

# columbia report

## Opera at Columbia University, 1941–1958

By Jack Beeson

### Introduction

The following essay was written, and the accompanying material compiled, in 1961. With the exception of the addition of some singers' names, the essay has been only slightly revised; at this late date it would be difficult to find and to correct any errors in the production data.

My purpose forty years ago was simply to record a short but vibrant period in the history of American opera through my experience as coach and conductor in the Columbia Opera Workshop and the closely related series of American opera premieres. For some years thereafter, I offered copies to anyone who showed an interest and to those on campus who—naively, I thought—were eager to revive the Workshop and/or produce new operas at Columbia with some regularity. Over the years, as opera workshops, small companies, and the writing and producing of chamber operas burgeoned, copies of the essay were requested more frequently—even by such organizations as Opera America. In celebration of the Music Department's centenary in 1996, both a Low Library exhibition and a publication highlighted the Workshop and its related productions. It was at the same time that the Glimmerglass Opera and the New York City Opera revived *Paul Bunyan*, drawing attention to the premiere of Britten and Auden's opera at Columbia in 1941. Shortly thereafter, the same two companies revived Virgil Thomson and Gertrude Stein's *The Mother of Us All* and invited me to speak to their audiences about her birth, largely from Workshop singers, in 1947.

Long before this period of interest in events of the past, I had given a copy of the material to a former graduate composition student, Jim Stepleton—by coincidence the son of my Junior High School music teacher in Muncie, Indiana. His interest led to his producing, in collaboration with the Friends and Enemies of Modern Music, a concert of excerpts from operas first performed at Columbia from 1941–1958. This retrospective in Miller Theatre in 1997 received extensive press comment. Finally, an inquiry from a graduate student at another university, addressed to Elizabeth Davis, Columbia's Music and Arts Librarian, requested a copy of a specified "unpublished document." Ms. Davis then insisted to me that this long drawn-out nonsense should cease, and that the material should be published. I complied, insisting only, in light of my many years at Columbia, that the publisher be *Current Musicology*.

I add, more as a coda than a preamble to what follows, that through the energy of Jim Stepleton there has recently been incorporated the Douglas Moore Fund for Opera, which will become active some months hence. Its purpose is to provide young composers of opera—Moore Fellows—with residence in opera companies that produce new works; to learn the ways of singers, conductors, and stage directors; to experience the pleasures and perils of collaboration; and perhaps to play rehearsals, coach singers, and conduct a bit. In short, to serve apprenticeships similar to those some of us enjoyed during our years with the Workshop and its productions half a century ago.

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In 1940, four years after its organization, the Columbia Theatre Associates (CTA), a small repertory company specializing in new and neglected old plays, moved into the newly-built Brander Mathews Hall on the Columbia University campus. The facilities of the new theater were most inadequate for the production of even modest operas, but there *was* an orchestra pit—or the semblance of one—and a production of two one-act chamber operas was undertaken immediately, in collaboration with the Juilliard School. Collaboration with musical forces more readily at hand seemed preferable, however, and during the next two seasons Columbia's Music Department augmented the musical forces from both inside and outside the Columbia community that were assembled by Milton Smith, who ran the school's Theatre Department, and by the CTA. In order to better serve the musical needs of the Brander Mathews productions and to provide an outlet for the department's interest in lyric theater, the Opera Workshop was organized in the 1943–44 season. In addition, Otto Luening was brought to the University in the spring of that season to rehearse and conduct the first performances of *Pieces of Eight* by Bernard Wagenaar. *Pieces of Eight* was the first opera commissioned by the Alice M. Ditson Fund, a grantor committed to advancing the cause of American music, and which after 1942 was administered by an advisory board with Music Department representation.

In the autumn of 1944, Professor Willard Rhodes was selected as executive and musical director of the Workshop, and Otto Luening was appointed to the Barnard and Columbia teaching staff and named musical director of the CTA. Through these changes in leadership, and with the Ditson Fund made available to commission and underwrite the production of a new opera each spring, a *modus operandi* was established which was to continue for about thirteen years, though with several changes of stage director.

The Opera Workshop existed as a General Studies course offered for four points, meeting twice a week (Tuesday and Friday) for a total of eight hours. Membership in the Workshop was open to aspiring conductors, stage directors, composers, and librettists, as well as to singers. Singers were admitted to the course only after an audition, and an attempt was made to achieve a distribution of voices in accordance with the repertory under study. Ditson tuition scholarships were available to the most promising singers. A program of study combining courses from the Music Department and the School of Dramatic Arts was available to those preparing for careers in the lyric theater.

During its most flourishing years, the Workshop resembled a small opera repertory company in the amount and scope of its activity. Friday classes were given over to staging arias and ensemble scenes that had been rehearsed musically in the Tuesday class sessions. In addition, numerous solo and ensemble coaching sessions were held, usually in the Music Department, under the guidance of the music director, his musical assistants, or the student-coaches. Occasionally student stage directors were entrusted with special rehearsals; for a period, sessions in Italian and English diction were provided. Limited space in the Department and the busy schedule of instruction and play production in Brander Mathews drove us frequently to Earl Hall, McMillin (now Miller) Theatre, and Casa Italiana; it was not rare for classes and rehearsals to be occurring in two or three places simultaneously. Several times a season the arias, scenes, and acts from the standard repertory studied in class were presented to invited audiences. Piano accompaniment sufficed.

Of greater importance to the opera project as a whole were the full productions, usually mounted twice a season and typically produced in collaboration with the Theatre Associates. The productions were about equally divided between neglected eighteenth-century comic operas, always translated into English (performed in mid-winter), and new works by American composers, commissioned by the Ditson Fund. Usually both productions were included in the regular subscription series of the CTA. In addition, the new works were given prominent place in the annual spring festivals of American music presented by the Music Department and the Ditson Fund for six successive years to distinguished invited audiences.

These large scale productions of premieres—usually of chamber operas, it should be added—were well attended and given full attention by the metropolitan and national weekly press. As often as not they were directed (both musically and dramatically) and sung by persons not necessarily regularly connected with the Workshop. Several of the premieres, for instance, were conducted by Otto Luening and staged by directors or

choreographers from off-campus. But even those productions not given under the aegis of the Workshop were made possible by the existence of that organization, for the Workshop provided continuity—that is, it could be depended on to supply the singers for small parts, a chorus, and, frequently, talented singing-actors for the important roles. Other roles were cast from “downtown,” from the ranks of those who were delighted to perform without pay for free coaching, stage experience, and critical notice in the press. Orchestras for the productions were made up partly by Columbia students and partly by outsiders. An arrangement with the Musicians’ Union made possible the payment of instrumentalists’ out-of-pocket expenses, a very much smaller amount than union scale. The size of the orchestra varied, from thirteen instrumentalists required by several of the chamber operas to about thirty. The inadequate pit, the small size of the house, the orchestral budget, and (by no means the least important factor) the interest of everybody concerned in a production of musical and dramatic intimacy—all these elements determined the size of the orchestra as well as the style of the production.

Particularly during the forties and the early fifties, the Opera Workshop and the opera productions were a vital part of the city’s musical and dramatic life. Of more widespread importance was the commissioning and performing of new works. The astonishing interest in the lyric theater shown by American composers since the Second World War and the new directions their works have frequently taken have certainly not been altogether the result of the Columbia project. But its influence can be imagined, if not measured, when one realizes that during its existence Brander Mathews was prominent among all theaters in the United States in the number of new operas it brought into being and that the recent interest in dramatically viable operatic productions was from the beginning the aim of the Brander Mathews productions. The current practice of casting choreographers as stage directors was anticipated at Columbia in a number of productions: Gian Carlo Menotti’s *The Medium*, Virgil Thomson’s *The Mother of Us All*, Otto Luening’s *Evangeline*, and Albert Rivett’s *Poor Eddy*, among others. The emergence of Menotti as a successful and well-known composer and his debut as a stage director occurred on campus in 1946—and one might in passing draw attention to the fact (glossed over by their biographers) that the first operatic efforts of those two stalwarts, Benjamin Britten and W. H. Auden, took place in May 1941 on West 117th street.

But, though the quality of individual productions during the late fifties did not decline, there was a notable diminishing in the number of productions and in Workshop activity. The reasons were various: other workshops sprouted inside and outside parent institutions; the G.I. Bill came to an

end and men and women who might previously have been able to nurture their talents in the Workshop were forced to rely on Lady Luck; professional and semi-professional opera companies and even Broadway producers began to show an interest in new works and in the revival of eighteenth-century repertory. More significant, however, was the fact that the academic and administrative community at large had not exhibited sufficient interest and support to organize this branch of theater at Columbia on a secure academic, artistic, and financial basis. An Arts Center with three theaters had long been planned, but was not built; it was said that a large gift was proffered by William Paley and rejected. Those who had led the opera project were not interested in continuing what was now being done elsewhere—frequently in imitation of Columbia's efforts—and development along new lines seemed impossible under the conditions that prevailed. Their patience exhausted, their energies no longer buoyant, and their efforts recognized in the main outside the University, they turned their attention to other matters. The assistants, having served their apprenticeships, were not tempted to continue the struggle with the old unsolved problems and the new unsolvable problems posed by the scarcity of rehearsal space in the Music Department, the disappearance of Milton Smith and the School of Dramatic Arts, and the disappearance altogether of Brander Mathews Hall.

In spite of difficulties, much was accomplished during Columbia's operatic years. It is not necessary to emphasize further the encouragement given to new works and ideas and to the revival of neglected operas of interest to the University community and the New York public at large. (One notes with some smugness that Paisiello's charming *Barber of Seville* was first rediscovered, not in Berlin in 1960, but in New York in 1946.) Equally important ends were served in training conductors, stage-directors, and singing-actors. One may single out from the names on the following pages four coaches and assistant conductors who have turned their apprentice years to professional use: Jacob Avshalamov, composer-conductor of the Portland Junior Symphony; John Crosby, founder and artistic director of the Sante Fe Opera; John Kander, composer and conductor on and off Broadway; and the present author, a composer.

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In 1961, it seemed to me invidious to list any singers who had once been members of both the Opera Workshop *and* the casts of related productions. Now that forty years have passed, there are but few still performing and some have died. Of those singers whose names or recorded voices may be familiar today a partial listing may suggest the quality and variety of the young artists who enlivened opera at Columbia from 1941–1958.

Everett Anderson  
 Ellen Faull  
 Alice Howland  
 Gladys Kuchta  
 James McCracken

Leopold Simoneau  
 Teresa Stich-Randall  
 David Thaw  
 Josh Wheeler

As indicated earlier, the new American operas were cast in part from "downtown." By prior arrangement, the title role of Menotti's *Medium* served Claramae Turner, successfully, as her audition for the Metropolitan Opera. The first *The Mother of Us All* led Dorothy Dow to Zürich, La Scala, and the New York Philharmonic. Two sopranos who appeared in the series of new American operas were also involved in two Douglas Moore premieres at the time: Shirlee Emmons and Leyna Gabriele.

#### Appendix A: Direction of the Columbia Opera Workshop

1943-44	Musical Director:	Nicholas Goldschmidt
	Stage Director:	Herbert Graf
1944-46	Musical Director:	Willard Rhodes
	Stage Director:	Herbert Graf
1946-48	Musical Director:	Willard Rhodes
	Stage Director:	John Wolmut
1948-54	Musical Director:	Willard Rhodes
	Stage Director:	Felix Brentano
1954-57	Musical Director:	Rudolph Thomas
	Stage Director:	Felix Brentano

Summer Opera Workshops were under the music direction of both Otto Luening and Willard Rhodes. The stage directors were Ernst Lert and Elemer Nagy.

## Appendix B:

Opera and plays with live music in Brander Mathews Hall from 1941 to 1958, produced, for the most part, by the Columbia Theatre Associates (CTA) in collaboration with the Music Department and its Opera Workshop. Certain operatic productions were undertaken at other venues, sometimes in collaboration with the Columbia Theatre Associates. All works performed are operas except for those indicated with a (†), which are mostly plays with newly-composed incidental music.

Season	Date of Performances	Work(s) Performed	Collaborators	Production Information
1941	February (double bill)	<i>The Devil Take Her</i>	Alan Collard (librettist) John Gordon (librettist) Arthur Benjamin (composer)	Produced in collaboration with the Opera Department of the Juilliard School of Music
		<i>Blennerhasset</i>	Norman Corwin (librettist) Philip Roll (librettist) Vittorio Giannini (composer)	World Premiere. Produced in collaboration with the Opera Department of the Juilliard School.
	May	<i>Paul Bunyan</i>	W. H. Auden (librettist) Benjamin Britten (composer) Hugh Ross (conductor) Milton Smith (stage director)	World Premiere. Produced by the CTA and the Columbia Music Department with the chorus of the Schola Cantorum. Six (?) performances.
1941– 1942	Fall	<i>The Burglar's Opera</i>	Edward Eager (librettist) Alfred Drake (librettist) John Mundy (composer)	World Premiere. Produced by the CTA.

## Appendix B (cont.)

Season	Date of Performances	Work(s) Performed	Collaborators	Production Information
	February	<i>The Music Master</i>	Edward Eager (translator) G. B. Pergolesi (composer) Richard Falk (conductor) Milton Smith (stage director)	Probably the first performances in English. Produced by the CTA and the Columbia Chamber Opera Players. Six (?) performances.
	March	<i>Iphigenia in Tauris</i> †	Witter Bynner (translator) Claude Lapham (composer)	Produced by the CTA. Incidental choral settings for Euripides' play.
1942– 1943	December	<i>The Village Barber</i>	Joseph Weidemann (librettist) Edward Eager (translator) Johann Schenk (composer) Nicholas Goldschmidt (conductor) Milton Smith (stage director)	Very likely the first American performances. Produced by the CTA and the Columbia Music Department. Five performances.
	May	<i>A Tree on the Plains</i>	Paul Horgan (librettist) Ernst Bacon (composer) Nicholas Goldschmidt (conductor) Milton Smith (stage director)	Commissioned by the League of Composers. First New York performances. Produced by the CTA and the Columbia Music Department. Five performances.
1943– 1944	December	<i>The Two Misers</i>	Edward Eager (translator) André-Ernest-Modest Grétry (composer) Nicholas Goldschmidt (conductor) Milton Smith (stage director)	Probably the first New York performances. Produced by the CTA and the Columbia Music Department. Five performances.

**Appendix B** (cont.)

<b>Season</b>	<b>Date of Performances</b>	<b>Work(s) Performed</b>	<b>Collaborators</b>	<b>Production Information</b>
	May	<i>Pieces of Eight</i>	Edward Eager (librettist) Bernard Wagenaar (composer) Otto Luening (conductor) Milton Smith (stage director)	World Premiere. First opera commissioned by the Alice M. Ditson Fund. Produced by the CTA and Columbia Music Department, aided by the Ditson Fund. Five performances.
1944– 1945	December	<i>The Jealous Husband</i>	Edward Eager (translator) G. B. Pergolesi (composer) Otto Luening (conductor) Martin Smith (stage director)	World Premiere in English and probably the first performances of the opera in the U.S. Produced by the CTA and the Columbia Music Department. <sup>1</sup> Five performances.
	May	<i>The Scarecrow</i>	Dorothy Lockwood (librettist) Normand Lockwood (composer) Otto Luening (conductor) Willard Rhodes (conductor) Jack Beeson (assistant conductor) Milton Smith (stage director)	World Premiere. Based on a play by Percy MacKaye. Commissioned by the Ditson Fund. Produced by the CTA and the Columbia Music Department, aided by the Ditson Fund. Five performances.
1945– 1946	December	<i>The Imaginary Invalid</i> †	Jack Beeson (composer)	Produced by the CTA. Incidental music for Molière's play.
	February	<i>The Barber of Seville</i>	Phyllis Mead (translator) Giovanni Paisiello (composer) Otto Luening (conductor) Jack Beeson (assistant conductor) Milton Smith (stage director)	Based on Beaumarchais' play. Only previous American production had been in French (New Orleans, 1810). Produced by the CTA and the Columbia Music Department. Five performances.

<sup>1</sup>From the fall of 1944 onwards, the Music Department was represented primarily by its sponsorship of the Opera Workshop.

## Appendix B (cont.)

Season	Date of Performances	Work(s) Performed	Collaborators	Production Information
	May <sup>2</sup>	<i>The Medium</i>	Gian Carlo Menotti (librettist, composer, and stage director) Otto Luening (conductor) Jack Beeson (assistant conductor) Robert Horan (stage assistant)	World Premiere. Commissioned by the Ditson Fund. Produced by the CTA and the Columbia Music Department, aided by the Ditson Fund. Five performances.
	May 27–28		Willard Rhodes (conductor) Jack Beeson (assistant conductor) Jacob Avshalomov (musical assistant) John Wolmut (stage director) Elena Allegro (stage assistant)	The Workshop in a program of scenes and acts from the repertory.
	August 14		Willard Rhodes (conductor) Elemer Nagy (stage director)	The Summer School Opera Workshop in a program of scenes and acts from the repertory, including the whole of Menotti's <i>The Old Maid and the Thief</i> .
1946– 1947	n.d.			A competition for a new one-act opera was sponsored by the Ditson Fund, in collaboration with the Metropolitan Opera. The winning work, <i>The Warrior</i> by Bernard Rogers, was performed by the Met in January 1947.

<sup>2</sup>Also in May were several performances of Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat*, produced jointly by the American Section of the International Society for Contemporary Music and the CTA, conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos, and directed by Frederick Cohen.

**Appendix B** (cont.)

<b>Season</b>	<b>Date of Performances</b>	<b>Work(s) Performed</b>	<b>Collaborators</b>	<b>Production Information</b>
	December 17–19		Willard Rhodes (conductor) Jack Beeson (assistant conductor) Jacob Avshalomov (musical assistant) John Wolmut (stage director) Elena Allegro (stage assistant)	The Workshop performed scenes from operas with texts taken from the works of Shakespeare.
	February (double bill)	<i>Stratonice</i>  <i>The Man with the Terrible Temper</i> ( <i>L'Irato</i> )	Winthrop Palmer (translator) Etienne Méhul (composer)  Phyllis Mead (translator) Etienne Méhul (composer) Willard Rhodes (conductor) Jack Beeson (assistant conductor) Jacob Avshalomov (musical assistant) Albert Rivett (musical assistant) John Wolmut (stage director)	Believed to be first American performances of both of these one-act operas. Produced by the CTA and the Opera Workshop of the Columbia Music Department. Eight performances.
	May	<i>The Mother of Us All</i>	Gertrude Stein (librettist) Virgil Thomson (composer) Otto Luening (conductor) Jack Beeson (assistant conductor) John Taras (stage director)	World Premiere. Commissioned by the Ditson Fund. Produced by the CTA and the Columbia Music Department, aided by the Ditson Fund. Nine performances.

## Appendix B (cont.)

Season	Date of Performances	Work(s) Performed	Collaborators	Production Information
	August 11		Otto Luening (conductor) Jack Beeson (assistant conductor) Ernst Lert (stage director)	Demonstration by the Summer Workshop of opera scenes, mostly Mozart ensembles.
	August 14		Otto Luening (conductor) Jack Beeson (assistant conductor) Ernst Lert (stage director)	Opera scenes by the Summer Workshop, mostly Mozart ensembles.
1947– 1948	January 26–28		Willard Rhodes (conductor) Jack Beeson (assistant conductor) John Wolmut (stage director) Lee MacBurney (stage assistant)	The Workshop in scenes from the repertory.
	May	<i>Evangeline</i>	Otto Luening (librettist, composer, and conductor) Jack Beeson (assistant conductor) Nona Schurman (stage director)	World Premiere. Aided by the Ditson Fund. Produced by the CTA and the Columbia Music Department. Eight performances.
	August 6			Demonstration by the Summer Workshop.
	August 13		Willard Rhodes (conductor) Albert Rivett (musical assistant) Everett Lee (musical assistant) Ernst Lert (stage director) Ruth Ives (stage assistant) Lee MacBurney (stage assistant)	The Workshop in scenes from the repertory.

**Appendix B** (cont.)

Season	Date of Performances	Work(s) Performed	Collaborators	Production Information
1948–1949 <sup>3</sup>	December	<i>The Belle of New York</i>	Hugh Morton (librettist) Gustave Kerker (composer) Willard Rhodes (conductor) Albert Rivett (musical assistant) Martin Smith (stage director) Louise Grifford (stage assistant)	Operetta produced by the CTA and the Opera Workshop of the Columbia Music Department.
	January	<i>Sir John in Love</i>	Ralph Vaughan Williams (composer) Willard Rhodes (conductor) Albert Rivett (musical assistant) Felix Brentano (stage director)	Based on Vaughan Williams's <i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i> . First complete performance in the U.S. (for two pianos). Produced by the Opera Workshop with various members of the School of Dramatic Arts.
	February	<i>The Little Clay Cart</i> †	Jacob Avshalomov (composer)	Produced by the CTA. Incidental music for the play by King Shudraka.
	May	<i>A Drumlin Legend</i>	Helena Carus (librettist) Ernst Bacon (composer) Otto Luening (conductor) Albert Rivett (musical assistant) Anley Loran (musical assistant) Martin Smith (stage director) Oreste Sergievsky (choreographer)	World Premiere. Commissioned by the Ditson Fund. Produced by the CTA and the Columbia Music Department. Four performances.

<sup>3</sup>Operas by Henry Cowell, Paul Nordoff, and, later, Hugo Weisgall (*Six Characters in Search of Author*) were commissioned by the Ditson Fund but not produced at Columbia.

## Appendix B (cont.)

Season	Date of Performances	Work(s) Performed	Collaborators	Production Information
	May	<i>The Emperor Wants a Son</i> †	Albert Rivett (composer)	Produced by the CTA. A play with incidental music.
	August 6		Otto Luening (conductor) Albert Rivett (musical assistant) Everett Lee (musical assistant) Ernst Lert (stage director) Ruth Ives (stage assistant) Lee MacBurney (stage assistant)	The Summer Workshop in scenes from the repertory.
	August 11		Otto Luening (conductor) Albert Rivett (musical assistant) Everett Lee (musical assistant) Ernst Lert (stage director) Ruth Ives (stage assistant) Lee MacBurney (stage assistant)	The Summer Workshop in scenes from the repertory.
1949– 1950	December	<i>The Way of the World</i> †	Albert Rivett (composer)	Produced by the CTA. Incidental music for the play by William Congreve.
	January	<i>The Barrier</i>	Langston Hughes (librettist) Jan Meyerowitz (composer) Willard Rhodes (conductor) Albert Rivett (musical assistant) Felix Brentano (stage director)	World Premiere. Produced by the CTA and the Opera Workshop of the Columbia Music Department. Ten performances.

**Appendix B** (cont.)

<b>Season</b>	<b>Date of Performances</b>	<b>Work(s) Performed</b>	<b>Collaborators</b>	<b>Production Information</b>
1950– 1951	December	<i>The Old Maid and the Thief</i>	Gian Carlo Menotti (librettist and composer)	A double bill of Menotti operas performed by a Workshop group at Cedar Crest College, Penn. Produced by the Opera Workshop.
		<i>The Telephone</i>	Gian Carlo Menotti (librettist and composer) Albert Rivett (conductor) Ruth Ives (stage director)	
	March– April	<i>Giants in the Earth</i>	Arnold Sundgaard (librettist) Douglas Moore (composer) Willard Rhodes (conductor) Albert Rivett (musical assistant) Felix Brentano (stage director)	World Premiere. After novel by Ole Edvart Rølvaag. Awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Music for 1951. Aided by the Ditson Fund. Produced by the CTA and the Columbia Music Department. Ten performances.
	April 2			The Workshop in scenes from Verdi operas (at Casa Italiana).
	May	<i>Come Down Daniel</i> †	Albert Rivett (composer)	Produced by the CTA. A play with incidental music.
	May	<i>The Old Maid and the Thief</i>	Gian Carlo Menotti (librettist and composer)	A double bill of Menotti operas performed by a Workshop group in White Plains, N.Y. Produced by the Opera Workshop. Two performances.
		<i>The Telephone</i>	Gian Carlo Menotti (librettist and composer) Albert Rivett (conductor) Ruth Ives (stage director)	

## Appendix B (cont.)

Season	Date of Performances	Work(s) Performed	Collaborators	Production Information
1951– 1952	May	<i>Acres of Sky</i>	Zoe Lund Schiller (librettist) Arthur Kreutz (composer) Otto Leuning (conductor) Jack Beeson (assistant conductor) John Kander (musical assistant) Edward Reveaux (stage director) Letitia Evans (choreographer)	First New York performance. Aided by the Ditson Fund. Produced by the CTA and the Music Department. Five performances.
1952– 1953	May	<i>Sweeney Agonistes</i>	T. S. Elliot (librettist) Richard Winslow (composer) Willard Rhodes (conductor) John Kander (assistant conductor) Felix Brentano (stage director)	First performance in New York; presented, with a small orchestra, on a program that included scenes from the repertory.
	March	<i>Poor Eddy</i> †	Elizabeth Dooley (librettist) Albert Rivett (composer and conductor) Albert Smith (stage director) Doris Humphrey (stage director and choreographer) Charles Weidman (principal performer)	A dance drama based on the life of Edgar Allan Poe, with songs. Produced by the CTA. Aided by the Ditson Fund. Five performances.

**Appendix B** (cont.)

Season	Date of Performances	Work(s) Performed	Collaborators	Production Information
1953– 1954	April	<i>The Beggar's Opera</i>	John Gay (librettist) J. C. Pepusch (composer) Willard Rhodes (conductor) John Kander (assistant conductor) Felix Brentano (stage director)	Produced by CTA and the Opera Workshop. Five performances.
	May (double bill)	<i>Malady of Love</i>	Lewis Allen (librettist) Lehman Engel (composer)	World Premiere.
		<i>Hello Out There</i>	William Saroyan (librettist) Jack Beeson (composer) Willard Rhodes (conductor) John Kander (assistant conductor) Felix Brentano (stage director)	World Premiere. Both operas produced by the Opera Workshop in cooperation with the School of Dramatic Arts. Aided by a grant from the Ditson Fund. Four performances.
1955– 1956	March 1		Rudolph Thomas (conductor) John Crosby (musical assistant) Felix Brentano (stage director)	The Workshop in scenes from the repertory. In McMillin Theatre.
	May	<i>Pantaloen</i>	Bernard Stambler (librettist) Robert Ward (composer) Rudolph Thomas (conductor) John Crosby (assistant conductor) Felix Brentano (stage director) Thomas DeGaetani (stage assistant)	World Premiere. Based on a melodrama by Leonid Andreyev. Performed at the Juilliard School of Music in a collaborative production. Produced by the CTA and the Opera Workshop of the Columbia Music Department. Aided by the Ditson Fund and the Juilliard School. Three performances.

## Appendix B (cont.)

Season	Date of Performances	Work(s) Performed	Collaborators	Production Information
1956–1957 <sup>4</sup>	November	<i>The Dream</i> <sup>†</sup>	Louis Huber (conductor) John Reich (stage director) Oreste Sergievsky (stage assistant) Louise Grifford (stage assistant)	A production combining the major part of Shakespeare's <i>Midsummer Night's Dream</i> and the music to Purcell's <i>Fairy Queen</i> . Produced by the CTA and the Opera Workshop of the Columbia Music Department. Five performances.
	May	<i>Panfilo and Lauretta</i>	Chester Kallman (librettist) Carlos Chavez (composer) Howard Shanet (conductor) Kurt Saffir (musical assistant) Walter Baker (musical assistant) Bill Butler (stage director)	World Premiere. Produced by the CTA and the Columbia Music Department. Aided by the Ditson Fund. Ten performances.
	May 24	<i>Love is a Game</i>	Marivaux (librettist) Milton Feist (translator) Pierre Petit (composer) Rudolph Thomas (conductor and stage director) John Crosby (assistant conductor) Felix Brentano (stage director)	First American performance of the one-act opera based on Marivaux's play. Followed by scenes from the repertory, all accompanied by piano.

<sup>4</sup>The Opera Workshop was discontinued after the season 1956–57. A grant from the Ditson Fund made possible a production of *The Sweet Bye and Bye* by Kenward Elmslie (librettist) and Jack Beeson (composer) on November 21, 22, and 23, 1957, at the Juilliard Opera Theater.

**Appendix B (cont.)**

<b>Season</b>	<b>Date of Performances</b>	<b>Work(s) Performed</b>	<b>Collaborators</b>	<b>Production Information</b>
1957– 1958 <sup>5</sup>	March (double bill)	<i>The Boor</i>	John Olon (librettist) Dominick Argento (composer)	New York premiere.
		<i>Gallantry</i>	Arnold Sundgaard (librettist) Douglas Moore (composer) Emerson Buckley (conductor) Kurt Saffir (musical assistant) J. O. Scrymgeour (stage director) Day Tuttle (stage director)	World Premiere. Produced by the CTA and the Columbia Music Department. Aided by the Ditson Fund and the Recording Industries Trust Fund. Five performances.

<sup>5</sup>On April 10–11, 1959, Columbia University, in cooperation with the University of Illinois, presented *The Bewitched* by Harry Partch, “a dance-satire” with choreography by Joyce Trisler. The work was produced by Tom DeGaetani in the Juilliard Concert Hall and was aided by the Ditson Fund.