



OPERA WORKSHOP

&

CAP AND DAGGER

presents



THE THREEPENNY OPERA

Book and Lyrics by
BERTOLT BRECHT

Music by
KURT WEILL

English Adaptation by Marc Blitzstein

Directed by HARVEY M. POWERS

Music Directed by ROBERT GOSS

Setting and Lighting by JOE McCARTHY

BUCKNELL UNIVERSITY THEATRE

Lewisburg, Pennsylvania

November 1, 2, 7, 8 and 9, 1968

8:30 p.m.

*This Show is produced by special arrangement
with Tams-Witmark Music Library, New York, N.Y.*

Speaking About The Play

Happenstance, the social pressures of an era, and the response of a peculiarly ironic and unconventional mind brought *The Threepenny Opera* into being in 1928. A London revival of John Gay's *The Beggars' Opera* had created such a stir in the theatrical circles of Europe that Bertolt Brecht's secretary translated the work into German and passed it along, scene by scene, to Brecht. The young poet and playwright was immediately intrigued and began an adaptation, but Gay's minor classic underwent a remarkable sea-change in the process.

Brecht played the action at the time of Victoria's coronation, dressed his characters as Edwardians, and conceived the work as a satire on the vicious bourgeois society of the German of the nineteen twenties. In his notes to *The Threepenny Opera* he tells us that it was his intention to write "a sort of summary of what the bourgeois spectator in the theatre wishes to see of life." In effect he wanted to say to his audience, "Now that you see your sense of values paraded in these togs, how do you like it?"

Paradoxically, his audience liked it fine. When it opened on August 31, 1928, *Die Dreigroschenoper* was an immediate success. It not only enjoyed one of the longest runs in Berlin theatrical history, but also proved its international appeal in subsequent productions throughout Europe and in its seven-year stand at the Theatre de Lys in New York. Certainly a considerable share of the success of the work must be attributed to the compatibility of the wedding of Kurt Weill's sound to Brecht's sense.

Brecht and Weill's collaboration, early in Brecht's career, represented a mutual influence. Both disliked the large orchestra with its beautiful sound—preferring instead music that is harsh, racy, modern in tempo, and above all, modern in spirit. Brecht's lyrics and Weill's music caught the popular ear to such an extent that Nazi officialdom was thwarted in one of its efforts to cleanse Germany of "decadence." In Hitler's "Museum of Degenerate Art" was a room in which the songs from *The Threepenny Opera* were played over and over, but the room drew so many enthusiastic listeners that it had to be closed!

Aficionados will recognize a few changes in the lyrics of the Blitzstein adaptation. These fresh translations were made in order to bring the work closer to the spirit and letter of the Brecht text—not simply to introduce "topical" references that were not there to begin with. Indeed, one of the remarkable things about *The Threepenny Opera* is how unfortunately topical it remains. The themes and images of protest and demonstration, of the exploitation of poverty, of mindless and immoral war, of police brutality, of the "sell-out" on many levels—all these are but too much alive today.

For instance, you encounter the simple stage direction, "The police round up the beggars." What sickening vision immediately swims up in your mind?

—H. M. P.

THE CAST

(in Order of Appearance)

<i>Street Singer</i>	Richard Schmenner
<i>Mr. J. J. Peachum</i>	Gary Koutnik
<i>Mrs. Peachum</i>	Ellen Hariu
<i>Filch</i>	Stuart White
<i>Macheath (Mack the Knife)</i>	Trevor Lewis
<i>Polly Peachum</i>	Laurie Campbell
<i>Macheath's Gang</i> {	<i>Readymoney Matt</i> Jim Klingler
	<i>Crookfinger Jake</i> Mike Schmidt
	<i>Bob the Saw</i> Jim Hart
	<i>Walt Dreary</i> William Mates
<i>Reverend Kimball</i>	Philip Johnson
<i>Tiger Brown, Commissioner of Police</i>	Ron Taylor
<i>Girls from Wapping Brothel</i> {	<i>Jenny Diver</i> Libby Dodd
	<i>Betty</i> Lynn Haudenshield
	<i>Molly</i> Susan Gray
	<i>Dolly</i> Diane Betzendahl
	<i>Coaxer</i> Jan Ekman
<i>Smith, Warden</i>	Glenn Diegnan
<i>Lucy Brown</i>	Carol Good
<i>Constables</i>	Doug Grove, Harold Black
<i>Beggars</i>	Peter Eggers, Gregory Bright Jeff Hickman, Peter Mente

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT ONE

<i>Overture</i>	
<i>Ballad of Mack the Knife</i>	Street Singer
<i>Morning Anthem</i>	Peachum
<i>Instead Of Song</i>	Mr. and Mrs. Peachum
<i>Wedding Song</i>	Macheath's Gang
<i>Pirate Jenny</i>	Polly
<i>Army Song</i>	Macheath, Tiger Brown and Gang
<i>Wedding Song (Reprise)</i>	Macheath's Gang
<i>Love Song</i>	Macheath and Polly
<i>Ballad of Dependency</i>	Mrs. Peachum
<i>The World is Mean—First Threepenny Finale</i>	Polly, Mr. and Mrs. Peachum

ACT TWO

<i>Melodrama and Polly's Song</i>	Polly and Macheath
<i>Ballad of Dependency (Reprise)</i>	Mrs. Peachum
<i>Tango Ballad</i>	Macheath and Jenny
<i>Ballad of the Easy Life</i>	Macheath
<i>Song of the Good Girl</i>	Lucy
<i>Jealousy Duet</i>	Lucy and Polly
<i>How to Survive—Second Threepenny Finale</i>	Macheath, Mrs. Peachum and Chorus

ACT THREE

<i>Useless Song</i>	Peachum
<i>Useless Song (Reprise)</i>	Chorus
<i>Solomon Song</i>	Jenny
<i>Call from the Grave</i>	Macheath
<i>Death Message</i>	Macheath
<i>The Mounted Messenger—Third Threepenny Finale</i>	Ensemble
<i>Ballad of Mack the Knife (Reprise)</i>	Street Singer

SCENES

ACT ONE

PROLOGUE:	A Street, Soho
SCENE 1:	Peachum's Beggars' Outfit Shop
SCENE 2:	An Empty Stable
SCENE 3:	Peachum's Beggars' Outfit Shop

ACT TWO

SCENE 1:	The Stable
INTERLUDE:	A Street
SCENE 2:	A Brothel in Wapping
SCENE 3:	Newgate Prison

ACT THREE

SCENE 1:	Peachum's Beggars' Outfit Shop
INTERLUDE:	A Street
SCENE 2:	Newgate Prison Death-Cell

The action takes place in London, before and during Queen Victoria's Coronation.

There will be two short intermissions after Act One and Act Two.

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