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William Brooks, Christina Bashford and Gayle Magee, eds, *Over Here Over There: Transatlantic Conversations on the Music of World War I*, Urbana, Chicago and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2019, 280 pp, illustrations, Cloth, \$110, 978-0-252-04270-6; Paper, \$30, 978-0-252-08454-6, eBook, \$19.95, 978-0-252-05156-2

In her quote on the back cover of the book Kate Kennedy suggests that 'there is a dearth of detailed work on classical music's response to the First World War'. I would agree with her that *Over Here Over There* is a notable move in the direction of filling that gap in our knowledge. And the book doesn't just discuss classical music, there are significant chapters on the popular music of the period as well. Dealing mainly with the responses of British, Canadian and American composers and musicians the book demonstrates the changing nature of that response and its expression of 'patriotic exhortation, privation, anxiety, and grief' (p 1).

The book's roots were two international conferences held in the UK and the USA in 2015, the second of which featured a remarkable re-creation of a performance by the legendary Canadian frontline troupe of musicians the 'Dumbells'. The conferences covered a very wide range of papers, and the editors were therefore faced with a significant task in bringing overall coherence to the ten contributions selected for publication. They tackle this task by splitting the chapters into two sections. The first covers individual composers – Frank Bridge, Charles Ives, Claude Debussy, John Philip Sousa and Irving Berlin. The second five are case studies of collective responses to the war. Part two, which covers topics ranging from the musical life of a stately home, through female cinema musicians to analyses of patriotic songs is inevitably more diverse and more difficult to unify thematically. Nevertheless, the book does bring out a number of linked themes.

One is the US move from neutrality to intervention. The chapter on Sousa is particularly successful in this respect, illustrating his journey in parallel with the political developments in his country. Beginning the war with a somewhat exaggerated neutrality – Sousa commented on the Kaiser's love of his marches – he later formed a band in the Naval Reserve and made one of the most popular settings of John McCrae's 'In Flanders Fields'. Patrick Warfield's chapter also shows how the war rejuvenated Sousa both physically, gaining a commission at the age of 62 and shaving his beard, and professionally, rediscovering 'a place in the popular imagination' (p 89).

In Canada the division between English and French speaking regions is shown to have been just as significant in music as it was in other respects, coming to a head over the introduction of conscription and its opposition, often violent opposition, in Quebec. This is specifically tackled in Brian C Thompson's chapter on 'Canada's Dominion Songbook' but Thompson also shows divisions within each language group with, for example, the pro-war French language publication *Le Passe-Temps*, and its inclusion of French-Canadian patriotic songs.

A key event that is referred to by several of the contributors is the impact of the sinking of the *Lusitania* on composers on both sides of the Atlantic. More than one writer uses 9/11 as a comparator which is not inaccurate but probably underestimates the grip the *Lusitania* had on public imagination and artistic output in the period after May 1915. Christian Bashford discusses how Frank Bridge dedicated his Lament to the memory of a child lost in the tragedy and the Charles Ives piece analysed by Gayle Magee, 'From Hanover Square North', was titled after the station he found himself at when he heard the news of the sinking. The links with the attack on the World Trade Center via the Ives piece is remarkable as the former El station in the title is on the very spot the Center was constructed. Magee concludes her chapter by referring to probably the best-known piece written in the aftermath of 9/11, John Adams' *On the Transmigration of Souls*, and its links to Ives' work.

Other fascinating insights are provided by Jeffrey Magee, especially regarding how Irving Berlin decided to omit 'God Bless America' from the finale of his wartime review *Yip Yip Yaphank* (it was felt to be rather too downbeat and hymnlike) and Kendra Preston Leonard on the remarkable women musicians whose careers centered on the cinema. They include Alice Smythe Burton Jay, who invented a new version of the piano roll to synchronise music and visual images; Rosa Rio, who died only in 2010 at the age of 107 and Carrie Hetherington whose 'American Fotoplayer' was an even more sophisticated device than Jay's.

In the final chapter Deniz Ertan describes how the ravages of the flu pandemic (with a death toll roughly equivalent to Covid in the US but an inverted age profile) changed the sound of American song from triumphalism to something far more melancholic, even to despair. I thought he might have made rather more of his thesis here by linking the change in tone to the way the memory of the war developed in the US over the next 100 years, did this change in musical tone add to the negative view of the war in wider American culture?

Overall, this is, perhaps, more a book for scholars of culture and warfare but several of the chapters would be of interest to more general readers, especially those wishing to know more about the specific figures featured. It's another valuable addition to our understanding of culture during wartime and the nature of collaboration, cross-fertilisation and allied responses to the First World War.

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