

Ryan Ross

“They Dance No Sarabande”: Constant Lambert, *The Rio Grande*, and the American Exotic

By the Rio Grande
They dance no sarabande
On level banks like lawns above the glassy, lolling tide;
Nor sing they forlorn madrigals
Whose sad note stirs the sleeping gales
Till they wake among the trees, and shake the boughs,
And fright the nightingales;
But they dance in the city, down the public squares,
On marble pavers with each colour laid in shares,
At the open church doors loud with light within,
At the bell's huge tolling,
By the river music, gurgling, thin,
Through the soft Brazilian air.
The Comendador and Alguacil are there
On horseback, hid with feathers, loud and shrill
Blowing orders on their trumpets like a bird's sharp bill
Through boughs, like a bitter wind, calling
They shine like steady starlight while those other sparks are falling
In burnished armour, with their plumes of fire,
Tireless, while all others tire.
The noisy streets are empty and hushed is the town
To where, in the square, they dance and the band is playing;
Such a space of silence through the town to the river
That the water murmurs loud
Above the band and crowd together;
And the strains of the sarabande,
More lively than a madrigal,
Go hand in hand
Like the river and its waterfall
As the great Rio Grande rolls down to the sea.
Loud is the marimba's note

Above these half-salt waves,
And louder still the tympanum,
The plectrum, and the kettle-drum,
Sullen and menacing
So these brazen voices ring.
They ride outside,
Above the salt-sea's tide,
Till the ships at anchor there
Hear this enchantment
Of the soft Brazilian air,
By those Southern winds wafted,
Slow and gentle,
Their fierceness tempered
By the air that flows between.

If one were to search for a single British musical work that mirrors the island nation's social and cultural dissatisfaction during the 1920s, as well as escapist yearning for paradise beyond the sea, Constant Lambert's *The Rio Grande* would surely be it. Composed in 1927, *The Rio Grande* was a collaborative work based on a poem by Sacheverell Sitwell scored for piano, alto soloist, chorus, and orchestra. The musical setting presents Lambert's vision of an exotic pan-American vista. Through Sitwell's high-spirited poem Lambert muses upon a fanciful land and culture that brim with youthful vivacity, evoking a veritable South American Eden in which its inhabitants engage in a non-stop cycle of revelry and relaxation. In setting the poem to music, Lambert utilized the racially-identified tropes of early jazz and syncopated dance music in order to create a hybrid tableau of British expectations for the Exotic New World.

The Rio Grande thus offered an optimistic alternative to a world characterized by social unrest. After the end of World War I, Great Britain, concurrent with several other European nations, found itself in the midst of an economic depression.¹ What trade production Britain could muster subsequent to the carnage of battle and drainage of material resources was in large part negated by the increased industry and technological advances of other European nations. These near neighbors, so recently dependant in large part upon Britain for manufactured goods, suddenly found themselves better able to produce household wares, machinery, textiles, and steel. The ensuing loss in trade promoted widespread unemployment in Britain, which in turn exacerbated the strain on what was already a crippled economy.

This economic deterioration prompted government leaders to work to remedy the situation. During the early part of the decade lawmakers lowered expenditures and taxes and put an increased emphasis on foreign policy following recommended changes made by the conservatives who were in power in the Parliament at the time, notably Bonar Law and Stanley Baldwin. Members of the government took compensatory steps in order to make up for the lost revenue caused in large part by the tax cuts,

including hiking interest rates, which further stymied the growth of businesses and the job market. In the early 1920s discontent with a stagnant economy among the working and middle classes led to widespread strikes. Consequently, chronic unrest marked the basic social and economic atmosphere of Great Britain for the decade leading up to the shift of power to the Labor Party in 1929.

Amid the political and economic tumult changes of another sort were being set into motion. Growing discontent with conservative fiscal policies was accompanied in intellectual and popular recreational circles by discontent with, and even contempt for, the more traditional aspects of pre-war culture and society. The decimation of war had instilled a new cynicism and skepticism about the older leadership and its habits among your adults across the board. The loosening of the old guard's social prominence facilitated the rise of new passions and liberal inclinations among the politically ambitious younger generations, and their ideas flourished. Writing in 1925, the fifty-year-old Winston Churchill, then Chancellor of the Exchequer under Stanley Baldwin, recognized the increasing impatience with tradition in Britain. An economic and ideological conservative, Churchill had this to say about its waning influence:

Is what we see now in the leading democracies a diffusion and squandering of the accumulated wisdom and treasure of the past? Are we blundering on together in myriad companies, like innumerable swarms of locusts chirping and devouring towards the salt sea, or towards some vast incinerator of shams and fallacies? Or have we for the first time reached those uplands whence all of us, even the humblest and silliest equally with the best, can discern for ourselves the beacon lights? Surely such an inquiry deserves an idle hour.²

In the face of what they perceived as social and cultural drudgery, some British citizens began to fancy the prospect of adopting a refreshing "Otherness." At this time fascination with things pertaining to the budding American mass culture were becoming increasingly acceptable and even fashionable to a large portion of the British population. The general populace proceeded to consume American movies, sports, and music with genuine fervor. In particular, jazz and other American entertainment music rose to considerable heights of prestige in Britain.³

Though African American entertainments had always enjoyed more than modest popularity in Britain back to the days of mid-nineteenth century minstrelsy, later examples of which Katie Graber and Julia Chybowski discuss elsewhere in this issue, the absorption of American popular music in Britain during the 1920s occurred on an unprecedented scale and was further heightened as time went on. In her Ph.D. dissertation examining popular music and the British Broadcasting Corporation during World War II, Christina Baade underscores the intensification of the British fascination with American jazz and popular music in the years following World War I:

Although it is possible to trace a transatlantic exchange of musical culture going back to the nineteenth century and beyond, the decades after World War I signaled a shift in the balance of power in favor of the United States, which was only exacerbated during the Second World War.⁴

Young Britons, like members of so many other European nations both in the 1920s and at other times, relished the bravado and vitality that seemed to define American culture and music. They were eager to connect freedom and progress with forces outside a grim and diminished homeland, namely foreign and exotic places and peoples. At the same time, jazz provided more adventurous souls with a means of concealing their post-war social anxieties. In his book, *The Radical Twenties: Writing, Politics, and Culture*, John Lucas explains how jazz, in addition to being associated with positive progressivism, was also used as a conscious tool to express disappointment with current conditions. He describes how unemployment marches in Britain during the 1920s often included jazz bands, and states that jazz was one of several “elements in behavioral patterns intended to signal a disillusionment with the post war world.”⁵ In a similar vein, Glenn Watkins discusses jazz as an outlet favored by the post-war Europeans suffering from worn nerves immediately following the war.

In the eyes of some during the 1920s, signs of frayed “nerves” were evident not only in the migration to France of the so-called “Lost Generation” of American writers but also in most of the American dances that were finding their way to Europe. Despite its seemingly carefree attitude, “jazz,” which often found expression in an insouciant, compulsive beat and runaway energy, reflected the societal distress that many were experiencing.⁶

Concurrent with these trends, a modernist movement emerged among intellectual circles in Britain in the years following World War I, including the so-called Bloomsbury circle. In this post-bellum cultural climate they sought to embrace new freedoms and ideas. Given that the group had no formal organization or membership, pinpointing all of its contributing members is difficult. However, its primary lights were Virginia and Leonard Woolf, Roger Fry, Clive Bell, E. M. Forster, Lytton Strachey, and David Garnett. Although these and others of the Bloomsbury group differed somewhat in their goals and ideals, they were bound together in a shared rejection of moral subjectivism and verism. They all sought greater liberty and expression in life and art than what had been afforded to society through the more formal customs of the late Victorian age. The Bloomsbury group’s postwar modernist aesthetic is well summarized by Bloomsbury scholar Heinz Antor:

They realized that the modern age was an age of disintegration and this created in them the need to transcend the surface level

of outside reality in order to find something of lasting value, something absolute or eternal. The Bloomsbury artists, like many other modern artists, felt that what had been rendered by traditional art was either superficial or had lost its validity.⁷

Another writer on Bloomsbury, Ulysses L. D'Aquila, paints a more aggressive picture of the Bloomsbury circle:

In each of them, whether in the field of painting, aesthetics, economics, political philosophy or literature, was the desire both to strike a fatal blow at the oppressive Victorian past and to make some solid contribution to the new world its passing would make possible.⁸

By the 1920s many British writers, both those associated with Bloomsbury and those not, embraced greater freedom and less expressive restraint in their styles. Essayists and novelists investigated hitherto taboo or provocative topics. The younger writers of England embraced the field of psychology, especially those theories pertaining to love and sex. The work of Sigmund Freud was highly revered, and numerous others drew upon it, particularly D. H. Lawrence, who explored and wrote candidly about sexuality in his novels. Virginia Woolf's tireless efforts on the behalf of women and their roles in society came to some avail as Britain established women's suffrage in 1928, eight years after the United States did the same.

Others modernists loosely associated with the Bloomsbury circle adopted a more encompassing approach to pushing the boundaries of mainstream taste by touting new art and music as well as literature. One such group, sometimes affiliated with the Bloomsbury circle, was comprised of the Sitwell siblings: Edith (1887–1964), Osbert (1892–1969), and Sacheverell (1897–1988). The Sitwells gained a reputation for eclecticism, eccentricity, wit, learning, and bizarre behavior, always delighting in the modern.⁹ Their family heritage is no less remarkable. The Sitwells have been traced back to the early fourteenth century and boast a long line of noblemen and dignitaries including an earl, a mathematician, and several writers. The twentieth-century Sitwell siblings' father was a baronet and a painter who was reputed (as were many Sitwells before him) to be a man not entirely sane. In addition to his claims to be able to capture spirits, George Sitwell was known to provide decor for his estate by painting Chinese letters on his livestock. His children inherited some of his eccentricities and fit nicely into their post-World War I times. Their tastes in literature, art, and music mirrored the intellectual fashions of the British 1920s, all the more since their assimilation of multiple disciplines within the arts earned emulation by numerous admirers. All three went on to achieve distinction in their own individual ways, and each wrote works in many different literary forms. Edith was perhaps the most famous of the siblings for her communicative and vivid poetry. Her best known poem is

Façade (1922), a clever experiment in phrasing and imagery. Osbert was primarily an essayist with a flair for nuance and ironic humor as well as melancholy reflection.

Sacheverell, the youngest, gained equal fame as a critic, a poet, a biographer, and a travel writer. He traveled the world avidly and wrote insightful and highly descriptive accounts of his voyages, often tinged with a warm, human element.¹⁰ The Sitwells' reputation for seeking the remote and mysterious—in a word, the “Exotic”—was in large part sustained by Sacheverell's forays into foreign lands and his historically informed, if at times fanciful, accounts of them. An early biographer of the Sitwells, John Lehman, called Sacheverell “a keen traveler, particularly one habitually inspired by the exotic, the concealed, and the neglected.”¹¹ Sacheverell's most recent biographer, Sarah Bradford, characterized him as “having a fear of boredom and the humdrum; he enjoyed the sensation of the extraordinary.”¹² Sacheverell himself proclaimed his affinity for what he viewed as the extreme and the extravagant during an interview with Peter Hunt: “I like things to be excessive, either very beautiful or very macabre.”¹³

While these interests fit in well with the times, travel writing and passion for an “Exotic Other” was not at all new to the British by the 1920s.¹⁴ Many British travel writers from the Renaissance era through the nineteenth century called attention to exotic aspects of their voyages to America and elsewhere. Barbara Korte, author of *English Travel Writing: From Pilgrimages to Postcolonial Explorations* (1996), notes that “the assumption that foreign parts were marvelous and populated by fabulous races was certainly long-standing.”¹⁵ A short list of notable British travel writers on whom this aspect of the Americas in particular was not lost includes Thomas Hariot (1560–1621), William Dampier (1652–1715), Anna Jameson (1794–1860), Charles Darwin (1809–1882), and Arthur Firbank (1886–1926). Many more British travel writers wrote about other parts of the world, especially the Orient, and together with those named above helped create a genre of writing on which the interwar modernist generation based much of its expectations and imaginings. But whereas before the 1920s travel writers admired the Otherness of exotic horizons from a safe distance, new writers of the modernist movement sought to emulate in their own lives what they perceived as the freedom residing in the remote. Barbara Korte explains:

Many British travellers before the First World War still felt rooted in their home country and loyal to its values. Between the world wars, however, many travellers, including a high proportion of writers, consciously sought to escape from their home society.

Travellers looked abroad for alternatives to the lifelessness and constriction of their own country.¹⁶

This postwar mentality marked a new generation of travel writers including E. M. Forster, D. H. Lawrence, Evelyn Waugh, and later Sacheverell Sitwell. In actuality, the Sitwells as a triumvirate stood behind the allure of

travel early on in the English modernist movement with their continuous advocacy of things foreign. Sarah Bradford states: "The end of the war reopened the possibilities of travel in Europe and beyond; through the 1920s the Sitwells were the trailblazers, making it fashionable to travel in search of the beautiful and the obscure."¹⁷

Although he produced much of his travel literature later in life, Sacheverell Sitwell's early poetic writings from the 1920s already abound with a yearning for the non-British Exotic. A volume of poems published with and including *The Thirteenth Caesar* (dating from 1924) is rich in its evocations of lush tropical vegetation, sparkling pools and waterfalls, and peoples of faraway lands and ages.¹⁸ One of the poems in particular, *The Rio Grande*, stands out for its descriptions of iridescent scenery and its fanciful portrayal of Latin America. *The Rio Grande* does not depict the river in the south of Texas, but rather a festive day in a Brazilian seaport (the exact location is unclear). The language of the poem is highly atmospheric and displays some of the vivid imagery, as well as the expectations and subsequent experiences, shared by other modernists in works such as D. H. Lawrence's *Mornings in Mexico* (1927) and Evelyn Waugh's *Ninety-Two Days* (1934).

Another crucial influence on Sacheverell Sitwell's poetry was a long-standing passion for visual art. Both his brother, Osbert, and his father, Sir George, fostered this interest by taking Sacheverell to exhibitions and also educating him through their own enthusiastic tutelage. While still a teen Sacheverell enrolled at Eton College (and later Oxford) to study literature and art. Coupled with this was the experience during these years of witnessing Serge Diaghilev's Ballets Russes visiting in London during the fall of 1918. Diaghilev, who had gained a reputation as a devotee of the Primitive and the Exotic with such productions as Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, paid periodic visits to the Bloomsbury gatherings.

Sitwell, however, was not the sole modernist whose impressions of the Exotic were shaped by the visual arts. Post-Impressionist art from the first two decades of the twentieth century helped feed the imaginations of numerous other modernists anticipating the Exotic. Although not limited to solely French artists (a notable exception is Picasso), painters and sculptors of this nationality were particularly taken with exotic subject matter. Works by artists such as Derain, Matisse, and Cézanne, among others, offered tantalizing images of the Erotic and the Primitive as well as the Exotic. One only has to view paintings such as Matisse's *Joie de vivre* (1905–1906) or Derain's *Bacchic Dance* (1906) in order to discern a desire to depart from any previous conventions in favor of more unbinding methods of expression associated with Post-Impressionism. It should then come as little surprise that modernist writers commonly promoted the efforts of their artistic counterparts. The Sitwell siblings were fervent evangelists of the modernist movement, and among other activities they propagated its art in both print and in deed. In 1919, Osbert and Sacheverell, with the help of Bloomsbury art mogul Roger Fry, organized an exhibition of French Post-Impressionist art in London. They arranged to have works by paint-

ers such as Matisse, Dufy, Gauguin, and Picasso exhibited in London to a wide audience of connoisseurs and lay people. This exhibition established the Sitwell brothers as champions of contemporary art.¹⁹

Jody Blake, in her book *Le Tumulte noir: Modernist Art and Popular Entertainment in Jazz-Age Paris, 1900–1930*, discusses in great detail the metamorphosis of the French attitude toward black American music from the turn of the century through World War I. Her statements, quoted here at length, suggest that the French art so voraciously consumed by the Sitwells and other British modernists was itself often rooted in perceptions of black American musical culture:

The immediate postwar period experienced, therefore, an internal upheaval nearly as momentous as the external cataclysm that had triggered it. Nowhere were these aftershocks felt more strongly than in the world of jazz-age entertainment. From popular stages and dance floors, French society itself was eventually jolted as its youth heeded the subversive challenge of the new music. . . . The result was poetry and painting that resembled the prose of the mainstream literary magazines and the canvases of the academic salons as little as jazz resembled the music of the established concert halls. . . . Like jazz music and jazz dance themselves, the “jazz art” and “jazz literature” of the [French] dadaists were thought to signal the imminent triumph of savagery over civilization. As such, both popular entertainment and the modernist art that shared its iconoclastic spirit and subversive intent would be thrust into the middle of the debate over the perceived crisis in traditional values that raged over France in the wake of the postwar “Call to Order.”²⁰

At the time French artists began to imbue their works with exoticism, black American vernacular genres, such as the cakewalk, began to take root in Paris as well. The association of freedom with the exoticism of America not only manifested itself in the visual art of France, but also the aural. The mystique of the thriving “Negro” American musical culture proved irresistible for French listeners as it later would for the English. Black musicians found themselves welcome in France and were treated more sympathetically there than they had been accustomed to in America. Predictably, ragtime soon found a niche in France and, as a result, black music affected French art through its affinity with the Exotic. Greg Robinson writes that in France “commentators persisted in analyzing their art through the vocabulary of the exotic and the primitive,” a reference to both African American and Native American elements.²¹

Clearly the artistic works described above interested the Sitwell siblings, as is evidenced by the painters they chose to represent in the exhibition. Their advocacy of French Exotic and Primitivist art found enthusiasts among the contemporary British intelligentsia, including composers, artists, and friends of Bloomsbury. As a result of this exposure, British

attraction to the Exotic increased and many of the younger generation took note. One such young artist was the composer Constant Lambert (1905–1951).

The strange and unenviable circumstances of Lambert's childhood and adolescence likely account, at least in part, for a later predilection toward the Exotic.²² Living for much of his youth in a state of perpetual pain and illness, Lambert spent considerable time at hospitals and care centers. His father, George Lambert, was a commercial painter/sculptor, largely of nature subjects, whose livelihood fluctuated in accordance with the demands and means of his clients. The situation did not correlate well with the educational, medical, and musical fees of his sons (Lambert had a brother, Maurice), not to mention whatever else the family may have had in way of expenses. As a result, Constant often spent time away from home in the care and company of friends, relatives, and other generous benefactors. Compelled to suffer special treatment for his medical needs, the boy endured the scorn and envy of his peers when he was able to attend school at all. Yet despite these hardships Constant displayed a prodigious grasp of music and was able to make impressive headway in his development as a young composer, harboring early enthusiasm for dance music and the piano school of Liszt.

Perhaps the ultimate blow in Lambert's rearing came when his father left for Australia late in 1920, never to return nor to provide any monetary support for his children. This desertion proved a crushing culmination to a childhood marked by deprivation. Matters began to look up for Lambert when he enrolled at the Royal College of Music in 1922. The young man quickly made friends and admirers, and he had no difficulty forming allies. Among these was his teacher Ralph Vaughan Williams, who expressed wonder at the formidable level of technique Lambert had already possessed. Others included the Sitwells, who were to play a central role in the formation of Lambert's mature aesthetic outlook.

Lambert first met the Sitwells in 1922, at the age of seventeen, on the threshold of his compositional career. Recognizing that the young man had abundant talent and interests very similar to their own, the Sitwells welcomed him as a frequent guest into their household, and they championed his musical efforts. Osbert Sitwell wrote a piece about Lambert in his book *Queen Mary and Others* (1974) years after the latter's death. The Sitwells' general affection for Lambert is clear:

If someone chanced to ask me who was the most lively, quick, well-informed, and in general the most intelligent young man I had ever met, I should have no difficulty in finding at once the answer: Constant Lambert.²³

Lambert had always been influenced by a variety of musical and literary styles, stemming in part from the varied company he kept: poets, sculptors, painters, philosophers, and of course, musicians. His diverse musi-

cal output, drawing upon sources from Lisztian romanticism to the experimental ballets of Stravinsky, and from the neoclassicism of Ravel to the nationalism of the Russian Mighty Five, is particularly revealing in this matter. In 1923 Lambert added to his musical palette elements when he witnessed a theater event produced by C. B. Cochran titled *From Dover Street to Dixie* at the London Pavilion. This show consisted of a series of skits derived from blackface minstrel acts and songs sung by Florence Mills with a troupe of black artists who came to be known a few years later as the “Blackbirds.” Mills’s supporting troupe was accompanied by an ensemble coined “The Plantation Orchestra,” members of which performed jazz-embellished versions of spirituals and minstrel tunes such as James Bland’s “Carry Me back to Old Virginny.”

Florence Mills (1895–1927) enjoyed great popularity in England during the mid- to late 1920s, having first gained considerable respect in America and then abroad as an actor, singer, and entertainer performing vaudeville skits and songs. In at least one instance she even crossed over into the concert hall and sang the soprano role in William Grant Still’s *Levee Land* (1925), a work for solo vocalist and large chamber ensemble. A great box office draw in the United States during the teens and twenties, Mills eventually began touring abroad with the Blackbirds. Lambert saw her first British tour in 1923. After returning to Broadway in 1924, Mills then spent much of her last years touring in France and England. From 1926 through May of 1927 Lambert attended Mills’s shows often. Soon after her last London production Mills took ill and died in early November of 1927. Her spectacular, albeit brief, career is discussed in a eulogy written by her husband, U. S. Thompson.²⁴

Lambert was apparently quite taken with Mills’s personality and by her performances of black spirituals. The British music writer, pianist, and friend of Lambert, Angus Morrison, claims Lambert admired her “essential simplicity” and “childlike quality,” which brought the *Dover Street to Dixie* production to life and stirred interest in black American music in the young composer.²⁵ His perception of Mills’s “childlike” quality suggests his association of black musicality with untrained naturalness, and continues the racial reception discussed at length in essays by Chybowski and Graber in this issue. The performance certainly made an indelible impression on Lambert. Morrison, who was present with him, had this to offer concerning his companion’s perception of these American performers:

Without a doubt this was one of the key experiences in his life, beginning not only with his long preoccupation with jazz and the possibility of fusing and blending many of its rhythmic inventions and subtleties into the texture of more serious [sic] music, but also moving him in a far deeper way emotionally than any other music he had hitherto heard.²⁶

It is clear from Morrison, with his talk of “fusing and blending” jazz elements into “more serious” music, that the *Dover Street to Dixie* show

was a key preparatory experience for Lambert's composition of *The Rio Grande*. In regard to specific aspects of the *Dover Street* performance that made an imprint on Lambert and influenced the creation of *The Rio Grande*, Morrison provides further insight:

The arresting part of the whole performance was a sort of fanfare on the tune of *Carry me back to old Virginia* [sic]. The Delius-like harmonies were made to sound even more lush and glowing by the clear uninhibited [sic] playing of this magnificent Negro band. It was indeed the memory of this opening flourish played by the superb first trumpeter, Johnny Dunn (described in the programme as "the Creator of "Wa-Wa"), that remained with Constant all through his life. Its echo can be heard somewhere in almost all his works, and there is no doubt that the first phrase of the chorus in *The Rio Grande* was a conscious attempt on his part to reproduce the same effect—that irresistible blend of blatancy and sweetness that had stirred him so deeply when he first heard it.²⁷

From this point it seems that Lambert became truly devoted to using jazz elements in his works intended for the concert hall. Yet not only did Lambert make extensive use of jazz harmonies and syncopated rhythmic elements in many of his compositions, he became an active propagator of its merits in his writings on music, of which there are several. His most famous collection of writings, *Music Ho!* (published first in Britain in 1934 and later in America in 1967) contains extensive treatment of American jazz and exoticism in music. While many of the writings in *Music Ho!* date from shortly beyond the 1920s, the attitudes expressed in them mirror those of artists, musicians, and writers of the time period and are germane to *The Rio Grande*. One statement, in particular, places Lambert directly into the role of quintessential iconoclast among British intellectuals seeking an alternative social climate in the 1920s: "Even the most austere among us occasionally feel a desire to escape from our drab physical surroundings into a more highly coloured and less moral world."²⁸

All indications are that Lambert was enraptured, for musical and contextual reasons, by American spirituals and elements of jazz from very early stages in his career. Certainly by the time he knew the Sitwells his admiration for black vernaculars had been established, only to be heightened with his exposure to the brand of singing produced by Florence Mills and her band. As one might expect from the frequent exchange of letters between Lambert and the Sitwells, Osbert Sitwell, well aware of Lambert's fascination with American music, observed:

Constant's music seems to me to have a special nostalgia of its own; his choral setting of my brother's poem, 'Rio Grande,' which I have heard several times, is magnificent and beguiling. His Book *Music Ho!* rivals Berlioz's *Soirées dans L'Orchestre*. Berlioz was one

of his gods, as was the Abbé Liszt. But in light mood he would praise Sousa: indeed he had founded a club to demand more and superior performances of his work.²⁹

Of course Lambert was not the only composer in England or elsewhere to express an attraction to American musical imports. Many prominent European composers, including Debussy, Stravinsky, Hindemith, Ravel, Walton, Shostakovich, Weill, and Milhaud, to name only a few, adopted elements of jazz and American vernaculars into their own works from 1910 onward. Jazz, then, provided theirs and Lambert's music with a dimension, an "Otherness," that set it apart from traditional European styles and practices—a welcome prospect during the social and cultural restlessness of the times. Susan C. Cook cites reasons why European composers experimented with jazz in their "serious" music and notes that these attempts were not necessarily new:

The popular, through its associations with the feminine, the body, and mass culture, promised something that was lacking within the privileged sphere of mindful high culture. In their desire to flirt with popular music, then, modernist composers in the 1920s shared sensibilities with composers, artists, and writers before them who had similarly transgressed national, racial, and class boundaries for aesthetic attributes of the Exotic that might likewise inform their "serious" work.³⁰

While Lambert sought for a way to fuse and blend jazz with classical music, he was yet concerned with retaining the "authenticity" of the jazz elements he used. The *Dover Street to Dixie* performance, with its "authentic" black performance styles, revealed to him how this might be achieved. *The Rio Grande* is the product of that very possibility. It is a blending of African American jazz with so-called classical elements of form and texture, aesthetically implying a marriage of the old European classical parameters of the mind with the new, racialized jazz and dance elements of the body. Lambert imbues Sitwell's colorful poem with the exotic borrowings from the spiritual, the cakewalk, and ragtime for the purpose of depicting the ambience of Sitwell's poem. At certain junctures throughout the score, Lambert overtly imitates aspects of the black skits he experienced in *Dover Street to Dixie*. One can hear the "wa-wa" trumpet, the "drooping" minor thirds redolent of the black spiritual, and the comic use of syncopated ragtime vamping reminiscent of minstrel show skits. The result is a score brimming with jocularly and vitality even in subdued passages, a score bent on exhibiting the liveliness of an exotic paradise.

Lambert also found authenticity in the combination of instruments and voices used in the *Dover Street to Dixie* performance. The composer cited the 1923 show as prompting his use of a black choir in *The Rio Grande*. In an interview with David Patmore, Lambert declared: "I want to do *The Rio*

Grande with a negro choir. I have always had negro voices in mind for this piece, as the idea for the music came from seeing [and hearing] Florence Mills in *Dover Street to Dixie* and from some of the music in 'Blackbirds.'" ³¹ Although it is unclear whether or not Lambert ever had the occasion of using this particular ensemble, his statement at the least reveals earnest intention. Beyond this and given his professed interest in black music, Lambert would likely have been aware of the long tradition of black spiritual and jubilee vocal groups frequenting Britain in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

However, the issue of authenticity hardly concludes here. That the poem *The Rio Grande* by Sacheverell Sitwell describes South America while the music by Lambert draws upon North American styles is problematic given the composer's intent for stylistic reconciliation between text and music. One should bear in mind, however, that what Lambert wanted to avoid was a localized European imitation of jazz styles. Transcultural borrowing was, to his thinking, compatible with authenticity, but only in a general way. In *The Rio Grande* Lambert uses a North American musical exoticism—black jazz—to color the imagery of South American exoticism described in Sitwell's poem and in effect conflates both the Americas. Lambert recognized, of course, that jazz was primarily a black North American practice. However, for all of his concern for authenticity in performance he vehemently refused to accept the notion that North America held sole ownership of jazz, and he was a staunch advocate of its transcultural and transhemispheric assimilation. In *Music Ho!* he states:

The Negro once enjoyed a monopoly of jazz, just as England once enjoyed a monopoly of the industrial revolution, but for the Negroes to imagine that all jazz is their native province is as if an Englishman were to imagine that all locomotives were built by his compatriots. On one hand, we have the crusty old colonels, the choleric judges and beer-sodden columnists who imagine they represent the European tradition, murmuring "swamp stuff," "jungle rhythms," "Negro decadence" whenever they hear the innocent and anodyne strains of the average English jazz band, hugely enjoying their position of Cassandra prophesying the downfall of the white woman. On the other hand we have the well-meaning, but rather sentimental propagandists of the Negro race only too eager to point out that the Negroes are the only begetters of a movement that has admittedly swept all over the world and that provides an exotic influence far exceeding the localized exoticism of Cocteau and his followers. ³²

By slighting the most famous fellow traveler of Les Six in Cocteau, Lambert betrays a less narrow but still circumscribed and European perspective on vernacular music, more or less heedless of what the music may have meant to its creators or other Americans "all over the world." ³³ Lam-



bert argues that composers like Milhaud and Auric at times passed off their foreign flavored use of local kitsch as genuinely exotic. He felt that some pieces by these men were contrived and infused with paltry elements. In the quotation below he even uses the word “emasculated” in order to describe what he viewed as a cheap surrogate for the stout authenticity he claimed to model.

Although the belated attempt to revive the glories of Chabrier in the shape of the bal-musette sentimentalities of Auric, the military-band exoticism of Poulenc and the wise-cracking South Americanisms of Milhaud, has produced little work of even temporary value—and certainly no work of anything like permanent value—this self-consciously popular movement has been worth examining if only for the fact that it provides the link between pre-war national exoticism and post-war international exoticism. It is strange indeed that the slangy squarecut vulgarity of Auric and Milhaud, as exemplified by *Les matelots* and *Le boeuf sur le toit*, should be the bridge between the sturdy provincialism of the folk dance and the emasculated cosmopolitanism of the foxtrot.³⁴

The Rio Grande can be categorized as a cantata for chorus, alto soloist, piano, and a small orchestra consisting of strings, two trumpets, two cornets, three trombones (two tenors and one bass), tuba, and a host of percussion instruments. A glance at the list of percussion instruments used in this work reflects its exotic strivings and its emphasis on rhythm: xylophone, glockenspiel, triangle, castanets, small cow bell, tambourine, side-drum with a wire brush, tenor drum, Chinese tom-tom, Chinese block, cymbals, Turkish crash cymbal, bass drum, tam-tam, and three tympani. Of central importance to the *The Rio Grande*, both in its leadership role and its character, is the piano. Lambert's own instrument, the piano plays a prominent part throughout the work, noteworthy if we remember it as the basic vehicle for ragtime and cakewalk works from the turn of the century. In addition, Lambert assigns large cadenzas to and organizes much of the harmonic movement and texture around the piano. Thus, for the purposes of providing various means of exotic ambience and for upholding harmonic motion the piano is absolutely essential. Yet the piano is also the quintessential parlor and concert instrument of its time.

The form of *The Rio Grande* is a loose ABA, helpful for portraying the bright atmosphere of the outer sections of the poem in contrast with the more tranquil middle lines concerned with a hushed town and the space of silence in the air. The texture is built on several small motives, many of which suggest intervals in an American spiritual or early jazz melody, as shall soon be discussed. When these motives take a subsidiary role, as they occasionally do, it is usually for the express purpose of painting a specific word or phrase.

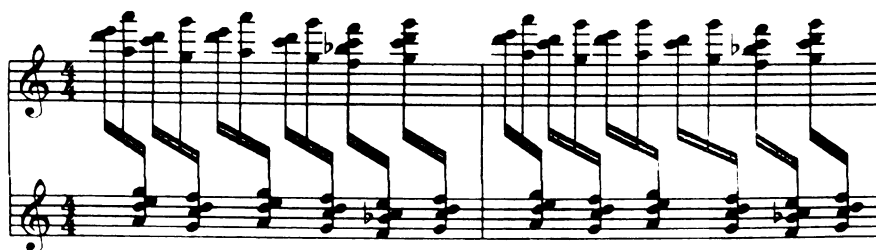
As one might expect, the main motives of the work are, for the most part, rhythmic and rely heavily on syncopation. The first of these is a rhyth-

mic figure () frequently used in the turn-of-the-century cakewalks of Scott Joplin and Arthur Marshall, as well as the cakewalk imitation by Claude Debussy in his small work for piano *Le Petit Nègre* (1909). The second major rhythmic motive (Example 1) suggests piano ragtime found in the works of Joplin as well: two groups of sixteenth notes with each group containing four notes, the last of the first group and the first of the last group tied together: . The tied notes create a stress on the weak part of the second beat, a syncopation technique common in ragtime music.



Example 1. Ragtime rhythmic motive used in first theme in the strings (measure 10)

In *The Rio Grande* Lambert uses the cakewalk motive in a number of guises, perhaps best demonstrated at the beginning of the piece. The first instance of the motive appears in a slightly altered variant. After a syncopated introduction highlighting tambourines and plucked strings, an opening piano flourish appears. This figure, widely reused throughout the work, features a cakewalk motive embedded within a hemiola pattern. The second sixteenth note in each three-note group comes out accented, forming a stress not unlike the rhythmic motive identified with the cakewalk. See Example 2 below:



Example 2: First example of "Cakewalk" motive in *The Rio Grande* (measures 5-6)

The strings continue with a mixture of the ragtime and cakewalk figures and are interrupted by the brass, who introduce the latter figure themselves. This texture lasts for half a dozen measures until the choir enters at rehearsal 1. Highlighting the first line of the poem is the almost disparaging declension (featuring an accent on a D-flat, which is by no means diatonic) occurring on the word “sarabande” and can be seen as a conscious word painting instance in which the longstanding dance form of Europe is portrayed as both dull and old fashioned. A new and exciting dance style now reigns: the cakewalk. Likewise, the vitality present up to this point is briefly dimmed as the “forlorn madrigals” and their “sad notes” arrive in the text, but rehearsals 3 and 4 quickly liven things up again, and the cakewalk, led by the piano, takes on picturesque hues as an alto soloist, possibly scored with an image of soprano Florence Mills as a model, describes the frightened nightingale being awakened among the trees. There is no sarabande being played on a harpsichord now, but a new cakewalk dance on the piano. Here Lambert cleverly places the piano figure in the upper register amid occasional chiming from the triangle, giving the impression of chirping. In the next lines of the poem, concerning the dancing in the public squares, the choir, the piano, and the orchestra (with much more percussion) march along to the text in a colorful procession accompanied by lush harmonies primarily oscillating between major and minor seventh sonorities. Sitwell and Lambert clearly had vivid expectations of Brazil.³⁵

At rehearsal 6, marked *giocoso*, the piano and an increased percussion battery continue the cakewalk further, while the choir illuminates the “gurgling river.” The choir takes a subsidiary role to the piano and percussion, and the real emphasis is put on the happiness of the people dancing by the limpid river. See Example 3:



Example 3: The Rio Grande, piano figure at rehearsal 6

Soon the revelry breaks up as a result of the calls to order by the grownups, the “Commendador and the Alguacil,” Brazilian equivalents of the Canadian Mounties. Trumpets and xylophones ring out and depict the brazen descriptions of these lines of the poem. The line “Tireless while all others tire” is a clear reference to the fantastical exuberance of the culture Lambert is trying to portray here. The tirelessness of this foreign paradise makes good on its promise, and after the end of the first appearance of the A section a lengthy cadenza given by the piano and accentuated by various interjections from different members of the percussion

section rushes in immediately at rehearsal 11. The cadenza serves as a transition to the serene middle section and features development of the cakewalk and ragtime rhythmic motives discussed above. Activity dies down at the cadenza and the piano texture relaxes into a series of rolled chords, only to be interrupted again by cakewalk flourishes. However, at rehearsal 13 the real calm settles in and a new mood pervades.

Hitherto, the content and character of both the music and the poem have been energetic and radiant, reflecting youth and vitality illustrated through the dancing. Now, the middle section of the poem describes a hushed town and shining starlight, and though most of the previous rhythmic energy disappears, the feeling of lush extravagance in this joyous world is no less palpable. Lambert sets aside ragtime and the cakewalk and relies on a slightly different kind of black-identified music to express the new ethereal scenery, the black spiritual. Characteristic of the latter is the use of sliding or “drooping” major/minor thirds which are such an integral part of the blues and the black American spiritual style.³⁶ In *The Rio Grande* this effect appears in both the trumpet signal and in the chorus entry six measures later. Example 4 below illustrates the feature:

The image shows a musical score for a choral entrance, consisting of four staves. The music is in 4/4 time and begins with a piano (p) dynamic. The lyrics are: "To where, in the square, they dance and the band is play-ing;". The score features a variety of musical notations, including eighth notes, quarter notes, and half notes, with some measures containing triplets. The lyrics are written below the staves, with some words split across lines. The overall mood is serene and calm, reflecting the middle section of the poem.

Example 4. Choral entrance, four measures after rehearsal 14

Also, though the atmosphere here is different from the previous passage, the syncopation is no less present as tied notes and weak-beat stresses abound. Chordal sonorities derived from C-sharp minor simmer softly from the piano amid the calm murmuring of the choir, members of which describe the now placid atmosphere. Another exercise in word painting ensues as the whole ensemble gradually works up to a small roar when describing the water murmuring “above the crowd and the band together.” Not one to keep things subdued in this work for long, Lambert immediately inserts an *Allegro Risoluto* beginning at rehearsal number 17. Yet another build-up ensues as the poem tells us of the music and merriment of the people spilling forth like the waterfalls emptying into the sea. Here resides the middle climax of the work as the chorus and orchestra sound forth a stentorian C major chord on the word “sea” as if reflecting the

immensity of that entity separating the New World paradise from the tedious Old World.

A brief pause introduces the anticlimax: a parody of black skits and minstrelsy at rehearsal 19. Marked *scherzando*, the piano performs here a kind of ragtime vamp using rolled chords and accents on weak beats and giving the impression of the “eccentric” dancing and comedy historically associated with such minstrel skits (see Example 5). Stressing the comic effect once again is percussion that double the accents of the piano on the castanets and wood blocks.



Example 5. The Rio Grande, rehearsal 19

The cakewalk once more continues as thematic material from the first section returns. This time the score calls for even more percussion (denoting the marimba, timpani, and kettle drum mentioned in the text), and the glissandi or “sliding” elements are discernable in the brass. The final climax occurs at rehearsal 23 as the poem once more insists that there is no old-fashioned sarabande being danced at this jubilant place in Brazil. Interestingly enough, however, Lambert inserts another piano cadenza after this third denial of the sarabande, but a cadenza unlike its jovial, jazz-influenced predecessor. This cadenza consists of glittering Lisztian virtuososo passage work giving way to soft, nocturne-like reflection. Little in the way of black American music is imitated here; perhaps this is Lambert delaying Sacheverell Sitwell on the way to the sparkling New World fantasy, pausing a moment while casting a wistful look back at the world that nurtured and shaped him. But this is a fleeting hesitancy. The alto soloist returns and sings the last lines of the work containing the rich melodic lines and drooping thirds encountered before. The work ends, even as the poem does, with a “tempered” exuberance, the flowing gentleness found in one last appearance of the black American spiritual, an echo perhaps of the music of a race of people begging for a different kind of release yearned for many decades before.³⁷

The emotional and qualitative effect of *The Rio Grande* was not lost upon listeners who first heard it 12 December 1929 at Manchester performed by the Halle Orchestra and Choir, with an unnamed alto soloist, conducted by Lambert. The press and audience responses were ecstatic; they were intrigued and favorably impressed that a “serious” composer like Lambert, who would hit his reputational stride with *The Rio Grande*,

took their long-beloved jazz and used it to compose this work. Lambert's musical contemporaries also gave it considerable praise. His good friend William Walton generously declared, "Don't miss a second of this. It's great. Much better than I have ever written."³⁸ Arthur Bliss, not known for any enthusiasm toward jazz, years later looked backwards and cited it as "perennially fresh."³⁹ Likewise the general populace were thrilled, as suggested by an anonymous reviewer in the *London Times* on 14 December 1929.⁴⁰ The exotic tropes of sensuality, black rhythm, and the "languor" and "vigor" of the New World were not lost upon by the reviewer in connection with the escapism inherent in *The Rio Grande*.

This work is not the first attempt to employ the idioms of jazz for serious musical purposes, but it is the first completely successful of a composer so absorbing the spirit, the rhythm, and the instrumentation of jazz as to be able to use it naturally and in good faith to express ideas of his own which suit the medium. The text is Sacheverell Sitwell's, and its copious imagery easily conjures up in the mind of the composer both the languor of the Southern and the vigor of the Northern American dance forms. The sensuous and the rhythmic elements are found similarly equipoised in the crudest [*sic*] negro jazz, and indeed constitute its powerful appeal; but Mr. Lambert, who is young enough to take jazz quite naturally when he meets it, and has not laboriously to overcome any prejudices, can use it creatively as no jazz composer does who falls back on the strings of *cliches*. This work is original in two ways at once: It uses jazz in a new, serious, and original manner, and it is original quality jazz because it is animated by a definite poetic idea.⁴¹

The refreshing novelty of the work, perhaps more than any other aspect, won over audiences who first heard it. Recalling the words of Angus Morrison, the union of the poem and the music of *The Rio Grande* convey a "blatancy and sweetness" not readily felt by those still under the sway of Old Europe. Morrison goes on to characterize *The Rio Grande*: "It is here, surely, that he gives expression more completely than anywhere else in his music to the passionate longing he always felt for exotic beauty, and his perpetual sense of the beckoning wonder of distant and unattainable horizons."⁴² In light of later developments, however, the poem and the music of Sitwell and Lambert appear to be temporal fantasies of youth existing during an era highly receptive to such escapism. It is clear from biographical information on both men that they never gave up on a life-long search for the extraordinary. Yet their youthful vigor and unbridled fantasizing on Exotic Otherness grew more mellow even as the inter-war modernism of England and the rest of Europe changed. When Sacheverell Sitwell finally visited Brazil many decades after writing *The Rio Grande* he found it more dull and lifeless than he had previously expected, with few

of the colorful birds or lush scenery he had envisioned many years before.⁴³ And though the state of jazz as popular music continued to remain as strong as ever in Britain, the exotic side of jazz Lambert sought to convey during the mid- to late 1920s in works such as *The Rio Grande* gave way to denser, more neo-classically oriented works like the *Concerto for Piano and Nine Players* (1930–1931) and the late ballet *Tiresias* (1951), which use jazz harmonies and rhythms as one of many flavors rather than a showcase for a distinct American brand of Exoticism.⁴⁴ To the extent that it employs jazz so overtly, *The Rio Grande* is the last work of its kind by Lambert.

Indeed, when considering the question of placement, not only within the composer's own compositional output but also within the larger scheme of twentieth-century British music as a whole, *The Rio Grande* stands out as something of an anomaly and reveals an additional dimension of its importance. At a time when composers such as Vaughan Williams had been trying (and succeeding) to establish a distinct English style in contrast to the seemingly ubiquitous and overmastering German tradition, the appearance of a work such as *The Rio Grande* decidedly disrupted that trend. As mentioned previously, jazz and its exotic associations had always held a certain allure for Britons, and this attraction reached a considerable level of intensity during the 1920s. But with the arrival of *The Rio Grande* we have for the first time in Britain's musical history a classical work that synthesizes several jazz elements into a "serious" composition utilizing choir, vocal soloist, orchestra, and piano. While it is certainly true that other active inter-war British composers were taken with the Exotic (Cyril Scott, Granville Bantock, Frederick Delius, and the more internally focused Arnold Bax could be named), none of these produced a work concerned with American musical exoticism as did Lambert.

As a unique entity within Britain's musical heritage, and as a work that stands in contrast to others, even of its approximate, jazz-related category (where, for example, is the choir in *La création du monde*?) I believe that *The Rio Grande* merits consideration within a larger picture than has been previously afforded it. Certainly, *The Rio Grande* demonstrates the powerful—if problematic—presence of American culture in the minds of the British between the world wars as well as the impact that the culture exerted on a volatile crossroads of twentieth-century European history. Yet even more palpable and immediate are the inherent qualities of *The Rio Grande*: freshness, optimism, charm, wit, eccentricity, energy, and national/racial overtones. These traits endeared the work to its first audiences and, combined with its daring instrumentation and vivid poetic imagery, make it seem no less exotic nowadays.

Notes

1. My historical overview is derived from a comprehensive and insightful study of Britain's social and economic climate during the 1920s: John Davis, *A History of Britain, 1885–1939* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), see especially chapters 6–7. A second contributing source to my overview is Alan Johnson, "The Making of a Poor People's

Movement: A Study of the Political Leadership of Popularism," in *Class Struggle and Social Welfare*, eds. Michael Lavalette and Gerry Mooney (London and New York: Routledge, 2000). An older yet more encompassing source I have consulted is Stuart E. Prall and David Harris Wilson, *A History of England* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1984), chapter 33. An additional text I drew upon that is more concerned with the social and cultural conditions of these times is John Lucas, *The Radical Twenties: Writing, Politics, Culture* (Nottingham: Five Leaves Publications, 1997).

2. Winston Churchill, "Mass Effects in Modern Life." In *Thoughts and Adventures*, edited by Winston Churchill, (London: Macmillan, [1925] 1932): 5–6.

3. The term "jazz" has accrued many meanings and connotations with its appearance in various cultural contexts and studies. When I use the term "jazz" here I am referring to its multiple musical definitions, i.e. ragtime, swing, syncopated rhythms, melodies and harmonies derived from black spirituals, etc. Within other contexts the term "jazz" has come to embody such concepts as empty or exaggerated dialogue, emotional excitement, sexuality, and chaotic modernity.

4. Christina Baade, "Victory Through Harmony": Popular Music and the British Broadcasting Corporation in World War II" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, Madison, 2002), 20–21.

5. John Lucas, *The Radical Twenties: Writing, Politics, Culture* (Nottingham: Five Leaves Publications, 1997), 130–131.

6. Glenn Watkins, *Proof through the Night: Music and the Great War* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003), 379.

7. Heinz Antor, *The Bloomsbury Group: Its Philosophy, Aesthetics, and Literary Achievement* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1986), 100–101. This source gives abundant information on Bloomsbury's aesthetics and the influences behind those aesthetics. It is an indispensable source to any Bloomsbury study.

8. Ulysses L. D'Aquila, *Bloomsbury and Modernism* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1989), 118–119. *Bloomsbury and Modernism* explores several individual writers of Bloomsbury and examples of their works contributing to the modernism associated with the circle. The manner in which D'Aquila successfully demonstrates the diverse philosophies among the Bloomsbury writers while at the same time unites them through their common modernist objectives is of particular interest and value.

9. For further reading on the Sitwells within the context of their culture consult: National Portrait Gallery (Great Britain), *The Sitwells: And the Arts of the 1920's and 1930's/ National Portrait Gallery, London* (London: National Portrait Gallery, 1994).

10. Sacheverell Sitwell traveled the world throughout his life, visiting every continent except Antarctica. A list (by no means complete) of his travel writings includes: *Southern Baroque Art* (1927), *German Baroque Art* (1928), *Mauretania: Warrior, Man, and Woman* (1940), *Netherlands: A Study of some Aspects of Art, Costume, and Social Life* (1948), *Spain* (1950), *Malta* (1958), *Golden Wall and Mirador: From England to Peru* (1961), *The Red Chapels of Bantei Srei, and Temples in Cambodia, India, Siam and Nepal* (1961), and *Southern Baroque Revisited* (1967). For a detailed and annotated account of these and all the rest of Sacheverell Sitwell's writings consult Neil Ritchie, *Sacheverell Sitwell: An Annotated and Descriptive Bibliography 1916–1986* (Florence: Giardo Press, 1987).

11. John Lehman, *A Nest of Tigers: Edith, Osbert, and Sacheverell Sitwell in their Times* (London: Macmillan, 1968), 180.

12. Sarah Bradford, *Sacheverell Sitwell: Splendours and Miseries* (London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1993), 67.

13. Bradford, *Sacheverell Sitwell*, 67.

14. For a detailed discussion of the history and varied aspects of British travel writing consult Barbara Korte, *English Travel Writing: From Pilgrimages to Postcolonial Explorations* (translated by Catherine Matthias, 2000). (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1996).

15. Korte, *English Travel Writing*, 29.

16. *Ibid.*, 138, 140.

17. Bradford, *Sacheverell Sitwell*, 91.

18. The poems contained within the collection have a consistent theme of nature

and escapism, particularly that pertaining to a paradise. Such poems as "Orange Tree By Night," with its discussion of tropical foliage being illuminated by sparkling pools, "Complaint," a narrative describing sailing into a vast blue expanse, and "Variation on a Theme By Marlowe," with its musing upon the West, are typical of the sentiments expressed in the volume. This collection of poems, published by Grant Richards Limited in 1924, was an early attempt by Sitwell to establish his name as a poet. As a result of his youth and his overeagerness to assert his potential in the eyes of others, he received reviews heartily acknowledging his talent yet apprehensive about the work itself. For a reception overview, see G. A. Cevasco, *The Sitwells: Edith, Osbert, and Sacheverell* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, a division of G. K. Hall & Co., 1987), 54–55. This source is the latest comprehensive book on the Sitwell siblings. See also Bradford, *Sacheverell Sitwell: Splendours and Miseries*, 124–125.

19. See G. A. Cevasco, *The Sitwells: Edith, Osbert, and Sacheverell*, 20.

20. Jody Blake, *Le Tumulte noir: Modernist Art and Popular Entertainment in Jazz-Age Paris, 1900–1930* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 80–82.

21. Greg Robinson, "Choosing Exile: Richard Wright, the Existentialists, and Cultural Exchange." In *American Culture in Europe: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, 163.

22. Most of the biographical information on Lambert in this writing derives from Richard Shead's *Constant Lambert* (London: Simon Publications, 1973), currently the sole existing biography on the composer. Other bits of biographical information exist in Osbert Sitwell's *Queen Mary and Others* (London: Michael Joseph, 1974), 77–80, and Hubert Foss's tribute "Constant Lambert," *The Musical Times* 92 (1951): 449–451.

23. Osbert Sitwell, *Queen Mary and Others*, 77.

24. This writing may be found in Nancy Cunard's large anthology of historical black American culture, *Negro: An Anthology Made By Nancy Cunard: 1931–1933* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), 320–321. Cunard's volume treats black American culture extensively from its jazz to its literature. It is a vast and worthwhile source for a study on any of these topics. A new book on Florence Mills, unavailable to me at the time of this writing, is forthcoming in November of 2004: Bill Egan, *Florence Mills: Harlem Jazz Queen* (Scarecrow Press).

25. Quoted in Richard Shead, *Constant Lambert* (London: Simon Publications, 1973),

39. The exact source of the quotation is not indicated in the biography's text.

26. *Ibid.*, 38–39.

27. *Ibid.*, 39.

28. Lambert, *Music Ho!*, 170.

29. Osbert Sitwell, *Queen Mary and Others*, 79. I have not been able to find any information on the alleged club Lambert started in response to the music of John Philip Sousa. Beyond a few sentences of praise for Sousa in his book *Music Ho!* (treated on its own later in this writing), the matter of Sousa receives sparse treatment within the presently limited literature on Constant Lambert.

30. Susan C. Cook, "Flirting with the Vernacular: America in Europe, 1900–45," in *The Cambridge History of Twentieth Century Music* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), 153.

31. Interview, *Everyman*, 16 October 1930. Quoted in Richard Shead, *Constant Lambert*, 74.

32. Lambert, *Music Ho!*, 177.

33. This group of composers consisted of Georges Auric, Louis Durey, Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud, Francis Poulenc, and Germaine Tailleferre. The group's spiritual fathers, Eric Satie and Jean Cocteau, wished to resist what they saw as the overbearing influence of German music.

34. Lambert, *Music Ho!*, 176–177.

35. Sitwell had at this point not yet visited Brazil and would not do so until 1964. This matter is expounded upon at the conclusion of this writing.

36. For a discussion on this feature consult Cook, "Flirting with the Vernacular," 167.

37. A brief discussion of *The Rio Grande*, including an interesting commentary on the parallels between Duke Ellington's music and that of Lambert's score, is

Christopher Palmer, “Constant Lambert—A Postscript,” *Music and Letters* 52 (April 1971): 173–176.

38. Quoted in Stephen Lloyd, *William Walton: Muse of Fire* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2001), 108. According to the source, the remark was first recorded in the *Daily Express* following the performance on 13 December 1929. Lloyd does not mention the critic’s name. The statement was, however, confirmed by Walton’s widow in her memoirs on the composer: Susanna Walton, *William Walton: Behind the Façade* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 54–55.

39. Gregory Roscow, ed. *Bliss on Music: Selected Writings of Arthur Bliss 1920–1975* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 200.

40. The small body of reviews I was able to find are unanimous in their praise of *The Rio Grande*. The one I chose for this text seemed the most detailed and applicable. In order to find more reviews one can consult Richard Shead, *Constant Lambert*, 82–83.

41. *London Times*, 14 December 1929.

42. Shead, *Constant Lambert*, 74.

43. Sarah Bradford, *Sacheverell Sitwell*, 398. A chapter on Sitwell’s experiences in Brazil may be found in *Southern Baroque Revisited* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1967).

44. This matter is treated at greater length in Richard McGrady, “The Music of Constant Lambert,” *Music and Letters* 51 (1970): 242–258.