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“Total Eclipse”: The Music of Johanna Magdalena Beyer

An Introduction and Preliminary Annotated Checklist

John Kennedy and Larry Polansky

Introduction

Johanna Magdalena Beyer was an important but almost completely overlooked American composer. By providing a brief introduction to Beyer's life and music, along with an annotated checklist of known extant manuscripts, we hope to stimulate and provide a foundation for future musicological research and to facilitate performance of her work.

There are many questions regarding Beyer's life and music that remain unanswered. This first article and checklist is intended to assist those wishing to undertake the significant musicological, editorial, and historical work that still very much needs to be done.

Johanna Magdalena Beyer

When Johanna Beyer wrote the poems for her Three Songs for Soprano and Clarinet, “Total Eclipse,” “Universal—Local” and “To Be,” she ironically forecast the tragic poetry of her life, which, along with her work, has been totally eclipsed in a shadow of obscurity. The personal and artistic struggles she faced and lack of recognition she received are sadly echoed in the yearning of her poems.

Beyer's life remains shrouded in mystery, partly because she seems to have been an enigma to those who knew her when she was alive. Most of her scores are signed “J.M. Beyer”—not Johanna—possibly to prevent her gender from affecting the judgment of those to whom she sent her scores.¹

In 1988, on the occasion of Essential Music's 100th Birthday Commemoration Concerts, a number of her former colleagues were

interviewed in the hope of learning more about her life. John Cage, Sidney Cowell, Lou Harrison, William Russell, Otto Luening, and others offered similar recollections of Beyer. They knew her, but hardly knew her. She struck people as someone determined in her convictions, but strange and difficult to know. She is described as having been tall, angular, awkward, and self-conscious. Her pianism and musicianship are recalled as being excellent, and her musical training in Germany as traditional and solid.² Otto Luening remembers Beyer as being devoted to the cause of contemporary music and active in the community: “always there to lick stamps and help.” He recalls that others viewed her as “problematic”—unsure whether her compositions were deliberately primitive or lacking in “technique.”³ Though her English was very good, she is remembered as being extremely quiet, almost painfully shy. From those interviewed and from all published reports, it seems likely that she was not close to many in the New York City music scene. She told others she had no family and did not maintain ties to relatives in Germany.

According to Nicholas Slonimsky, Beyer was born in Leipzig on 11 July 1888. She came to New York in 1924, one year after graduating from a German music conservatory at the age of 35.⁴ We do not know her reasons, artistic or otherwise, for coming to the United States or about her struggles in doing so. By 1928, she had two degrees from the Mannes College of Music,⁵ and in this period began studying composition with Dane Rudhyar, Ruth Crawford, Charles Seeger, and Henry Cowell.⁶ She became a correspondent of Percy Grainger’s.⁷ She earned her living by teaching piano, the profession listed on her death certificate. Though never listed as a faculty member, colleagues recall she taught at Greenwich House Music School, perhaps as a substitute for Henry Cowell. From 1936 to 1940, during Henry Cowell’s imprisonment in San Quentin,⁸ Beyer worked as Cowell’s secretary and liaison in what appears to have been an informal capacity (although in several letters she refers to herself as his “agent”). She helped manage the affairs of the *New Music Editions*, tried to arrange for the publication of his book on melody, coordinated friends in the effort to have Cowell released, handled Cowell’s correspondence, took care of various administrative tasks,⁹ and advocated his work¹⁰ (see Fig. 2). She was also involved in seeking a publisher for Cowell’s book *The Nature of Melody*.¹¹ Her letters to Grainger and others show a strong dedication to Cowell and his work.¹² She had little money, and her income may have been supplemented by WPA work and Ladies’ Home Aid.¹³ From 1933 to 1936, her address was 39–61 Forty-third Street in Long Island City, Queens.

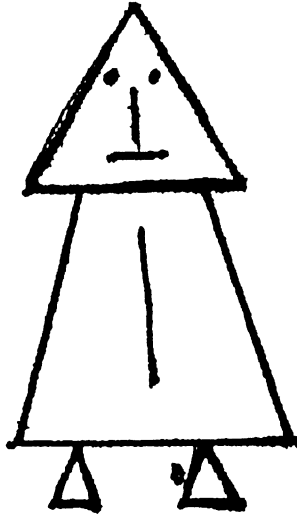


Figure 1. Doodle (presumably Beyer's) from *Piano-Book*

In 1937, she moved to 40 Jane Street in Greenwich Village.¹⁴ After February of 1938 sometime, she appears to have moved back to Long Island City.¹⁵

Archival sources show Beyer was involved in concerts and events of the WPA Federal Music project and Composers' Forum-Laboratory, the Central Manhattan Music Center, the League of Composers, and the New School. The first known instance of her name in print is in Cowell's *New Music Orchestra Series 5* (1933), in which Beyer is credited with translating Carl Sandburg's *Prayers of Steel* into German for Ruth Crawford's *Three Songs for Alto*.¹⁶

One of the first known public performances of her music was on 15 February 1934, in one of Cowell's New Music Society of California concerts in San Francisco.¹⁷ The work of "J.M. Beyer" was presented in a program that included works by Piston, Honegger, Copland, and Hindemith. The "Lentamente" from her *Suite for Clarinet and Bassoon* was performed and reviewed in the *San Francisco Examiner* as a "doleful dull duet." In 1938, this movement and the suite's "Allegro ponderoso" were recorded and issued on the *New Music Quarterly Recordings*.¹⁸ Cowell's *Two Chorales and Ostinato* was on the flip side.¹⁹

The first and only publication of Beyer's music (apart from facsimiles of "Music of the Spheres" and the *Three Movements* for

HENRY COWELL'S LATEST MUSIC

Through the fine cooperation of the Down Town Music School and various players we are able to invite you to an evening of Henry Cowells latest music at the

Down Town Music School 50 East 12. Str. New York

Sunday evening March 13. at 8 P.M.

May I ask your cooperation by letting me know whether we may count on your presence and how many interested friends you will bring along?

Henry Cowells parents will be in New York from March 8. until March 16. Their time here is most limited. The various things may be accomplished successfully only by careful planning. They have asked me to arrange meetings with friends who would be interested in direct news,

Johanna Magdalena Beyer

Chelsea 3-6545

Johanna Magdalena Beyer
40 Jane Str. New York City

Figure 2. Beyer's invitation to a Cowell concert

Percussion in Peter Garland's *Soundings*)²⁰ was in the *New Music Orchestra Series* 18 (1936), an edition devoted entirely to percussion music. Beyer's *IV* appeared along with music of Harold Davidson, Ray Green, William Russell, Gerald Strang, and the *Dance Rhythms* of the choreographer Doris Humphrey, notated by Wallingford Riegger.

Beyer's music was twice featured on WPA Composers' Forum-Laboratory concerts, a series in which she also appeared as a pianist in the music of Cowell²¹ (see Fig. 3). On 20 May 1936, her half of a program included her *Movement for Two Pianos*, *Suite for Soprano and Clarinet*,²² *String Quartet no. 1*, and "excerpts from *Piano Suites*," possibly her just-completed *Clusters* (or sections of *Dissonant Counterpoint* or *Gebrauchs-Musik*). A *New York Times* review gave no assessment of the work. On 19 May 1937, she presented her *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano*, *Suite for Clarinet and Bassoon*, *Suite for Violin and Piano*, and again, "an excerpt" from a piano suite.²³ The *New York Herald Tribune* described the works as "experimental in form and modernistic in harmony" and noted there was a "good-sized audience."²⁴

In the late 1930s, John Cage led concerts and tours of percussion music in Seattle and in the Northwest. The programs included music of Cage, Green, Russell, Harrison, and two movements from Beyer's *Three Movements for Percussion*, "Endless" and "Restless." Beyer had composed the work in 1939 and dedicated it to Cage, whom she had probably met in Henry Cowell's percussion class at the New School in 1935.

Beyer died on 9 January 1944 at the age of fifty-six. The cause of death was listed as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, the onset of which occurred in 1938. It was during these very years that ALS became known as "Lou Gehrig's disease," for killing baseball great Lou Gehrig of the Yankees in 1941. The last years of Beyer's life show little compositional activity, and in fact her last manuscripts are not in her hand, suggesting a friend or hired copyist assisted her because of her decreasing manual abilities. These last works (like the *Suite for Piano*, the *Sonatina in C*, and the *String Quartet no. 4*) are also markedly different from a musical standpoint. They are generally more tonal and simpler than her earlier works. Beyer was confined to a bed in the House of the Holy Comforter in the Bronx for six months prior to her death.²⁵ She is buried in Kensico Cemetery in Valhalla, New York.

If indeed Beyer suffered from ALS from 1938 until her death, then perhaps her purported alcoholism was an unkind diagnosis by observers who did not know of her affliction. ALS slowly attacks the

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Federal Music Project
of New York City

COMPOSERS' FORUM-LABORATORY
Second Series Nos. 38 & 39
Directed by Ashley Pettis

Wednesday Evening, May 19th, 1937 - 8:45 o'clock

WPA FEDERAL MUSIC THEATRE
254 West 54th Street
New York City

COMPOSERS - JOHANNA H. BEYER and WALTER HELPER

P R O C R A M

JOHANNA H. BEYER

- I. SONATA FOR CLARINET AND PIANO (1936)
(Dedicated to Rosario Mazzeo and Nicolas Slonimsky)

William Bortman, clarinet
Composer at the piano
- II. SUITE FOR CLARINET AND BASSOON (1935)
Allegro ritmico quasi presto
Lentamente
Allegro grazioso
Allegro ponderoso

William Bortman, clarinet
Herbert Coleman, bassoon
- III. EXCERPTS FROM PIANO SUITES (1930-1936)

Composer at the piano
- IV. SUITE FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO (1937)
(Dedicated to Szigeti and Nagaloff)

Carmela Ippolito, violin
Composer at the piano
- V. QUINTET FOR WOODWINDS (1933)
In one movement

George Lisitzky, flute
Samuel Spumberg, oboe
William Bortman, clarinet
Ralph Capocci, English horn
Herbert Coleman, bassoon

WALTER HELPER

- I. STRING QUARTET IN G
Allegretto non troppo
Adagio
Allegro

FORUM STRING QUARTET - Walter Eisenberg, 1st violin
Milton Lang, 2nd violin
Sidney Cohen, viola
Ana Drottell, 'cello

Figure 3. Concert program from Beyer's 1937 WPA Composers' Forum concert

nerves and muscles, affecting one's thought, slurring one's speech, and ultimately inhibiting the ability to walk and use one's hands. That such symptoms could be misconstrued as alcoholism seems quite likely given her lonely persona.

Since her death, performances of her work have been extremely rare. Her solo oboe music and solo clarinet music have possibly received isolated performances.²⁶ The Three Movements for Percussion and IV are known to have been performed by ensembles at the Oberlin Conservatory, the University of Illinois, and SUNY-Buffalo. Essential Music presented the first concerts devoted entirely to Beyer's music with two different programs on 10 and 15 November 1988 at Greenwich House in New York, to mark the one hundredth anniversary of her birth. Since the 1988 concerts, a number of Beyer's works have been regularly performed, including a number of performances of her piano music.²⁷ Many works still await their premiere.

About Beyer's Work

Many of Beyer's works share a determined austerity and brevity, with a conscious sense of understatement. Even when daringly experimental, her work has a strong sense of formal coherence, along with a unique sense of humor and whimsy. What appeared to some as primitive is more accurately described as a disciplined focus on the development of single ideas and overall shapes, and an economy of scale and tools that is an early example of a minimalist approach. Her early works, especially those from 1930–35, show a strong relationship with the music and ideas of Ruth Crawford Seeger, Henry Cowell, and Charles Seeger.

Some of her works betray a sardonic sense of humor and a hint of embittered mockery. Among the evidence that she indeed felt frustrated and indignant is that her major unfinished work was to be a political opera called *Status Quo*,²⁸ in which she hoped to express the injustice of the time in which she was living.

Beyer's scores were generally not well received. Rarely did she have the opportunity for feedback or the trial-and-error learning process of having works performed. In spite of this, her most interesting scores show a sense of internal discipline and conscious definition of limits, strongly suggesting a consistent and well-thought-out intention regarding the nature of her work. Also evident, over the course of the ten years or so of her extant work, is a sincere commitment to experimentalism and innovation, as seen in her radical structural ideas and in her many works for percussion ensemble.

Beyer's work incorporates a wide array of experimental ideas that sometimes resemble those of her colleagues in the 1930s, yet her processes and techniques are highly individualized. The *Suite for Clarinet* (1932) is perhaps her earliest composition and includes unmeasured measure groupings of steady pulses, incremental and gradual processes, and palindromic forms²⁹ (see Fig. 4).

The *String Quartet no. 2* (1936) (see Figs. 5 and 6) places a theme from Mozart's *The Magic Flute* amidst an Ivesian accompaniment. In the third movement, the violins are in $\frac{3}{8}$ but the viola and cello in $\frac{2}{4}$. The fourth movement consists of continuous glissandi, with the theme in the cello. "Music of the Spheres" (1938), an interlude from her unfinished opera *Status Quo*, was composed for electrical instruments or strings with lion's roar and triangle. All intervals in the string parts are continuous glissandi, with the tempo a constant accelerando-rallentando. The piano pieces *Dissonant Counterpoint* (1937?), *Gebrauchs-Musik* (1934), and *Clusters* (1931, 1936) (see Fig. 7) are important early examples of Charles Seeger's theoretical ideas, yet they are characteristically Beyer's in their tendency toward a minimalist, single-minded adherence to a salient formal procedure.

One of Beyer's most important contributions is her work for percussion ensemble, constituting some of the earliest examples of the genre. The *Percussion Suite* of 1933 is one of the earliest works for percussion ensemble and explores the understated and quiet expressive possibilities of percussion in a manner quite different from her contemporaries. *IV* (1935) (see Fig. 8) is composed for nine unspecified percussion instruments, and the work is a continuous state of flux in which tempo and volume change constantly from the first beat to the last. The *March for Thirty Percussion Instruments* (1939) is among the most gorgeous orchestrations for percussion ensemble ever composed, with metric and dynamic surprises making the title ironic. Finally, the *Three Movements for Percussion*, (1939) particularly the movement "Endless," contains processes and structures that take the percussion ensemble genre far beyond a rhythmic focus.

Beyer's percussion music occupies an important and almost completely overlooked place in the history of American music. It is distinguished from the work of her better-known contemporaries by its use of quiet dynamics, a quirky sense of humor, and an emphasis on process over more purely rhythmic exploration.

Some of the rare nonmusical writings we have by Beyer are the three poems for her *Three Songs for Soprano and Clarinet* ("Total Eclipse," "To Be," and "Universal—Local"). While of dubious value in and of themselves as poems, much of their language poignantly

reflects Beyer's life and yearnings, with an earnest optimism in eternity and a sacramental appreciation of nature and life. In retrospect, knowing the struggle of her life adds a tragic irony to these poems.

Restless thoughts of men, begging to be known, to be
loved . . .
Stars, moons, suns—penetrating love . . .
To be a blossom—forthcoming fruitpromise . . .

We hope that for Johanna Beyer, the total eclipse will lift, and that she will come to be.

The Known Compositions of Johanna M. Beyer

The list of works by instrumentation in appendix 1 is taken mainly from John Kennedy's original list, printed in the Essential Music concert program (see "A Preliminary Beyer Resource List" in appendix 3). This current version contains a few minor editorial changes. The instrumentation, number of movements, and annotations are deleted (see the more complete annotations to the NYPL List in appendix 2). In certain cases, smaller pieces appearing individually in manuscript sources (like "Bees," "See-Saw," and "Waltz") have been subsumed or combined into larger works: see appendix 2 for specific details.

Kennedy numbers (K nos.) follow John Kennedy's original list of pieces by instrumental category. New York Public Library List numbers (NY nos.) correspond to the ordering of manuscript sources in the New York Public Library. There are several pieces for which there are multiple manuscript sources. Fleisher Collection of the Free Library of Philadelphia numbers (F nos.) indicate that a manuscript source is only in the Fleisher Collection.³⁰ Only one piece, IV, K2, published by New Music Editions, has no F or NY number.

PRESTO ($\text{♩} = 132$) I SUITE I for CLARINET B \flat
J. M. BEYER 1932

f *sfz*
f sempre non legato
mp
p
mf *sfz*
pp
f
p crescendo *accelerando* *ritenuto*
a tempo *pp sempre* *ritenoh*
pp sempre *ritenuto* *p p*
f rallentando molto
p stringendo
ppp rallentando molto
ppp

Accidentals affect only those individual notes before which they stand

Figure 4. First two pages of manuscript from Clarinet Suite 1a, movement 1

The musical score consists of ten staves of music. The first staff begins with a *ppp* dynamic marking. The second staff includes *ppp* and *ritando*. The third staff features *f* and *ritardando*. The fourth staff has *sffz*, *pp*, and *pp sempre*. The fifth staff contains *pp*, *pp sempre*, and *stringando molto*. The sixth staff includes *pp*, *pp sempre*, *stringando poco*, and *ritenuto*. The seventh staff is marked *al tempo*. The eighth staff has *sffz*. The ninth staff includes *mf*. The tenth staff features *sffz* and *f*. The score is written in a single system with a vertical bar line separating the first and second measures.

Figure 4. Continued

III. MODERATO (2 minutes)
♩ = 76

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Cello

3
8

mf
pizzicato

mp
mf
mf

5 10 20 35 40 50 60

Op. No. 4 - 18 Measures
Printed in the U.S.A.

© Schirmer Inc., New York

Figure 5. Third movement, String Quartet no. 2, manuscript

This image shows a page of handwritten musical notation for a 4-staff instrument. The score is written on ten staves, with the first four staves containing the main melodic and harmonic lines. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings such as *mf*, *mp*, and *p*. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4 above or below notes. There are several circled numbers (15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75) marking specific measures. The score concludes with a double bar line and a final chord. The handwriting is clear and professional.

Op. No. 4 - 40 Staves
Printed in the U. S. A.

G. Schirmer Inc., New York

Figure 5. Continued

IV ALLEGRO quasi PRESTO (1 minute)
♩. = 104

VI I
3 glissando
8
5

VI II
3 con sordina
8
ppp

Va
3 marcato
8
ppp

Vc
3
8
ppp

10 15

20 25 vibrato

30 35

Style No. 4—16 Staves
Printed in the U. S. A.

G. Schirmer, Inc. New York

Figure 6. Fourth movement, String Quartet no. 2, manuscript

The image displays a musical score for a string quartet, consisting of four staves labeled I, II, C, and a section with 'a largando' and 'arco' markings. The score is written in a single system with various musical notations, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The tempo is marked 'a largando' and the playing technique is 'arco'. The score includes several measures with circled numbers (70, 75, 60, 65, 70, 75) and the word 'vibrato' written above and below the notes. The bottom left corner contains the text 'Style No. 4-18 States' and 'Printed in the U. S. A.'. The bottom right corner contains the text '© Schirmer Inc. New York'.

Figure 6. Continued

(♩ = 120)

VII

A page of handwritten musical notation for a solo piano piece. The score consists of ten systems of staves. The first system has a tempo marking '(♩ = 120)' and a section marker 'VII'. The notation is dense, featuring complex rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and frequent use of slurs and ties. The piece is characterized by dissonant counterpoint, with intervals that are often non-traditional. Performance markings include 'Crescendo molto' in the lower systems, 'Decrescendo' in the middle, and dynamic markings such as 'pp' (pianissimo) and 'p' (piano). The manuscript shows signs of being a working draft, with some ink bleed-through and corrections.

Figure 7. Dissonant Counterpoint, for solo piano, movement 7, manuscript

IV

J. M. BEYER

(♩=144)

1 7/8 *p*

2 7/8

3 7/8

4 7/8 *accelerando poco*

5 7/8 *mp*

6 7/8

7 7/8

8 7/8

9 7/8 *ritenuito*

8 12

1 7/8 *p*

2 7/8 *accelerando poco più*

3 7/8

4 7/8

5 7/8

6 7/8

7 7/8

8 7/8

9 7/8

16 19 *mp*

1 7/8 *ritenuito*

2 7/8

3 7/8

4 7/8

5 7/8

6 7/8

7 7/8

8 7/8

9 7/8

Figure 8. First page of IV, for percussion, published by New Music Editions

Appendix 1: K no. and NY no. Listings*Percussion Ensemble*

K1	F1	Percussion Suite	1933
K2		IV	1935
K3	F2	March for Thirty Percussion Instruments	1939
K4	F3	<i>Percussion Opus 14</i>	1939
K5	NY47	Three Movements for Percussion	1939
K6	F4	Waltz for Percussion	1939

Solo and Chamber Music

K7	NY36	Suite for Clarinet 1	1932
K8	NY37	Suite for Clarinet 1b	1932
K9	NY38	Suite for Clarinet and Bassoon	1933
K10	NY28	Sonata for Clarinet and Piano	1936
K11	NY35	Suite for Bass Clarinet and Piano	1936?
K12	NY16	Movement for Double Bass and Piano	1936
K13	NY18	Movement for Two Pianos	1936
K14	NY40	Suite for Violin and Piano	1937
K15	NYH8	Suite for Oboe and Bassoon	1937
K16	NY26, 46, 49	Six Pieces for Oboe and Piano	1939
K17	NY22	Quintet for Woodwinds	1933
K18	NY19	Movement for Woodwinds	1938
K19	NY52	Trio for Woodwinds	194?
K20	NY32	String Quartet no. 1	1933–4
K21	NY33	String Quartet no. 2	1936
K22	NY6, NY17	Movement for String Quartet (“Dance”)	1938
K23	NY34	String Quartet No. 4	1943?
K24	NY31	“Music of the Spheres” (<i>Status Quo</i>)	1938

Solo Piano

K25	NY13	<i>Gebrauchs-Musik</i>	1934
K26	NY3, 48, 53	<i>Clusters</i> (or <i>New York Waltzes</i>)	1936, 31
K27	NY11	“Winter Ade” and five other folksong settings	1936
K28	NY7	<i>Dissonant Counterpoint</i>	193?
K29	NY39	Suite for Piano	1939
K30	NY29	Sonatina in C	1943
K31	NY21	Prelude and Fugue (in C Major)	(no date)
K32	NY2, 20, 25	<i>Piano-Book</i> , “Classic—Romantic—Modern”	(no date)

Songs

K33	NY27	<i>Sky-Pieces</i>	1933
K34	NY50	Three Songs (“Timber Moon”; “Stars, Songs, Faces”; “Summer Grass”) (soprano, piano, percussion)	1933

K35	NY1	<i>Ballad of the Star-Eater</i> (soprano and clarinet)	1934
K36	NY51	Three Songs for Soprano and Clarinet (“Total Eclipse”; Universal—Local”; “To Be”)	1934
K37	NY14	“Have Faith!” (soprano and flute) (3 versions)	1936–7

Large Mixed Ensembles

K38	NY15	March (14 instruments)	1935
K39	NY5	<i>Cymab</i> (chamber orchestra)	1937
K40	NY9	<i>Elation</i> (concert band)	1938
K41	NY23	<i>Reverence</i> (wind ensemble)	1938

Choir

K42	NY24	<i>The Robin in the Rain</i>	1935
K43	NY10	<i>The Federal Music Project</i>	1936
K44	NY14a	<i>The Main-Deep</i>	1937
K45	NY19a	<i>The People, Yes</i>	1937
K46	NY4	<i>The Composers' Forum-Laboratory</i>	1937

Orchestra

K47	NY12	<i>Fragment for Chamber Orchestra</i>	1937
K48	NY45	<i>Symphonic Suite</i>	1937
K49	NY30	“Dance for Full Orchestra” (<i>Status Quo</i>)	1938
K50	NY41	<i>Symphonic Movement 1</i>	1939
K51	NY43	<i>Symphonic Opus 3</i>	1939
K52	NY44	<i>Symphonic Opus 5</i>	1940
K53	NY42	<i>Symphonic Movement 2</i>	1941

Appendix 2: List of Piece Titles by New York Public Library American Music Collection Number

The following is a detailed catalog and description of Beyer manuscript sources. This is intended as a concordance to the New York Public library American Music Collection, Johanna Beyer Archives, and a source for future scholarship.

After Beyer's death, her scores (about two large boxes) were deposited in the archives of the American Music Center. They were later transferred to the New York Public Library, American Music Collection, in the Music Division. These are the only known manuscript sources, aside from the few scores that are in the Fleisher Collection of the Free Library of Philadelphia. The New York Public Library's estate search did not uncover an heir to Beyer's estate, so these manuscripts are freely available to the public.

A document from the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts entitled “Table of Contents: Johanna Magdalena Beyer Holographs and Photocopies” contains additional information on the manuscripts, as well as a numbering of the archives. This archive is the main source for Beyer’s scores, and we adhere to the NYPL numbering in our list.

Numbers in parentheses before each annotation correspond to the New York Public Library numberings. The two facsimiles published in *Soundings* are contained in the NYPL collection (see appendix 3). The manuscripts uniquely available from the Fleisher Collection are annotated following the NYPL manuscripts.

Order of each entry:

- New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, American Music Collection number. Title.
- Instrumentation. Date. Kennedy no.
- # of copies, pages, duration markings, measures, other manuscript data.
- Comments (dedication, more detailed comments on the manuscript sources, musical ideas, corrections, historical data).

(1) *Ballad of the Star-Eater*

Clarinet and soprano. 1934. K35.

Four copies.

Text by Bonaro Wilkinson Overstreet. There are three slightly different versions of the piece, which can be referred to as V1 (clarinet in concert), V1a (same as V1, except that some clarinet passagework has been added, for example, around m. 57, and some other minor differences, like the missing time signature), and V2 (possibly in a different hand, with the clarinet part in B \flat , and some other minor differences). V2 is different in measure and page layout from V1 but in other respects is the same.

An interesting cumulative clarinet part begins the piece. The poem’s three sections are combined into one continuous work. It is possible that this piece could have been performed on the 20 May 1936 Composers’ Forum-Laboratory Concert, perhaps with the Three Songs for Soprano and Clarinet (NY51) as part of a piece entitled (on the program) “Suite for Soprano and Clarinet.”³¹ That would explain the preparation of a “part” (which may be in Beyer’s hand, or by a different copyist, perhaps the clarinetist). A performance by Rosario Mazzeo of a “Suite for soprano and clarinet” on 29 Jan. 1936 is listed

in Beyer's CV (see appendix 3, "Known Performance"). See the notes to the Frog Peak edition of this piece by Charles Shere for more details (appendix 3).

(2) "Bees"

Solo piano. Date? K32.

Marked "No. 21 from Piano-Book." This manuscript is a clear copy; "busy are the bees" is written at the top. Three versions exist (one in *Piano-Book* [NY20], with lyrics), and the markings for the sources are slightly different. This copy has a little picture in the title and is the more readable. See the notes to the Frog Peak edition of this piece by Larry Polansky for more details (appendix 3).

(3) *Clusters*

Solo piano. 1936. K26.

Two copies.

Clusters consists of four waltz movements: "This is the same as 3 N.Y. Waltzes (NY48, NY53) and an additional Waltz" (NYPL).

(4) *The Composers' Forum Laboratory*

Chorus. 1937. K46.

This manuscript is a clear copy. Dedicated to Ashley Pettis, director of the Composers Forum-Laboratory.

(5) *Cyrnab*

Orchestra, with multiple percussion and piano. 1937. K39.

Three copies of the score, nineteen parts. Duration marked as twelve minutes. Twenty-five pages long, 197 measures.

"CYRNAB" appears to be a simple anagram. The most likely explanation is:

henRYCowell
johanNABeyer

implying something, perhaps about Beyer's perception of her relationship to Cowell. A second explanation is less likely: a symmetric transformation on the word makes it "nyc bar"; reverse each word ("cynrab"), and then flip the middle two letters ("cyrnab"). This piece is interesting in its rhythmic ideas.

(6) *Dance for Strings*

Violin, viola, cello, double bass. Date? K22.

No title page. Six-page score, and parts. 221 measures.

This folder in the NYPL simply contains the ozalid masters of NY17, Movement for String Quartet, which is the same piece. NY6 also includes parts for the Movement for String Quartet, which are labeled “Dance.”

(7) *Dissonant Counterpoint*

Piano. Date? K28.

Two complete copies. Eight short movements.

This piece is probably from the same period as the clarinet suites (early 1930s) because of the musical style and notation. *Gebrauchs-Musik* and *Dissonant Counterpoint* may not have been completely distinct works for Beyer; there are several documented performances by her (1934, 1935, 1936, and 1937) of a piece called “Excerpts from Piano Suites,” which might have included parts of these two pieces, or possibly *Clusters* (see appendix 3, “Known Performances”). This may partly explain the mistaken manuscript page of *Dissonant Counterpoint* that was temporarily included in the NYPL *Gebrauchs-Musik* manuscript. Because of the date, these excerpts could not have included the Suite for Piano (NY39), unless that piece is misdated in these manuscripts.

In a letter to Grainger dated 21 May 1938, Beyer says: “I have decided to have a very difficult dissonant counterpoint Suite For Piano recorded with *Musicraft* this week. I used to play it in concerts. I inquired at Silvermans and also Wurlitzer [it is hard to read these two names in the manuscript, but presumably both are recording studios] but I finally decided to do it at *Musicraft*. The 12 inch record costs \$4—and one may have duplicates done for \$3—and if not duplicates, an even cheaper price can be made. The material they use for these records is quite lasting, and with good care one might use these records almost indefinitely.” It is not known at this time whether this recording was ever made.

There is a bound score of *Dissonant Counterpoint* in the NYPL, with the following order of pieces: I, II, III, V, VII, VI, IV.³²

For more details, see the Frog Peak edition of this piece by David Fuqua (appendix 3).

(8) Duet “Suite” for Oboe and Bassoon (or Four Pieces for Oboe and Bassoon)

Several alternate versions (oboe, viola or clarinet or English horn; solo piano; or for oboe and trombone or tuba in F). June 1939. K15. Five copies.

All copies seem to be the same piece, different titles. (1) Andantino, (2) allegretto, (3) lentamente, (4) Presto. Concerning other instrumental possibilities, this piece includes the instruction “or any other

five suitable instruments.” Each movement is only one page of score, and these pieces are, in general, simpler and less chromatic than her earlier work. The score is very readable.

(9) *Elation*

Large wind ensemble, percussion. July 1938. K40.

Six minutes long. Five-page score.

This is a cumulative piece: the ensemble gets larger and then contracts. There is no original manuscript in the NYPL collection. The dedication “to Edwin Franko Goldman” is somewhat unusual, since it was Richard Franko Goldman, the bandleader and later head of the Peabody School of Music, son of Edwin Franko Goldman (founder of the famous Goldman Band), who was associated with both Cowell and Grainger and who wrote for *Modern Music*. Beyer knew him.³³ This piece was written while Cowell was imprisoned at San Quentin: R. F. Goldman sent Cowell books and scores there. R. F. Goldman did not become the director of the Goldman Band until 1956, so the dedication is probably to the band’s director at the time (E. F. Goldman). Beyer seems to have sent him the piece,³⁴ but in a 1946 article³⁵ on new music for concert band, Goldman lists thirty-two American composers (“and a number of others”) “among those who have written wind band compositions here [the United States],” and Beyer’s name is conspicuously absent among composers including Cowell, Reigger, Robert McBride, Ray Green, and other contemporaries.

Both *Elation* and *Reverence* (NY23, K41) seem to have been influenced by Beyer’s association with Grainger and were played in rehearsal by his band.³⁶ In the letters³⁷ Beyer made a number of references to hearing Grainger’s band play and of writing these two pieces for the Goldman Band or Grainger’s band.³⁸ For more information, see the notes for *Reverence* below.

(10) *The Federal Music Project*

SATB (chorus). July 1936. K43.

Two copies. Twenty-six measures.

There are two copies of the score and two differently printed texts. The two manuscripts are slightly different, but both are horizontal on facing pages. On the top of one of them, “Duration 5 minutes” is written. The printed texts (Beyer’s) are slightly different in punctuation and typeface. For example, the commas after “knowledge” and after “remarkable” do not appear in one copy, and there is an extra smudge in one copy only. The score is marked “3961–43rd st., long island city, NY.” This piece is also dedicated to Ashley Pettis, director of CFL. The score has five verses, all with the same music. There

is a strong sense of English as a second language in this text, with its German constructions (“Unavoidably what may happen is surely a wonderful thing”). There is also a reference to a “beehive” (a recurring theme in Beyer’s work, as in “Bees”). It is not completely clear how the different verses are set with the music. In the score, the bass part “It busses and bubbles all day” is marked with the performance instructions “marked, almost spoken, yet with the tonal pitch.” See the notes to the Frog Peak edition of this piece by Margaret Fisher, Larry Polansky, and David Fuqua for more details (appendix 3).

(11) “Winter Ade”

1936. K27.

“German folksong with various versions.” “German, england, ireland, italian, russian” (7 folksong arrangements). An old-looking manuscript, “GE:CHD—jrf 7/27/36” is written at the end of the score.

These are simple, pedagogical piano settings of various national tunes (“Volga Boatman,” “Santa Lucia,” etc.). The title of the whole set is not necessarily “Winter Ade”—that piece is first in the set. There are multiple copies of most of the pieces.

(12) *Fragment*

For chamber orchestra (flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, French horn, violin, viola, cello, double bass, percussion) and piano. January 1937. K47.

Two copies of score. 113 measures.

Dedicated to Hans Lange. The second copy (holograph) has some markings, especially on the first page, that the first copy does not. Another copy exists in the Fleisher Collection (marked as “2875”) with a nicely done cover page and the dedication to Lange on the inside cover. Hans Lange was a conductor active in contemporary music in New York in the 1930s, and the dedication, as with the one to Stokowski (see NY42) does not necessarily mean that Beyer had a significant relationship with him or even knew him, much less that he performed the work. This is the piece that Beyer refers to in her letter to Koussevitzky’s secretary of 16 May 1938 (see notes for *Symphonic Suite*, NY45, K48).

(13) *Gebrauchs-Musik*

Solo piano. 1934. K25.

Six movements (I–VI).

There are two copies of the score in the NYPL folder, and for a time the second one was missing the sixth movement (leading us to tempo-

rarily believe that this movement belonged to *Dissonant Counterpoint*). The missing low G (in the fifth movement) on one copy appears on the other copy, which is a completely different manuscript (same hand). Only one of the versions of the fifth movement has a tempo marking. One of the copies is a bound performance edition, with pencil markings. The other is an ozalid master.

The words “Gebrausch-Musik” are printed, probably in someone else’s hand on the title page of the bound edition, under the script version of the title (clearly in Beyer’s hand, but written in an old-style German script). The script seems to have an “s” (or possibly even an “ß”) on the end of the word “Gebrauchs,” but is difficult to read. It is unclear from the manuscript whether or not there is an internal “s” in the script title, making the title of the piece “Gebrauschs-Musik” or even possibly (but doubtfully) “Gebrausch-Musik.” The NYPL list of Beyer’s manuscripts spells it without the internal “s” but with the final (genitive) one. If the internal “s” is in fact there, it is difficult to understand what could have been meant by this spelling.³⁹

The print misspelling (missing the final “s” and with the internal “s”) may be that of a later cataloger’s. Assuming her spelling was indeed “Gebrauschs-Musik,” Beyer’s hyphenation and capitalization of “Musik” still differs from the usual (American) spelling “Gebrauchsmusic.” This idea, often associated with Hindemith, was debated and discussed frequently in the pages of *Modern Music* in the early 1930s, a publication Beyer would almost certainly have been familiar with.⁴⁰ It is difficult to determine the relationship of these piano pieces, which are highly abstract, to the usual meaning of the term. Each piece is one page long. See the Frog Peak edition of this work by Carter Scholz for more details (appendix 3). See notes for (NY7).

(14) “Have Faith!”

Soprano and flute. 1937. K37.

Two copies each of the first two versions.

“Two versions of HAVE FAITH” is written on the cover. There are two versions of the piece plus an alternate introduction for the first (that is, a total of three versions). “Have Faith!” is dedicated to Ethel Luening, who was a singer in New York City, previously married to the composer Otto Luening. She also performed Cowell’s music (see appendix 3, “A Preliminary Beyer Resource List”) and is the singer on the New Music Quarterly recording of Cowell’s *Vocalise*. The work is in $\frac{5}{8}$ (a favorite of Beyer’s). The dates on the manuscripts are: Jan. 1937, Dec. 1936, and Dec. 1936 (the first holograph is marked “Dec. 36 January 1937”), which is different than the two versions in the

holograph. The first version lists Beyer's address as "40 Jane St., NY, NY." "Have Faith!" is a short work (one page for each version).

(14a) *The Main-Deep*

Chorus. SATB. Oct. 1937. K44.

Fifty-three measures.

On James Stephens's "The Main Deep"; "to the choral contest committee, Federal Music Project, 254 West 54 st, ny." The facsimile is clearly readable. The score contains the instruction to the chorus "All intervals should be reached by sliding, as subtle as possible."

(15) March

Clarinet, two cornets, cymbal and drum, violin 1, violin 2, bass, cello. Apr. 1935. K38.

Score and parts. Eighty-five measures.

The score is readable but written on "upside-down" orchestra paper. It is written in concert pitch, parts transposed.

(16) Movement for Double Bass and Piano

Date? K12.

Three copies. Second version is 1936. Ninety-eight measures.

There are two versions of this piece; one appears earlier. The score is fairly readable. The versions are different manuscripts, but the actual music seems to be the same. See the Frog Peak edition of this work by David Fuqua for more details (appendix 3).

(17) Movement for String Quartet

1938. Violin, viola, cello, double bass. K22.

221 measures. Six pages.

This is the same as NY6, the ozalid master.

(18) Movement for Two Pianos

Two pianos. 1936. K13.

Two copies of the score. Forty-two measures.

To Henry Cowell. This piece includes Cowell-style piano cluster notation⁴¹ and some difficult but interesting gruppetti. It is a little unclear what Beyer means by long, tied-together chords over several measures (let ring?). This work was performed on the Composers' Forum-Laboratory Concert of 20 May 1936. See "Known Performances" and the Frog Peak edition of this work, edited by Drew Krause, for more details (appendix 3).

(19) Movement for Woodwinds, or Movement for Woodwind Quintet

Flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, "double bassoon" (no French horn).

Sept. 1938. K18.

Three copies of the score, one copy of parts. Parts marked "W.W.Q. 1938." Duration on score: six minutes.

This piece is one movement in three short sections: 87 measures, 102 measures, 28 measures, with tempi at quarter note equals 80, 144, 80, and tempo changes within these sections. The third section is a kind of recapitulation of the first.

(19a) *The People, Yes.*

Chorus: SATB. September 1937. K45.

Eighty-four measures.

On Carl Sandburg's "The People, Yes" "to the choral contest committee, Federal Music Project, 254 West 54." "40 Jane St." Sandburg's poem is handwritten on the title page (along with "106").

(20) *Piano-Book (Classic—Romantic—Modern)*

Date? K32.

This book contains beautiful little graphic "index cards in front" (from NYPL list): doodles, corresponding to the little pieces inside. Exercises include "cross-rhythms" and other pedagogical works. Small pieces include "Bees" (NY2), "See-Saw" (NY25), "Stille Nacht" (Franz Gruber?), "Lento" (marked Sept. 1936, and an interesting work), "Study-Allegretto" (the same study as in "See-Saw and Study," NY25), "Andantino" and several other works (some may be by other composers). The last few small pieces are chromatic, untitled, and interesting (like "Lento" and a short, untitled work where quarter note equals 56). The manuscript includes watercolors at the end (by "O.K." ?). In her CV, Beyer refers to "Childrens play Songs with poems and drawings, given out and used at the Federal Music Project" (see footnote above).

The edition of "Bees" in the *Piano-Book* is not substantially different from NY2, except for a few added fingerings, but the lyrics (a pedagogical aid) are written beneath the notes. The versification is ours. "sr—" and "br—" are used for the tremolos:

The bees are so busy, so busy, sr—, br—.

Gathering honey from flowers and trees, all day long, sr—, br—, sr—,
br—, sr—, br—.

And the sky is so bright and the fragrance so sweet and the music of
nature makes me dream and sleep.

More [?] happy and gay, I might dance and sway, try to fly like you,
busy bees, sr—, br—, sr—, br—, sr—, sr—, br—, sr—

I might dance and sway, try to fly like you, busy bees. sr—, br—,
sr—.

(21) Prelude and Fugue

Piano solo. Date? K31.

In C major (the fugue is slightly more chromatic). Attaca. There are two copies, in very different manuscripts. The second manuscript seems to be a draft and contains crossed-out sections. This piece is probably either pedagogical or very late. There is also a strong resemblance between the prelude and the C-major prelude of Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*, book 1. For some reason, beams are not used on eighth notes in the fugue.

(22) Quintet for Woodwinds

Flute, oboe, English horn, clarinet, bassoon. 1933. K17.

Three copies of the score. Parts. Fifty-six measures.

The parts are marked, indicating perhaps that the piece has been read or performed. The score is in concert pitch. This is probably the piece that was performed on the 1937 WPA concert of Beyer's work (with a date of composition given as 1937!).

(23) *Reverence*

Flute, piccolo, English horn, clarinets (B \flat , E \flat alto, B \flat bass), saxophones (soprano in B \flat , alto, tenor, baritone), E \flat alto horn (brass), "brass" (trombone, euphonium and E \flat tuba), bassoon and "double-bassoon," timpani, bass drum. Feb. 1938. K41.

Score and parts. 113 measures.

"To Percy Grainger." There is a third page in the original that is somehow integrated into the holograph. The score is transposed and a bit confusing, condensing the instrumental parts into three pages. Much of the sectional writing is tutti.

Reverence (and *Elation*) seem to have been played in rehearsal by Grainger's band sometime in late April or early May 1939. There is a great deal of correspondence from Beyer to Grainger about writing for his band in NY.⁴² In a letter of 21 May 1938, she said:

I must thank you again for your beautiful invitation. It was a fine opportunity for me to learn. These bands do distinguished work—both playing and composing. I was very interested—the first [?] Symphony for Band [?].

And I had never *seen* you play! I have heard you often over the Radio. It was inspiring! I like Grofé very much, but I think your "Children's March" was the most fascinating composition on the whole program. I have always admired your fine balance and excellent proportion—orchestration, the perfect coloring. But to-day I was strongly reminded of Henry [Cowell] by seeing you play and listening to

the composition as a whole. You both have that gathering of forces—communion, this great energy, controlled by a mastermind!

In another letter, dated 22 April 1939 (New York), Beyer wrote:

The parts for Reverence may not be of much use, I wrote them last year without knowing anything about it, just merely guesswork, and then I had many copies made, I did not send them all, so if more of any kind should be needed, I could send them off immediately. Elation I wrote the night after my first visit to the Mall last summer; I went to bed reluctantly, but I could not sleep, so I simply had to get up again and write it down. A few days after I gave it to Goldman, but they never would consider it, I am sure. I also wrote the parts at the same time. These parts show a little improvement and might do. I went to the Independence yesterday, our new Blue printing Co. who has excellent transparent paper and the cheapest and best printing you can imagine (my copies are still on the National though, because last year they did not have their own paper yet. I gave them your address to send you samples of paper, you might have received it, while you were away, anyway, I might have received it, while you were away, anyway, I asked them to send you samples again) and had just one copy made of each Elation part, please let me know if there are more parts needed of any particular type. If the Reverence parts should prove impractical I am more than willing to make a better set. I am sorry to give you all that trouble through my incompetence in the matter, but I am progressing, only I have delt [sic] in other matters all year again and in fact am still in it deeply up to my neck!

In a third letter, dated 16 May 1939, Beyer referred to the rehearsal-performance and seems to apologize for her reaction to Grainger after hearing the pieces:

A little time ago I wrote to Henry [Cowell] that I was summoned to the Y.M.C.A. Brooklyn to meet you, but that I had no idea for what purpose, only while there it dawned upon me, seeing the Williams School players there. I wrote about the thrill I had of hearing for the first time something orchestral of mine, that I found it contained some of exciting spots the other rather thin, that I had not looked at that work at all since last summer, but it being very easy caught on to it so much that I felt like conducting myself, only I did not say so, and that from my utterance you might be at a loss with me, and therefore I would write to you and explain a little.

After this introduction may I say, that I really felt very grateful to you for taking all this trouble, it was really a thrill despite! I was in a very sensitive mood and having heard this exquisite music before [probably referring to her attendance at other rehearsals and performances of

the band], I was rather taken [a]back to have to listen to my unskillful stuff, but it was a fine experience for me, and the best lesson, I could possibly have. I have been very busy since, but yesterday I got both Reverence and Elation out and played it [?] for myself testing whether I would have the same reaction to-day as on the day of rehearsal. It did not seem to be so bad, so I set about and substantiated both works. I believe, they might be nearer to what I want it to sound like after this dressing up. I shall now change the parts accordingly. By the way, that one part, which was claimed to have not been written out, I do have in my master parts here, it is written out for the E flat Clarinet. I like Reverence much better than Elation, but I do think they both will sound alright now. If there should be another possibility of rehearsal it would be just grand!

In a fourth letter, of 8 September 1939 (New York), she wrote:

About meeting, there is not such great hurry, I do not know whether I will be able to speak freely at Schirmers.⁴³ However, I shall try my best to adjust myself if you desire a meeting here. Yes my phone is Chelsea 3-6545, perhaps you give me a ring? I wonder whether it would be possible for you to bring back the parts of "Elation," I would like to straighten them out. After the "lesson" you gave me, I made changes. But please, don't inconvenience yourself, only when it is possible, because there is no hurry either.

(24) *The Robin in the Rain*

Chorus. 1935. K42.

There are two versions of this piece. The first is for sopranos and altos (women's chorus), soprano solo, and piano, dated October 1935. The second version is for chorus (SATB), "to the choral contest committee, Federal Music Project, 254 West 54." There is a different soprano line for different verses over the same "drop drop" (etc.) onomatopoeic alto part and the same bass and tenor part. There are three copies of the score, two of the first version and one of the second (choral). The second copy of the first version is only a half page, first verse, no piano part, but otherwise the same as the complete score for the first version. The text is by Charles Coke Woods. The second version is marked with the 40 Jane Street address.

(25) "See-Saw" and "Study"

Piano. Date? K32.

Two copies.

"#25 from *Piano-Book*" (NY20), and also "Study" from *Piano-Book*. These are two short piano pieces (they have accompanying graphics in *Piano-Book*). Both pieces are contained on one page. "See-Saw" is unusual as a study in its large leaps.

(26) Six Movements for Oboe and Piano, or Six Pieces for Oboe and Piano

June 1939. K16.

Two copies.

“Pieces” is written on top of “Movements” on the title page in parentheses. Also included are several copies of a piece called Three Pieces for Oboe and Piano (first three movements of “six pieces”). See (NY46, NY49). There are several copies of this three-movement piece. This score is readable.

(27) *Sky Pieces*

Soprano and piano. April 1933. K33.

Six copies of score. Three pages long.

The poem is by Carl Sandburg. There are several different autographs, though they are fairly similar. One copy has pencil corrections of wrong notes. One copy has a “graphic text” cover. Address listed as 3961 Forty-third Street, Long Island City. The score is readable.

(28) Sonata for Clarinet and Piano

Feb. 1936. K10.

To Rosario Mazzeo and Nicolas Slonimsky. Four movements: allegro (eighty-six mm.), adagio (seventy-three mm.), allegretto (sixty-five mm.), lento (forty mm.). There are four copies of the score, all of which appear to be the same. The score is readable.

(29) Sonatina in C

Piano. “greenwich village, ny, june 1943.” K30.

To Roland Leitner. Four movements: (1) allegro brioso, (2) scherzo, (3) andante, (4) sciolto (loose, agile, nimble). The *sonatina* is somewhat in the style of Clementi, in terms of pianism, key movement, form, etc. There is a small mistake in measure six (quarter note should be eighth note). This piece is perhaps the latest known work of Beyer’s and is very tonal. Is it actually her piece, or a pedagogical revision of someone else’s?

(30) “Dance for Full Orchestra” (from *Status Quo*)

Part of act 4, Geneva. Musette, electric cello, bagpipe, several wind instruments, bass drum, saxophone. 1938. K49.

Two copies.

The full score of “Dance” is preceded by one page of “10. Pair:

France. 11. Pair: England. 12: Pair: America. Dance—Adjustment.”

This page is page XXVIII, and “Dance” starts on page XXIX, clearly standing alone as a piece unto itself (measure numbers start from 1).

“ ‘Geneva’ was one of the intended sections from the unfinished opera

Status Quo" (see NY31). "Dance" is said to segue into "Music of the Spheres" ("MOTS is at end of Dance, incomplete."). In a one-page work plan for the opera, part of the Guggenheim Fellowship proposal she enclosed to Koussevitzky (11 Oct. 1937), Beyer wrote:

I wish to spend a year in the effort to create an opera that will be modern both in theme and musical form.

(My conviction is, that the traditional themes of the opera are outworn and of little significance for our time. Likewise the musical form of the opera, which related itself to these older themes, is quite inadequate for the musical consciousness of our present world.)

. . . the opera would be organized thus: I am temporarily [sic] choosing the title "Status Quo." The opera would be in 4 acts, 12 scenes.

Act I: U.S.A.

Act II: The Kremlin

Act III: Rome-Berlin

Act IV: Geneva

From the above it will be noted, that there is an attempt to handle the ideas and interests that are vital in our present world. Furthermore, it will be seen, that I am adopting a musical form, quite new, and which, in combination with various forms of pantomimes [sic], dances, as well as speech, exclamations, songs, would seem to express our modern life. By this technic [sic] I shall [sic] also be able to recall various historical music systems and give them their significant placing in the evolution of our social life.

(31) "Music of the Spheres" (from *Status Quo*) (See Fig. 9)

Movement for Three Electrical Instruments

For three electrical instruments or strings. 1938. K24.

Two copies. 127 measures.

Excerpt from the unfinished opera *Status Quo* (beginning) (see NY30).

"Screen: Starsystems . . ." "leading into: Introduction" "Lento-Moderato-Lento."

(32) String Quartet no. 1

(No. 1?); 1933–34. K20.

Three copies of the score (only two with cover pages) and three copies of complete parts.

Allegro (seventy-two mm.), lento (154 mm.), moderato (seventy mm.), presto (142 mm.). All movements *attaca* (before one, an "aesthetic pause" is directed). The presto movement is a study in glissandi (see fourth movement of *String Quartet no. 2*), *crescendi-decrescendi*,

Johanna Magdalena Beyer

STATUS QUO

Dramatic Opera in 4 acts	12 Scenes	Kaleidoscopic happenings
Time: Present:	Background: Screen, picturing starsystems, our globe, different continents...	
Music: All existing musical systems according to stage and screen		
<u>Act I: U.S.A.</u>	<u>Act II: The Kremlin</u>	<u>Act III: Rome-Berlin</u>
<u>Act IV: Geneva</u>		
Scene 1.	America: New York	Screen: Stars, globe, America, U.S.A., airplanes, steamers, skyscape
Pair, eastern type, in subway	Broadway, Harlem, Chinatown, Ghetto....	Music: energetic, pulsating, syncopated, cross rhythms, dissonant counterpoint, polyphonic...
discussing world affairs		
their point of view		
Scene 2.	Pair, western intellectuals,	Screen: Schenectady, Washington, Lobby, Lobbyists
going across country in plane:	Schenectady, Washington D.C., New Deal	Northpole: icebergs, icefields, snow wastes..
Mt. Wilson Observatory, San Francisco	Bay, bridge, shipping, strike, across Northpole	Music: flowing, throbbing, of exultation, exuberance
		american folktones, according to screen
		across Northpole just primitive percussion beats
Scene 3.	England:	Screen: accordingly
Abdication of Edward VIII	coronation pageant	Music: Neo classic, conventional
Scene 4.	France:	Screen: accordingly
		Music: French, Debussy 6-tone-scale..
<u>Act II. The Kremlin</u>		
Scene 1.	Russia: Moscow	Screen: Youth, factories, nurseries, schools, artprojects
all their new achievements	Syberia	collective farms
		Music: Marches, marching songs.....
Scene 2.	China: being aggressed	Screens: accordingly
		Music: oriental, using original records possibly
Scene 3.	India-Africa being ruled	Screen: accordingly
		Music: Hindu-African
Scene 4.	Ireland	Screen: the isle, scenery.....
		Music: Gaelic, bagpipes, jigs, reels....
<u>Act III: Rome-Berlin</u>		
Scene 1.	Europe continental	Screen: Nürnberg Festival
Germany		Music: Folktones, marches, conventional, modern
Scene 2.	Italy	Screen: Rome fascist rally
		Music: Marches.....
Scene 3.	Spain	Screens: accordingly
		Music: Spanish
<u>Act IV: Geneva</u>		
Scene 1.	Geneva	Screen: Switzerland, peaks of eternal snow, Wilhelm Tell
		flags and representatives of all countries....
		Music: essence of music, derived from all existing syst

Figure 9. Beyer's one-page typescript synopsis of the projected opera *Status Quo*

close intervals, and registral extremes. One copy of the score has corrections.

(33) String Quartet no. 2

July 1936. K21.

One copy of the score and parts.

Allegretto (two minutes, forty-nine mm.), largo (three minutes, fifty-three mm.), moderato (two minutes, ninety-seven mm.), allegro quasi presto (one minute, seventy-eight mm.). The word "Persephone" is crossed out on the front page.

This quartet is an extremely important and interesting piece, bearing a close relationship to the String Quartet no. 1 (NY32). The

last movement is especially interesting: the inner parts are continuous glissandi (see String Quartet no. 1, presto, movement 4), and the violin part is a combination of glissandi and seconds.

The cello part for all four movements is Papageno's aria from Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*: "Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen . . .," stretched out to be a kind of ground bass (in $\frac{3}{8}$ or $\frac{2}{4}$). In the first movement, this tune is altered chromatically (such as the G# and C# in mm. 11 and 12). Movement 2 is reminiscent of the third movement of the Ruth Crawford String Quartet, with a continual "crescendo/decrescendo" texture that emphasizes timbre over melody, harmony, and rhythm. There is even a kind of "explosion" (m. 32) similar to the one that occurs in the Crawford piece. Movement 3 is a study in different superimposed meters (note that there are even "counting" instructions added in pencil). Cello and viola are in $\frac{4}{8}$ ($\frac{2}{4}$), violins in $\frac{3}{8}$. The score is on manila and readable.

See the Frog Peak edition of this work by Pamela Marshall for more details (appendix 3).

(34) String Quartet no. 4

Date? K23.

Moderato (seventy-two mm.), larghetto (fifty-three mm.), andante (sixty-six mm.), presto (ninety-eight mm.). The score has some pencil notes as well, preceded by one page of what appears to be a sketch. Like some of the other late pieces, this is very tonal and rhythmically simple. There are two copies of the score, in the same manuscript style as NY29 (1943). One sheet of the original manuscript is inserted before movement 4.

(35) Suite for Bass Clarinet and Piano

Date? K11.

Two copies of the score.

Three movements: (1) rubato, (2) lento, (3) allegretto. This suite was possibly written around 1932–33, and related in some way (as part of a set of pieces?) to NY36, NY37, and NY38, although the hand is different, and it is also clearly in the "dissonant counterpoint" style. Written for Rosario Mazzeo.

(36, 37) Suite for Clarinet 1 and Suite for Clarinet 1b

1932. K7, K8.

The first suite is titled on the manuscript "Suite I for Clarinet Bb." Suite 1: (1) presto, (2) largo, (3) moderato, (4) rallentando. Suite 1b: (1) giocoso, (2) Lamentation, (3) Contrast (sonnet form), (4) accelerando. The NYPL list calls these pieces Suites 1 and 2. There are two

copies of each score, one in B \flat and one in C. Accidentals are transposed oddly, often enharmonically between the two parts (this is also the case, for example, in the clarinet transposition of *Ballad of the Star-Eater*; see NY1).

These two scores, like *Dissonant Counterpoint* (NY7), are in a very fine, clear hand, characteristic of some of the earlier music. The hand seems to be the same for the two versions. The indication of phrasing by measure layout is similar to that in *Dissonant Counterpoint*. Each part of the second suite, transposed (?), has some descriptive notes written in pencil and ink. These could be the performer's notes, or Beyer's comments to a specific performer, or perhaps even analytical notes to be used in a composition lesson (with Charles Seeger?). There are a number of differences in page layout and dynamic markings between the two versions, such as length and placement of hairpins. There is some question as to the reason for the transposed version (was this piece performed?) and as to which version of the manuscript is earlier or more "definitive." There are a number of transposition errors between the two versions. In Suite 1 (a), first movement (presto), just before the beginning of the retrograde (near the middle piece), the high F \natural in the B \flat part should be an F \sharp (it is an E in the concert part). This is suggested by the fact that if the E were an E \flat in the C part, that would be an octave (actually two octaves), which seems uncharacteristic of the style. This suggests, however, that the concert version probably came first, since if it came second, Beyer would have had to have corrected this note without correcting the B \flat manuscript. Alternatively, she could have been working from some third source and copying from that onto these two sources.

Suite 1 (a), movement 1 is a retrograde of itself (a palindrome or "mirror form"), possible evidence of Ruth Crawford's influence (this piece is written just after Crawford's *Piano Study in Mixed Accents* and the String Quartet). This movement also involves a cumulative melodic process. The following is written on the first page of the concert key version: "Perpetual motion—constant beats/measures vary/continuing motive/*crabform of perpetual motion." The asterisk refers to a melodic cell on page 1, with an asterisk in the left-hand margin. After "continuing motive" Beyer writes a sixteenth note and a dotted eighth.

Three measures in the middle of the palindrome are anomalous. These three measures occur in line 12 of the B \flat and C versions, with the six pitches (in C): G–A \sharp –F–B–E \flat –E. Coincidentally, the last note (E) of these measures is the transposition error referred to above.

The anomaly of these three measures, in which there is an intervallic expansion, is actually indicated by Beyer in her placement of a triple bar before the measures and a double bar with a fermata after them. Beyer uses triple bars structurally throughout the work as a kind of higher-level section indicator to the double bar, which is used for phrases. The fermata is missing from the B \flat version. Some kind of pitch-class system also seems to be at work in this movement, perhaps in the maximal avoidance of pitch-class repetition. The number of measures per phrase is cumulative to the midpoint (as in one of the movements of *Dissonant Counterpoint*). In addition, the last two notes of each line up to line nine are the same (concert A \flat –A). These become the first two notes of every line from line 21 and after (as well as lines 17–19 in different registers).

In 1(a), movement 2, some sort of atonal system also seems to be at work. The missing dot in the B \flat version, third line, second measure, is further evidence that the concert version was done first. This movement is cumulative (like movement 1), expanding toward the middle, compressing toward the end. The marking on this movement is: “Tones of contrary of crab of/perpetual motion.” In 1(a), movement 3 (moderato), the double bar is also used to separate phrases. Every measure is in $\frac{2}{8}$ time. Every structural phrase is exactly eight measures long, except for a central group of four measures that is set off physically on the page. In other words, there are four phrases of eight measures each, then a central phrase of four measures, and then, symmetrically, a set of four phrases of eight measures each. There is a transposition mistake in the beginning of this movement: the first two notes (first measure) are not transposed in the B \flat part (the rest is). Beyer’s marking on this movement is: “Modulation from skippy – + finish measure [nemme?]/(large interval) to skippy – + line [live?] measure [nemme?] (small interval)/contrast between staccato + legato, climax feeling [drawn?].” In 1(a), movement 4, Beyer uses two different “metric modulation” processes. In the first, the eighth note is held constant, but the meter changes. In the second, the new measure equals the absolute length of the previous measure, though the number of eighth notes is different (a metric modulation equivalent of a gruppetto). Beyer indicates these two processes in the score by the notations: “eighth = eighth” and “m = m.” The measure-by-measure modulations always happen at the end of a line. The marking at the bottom of this movement is: “It must be remembered that if the starting tempo is changed, all succeeding tempi will automatically be greater.” Markings for 1(b) movements are: (1) “Gradual growth of tied tones”; (2) “Tones of contrary form of perpetual motion”; (3)

“Contrast of phrases: / skippy = steppy.” Movement 4 has indications throughout measuring tempo changes mathematically as the result of each modulation and various tempo fractions. These are at the end of each system.

Thanks to Daniel Goode for contributing much of the information in the above comments.

(38) Suite for Clarinet and Bassoon
1933. K9.

Two copies of score.

(1) Allegro ritmico quasi presto (two pp., two minutes), (2) *lenta-*mente (two pp., three minutes), (3) *Alegretto gracioso* (three pp., two and a half minutes), (4) *allegro ponderoso* (two pp., two minutes). The score also has the title “Suite III for Clarinet and Bassoon,” probably relating in some way to NY36, NY37, and even NY35 (whose date may be around this time, but whose style is somewhat different). The *lenta-*mente is mentioned in Mead,⁴⁴ and recorded on *New Music Quarterly Recordings*, reviewed by Copland (see appendix 3). Beyer mentions this recording (and the Boston performance of the work) in letters to Grainger, 22 and 28 November 1937: “I had written [to Cowell in San Quentin] that I am to be recorded with Quarterly recordings and that the Boston players were doing one of my Suite for Clarinet and Bassoon, that is part of it, and he rejoices,” and “there is a surprise for him [Cowell] in store, as the Suite he wrote this summer for Oboe and Piano for Robert Mc. Bride [sic] at Bennington, is going to be one side of the new records and one of my Suite for Clarinet and Bassoon, that is, just two movements of it, will be on the other side, played by members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. I am all excited by it.”⁴⁵ From Beyer’s CV, this piece also seems to have been performed at the New Music Society, University of California, on 15 February 1934. There are two addresses on the score: “3961–43r St Long Island City NY USA” and “40 Jane st ny.” The second copy has a title page (“Suite for Clarinet and Bassoon”). This piece is in the style of *Dissonant Counterpoint* and the clarinet suites.

(39) Suite for Piano
Nov. 1939. K29.

Four copies of score. Four pages.

To Henry Cowell. Three movements. Two and a half minutes, four minutes, and three minutes. This is, like a great deal of the late work, very tonal. The score is in a clear copy.

(40) Suite for Violin and Piano

January 1937. K14.

Four copies of the score. Three pages long. Six minutes.

To Szigetti and Magaloff. Three movements. The score is marked "j.m beyer 40 jane str. chelsea 3-6545." This piece was performed at the Composers' Forum Laboratory concert of 19 May 1937, probably with Beyer at the piano.

(41) *Symphonic Movement 1*

July 1939. K50.

No original manuscript, just holograph. Duration given at ca. five minutes. 181 measures.

There is a copy of this score in the Fleisher Collection, no. 3170, with a cover page that does not appear to be Beyer's, with the name "Johanna M. Beyer" on it. On this manuscript, it is simply named "Symphonic Movement."

(42) *Symphonic Movement 2*

Mar. 1941. K53.

No original manuscript, just holograph. 102 measures.

To Leopold Stokowski. For more on Beyer's relationship to Stokowski, see Charles Amirkhanian's essay in the Essential Music Concert Program.⁴⁶ This appears to be a very tonal work. Another copy, with a "printed" cover page, exists in the Fleisher Collection (with the name "Johanna M. Beyer").

(43) *Symphonic Opus 3*

March 1939. K51.

Original manuscript only, with parts.

(1) Andante (three minutes, eighty-five mm.), (2) moderato-ritmico (three minutes, eighty mm.), (3) largo (seven minutes, 134 mm.), (4) presto (three minutes, 352 mm.). "The Fleisher collection of the Free Library of Philadelphia owns a photocopy of this set of parts which may be rented" (note from New York Public Library, 21 Dec. 1983). The instrumentation is listed on a typed title page, with "duration 16 minutes": two piccolos, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets in B \flat , bass clarinet in B \flat , bassoon, two horns in F, two trumpets in B \flat , trombone in B \flat , percussion (xylophone, bells, cymbal, gong, timpani, and bass drum), and strings. The copy in the Fleisher Collection, numbered 3147, has a cover page that says "(Time of performance 16 minutes)" and the name "J.M. Beyer."

(44) *Symphonic Opus 5*

Sept. 1940. K52.

Score only, no parts.

(1) "Moderato" (101 mm.), (2) andante, (fifty-seven mm.), (3) allegro (192 mm.). Note that there is no "Symphonic Movement" or "Opus" 4.

(45) *Symphonic Suite*, or *Symphonic Suite 1*

January–July 1937. K48.

Two copies of the score, and one set of eighteen parts. Score says "24 minutes." (1) Grave (seven minutes, 104 measures, attacca into next movement), (2) allegretto scherzando, (four minutes, eighty-five mm.), (3) lentamente, (eight minutes), (4) presto (as fast as possible) (five minutes, 102 mm.). A copy of this score is in the Fleisher Collection, with the title "Symphonic Suite" (in quotation marks) and the name "Johanna M. Beyer." Beyer sent this piece to Koussevitsky (in the context of Beyer's correspondence with him about Cowell's work), and it is mentioned several times in Beyer's letters.

In a letter to Koussevitzky, 8 August 1937, Beyer wrote:

I have just finished my First Symphony, that is, I call it: Symphonic Suite

I Grave, II Alegretto scherzando, III Lentamente IV Presto (performance about 20 mins)

and wonder whether I may send a score to you. I am a friend of Henry Cowell, Ruth Crawford, Professor Seeger etc. and have had the following concerts: Two at the New School for Social Research, one at the University of California, one in London, England, two at the Composers Forum-Laboratory New York, one in Boston; it was January 1936 when Mr. Rosario Mazzeo, clarinetist of your orchestra, played some of my compositions.

Because I am staying at a friends [sic] house for the summer out here in Long Island, I happen to have only one of my programs with me, the rest is in my New York apartment.

I am awaiting your response with the greatest imaginable interest.

(Miss) Johanna M. Beyer⁴⁷

In a letter to Beyer, Cowell wrote, "It would be splendid if Koussevitsky in Boston would take an interest in your new orchestra piece. It would be worth the work. I fully appreciate your hopeless feeling when engaged in copying parts!"⁴⁸

(46) Three More Pieces for Oboe and Piano

Date? K16.

“To Joseph Marx.” The dedication is hard to read but is probably to the well-known oboist and publisher. The score is rough, with pencil markings, on manila only. See NY26, NY49. These pieces are subsumed under NY26.

(47) Three Movements for Percussion

(1) Restless, (2) Endless, (3) Tactless. 1939. K5.

To John Cage. (1) 114 measures, triangle, woodblock, tambourine, snare drum, timpani, gong; (2) seventy measures with a five-measure coda (on previous page): woodblock, cymbal, lion’s roar, bass drum; (3) ninety measures; low and high triangles, bells, low and high woodblocks, cymbal, tom-tom, snare drum, gong, lion’s roar, bass drum. This score is written on specially made paper in percussion (non-staffed) notation and is a little difficult to read but playable. A copy of this manuscript was published in *Soundings* 10 (see appendix 3). A copy is also in the Fleisher Collection.

(48) *Three New York Waltzes*

August 1936. K26.

One copy of the score, and one additional waltz (see NY53).

This set of manuscripts also includes “New York Waltz” (NY3, NY53). The exact relationship to the other piano pieces (Waltz, *Clusters*) is unclear, as is the relationship of the free page to the holograph.

(49) Three Pieces for Oboe and Piano

Date? K16.

This is comprised of the ozalid masters of the first three pieces of NY26. It is labeled “Three Pieces . . .” in the hand of whoever filed them for the American Music Center or the NYPL (not Beyer). This and “Six Pieces for Oboe and Piano” (also see NY46 and NY26) are combined into K16. penciled-in dedication to “Joseph M(arx?)” (see NY46) “Cincinnati (?)”.

(50) Three Songs (on Sandburg poems)

Soprano, percussion, piano. 1933. K34.

“Timber Moon”; “Stars, Songs, Faces”; “Summergrass.” There are several copies of the score, each with nice covers in different graphic styles. All three songs are scored for Chinese blocks, triangle, cymbal, and bass drum. Some “blotched-out” measures occur in these songs, and they would benefit from recopying. These songs were performed, according to Beyer’s CV, at the New School for Social Research, 25 October 1933.

(51) Three Songs for Soprano and Clarinet

1934. K36.

Four copies of the score, and copies of the texts.

“Total Eclipse” (poem written Aug. 1932). “To Be” (poem, Dec. 1934). “Universal—Local” (July 1932). These are Beyer’s own texts. This piece is in a very clear copy style, completely readable and playable. Five pages total (three for “Total Eclipse”). The work is in a dissonant and highly contrapuntal style, characteristic of Beyer’s work of the early 1930s. A performance by Rosario Mazzeo of a “Suite for soprano and clarinet” on 29 January 1936 is listed in Beyer’s CV (see appendix 3, “Known Performances”). See the Frog Peak edition of this work by Mark Warhol for more details (appendix 3).

(52) Trio for Woodwinds

Date? K19.

Flute, oboe, and bassoon.

(1) Perpetual (fifty-five mm.), (2) scherzando (forty-five mm.), (3) animato (sixty-two mm.). This is the master manuscript only, one copy of the nine page score, very clean and easy to read. The word “bassoon” is not written in the score anywhere. From the manuscript style, musical ideas, and its physical place in the NYPL list and archives (though this could be arbitrary), this piece looks as though it could be a very late work. Conversely, it could be a pre-1931 work, though little is known about those at this point, even whether or not any exist.

(53) Waltz

1931. K26.

Manuscript only.

This manuscript seems to be from *New York Waltzes* (NY48), or the last movement of *Clusters* (NY3). There are no other markings. NY3, NY48, and NY53 should probably be considered as one four-movement piece or set of pieces, either called *Clusters* or *New York Waltzes*.

List of Piece Titles by Fleisher Collection Number

The following manuscripts are available from the Fleisher Collection of the Free Library of Philadelphia, and not in the NYPL collection. Parenthetical numbers are the “F-#’s” for these scores. The cover pages for these scores are clearly done by the Fleisher Collection.

They are printed and show the name “Johanna M. Beyer” rather than the usual initials.

(1) *Percussion Suite*

Chinese wood blocks, triangle, tambourine, cymbal, bass drum, xylophone, rattle, castanets, tam-tam. 1933. K1.

Three movements. Seventeen pages.

The manuscript is in a very clear, final copy. The piece seems to be written for five players. Movement 1 is scored for Chinese wood blocks, triangle, tambourine, cymbal, and bass drum. Movement 2 is scored for xylophone, triangle, tambourine, cymbal, and bass drum. Movement 3 is scored for Chinese wood blocks, rattle, triangle, castanets, and tam-tam. The third movement seems to have been played several times in New York City in 1936–37 (see appendix 3, “Known Performances”).

(2) *March*

For thirty percussion instruments. 2 July 1939. K3.

Five pages. 166 measures. Four minutes.

The manuscript for this late percussion piece is on large, hand-ruled paper. The instrumentation is specified (unlike *IV*), and includes triangles, metal bowls, Chinese wood blocks, rice bowls, dragon’s mouth, tambourine, tom-toms, cymbals, anvil, temple gongs, gong, snare drum, bass drum, thunder sheet, and lion’s roar. It does not require thirty performers and can be played comfortably by nine. The meter is $4\frac{1}{2}/4$. There is one general dynamics “staff” (along the bottom of the score) for the whole piece. The score is quite difficult to read because not all of the beats are notated (that is, rests are often left out). Beyer’s notation in the march, *Percussion Opus 14*, and *Waltz for Percussion* uses multiple lines for one set of instruments (like bowls of graduated pitch), similar to the percussion notation of Stravinsky, Milhaud, and other composers of the period. In other words, these pieces are not notated by performer but by instrument.

(3) *Percussion Opus 14*

Triangle, metal bowl, dragon’s mouths, tom-tom, cymbal, anvil, gong, snare drum, bass drum, timpani, lion’s roar. Aug. 1939. K4.

Three pages. 115 measures. Four minutes.

As in the *March*, this score is a bit difficult to read because of the omission of rests (rhythmic events are placed spatially for the most part). The score has fifteen different parts, but this piece is playable by fewer performers (seven to nine). It is not clear what is meant by

“Opus 14”: the title, like *IV*, is cryptic (no other opus numbers appear on her works).

(4) Waltz for Percussion

Triangles, dragon’s mouths, tom-tom, cymbal, gong, high and low timpani, bass drum (?). Dec. 1939. K6.

Three pages. 105 measures. Four minutes.

March, Waltz, and *Percussion Opus 14* are clearly companion pieces. All are of the same length, similar orchestration, manuscript styles, and musical ideas. The score has twelve parts, but this piece is playable by fewer performers (seven to nine). As in F2 and F3, the manuscript is difficult to read because of the omission of rests.

(5) *IV*

Nine unspecified percussion parts of performers. 1936. K2.

IV was the only known published work during Beyer’s lifetime. Its title (like those of the other percussion pieces) is cryptic. Stylistically, it appears to be the fourth in a set of pieces that include March, *Percussion Op. 14*, and Waltz for Percussion, but that seems chronologically impossible. Perhaps it is the fourth movement of the Percussion Suite and a transition toward a new way of writing for percussion. In her letters she states it is a “4th movement for percussion.”

Appendix 3: A Preliminary Beyer Resource List

Print

Almost no research has been done on Beyer’s life. In the many books on women in music and American music, Beyer is barely mentioned. In the few instances where Beyer is cited, the information has been drawn from Slonimsky’s original *Baker’s* entry. Charles Amirkhanian is in large part responsible for awakening interest in her work through the 1750 Arch Street Recording and by arranging for the *Soundings* publication (see his essay in the Essential Music Program cited below).

About Beyer

Amirkhanian, Charles, and Kennedy, John. “Johanna Magdalena Beyer: 100th Birthday Commemoration.” Program notes (and recording) of Essential Music’s two concerts of Beyer’s work, 10 and 15 November 1988. Includes essays by Amirkhanian (“Johanna Magdalena Beyer: A Discovery Waiting to Happen”) and Kennedy (“Total Eclipse: The Life of Johanna Magdalena

Beyer”), as well as Kennedy’s chronological and instrumental listing of Beyer’s work (“The Known Compositions of Johanna M. Beyer”), included in revised form here.

Cohen, Aaron, ed. *International Encyclopedia of Women Composers* (Bowker, 1981). Some confusion exists in the list of Beyer works given here; they appear to be taken directly from the NYPL list, so that a few multiple manuscript sources are listed as different pieces.

Cohn, Arthur. “Americans in the Fleisher Collection,” *Modern Music*, 16, no. 2 (Jan.–Feb. 1939): 116–19. This article describes Edwin Fleisher’s project (beginning in 1934) to financially sponsor “a Works Progress Administration project to copy unpublished orchestral music by American composers.” After a brief introduction to the project, including the criteria for inclusion, Cohn says: “The range of work is inclusive, it reaches from the academic to the most violently experimental. Men like Copland, Converse, Sessions, Wagenaar, Berezowsky, Piston, are well represented. The orchestral works of Charles Ives are practically complete. Symphonic jazz has its innings with Ferde Grofé, Otto Cesana and Morton Gould. The ‘tone-clusterites’ are all there—Johanna Beyer, Henry Cowell, John C. Becker, to mention only a few.”

Copland, Aaron. “Scores and Records,” *Modern Music* 16, no. 2 (Jan.–Feb. 1939): 122–25. Copland reviews the New Music Quarterly Recording of Beyer’s *Suite*: “NMQR has also put on a single disc two movements from a *Suite* for clarinet and bassoon by Johanna Beyer, and *Two Chorales and Ostinato* for oboe and piano by Henry Cowell. Miss Beyer’s pieces produce an improvisatory impression which tends to leave one suspended in mid-air. This is less true, however, of the second of the two movements. Cowell does not seem to me to be fairly represented by these slight works.” (Movements 2 and 4 are on the recording).

Cowell, Henry. “Drums Along the Pacific,” *Modern Music* 18, no. 1 (Nov.–Dec. 1940): 46–49. In this early and famous article on West Coast percussion music, Cowell says:

During the last two years an extraordinary interest in percussion music has developed on the Pacific coast. In Seattle, San Francisco, Oakland and Los Angeles, orchestras have been formed to play music for percussion instruments alone. They are directed chiefly by two young Western composers, John Cage and Lou Harrison, who have concocted innumerable creations for these instruments, and have induced others like Ray Green of San Francisco, Gerald

Strange of Long Beach, and J. M. Beyer, formerly of New York, to write for them.

Several things are interesting about this citation. The piece that Cowell is probably referring to is IV. Lou Harrison (personal communication) has mentioned that he asked Beyer for a score, and she sent him one (but this has not been located, and it is not clear which piece this would have been). It is not clear what Cowell means by “formerly of New York.” Finally, it is noteworthy that Cowell uses the name “J.M. Beyer” instead of Johanna, or Johanna Magdalena.

Grainger Museum, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

The museum’s collection contains several copies of letters to and from Beyer (duplicated in the Library of Congress collection).

The Grainger archives also contain a copy of the Suite for Piano (referenced in *Grainger’s Collection of Music by Other Composers*, catalogue 2, ed. Phil Clifford, [Melbourne: Grainger Museum, University of Melbourne, 1983]); a copy of the typescript introduction to “Music of the Spheres”; what seems to be an original color copy of Beyer’s hand-drawn “Merry Xmas (JBM)” card (date unknown); and a letter from 28 January 1938 with the marking “SOS” that seems to be unique to this collection. This letter concerns Beyer’s efforts to get Fischer to publish the Cowell book on melody.

Percy Grainger Collection, Library of Congress, Music Division, Washington, D.C. This packet contains one letter from Cowell to Beyer (from San Quentin, no date); eighteen letters from Beyer to Grainger (the first dated 14 Aug. 1938, the last 21 June 1940) which include a number of very brief handwritten notes; two letters from Beyer to Grainger’s associate (Mr. Fred Morse, or Mrs. Morse?); one letter from Grainger’s manager to Beyer; and one letter from Beyer to Alvin Johnson at the New School for Social Research. This packet also includes a one-page “text” for “Music of the Spheres” (see appendix 4, “Beyer Texts”) and a hand-drawn Christmas card from Beyer.

Serge Koussevitzky-Johanna Beyer Correspondence, Library of Congress, Music Division, Washington, D.C. This packet includes eight letters from Beyer to Koussevitzky (Aug. 1937–Mar. 1940); one letter to Olga Naomoff (Koussevitzky’s secretary, dated 16 May 1938); one letter from Henry Cowell to Beyer (from San Quentin, 15 Aug. 1937); one letter from Olive Cowell (dated 24 Aug. 1937); and an announcement made and signed by Beyer for a program of Cowell’s music with Cowell’s parents in

attendance, for Sunday, 13 March [probably 1938]) at the Downtown Music School. Importantly, the Koussevitsky letters include Beyer's CV (one page), a one-page outline of the opera *Status Quo*, and a "work plan" for the opera (for her Guggenheim Fellowship application).

Mead, Rita. *Henry Cowell's New Music 1925–1936* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1978). This book contains several mentions of Beyer:

- p. 223: mention of Beyer's translation of Ruth Crawford's *Prayers of Steel* into German;
- p. 277: review of performance of the "Lentamente" from the Suite for Clarinet and Bassoon;
- p. 336: short description of *IV*;
- p. 365: publication of *IV*; and
- footnote, p. 447 (no. 33): short personal description of Beyer as a student in Cowell's percussion class, 1935.

New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, American Music Center, list of Beyer archives, "Johanna Magdalena Beyer: Holographs and Photocopies." This list accompanies the actual Beyer archives, which are available to the public. The annotations to Beyer's manuscripts in this article (appendix 2) correspond in numbering to the NYPL list.

Fabian Sevitzyk-Johanna Beyer Correspondence, Library of Congress, Music Division, Washington, D.C. This packet contains twenty-three letters from Beyer to Sevitzyk, conductor of the Indianapolis Symphony, and ten brief responses from Sevitzyk or his secretary. The first (from Beyer) is dated 30 August 1939. The last (from Sevitzyk) is dated 26 April 1941.

Slonimsky, Nicholas, *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians* listing, 8th ed., 1992. 1 paragraph, p. 189. Slonimsky's brief biographical mention has long been the main source for other citations of Beyer. Slonimsky was also in possession of her death certificate.

Zaimont, Judith Lang, ed. *The Musical Woman: An International Perspective* (Greenwood Press, 1987), two vol. Beyer is briefly mentioned in this book, in reference to the 1750 Arch Street Recording. In vol. 2, chap. 10, "An Electronic Music Panel Discussion," Judith Rosen interviews Annea Lockwood, and Ruth Anderson (4 Apr. 1984), and in mentioning the participants on the 1750 Arch Street record Lockwood calls her, "Johanna Beyer (a German composer, who is now dead)." Beyer's name appears in vol. 1 of these books in the discography, again for that record.

Anonymous, "The Composers Organize: A Proclamation," *Modern Music* 15, no. 2 (Jan.–Feb. 1938): 92–95. In this announcement of the founding of the American Composers' Alliance, Beyer's name, spelled "Joanna Beyer," is listed as one of "forty-eight representative composers banded together at the Beethoven Association in New York City [19 Dec. 1937] for the express purpose of furthering this cause." Some of the other composers were Marion Bauer, Virgil Thomson, Edgar Varèse, Otto Luening, Elliot Carter, Paul Bowles, Marc Blitzstein, Walter Helfer, and Wallingford Reigger. Aaron Copland was the chairman and could have been the principal author of this article. See also his "The Composers Get Wise," *Modern Music* 19, no. 1 (Nov.–Dec. 1940): 18–21.

Reviews

Rockwell, John. "Long-Forgotten Works of a 30's Avant-Gardist," review of 10 November 1988 Essential Music Concert, *New York Times*, 14 November 1988.

Oestreich, James. "At Spoleto Festival, Moral of the Day Is Redemption," review of Beyer String Quartet no. 2 (1936), programmed by John Kennedy, *New York Times*, 30 May 1994.

"Two Composers at Forum," review of Beyer/Helfer CFL concert, *New York Herald Tribune*, 20 May 1937. See listing under "Known Performances."

"Two Composers Heard: Forum-Laboratory Offers Ethel Hier and Johanna Beyer," review of Composers' Forum Laboratory Concert, *New York Times*, 21 May 1936. See listing under "Known Performances."

Published Scores

IV (for nine percussion instruments), New Music Orchestra Series (New Music Editions, 1936).

Three Movements for Percussion, in *Soundings* 10, 1976. Facsimile.

Music of the Spheres, in *Soundings* 7–8, 1973. Facsimile.

Frog Peak Music Editions

"Bees," for solo piano, Frog Peak/Johanna Beyer Project no. 1, ed. Larry Polansky (1994).

Movement for Double Bass and Piano, Frog Peak/Johanna Beyer Project no. 2, ed. David Fuqua (1995).

- Ballad of the Star-Eater*, Frog Peak/Johanna Beyer Project no. 3, ed. Charles Shere (1995).
- The Federal Music Project*, Frog Peak/Johanna Beyer Project no. 4, ed. and copied by Margaret Fisher, David Fuqua, and Larry Polansky (1995).
- Dissonant Counterpoint*, for solo piano, Frog Peak/Johanna Beyer Project no. 5, ed. David Fuqua (1995).
- Three Songs for Clarinet and Soprano, Frog Peak/Johanna Beyer Project no. 6, ed. Mark Warhol (1995).
- String Quartet no. 2, Frog Peak/Johanna Beyer Project no. 7, ed. Pamela Marshall, 1996.
- Gebrauchs-Musik*, for solo piano, Frog Peak/Johanna Beyer Project no. 8, ed. Carter Scholz, 1996.
- Movement for Two Pianos, Frog Peak/Johanna Beyer Project no. 9, ed. Drew Krause (1996).

Recordings

- IV, performed by Essential Music, on *The Aerial* no. 3, Non Sequitur Recordings (1991).
- “Music of the Spheres” (electronic realization by the Electric Weasel Ensemble), on *New Music for Electronic and Recorded Media*, Arch Street Records S-1765 (1976).
- Suite for Clarinet and Bassoon, New Music Quarterly Recordings #1413A–B (78s), movements 2 and 4.

Known Performances (Selected)

- Three Songs for Soprano, Piano, and Percussion, New School for Social Research, New York City, 25 October 1933.
- Suite for Clarinet and Bassoon, New Music Society, University of California, 15 February 1934.
- “Suite for Soprano and Clarinet,” Rosario Mazzeo, clarinet, Boston, 29 January 1936; some combination of *Ballad of the Star-Eater* and Three Songs for Soprano and Clarinet (see the concert 20 May 1936 below).
- Composers’ Forum-Laboratory concert, 20 May 1936, Movement for Two Pianos, excerpts from the Piano Suites, Suite for Soprano and Clarinet, and String Quartet no. 1. The “Suite for Soprano and Clarinet” could be some combination of *Ballad of the Star-Eater* and Three Songs for Soprano and Clarinet. No program of this concert has yet been found, and Beyer’s CV does not list the clarinet piece as being performed there, but rather in Boston on

29 January 1936 (see above). The sources are Beyer's CV and a review in the *New York Times* (see listing under "Print; Reviews").

- WPA Federal Music Project, Federal Music Theatre, 19 May 1937, Composers' Forum-Laboratory Concert of Johanna M. Beyer and Walter Helfer. According to the program, the Beyer works played were Sonata for Clarinet and Piano (1936), Suite for Clarinet and Bassoon (1933), excerpts from the Piano Suites [?] (1930–36), Suite for Violin and Piano (1937), and Quintet for Woodwinds (1937). The listing of 1937 for the Quintet for Woodwinds is confusing, because that is probably K17, NY32, dated 1933. The other woodwind work (Movement for Woodwinds) is marked 1938. The parts for K17 are marked up, indicating that this could have been the piece performed on this concert. Helfer's String Quartet in G was also performed. It is difficult to know what piano music was performed here, or where the confusion in dates stems from. The "excerpts from Piano Suites" could have been some combination of the *New York Waltzes*, *Dissonant Counterpoint*, and *Gebrauchs-Musik* (also see the 20 May 1936 concert, the mention in Beyer's CV about the piano suite performed at the New School for Social Research, 21 November 1934, and the "excerpts from different piano suites" at the Society of Women Musicians, London, 13 July 1935). A program of this concert is available at the New York Public Library. No performers are listed on the program, but the *New York Herald Tribune* reviews says that Beyer played the piano pieces as well as the piano part in the clarinet sonata and violin suite. Beyer's CV only lists the Suite for Violin and Piano as having been performed on this date, but she also lists the "Percussion movement No. III," "Sonata for Clarinet and Piano," and the "Suite for clarinet and bassoon, piano excerpts" as three pieces which were played at the Federal Music Projects Music Week 1937, which may or may not have been this same concert.
- Central Manhattan Music Center, probably 1936 or 1937, "Glee club songs [?], various piano pieces, percussion movement III" (probably the third movement of the Percussion Suite [K1, F1]).
- Essential Music has performed Beyer works on the two concerts mentioned above (see "Print; About Beyer") and at various other concerts, including: the 1990 PAS Convention in Philadelphia (IV and March), the Salzburg Festival (1991), the Zurich June Festival (1991), the Spoleto Festival (1994, 1995), Greenwich House in New York City (String Quartet no. 1, 12 Apr. 1990),

Roulette, New York City ("Music from the Frog Peak Collective," on which *IV* was performed twice in two different instrumentations, one on gamelan instruments), and others.

Recordings and programs of all of these concerts exist.

Dissonant Counterpoint (selected), *Gebrauchs-Musik* (selected), and "Bees," performed and recorded by Sarah Cahill, First Congregational Church, Berkeley, 16 July 1994. Cahill has since given several performances of these works across the United States. In Europe, the pianist Deborah Richards has also performed sections of *Dissonant Counterpoint*.

Movement for Double Bass and Piano, Robert Black, bassist, Roulette, New York City, 14 December 1995.

Astra Chamber Music Society, Melbourne, Australia, 8 December 1996, John McCaughey, director. The Beyer works performed on this concert were Suite for Clarinet 1b; *The Main Deep*; *The Composers' Forum-Laboratory*; *The People, Yes*; "Have Faith!"; and String Quartet no. 2. Astra's performances of the three choral pieces are probably the world premieres of these works, and this may also be the case with "Have Faith!"

Other Sources

Letter from John Cage to John Kennedy, 25 January 1988: "I remember Johanna very little though I enjoyed her when I was with her. . . . Johanna's mss. were always quickly recognizable as hers, both the covers and the writing of the notes. I performed some percussion pieces in Seattle and on N. Western tours."

Letter from Otto Luening to John Kennedy, 8 February 1988:

I do remember the . . . Federal Music Theatre and the Composers Forum that included works by Johanna Beyer . . . I remember the theatre and I conducted the orchestra on a couple of occasions. I do recall the Forum program of Cowell's music and that my first wife, Ethel Luening [to whom *Have Faith* is dedicated] and I performed I think for the first time the *Toccanta* [Cowell] for soprano, flute, 'cello and piano with Marion de Ronde, 'cello and Constance Fox, piano. Douglas Moore was on the second half of the program. I recall that the program as being interesting and Beyer's pianism good.

Robert McBride is listed as flutist for the *Ostinati* but he was a clarinetist. The Beyer Forum I can recall as being "interesting" but no details present themselves as I reminisce.

The two concerts referred to by Luening were part of the Federal Works Agency, Work Projects Administration Arts Program, Compos-

ers' Forum-Laboratory Series. The Cowell piece, with Beyer on piano, was played on the 7th session, 5th series, Ashley Pettis, guest director (see dedication to NY4, *The Composers' Forum-Laboratory*), Sunday 11 February 1940, 3:30 P.M. A program exists and is on file at the New York Public Library. Beyer is also listed as the solo pianist for *Rhythmicana* on that concert. The second concert of Beyer's music is the 19 May 1937 Composers' Forum-Laboratory Concert listed above.

Appendix 4: Beyer Texts

"Total Eclipse"

Poem by Beyer, August 1932, from Three Songs for Soprano and Clarinet, NY51, K36.

Moving of masses,
Stirred by astro-phenomena,
Directing matter,
Their slave, yet their master,
Still to be.

Effort, research, action,
Thought bearing power, strength,
And courage abundant
To wrestle from the elements
The secret kept.

The world is aghast,
Nature pales in hush
And feeble protesting
Sinks into last motions,
Activity before death.

Birds and beasts bow in fear,
Frightened leaves tremble,
Emaciated sunbeams die below swaying grass,
Leaving the planet colorless,
Faint, deathlike at rest.

Here and yonder,
Beads of light—lost,
Ring through valleys of the moon,
Still shed their love upon earth,
While shadow-bands pattern designs.

But behold the heavens,
Phenomenous climax!
Bursting the shielding surface,
The fiery glow of the corona
Circles its dance of life.

And its secrets alight,
Reaching out beyond spheres,
Expanding toward searching,
Restless thoughts of men,
Begging to be known, to be loved.

But though men try,
Time and again,
These longing elements flee back,
Hiding their shame—"misunderstood"—
Wearing mourning-veils another time untold!

"To Be"

Poem by Beyer, December 1934, from *Three Songs for Soprano and Clarinet*, NY51, K36.

To be a sunbeam, a sparkling ray,
To fall as raindrop, chattering gay,
To be a grain of sand, bathing in sun and wind,
Waiting for tides to come and go—
To be a tiny shoot, just from home "root,"
To leaf off from the stem that holds you firm,
To be a blossom, oh, with a spellbound hue,
Forthcoming fruitpromise, crystallized in dew—
To be a wandering cloud, sailing along,
To shine as star above, meet moons and suns,
To rise and fall in curves, in space and time,
Thus, an enduring cycle, majestic, sublime.

"Universal—Local"

Poem by Beyer, July 1932, from *Three Songs for Soprano and Clarinet*, NY51, K36.

Stars, moons, suns,
Penetrating love—
Endless time, infinite space—
Forever—
Boundless beauty—

Sleepers, toiling with a minute,
With a grain of soil—
Poor, forgotten creatures, dragging on—
But void,
Where could be wings!

The Federal Music Project

Text by Beyer, July 1936, from choral work of the same name, NY10, K43. This is the typed “poem” that accompanies the score, of which there are two copies, one with typos. In line 2, verse 1, Beyer consistently uses the word “busses,” which we have changed to “buzzes.” We have also changed “breath” to “breathe.”

I know of an active bee-hive,
it buzzes and bubbles all day,
is full of creative ideas,
a nucleus of a future so gay!

To it come all happy children
and adults so young and so old
to find the key to music
to know of the secrets untold.

It all is taught with knowledge
with love through games and fun.
Unavoidably what may happen
is surely a wonderful thing.

Glad people will breathe in music,
the babies with their milk
and soon we will have creators
of enduring music and skill.

The Federal Music Project,
the bee-hive I’m talking about,
is a remarkable living idea
with a future, oh, so bright!

“Have Faith!”

By Beyer (?), December 1936, text for the piece of the same name, NY14, K37. This text only appears in the song, so the following versification and to some extent, punctuation and capitalization, are our own (punctuation differs slightly in the different manuscript versions).

Here is a song, a song for you,
oh nightingale, oh, nightingale,
nightingale!
A song of what?
Of hope and future, present, past?
It does not matter, it does not
matter.
But, essential is, that you and I
and all the others have faith,
have faith in things to come,
in things that passed, and are,
and we must try to understand
and love and help each other.

Have faith,
have faith in things to come.
Have faith.

Music of the Spheres

“Announcer’s text,” included in Grainger packet at the Library of Congress. Presumably from the opera *Status Quo*, K24, NY31.

Voice: (Announcer)

Presently we will hear Music of the Spheres, see star systems happenings of the Universe, to remind us of eternal truth, beauty, infinity [infinities?]. We will see our earth, floods, vegetation, ancient animals, and some of our ancestors.

On the stage two primitive creatures roam around in darkness. We hear a cry, a wail-stops [?] in response: sound and rhythm are here-with given. And in this introduction we will witness the development of these two elements into music from the very primitive to the complicated of our day.

When arrived at the use of most complex rhythm, melody, harmony, we find ourselves in America, the U.S.A. And we better be prepared, for here we will experience cause and effect of complex music: life at a Sturm and [sic] Drang period: stress, uncertainty, the restlessness of 1938/1939.

After this we will travel to other islands, continents, other climates, surroundings, circumstances and be anxious to find out, what other influences may do to music, into what our two elements: sound and rhythm have developed there.

We will find, that everywhere, music is closely related to life and that there are developed in music various systems—some thousands of

years old. And although this or that system of music from other countries is unfamiliar to us, we must be tolerant and interested, as we are in the lives of these different peoples, and then we will experience, that these strange sounds have a certain beauty. The understanding and joy of it will increase to the degree of our interest in it.

In the last act, just before having another glimpse of eternity, people from all these countries will unite in a dance. Tolerance and cooperation will be the motives. The music to this dance is an attempt to unite features of different music systems to a rather substantial harmonious whole.

And with this accomplished we will join the spheres once more.

Notes

Thanks to George Boziwick of the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, American Music Collection; Patricia Fiskén, Patricia Morris, and Jacqueline Jacobus of the Paddock Music Library, and Marcy Boulton, of the Baker Library, Dartmouth College; Natalyn Nails for microfilm assistance; Kile Smith of the Fleisher Collection of the Free Library of Philadelphia; and Kevin LaVine of the Music Division, Library of Congress, for invaluable assistance in this work. Charles Amirkhonian is primarily responsible for originally stimulating our interest in Beyer's work and helped to uncover it. Various composers and performers have provided important help in working on these manuscripts, including Daniel Goode, Charles Shere, Mark Warhol, Drew Krause, Sarah Cahill, Pamela Marshall, Carter Scholz, David Fuqua, and Margaret Fisher.

1. Several of the scores in the Fleisher Collection of the Free Library of Philadelphia have new title pages, with her full name, which do not appear to be in Beyer's hand. Even Cowell refers to her as J.M. Beyer in "Drums Along the Pacific," *Modern Music* 18, no. 1 (Nov.–Dec. 1940): 46–49. See appendix 3, "A Preliminary Beyer Resource List."
2. Personal communications from John Cage, Sidney Cowell, Lou Harrison, William Russell, and Otto Luening to John Kennedy, 1988. See also Rita Mead, *Henry Cowell's New Music 1925–1936* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1978). See appendix 3 "A Preliminary Beyer Resource List."
3. The use of the word "primitive" was common in reviews of the works of Cowell and Ives in the 1920s and 1930s as well. Cowell himself used the term in his article "Towards Neo-Primitivism," *Modern Music* 10, no. 3 (Mar. 1933): 12.
4. Nicholas Slonimsky, *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians*, 8th ed. (1992), 189. Until now, this short Baker's entry has been the primary source for information about Beyer. Her curriculum vitae, presumably for her application to the Guggenheim Foundation, is included in the letter to Koussevitzky (henceforth referred to as "CV"), 11 Oct. 1937. It says: "I. German High school, studied piano theory harmony counterpoint singing dancing, graduated [sic] at the 'Verband der Direktoren Deutscher Konservatorien und Musik Seminare E.V.' under Koeniglicher Musikdirector Karl Holtschneider September 23, 1923" (Serge Koussevitzky Collection, Library of

Congress). In the various verbatim quotations from Beyer's letters and CV that appear throughout this article, we have left her original punctuation, or lack of it, as well as her various misspellings.

5. Beyer, CV. "Graduated from the David Mannes music school New York: May 18. 1927 Diploma for Solfege, May 19. 1928 Teachers Certificate, stayed on another year, but was not considered Student, because I could not attend the whole schedule"

6. Beyer, CV.

Studied composition with Dane Rudhyar, Ruth Crawford, Professor Charles Seeger, Henry Cowell

II. Had a scholarship at the New School for Social Research in 1934 and 1935

Have been suggested for the Mac Dowell Colony Peterborough

III. German English French Italien [sic]; I could consult works in German English French

Accomplishments:

1. Have taught privately, had Student recitals each year
played with a violinist in High schools and Public schools
taught one year at the Federal Music Project, New York
played and composed for dancers
played the piano works at my own concerts

7. Beyer, CV, Percy Grainger Collection, Library of Congress.

8. She refers to this, in a letter to Sevitzy (25 Jan. 1940), as his "important post in California." Sevitzy responds (1 Feb. 1940): "I was a little upset to know that Mr. Cowell is still at his important post in California. If I go to California next summer I will certainly be one of his visitors." Fabian Sevitzy Collection, Library of Congress.

9. "I have finally succeeded—getting a membership card for Henry from the A.C.A. American Composers Alliance. Have filled out his blanks for royalties, World Fair Music [?] and the like, contacted Alan Davies [?], Director of W.F. Music and found him [?] attentive to promote Henry's works." Letter from Beyer to Grainger, Long Island, 14 Aug. 1938, Percy Grainger Collection, Library of Congress. A number of letters between Beyer and Fabian Sevitzy (1939–40) concern performance royalties and arrangements for Cowell's *Old American Country Set*, which was performed by the Indianapolis Symphony. Fabian Sevitzy Collection, Library of Congress.

10. Beyer to Grainger, 14 Aug. 1938. In this regard it is curious that Cowell cites her as being "formerly of New York" (Cowell, "Towards Neo-Primitivism"). We have so far not found any other mentions of Beyer in Cowell's published writings.

11. "He has sent me his new book: "The Nature of Melody." I have been checking up examples and the like. Slonimsky has to look over his own described system and he had offered to help to find a publisher. But having the book now, and being right here in New York, he advised me, to present it first to Fishers [sic] and perhaps others, before I send it on to Boston.

Now, despite that I have had concerts in London[,] San Francisco, Boston[,] New York, I am hardly known; many New York composers know me of course; but the Fischers, to whom I had presented one of my books, don't know me. But I dared to present Henry Cowell[']s book last Friday."

Letter to Percy Grainger, New York, 15 Nov. 1937, Percy Grainger Collection, Library of Congress. This letter also gave detail about the book itself, and asked for Grainger's help: "I have the book here. I could either meet you somewhere, or if you

care to come down here to the village between 12 and 13 Str. corner 8. Ave., 40 Jane Str., you would of course be most welcome." She also discussed the book, Cowell's conditions and activities in prison, and other matters in letters to Grainger of 17 and 22 Nov. 1937. *The Nature of Melody* is also the subject of her "SOS" letter to Grainger of 28 Jan. 1938, contained in the archives of the Grainger Museum in Melbourne, Australia.

12. She occasionally used these correspondences to advocate her own work, with Grainger, Koussevitzky, Sevitzy, and probably others. In the context of a number of letters with Sevitzy regarding Cowell's work, she says: "Besides I have a number of all sorts of combinations of my own at hand ranging from atonal idiom to the tonal. Henry thinks I am an important composers [sic], so do some members of the Boston Symphony and a couple of other fellows. I might include some, unless you forbid me to do so." In a later correspondence she sent him the Suite for Bass Clarinet and Piano, Four Pieces for Oboe and Bassoon, and Six Pieces for Oboe and Piano. Later, she asked if she could send the *Symphonic Movement 1* and *Symphonic Opus 5*. Letters to Sevitzy, 8, 12, and 17 Apr. 1940. Fabian Sevitzy Collection, Library of Congress.

13. Sydney Cowell, personal communication with John Kennedy, 1988. In addition, Beyer often mentioned her modest financial situation in her letters to Grainger and others.

14. Cowell seems to have been concerned about Beyer's dedication to his cause: "Dear Hanna; . . . You have been wonderful in writing so often, and I enjoy every letter from you greatly. If you wish to continue writing them, I shall be delighted. But if you find, that it is upsetting to you to continue, I shall understand this perfectly. Sometimes I feel that part of you is being imprisoned because of the slowness [?] of the contact in letters, and perhaps you would be setting yourself free by breaking the contact. That you will know better than I." Letter from Cowell to Beyer, undated, but probably from 1937, Percy Grainger Collection, Library of Congress.

15. Several letters from that year, including ones to Grainger and Morse, have the address "3947-48th Str., Long Island City, N.Y." These letters are somewhat unusual in her use of the name "(Miss) Johanna M. Beyer." Shortly after that, she begins to use "J.M. Beyer" or "Johanna M. Beyer" once again (e.g., letter to Grainger, 22 Apr. 1939). Percy Grainger Collection, Library of Congress.

16. Mead, 223.

17. Beyer's CV lists some other performances of pieces to which manuscript sources have not yet been connected (these are all under the heading "Accomplishments"):

3. Dorsha Theatre: Several performances of dances to which I wrote and played the music
- Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences March 16. 1931 composed and played for the dancer Mara Mara at a Persian exhibition
- wrote a play "The Modern Composer" with incidental music, choreographed the modern ballet, designed and made the costumes, slides, illustrated advertisements, directed the whole play, took the piano part, November 20. 1936 at the Federal Music Project: Central Manhattan Music center
- wrote many poems

18. See Appendix 3, "A Preliminary Beyer Resource List."

19. The CV lists, as item no. 4 under "Accomplishments," the following performances:

Percussion movement No. IV printed with *New Music Orchestral Series 1936 California*.
Childrens play Songs with poems and drawings, given out and used at the Federal Music
Project

New Music Quarterly Recordings, Bennington College, Suite for clarinet and bassoon to be
recorded

part of piano book is going to be printed with *New Music* [this is handwritten, and it is very
unclear what this refers to]

3. Songs for Soprano, piano, percussion at the Composers Symposium New School
f.Soc.R. 10/25/1933 [K34, NY50]

Suite for clarinet and bassoon at the New Music Society, University of California 2/15/1934
[K9, NY38]

Piano Suite at the New School for Social Research November 21, 1934 [*Dissonant Counter-
point?* See appendix 3, "Known Performances"]

Excerpts from different piano suites at the Society of Women Musicians London July 13,
1935

Suite for soprano and clarinet at a chamber music concert Boston by the clarinetist of the
Boston Symphony Rosario Mazzeo January 29, 1936

Movement for two pianos [at the Composers' Forum-Laboratory May 20, 1956]

Excerpts from piano suites [at the Composers' Forum-Laboratory May 20, 1956]

String quartet No. 1 [at the Composers' Forum-Laboratory May 20, 1956]

Glee club songs, various piano pieces, percussion movement N.OIII [probably the third move-
ment of the *Percussion Suite* (K1, F1)] at Central Manhattan Music Cent[er, probably 1936 or
1937. The typescript runs off the page here. The Glee club songs could be *The Federal Music
Project* (K43, NY10) and *The Composers' Forum-Laboratory* (K46, NY4)].

Percussion movement No. III at the Federal Music Projects Music Week 1937

Sonata for clarinet and piano [at the Federal Music Projects Music Week 1937]

Suite for clarinet and bassoon, piano excerpts [at the Federal Music Projects Music Week
1937]

Symphonic Suite Dr. Koussevitzky Boston is looking it over

For a review of the *New Music Quarterly Recording*, see Aaron Copland, "Scores and
Records," *Modern Music* 16, no. 2 (Jan.–Feb. 1939): 122–25. See appendix 3, "A
Preliminary Beyer Resource List."

20. See appendix 3, "A Preliminary Beyer Resource List."

21. She seems to have performed Cowell's piano music often: "A few people are
coming to my place this Friday evening, they want to hear a few of Henry's piano
pieces and some of mine, Henry is writing me some piano pieces"; and "Henry has
written a Piano Suite for me, but it has not arrived yet!" Letters to Percy Grainger,
New York, 7 Feb. and 21 May 1938, Percy Grainger Collection, Library of Congress.

22. It is unclear what piece that actually was, since there is no single piece in the
manuscript sources with that name. See the entries under *Three Songs for Soprano
and Clarinet* and *Ballad of the Star-Eater* in appendix 2 and see appendix 3, "Known
Performances."

23. It is possible that Robert McBride was the clarinetist for Beyer's work. McBride
played clarinet in some of Cowell's work on these concerts at about the same time.
This is also suggested by a personal communication from Otto Luening to John
Kennedy, 1988.

24. See appendix 2, "Known Performances."

25. Charles Amirkhanian, "Johanna Magdalena Beyer: A Discovery Waiting to Happen," program notes for Essential Music's Beyer Concerts, 1988. See appendix 3, "Known Performances."
26. This is suggested by the record of inquiries and correspondence records of the New York Public Library Beyer archives.
27. See appendix 3, "Known Performances."
28. A detailed outline of this opera as well as a "work plan" are contained in a letter to Koussevitzky, 11 Oct. 1937. Serge Koussevitzky Collection, Library of Congress.
29. The clarinet suites and the piano piece *Dissonant Counterpoint* both use a kind of deliberate phrase structuring, called "verse form" by Charles Seeger, that is also found in Ruth Crawford's *Diaphonic Suites*. For an excellent description, see David Nicholls, *American Experimental Music, 1890–1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), chap. 3. Joseph Straus, *The Music of Ruth Crawford Seeger* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), is another important source on Charles Seeger's theory of "dissonant counterpoint" and on the structure of Crawford's *Diaphonic Suites*. It is clear from Straus's analysis how much these pieces must have influenced Beyer in the clarinet suites and *Dissonant Counterpoint* (though Beyer is not mentioned in either Straus's or Nicholls's book). Charles Seeger's 1930–31 treatise entitled "Tradition and Experiment in (the New) Music," in his *Studies in Musicology II: 1929–1979* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), is the original source for these and many other ideas relevant to Beyer's early style.
30. See Arthur Cohen, "Americans in the Fleisher Collection," *Modern Music* 16, no. 2 (Jan.–Feb. 1939): 116–19.
31. Although Beyer does *not* list this as one of the pieces played on her concert in her CV.
32. There is a slight question about these numberings themselves, regarding which piece is IV and which is V. See the Frog Peak edition of this work for more details (appendix 3).
33. Richard Goldman is mentioned frequently in her letters to Grainger. For more on R. F. Goldman's relationship with Cowell, see John Bird, *Percy Grainger* (London: Faber and Faber, 1982), 214. For the most recent research on Cowell's imprisonment, see Michael Hicks, "The Imprisonment of Henry Cowell," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 44 (Spring 1991): 92–119. This article includes no reference to Beyer or her many letters and activities on Cowell's behalf during the prison years.
34. Letter to Grainger, 22 Apr. 1939. Quoted below in notes for *Reverence*.
35. Richard Goldman, "A New Day for Band Music," *Modern Music* 18, no. 4 (Fall 1946): 216–65.
36. Letter to Grainger, New York, 16 May 1939. See notes for *Reverence*.
37. Percy Grainger Collection, Library of Congress.
38. "I have been over to the mall five times during these past [?] weeks, also wrote another Band-work." Letter to Grainger, Long Island, 14 Aug. 1938. "All Thursday night I was filled with restlessness and the desire to write for Band. And despite that

it does not fit in with my schedule right now, and that I do not know how to write for Band, I wrote a little piece Friday and copied it Saturday and to-day Monday I shall have it photostated and send it right on to you [Beyer is almost certainly referring to *Reverence*]. I like to dedicate it to you, but first you have to determine whether it is of any value at all for the purpose, and if you have a minute time, perhaps you might give me a few hints how to do better or entirely otherwise." Letter to Grainger, New York, 7 Feb. 1938. In a letter of 21 May 1938, she thanks Grainger for an invitation to come hear the band play (see the notes on *Reverence*). Percy Grainger Collection, Library of Congress.

39. John McCaughey (personal communication) has suggested that if there is an internal "s" in the title (as in the print version) that this may be a wordplay on the German *rausch*, meaning "intoxication" or "ecstasy," with its musical connotations. He has also suggested that Beyer may be poking fun at the common American pronunciation of "Gebrauchsmusic." There is a faint but dubious possibility that this spelling could be a wordplay on the German *rauschen*, or noise.

40. See for example, Lehman Engel, "New Laboratories and Gebrauchsmusik," *Modern Music* 18, no. 3 (Mar.–Apr. 1936): 50–53.

41. Cohen, "Americans in the Fleisher Collection," refers to Beyer, Cowell, and Becker as "the new clusterites." See appendix 3, "A Preliminary Beyer Resource List."

42. Percy Grainger Collection, Library of Congress.

43. We do not yet know what she is referring to: perhaps she worked at Schirmer, suggested by other mentions: "It would be splendid to have the *Celtic Set* [Cowell] printed at Schirmers. Things are coming along." Letter to Grainger, 24 Mar. 1940. Percy Grainger Collection, Library of Congress.

44. Mead, 277.

45. Percy Grainger Collection, Library of Congress.

46. Charles Amirkhanian, "Johanna Magdalena Beyer: A Discovery Waiting to Happen," program notes, Essential Music's 1988 Beyer Concerts. See appendix 3, "Known Performances."

47. Koussevitsky Collection, Library of Congress. In a second letter, dated 25 Aug. 1937, she mentions that she is still working on parts for the piece. In a third letter, 11 Oct. 1937, she asks him if he would serve as a Guggenheim Fellowship reference for her, and she includes her CV and plans for *Status Quo*. At present, these are the only known copies of these documents. In a letter of 16 May 1938, Beyer writes to Olga Naoumoff [?]: "I just received your message about returning my scores and parts. As nothing is said about it, I take it for granted that Dr. Koussevitzky is not interested in this sort of thing. I have in the meantime written another symphonic work in a different vein and hope that I may send this in sometimes. Later I wrote another work for Band Orchestra in an almost conventional vein and it has been accepted by Percy Grainger."

48. Letter from Cowell to Beyer, undated, but probably from 1937. Percy Grainger Collection, Library of Congress.