gottschalk's works, so a chronological order was out of the question), and each volume has a comprehensive index to all five, skillfully set out to distinguish among the various versions of the titles, in several languages, under which pieces by Gottschalk were published. Included along with the two-hand originals are some four-hand alternate versions (and a two-piano arrangement of one work); also included are pieces issued under one or another of Gottschalk's pseudonyms. The evocative 19th-century title-pages are reproduced, in black-and-white, although not end-pages lacking music. Each volume has as frontispiece a photograph or cartoon of Gottschalk himself, and each includes a facsimile of a page or so of his manuscript (in one volume a handbill of 1862 announcing Gottschalk's "first and only Matinee Musicale"). The paper is of good quality, the folio size (approximately 9x12) assures legibility, and special care was apparently taken with the bindings to allow the volumes to lie flat on the piano rack when open.

In sum, the musical edition proper is exemplary as a reprint. Bouquets should go to its editor, Vera Brodsky Lawrence—not forgetting the expert help she got from Richard Jackson of the Americana Collection at the New York Public Library's Music Division (which provided many of the copies of the music for reprinting, and all the materials for the illustrations).

Having lauded *The Piano Works of Gottschalk* for what it is, now let me criti-

cize it for what it is not—but could have been, rather easily.

Despite Mrs. Lawrence's claim that the Arno Press edition is "intended for performers as well as for students and scholars," these five volumes will certainly be bought in general not by individuals but by libraries. At a price of \$225 the set, this seems self-apparent. In size, scope, and cost, the set is in the tradition of *Denkmäler*—the first dedicated to a single American composer (excepting perhaps those boxed sets of Stephen Foster's sheet music distributed to libraries in the 1930's by the Lilly Foundation). Having determined to take the *Monumenta-Denkmäler* road, Arno Press incurred (it seems to me) an obligation to live up to the concept. Thus, it simply doesn't do to have prefaced this impressive publication with a long introduction (by Robert Offergeld) that is virtually a reprint itself—and of an article he wrote for the September 1968 issue of *Stereo Review*. That article was excellent for that magazine and the market it seeks to reach (in fact, I have little but praise for *Stereo Review*, its imaginative editor William Anderson, and especially its continuing series of pieces on "The Great American Composers"; as a commercial record magazine, it has been uniquely high-minded). Offergeld himself is not only a good writer; he is perhaps the most knowledgeable (certainly the most passionate) partisan of Gottschalk we have. But he and Arno Press missed an opportunity—or evaded an obligation—to turn his essay into an introduction that matches the edition itself in its invitation to really serious scholarly consideration: all he needed to do was to provide documentation for the massive array of new

facts and opinion he presents. Footnotes and bibliography are certainly not needed or wanted by *Stereo Review*; but if essentially the same article as was written for *Stereo Review* is now being re-offered to scholarly consumers—and I would include all three types of persons mentioned by Mrs. Lawrence (performers, students, and scholars) under that heading—then responsibility for providing scholarly apparatus is incurred.

Offergeld's immensely enthusiastic, twenty-two-page introduction—written with all stops out, a veritable torrent of electric prose—could probably be documented by him easily and effectively; I for one trust him. And I hereby challenge Arno Press—which might justifiably feel short-changed, since it got from him only a slightly beefed-up rewrite of an article already completed and published—to requisition from Offergeld the documentation his essay deserves and to distribute it to buyers of the Gottschalk edition.

In the meantime, purchasers of the set should know that there is available, and perhaps gratis, an excellent *Catalogue of the Published and Unpublished Compositions of Louis Moreau Gottschalk* that is indeed of scholarly value. The author is...Robert Offergeld. The publisher is (you guessed it) *Stereo Review*. Perhaps you missed, in that magazine's issue of March 1970, an invitation to write for a free copy. I am told that this "Centennial Catalogue" is now officially out of print, but that Arno Press has been given a good number of copies. The catalog belongs with the Gottschalk edition.

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Leonhard Lechner: Werke. Bd. 2: Neue teutsche Lieder zu drey Stimmen, nach art der Welschen Villanellen. Ed. by Uwe Martin. Kassel: Bärenreiter-Verlag, 1969. [72 p., cloth, DM 30.-]

Although Leonhard Lechner (ca. 1553–1606) was esteemed by his contemporaries as "mighty composer and musician" (cf. the *Nürnberg Ratsprotokoll* of July 26, 1577, as quoted in MGG VIII [1960], col. 435), the modern scholar has long been hampered in his evaluation of Lechner's significance because of the lack of modern editions of his works. Only his settings for

five voices (1579) of J. Regnart's *villanelle*, published by Robert Eitner in *Publikationen älterer praktischer und theoretischer Musikwerke* XIX (1895), his *Neue Teutsche Lieder* (1582), edited by Ernst Fritz Schmid (Augsburg, 1926), his *Die deutsche Passion* (1593), edited by Konrad Ameln (Augsburg, 1926), and a number of individual pieces, especially from a post-