MELODY
for the
Photoplay Musician and
the Musical Home

JANUARY, 1925
Volume IX, No. 1

IN THIS ISSUE

"Static and Code"—The First Number of
"DEMENTIA AMERICANA"
A Syncopated Suite by George L. Cobb, Composer of "Poor Girl"

"SENSATIONS AND COMMON SENSE"
An Article Every Musician and Music Lover Should Read

OTHER JANUARY FEATURES INCLUDE
Articles: "The Photoplay Organist and Pianist," an Interview with Harry Neaton;
"The Elevator Shaft," etc.
Music: "Slumber Boat" (Barquilla), "Flower Girl" (the first of "Three Sketches from Old Mexico"); "Viva and Vigor" (A snappy March with an unusual trio.)

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Sensations and Common Sense

MUST Pay Millions for Music! "Copyright Ruins the Big Gold Mine for Composers"—"No Way I've Found To Stop Great Source of Revenue"

The above headlines in a recent issue of The Boston Post (December 10, 1945) surely sound as though something had been slipped over on an unsuspecting public. The ever-quick-To-The-Rescue Post, alert to the interests of that public, and with possibly a fourth of sensational-producing news for that edition, hop blithely into the breach and informs everybody, in several columns of rather unrestrained dis-course, just what they are up against.

No one can say that the public shouldn't be interested, nor that the news values the article itself is in any way meager, but we must insist that the emphasis is misplaced throughout the whole article and that the aspect of the situation which will ultimately be of most importance to the public is not even hinted at.

Briefly, the thing to which they allude is the fact that the Supreme Court has recently decided the Copyright law means what it says instead of something else; that when a writer, composer, or publisher produces and copyrights a musical composition of any sort, it is really his or her property as long as the copy-right is in force — as was originally intended when the law was passed. If any other concerns uses this copyrighted property to further its interests in any way, it must pay for such use.

If the law here were unreasonable or the fees assessed excessive, there would be reason for all the excitement, but the law is not unreasonable, neither are the fees excessive. The resentment should have been caused by gratification over the fact that the American publisher may receive adequate protection so that he is enabled to encourage the American composer to write worthily and voluntarily.

No one will deny the importance of preserving musical work in our social, economic and artistic life, nor its potency in helping to make a nation great and successful, and its people happy, tolerant, and wise — worthy citizens of such a nation.

It is true that when the present copyright law was passed, the numerous mechanical reproducing devices which are now a part of our daily life were unthought of. It was then merely a question of engraving and printing the music, selling it and accepting the resulting profit or loss with equanimity. Even then music publishers and writers were not among the ranks of the so-called predatory rackets. Those whose idea of success has for its kernel the accumulation of wealth or power are not attracted to the writing or publishing of music. The profits from such enterprises have never been more than would be expected from any other business of like volume; they have usually been less.

Big Figures Versus Hard Facts in the Copyright Discussion

Copyright owners formerly depended on the sale of sheet music for their income, but since the public has been thoroughly saturated with various sorts of reproducing devices like talking machines, player-pianos, and especially the radio, sales of sheet music have declined enormously. To offset this loss, fees were asked from the reproducing factories for copyrighted numbers recorded or broadcast. and the Supreme Court has upheld this understanding of publishers' rights under the copyright law.

What Is Reasonable Mean?

But let us take the Post's own figures, and see how seriously it is not.

Theatres are assessed ten cents per seat per year; if you go to the theatre 100 times per year (more than you can go, probably), you will be paying a tidy sum over a three-cent yearly tax to the publishers and writers of the music you hear, or about $1.00 of a cent for each performance. The individual contribution through radio, talkies, etc., will be just about as large. Actually the individual will probably pay nothing, as the corporations behind each of these devices can well afford to absorb this fee. Talking-machine records have for some time been paying over $2,000,000 a year royalties on their copyright numbers, but numbers not copyrighted are not sold for that much less.

Now according to the Post article, in time this "increased" milkon will amount to $8,000,000 a year, which would be divided among 440 composers and 47 publishing houses. In another place in the article it is estimated that the probable sale of a successful song has always been from about 2,000,000 copies to 500,000 — a decline of 75%.

We are allowed to infer in this Post article that the copyright owners seek their share as sewed fees to replace the loss of income through the loss of sales of sheet music, and that they may have a partial claim to them for that reason.

Without assuming any responsibility for the accuracy of the Post's figures, let us carry them out to their logical conclusion and see what they tell us. $8,000,000 a year seems like a lot of money, but if it is to replace 75% of the lost income from so large and important a national business as writing and publishing music, it is not very much, even though the Post is correct in its assumption that copyright owners may sometimes get it. If $8,000,000 a year represents 75%, then the total annual business in its prime was about $5,000,000,000, surely not a very large volume for a business as extensive as this one is. If we allow for the fact that copyright owners may have other sources of income, and say that the $8,000,000 a year replaces 75% of the vanished business instead of 75%, we still have only a total volume of $8,000,000,000 annually.

Publishing music is almost as uncertain as gambling, and it is much more complicated. Music engraving and printing are costly; so is paper. Some publishers have 100 or more people on their payroll. Hundreds of thousands of dollars will be tied up in plates and copyrights, and the risk is not negligible. Yet it is not the fault of the publisher. No one can predict whether a number is going to return a profit. But if the publisher is to continue in business, he must continue to publish and hope that the successful numbers will carry the burden of the unsuccessful ones, despite the fact that since time was money, the cost of publishing music has increased in some cases as much as 500%.

Then it must be remembered that in the time the present copyright law is in force, music is distributed in a manner that would have been impossible before; for instance, it is now sent to publishers worldwide as printed sheets on which the music is to be reproduced; this requires not only a larger staff of musicians and arrangers, but also the ability to publish the scores in a timely fashion.

WHAT IS YOUR OPINION?

The article above makes inferences and suppositions. In the case of this article we are not called to write one, but if you think our premises are valid and our facts correct, say yes or no as you see fit. If you think the facts and our inferences are correct, tell us so and say why your own opinions are not in accord with our views.

We want to do our part to stimulate realistic and thoughtful interest in this subject which is so highly important to all music lovers and publishers, and gladly open our columns for a general discussion.

Walter Jacobs, Incorporated

Lucy Lea, Edito.

VOLUME IX
JANUARY, 1946
NUMBER 3
Page Four

The Dean of Boston Organists

AN INTERVIEW WITH HARRY NORTON
In Which Are Divulged Some
Interesting Facts and Opinions
By George Alhaine Fisher

"I’ve noticed, too, that theatre organ playing has had a marked influence on classical organ playing. Church organists hear some attractive number played on a theatre organ, and immediately go out and buy the same instrument, thinking they can use it for their church service. Consequently, church organ music has much more of an appeal than it used to have."

Norton began his career as an organist when he was just a few years old, and he has been involved in music ever since. He currently serves as the organist at the Washington Theatre, Boston, and is known to many MELODY readers as the organist who has played in hundreds of volumes in the past. His more than twenty years of service have earned him something of a legend in the field of theatre organ music.

"I was startled when I first heard HARRY NORTON’s music, but once I heard it, I was hooked. His music is so original and beautiful, and I knew that I had to make it a part of my repertoire."

Norton is a man of simple tastes, and he enjoys spending his time in quiet, peaceful surroundings. He lives in a small apartment in the city, and he spends most of his time practicing and composing music. He is a true artist, and he is always looking for new ways to express himself through his music.

"I believe that music is a form of expression, and that it has the power to move people. I want my music to make people feel happy, and to inspire them to think and to dream."

Norton is a true artist, and he is always looking for new ways to express himself through his music.
The Photoplay Organist and Pianist

By L. G. del Castillo

We’ll, I think you will say this is enough optimism in my part, so will close by saying this: Mr. Nelaf is correct. The organ, the piano, and the recording of music are all essential. I have seen many examples of this in my own work. We cannot live without these elements. I hope that we can continue to work together to create beautiful music for generations to come.

Mr. Nelaf’s letter is to the point, particularly to the point where he brings up the question of the future of the organ. I think we can all agree that the organ will continue to play a vital role in our musical landscape.

Mr. Nelaf is correct in his letter. The organ is a wonderful instrument with a rich history and a bright future. I am grateful for his words and the opportunity to share them with our readers. Let us continue to support and promote the organ in all its forms.

Mr. Nelaf’s letter is a call to action. Let us not take the organ for granted, but rather let us work together to ensure that it continues to thrive and to flourish in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Nelaf, for your letter. I hope that we can continue to work together to create beautiful music that will inspire and uplift us all.

--Reply from the Editor

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Popular Music Reflects American Life

THE AMERICAN people demand sacrificially all things when they want them, and if that is so, Mr. Nelaf has a combination which will satisfy most demands, as well as the majority of their physical appetites for enjoyment. Through the work of Paul Winstead, a Chicago, Illinois, organist, in the March issue of the American Organist, is in evidence the fact that under the guidance of Mr. Nelaf, the organ is not merely as a wind instrument, but that the music is organ music.

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The Once Over
Passing Comment—Editorial and Otherwise—on Topical
Current Interest to All Folks
Who Are Interested in Music

Pianist in their best role, the man who has held his job comes
not only to give his best but to maintain an untiring spirit in the
field. In many years, his own personal fortune has been
assured, and he has been able to give his best to the public.

DELMONT, 1947—In the category of musical
presentations, the one that has attracted the most attention
in recent weeks has been the concert by the famous
pianist, known for his virtuosity and his ability to
express the innermost feelings of the music he
embodies. The concert was performed in the
beautifully appointed hall of the Delmont Opera House,
where the audience was deeply moved by the
exquisitely rendered performance.

The pianist, who has been touring the country
recently, gave a recital in this city last night, and
the audience was thrilled by his interpretations of the
classical works he presented. The concert
was a triumph for the pianist, and the audience
left the hall with a renewed appreciation of the
beauty and depth of the music they had just
heard.

The pianist, who is known for his dedication to
music, has always been a favorite with the
public, and his concerts are eagerly awaited by
music lovers everywhere. His performances are
always a testament to the power of music to
move and inspire, and his concerts are always a
source of joy and beauty for those fortunate
enough to be present.

The pianist’s next concert is scheduled for this
coming weekend, and tickets are selling rapidly.
Music lovers are encouraged to purchase their
tickets early to ensure a seat at this
extraordinary performance.

Barcarolle

Allegretto grazioso

L. G. Del Castillo

The music of our time is the music of our
people, and it is our responsibility to
preserve and celebrate this rich
heritage. The pianist’s concert
is a wonderful example of how
music can bring people together
and create a sense of community.

The musical landscape is ever
changing, and it is up to us to
recognize and appreciate the
new voices that are emerging on
the scene. By supporting our
local musicians, we are ensuring
that the spirit of the music
continues to thrive.

The pianist’s concert is a
great opportunity to celebrate
the beauty of music and to
support an artist who is
devoted to sharing his passion
with the world. So mark your
calendar, purchase your
tickets, and join us in
celebrating the power of
music.

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International Copyright Secured
Dementia Americana
A Super-Syncopated Suite

Static and Code

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Three Sketches from Old Mexico

No. 1

Flower Girl

Cady G. Kenney

Allegretto
Gossip Gathered by the Gauder

Facts and Fancies Garnished from the Field of Music

By MYRON V. FREEMAN

The successful song writer of today is necessarily busy. He has to write a song every day, or twice a day. He is constantly in demand. He is always looking for new ideas, new formulas, new melodies. He is always trying to think of something new, something different, something that will catch the public's fancy. He is constantly working, constantly striving to produce something that will be a hit. And he is successful. He is one of the most successful song writers of the day. His songs are sung everywhere. His name is known to everyone. He is a real success.

-- The New York Times

The Gauder is a well-known song writer. His songs are popular all over the world. He has written many hits, and his songs are always well received. He is a true master of his craft. He is a true artist. His songs are a pleasure to listen to. He is a true genius. His songs are a joy to all who hear them. He is a true success.

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The notice that because a thing is ill and obsolescent it must be the correct standard to uphold and follow is rapidly passing away. No longer can the modern musician, in his pro- fessional capacity, be content with the old methods and means. The new forces and the new possibilities are moving on, and unless one grasshopper that is given, much less those ancient masters. Indeed, we have taken a back seat from the past, but the work of the present is still in its infancy. It may be true, in some measure, that the great ones who died and gave way are the source of inspiration and unconscious, yet we will find that the modernists have gone even further, in a different field and yet more important field, that is the field of the living artist. No one can deny that the present is potentially a revolutionary age. Were it not for the fact that our forces are not yet trained in the techniques of the new world, it is in every sense a new-born music that is coming into the world. One thing is certain, however, that in this modern world the old ways and means must be discarded. The old forms and methods of the past are dead and should be buried. But a new era of music is coming, and the musician who is not alive to this new era is not a musician at all.

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By George L. Cobb

[Music advertisement]

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MUSICIANS ODETTA & THE CREST

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First 100 BIGGLES, Fin-tast. Berlinia, Regal, 12.10. The

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MERCY MERRICKS

A CERTAIN “THREE” Society in the county, whose

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growing pains, and whose goal appears to be

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not difficult to understand when you consider

the nature of the society at work. Those who

know the society are aware of the fact that

there is a need for more unity and more

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idea is to bring the people of the town together

and to create a sense of community. This is

done by organizing events and projects that

will help to promote understanding and unity.

Some of the events include community picnics,

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Musician’s Choice

MUSICIAN'S CHOICE

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CONTENTS, Vol. I
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GERMAN LULLY
LOVE SONG
THE DREAMER (La Rêverie)
JAPANESE DANCE
SONG OF REST (Chant du Repeur)
THE ROYAL TRUMPETERS
SPANISH DANCE
A BIT O' BRIARNEY
CASTALIA
DEER DANCE
REVIE
MARCH OF THE WAR GODS

CONTENTS, Vol. II
GOLDEN ROB
A DREAM
JAPANESE LANterns
A TWILIGHT DREAM
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Volume IX, No. 2

IN THIS ISSUE

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