

# TELARC® Quarter Notes

VOLUME 1 NO. 2

A QUARTERLY UPDATE FROM TELARC

SPRING, 1987

## STEALING MOTHER NATURE'S THUNDER

by Jan C. Snow



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"We set up in a log cabin in the middle of a canyon and waited for storms," recalls Leek's colleague, Rich Feldman, of one expedition. "Once, we had a really good storm going but every time the lightning would strike there would be a momentary power interruption and the machine would stop." Running into the cabin each time to restart the machine in the brief interval between the lightning and the clap that followed, the thunder hunters got lots of exercise, but bagged little in the way of usable boomers. "And that," adds Feldman, "was after a full week of recording."

To everything, meteorological phenomena not excepted, there is a season ... and when it's over, there's nothing to do but wait for next year. Leek got some additional thunder in 1982 around his California home above Lake Elsinore and he spent still more time tracking thunderstorms in Arizona and Utah in the summer of 1983. Telarc's Chairman Jack Renner had been keeping an electronic ear out at his summer cottage near Zoar, Ohio, but dry thunder is exceptional in the Midwest and thunder accompanied by rain, in Renner's words, "sounds like pouring BBs on a tin roof." Mean-

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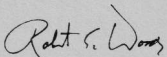
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Many of you have offered suggestions for what we should record. It's a great help to hear from our customers on this subject — after all, you're the ones who are buying and it's our job to make what you want. We think we're on the right track since many of the suggestions are for projects that are actually in the planning stages.

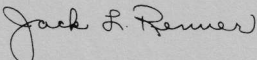
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Sincerely,



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EDITOR: Gary Reider

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR: John Eustace

## KUNZEL AND POPS ON FAST TRACK

by Ray Cooklis, music critic

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The place is a riot. Paper-crammed briefcases and boxes discharge their contents onto the sofa, desk, chairs and the floor. There are scores, charts, photocopies of old programs record jackets, notebooks itinerary sheets, rehearsal schedules... In short, vintage Kunzel.

Red-faced and breathless, searching for some elusive slip of paper, Kunzel pauses to answer a few questions. "Stop?" he asks in mock disbelief. "With a pistol, maybe." He points to his temple. "Right here." Kunzel shakes his head, smiles and slips into a familiar line. "Hey, I can't stop. I have to pay for my boat." The "boat" is his 40-foot yacht, *The Blue Swan*, docked at his idyllic home on Swan's Island, Maine, and he's been paying it off forever, to hear him tell it.

With last week's non-stop round of Concerts in the Park behind him, Kunzel is juggling his usual mix of duties — rehearsals for this weekend's opening concerts of the 1986-1987 Pops season, next week's Pops' recording sessions for four new Telarc albums, and research for an array of future concerts and albums.

For the "Cotton Club" — themed season opener at 8 PM Saturday and Sunday in Music Hall, Cab Calloway whom Kunzel describes as "the most important and successful Sportin' Life ever," does that part from Gershwin's *Porgy & Bess* plus a variety of songs he's made famous.

On the more classical side, Kunzel has dug up a little surprise for this weekend; a mysterious "Jubilee Variation" by composer Aaron Copland, the title of which Kunzel spotted recently in a catalog. Finding the score was tougher. Copland's publisher, Boosey & Hawkes, didn't have it. "What's more, they said he (Copland) doesn't, either," Kunzel said.

The search wound back to Music Hall, where CSO Librarian Mary Judge-Vila dug around in the attic and found a complete set of orchestral parts for Variations on a Theme by Goossens, which included the Copland snippet. It seems



that in 1944-45, then music director Eugene Goossens invited ten American composers — Copland, Howard Hanson, William Schuman, Roy Harris, Walter Piston and five others — to write one variation each on a theme by Goossens himself to celebrate the CSO's 50th Anniversary.

The Copland Variation will continue its way into the Pops upcoming all-Copland album to be recorded next week along with portions of several discs. "We have so much in the works," says Kunzel.

Indeed, Kunzel and the Pops are going gung-ho under their exclusive contract with Telarc. With five releases now on Billboard Magazine's Top Twenty Compact Disc Chart, they're booked solid through 1990 to produce more albums.

This fall, Kunzel says, comes a Stokowski Sound album of the legendary maestro's transcriptions. For the Copland album, actress Katharine Hepburn will narrate a Lincoln Portrait while Sherrill Milnes will sing the Old American Songs.

There's more. Crooner Frankie Laine will be featured (in Rawhide, what else?) on a Round-Up of TV and movie Western music. Albums on march, Hollywood,  
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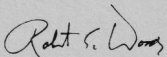
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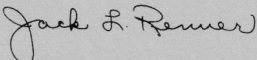
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# KATHARINE HEPBURN'S RECORDING DEBUT

by Bob Woods, Producer

**COPLAND:** *Lincoln Portrait & Other Works*. Erich Kunzel, *Cincinnati Pops Orchestra*. Katharine Hepburn, speaker; Sherrill Milnes, baritone. (CD-80117) April, 1987.

When Erich Kunzel first suggested Katharine Hepburn as the proposed "speaker" for Copland's *Lincoln Portrait* I thought he was kidding. First, the part has always been done by a man; second, I worried that the roughness in her voice might keep her from meeting the demands of the part, and third, I couldn't imagine she would do it.

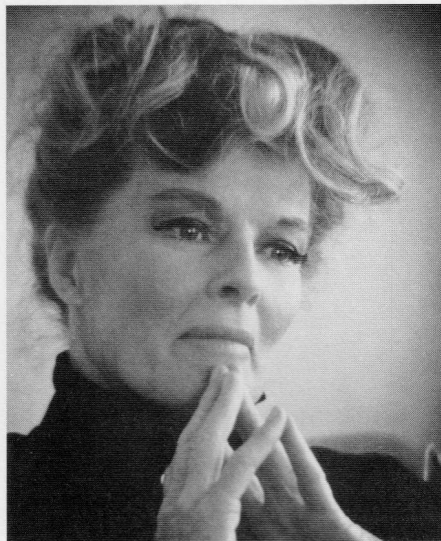
One thing you learn working with Erich is that he is not shy. He just sits down at his trusty typewriter and gets right to the point. He managed rather easily to get in touch with Miss Hepburn. Thanks to his charm and his love and knowledge of New Englanders, she agreed to give it a go (a bribe of fresh lobster from the waters near Kunzel's Swans Island, Maine home didn't hurt). No deal was discussed, just a possible date. Hepburn simply said, "Let's do it. If you like it, fine, and if you don't, just burn the tape. You won't hurt my feelings."

Schedule conflicts would not allow recording her and the orchestra together, so it was necessary to set up a session in New York for the speaker's part only, with Telarc engineer and chairman Jack Renner and Maestro Kunzel present.

Miss Hepburn had obviously done her homework. She had listened to many of the available recordings of the work and was of the opinion that, quite frankly, they all missed the mark. There was real substance in those words of Mr. Lincoln, and she was determined this was not just a script to be read, it was a part to be acted. The session was brief, and Erich delivered the obligatory lobster as promised.

When Jack got back the next day, we all anxiously gathered in the playback room to hear how it went. We had no idea that it would be so powerful. At one point during the recording session, Miss Hepburn got so caught up in the part she was actually in tears. Her critical approach to the interpretation of the part and the accompanying colorful outtakes were amazing.

Katharine Hepburn is a person of great substance, of great conscience and in possession of a charming, although notoriously rough, personality. She expressed that there were times she felt Mr. Copland's music, as good as it was, rather got in the way of the far-more-important words of Mr. Lincoln. A



philosophical journey down a side road on the topic of right and wrong further revealed the fascinating depths of this remarkable woman.

As stated earlier, the speaker's part was not done simultaneously with the orchestral performance. To prevent a mismatch of acoustics that can occur when something must be recorded this way, we took her edited performance and (digitally, of course) played it back in Music Hall in Cincinnati where the orchestral recording was made. This playback was digitally recorded in that same acoustic and after much work in-house by Elaine Martone and Rosalind Ilett it was then sent to Tom MacCluskey at RCA studios in New York for digital mixing. (It is here that the only extant Soundstream digital editing system exists.)

The speaker's part was combined with the musical score, "mixed" as we say in the business, entirely in the digital domain and then returned to Telarc for assembly of the final mastertape.

Erich and I set up a meeting with Katharine Hepburn at her New York apartment in December, finished tape in hand to play for her. To our surprise, her reaction was "Oh my God, I don't want to hear it. I'm sure it's fine if you say so." So instead, we simply spent a delightful hour over tea listening to her talk enthusiastically about a book she is writing, as she says "All by myself with legal notepad in hand at three o'clock in the morning." What little she shared had us thoroughly entertained.

The finished recording, we feel, is very special. Hepburn has elevated this work, one that never really quite commanded my interest, and with Erich's superb understanding of the score, has

turned it into a masterpiece. The balance of the recording, specially highlighted by the brilliant baritone voice of Sherrill Milnes, is vintage Copland at its best. Included is a short work, *Jubilee Variations*, lost until resurrected for this recording from the "attic" of the Music Hall in Cincinnati. ☺

## SNEAK PREVIEW OF NEW RELEASES

**WALTON:** *Symphony No. 1 / "Crown Imperial" March / "Orb and Sceptre" March*. André Previn / *Royal Philharmonic Orchestra*. (CD-80125) - May, 1987.

Sir William Walton's path-breaking *Symphony No. 1*, was completed and first performed in 1935. Up to that time, nothing of such substance (save Vaughan Williams' early symphonies) had been offered to the British (and world) musical community. Elgar's two symphonies belonged to the previous era. "A completely sincere personal utterance," said a respected critic of the time. Indeed, this splendid "modern" symphony combines Sibelius' formal control with Stravinsky's rhythmic electricity and Elgar's orchestral heartiness. Written for the coronation of King Edward VI in 1937, the majestic march "Crown Imperial" quite literally created a sensation, to be followed in 1953 by a similar imperial exercise for Queen Elizabeth II, dubbed "Orb and Sceptre." This is the second digital recording of the work, and the first by a world-class orchestra and conductor.

**BEETHOVEN:** *Symphony No. 6 in F, Op.68 "Pastorale" / Leonore Overture No. 3, Op.72*. Christoph Von Dohnányi / *The Cleveland Orchestra*. (CD-8014) May, 1987.

Following the success of Maestro Dohnányi's Beethoven Ninth (Telarc CD-80120), Telarc has recorded the gracious "Pastorale" — surely the most loved of the nine symphonies for its colorful nature painting and its realistic orchestral "sound effects". The latest in a distinguished line of music directors from Cleveland has shown himself well attuned to the long tradition of the Austrian symphonic literature. Maestro Dohnányi includes the dynamic third of Beethoven's "Leonores" — an authentic

distillation of the drama in his only opera, "Fidelio." The performance of Leonore here is one of the most exciting recorded. This represents Telarc's fourth Dohnányi/Beethoven recording. Look for Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 (CD-80120); Symphony No. 3 (CD-80090); and Symphony No. 8 (CD-80091) at your local compact disc retail store.



MOZART: *Symphony No. 36 in C, K.425 "Linz" / Symphony No. 38 in D, K.504 "Prague".* Sir Charles Mackerras / Prague Chamber Orchestra. (CD-80148) June, 1987.

The debut recording of the symphonic masterpieces of Mozart with the Prague Chamber Orchestra and Sir Charles Mackerras stirred up quite a hornet's nest. (Telarc CD-80139 — Symphonies Nos. 40 in G, K.550 and 41 in C, K.551 "Jupiter" released in January 1987.) Not everyone agreed with Sir Charles and musicologist William Malloch in their conviction that contemporary recordings of the third-movement minuets lack the sweep and panache of these decidedly-faster interpretations. Others were thrilled, of course, and we're awaiting the critics responses in the media.

Collectors of long-standing and the newcomers to the world of compact disc will surely want to compare these new additions to the growing library of Mozartiana, to the traditional versions from the hallowed Mozart orchestras and conductors. This recording is a fresh breeze indeed in the "Linz" and Prague" symphonies, continuing Sir Charles' evaluation of the final masterpieces from Mozart's symphonic pen. The brisk tempi of the third movements, lead logically to the fleeting pace of the finales.

SAMPLER VOLUME 4. (CD-80004) April, 1987.

WILLIAMS: Olympic Fanfare  
Kunzel / Cincinnati Pops

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 9, Mvt. IV,  
excerpt • Dohnányi / Cleveland

BEETHOVEN: "Moonlight" Sonata, Mvt. I,  
John O'Connor, piano

HOLST: The Planets, Uranus the  
Magician • Previn / Royal Philharmonic

TCHAIKOVSKY: Piano Concerto No. 1,  
Mvt. I, excerpt • Parker / Previn / Royal  
Philharmonic

TCHAIKOVSKY: The Nutcracker, Act I,  
Scene 8 • Mackerras / London  
Symphony

OFFENBACH: Orpheus in the Under-  
world, excerpt • Kunzel / Cincinnati Pops

MOZART: Ave Verum Corpus  
Shaw / Atlanta

BOCCHERINI/STOKOWSKI: Menuet  
Kunzel / Cincinnati Pops

MOZART: Symphony No. 40, Mvt. III  
Mackerras / Prague Chamber

MAHLER: Symphony No. 1, Mvt. II,  
excerpt • Slatkin / Saint Louis

RAVEL: Quartet in F, Mvt. I, excerpt  
Cleveland Quartet

COPLAND: Old American Songs,  
I Bought Me A Cat • Milnes / Kunzel /  
Cincinnati Pops

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: Symphony No. 2,  
Mvt. II, excerpt • Previn / Royal  
Philharmonic

TCHAIKOVSKY: Symphony No. 6,  
Mvt. III, excerpt • Dohnányi / Cleveland

E. BERNSTEIN: The Magnificent Seven  
Kunzel / Cincinnati Pops

## KUNZEL AND POPS

(continued from page 2)

science fiction and World War II themes are in the works.

On the concert front, a return to New York's Carnegie Hall is set for early 1988. "I am very pleased with how we have grown — grown in Cincinnati, grown nationally," Kunzel says.

The success of its digital recordings — the Pops pioneering 1812 Overture is still a standard sonic demo disc after four years — "has made us proud," Kunzel says.

And it has helped Kunzel make strides toward a long-cherished goal; having the Cincinnati Pops take the lead from the post-Arthur Fiedler Boston Pops. "Last time I conducted there," Kunzel boasts, "Boston Pops players were coming up to me and saying, 'Hey, you're murdering us!' That was nice to hear. And we are."

Speaking of Boston, Kunzel still denies having any interest in that most venerable Pops post. "I wouldn't go," he says. "Why go with what we have here? Frankly, this is a better orchestra and a better hall. It is just absolutely a fabulous hall to record in."

So Kunzel says he's as committed as ever to staying the course in Cincinnati. "In 1987, the Cincinnati Pops officially will be ten years old," he says. "We've accomplished one hell of a lot in ten years." ☺

**MOVING? COMMENTS? HAVE A FRIEND WHO WOULD ENJOY  
QUARTER NOTES? WANT A TELARC CATALOG?**

Complete the reverse side of this card, affix a 14¢ stamp and mail.

*The Mozart-Prague Connection***A SPECIAL SYMPHONY FOR MOZART'S FAVORITE CITY**

by John Eustace

When Telarc first announced that they would be releasing recordings of Mozart, many classical music listeners were very pleased. When it became known that the orchestra would be the Prague Chamber Orchestra, some listeners must have been chagrined. Surely, a major orchestra should have been used to document such a major composer. This was actually a logical choice for Mozart's late works.

In 1786, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was living in Vienna with his wife, Constanze. It had not been a good year. He was scratching out a living, hoping that one day the Emperor would reward him with a position. His father, living in Salzburg, was constantly trying to get him to be more serious with his life and talent. To top it off, they lost their new baby, the second to die in four years. Mozart's optimism was probably the only thing that made life bearable that winter.

As the new year dawned, Mozart began receiving reports that his opera "Le Nozze di Figaro" was playing in Prague with tremendous success. Mozart made plans to visit the city. He arrived January 11th and was welcomed as a star.

Mozart heard his music everywhere. "Figaro" had been playing at the local opera house to enthusiastic audiences for six months. He heard tunes from the

opera being whistled and sung in the streets. Selections had been arranged for almost every conceivable instrumental combination.

He had come to Prague expecting to be asked to perform, and had brought some new music with him. One of the works premiered was a new symphony which became known as the "Prague". He also conducted a performance of "Figaro" and agreed to write a new opera for the city.

After a month, Mozart returned to Vienna. His father died in Salzburg that summer, but because Mozart was very ill, his sister didn't inform him until weeks later.

On October 1st, the Mozarts again headed for Prague. At the end of the month he premiered his new opera, "Don Giovanni".

The Mozart tradition has remained unbroken in Prague since his death. To this day the city takes pride in the fact that they were the first to truly appreciate Mozart's music. The love for his music is apparent in the recordings the Prague Chamber Orchestra has made for Telarc. While it would have been possible to record this music with another orchestra, it was more important to document a unique tradition in the world of music. ♡

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We enjoy hearing from you. If you have a comment or question, a space is provided below. We'll be in touch.

**The recording of *Grand Canyon Suite*, with Gershwin's *Catfish Row: Symphonic Suite from Porgy and Bess*, performed by Erich Kunzel and the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, is scheduled for June release. (CD-80086)**

Just clouds bumping into one another, we were told when we were small. Later, we discovered equally fanciful but more literary explanations for thunder in the Norse mythology of mighty Thor flinging his hammer, or in Washington Irving's tales of the Catskills' heavenly keglers. (Thunder scientifically revealed as the sound of rapidly expanding gases along the path of the electrical discharge of lightning hasn't romance enough to satisfy us.)

Fascinated as composers have been with this most impressive of nature's sound effects, orchestral representations of thunder pop up in the literature

with the frequency of well... thunderstorms in summer. *La Mer*, *The Barber of Seville*, Strauss' *Alpine Symphony*, Berlioz' *Les Troyens*, Beethoven's Sixth Symphony — there are so many — and, of course, from Grofé's *Grand Canyon Suite*, "Cloudburst."

When the idea of recording actual thunder for an experimental overdub on "Cloudburst" first struck, atmospheric conditions were right. "Erich [Kunzel] and I were just brainstorming," explains Telarc President Bob Woods. "We've been interested in trying this sort of thing from time to time, whenever Erich does a recording that is light and it seems ap-

**NATURE'S THUNDER***(continued from page 1)*

while, Woods sifted through the archives of Brad Miller, an independent engineer noted for his environmental sound recording, "but they were analog," says Woods, "and we weren't too crazy about that. Nothing worked."

Yet another engineer involved in the project, Jules Bloomenthal, had microphones set up in the back porch of his home in Salt Lake City. Out to dinner for the evening, Bloomenthal and Feldman, who was visiting, were awaiting their entrees when a storm came up. "We looked at each other and said 'We need this! We weren't going to let a mere dinner get in the way,'" recalls Feldman. The two threw down their napkins and dashed back to start up the recorder only to have the power fail just as they got into the house.

Despairing as yet another season passed without capturing the requisite rumbles, Woods, at the suggestion of a Telarc distributor in Australia, decided to take advantage of the flip side of our weather by recording down under. Brad Miller's son, Michael, was dispatched to the outback with all necessary recording gear and a four-wheel drive vehicle. "But after he got there," says Woods, "they had a monsoon season," a climatological aberration that yielded little thunder and lent credence to the growing suspicion that the presence of digital recording equipment in a given locale somehow causes drastic alteration of normal weather patterns.

Finally Leek, driving across Utah to California from a session in Salt Lake City, all equipment handily packed in his van, spotted a model cumulonimbus in the near distance. He escaped from the traffic by ducking past a barricade onto a section of freeway that was still under construction and quickly set up beneath a bridge. "One of the shots was so close the static electricity shut the machine down," says Leek, "but I got just enough to do the job."

Having stalked their noisy quarry for over five years, Telarc's thunder hunters could finally rest on their digital laurels. The precious bits and pieces so laboriously gathered were meticulously edited and combined for the most realistic effect possible. Of course, Grofé provided beautifully for the thunder and lightning in his deft scoring of "Cloudburst," using the traditional timbres of the orchestra. "Our thunder is an experiment," says Woods. "It was only done for fun." (Nevertheless, we think Grofé would have been pleased.) ♡

*Arts writer Jan C. Snow watches and listens to thunderstorms from the front porch of her home near Lake Erie.*

## MUSINGS

by Bob Woods

As noted in our letter, we have received many suggestions from our readers. We have responded to many that their suggestions were going to become a reality, as the project was in our planning stages. It dawned on us that it would be a good idea to define our planning process.

Presently, we are planning projects through 1990 and beyond. Some projects can be brought about very quickly; others take a great deal of time.

A prime example is our recording of the Holst *Planets* with André Previn. As early as 1979 we knew we wanted to record it but didn't feel we had an appropriate relationship with a conductor for that repertoire. Finally, in 1984 we initiated negotiations with Maestro Prévin. Because a conductor's commitments are usually made years in advance, it would be some time before we could schedule a recording. Finally, in April of 1986 we made the recording. Add six more months for post-production work (which is fast by both industry and our own standards) and the finished product was released in September, 1986.

And so it goes for many projects. There is also the consideration that a work should be performed before it is recorded. If the parties have had a chance to rehearse and perform a work prior to the recording, the performance should be better. In England it is common practice to get an orchestra and conductor together on mutually available days and make a recording. The results can be amazingly good, but only *if* the two parties know and respect each other, and the producer knows that the orchestra is well versed in the repertoire at hand.

This seldom happens in the U.S. A union rule requires the work be performed prior to recording in order to record at what is called special *symphonic* rates. Therefore, recording companies are usually not willing to pay more to record in order to avoid the rule.

In an upcoming issue, we'll talk about the difference in recording between Europe and the States — it's very interesting. ☺

## Fun In the Sun

### MAKE A SPLASH WITH "CALIFORNIA PROJECT"



The weather's warm and summer's almost here so take along the music that says summer, Telarc's *California Project*. Performed by the band, Papa Doo Run Run, and some distinguished guest vocals (including Beach Boy Mike Love and Dan Torrence of Jan and Dean) who re-create the music of the Beach Boys and Jan and Dean.

*California Project* is a digital recording of a collection of the greatest hits made famous by the Beach Boys, including "California Girls", "Surfer Girl", "Fun, Fun, Fun", and "Good Vibrations". This music evokes the free and dreamy

California lifestyle that brings back the golden days of the 1960's in contemporary sound that will knock your socks off.

Papa Doo Run Run was originally formed in 1965 in the Silicon Valley near San Francisco as a top-forty act. Their performances evolved into their own celebration of summer — recapturing the rich harmonies and youthful appeal of the classic surfin' hits of the 60's. Papa Doo Run Run has appeared numerous times with members of the Beach Boys and five major concert tours with Jan & Dean (1977-1980).

The hit songs of the Beach Boys and California groups of that era still evoke a warm, golden summer feeling. Brian Wilson's music is timeless. The enchanting melodies and close harmonies that became the trademarks of the California sound have withstood the test of time.

*P.S.* There is a rumor that Telarc President Bob Woods is singing on one of the cuts on *California Project*. "It's true," he says, "but fortunately it's far enough down in the mix not to do any damage!"

*California Project* is available on Telarc CD-85501 and cassette tape CS-35501. ☺



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