

cities, much of Gainesville's best music is played by bands—like Doldrums, Just Demigods, the Jeffersons, What Anne Likes—that exist for a moment in time for their community and then disappear. Their music, however, survives in the memories of the people who were there.

The best rock functions as a personal and local form of capitalism, living or dying either by its own stubborn will to exist or by its ability to win the attention and affection of an audience that intersects personally, artistically, and perhaps economically with the performers. But unlike the average capitalist venture, it doesn't need and doesn't always intend to make a profit at all. For the Darwinian laws of the marketplace serve rock as they serve no other art form, providing ecological niches both for dinosaurs like U2 and Guns n' Roses and for small, wily mammals like the labels and bands discussed above. And this marketplace produces a genuine folk art still in touch with the lives, demands, and interests of an audience that loves and is willing to support the music with its own cash (whether paying admission to a club or buying a tape or a record) or just with attention (when cramming into a house party).

Federal arts funding creates contempt for the audience-driven value of communication. Art funded by coercion doesn't have to appeal to any genuine human need, especially when even the possibly beneficial enlightened patronage of one person with taste and vision is replaced by elite cliques more concerned with fashion and position than with achievement. "Modern art"—federally supported—speaks by design to no one outside a self-satisfied, self-involved metropolitan elite surviving on all of our

dimes.

Paglia's op-ed was headlined "Endangered Rock." Rock is doing just fine, thank you. It is art, which already suffers federal largess, that should worry about disappearing. Indeed, for most Americans it already doesn't exist.

Brian Doherty writes from Washington, D.C.

## The New Musical Order

by J.O. Tate

### The Recorded Violin

In order to recycle the familiar repertory, the music industry must seek new markets through various gimmicks: celebrity status, special occasions, and even styles more familiar on the street than in the salon. Nigel Kennedy, the young English violinist, has recently made a hit of the Brahms Violin Concerto not because of his impressive skill and interesting interpretation, but because of his *mondo bizarro* image on his album cover. Gidon Kremer, older and more sophisticated, has long cultivated an eccentricity that is no pose, but rather the mark of a distinctive musical integrity. At the opposite extreme, even Midori's cloyingly sweet interviews and china-doll persona have not masked her virtuosity on the violin. But such remarkable individuals are quite exceptional in an international musical cul-

ture in which national as well as personal distinctions have been "blanded out" or processed into mush by the musical analogue of "global democracy" or the "New World Order."

Even the compact disc itself may be viewed as a hugely successful marketing ploy, necessitating somehow the duplication of a great deal of repertory if not of performing artists. What Theodor Adorno would say about it is only too obvious. But just as new generations of performers continue to converge in the middle of the road, the compact disc has become the vehicle for the revival of many a 78. What's old is new. An element of genuine individuality is restored, and the violin is redeemed just as the world before the Second and even the First World War is restored to us, repackaged and digitized and more necessary than ever.

The great names reappear on various labels: Jascha Heifetz on BMG/RCA; Mischa Elman on Pearl and Vanguard; Fritz Kreisler on Pearl and Music and Arts; Sir Yehudi Menuhin on EMI and Biddulph; Jacques Thibaud on the same; Bronislaw Huberman on Pearl and EMI; Joseph Szigeti on Pearl, Biddulph, and Vanguard; and others on other labels. The pursuit of each giant is a project—and an education—in itself, its own reward. But the long shadows cast by such heroic careers are in a sense distorting because they tend to restrict our sense of musical perspective to what may be merely idiosyncratic. A broader sense of musical style may be gained by attending to wider horizons.

As far as the violin is concerned, those horizons can be scanned today in an anthology that surveys the world of the violin from 1901 to 1939: *The Recorded Violin: The History of the Violin on Record*, Volumes I & II (three CDs each, Pearl BVA I & II, imported by KOCH International). The 110 items included on these six discs add up to over seven hours of playing time—time rescued from oblivion and intensified by revelations of beauty from lost worlds.

In this collection, the background of great careers is filled in. Perspective is supplied by the firm establishment of a broad view and historical sense, so that the modernizing brilliance of Jascha Heifetz—to take but one salient example—is not scanted but rather set firmly in context, with Heifetz represented solely by his 1917 recording of Henri Wieniawski's Scherzo-tarantella. Such a

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virtuoso vehicle, recorded in the year of his American debut, puts Heifetz alongside such other pupils of Leopold Auer as Mischa Elman, Efrem Zimbalist, Nathan Milstein, Toscha Seidel, Eddy Brown, Mischel Piastro, and Cecilia Hansen. In such a comprehensive collection, Leopold Auer himself finds a place, as well as another Auer pupil who did not emigrate westward, Miron Polyakin. Thus the Auer influence and the Russian school—as well as other Russian violinists—are represented in depth. That school and style seem today to have become the international standard, eclipsing the national traditions that are also surveyed in the Pearl collection.

Nineteenth-century musicianship is best personified in Joseph Joachim, who—born in 1831—was a friend of Schumann and Brahms and an associate of Mendelssohn and Liszt. The Bruch Violin Concerto in G Minor, the Dvorák Violin Concerto, and the Brahms Violin and Double Concertos were all written for Joachim, who yet lived long enough to record. So did Pablo de Sarasate, for whom Saint-Saëns wrote his *Rondo Capriccioso*, Lalo his *Symphonie espagnole*, and Bruch his *Scottish Fantasy*. Other masters to be heard in their historical matrix are Eugene Ysaÿe, Jeno Hubay, Georges Enescu, Adolph Busch, Arnold Rosé, Carl Flesch, Jan Kubelik, and Frans von Vecsey. These and others document the traditions of Romantic virtuosity, of various and varied national schools, and of cultures blasted away by the First World War. The expressive *portamento*, and much of the violin repertory, was made to seem quaint by the reductive processes of modernization; in that sense, *The Recorded Violin* has a social as well as a musical aspect. The violin is, among other things, a measure of history.

There can be no question that these silver discs, conflating so many old shellacs, condense too the experience of generations. Their fascination, more than individual and musical, is also national and even international. Yet their first call upon our attention is the most important one—and that is immediate pleasure. This discopaedia is no chore to listen to—quite the opposite. It is a source of delight and of surprise. Rene Benedetti (1901-1975) seems as attractive in the sketch provided in the notes as he does in Zoubok's *Deux Minutes de Jazz*. Jean-Jacques Kantarow said of

him,

Benedetti was the most extraordinary player, technically flawless, one of the best players of all time. He didn't make a big career because he didn't want to, although he seems to have played everywhere at least once. He preferred giving lessons, had a fantastic trio with Navarra and Benvenuti, the technique of a Heifetz, the charm of Thibaud, and nothing to prove in the world. In a sense, he couldn't really teach, since playing was so easy for him. He used to sit on the sofa and tell us to "play just like I do," as he effortlessly played Paganini at any time of day. He had an old timer's approach to music: fantastic sound and no defined five-position technique; instead, something in between with a lot of extensions and contractions with the left hand.

Need I add that Kantarow's observations seem quite audibly borne out?

Similarly, the "charming and stylish Renée Chemet," who is heard in Tchaikovsky's Nocturne, really does play with charm and style. And it is intriguing and chilling to read that "in 1932 she forsook Europe for the Far East and the rest of her career is shrouded in mystery."

But in a more normal vein, Georges Enescu's 1929 performance of Chausson's *Poème Op. 29* is a revelation of tempo flexibility and varied tone colors. May Harrison, accompanied by Sir Arnold Bax, plays the First Sonata of Delius with flair, imagination, and mastery. These two performances alone seem to me not only treasures but also challenges. They are a rebuke to contemporary pride and shallow musicianship. Such shrewdness, savoir faire, and spirit are not to be found among the slick effusions of contemporary violinists. These rare recordings and others—glories of *The Recorded Violin*—are compelling reasons for its acquisition and thoughtful audition. This towering evidence of our 19th-century heritage suggests how much we have expunged and exhausted in the 20th century. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

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## Make Way for the Hillbilly

by Marshall Fishwick

### Garth Brooks and the 'New' Country Music

He looks into your eyes, moves you to tears, touches your heart. You cheer, raise your hands to heaven, bring offerings of red roses and baby's breath. Garth Brooks is conquering another audience, and country music is conquering America.

Check the music charts. Brooks is passing frenetic rap, snarling rock, and slithering MTV. True, Garth Brooks represents the "new wave" of country music singing, and he does not please the old-time performers and fans. For them electronic instruments, glitzy costumes, and sugar-sweet songs represent a sellout to the entertainment industry and a pandering to popularity. They miss the whine, the nasal sound, the impromptu chords and changes that used to mark "country." For them genuine hillbilly and mountain culture were destroyed by mass culture and contrived songs; for them, folklore has become fakelore. The debate rages, and both sides hold firm.

Garth Brooks may be a yokel from Yukon, Oklahoma, but he signals a change of heart in much of America and even in the world beyond. We all want to touch something solid, hear something sweet. We want to center on people, places, and values held long before the Age of Discs and Disinformation. People and places—populism and regionalism. Those are the *isms* that will win our support and votes. "Brooks has become," notes James Hunter in the *New York Times*, "the most influential agent of something that country music, occasionally to its advantage, loves to resist: change."

Garth Brooks sings of old friends, high hopes, log fires, and rivers: "You know a dream is like a river, ever changin' as it flows." He thinks about people, not cash flow: "When you see these people, it's like there's suddenly a bridge and you can just walk out and touch them . . . and they touch you." A man for this season, he reaps a golden harvest and links emotion and memory. Make way