

Kay Norton

The Normand Lockwood Archive and An Overview of His Career

Editor's note. Kay Norton completed her doctoral thesis, *The Music of Normand Lockwood from 1930 to 1980: Fifty Years in American Composition*, at the University of Colorado in May, 1990. She is now preparing a monograph on Lockwood and his music, to be published by Scarecrow Press in its *Music of North American Composers* series. For the author's comments on the "Americanisms" in Lockwood's music, see also her contribution to the symposium, "Why *American Music*?" elsewhere in this issue.

Normand Lockwood's compositional career has brought him in contact with a variety of people and a wide assortment of musical styles. Born in 1906, he began his formal training under the guidance of his father, Samuel, and his uncle, Albert, both faculty members at the University of Michigan. During the 1920s he studied composition, first with Respighi in Rome, and then for three years with Boulanger in Paris. He then returned to Rome for a three-year appointment as fellow at the American Academy. In 1932 he began his duties on the faculty of Oberlin College, following that tenure with a move in 1941 to Union Theological Seminary. Subsequent academic positions include Westminster Choir College, Trinity University, and the universities of Oregon, Hawaii, and Denver. He retired from teaching in 1971. Still a resident of Denver, he continues to compose, most recently finishing *Metaphors* (1990), commissioned by the Colorado Wind Ensemble.

The Normand Lockwood Archive, located in the American Music Research Center at the University of Colorado, Boulder, contains approximately 400 works, representing all traditional musical genres: choral music, keyboard works, chamber music, solo songs, instrumental and orchestral works, and operas. Programs, reviews, letters, and other memorabilia augment this rich store of music. The Archive and its catalog document a long and fruitful career, presenting a panoramic view of Lockwood's academic years as teacher, friend, colleague, and professional composer.

The catalog of the music is organized alphabetically by title. Commission and dedication information provide a capsule history of many pieces. In the case of the 1951 *Concerto for Organ and Brasses*, the commission by the American Guild of Organists in honor of E. Power Biggs appears alongside its many documented performances. Programs for *Carol Fantasy*, for SATB and choir, span the years 1949 to 1980, with performances as distant as Jakarta, Indonesia. The annotated score of the oratorio *Children of God* is hand-labeled as the "Property of [conductor] Thor Johnson." Nearly every leaf of the sixty-three-

page catalog reveals an interesting annotation by the composer, or a letter—either personal or professional—from such luminaries as poet Carl Sandburg, performer/historian John Kirkpatrick, composer Mabel Daniels, or conductor Joseph Krips.

Lockwood's compositional eclecticism may stem from his youthful, cosmopolitan training, which instilled in him a fascination for the many different musical styles of the day. At first juxtaposing these varying musical ideas with great freedom, Lockwood began to synthesize them by mid-career into a cohesive, individual style. The first step toward this synthesis is apparent in the cyclic organizations prominent in the 1940s string quartets. By the 1950s, the themes in a given composition are no longer so disparate as they had been: Lockwood often chose one pitch pattern, like the octatonic scale or the tritone, as a device by which all themes are unified. Since the 1950s, Lockwood's music has become ever more focused, the juxtapositions of musical ideas becoming more subtle. Striking shifts in musical language still occur in the later works, but are logically motivated by the text in vocal works, or by a common compositional device in the instrumental pieces.

Another factor affecting Lockwood's music, one which often contributes to his eclectic habit, is his intuitive capacity. A man of keen insight, he possesses a unique and uncanny ability to speak musically through a performer, instrument or text. This quality, like his eclecticism, may also stem from his cosmopolitan youth. Perhaps because he was thrown at such a young age, largely unprepared, into a world of high expectations and achievements (e. g., Rome, Paris, Oberlin), Lockwood became a shrewd observer of people and situations. His contextual observations are as important in generating a new work as are his chosen musical materials. For each piece, he logically and pragmatically considers what sort of music might work best in that particular situation. For an organ work, he wrote long rests to punctuate chords (He wanted to take advantage of the resonate church building in which the piece was being performed). His well-developed sense of "rightness" that stems from his gift of insight has influenced the success of his music, as well as made him well-liked and well-rewarded.

Lockwood has been consistently successful as a composer in the academic world and in his progressive incorporation of the many musical languages which have influenced American composers. The works themselves are notable, not only esthetically, but also because of the composer's special insight into the relationships among the music, performer, and medium. In short, Lockwood's career and compositions to date reflect the high quality and wide variety which characterize much American music in this century.