

# CONCISE HISTORY OF WESTERN MUSIC

BARBARA RUSSANO HANNING

FIFTH EDITION
ANTHOLOGY UPDATE



# **Concise History of Western Music**

**5th edition Anthology Update** 

# **Barbara Russano Hanning**



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## **CHAPTER 26**

# Music between the Two World Wars

### Prelude - 1

- Music has long been linked to politics
  - nineteenth century, classical music was autonomous art
    - transcended politics
    - new "science" of musicology reinforced this view
  - new links to politics between world wars
    - gap widened between modernist music and audiences
    - composers tried to craft accessible concert works
    - wrote works within capabilities of amateurs
    - many used music to engage social, political, economic issues
    - nationalism continued as strong force

## Prelude – 2

- Music has long been linked to politics (cont'd)
  - government sponsorship
    - public schools increasingly included music curriculum
    - government-controlled radio employed musicians in Europe
    - totalitarian governments: music must support state, ideologies

#### France - 1

- Notions of classicism
  - World War I, new wave of anti-German sentiment
    - renewed opposition to German influences
    - neoclassicism associated with patriotism prevailing trend after the war
    - defining "Classic" point of contention
      - o conservatives: balance, order, discipline, tradition
      - o progressive composers like Ravel: encompassing the universal
- Les Six
  - six younger composers, strong influence of neoclassicism
    - Arthur Honegger (1892–1955)



#### France – 2

- Les Six (cont'd)
  - Darius Milhaud (1892–1974)
  - Francis Poulenc (1899–1963)
  - Germaine Tailleferre (1892–1983)
  - Georges Auric (1899–1983)
  - Louis Durey (1888–1979)
  - sought to free French music from foreign domination
  - drew inspiration from Erik Satie, hailed by Jean Cocteau
  - highly individual works
    - collaborations, joint concerts

## France – 3

- Les Six (cont'd)
  - Tailleferre: most neoclassic
  - Auric: most avant-garde
  - Honegger, Milhaud, Poulenc: most individual
  - Arthur Honegger
    - musical style
      - o dynamic action, graphic gesture
      - short-breathed melodies
      - o strong ostinato rhythms
      - o bold colors, dissonant harmonies
    - Pacific 231 (1923), symphonic movement
      - o physical impression of speeding locomotive
      - o hailed as modernist masterpiece

#### France - 4

- Les Six (cont'd)
  - King David (1923), oratorio
    - o amateur chorus tradition
    - o allusion to Gregorian chant, Baroque polyphony, jazz
    - won international reputation
  - Darius Milhaud
    - prolific, diverse style and approach
      - o Le bouef sur le toit (The Ox on the Roof, 1919), ballet, comic frivolity
      - o Christophe Colomb (1928), opera-oratorio, earnestness
      - o Sacred Service (1947), religious devotion
    - La Création du monde (The Creation of the World, 1923; NAWM 194), ballet
      - o open to sounds from the Americas
      - o saxophone, ragtime syncopations, elements of the blues

#### France – 5

- Les Six (cont'd)
  - o neoclassic and modernist traits: fugue, polytonality, polyrhythms
  - Brazilian folk melodies and rhythms
    - Le boeuf sur la toit
    - suite of dances Saudades do Brasil (Souvenirs of Brazil, 1920–1921), polytonality
  - blended ingenuity, freshness, variety; open to foreign influence
  - Francis Poulenc
    - drew on Parisian popular chanson traditions, cabarets, revues
    - musical style: graceful, witty, satirical
    - Dialogues of the Carmelites (1956), opera

# Ex26-01



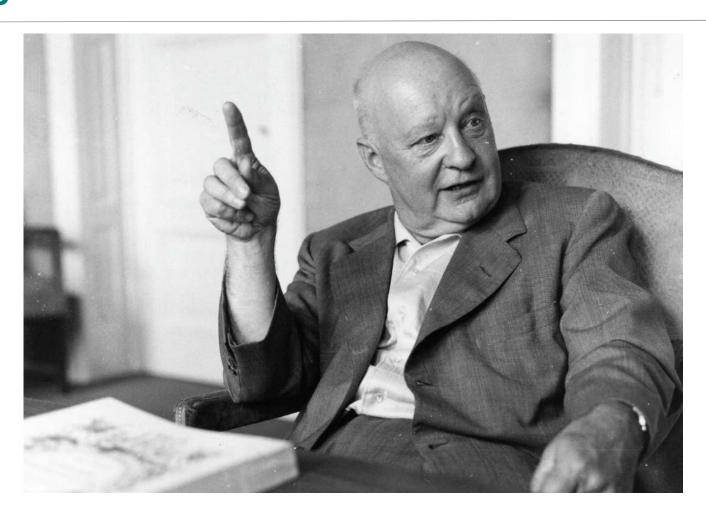
- 1933, Nazis came to power
  - attacked modern music as decadent
  - banned political Left and Jews from public life
  - many leading musicians took refuge abroad
- New objectivity
  - "Neue Sachlichkeit," New Realism, "New Matter-of-Factness"
    - phrase first used in art criticism, adopted by musicians
    - opposed complexity, promoted familiar elements
      - o borrowed from popular music, jazz, Classic and Baroque procedures
      - music should be objective in its expression

- New objectivity (cont'd)
  - music as autonomous rejected
  - should be widely accessible, communicate clearly
  - Ernst Krenek (1900–1991)
    - Jonny spielt auf (Johnny Strikes Up the Band, premiered 1927), opera
      - o drew on jazz and simplified harmonic language
      - o attacked by Nazis as "degenerate," African American elements
    - later adopted twelve-tone method
    - 1938, emigrated to United States
  - Kurt Weill (1900–1950)
    - opera composer in Berlin, exponent of New Objectivity

- New objectivity (cont'd)
  - Maufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny (Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny, 1930)
    - o collaborated with playwright Bertolt Brecht, allegorical opera
    - elements of popular music and jazz
    - o witty references to variety of styles
    - exposes failures of capitalism
  - Die Dreigroschenoper (The Threepenny Opera, premiered 1928)
    - o collaboration with Brecht, based on John Gay's libretto
    - o music parodied American hit songs
    - o juxtaposes eighteenth-century ballad texts, European dance music, American jazz
    - Die Moritat von Mackie Messer (The Ballad of Mack the Knife, NAWM 195); lilting melody belies brutal imagery



- New objectivity (cont'd)
  - second career composing Broadway musicals in New York
    - continued spirit of New Objectivity
- Paul Hindemith (1895–1963)
  - among the most prolific composers of the century
    - o important teacher of two generations: Berlin School of Music, Yale University, University of Zurich
    - o thought of himself primarily as practicing musician: performed professionally: violinist, violist, conductor
  - Weimar period
    - o began composing in late Romantic style
    - o developed individual expressionist language
    - o adopted aesthetic of New Objectivity



- Paul Hindemith (1895–1963) (cont'd)
  - *Gebrauchsmusik*, "music for use"
    - o music for young, or amateur performers
    - o high quality, modern style, challenging yet rewarding
    - o Wir bauen eine Stadt (We Build a Town, 1930)
  - *Mathis der Maler* (Mathis the Painter, 1934–1935), opera
    - o music banned by Nazis as "cultural Bolshevism"
    - examined role of artist in relation to politics
    - o opera based on life of Matthias Grünewald
    - o can be read as allegory for Hindemith's career
  - works from 1930s
    - o more accessible, neo-Romantic style
    - o less dissonant linear counterpoint, systematic tonal organization

- Paul Hindemith (1895–1963) (cont'd)
  - "harmonic fluctuation": consonant chords, greater dissonance, return to consonance
  - o style example: Symphony Mathis der Maler (1933–1934, NAWM 196)
  - later works
    - o 1940, emigrated to United States
    - o returned to Switzerland in 1953
  - applied mature style of *Mathis*
    - o sonatas for almost every orchestral instrument (1933–1935)
    - o Ludus tonalis (Tonal Play, 1942), evokes Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier
    - Symphonic Metamorphosis after Themes of Carl Maria von Weber (1943)
    - Symphony in B-flat for band (1951)



- Music under the Nazis
  - Nazis established Reich Chamber of Culture under Joseph Goebbels
    - included State Music Bureau, all musicians had to belong
      - o Richard Strauss, appointed first president; forced to resign
    - Nazi requirements expressed in negatives
      - must not be: dissonant, atonal, twelve-tone, "chaotic," intellectual, Jewish, jazzinfluenced, left-wing
      - excluded most modernist music
    - exploited great German composers of nineteenth century, especially Wagner

- Music under the Nazis (cont'd)
  - Carl Orff (1895–1982)
    - won international reputation during Nazi era
    - naively believed music was autonomous from politics, stayed in Germany
    - Carmina burana (1936), chorus and orchestra
      - o medieval poems akin to goliard songs
      - o deceptively simple neo-modal idiom
      - o drew on Stravinsky, folk songs, chant, medieval secular song
      - pseudo-antique style based on drones, ostinatos, harmonic stasis, strophic repetition
    - developed methods for teaching music in schools

## The Soviet Union - 1

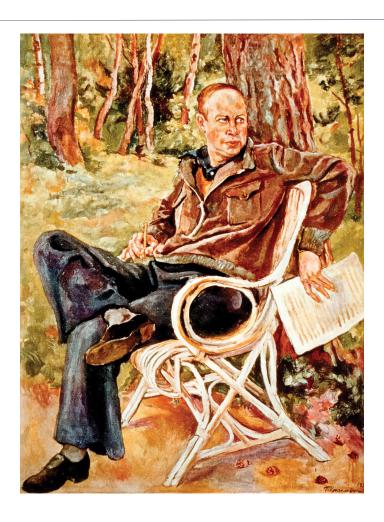
- Government controlled all aspects of the arts
  - the arts
    - as way to indoctrinate populace in Marxist-Leninist ideology
    - enhance their patriotism
    - venerate their leaders
  - after the Revolution
    - musical institutions nationalized
    - concert programming, repertories strictly regulated

## The Soviet Union – 2

- Government controlled all aspects of the arts (cont'd)
  - composers' organizations founded in 1923
    - Civil war 1918–1920, economic crisis
      - relaxation of state control
      - o period of relative freedom
    - The Association for Contemporary Music
      - continued modernist trends of Scriabin
      - o promoted contacts with the West
    - The Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians
      - o encouraged simple tonal music, wide appeal
      - o especially "mass songs" to socialist texts
    - 1929, Stalin consolidated power, dissent was squashed
      - o new organization: Union of Soviet Composers

### The Soviet Union – 3

- Government controlled all aspects of the arts (cont'd)
  - 1934 writer's congress promulgated socialist realism
    - doctrine called for realistic style
      - o works that portrayed socialism in positive light
      - o celebrated revolutionary ideology, heroes
    - music qualities
      - o relatively simple, accessible language
      - o centered on melody, folklike styles
      - patriotic or inspiration subject matter
    - music for its own sake or modernists condemned as "formalism"



#### The Soviet Union – 4

- Sergey Prokofiev (1891–1953)
  - initial reputation as radical modernist
    - left Russia after the Revolution
      - o two decades in North America and western Europe
      - o composed solo piano works and concertos for himself to play
      - o commissions include: *The Love for Three Oranges* (1921), ballets for Ballets Russes
    - 1936, returned to Russia permanently
  - Soviet commissions
    - *Lieutenant Kijé* (1933), film score
    - *Romeo and Juliet* (1935–1936), ballet
    - Peter and the Wolf (1936), fairy tale for narrator and orchestra
    - Alexander Nevsky (1938), celebrated film score



#### The Soviet Union – 5

- Sergey Prokofiev (1891–1953) (cont'd)
  - film scores, theatrical pieces reworked into concert works
    - orchestral suites: Romeo and Juliet, Lieutenant Kijé
    - cantata Alexander Nevsky, movement four (NAWM 197)
      - stirring choral melodies, folklike style
      - o mostly diatonic melodies, accessible harmonies
      - o modal melodies, orchestration convey Russian sound
  - World War II, relaxation of government control
    - absolute music, classical genres
      - Piano Sonatas Nos. 6–8 (1939–1944)
      - Fifth Symphony (1944)
    - after the war, works condemned as "formalist"

### The Soviet Union – 6

- Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975)
  - spent his entire career within Soviet system
    - combination of traditionalism and experimentation
    - 1920s, more aligned with modernists
    - First Symphony (1926), rocketed him to international prominence
  - Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District
    - opera premiered in 1934, great success
    - angered Stalin, discordant modernist music, surrealistic portrayal of violence and sex
    - attacked by Pravda, "chaos instead of music"





#### The Soviet Union – 7

- Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975) (cont'd)
  - Fifth Symphony
    - inspired by study of Mahler symphonies
    - wide range of styles and moods
      - o lyricism to dynamism
      - deep feeling and high tragedy
      - o bombast and the grotesque
    - four movement, heroic symphony in manner of Beethoven
    - outwardly conformed to socialist realism

### The Soviet Union – 8

- Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975) (cont'd)
  - possible messages of bitterness and mourning
    - Allegretto (NAWM 198), jarring contrasts to Mahler scherzo
    - o slow movement evokes Russian funeral music
    - o triumphant finale, false enthusiasm
  - Seventh Symphony (*Leningrad*, 1941)
    - programmatic, heroic defense of Leningrad against Hitler
    - some hear complaint against Stalin's repression
  - later works
    - 1948 crackdown, denounced along with Prokofiev
    - rehabilitation: patriotic film scores, choral paeans

## The Americas – 1

#### Canada

- musical life developed along patterns in United States
  - performance of European classical repertory
  - twentieth century, founding of orchestras: Quebec (1903), Toronto (1906)
- Claude Champagne (1891–1965)
  - first Canadian composer to achieve international reputation
  - in his youth learned French-Canadian fiddle music, dance tunes
  - deeply influenced by Russian composers

## The Americas – 2

- Canada (cont'd)
  - studied in Paris: Renaissance polyphony, Fauré and Debussy
  - Suite canadienne (Canadian Suite, 1927), chorus and orchestra
    - elements from French-Canadian folk music, polyphonic French chansons
  - Dance villageoise (Village Dance, 1929), best-known piece
    - o evokes French-Canadian and Irish folk styles
- Brazil
  - Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887–1959)
    - Brazilian elements with modernist techniques

#### The Americas – 3

- Brazil (cont'd)
  - 1923–1930 in Paris, widespread praise, prominence
  - 1930, return to Brazil, promoted music in schools
  - criticized for collaboration with nationalist dictatorship
  - *Bachianas brasileiras* (1930–1945)
    - pays tribute to Bach, neoclassical trend
    - each is a suite of two-four movements
    - elements of Baroque styles, Brazilian folk elements
    - Bachianas brasileiras No. 5 (first movement, NAWM 199), for solo soprano and orchestra of cellos
      - o alludes to da capo Baroque arias, modified ABA structure
      - suggestion of instrumental ritornello
      - styles of Brazilian popular song improvisation

# F26-09



#### The Americas – 4

- Brazil (cont'd)
  - o vocal embellishment of Italian opera
  - o simultaneously neoclassical, national
- Mexico
  - 1921, Mexican government brings arts to wide public
    - promoted new nationalism, drew on native Indian cultures
  - Silvestre Revueltas (1899–1940)
    - studied in Mexico and United States
    - returned to Mexico, assistant conductor to first professional orchestra

#### The Americas – 5

- Mexico (cont'd)
  - music modeled on Mexican folk and popular music, modernist idiom
  - Homenaje a Federico García Lorca (Homage to Federico García Lorca, 1936), Revueltas
    - written in memory of poet killed by Nationalist militia
    - first movement, Baile (Dance)
      - evokes style of cante jondo, song tradition celebrated by Lorca
      - o lively dance recalls Mexican band music
      - modernist elements: strong dissonance, parallel dissonant sonorities, glissandos, grotesque combinations of instruments

- Composers, performers developed new links with Europe
  - immigration of many European leading composers
  - World War I, reorientation of American music toward France
    - American Conservatory founded at Fontainebleau
    - Americans study with Nadia Boulanger (1887–1979)
  - new currents among American composers
    - ultramodernist: focus on new musical resources
    - Americanist: incorporated national styles into European genres

- Composers, performers developed new links with Europe (cont'd)
  - both asserted independence from Europe
  - American composers formed own organizations
    - o International Composers Guild, League of Composers
- Edgard Varèse (1883–1965)
  - French-born, experimentalist
    - brief career in Paris and Berlin
    - moved to New York, 1915
    - influenced by Debussy, Schoenberg, Stravinsky

- Edgard Varèse (1883–1965) (cont'd)
  - spatial music and sound masses
    - aimed to liberate composition from conventional elements
      - o sounds as essential structural components
      - o all sounds as raw material
    - spatial, sound masses moved through musical space
      - o sound mass characterized by timbre, register, rhythm, melodic gesture
      - sound masses interact, may gradually transform
    - percussion instruments, equals to winds and strings
  - *Hyperprism* (1922–1923, NAWM 200)
    - pitch, timbre, gesture, rhythm interact; suggest sound masses colliding, changing

## Ex26-02



- Edgard Varèse (1883–1965) (cont'd)
  - sounds excluded from traditional music
  - every combination of sounds is unusual
  - heard as block of sound, rather than melody, harmony, or accompaniment
  - ideas and music had enormous influence on younger composers
  - after World War II turned to electronic sound generation and tape recorder
    - Déserts (1950-1954) for winds, percussion and tape
    - Poème électronique (1957-1958), tape piece

- Henry Cowell (1897–1965)
  - native of California; little training in European music
  - experimentation in early piano music
    - tone clusters, chords made with the fist or forearm
      - o The Tides of Manaunaun (ca. 1917)
    - new playing techniques inside the piano
      - o The Aeolian Harp (1923)
      - o *The Banshee* (1925; NAWM 201)
    - ideas summarized in *New Musical Resources* (1930)
  - interested in non-Western music
    - eclectic approach to compositions

# F26-10



- Henry Cowell (1897–1965) (cont'd)
  - 1930s, more accessible language
    - o incorporated American, Irish, or Asian elements
  - after World War I, pieces incorporated Indian tabla, Japanese koto
  - impact
    - New Music, periodical promoting music and concerts
      - published scores by Ives, Schoenberg, other modernist and ultramodernists
    - interest in non-Western music, enormous impact on younger composers

- Ruth Crawford Seeger (1901–1953)
  - first woman to win Guggenheim Fellowship in music
    - 1924 to 1933, active as a composer in Chicago and New York
    - studied with composer, musicologist Charles Seeger
    - experimented with serial techniques, applying parameters other than pitch
    - convinced preserving folk songs would be greater contribution
      - o edited American folk songs from field recordings

## F26-11



- Ruth Crawford Seeger (1901–1953) (cont'd)
  - String Quartet (1931; finale NAWM 202), best-known work
    - two-part counterpoint, first violin against other instruments
    - two voices heard in opposite direction in density and dynamics
    - entire musical fabric repeated in retrograde transposed up a semitone

### Ex26-03

#### a. Opening



- George Gershwin (1897–1938)
  - late 1920s and 1930s: most famous, frequently performed American composer in classical genres
    - saw no firm line between popular and classical music
    - used jazz and blues to add dimensions to art music
  - Rhapsody in Blue (1924)
    - billed as "jazz concerto"
    - premiered as centerpiece in concert organized by Paul Whiteman
    - scored for solo piano and jazz ensemble
    - incorporates popular song forms, blue notes, other elements of jazz and blues

- George Gershwin (1897–1938) (cont'd)
  - continued to fuse seemingly disparate traditions
    - Preludes for Piano (1926), jazz, blues, Latin dance rhythms
    - Porgy and Bess (1935), folk opera
      - o draws on opera and musical genres
      - features recurring motives
      - o characters are all African American
      - o musical style heavily influenced by African American idioms

- Aaron Copland (1900–1990)
  - most important and central American composer of his generation
    - combined modernism with national American idioms
    - organized concerts series, composer groups
    - promoted works of his predecessors and contemporaries
    - influenced many younger American composers
  - early years
    - grew up in Jewish immigrant family in Brooklyn; exposed to ragtime, popular music
    - studied piano, theory, composition in European tradition

# F26-12

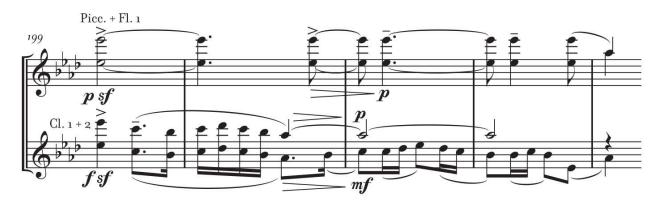


- Aaron Copland (1900–1990) (cont'd)
  - first American composer to study with Nadia Boulanger
  - jazz elements, strong dissonances in early works
    - o *Music for the Theatre* (1925), Piano Concerto (1927)
  - sought to appeal to larger audience
    - recognized radio, record listeners
    - reduced modernist techniques, simple textures, diatonic melodies and harmonies
      - o El Salón México (1932–1936), incorporated Mexican folk songs
      - o Billy the Kid (1938), Rodeo (1942), use cowboy songs
      - o *The Second Hurricane* (1936), written for schools
      - o film scores, including *Our Town* (1940)

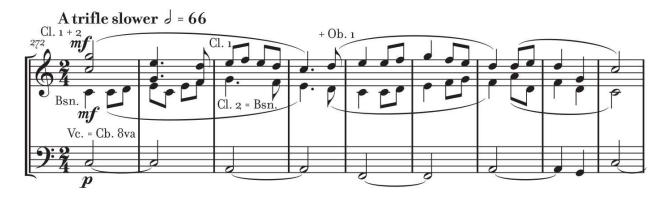
- Aaron Copland (1900–1990) (cont'd)
  - Appalachian Spring (1943–1944) (excerpt in NAWM 203)
    - exemplifies Americanist idiom
    - ballet written for ensemble of thirteen instruments
    - better known as arrangement for orchestral suite
    - incorporates variations on Shaker hymn 'Tis the Gift to Be Simple
    - transparent, widely spaced sonorities, empty octaves and fifths, diatonic dissonances
      - o frequently imitated, quintessential musical emblem of America
      - used especially for film and television

### Ex26-04

a.

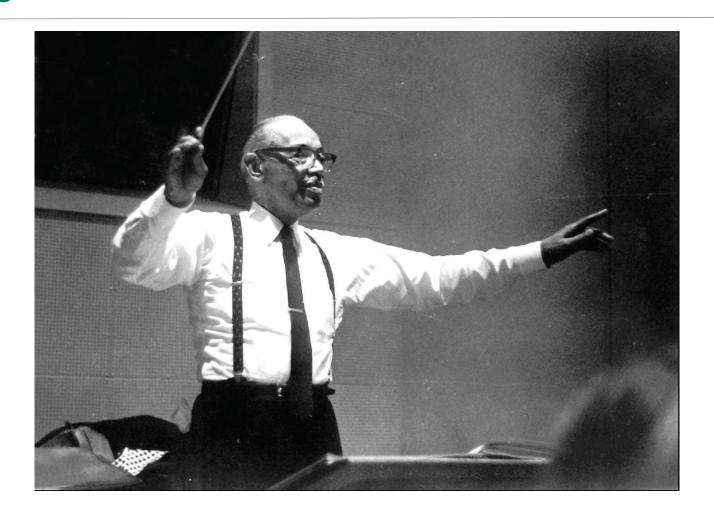


*b*.



- William Grant Still (1895–1978)
  - drew on diverse musical background
    - composition studies with George Whitefield Chadwick, Edgard Varèse
    - arranged for W. C. Handy's dance band
  - nicknamed "Dean of Afro-American Composers"
  - broke numerous racial barriers, numerous "firsts"
    - first African American to conduct a major symphony orchestra in the United States
      - o Los Angeles Philharmonic, 1936

# F26-13



- William Grant Still (1895–1978) (cont'd)
  - first to have opera produced by major company in the United States
    - o *Troubled Island* at New York's City Center, 1949
  - first to have an opera televised over a national network
  - composed over 150 compositions in classical tradition
  - Afro-American Symphony (1930)
    - traditional four-movement framework
    - encompasses African American musical elements

- William Grant Still (1895–1978) (cont'd)
  - Afro-American Symphony, opening movement (NAWM 240)
    - sonata form, first theme in twelve-bar blues structure
    - second theme suggests a spiritual
    - numerous other African American traditions
      - o call and response
      - syncopation
      - o varied repetition of short melodic ideas
      - o jazz harmonies
      - o dialogue between groups of instruments
      - o instrumental timbres common in jazz

### **Postlude**

- Political circumstances surrounding most of this music has been largely forgotten
- Postwar depoliticizing of art music comes under increasing scrutiny
- Music between the wars shows unprecedented diversity

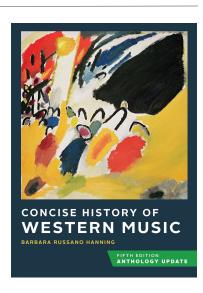
### **TIMELINE**

TIMELINE Between the Wars			
Musical Events	1917 Satie, Parade  1917-21 Berg, Wozzeck (NAWM 182)  1922-3 Varèse, Hyperprism (NAWM 200)  1923 Milhaud, La Création du monde (NAWM 194)  1924 Gershwin, Rhapsody in Blue  1925 Cowell, The Banshee (NAWM 201)  1927 Champagne, Suite canadienne	1927-31 Ellington's band at the Cotton Club 1928 Weill, The Threepenny Opera (NAWM 195) 1930 Still, Afro-American Symphony (NAWM 204) 1931 Crawford Seeger, String Quartet 1931 (NAWM 202) 1933 Union of Soviet Composers founded 1933-34 Hindemith, Symphony Mathis der Maler (NAWM 196) 1936 Shostakovich's opera Lady Macbeth attacked in Soviet press	1936 Orff, Carmina burana 1936 Revueltas, Homenaje a Federico García Lorca 1937 Shostakovich, Fifth Symphony (NAWM 198) 1938 Prokofiev, music for the film Alexander Nevsky 1940 Stravinsky and Bartók emigrate to the United States 1943–44 Copland, Appalachian Spring (NAWM 203) 1948 Soviet Union cracks down on Prokofiev, Shostakovich, and "formalist" composers
Historical Events	1914  1914–18 World War I  1917 Russian Revolution  1920 Women win right to vote in United States  1922 Fascists take over government in Italy	1929 New York stock market crash begins worldwide depression 1933 Hitler comes to power in Germany 1933 Roosevelt institutes New Deal in United States 1934 Doctrine of socialist realism adopted in Soviet Union	1936-39 Spanish Civil War 1938 Germany absorbs Austria 1939-45 World War II



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This concludes the Lecture Slide Set for Chapter 26

by

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