SELECTED GERSHWIN SONGS AS TRANSCRIBED FOR THE PIANO
BY GEORGE GERSHWIN AND EARL WILD

A Document

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Musical Arts in the
Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

Yun-Ling Hsu, B. M., M. M.

** ** ** **

The Ohio State University
2000

Document Committee:

William Conable, Adviser

Donald Gren

Robin Rice

Approved by

Adviser
School of Music
ABSTRACT

Often called as "the finest transcriber of our time" and "the direct descendant of the golden age of the transcription," the pianist Earl Wild has transcribed seven Gershwin songs for piano solo as Seven Virtuoso Etudes. These songs are "Fascinating Rhythm," "Oh, Lady, Be Good!," "Somebody Loves Me," "The Man I Love," "Liza," "I Got Rhythm," and "Embraceable You." All except for "Embraceable You" were also transcribed by Gershwin for piano in George Gershwin's Song-book. This document provides a comparison study of Wild's Seven Virtuoso Etudes and Gershwin's own transcriptions in the Song-book based upon the same songs.

Chapter Two deals with Gershwin's life, early musical training, role as a composer, a pianist, and a songwriter, including his important works, major performances, and general background and style of songs. It concludes by discussing his improvisational skill, a brief history of the George Gershwin's Song-book, and influences and the style of the eighteen transcriptions in the Song-book.
Chapter Three explores Wild's biography, early musical and piano background, and long and prestigious music career, including his compositions, performances, and recordings. The chapter also concentrates on Wild's early influences in transcription and improvisation, motive for composing piano transcriptions of George Gershwin, and the background and characteristics of the transcriptions.

Chapter Four presents a historical survey of Gershwin's seven songs, an analysis with nine musical elements of the six selected piano transcriptions from *George Gershwin's Song-book* and Wild's transcriptions of *Seven Virtuoso Etudes*, including form, key, tempo, meter, rhythm, melody, harmony, dynamics, and articulation. The chapter concludes with a discussion of piano technique that Gershwin and Wild employed in their transcriptions in seven aspects including chordal patterns, rapid single-note passages, arpeggios, repeated note patterns, large skips, countermelody, and pedaling. The analysis of the elements and piano technique reveals differences and similarities in the transcriptions and keyboard technique of Gershwin and Wild.
To my Heavenly Father
and earthly parents
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my former piano instructor Mr. Earl Wild for his precious time for meetings and interviews, for sharing his invaluable musical ideas, and for being extremely supportive throughout the whole process of this document. His devotion in music and distinguished musicianship will continue to influence my musical career. Sincerest appreciation goes to Mr. Wild’s manager and producer, Michael Rolland Davis, for providing me with related articles, reviews, recordings, and scores. Additionally, his unlimited help and patience in answering my questions through e-mails has made this document possible.

Greatest thanks are addressed to my academic advisor Dr. William Conable for his prompt and efficient guidance and advice on the document. His support on my document and my performances is appreciated. Appreciation also goes to Dr. Donald Gren for his time and help as well as for serving as my advisor and committee member throughout my graduate study at the Ohio State University. I would like to thank Dr. Robin Rice for being on my D.M.A. committee for recitals, general examination, and viewing the document. Thanks are extended to
Dr. Tom Heck and Mr. Alan Green from the Music Library for their assistance on the research, footnote, and bibliography. I am grateful to Dr. Rosemary Platt, Professor Emeritus, for her inspiration on the topic and advice in the very early stage of my research.

Special acknowledgments are addressed to my friends, industrial and graphic designers Ronald Casimir, Axel Roesler, and Rebecca Krenelka for their more than professional knowledge and skills on the computer. My thanks go to Axel for his time and assistance with computer-setting the images and musical examples for all the figures in this document. Sincerest appreciation is expressed to Ronald for not only his knowledge of the computer but also his unceasing support in many circumstances.

To my family, friends, and students, I am greatly indebted for their help, encouragement, and support for my study along the way. The gratitude that I owe to my parents and to the Lord is beyond description. It is because of them that I am what I am today.
VITA

January 24, 1966 .................. Born - Pingtung, Taiwan

1986................................. Diploma in Music, Piano Performance,
Tainan Junior College of Home Economics,
Tainan, Taiwan

1990................................. Bachelor of Music (B.M.), Piano Performance,
The Ohio State University,
Columbus, Ohio

1993................................. Master of Music (M.M.), Piano Performance,
The Ohio State University

1990–1991........................... Graduate Administrative Associate,
School of Music,
The Ohio State University

1992–1995........................... Graduate Associate in Piano Chamber Music and
Accompanying,
School of Music,
The Ohio State University

1995–1997........................... Graduate Teaching Associate in Secondary
Studio Piano and Administration,

Graduate Teaching Associate in Secondary
Class Piano,
School of Music,
The Ohio State University

March, 2000 ......................... Switzerland Recital Début,
Bern, Switzerland

vii
FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Music

Studies in Piano Performance:

Earl Wild
André Laplante
Rosemary Platt
Steven Glaser
Donald Gren
Nelson Harper

Studies in Piano Chamber Music and Accompanying:

André Laplante
Donald Gren
Rosemary Platt
Nelson Harper
William Conable

Studies in Piano Pedagogy:

Jerry E. Lowder
Rebecca Johnson

Studies in Piano and Chamber Music Literature:

Donald Gren
Rosemary Platt
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vita</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Tables</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>xii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Need for the Study</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Scope of the Study</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Procedures of the Document</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. George Gershwin: Songs and Piano Transcriptions from <em>George Gershwin’s Song-book</em></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 George Gershwin: His Life and Music</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 George Gershwin’s Songs</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.1 Early Influences As A Songwriter</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.2 Song Background</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.3 Song Style</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 George Gershwin’s Piano Transcriptions from <em>George Gershwin’s Song-Book</em></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Earl Wild and His Piano Transcriptions of George Gershwin ......................... 35
  3.1 Earl Wild: His Life and Music .................................................................. 35
  3.2 Earl Wild’s Piano Transcriptions of George Gershwin ......................... 55
    3.2.1 Early Influences in Transcription and Improvisation...................... 55
    3.2.2 Motive for Composing Transcriptions of George Gershwin ........... 57
    3.2.3 Background and Characteristics of the Transcriptions ................. 58

4. Six Selected Piano Transcriptions from George Gershwin’s Song-book and Earl Wild’s Piano Transcriptions of Seven Virtuoso Études ..................... 64
  4.1 Historical Background of the Songs ...................................................... 65
  4.2 Musical Elements of the Transcriptions .............................................. 69
    4.2.1 Form .............................................................................................. 69
    4.2.2 Key .............................................................................................. 72
    4.2.3 Tempo .......................................................................................... 76
    4.2.4 Meter ........................................................................................... 77
    4.2.5 Rhythm ......................................................................................... 79
    4.2.6 Melody ......................................................................................... 83
    4.2.7 Harmony ....................................................................................... 88
    4.2.8 Dynamics ....................................................................................... 94
    4.2.9 Articulation .................................................................................... 95
  4.3 Piano Technique of the Transcriptions ................................................ 96
    4.3.1 Chordal Patterns ........................................................................... 97
    4.3.2 Rapid Single-Note Passages ......................................................... 105
    4.3.3 Arpeggios ..................................................................................... 109
    4.3.4 Repeated Note Patterns ............................................................... 113
    4.3.5 Large Skips ................................................................................. 115
    4.3.6 Countermelody ............................................................................. 120
    4.3.7 Pedaling ....................................................................................... 121

5. Conclusions and Recommendations ......................................................... 124

Appendix A Music Reviews of Earl Wild ....................................................... 130
Appendix B A List of All Published Earl Wild Piano Transcriptions ........... 138

Bibliography ................................................................................................. 140
## LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Form</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Key</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Tempo Marking</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Meter</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Earl Wild and author at the Chicago Symphony Hall, Chicago, 4 November 1999</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Earl Wild and author at the Fernleaf Abbey, Columbus, Ohio, 28 May 2000</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Different key signatures for two hands, Gershwin/Wild: “I Got Rhythm,” mm. 86–88</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Different key signatures for two hands, Gershwin: <em>I Got Rhythm Variations</em> for Piano and Orchestra (two-piano score), mm. 207–210</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>A variation of rhythm, Gershwin/Wild: “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 50–53</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>A variation of rhythm, Gershwin/Wild: “Oh, Lady, Be Good!,” mm. 38–40</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>A similarity of rhythm, Gershwin: “I Got Rhythm,” mm. 39–42</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>A similarity of rhythm, Gershwin/Wild: “I Got Rhythm,” mm. 43–46</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>Melody in the middle register of the piano, Gershwin/Wild: “Somebody Loves Me,” mm. 1–7</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>Melody an octave lower (the tenor melody), Gershwin: “Somebody Loves Me,” mm. 1–2</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>Melody an octave higher, Gershwin: “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 3–6</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

xii
Melody an octave higher, Gershwin/Wild: “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 11–14 ................................................................. 86

Melody in octaves, Gershwin: “Liza,” mm. 21–24 ........................................ 86

Melody in chords, Gershwin: “The Man I Love,” mm. 17–20 .............. 87

Melody in chords, Gershwin/Wild: “The Man I Love,” mm. 30–33 ...... 88

Parallel chromatic scalar passage in the inner voice (the alto melody) and chromatic chord progression, Gershwin: “I Got Rhythm,” mm. 35–38 ... 90

Parallel chromatic scalar passage in the inner voice (the alto melody), Gershwin/Wild: “Somebody Loves Me,” mm. 48–49 ...................... 91

Parallel chromatic chord progression, Gershwin/Wild: “Liza,” mm. 109–110 ......................................................................... 91

Enhancing the harmonic texture with block chords, Gershwin: “Liza,” mm. 16 ..................................................................... 92

Enhancing the harmonic texture with arpeggiated figures, Gershwin/Wild: “Embraceable You,” mm. 1–3 ........................................... 93

Enhancing the harmonic texture with rapid single-note figurations, Gershwin/Wild: “The Man I Love,” mm. 19–22 ............................. 93


Block chordal patterns, Gershwin: “The Man I Love,” mm. 1–4 ............ 98

Block chordal patterns, Gershwin/Wild: “The Man I Love,” mm. 30–33... ............................................................................. 99

Parallel chromatic chord progression, Gershwin: “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 1–2 (introduction) ......................................................... 100

Parallel chromatic chord progression, Gershwin: “Oh, Lady, Be Good!,” mm. 23–24 ..................................................................... 100

xiii
4.25 Parallel chromatic chord progression, Gershwin: “I Got Rhythm,” mm. 35–38
4.26 Parallel chromatic chord progression, Gershwin/Wild: “Oh, Lady, Be
Good!,” mm. 26–28
4.27 Parallel chromatic chord progression, Gershwin/Wild: “Liza,” mm. 46–48
4.28 Repeated chordal patterns, Gershwin: “Liza,” mm. 17–20
4.29 Successive scalar chord pattern, Gershwin/Wild: “Fascinating Rhythm,”
mm. 21–22
4.30 Alternating scalar chord pattern, Gershwin/Wild: “I Got Rhythm,” mm.
131–134
4.31 Alternating chordal pattern, Gershwin/Wild: “Oh, Lady, Be Good!,” mm.
68–69
mm. 4
4.33 Rapid single-note scale passage with alternating hands, Gershwin/Wild:
“Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 49
4.34 Rapid single-note scale passage with alternating hands, Gershwin/Wild:
“Liza,” mm. 117–118
4.35 Rapid single-note arpeggiated passage with alternating hands, Gershwin/
Wild: “Somebody Loves Me,” mm. 39
19–22
Love,” mm. 27
4.38 Cadential arpeggiated patterns, Gershwin: “The Man I Love,” mm. 32–33
4.39 Quartal broken chord arpeggiated patterns. Gershwin/Wild: “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 58–60 ................................................................. 111

mm. 41–42 ........................................................................................................ 111

4.41 Triple broken chord arpeggiated patterns. Gershwin/Wild: “Liza,” mm. 62
......................................................................................................................... 112

mm. 34–36 ........................................................................................................ 112

4.43 Repeated double-note pattern, Gershwin: “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 7–9
......................................................................................................................... 113

4.44 Repeated double-note patterns, Gershwin/Wild: “Fascinating Rhythm,”
mm. 45–48 ........................................................................................................ 114

......................................................................................................................... 114

102–104 and 112–114 ...................................................................................... 115

4.47 Left hand broken chord skips, Gershwin: “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 11–
13 .................................................................................................................... 116

4.48 Left-hand broken chord skips, Gershwin: “I Got Rhythm,” mm. 39–42
....................................................................................................................... 116

4.49 Stretching in intervals. Gershwin: “Liza,” mm. 1–3 and 7 ....................... 117

4.50 Stretching in rolled chords, Gershwin: “Somebody Loves Me,” mm. 29–
31 .................................................................................................................... 117

4.51 Left hand broken chord skips. Gershwin/Wild: “Fascinating Rhythm,”
mm. 11–14 ...................................................................................................... 118

4.52 Stretching in chords, Gershwin/Wild: “Lady, Be Good!,” mm. 46–49
....................................................................................................................... 118
4.53 Skips in right-hand shifting, Gershwin/Wild: “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 30 ...

4.54 Skips in left-hand shifting. Gershwin/Wild: “Fascinating Rhythm.” mm. 74–77 ... 120

4.55 Adding countermelody (on the first treble clef), Gershwin/Wild: “The Man I Love,” mm. 11–13 ...

4.56 The use of sustaining pedal, Gershwin/Wild: “Embraceable You,” mm. 47–48 and 55–58 ...

xvi
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

During my second year of graduate study at the Ohio State University, I was assigned four orchestral transcriptions of Ottorino Respighi’s Antiche Danze ed Arie per Liuto for solo piano as part of my graduate Master’s recital program. This was when piano transcriptions were brought to my attention for the first time. Ever since I have been fascinated by the art of transcription. In The New Harvard Dictionary of Music, transcription is defined as:

The adaptation of a composition for a medium other than its original one, e.g., of vocal music for instruments or of a piano work for orchestra, a practice that began in Western music by the 14th century.¹

Therefore, a piano transcription is an arrangement or adaptation of a composition from any other instrument or voice to piano. When modern pianos were developed composers used their new colors and ranges to adapt their own or other

---

composers’ works for pianos.

As a piano performer it gives me great satisfaction to play transcriptions. They allow me to conjure up the imagination and evoke the color of the original medium, and to bring audiences to a heightened awareness in style and orchestral sonority of the original piece. Because of my interest in the art of transcription, it has become my goal to discover more unique piano repertoire of transcription and reveal the nuances of the work in my practice and performance.

I was fortunate to study piano with Earl Wild, a former visiting Artist-in-Residence at The Ohio State University. He has been described as “one of the last in a long line of great virtuoso pianists/composers,” “a super virtuoso,” “one of the 20th century’s greatest pianists,” and “the finest transcriber of our time.” Since performing as soloist in Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue* with the conductor Toscanini and the NBC Symphony Orchestra in 1942, Wild has been acclaimed for his interpretation of Gershwin’s music. Throughout the years Wild has arranged several of Gershwin’s works for piano solo, including a *Grande Fantasy on ‘Porgy and Bess,’ Improvisation in the Form of a Theme and Three Variations on ‘Someone To Watch Over Me,’* and *Seven Virtuoso Etudes* on Gershwin’s popular songs: “I Got Rhythm,” “Oh, Lady, Be Good!,” “Liza,” “Embraceable You,” “Somebody Loves Me,” “Fascinating Rhythm,” and “The Man I Love.”

---

On February 11, 1993, Wild performed three of his virtuoso etudes, “Liza,” “Somebody Loves Me,” and “I Got Rhythm” in a faculty recital at Weigel Auditorium at The Ohio State University. These beautiful and clever etudes immediately drew my attention. Later I studied two etudes, “Fascinating Rhythm” and “The Man I Love” with Wild and performed them in recitals in 1995.

The music of Gershwin plays a major role in the twentieth century American music literature. It was his memorable melody and inventive rhythm that made Gershwin one of the important American composers. Gershwin’s first biographer, Isaac Goldberg, said: “He is a Colossus, with one foot in Carnegie Hall and the other in Tin Pan Alley.” ³ Certainly Gershwin is one of the first American composers to combine jazz and ragtime idioms with classical music successfully. His compositions had a strong influence on not only American but also international music. In 1998, the hundredth anniversary of Gershwin’s birth, his music was still as popular as in the 1920s and is programmed frequently.

After a study of the piano music of Gershwin, I discovered that he transcribed six of the same songs that Wild used for his Seven Virtuoso Etudes in the George Gershwin’s Song-book. This aroused my interest in comparing their transcribing and piano technique for these transcriptions based upon the same

songs. Through this study I will explore the musical relationship between Wild and Gershwin.

1.1 Need for the Study

There are two reasons for the study. The first is to draw attention to unique and inventive piano transcriptions. No previous study has analyzed Wild’s transcriptions of *Seven Virtuoso Etudes* or compared them with Gershwin’s own arrangements. Even though the eighteen transcriptions in Gershwin’s *Song-book* are the subject of a previous study, they are often overlooked by pianists.

During the nineteenth century, piano transcriptions were frequently played in concerts and were widely accepted by the public. Liszt arranged many instrumental, orchestral, and vocal compositions for the piano, such as Paganini’s violin caprices, Beethoven’s symphonies, almost sixty of Schubert’s songs, and selections from Mozart’s opera *Don Giovanni*, Bellini’s *Norma*, and Verdi’s *Rigoletto*. After the Liszt era piano transcriptions continued to play an important role in the piano repertoire. Busoni transcribed some of Bach’s organ chorale preludes for piano and he and Brahms both transcribed Bach’s violin *Chaconne* for piano.

---

In the early decades of this century, transcribed compositions were performed by many virtuoso pianists. Rachmaninoff played some of the Schubert-Liszt songs, Josef Lhévinne was well known for his performance of the Schulz-Evler Arabesques on the Blue Danube, and Vladimir Horowitz was renowned for playing his own arrangements of music from Bizet’s Carmen and Sousa’s The Star and Stripes Forever.⁵

As musical tastes have changed in the second half of the twentieth century, a higher respect for the composer’s original intention has developed. Piano transcriptions become less popular and virtually disappeared from recital programs. Although the playing of piano transcriptions lost favor in recent years, Mr. Wild’s performances are exceptions. Wild has remained among the most recorded and performed pianist in transcription. He shared his view of the musical art of transcription:

I love the transcription literature, including the many lovely pieces which are neglected because they have fallen out of fashion. . . . musicians often close their minds to some charming, and, in many ways, successful music.⁶

Transcriptions were so popular then. They were . . . interesting, colorful, dealing with a rich sonority and a projection of different kinds of sound. . . . I love to play transcriptions because they give the pianist so much more freedom. I can make my own interpretations. It’s not like a Beethoven sonata . . . in which one cannot move outside of certain concepts. The

---

pleasure in playing transcriptions comes from the projection of what they are.  

As long as there are creative musicians who can improvise and imagine backgrounds and settings, the art of transcription will remain timeless.  

More than a decade ago, interest in piano transcriptions slowly returned and they have become appreciated again.

A second reason for the study of transcriptions is to encourage performers to create new and exciting recital programs. Robert J. Silverman expresses the opinion that because audiences hear the standard works so frequently, fewer performers can keep them interested in this conventional programming and make them really listen to it. Wild has also noted that: “Audiences throughout this country have diminished greatly . . . with the same old repertoire.” Moreover, increased competition from television, radio, and recordings gives people the people the choice to stay at their homes; competition from all types of music often attracts people to attend other types of concerts than classical music concerts. It is becoming more difficult to interest people in attending classical music recitals.

---

Part of the solution may be interesting and creative recital programming including piano transcriptions. Music such as Wild’s transcriptions of Gershwin and transcriptions from *George Gershwin’s Song-book* are fine examples.

### 1.2 Scope of the Study

The main focus of this study is limited to the six song transcriptions of Gershwin from the newest edition of *George Gershwin’s Song-book* with a revised title, *Gershwin at the Keyboard — 18 Songs Hits Arranged by the Composer for Piano*, published by Warner Brothers Publications (Catalogue No. PF0014), and the *Seven Virtuoso Etudes* of Earl Wild, published by Michael Rolland Davis Productions, ASCAP (Copyright Earl Wild 1975, Library of Congress PA 705540). These songs are:

1. “Fascinating Rhythm”
2. “Oh, Lady, Be Good!”
3. “Somebody Loves Me”
4. “The Man I Love”
5. “Liza”
6. “I Got Rhythm”
7. “Embraceable You” (Gershwin did not transcribe this song in his *Song-book*.)
1.3 Procedures of the Document

The second chapter of this document begins with a biographical profile of George Gershwin. It includes his early musical life, his teachers, and his successful career as both a performer and composer including his important performances, compositions and popular musical works. It is followed by a discussion of the influences on his songwriting along with the general song background and style. The last part of this chapter is a discussion of George Gershwin’s Song-book including a brief history of the book as well as its influences and style of the transcriptions in the book.

The first half of Chapter Three deals with a biography of Earl Wild. It also mentions many of his major performances, recordings, CDs, compositions, and transcriptions. The second half of the chapter is an introduction to his piano transcriptions of Gershwin. It gives attention to Wild’s early influences in transcription and improvisation, his motive in transcribing Gershwin’s songs for piano, and the general background and characteristics of the transcriptions.

Chapter Four begins with a general historical background of the seven Gershwin songs. It is followed by an analysis of six selected piano transcriptions from the Song-book and Wild’s transcriptions of the Seven Virtuoso Etudes with a detailed presentation of form, key, tempo, meter, rhythm, melody, harmony, dynamics, and articulation. The chapter concludes with a discussion of piano
technique that Gershwin and Wild employed in their transcriptions, such as chordal patterns, rapid single-note passages, arpeggios, repeated note patterns, large skips, countermelody, and pedaling.

Chapter Five includes a summary of the study and conclusions concerning the aspects of Gershwin’s and Wild’s piano transcription technique as exemplified in George Gershwin’s Song-book and Seven Virtuoso Etudes. Recommendations for further study are included at the end of this chapter.

This document concludes with two appendices and a bibliography. Appendix A provides music reviews of Earl Wild. The first part contains reviews of Wild as a performer, which include his live and recorded performances in standard works and piano transcriptions; the second half deals with Wild’s Gershwin transcriptions. Appendix B is a list of all published Earl Wild piano transcriptions.
CHAPTER 2

GEORGE GERSHWIN: SONGS AND PIANO TRANSCRIPTIONS FROM

GEORGE GERSHWIN’S SONG-BOOK

2.1 George Gershwin: His Life and Music

George Gershwin [real name, Jacob Gershvin], American composer, pianist, and conductor, was born in Brooklyn, New York City, on September 26, 1898. Gershwin’s parents, Morris Gershovitz and Rose Bruskin, emigrated from St. Petersburg, Russia to the United States in 1890s. His father’s original family name was Gershovitz. His immigration officer had assigned the name, Gershvin, and it was changed to “Gershwin” by George after he started his music career.¹ Gershwin’s parents married in 1895 and lived in New York. They had four children, the oldest son, Ira, who wrote lyrics for many of Gershwin’s songs, then George, Arthur, and the youngest daughter, Frances, who later married the piano virtuoso Leopold Godowsky’s son, Leopold Godowsky, Jr.²

Early Musical Experiences

Gershwin spent most of his early boyhood in a modest Jewish community on the lower east side of Manhattan. He was interested in athletics and was a roller-skating champion on the street where he played. In an interview after Gershwin became a composer, he remembered his early musical experience at the age of six, where he had stopped on a sidewalk and heard Anton Rubinstein’s *Melody in F* on a player piano. This was in 1904 before radios and electric phonographs were invented. He was impressed by the music. “The peculiar jumps in the music held me rooted,” he recalled.3

About the same period of time, one day while roller-skating in Harlem, he heard jazz music from a club and was fascinated by the exciting rhythms. Later he often skated to this place to listen to the music. He told a friend that his interests in jazz, blues, and rags began at this time.4 Another musical encounter came when Gershwin was ten years old. In school Gershwin admired an eight-year-old violin prodigy, Maxie Rosenzweig (known in his later career as Max Rosen) and later they became close friends. Rosenzweig opened the world of good music for Gershwin and gave him hope of being a musician.5

---

4 Ibid., 13.
5 Ibid., 14.
Early Musical Training

In 1910, Gershwin’s family bought a piano for Ira, but it was George that showed his musical talent at the piano. George first took lessons with neighborhood teachers. From 1912, he began formal piano lessons with Charles Hambitzer, a talented pianist and composer, who introduced him not only to the standard classical piano works by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, and Liszt, but also to the modern music of Debussy and Ravel. In addition, he made Gershwin conscious of harmony and often took him to concerts. Gershwin kept a music book with pictures, captions, and newspapers stories of many famous piano virtuosi, such as Liszt, Josef Hofmann, Josef Lhévinne, Ferruccio Busoni, Alexander Glazunov, and such major composers as Wagner and Massenet. There were also programs of different concerts from Wanamaker, the new Aeolian, and Carnegie Hall in his music book.

Hambitzer recognized the young Gershwin’s talent in music from the beginning. He refused to accept money from Gershwin for his lessons. Once he wrote to his sister and described:

I have a new pupil who will make his mark in music if anybody will. The boy is a genius, without a doubt; he’s crazy about music and can’t wait until it’s time to take his lessons. No watching the clock for this boy.

---

6 Ibid., 17–18.
Nevertheless, he regretted Gershwin’s strong interest in popular music, and wrote:

He wants to go in for this modern stuff, jazz and what not. But I’m not going to let him for a while. I’ll see that he gets a firm foundation in standard music first.\(^9\)

Hambitzer was Gershwin’s first most important teacher and first great musical influence. When Gershwin became famous in the music world, he retained his respect for Hambitzer and acknowledged: “Without Hambitzer, there would be no Gershwin.”\(^10\)

After Gershwin stopped lessons with Hambitzer, he studied piano only occasionally with Herman Wasserman, who edited and revised the standard edition of *George Gershwin’s Song-book*, and Ernest Hutchenson, an outstanding pianist and author, who became the president of The Juilliard School of Music in 1937. So Hambitzer can be considered as Gershwin’s last regular piano teacher.\(^11\)

**The Young Professional**

By the age of fifteen, Gershwin stopped high school to work as a song demonstrator and plugger at Jerome H. Remick and Company, a large music publisher in the popular song writing and sheet music business in New York’s Tin Pan Alley. There he spent many hours every day to demonstrate the company’s

---

\(^9\) Ibid., 19.


songs for pianists or accompany for singers, who regularly visited the publishing house for new materials. As his long hours at the piano improved his playing, he soon earned a reputation as the best pianist in the store. Because of his impressive ability at the piano, he began to record player piano rolls of popular songs in 1915 and had made more than hundred piano rolls by 1926.12 Around 1915 he was also already writing his own songs, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

After he left his job at Jerome H. Remick and Company in 1917, he worked as a pianist for rehearsals of Miss 1917, a show by Jerome Kern and Victor Herbert. His talent as a composer and pianist had been noticed, and in the beginning of 1918 Max Dreyfus, the head of Harms Incorporated music publishers, offered him a weekly salary of thirty-five dollars to publish songs he might write in the future. In the same year he composed his first full score of Broadway musical comedy, La La Lucille.13

More Studies

During this time Gershwin studied composition with Conductor Artur Bodanzky (1877–1939), but lessons were ended very quickly. Hambitzer introduced Gershwin Edward Kilenyi, Sr., a Hungarian-born conductor, arranger, and composer, the second of the two most important teachers who helped to

---

12 Ibid., 23–24.
establish the foundations of Gershwin’s musical development intermittently from 1919 to 1921.\textsuperscript{14} Unlike many of Gershwin’s teachers, Kilenyi encouraged him to devote himself to popular music, instead of only to serious music. Kilenyi told him:

> It will bring you nearer your goal if you become a big success as a popular composer, for then conductors will come to you to ask for serious works.\textsuperscript{15}

After Kilenyi, Gershwin continued to study theory, harmony, counterpoint, and orchestration with Rubin Goldmark (three lessons in 1923), Henry Cowell (intermittently between 1927 and 1929), Wallingford Riegger (several months in the 1920s), and Joseph Schillinger (1932–6, longer than any other teacher). From time to time, Gershwin expressed an interest in studying with Edgard Varèse, Ernest Bloch, Maurice Ravel, Nadia Boulanger, Arnold Schoenberg, and Ernest Toch, but never did so.\textsuperscript{16}

In 1919, he wrote \textit{Lullaby} for string quartet that was actually composed as a harmony exercise for Kilenyi. Gershwin later incorporated the principal theme from \textit{Lullaby} into his short one-act jazzy opera \textit{Blue Monday Blues} in 1922 (later retitled as \textit{135th Street}). Beginning in 1920, he composed music for a series of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{14} Schwartz, Gershwin. 54–55.
\item \textsuperscript{15} Ewen, \textit{George Gershwin}. 33.
\item \textsuperscript{16} Schwartz, Gershwin. 54–56.
\end{itemize}
Broadway musicals, *George White’s Scandals*, for five consecutive years (1920–24).  17

*Rhapsody in Blue*

At the end of 1923, Paul Whiteman who was a dance orchestra leader and conductor, also often called the “King of Jazz,” planned to give an ambitious jazz concert for his orchestra in a concert hall. Inspired by Gershwin’s *Blue Monday Blues*, Whiteman asked him to write a piece in jazz idiom for piano and orchestra, and offered him the opportunity to appear as piano soloist. One month later Gershwin finished the piece *Rhapsody in Blue*. It was orchestrated by Ferde Grofé.

On February 12, 1924, Whiteman’s concert “An Experiment in Modern Music” was presented in the Aeolian Concert Hall. Among other things, it contained transcriptions of works by Irving Berlin and Edward MacDowell’s *To a Wild Rose*. Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue* was the second last piece and the program concluded with Elgar’s *Pomp and Circumstance*. There were many leading musicians in the audience, including Leopold Godowsky, Fritz Kreisler, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Walter Damrosch, Jascha Heifetz, Moriz Rosenthal, and Leopold Stokowski.  18 After the performance, Gershwin became a hero of the audience and the reviewers both as piano soloist and composer. One of music

---

17 Ibid., 43.
18 Ibid., 87.
reviewers. Deems Taylor, reported: “Mr. Gershwin will bear watching; he may yet bring jazz out of the kitchen.”

*Rhapsody in Blue* made Gershwin famous all over the world. It has been the best known and most performed orchestral work by an American composer up to the present day. Many composers followed in Gershwin’s footsteps by combining jazz or popular elements with traditional approaches in their piano compositions, for example, Aaron Copland’s Concerto for Piano and Orchestra and Ravel’s *Piano Concerto in D for the Left Hand* and his *Piano Concerto in G*.

**More Concert Works**

After the *Rhapsody* Gershwin devoted much more time to concert works. The summer of 1925 he completed and orchestrated a longer and more ambitious piece, the *Concerto in F* for piano and orchestra, which was commissioned by Walter Damrosch and the New York Symphony Orchestra. The solo piano work *Three Preludes for Piano* was first introduced at a December 1926 recital given by the Peruvian singer Marguerite d’Alvarez with Gershwin’s piano accompaniment. The tone poem *An American in Paris* was finished during Gershwin’s trip to Europe in 1928. It was also commissioned by Walter Damrosch and the New York Symphony Orchestra.

---

19 Ibid., 88.
20 Ibid., 93.
In Paris, Gershwin met many important musicians including Serge Prokofiev, Darius Milhaud, Francis Poulenc, Maurice Ravel, William Walton, Alban Berg, Leopold Stokowski, Jacques Ibert, and Nadia Boulanger who were impressed by his music and encouraged him in his work.\textsuperscript{21} According to Gershwin’s biographer Armitage, an interesting story dealing with Gershwin’s interest in studying with Ravel follows:

In Paris, George called on Maurice Ravel to see if he would take him as a pupil. Ravel assured him it was much better to be a first-class Gershwin than a second-class Ravel.\textsuperscript{22}

Broadway and Hollywood

During the 1920s and 1930s, Gershwin wrote the full scores for more than forty musicals and four films. In 1924, the big hit musical comedy \textit{Lady, Be Good!} was the first complete Broadway show with music by George and lyrics by his brother, Ira Gershwin. After \textit{Lady, Be Good!}, the Gershwin brothers wrote several musicals and operettas, including \textit{Tip-Toes} (1925), \textit{Oh, Kay!} (1926), \textit{Strike Up The Band} (1927, revised 1930), \textit{Funny Face} (1927), \textit{Treasure Girl} (1928), \textit{Show Girls} (1929), \textit{Girl Crazy} (1930). \textit{Of Thee I Sing} (1931), \textit{Pardon My English} (1933), and \textit{Let ‘Em Eat Cake} (1933). In 1932, \textit{Of Thee I Sing} became the first musical comedy to be awarded the Pulitzer Prize in drama.\textsuperscript{23}

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., 155.
\textsuperscript{23} Schwartz, \textit{Gershwin}, 217.
The Hollywood film scores that Gershwin wrote were *Delicious* (1931), *Shall We Dance* (1937), *A Damsel in Distress* (1937), and *The Goldwyn Follies* (1938).

**Later Works**

In May of 1931, Gershwin completed the *Second Rhapsody* for piano and orchestra, one of his least known works. From 1934 to 1935, he had a radio program, *Music By Gershwin*, on station WIZ on the Columbia Broadcasting System in New York, where he played and talked about his own music. While studying with his last teacher Joseph Schillinger, Gershwin wrote the *Cuban Overture* (1932), *George Gershwin’s Song-book* (1932), a set of variations on the song “I Got Rhythm” (1934), and the opera *Porgy and Bess* (1935).²⁴

The opera was based on DuBose Heyward’s novel *Porgy* about the crippled beggar Porgy and life among poor black people of Catfish Row in Charleston, South Carolina. The idea of composing this work first came to Gershwin when he read the book in 1926. He began the composition in February 1934 and spent the summer composing in a cottage at Folly Beach, South Carolina to be close to the local people and culture. After the composition was finished in the early of 1935, he used several months in orchestrating the work.²⁵ This last most important and serious work however, did not become successful until after his death.

---

²⁴ Crawford and Schneider, “Gershwin, George,” in *Twentieth-Century American Masters*, 144.
²⁵ Ibid., 144–145.
During the year of 1936, Gershwin was the American composer whose works played the most by symphonic organizations. In addition, he was honored as a member of the Academy of Santa Cecilia, Italy’s highest award to foreign composers.\textsuperscript{26}

From the first half of 1937, Gershwin started to experience discomfort, dizziness and headache. He fell into a coma on July 9 and died during surgery for a brain tumor on July 11, 1937 in Hollywood at the age of 38. He was buried in New York.

\subsection{2.2 George Gershwin’s Songs}

Gershwin first emerged as a songwriter, composing songs for Tin Pan Alley, then for the Broadway musicals and Hollywood films. Between World War I and 1950, Gershwin and a group of other American song composers dominated the field of American popular songs. The best known of those songwriters were Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern, Richard Rodgers, Cole Porter, and Harold Arlen.\textsuperscript{27}

\subsubsection{2.2.1 Early Influences As A Songwriter}

Gershwin’s interests in popular music and songs could be traced back to his early years. When the piano was brought into Gershwin’s house, he often played

\textsuperscript{26} Armitage, \textit{Man and Legend}, 17–18.

\textsuperscript{27} Crawford and Schneider, “Gershwin, George,” in \textit{Twentieth-Century American Masters}, 146.
popular tunes he loved or was familiar with, and made up his own melodies. Later Gershwin learned that classical composers Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and Brahms had used popular music in their waltzes, country dances, and other music. Throughout the time he studied piano with Hambitzer and later harmony with Kilenyi, he never let anything or anyone, not even the teachers he admired, shake him from his love for popular music.

He was “crazy about jazz and ragtime,” according to Hambitzer. Except for the time Gershwin devoted to the classical masters, his private hours of playing belonged to Tin Pan Alley. Gershwin particularly enjoyed playing Irving Berlin’s “Alexander’s Ragtime Band,” and was soon passionate about Jerome Kern’s music that he first heard at his aunt’s wedding in 1914. Gershwin once recalled:

I followed Kern’s work and studied each song he composed. I paid him the tribute of frank imitation, and many things I wrote at this period sounded as though Kern had written them himself.29

Later in an interview from a radio program in 1932, when asked about those contemporary composers he most admired, he immediately answered “Jerome Kern and Irving Berlin.”30 Both of them were major influences on Gershwin’s

28 Armitage, Man and Legend, 123.
30 George Gershwin, interview by Ruby Vallée, Fleischmann Hour Radio Program, New York, 10 November 1932, in Gershwin Performs Gershwin: Rare Recordings 1931–1935, Musicmasters CD 5062-2-C.
songwriting career.

Gershwin’s first song, a ballad, “Since I Found You” (lyrics by Leonard Praskins), was written in 1913 but never published. It was followed by “Ragging the Träumerei” (lyrics by Leonard Praskins). Because of the strong influence of Berlin and Kern, Gershwin was sure that theirs was the kind of music he wanted to compose. In order to learn all he could about popular music, he left school to take a job as a song plugger at Jerome H. Remick. Once he was practicing Bach’s *The Well-Tempered Clavier* at work. “Are you practicing to become a concert pianist?” a fellow plugger asked. Gershwin answered, “No, I’m studying to be a great popular song composer.”31

2.2.2 Song Background

Gershwin’s first published song was “When You Want ‘Em You Can’t Get ‘Em, When You’ve Got ‘Em You Don’t Want ‘Em” (lyrics by Murray Roth, 1916). “Swanee” was his first hit song (lyrics by Irving Caesar, 1919). It successfully sold over two millions of copies of recordings by Al Jolson for Columbia and one million copies of sheet music in 1920. Some of Gershwin’s earlier famous songs were with lyrics by Buddy G. De Sylva from musicals, such as “Nobody But You” (*La, La, Lucille*, 1919), “Do It Again” (*The French Doll*,

---

1922), “I’ll Build a Stairway to Paradise” (George White’s Scandals of 1922), and “Somebody Loves Me” (George White’s Scandals of 1924), the last two songs with lyrics in collaboration with Arthur Francis and Ballard MacDonald.

On November 1, 1923, the celebrated Canadian soprano Eva Gauthier, with Gershwin at the piano, gave her recital at Aeolian Hall, New York, which was considered “one of the very most important events in American musical history” by the writer Carl van Vechten. Gauthier introduced groups of songs from various composers, including Gershwin’s three songs, “Swanee,” “I’ll Build a Stairway to Paradise,” and “Innocent Ingenué Baby” (lyrics by A. E. Thomas and Brian Hooker). Gauthier sang a fourth Gershwin song, “Do It Again,” as an encore. This was the first time Gershwin appeared as a pianist and composer in a major concert hall.

In 1924, the first Broadway show by the Gershwins Lady, Be Good! included the songs “Fascinating Rhythm” and “Oh, Lady, Be Good!” both of which became standards of American song repertory. After Lady, Be Good!, Gershwin wrote his vocal music mostly with lyrics by his brother Ira. The Gershwin brothers became one of the most successful and best known music/lyrics partnerships in Broadway and Hollywood. The team contributed many of their

\[32\] Ibid., 259.
best songs to Broadway musicals, which were performed by such stars as Fred and
Adele Astaire, Gertrude Lawrence, Ethel Merman, and Ginger Rogers.

The following is a partial list of the greatest songs from the musicals, films,
and the opera by George and Ira Gershwin:

*Tip-Toes* (1925)

“Looking for a Boy,” “Sweet and Low-Down,” “That Certain Feeling”

*Oh, Kay!* (1926)

“Clap Yo’ Hands,” “Do Do Do,” “Maybe,” “Someone to Watch over Me”

*Strike Up The Band* (1927, revised 1930)

“Soon,” “Strike up the Band”

*Funny Face* (1927)

“My One and Only.,” “‘S Wonderful,” “The Babbitt and the Bromide”

*Treasure Girl* (1928)

“I’ve Got a Crush on You”

*Girl Crazy* (1930)

“Bidin’ My Time, Boy!,” “What Love Has Done to Me!,” “But Not for
Me,” “Embraceable You,” “I Got Rhythm,” “Sam and Delilah”

*Of Thee I Sing* (1931)

“Love Is Sweeping the Country,” “Of Thee I Sing,” “Who Cares?”

*Porgy and Bess* (1935)

“A Woman Is a Sometime Thing,” “Bess, You Is My Woman Now,” “I Got
Plenty o’ Nuttin’,” “It Ain’t Necessarily So,” “Summertime,” “There’s a Boat Dat’s Leavin’ Soon for New York”

*Shall We Dance* (1937)

“Let’s Call the Whole Thing Off,” “Shall We Dance,” “They All Laughed,” “They Can’t Take That Away From Me”

*A Damsel in Distress* (1937)

“A Foggy Day,” “Nice Work If You Can Get It”

*The Goldwyn Follies* (1938)

“Love Is Here to Stay,” “Love Walked In”

The song “They Can’t Take That Away From Me” from the film *Shall We Dance* was the only song of Gershwin ever nominated for an Academy award. Two of the greatest songs with lyrics by Ira Gershwin not listed above should be noted. One song, “The Man I Love,” was never used in any productions, but later became one of Gershwin’s most sung songs and song classics; the other song, “Liza,” from *Show Girl* (1929), had lyrics by Ira Gershwin and Gus Kahn.

---

2.2.3 Song Style

Gershwin wrote memorable songs. Many of his tunes have a characteristic minor melody sound. This is due to the emphasis of the interval of a minor third in the melodies that is much used in Jewish folk music. The vocal line is always incorporated into the piano accompaniment and frequently decorated with chromatic melody. The harmony is characterized by major-minor diatonicism, often with modulations or harmonic changes followed by a sudden return to the main key. Gershwin’s rhythm is relaxed, driving, flexible, and highly syncopated because of the influence of Afro-American dance music. He often based his songs on one main rhythmic-melodic motive, such as one recurring rhythmic pattern. He also learned from jazz musicians a more aggressive and swinging beat with the possibility of accents and repeating the patterns of accents.34

Most of Gershwin’s songs are standard thirty-two-measure popular songs with the repetitive refrain formulas of Tin Pan Alley. The conventional AABA format, also called “American popular song form,” is most common.35 It opens with an eight-measure phrase or A, which is repeated almost exactly, followed by a new eight-measure phrase in a different key as the “bridge” or B, then ended with

another repetition of the opening eight-measure phrase. Other forms such as ABAB and ABAC are also used.36

The tempo markings are given in Italian. Most of the time two to four measures of piano introduction lead to the first vocal entry. The piano part of his songs often contains pianistic elements such as the ragtime style of broken chord "oom-pah" accompaniment in the left hand, and stepwise movements of the harmony. The song lyrics were always written after the music was composed.

2.3 George Gershwin's Piano Transcriptions from George Gershwin's Songbook

2.3.1 Improvisational Skill

Early in his professional career as a song plugger at Jerome H. Remick's, Gershwin developed his improvisational ability by playing for hours. By the early 1920s, Gershwin was famous as an improviser. He often improvised his own songs or performed variations on the music of other composers to entertain his friends at parties. He never played his own pieces twice in the same way. His contemporaries remarked:

He improvised on the piano with such security and facility that it sounded like a written-down and memorized piece. (Henry Cowell)37

37 Ewen, George Gershwin, 206.
George at the piano was George happy. He would draw a lovely melody out of the keyboard like a golden thread, then he would play with it and juggle it, twist it and toss it around mischievously, weave it into unexpected intricate patterns, tie it in knots and untie it and hurl it into a cascade of ever-changing rhythms and counterpoints. George at the piano was like a gay sorcerer celebrating his Sabbath. (Rouben Mamoulian)\textsuperscript{38}

2.3.2 The *Song-book*

In 1929 the publishing house Simon and Schuster asked Gershwin to write down some of his improvisations and variations on paper. Between 1931 and 1932, Gershwin composed solo piano arrangements of eighteen songs. In May of 1932, Bennet Cerf’s Random House prepared a deluxe limited edition of three hundred copies of *George Gershwin’s Song-book* (a revised title, originally called *The George Gershwin Song-book*), which were illustrated by a New York artist Constantin Alajálov, and were signed by Gershwin and Alajálov.

The *Song-book* contained a collection of eighteen of Gershwin’s most famous songs from musicals that he wrote between the 1920s and the early 1930s. They were arranged chronologically by date of composition from the 1919 “Swanee” to the 1932 “Who Cares?” (from the musical *Of Thee I Sing*) in their regular piano/vocal sheet music form and each followed by the heart of the book, Gershwin’s variations. or as he called them, “transcriptions” for solo piano.\textsuperscript{39}

These printed transcriptions are the only published form of his improvisations. An

\textsuperscript{38} Schwartz, “Gershwin, George,” 187.

\textsuperscript{39} Edward Jablonski, *Gershwin* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1990), 229.
extra song “Mischa, Yascha, Toscha, Sascha,” written ten years earlier, was inserted as a bonus only for the limited edition of the *Song-book*. The general edition (without the “Mischa” song) was published by Simon and Schuster in September of 1932. The *Song-book* was dedicated to Kay Swift, a close friend of the composer.

In 1941, the general edition was reissued by Simon and Schuster. Edited and revised by Herman Wasserman, it contained new fingering and corrections. Another newer edition was published by New World Music Corporation in 1971.\(^{40}\) This most recent edition of the *Song-book* was retitled as *Gershwin at the Keyboard — 18 Songs His Arranged by the Composer for Piano*, published by Warner Brothers Publications, Incorporated. It contains only the eighteen transcriptions, some of them no longer placed in chronological order.

In the introduction of *George Gershwin’s Song-book*, Gershwin mentioned the main reason for publishing this book:

> Unfortunately, however, most songs die at an early age and are soon completely forgotten by the self-same public that once sang them with gusto. The reason for this is that they are sung and played too much when they alive, and cannot stand the strain of their very popularity. . . . When the publishers asked me to gather a group of my songs for publication I took up the idea enthusiastically, because I thought that this might be a means of prolonging their life.\(^{41}\)

---

\(^{40}\) Steven R. Chicurel, “George Gershwin’s Songbook: Influences of Jewish Music, Ragtime, and Jazz” (D.M.A. document, University of Kentucky, June 1989), 20.

Concerning the transcriptions in the book, he continued:

Playing my songs as frequently as I do at private parties, I have naturally been led to compose numerous variations upon them, and to indulge the desire for complication and variety that every composer feels when he manipulates the same material over and over again. It was this habit of mine that led to the original suggestion to publish a group of songs not only in the simplified arrangements that the public knew, but also in the variations that I had devised.\(^\text{42}\)

These eighteen transcriptions are based only on the refrains, not the verses. They are in chronological order by date of composition and include the following tempo or directive markings:

1. “Swanee” — Spirited
2. “Nobody But you” — Capriciously
3. “I’ll Build a Stairway to Paradise” — Vigorously
4. “Do it Again” — Plaintively
5. “Fascinating Rhythm” — With agitation
6. “Oh. Lady Be Good!” — Rather slow (with humor)
7. “Somebody Loves Me” — In a moderate tempo
8. “Sweet and Low-Down” — Slow (in a jazzy manner)
10. “The Man I Love” — Slow and in singing style

\(^\text{42}\) Ibid.
11. “Clap Yo’ Hands” — Spirited (but sustained)

12. “Do Do Do” — In a swinging manner

13. “My One and Only” — Lively (in strong rhythm)

14. “‘S Wonderful” — Liltingly

15. “Strike Up the Band” — In spirited march tempo

16. “Liza” — Languidly

17. “I Got Rhythm” — Very marked

18. “Who Cares?” — Rather slow

2.3.3 Influences and Style of the Transcriptions

Gershwin’s eighteen transcriptions in George Gershwin’s Song-book, like the songs they are based on, are mainly influenced by jazz and ragtime music. In the introduction of the Song-book, he wrote:

The evolution of our popular pianistic style really began with the introduction of ragtime, just before the Spanish-American War, and came to its culminating point in the jazz era that followed upon the Great War.43

In addition, another part of his influences came from Jewish music. The primary idioms of these three kinds of music are as follows:

43 Ibid.
Jazz music

1. ‘blue’ notes — usually by flatted 3rds and 7ths

2. syncopated rhythms

3. ‘walking’ bass lines of parallel 6ths and 10ths\textsuperscript{44}

Ragtime music

1. left-hand broken chord pattern — called as “ragtime bass” or more common as “stride bass,” mostly in 2/4 meter

2. right-hand syncopation — most common figure of three notes, the second having twice the value of the first and third

Jewish music

1. minor thirds in the melodies

2. declamatory and expressive traits similar to Synagogue prayer chants\textsuperscript{45}

Besides the influences of these idioms, several piano stylists and their techniques influenced Gershwin’s style of playing these transcriptions as well. In his Song-book, he also recalled:

A number of names come crowding into my memory: Mike Bernard, Les

\textsuperscript{44} Schwartz, “Gershwin, George,” in The New Grove Dictionary, 303.
\textsuperscript{45} Chicurel, “George Gershwin’s Songbook,” 28, 36–37.
Copeland, Melville Ellis, Lucky Roberts, Zez Confrey, Arden and Ohman, and others. Each of these was responsible for the popularization of a new technique, or a new wrinkle in playing. . . . To all of these predecessors I am indebted; some of the effects I use in my transcriptions derive from their style of playing the piano.46

All of the transcriptions are composed in major keys and flat keys are most common. The meters are very simple, such as 4/4 time, 2/4 time, and cut time. The rhythms of the transcriptions are mostly in divisions of two, with the quarter or half note getting the beat. The eighth note is a common unit of syncopated rhythms. The harmony is often diatonic with unresolved seventh chords and sudden changes of tonality usually by half or whole steps. Ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth chords are also used. Chromatic passages in scalar parallel movement of the inner voices and chromatic chord progression in parallel motion in the harmony are frequently used. Although Gershwin used frequent chordal changes he kept them as simple as possible in one key signature.

The AABA and ABAB are two most common forms with only one transcription “Who cares?” in ABAC form. The tempo markings are written in English, which is different from the Italian markings for his songs. The three expression markings staccato, accent, and tenuto are essential for playing these transcriptions. Although the eighteen transcriptions were popular songs before

46 Gershwin, introduction to the Song-book.
they became piano solos, the lyrics may be considered for additional musical perspective or could also be listed as program notes. Detailed discussion and analysis of Gershwin’s six selected transcriptions “Fascinating Rhythm,” “Oh, Lady, Be Good!,” “Somebody Loves Me,” “The Man I Love,” “Liza,” and “I Got Rhythm” from *George Gershwin’s Song-book* will occur in Chapter Four.
CHAPTER 3

EARL WILD AND HIS PIANO TRANSCRIPTIONS OF

GEORGE GERSHWIN

3.1 Earl Wild: His Life and Music

Earl Wild, American pianist and composer, was born in a middle-class family on November 26, 1915 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. There were no professional musicians in his family. His father, Royland Wild, worked for the Pittsburgh Steel Company. His mother, Lillian, was a housewife and took care of four children.

Early Musical Training

His mother was a music lover, having an old Edison phonograph and an upright piano. Wild was attracted to the piano at the age of three. Once when Bellini’s Norma overture was playing on the phonograph, he reached up to the piano and found the same notes with the same rhythm. ¹ His family recognized his

---

gift and arranged piano lessons for him when he was four. At this time not only could he copy any music he heard, but also could improvise on the piano. His rare gift of absolute pitch and improvisational ability soon labeled him a child prodigy.

At six, Wild was accepted into a program for artistically gifted children at the Pittsburgh Musical Institute and studied with Alice Walker. This was a public school program in conjunction with the music faculty of the Carnegie Institute of Technology, now Carnegie-Mellon University. By the age of eight he was already playing many advanced pieces that he still performed later in his professional career. From age twelve until he graduated from the Institute in 1934, he was a student of the German pianist Selmar Jansen, head of the Piano Department, who had studied with two pupils of Liszt, Eugene d’Albert and Xavier Scharwenka.²

**Hearing Legendary Performers**

As a child, Mr. Wild admired the playing of many famous musicians and was influenced by them. They were violinists Fritz Kreisler, Mischa Elman, and Nathan Milstein, and pianists Ignace Jan Paderewski, Moriz Rosenthal, Josef Hofmann, and Sergei Rachmaninoff.³ He also admired the playing of Josef Lhévinne, Walter Gieseking, and Artur Schnabel. Wild considers that Hofmann’s personal affection for inner voices was “the biggest influence on my attitude towards gaining a fluid and flexible technique,” and says that his interpretations

---

² Ibid.
were “always delivered with great logic and beauty.”\(^4\) Mr. Wild has also acknowledged Rachmaninoff as one of his major influences.

I was a child when I heard my first Rachmaninoff recital. It was as though I had come upon an ancient oracle: the mysticism of his presence seemed to envelop me. I became addicted to that great genius. in the years to follow I regularly attended his many concerts, wherever it was possible for me, throughout the country. He was one of the most important musical influences in my life. The simplicity of his approach to the keyboard was a model of perfection which I have strived to emulate.\(^5\)

The things that impressed Wild the most about Rachmaninoff’s playing were “its beautiful, lyrical quality, and its wonderful flexibility.”\(^6\)

**The Young Professional**

Wild played other instruments in his early school days. Every week he played different instruments such as flute, tuba, cello, and double bass with his high school orchestra, the Pittsburgh Musical Institute orchestra, the downtown YMCA orchestra and the Carnegie Tech orchestra. He also learned to make arrangements for piano and small orchestra, and often took them around to the local radio station KDKA, the first radio station in the world, “because it was a way in. I got my first job at 13. Whenever the station needed something fancy, they would ask me to play it.”\(^7\) From 1930 to 1935, he worked there intermittently

---

\(^5\) Ibid. 7.
and performed regularly as a soloist and accompanist.

At fourteen, he played glockenspiel and celesta in the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. From the age of seventeen, he was both a pianist and a pitched percussionist in the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra under renowned conductors such as Otto Klemperer and Fritz Reiner. Even though he moved to New York in 1934, he still held his symphony position until 1936.8

**Studies with Petri and Doguereau**

In 1934 Wild won a prize from the Pittsburgh Arts Society for a song he had written, which paid him enough to go to New York to study with the great Dutch pianist Egon Petri, a pupil of Busoni. Egon Petri was well known for his interpretation of Liszt and Beethoven. His style of piano playing was characterized as having “a complete avoidance of sentimentality” but “great charm.” He also played with “an almost perfect technical control” in his Liszt recordings.9 Wild describes the playing of Petri.

The first time I heard Egon Petri play I was absolutely floored. He made a crescendo while he was in the middle of a piece by hardly moving a muscle in his hands, and it sounded like somebody was shoveling sound onto the audience.10

---

Wild’s first lesson, Petri imitated Wild’s playing with high finger articulation and a small sound. “Hearing a copy of my own sound was a great revelation to me. After my first lesson my entire concept of sound changed,” Wild recalls.11 From studying with Petri, Wild learned to play with fingers close to the keys and how to produce a big sound in a quiet manner. “If you move too much it destroys the communication between the brain and the finger tips,”12 he says of his pedagogical techniques, and also says, “The ear must be placed at the ends of the fingers.”13

In the 1940s and 50s Wild studied intermittently with the French pianist Paul Doguereau, a student of Paderewski and Ravel. During the composer’s tour of the United States in the 1920s, Doguereau had traveled with Ravel and become acquainted with his musical ideas. With Doguereau Wild became knowledgeable about French music and learned Ravel’s major piano works including *Jeux d’eau, Sonatine, Miroirs*, and *Gaspard de la nuit*.14

Wild considers that Doguereau and Petri are two main influences on his playing and career. In his article he wrote:

> Between these two giants I was able to advance rapidly. . . . Their influence also gave me the mental strength to be calm when confronted with the difficulties surrounding a career. Doguereau had an equally superior technique, a big tone, and great elegance. Both of these pianists were men

---

of the world, highly educated and intensely devoted to their art. Their ideas on music in all of its facets were very similar, and I was exceptionally lucky in knowing them as pianists, teachers, and friends.\textsuperscript{15}

Wild also had occasional piano lessons with pianists such as Madame Helene Barere (a student of the famous Felix Blumenfeld in Russia and the wife of the great Russian pianist, Simon Barere), Volya Lincoln, and Volga Cossack (a pupil of Isidore Philipp).

**The NBC and Toscanini Years**

In 1937 Wild began to work at the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) Radio Network on all kinds of musical odd jobs, such as making arrangements for the program “Colonel Stoopnagle and Bud” on the Fred Allen show; playing solo works many times a week; sometimes playing concertos with NBC Symphony; and accompanying for great performers as Mischa Elman. He also performed chamber music and played for operetta performances. One week he played the celesta part in “The Dance of the Sugarplum Fairy” with Walter Damrosch conducting; two weeks later, he played the celesta again in Debussy’s *Iberia* under the Italian conductor Arturo Toscanini.

Wild liked the difficult but special Toscanini, and reported:

He always had the score with him, he talked of nothing but music, it was his entire life, and it was dramatic and desperate. He had to fulfill his duty, and it’s wonderful to work with people like that. You have to put blood in the

music, and that’s what it was—blood. . . . The rehearsal was sensational, and when he was on, and the music fit him, there were such flashes of genius, and such wonderful things that you looked at him in great awe.\textsuperscript{16}

Toscanini’s flashes of genius were just so brilliant. And it was all the more special because it was one of the those geniuses embedded in a personality who was fully educated.\textsuperscript{17}

In an article of the \textit{Chicago Tribune}, Howard Reich wrote, “There is within Wiidl an artist with uncompromising principals shaped by a lofty role model—Toscanini.”\textsuperscript{18} Toscanini influenced Wild not only by his personal character but also with his musical ideas about projection, tone color, forward motion, and his concept of playing Beethoven’s music.\textsuperscript{19}

This was the first time Wild worked with top professionals, especially the perfectionist Toscanini. “It was like going to a great music school and getting paid at the same time.”\textsuperscript{20} Wild considered the years from 1937 to 1944 (he was on leave for Navy duty 1942–44) at NBC as the most important formative years of his life.

\begin{flushright}
\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{18} Reich, “Showman Wild.” 6.
\textsuperscript{19} Harder, “The Piano Teaching of Earl Wild.” 12.
\end{flushright}
Wild became the first American pianist to perform the first piano solo recital ever broadcast on the U. S. television in 1939. It took place in the NBC studio and the program contained Mendelssohn’s *Rondo Capriccio* and Ravel’s *Jeux d’eau.*[^21] As Toscanini thought very highly of Wild’s talent, in 1942 he chose Wild to be the soloist in Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue* (Benny Goodman played solo clarinet) which was one of the works on Toscanini’s first all-American music program. The performance was a live broadcast. Wild was the first American pianist to appear as a soloist with Toscanini and his orchestra. According to Mr. Wild, the conductor selected the piece because “he liked it,” and felt that “of all Gershwin’s music, the *Rhapsody* would be the one piece that remained after the others were gone, because of its extreme energy.”[^22]

Although Wild had never played any of Gershwin’s other works, this successful concert with radio broadcasts made him an instant major interpreter of Gershwin in the country during the second World War. In the following few years he performed the *Rhapsody* and also Gershwin’s *Concerto in F* throughout the states.

**U. S. Navy Duty**

During World War II, from 1942 to 1944, Wild joined the U. S. Navy at Washington, D. C. and once again he did a variety of musical jobs. He played

fourth flute in the Navy Band; served as a soloist and played over twenty piano concertos with the U. S. Navy Symphony Orchestra during this two-year period; gave many command piano recitals at the White House; and traveled around the country with First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt to play the American National Anthem before her speeches.²³

He was honored to be invited many times to perform at the White House for six consecutive American presidents: Herbert Hoover, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, and Lyndon Johnson. Among those great memories, the most unforgettable one for Wild was to perform *Rhapsody in Blue* with the National Symphony Orchestra at President Kennedy’s inauguration ceremonies in Constitution Hall in 1961.²⁴

Left NBC for ABC

After being discharged from the Navy, Wild returned to New York. He left NBC in 1944. In 1945 Paul Whiteman, who commissioned and premiered *Rhapsody in Blue* with Gershwin in 1924, asked Wild to record the *Rhapsody* with his orchestra. This is Wild’s favorite recording of the *Rhapsody*, and was placed in his historic recording of 1997 Ivory Classics CD *George Gershwin / Earl Wild*. In the program notes in the CD booklet, he wrote:

---


I prefer the recording I made with Whiteman. I feel it has the true American flavor—the brashness, the vitality and the faster tempi of the period. It’s much closer to Gershwin’s own realization of the piece.25

During the time Whiteman was the vice-president at ABC in the late 40’s and 50’s, Wild traveled with him all over America and Canada performing the Rhapsody and Concerto in F.26 Wild also recorded the Rhapsody with Arthur Fiedler and the Boston Symphony in 1959.

In 1949 and 1950, he had two brief trips to Paris, and there he met major musicians including Francis Poulenc, Wanda Landowska, Henri Sauget, and Nadia Boulanger.27

In 1946, Wild moved to newly formed American Broadcasting Company (ABC) Television and Radio Network, where he worked as a staff pianist, accompanist, composer, arranger, and conductor until 1968. His jobs included accompanying singers for “Met Auditions of the Air” at the Metropolitan Opera House in the early 1950s. He had accompanied some of the great singers, such as Grace Bumbry, Margarete Matzenauer, Zinka Milanov, Jennie Tourel, Lily Pons, William Lewis, and Robert Merrill. Besides accompanying singers, Wild also appeared as an active chamber player and collaborated with major chamber

26 Ibid.
musicians over the years, such as Mischa Elman, William Primrose, Leonard Rose, Mischa Mischakoff, and Oscar Shumsky. Even in his last years at ABC, Wild played popular major chamber works weekly at FM broadcasts. As well as composing and performing both serious and light music for television documentaries, he often conducted. He conducted many of his own compositions; for instance, he conducted his Easter oratorio Revelations (1962), commissioned by ABC, on television in 1962 and 1964.

During the 1960–1961 season at the Santa Fe Opera, he conducted seven performances of Giuseppe Verdi’s La Traviata and four performances of Giacomo Puccini’s Gianni Schicchi (on a double bill with Igor Stravinsky conducting his own opera-oratorio Oedipus Rex).

Wild worked for the comedian Sid Caesar on the popular TV show “The Sid Caesar Hour” from 1954 to 1957. There he improvised at the piano and then orchestrated the music for the show. For four years he contributed many of the musical jokes and wrote musical parodies with the splendid comedy writers, such as Neil Simon, Carl Reiner, Mel Brooks, and Paddy Chayefsky.

During the years with NBC and ABC, Wild often played concerts outside of the studio, including his first New York solo recital at Town Hall in 1944 with

---

31 Ibid., 884.
works by Haydn, Schumann, Medtner, and Rachmaninoff. But he never pursued
the career of a concert pianist because his father died at a young age and he did not
want to risk losing a regular salary to support his mother and himself. He says:

I wasted a lot of time in those years making a living, but I still practiced
every day. I would find a studio when I had a few hours off, and I’d work
on new pieces, building a repertoire.\textsuperscript{32}

\textbf{Concert Career}

In 1968, Wild left ABC and decided to devote himself to concertizing. “I
finally decided I loved the piano so much I just wanted to play it for the rest of my
life. After all, I was a pianist from the beginning,” he says.\textsuperscript{33} Since then he has
performed worldwide.

He became a Baldwin Artist in 1946 and has used Baldwin pianos
exclusively ever since. He used to perform forty concerts a year and now gives
about ten. He usually practices five to six hours at home and two to three hours on
tour. Before his concerts he will play the program three or four times for friends at
home. “Rachmaninoff often said he would never appear on the concert stage
unless he was totally prepared,” Wild states.\textsuperscript{34}

Wild’s extensive piano repertoire contains classical, romantic, and
contemporary music. His performances of contemporary music have included

\textsuperscript{32} Robinson, “Earl Wild,” 40.
\textsuperscript{33} Rubin, “Music Shouldn’t Sound Difficult,” 22.
\textsuperscript{34} Wild, “If You Heard What You Heard,” 7.
many premieres such as the 1944 American premiere of the Shostakovich E minor Piano Trio; the 1949 world premiere of Paul Creston’s Piano Concerto in Paris and later the American premiere in Washington, D. C.; and the world premiere of Marvin David Levy’s Concerto (a work specially written for Wild) with Sir Georg Solti conducting the Chicago Symphony in 1970. On a 1949 Paris tour, Wild also played Morton Gould’s Concertino and Samuel Barber’s Excursions on Radio française.35

Wild spends the most time playing romantic works and has become one of specialists in performing romantic music. One of his reviewers remarked: “If Vladimir Horowitz was ‘The Last Romantic’, then Wild may well be the Last American Romantic.”36 As a romantic virtuoso, Wild is best known for his interpretations of Liszt, Rachmaninoff, and Chopin.

Playing Liszt for more than six decades, Wild has made monumental programs of Liszt’s piano works. In New York City in 1961 he performed an all-Liszt recital to honor the 150th anniversary of Liszt’s birth. In 1986, the hundredth anniversary of the death of Liszt, he gave a series of three recitals entitled Earl Wild Celebrates Liszt (Liszt the Poet, Liszt the Transcriber, and Liszt the Virtuoso) at Carnegie Hall and other major cities in America and England. He recorded these three recital programs on six compact discs that won Hungary’s Liszt Medal.

in the same year. A documentary entitled *Earl Wild: Wild about Liszt*, received the British Petroleum Award for best musical documentary of 1986. It was filmed at Wynyard, the Marquess of Londonderry’s estate in the north of England. In 1988, Wild edited two volumes of performing editions of Liszt’s piano music for G. Schirmer publications. These are packed with many effective suggestions of fingering, pedaling, phrasing, revoicing, distribution of the hands, and alterations of the text.

In addition to playing Liszt’s works, Wild also performs many of standard works of Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Schumann, Brahms, Debussy, and Ravel.

After playing a variety of major repertoire, Wild began to bring back many of the rarely heard Romantic works. He felt that:

After such a long time playing so much different repertory music, so much all-Chopin, all-Liszt, all this and all that, well, this time I wanted to play something amusing. I felt a need to bring back something light, something that has been missing for a long time, something for the piano buffs.

These works were by neglected nineteenth century pianist/composers, such as Ignace Paderewski, Xavier Scharwenka, Karl Tausig, Mily Balakirev, Nikolai Medtner, Eugen d’Albert, and Moriz Moszkowski. Wild has made numerous performances and recordings of works by these composers.

---

38 Rhein, “Earl Wild at 80,” 11.
Moreover, he has brought many forgotten transcriptions back to the concert stage. In the *Chicago Tribune*, John von Rhein wrote:

> Perhaps no pianist has done more to bring transcriptions back into the repertory. Wild was the first pianist ever to play an entire program of them, in Carnegie Hall in 1981.\(^{40}\)

During the 1981–82 season Wild toured with a program consisting entirely of piano transcriptions. Audiofon records released a two-disc live album of the recital entitled *The Art of the Transcription* (CD 72008-2).

**Composing and Transcribing**

Besides concertizing, Wild has continued to be interested in composing and transcribing. Along with incidental music for television, he has composed a ballet, a choral, and orchestral pieces. His most recent composition is *Variations on a Theme of Stephen Foster for Piano and Orchestra* ("Doo-Dah" Variations), premiered with Wild as a soloist and the Des Moines Symphony Orchestra with conductor Joseph Giunta in 1992.

Often hailed as “the finest transcriber of our time,” Wild also has been acknowledged as: “the direct descendant of the golden age of the transcription.”\(^{41}\) He ranks alongside such famous transcribers as Liszt, Busoni, Rachmaninoff,


Horowitz, Grainger, and Godowsky. Over the years, Wild has contributed more than thirty-four piano transcriptions of vocal and orchestral works. He has been limited by the demands of his concert career. “If I didn’t have to practice so much, I’d be writing music by the room,” he says. When interviewed by Donald Manildi, Wild explained:

I do these transcriptions for pleasure. . . . When I’m not practicing, I still need to be doing something with music, and preparing these transcriptions uses my mental energy but not physical energy.

In the 1950s, Wild began to arrange Gershwin’s works for piano solo. Wild first included his 1976 recordings of Grande Fanstasy on ‘Porgy and Bess’ and Seven Virtuoso Etudes on Gershwin songs in the 1978 Quintessence recording Wild about Gershwin (PMC 7060). These 1976 performances were also included in the 1997 historic recording George Gershwin / Earl Wild on the new Ivory Classics label (CD 70702). In 1989, he re-recorded these two works and first recorded his 1989 Improvisation in the Form of a Theme and Three Variations on ‘Someone to Watch Over Me,’ and placed them in Earl Wild Plays His Transcriptions of Gershwin CD (Chesky CD 32). Reviews about Wild as a transcriber of Gershwin are given in the Appendix A of this document.

---

In 1981, Wild completed thirteen piano transcriptions from a selected group of Rachmaninoff songs. He recorded twelve of them for dell’Arte Records (CDDBC 7001) in 1982, and four transcriptions for Chesky Records as *Earl Wild Plays Rachmaninov* (CD 58) in 1991. For Wild’s eightieth birthday in 1995, Sony Classical released his most recent all-transcription disc *Earl Wild: The Romantic Master* (SK 62036), with a performance of thirteen transcriptions altogether (including eight world premieres). Nine of these pieces are his own, transcribed from 1975 to 1995. This disc was awarded a Grammy for Best Instrumental Soloist Performance (without Orchestra) in February 1996.

**Recorded Artist**

Wild is one of the most recorded pianists today. He made his first disc in 1934 for RCA, and since then he has recorded with more than twenty different record labels. His most recent label is Ivory Classics, a new company formed by his producer Michael Rolland Davis and based in Columbus, Ohio. Wild’s discography includes more than 35 piano concertos, 15 chamber works, and over 450 solo piano pieces. Today, as he enters his ninth decade, he still continues to record several discs, play live performances, and receive reviews every year. An overview of reviews is provided in the Appendix A.
Teaching

Wild began to teach in the 1960s. From 1978 to 1981, he served as the founder and artistic director of the Concert Soloists at Wolf Trap in Vienna, Virginia. This was a chamber music ensemble for seasoned performers and some of the most talented young musicians. He has taught piano in the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing (1983), Toho-Gakuen School of Music in Tokyo (1985), Sun Wha School in Seoul (1983, 85, 87), and has given master classes worldwide as well. He has been on the piano faculty of University of Rochester’s Eastman School of Music (1964), Pennsylvania State University (1965–68), Manhattan School of Music (1981–82), The Juilliard School of Music (1976–1987), and The Ohio State University (1986–1993). Since 1993, he has been Distinguished Visiting Artist at Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh. In 1996, he received an Alumni Merit award from Carnegie-Mellon University.

Recent Life and Future Plans

For seven decades Earl Wild has had a remarkable long-running career as a pianist, accompanist, improviser, conductor, composer, transcriber, editor, and teacher. Even though he is now eighty-four, he still performs every year and commits himself to his music every day. He says:

I wake up with so many ideas, so many projects I want to finish, that it makes my blood flow and gives me a kind of inner energy that I can always draw upon.45

The thing is, playing the piano and being in music keeps you alive.46

In March of 1997, Wild became the first pianist in history to broadcast a solo piano recital live on the internet. In 1999, he was one of the seventy-three virtuosic pianists selected by Philips Classics Records for the 1999 album *Great Pianists of the 20th Century*. It contains two CDs of Wild’s performances of transcriptions by other composers and himself, including his *Seven Virtuoso Études* of Gershwin. Currently, in the year of 2000, he is devoting himself to recording for eight months and is expecting to release three new compact discs including some of his own compositions. In March and April, he recorded the Schumann and Dohnányi piano quintets with a full string orchestra and his own piano sonata, a premiere recording. For the 2000–2001 season he will perform an eighty-fifth birthday concert in the Carnegie Hall in New York on November 29, 2000. He also will perform with the Youngstown Ohio Symphony and give a piano recital in Santa Rosa, California in January of 2001. Two recent photos taken with Wild are provided on the next page (see Figure 3.1 and 3.2).

Figure 3.1: Earl Wild and author at the Chicago Symphony Hall, Chicago, 4 November 1999.

Figure 3.2: Earl Wild and author at the Fernleaf Abbey, Columbus, Ohio, 28 May 2000.
3.2 Earl Wild’s Piano Transcriptions of George Gershwin

3.2.1 Early Influences in Transcription and Improvisation

Wild’s interest in piano transcriptions began when studying with Selmar Jansen. During this time Wild became acquainted with piano transcriptions because Jansen introduced him to rare repertoire and let him borrow his transcriptions. He recalls:

Mr. Jansen’s personal library contained many wonderful piano transcriptions of symphonies, ballets, chamber works, and operatic fantasies. My interest in performing and writing pieces of this nature was firmly instilled in me by having access to these imaginative compositions.\footnote{Annette Chesky and Jeffrey Chesky, program notes in CD booklet for Earl Wild, \textit{Earl Wild Plays His Transcriptions of Gershwin}, Chesky CD 32.}

Jansen collected many rarely played nineteenth century pieces and transcriptions, for example, Balakirev’s paraphrase of Glinka’s \textit{A Life for the Czar} and Schwarwenka’s \textit{Piano Concerto No. 1}. Those rarely played works later served as Wild’s introduction to the recording industry and have been labeled as “Romantic Revival Music.”\footnote{Dear Elder, “Rachmaninoff Tradition,” 7.}

Wild says, “Transcriptions are marvelous training pieces.”\footnote{Rhein, “Wild Again,” 18.} In a 1989 interview, he recalls:
I used to do them as just technical exercises, too, because they weren’t easy. And I enjoyed doing them so much because they presented problems that I liked to be able to do.\textsuperscript{50}

He continues:

And no one else was doing them. Later on, when I was 65, I decided I was really going to do it, so I gave the transcription recital in Carnegie Hall. My audience that day had more musicians that had ever been before—name musicians. So I was very pleased with it.\textsuperscript{51}

Later in his career, he used many of these unusual transcriptions as part of his repertoire, and as a stimulus to create his own transcriptions.

When studying with Egon Petri, Wild was encouraged in his urge not only for transcriptions, but also for improvisations. He states:

When I studied with Egon Petri, I discovered we had similar improvisational abilities—along with a high regard for piano transcriptions, especially those of Liszt. At one of my lessons, we were discussing the Liszt-Wagner relationship along with many stories about the improvisational genius of Mozart and Beethoven. Petri, whose wit was endless, improvised for me a fantasy, combining themes from \textit{Gotterdammerung} with a popular song of the period ‘Roll out the Barrel.’ Since improvisation had always been second nature to me, I in turn, played for him a piece combining Wagner’s \textit{Rienzi} Overture with Liszt’s \textit{Mephisto Waltz No. 1}. It was Petri who gave me the courage to pass through life unscathed by the barrage of trendy criticism. Only recently is the ‘Art of the Transcription’ again being recognized as a valid musical expression.\textsuperscript{52}

\textsuperscript{50} Peter J. Rabinowitz, “Pianist Without Piety: A Conversation with Earl Wild,” \textit{Fanfare} 12, no. 6 (July/August 1989): 397.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{52} Chesky and Chesky, program notes in CD booklet.
At an early age, Wild had the opportunity to play in a gypsy orchestra with Hungarians and to learn their style of improvisation. He also learned to improvise jazz. At the age of 14, he declined an offer to play as a jazz pianist in a Florida nightclub. However, his adept ability for improvising in the jazz idiom laid the groundwork for his transcriptions of Gershwin’s music.

3.2.2 Motive for Composing Transcriptions of George Gershwin

Ever since his first performance of Rhapsody in Blue with Toscanini’s NBC Symphony in 1942, Wild has been a leading exponent of George Gershwin’s music. In interviews, Wild explained his impression of Gershwin and his relationship with him:

I met him and spent an evening with him and some other people. I liked him very much. He was very pleasant. He just loved to play the piano because it was his thing.\(^{53}\)

I heard him play [Concerto in F and Rhapsody in Blue] several times—it was wonderful. . . . Music was really Gershwin’s thing—the fact he made money by it was entirely secondary.\(^{54}\)

Years later, Wild made Gershwin transcriptions for piano solo because:

I was thinking recently that so much music written today is dead serious—and deadly. . . . These transcriptions are supposed to make you smile, but

\(^{53}\) Earl Wild, interview by author, Columbus, Ohio, 20 April 2000.
not at the expense of the music.\textsuperscript{55}

The reason that Wild chose the music of Gershwin because Gershwin did not write much solo piano music and Wild wanted more solo piano music of Gershwin to be played.\textsuperscript{56} In addition, the music of Gershwin is worthy as original material for entertainment. He explains:

Gershwin’s melodies are perfect. They lend themselves to this kind of elaboration because of their enormous popularity: Everyone knows the tunes, so you can recognize them while enjoying the decorations.\textsuperscript{57}

3.2.3 Background and Characteristics of the Transcriptions

Wild’s transcriptions of Gershwin include a \textit{Grande Fantasy on ‘Porgy and Bess,’ Improvisation in the Form of a Theme and Three Variations on ‘Someone to Watch Over Me,’ and Seven Virtuoso Etudes}. As noted earlier, these three works were performed in his 1989 Chesky CD \textit{Earl Wild Plays His Transcriptions of Gershwin}; and the 1976 recordings of the first two works were also included in his 1997 Ivory Classics CD \textit{George Gershwin / Earl Wild}. The reviews of these two CDs are included in Appendix A.

Listening to his Gershwin recordings, we can acknowledge that Wild has combined his passion for improvisation, Gershwin, and nineteenth-century

\textsuperscript{55} Scherer, “Turning Gershwin Into Liszt,” 18.
\textsuperscript{56} Earl Wild, e-mail to author, 1 May 2000.
\textsuperscript{57} Scherer, “Turning Gershwin Into Liszt,” 18.
romanticism and impressionism. These transcriptions are amazing not only for their cleverness, but especially for their technical challenges. As Annette and Jeffrey Chesky mention:

It is in this spirit, the taking of another composer’s themes as the inspiration and weaving them into a new cohesive creation requiring great technical ability on the part of the performer, that these transcriptions of Gershwin’s music were written.⁵⁸

The transcriptions are also amusing. According to Wild, amusing is exactly what he wants them to be. Certainly Wild’s transcriptions amuse because of his successful combination of idioms. One has the popular melodies of Gershwin combining with exciting jazz rhythms, and also some romantic and impressionistic traditions of virtuosic writing with brilliant passagework, counterpoint, and symphonic textures. Wild decorates the chosen melodies with various figurations, and uses the original thematic material for further development without changing the spirit of the original composition. As Wild explains:

What makes a good transcription? The achievement of the spirit of the original piece, basically, and the evocation of its emotion and imagery. A song, for instance, will have a certain framework, and although you can expand that framework slightly, you should not turn it into something far removed from its original flavor. . . . If the transcription cannot evoke the original, there’s no point to it.⁵⁹

---

⁵⁸ Chesky and Chesky, program notes in CD booklet.
⁵⁹ Kozinn, “Earl Wild,” 64.
Originally called *A Grande Fantasy on Airs from Porgy and Bess*, the
*Grande Fantasy on ‘Porgy and Bess’* was completed in 1975, and is based upon
Gershwin’s 1935 folk opera. The songs in this half-hour work are kept in the same
order as they occur in the opera. Those songs are “Jasbo Brown Blues,”
“Summertime,” “Oh, I Can’t Sit Down,” “My Man’s Gone Now,” “I Got Plenty
O’Nuttin,” “Buzzard Song,” “It Ain’t Necessarily So,” “Bess, You Is My
Woman,” “I Love You, Porgy/Bess, You Is My Woman,” “There’s A Boat Dat’s
Leavin’ Soon For New York,” and “Oh Lawd, I’m On My Way.” Although
Gershwin’s melodies can be clearly recognized from listening to the recording, the
work is a “mad and Godowskyesque” piano composition as Wild described it.

The humorous and romantic *Improvisation in the Form of a Theme and
Three Variations on ‘Someone to Watch Over Me’* is Wild’s most recent Gershwin
transcription. It was written in 1989. The song “Someone to Watch Over Me”
was originally from the 1926 musical *Oh, Kay!*. This transcription includes a
theme and three variations in the style of Barcarolle, Brazilian Dance, and Tango.
In the tango variation, Wild used the materials from the Bach *Partita* in C minor
and the C minor fugue from the *Well-Tempered Clavier* Book I in conjunction
with the melody of “Someone to Watch Over Me.” The idea of composing this
piece came after he had spent a whole day teaching these two pieces of Bach. He
recalls:
When I got home I sat down and started to play both of the main tango rhythms—just to relax. While I was doing that, ‘Someone to Watch Over Me’ popped into my mind. I played it in counterpoint on top of them—and it worked. Then I thought I had better add some variations to this set of ideas. So I devised the barcarolle, imagining myself in a gondola floating past an Italian singing school.  

In barcarolle section, Gershwin’s melody is set against fragments of “O sole mio,” “Nessun dorma,” and The Carnival of Venice, as well as phrases from Leoncavallo’s Pagliacci, Puccini’s Madama Butterfly, Tosca, and Gianni Schicchi. The repeated notes appearing in the high register sound like the mandolin playing.  

While performing the Rhapsody in Blue and the Concerto in F with Whiteman’s orchestra in the late 1940s and the 1950s, because Wild wanted some solo music to perform as encores, he composed his transcriptions of Seven Virtuoso Etudes.  

It was originally titled Seven Etudes Based On George Gershwin’s Popular Songs, which are based upon the following Gershwin’s songs: “I Got Rhythm,” “Oh, Lady, Be Good!,” “Liza,” “Embraceable You,” “Somebody Loves Me,” “Fascinating Rhythm,” and “The Man I Love.” Except “Oh, Lady, Be Good!” and “Fascinating Rhythm” transcribed in 1975, the other five etudes were written in the 1950’s and revised in 1975. The relationship between Wild's Seven Virtuoso Etudes and Gershwin’s popular songs is similar to that of Liszt’s  

61 Wild, e-mail to author, 1 May 2000.
"I Got Rhythm" is a vigorous and an exciting piece which is reminiscent of Ravel's style of playing. "Oh, Lady, Be Good!" slows down the original tempo to match a rich blue melancholy. Wild imagines himself that: "I was picturing this plump Georgia peach walking down the main street of a southern town, swaying sexily in the sultry breeze." Like "Oh, Lady, Be Good!," "Somebody Loves Me" is slower than the original moderate tempo with a bluesy atmosphere. As Wild said, "Somebody Loves Me" sounds like Fauré's music. Many blues notes and scales occur in these two transcriptions of "Oh, Lady, Be Good!" and "Somebody Loves Me." "Liza" includes a breath-taking technical virtuosity with fast runs throughout the piece. The sentimental "Embraceable You" has an impressionistic beauty that is particularly shown through the use of arpeggiated figuration.

"Fascinating Rhythm" is a rhythmic and driving perpetual motion piece with only one and a half minutes long.

"The Man I Love" was originally written for the left hand alone in 1954. Wild later arranged it for both hands in 1975 and placed it along with other six etudes as *Seven Virtuoso Etudes*. The version for the left hand alone is not considered one of the *Seven Virtuoso Etudes*. Both versions are published by

---

63 Earl Wild, conversation with author, Columbus, Ohio, 8 August 1999.
65 Wild, conversation with author, 8 August 1999.
66 Wild, e-mail to author, 1 May 2000.
Michael Rolland Davis Productions (see Appendix B) and only the version for both hands is discussed in this document. “The Man I Love” for both hands contains beautiful notes surrounding the melody and complex chordal and rapid single-note technique. Detailed examination of Wild’s *Seven Virtuoso Etudes* along with six selected Gershwin’s transcriptions from *George Gershwin’s Songbook* will be presented in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 4

SIX SELECTED PIANO TRANSCRIPTIONS FROM

GEORGE GERSHWIN’S SONG-BOOK

AND

EARL WILD’S PIANO TRANSCRIPTIONS OF

SEVEN VIRTUOSO ETUDES

Earl Wild’s Seven Virtuoso Etudes are: “Fascinating Rhythm,” “Oh, Lady, Be Good!,” “Somebody Loves Me,” “The Man I Love,” “Liza,” “I Got Rhythm,” and “Embraceable You.” Except for “Embraceable You” Gershwin published his own transcriptions of the other six songs in George Gershwin’s Song-book. This chapter begins with a historical background of these seven songs and is followed by an analysis of the piano transcriptions with a detailed discussion on a list of musical elements. The chapter ends with a presentation of the piano technique Gershwin and Wild applied in their transcriptions.
4.1 Historical Background of the Songs

“Fascinating Rhythm”

Gershwin began to write “Fascinating Rhythm” (lyrics by Ira Gershwin) while he was still working the score for the musical *Primrose* in London. There he played the unfinished eight measures to Alex Aarons, a producer. Aarons liked the tune and asked Gershwin to include the song in his next show. “Fascinating Rhythm” was completed when Gershwin got back to New York and was incorporated into *Lady, Be Good!* Fred Astaire, Adele Astaire, and Cliff Edwards first sang it in the show at the Liberty Theatre in New York City on December 1, 1924.

“Oh, Lady, Be Good!”

One of standards of American song repertory, “Oh, Lady, Be Good!” (lyrics by Ira Gershwin) was introduced by Walter Catlett in *Lady, Be Good!* at the Liberty Theatre on December 1, 1924. In 1925, Gershwin accompanied the Soprano Marguerite d’Alvarez in this song at the Roosevelt Hotel.

“Somebody Loves Me”

On June 30, 1924, “Somebody Loves Me” (lyrics by B. G. DeSylva and Ballard MacDonald) was first sung by Winnie Lightner and Tom Patricola in George White’s Scandals of 1924 at the Apollo Theatre in New York City. It became one of Gershwin’s biggest hit songs since “Swanee” and even became a rage in Paris.³

“The Man I Love”

“The Man I Love” (lyrics by Ira Gershwin) was begun in April of 1924 and was originally published under the name “The Man I Loved.” The song was introduced by Adele Astaire on November 17 in the opening scene of the Lady. Be Good! tryout in Philadelphia. Originally written for Lady. Be Good! in 1924, it was later for the first version of Strike Up the Band in 1927. However, it was dropped from the scores before both of the shows. Gershwin understood the problem and said:

You see . . . the song is not a production number—that is, it allows of little or no action while it is being sung. It lacks a soothing, seducing rhythm; instead, it has a certain slow lilt that subtly disturbs the audience instead of lulling it into acceptance. Then, too, there is the melody, which is not easy to catch; it presents too many chromatic pitfalls. Hardly anybody whistles it or hums it correctly without the support of a piano or other instrument.⁴

After being dropped from *Strike Up the Band*, “The Man I Love” was suggested for use in the musical *Rosalie* in 1927, but it did not even reach rehearsals. The song was never used in any stage production.\(^5\)

Even though it had not been used in the musicals, “The Man I Love” was still becoming popular with jazz orchestras in London and Paris. When American tourists heard the song there, they returned to the U. S. and asked bands to play it. About six years after the song was written, American female singer Helen Morgan and various orchestras made it one of the most treasured of Gershwin’s standards. It became the theme song of Gershwin’s 1934–1935 radio program, *Music By Gershwin*.\(^6\)

In 1944, the pianist Percy Grainger reworked the composer’s transcription from *George Gershwin’s Song-book*. Grainger felt the song had an “obvious indebtedness to a phrase in the slow movement of Grieg’s C minor Sonata for violin and piano” and called the song “one of the great songs of all time.”\(^7\) The famous English composer John Ireland liked the song and acquired a recording of it in 1924. Wilfred Mellers, an English musicologist, considered it “the most moving popular song of our time”\(^8\) and devoted a technical analysis to it in *Music

\(^5\) Ewen, *George Gershwin*, 93.
"Liza"

"Liza" (lyrics by Gus Kahn and Ira Gershwin) was a favorite with many jazz musicians and with Gershwin. He frequently played it with improvised variations for friends. On July 2, 1929, Ruby Keeler (the wife of Al Jolson) and Nick Lucas first sang the song in *Show Girl* at the Ziegfeld Theatre in New York City. Gershwin played it in the 1931 television broadcast. Other appearing people on this very early television program included New York City Mayor Jimmy Walker.\(^9\)

"I Got Rhythm"

"I Got Rhythm" (lyrics by Ira Gershwin), one of Gershwin’s best known and most representative songs, comes from the hit musical comedy *Girl Crazy*. Singers Ethel Merman and The Foursome first sang the song in the opening performance of *Girl Crazy* with Gershwin conducting at the Alvin Theatre on October 14, 1930. According to Isaac Goldberg, "I Got Rhythm" was originally planned for the 1928’s *Treasure Girl*, and it was also originally in a slower tempo.\(^11\) This song was one of favorites of the Gershwin brothers. George liked it

---

\(^{10}\) Rimler, *A Gershwin Companion*, 205.
\(^{11}\) Ibid., 240.
greatly and transformed it into his 1934 work *I Got Rhythm Variations* for piano and orchestra, dedicated to Ira.\textsuperscript{12}

“Embraceable You”

One of Gershwin’s most expressive and memorable love ballads was the hit song “Embraceable You” (lyrics by Ira Gershwin). It was originally written in 1928 for the Ziegfeld operetta *East is West*; however, it was actually introduced by Allen Kearns and Ginger Rogers in *Girl Crazy* at the Alvin Theatre in New York City on October 14, 1930. “Embraceable You” was a favorite not only of the audiences, but also of Morris Gershwin, father of the Gershwin brothers. He especially liked the line “Come to Papa, come to Papa—do!” in the song and often asked George to play “that song about me” at parties.\textsuperscript{13}

### 4.2 Musical Elements of the Transcriptions

#### 4.2.1 Form

Gershwin kept the formal structure of his six transcriptions as simple as that of the original songs. Like his songs, each of the selected transcriptions is in a standard thirty-two-measure formula, symmetrically divided into four groups of

\textsuperscript{12} Rosenberg, *Fascinating Rhythm*, 191.

\textsuperscript{13} Rimler, *A Gershwin Companion*, 237.
eight-measure phrases. The most common form is AABA; one transcription, “Fascinating Rhythm,” is in ABAB form. Two transcriptions, “Liza” and “I Got Rhythm,” are extended into a repeat AABA form. “I Got Rhythm” can be analyzed as a theme and two small variations. A brief formal analysis is following:

- Measure 1–34 — Theme — AABA (key of D-flat)
- Measure 35–38 — Transition
- Measure 39–62 — Variation 1 — AAB (key of F)
- Measure 63–72 — Variation 2 — A (key of F)

“Fascinating Rhythm” contains an extra two-measure introduction. It is one of two transcriptions from *George Gershwin’s Song-book* that contain introductory statements; the other is “Strike Up The Band.”

Earl Wild’s *Seven Virtuoso Etudes* also have phrases divided into eight-measure groups. “Fascinating Rhythm” is in ABAB form and “Embraceable You” is in ABAC form; the others are in AABA form. Some of Wild’s transcriptions include introductory statements and codas. Compared to Gershwin’s formal structure, the forms in *Seven Virtuoso Etudes* are more extended except “The Man I Love,” which Wild kept in the original AABA form. A variation is included in the repeated AABA form of “I Got Rhythm.” This variation is reminiscent of Gershwin’s famous “Chinese Variation” in the piano and orchestra piece *I Got*
Rhythm Variations. One transcription, “Fascinating Rhythm,” contains an irregular form including an extension on the A motif in the repeated form. Its formal analysis follows:

Measure 1–10 — Introduction (key of E-flat)
Measure 11–38 — ABAB
Measure 39–65 — Extension on the A motif
Measure 66–69 — B
Measure 70–93 — Coda

The following is a table of formal differences of six selected Gershwin original songs and transcriptions, and Wild’s Seven Virtuoso Etudes (see Table 4.1):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Song</th>
<th>Gershwin’s Songs</th>
<th>Gershwin’s Transcriptions</th>
<th>Length (measures)</th>
<th>Wild’s Transcriptions</th>
<th>Length (measures)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Fascinating Rhythm”</td>
<td>ABAB</td>
<td>I+ABAB</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>I+ABAB+Ext on A+B+Cd</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Oh, Lady, Be Good!”</td>
<td>AABA</td>
<td>AABA</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>I+AABA+AABA</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Somebody Loves Me”</td>
<td>AABA</td>
<td>AABA</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>AABA+AABA+A</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The Man I Love”</td>
<td>AABA</td>
<td>AABA</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>AABA</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Liza”</td>
<td>AABA</td>
<td>AABA+AABA</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>I+AABA+AABA+AABA+Cd</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I Got Rhythm”</td>
<td>AABA</td>
<td>AABA+AAB (Var 1) +A (Var 2)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>I+AABA+AABA+AABA (Var)+Cd</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Embraceable You”</td>
<td>ABAC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ABAC+BAC</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1: Form

4.2.2 Key

Of the six transcriptions, Gershwin transposed “Liza” and “I Got Rhythm” from the original keys. “I Got Rhythm” is the only transcription that contains a permanent key change, from D-flat major to F major in the repeated AABA form.

Wild also transcribed four of his transcriptions, “Oh, Lady, Be Good!,” “Somebody Loves Me,” “I Got Rhythm,” and “Embraceable You” to new keys,
because he feels that the new keys sound better on the instrument. When the author interviewed him, he expressed his opinion of key changing in piano music:

For instance, I often play pieces by Chopin a key lower or a key higher. I find it’s very interesting and sometimes the lowering of the key sounds really beautiful. Like the E major Opus 10, No. 3, the etude sounds much better in D than it does in E. . . . And also the ‘Aeolian Harp’ Op. 25, No. 1, it’s much better when it’s played in G-flat instead of A-flat.\textsuperscript{14}

And he also said of his concept of keys in the transcriptions:

Keys to me are really color and the color is usually emotional. Most of the time I like to have keys that are singable, that you can sing with. . . . The piano is really the voice when you play, so it’s better to make people comfortable with the selection of the keys. It’s a matter of comfort.\textsuperscript{15}

None of the \textit{Seven Virtuoso Etudes} includes a permanent key change. A temporary key change is included in the extended form of “Oh, Lady, Be Good!” and “Liza.”

A table of the keys of the six selected Gershwin’s original songs and transcriptions, and Wild’s \textit{Seven Virtuoso Etudes} follows (see Table 4.2):

\textsuperscript{14} Earl Wild, interview by author, Columbus, Ohio, 20 April 2000.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Song</th>
<th>Gershwin’s Songs</th>
<th>Gershwin’s Transcriptions</th>
<th>Wild’s Transcriptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Fascinating Rhythm”</td>
<td>E-flat</td>
<td>E-flat</td>
<td>E-flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Oh, Lady, Be Good!”</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>B-flat / D / B-flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Somebody Loves Me”</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The Man I Love”</td>
<td>E-flat</td>
<td>E-flat</td>
<td>E-flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Liza”</td>
<td>E-flat</td>
<td>D-flat</td>
<td>E-flat / A / E-flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I Got Rhythm”</td>
<td>B-flat</td>
<td>D-flat / F</td>
<td>G-flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Embraceable You”</td>
<td>G</td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2: Key

An instance of different key signatures for the two hands occurs in Wild’s “I Got Rhythm.” This technique of using keys of C and G-flat for both hands in the extended A section (see Fig. 4.1) is similar to Gershwin’s treatment in the “Chinese Variation” in *I Got Rhythm Variations* (see Fig. 4.2).
Figure 4.1: Different key signatures for two hands, Gershwin/Wild: “I Got Rhythm,” mm. 86–88.

Figure 4.2: Different key signatures for two hands, Gershwin: *I Got Rhythm Variations* for piano and orchestra (two-piano score), mm. 207–210.
4.2.3 Tempo

In each of Gershwin’s original songs a tempo marking is indicated before the verse; a different marking is often given before the refrain. Most of the tempo markings are given in Italian and some are given in English. Since Gershwin’s and Wild’s transcriptions are based only on the refrains, tempo markings are written for the refrains. The tempo markings for Gershwin’s transcriptions are always given in English but the markings within each transcription are often (but not always) given in Italian. The tempo markings for Wild’s *Seven Virtuoso Etudes* are always given in Italian.

Gershwin kept all of the six transcriptions in one tempo and kept the descriptions very close to those of the original songs. In the transcription “I Got Rhythm,” he included a directive marking *Very marked* instead of a tempo marking. In contrast, Wild included two or more tempo markings in “Liza” and “I Got Rhythm,” and he either changed or omitted the markings from the original songs in his transcriptions. For example, in “Liza,” Wild changed the tempo marking *Moderato* from the original song to the new markings *Allegro* (for the introduction) and *Presto*. He altered the original character from the languid feeling to a hurried and agitated feeling. In “Oh, Lady, Be Good!” and “Somebody Loves Me,” Wild omitted the tempo markings from the original songs without adding new markings, suggesting a free execution for a bluesy atmosphere. The
following is a table of the tempo markings of six selected Gershwin original songs (refrain), transcriptions, and Wild's *Seven Virtuoso Etudes* (see Table 4.3):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Song</th>
<th>Gershwin’s Songs (refrain)</th>
<th>Gershwin’s Transcriptions</th>
<th>Wild’s Transcriptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Fascinating Rhythm”</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>With agitation</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Oh, Lady, Be Good!”</td>
<td><em>Slow and gracefully</em></td>
<td><em>Rather slow (with humor)</em></td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Somebody Loves Me”</td>
<td><em>Allegretto moderato</em></td>
<td><em>In a moderate tempo</em></td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The Man I Love”</td>
<td><em>Molto semplice e dolce</em></td>
<td><em>Slow and in singing style</em></td>
<td><em>Andante</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Liza”</td>
<td><em>Moderato</em></td>
<td><em>Languidly</em></td>
<td><em>Allegro - Presto - Rubato</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I Got Rhythm”</td>
<td><em>With abandon</em></td>
<td><em>Very marked</em></td>
<td><em>Presto - Prestissimo</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Embraceable You”</td>
<td><em>Rhythmically</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Allegro (Rubato)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3: Tempo Marking

4.2.4 Meter

Gershwin kept all of the six transcriptions in one single time signature. He transcribed three of his songs “Somebody Loves Me,” “Liza,” and “I Got Rhythm” from the original cut time signatures to new signatures 4/4 and 2/4 in the
transcriptions. The rhythmic value of the melodies from the original meters remains the same in the new meters.

In *Seven Virtuoso Etudes*, Wild also changed all of the transcriptions to new meters from the original songs except “Fascinating Rhythm” which he keeps in the original 4/4 until it changes to 3/4. However, multiple time signatures are used in his transcriptions “Fascinating Rhythm” and “The Man I Love.” Wild uses a frequent alternation of the meters 4/4 and 3/4 in “Fascinating Rhythm” and a compound meter 12/8 in “The Man I Love.” A table of meter follows (see Table 4.4):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Song</th>
<th>Gershwin’s Songs (refrain)</th>
<th>Gershwin’s Transcriptions</th>
<th>Wild’s Transcriptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Oh, Lady, Be Good!”</td>
<td>Cut time</td>
<td>Cut time</td>
<td>4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Somebody Loves Me”</td>
<td>Cut time</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Liza”</td>
<td>Cut time</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I Got Rhythm”</td>
<td>Cut time</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>2/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Embraceable You”</td>
<td>Cut time</td>
<td>Cut time</td>
<td>4/4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4: Meter

4.2.5 Rhythm

Even though Gershwin changed some of the original meters in the six selected transcriptions, he kept the original rhythm of the melody almost exactly from his songs in these six transcriptions. Wild also adheres to Gershwin’s original rhythm for the melodies in his transcriptions. In the program notes of the Chesky disc he wrote,

One of respect for Gershwin’s original notation, I have not changed one
rhythmic value of the melodies in my transcriptions of the *Seven Virtuoso Etudes* ... 

However, slight variations of rhythm are used in some of his transcriptions. The following example is a variation on the first theme melodic motif in “Fascinating Rhythm” (see Fig. 4.3).

a. Gershwin’s original song (refrain): “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 1–2.

b. Gershwin/Wild: “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 50–53.

Figure 4.3: A variation of rhythm, Gershwin/Wild: “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 50–53.

---

The other variation of rhythm is in a bluesy manner in the transcription “Oh, Lady, Be Good!” (see Fig. 4.4).

a. Gershwin’s original song (refrain): “Oh, Lady, Be Good!,” mm. 1–3.

![Refrain](image1)


![Figure 4.4](image2)

Figure 4.4: A variation of rhythm, Gershwin/Wild: “Oh, Lady, Be Good!,” mm. 38–40.
There are similarities in some of the rhythmic patterns in Gershwin’s and Wild’s transcriptions, for instance the rhythmic patterns in the right hand in both transcriptions of “I Got Rhythm” (see Fig. 4.5 and 4.6):

Figure 4.5: A similarity of rhythm, Gershwin: “I Got Rhythm,” mm. 39–42.

Figure 4.6: A similarity of rhythm, Gershwin/Wild: “I Got Rhythm,” mm. 43–46.
4.2.6. Melody

Melodies are presented in five different ways in Gershwin’s and Wild’s transcriptions, including the melody in the middle register of the piano, lowered an octave, raised an octave, and presented in octaves and in chords.

1. Middle register of the piano

The melody is frequently placed in the middle register of the piano in the regular vocal melodic range. This usually takes place when the original vocal melody serves as the melody for the piano part. This kind of melodic treatment frequently occurs in the piano accompaniment of Gershwin songs but only occasionally appears in his six transcriptions. In contrast, Wild favors using this way of presenting melody in several of his transcriptions of *Seven Virtuoso Etudes*. He often uses the melody in the middle register of the piano at the beginning of the piece, then raises the melody to a higher register, and finally returns to the regular vocal melodic range. The following example of the melody in the middle register of the piano is in his “Somebody Loves Me” (see Fig. 4.7).
2. An octave lower

Melody in a lower octave is used when variety is needed in the transcription. An excellent example occurs in Gershwin’s transcription “Somebody Loves Me” (see Fig. 4.8).

Figure 4.8: Melody an octave lower (the tenor melody), Gershwin: “Somebody Loves Me,” mm. 1–2.
This technique of playing the melody an octave lower in the left hand against a passage of counterpoint in the right hand was influenced by the pianist Mike Bernard’s (1888–1936) style of playing. In contrast, Wild seldom uses melody an octave lower in his transcriptions.

3. An octave higher

Raising the melody an octave higher than the vocal melody from the original song is often used as a contrast or a different quality in the musical effect. Gershwin and Wild occasionally employ this technique in their transcriptions. They both transcribe the melody to an octave higher in the first theme in their transcriptions of “Fascinating Rhythm” as in the following examples (see Fig. 4.9 and 4.10):

![Figure 4.9: Melody an octave higher. Gershwin: “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 3–6.](image)

Figure 4.10: Melody an octave higher, Gershwin/Wild: “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 11–14.

4. Melody in octaves

Melodies are written in octaves not only to bring out the theme or the important melody, but also to make a broader voicing. They rarely occur in Wild’s transcriptions; in contrast, there are several examples in Gershwin’s transcriptions such as the following (see Fig. 4.11):

Figure 4.11: Melody in octaves, Gershwin: “Liza,” mm. 21–24.
5. Melody in chords

Melodies in chords frequently appear in both Gershwin’s and Wild’s transcriptions. A passage of chordal melody often takes place when a full sonority or a climax occurs. The following examples are in two transcriptions of “The Man I Love”: one is for the full sonority of the melody (see Fig. 4.12); and the other is at the climax of the melody (see Fig. 4.13).

4.2.7 Harmony

As mentioned in the second chapter, Gershwin’s harmony is often diatonic with unresolved seventh chords and unprepared changes of tonality usually by half or whole steps. Ninth, eleventh, and thirteenth chords are used. However, Wild states that he does not think about the harmony when he composes. Composing is
so natural for him that the pieces just fall into what he perceives as the correct register. It is just a natural instinct for him.\textsuperscript{18}

Two harmonic features that Gershwin favors using are chromatic passages in scalar parallel movement in inner voices and chromatic chord progression in parallel motion. They frequently appear in the transcriptions and most of the time they are in a descending motion. The most striking examples of these two harmonic features are in his transcription "I Got Rhythm." The alto melody in the right hand contains a parallel chromatic melodic line in descending motion, while the left hand contains a modulatory chromatic progression also in descending motion between two keys D-flat and F major (see Fig. 4.14). This chromatic chord progression recalls another famous transition in the \textit{Rhapsody in Blue} right before the E major orchestral section.\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{18} Earl Wild, e-mail to author, 22 April 2000.
Figure 4.14: Parallel chromatic scalar passage in the inner voice (the alto melody) and chromatic chord progression, Gershwin: “I Got Rhythm,” mm. 35–38.

Compared to Gershwin’s treatment, Wild seldom uses parallel chromatic scalar passages in inner voices and parallel chromatic chord progression in his transcriptions. There are only few examples that appear in his Seven Virtuoso Etudes. An instance of a parallel chromatic scale in the inner voice in a descending motion for the right hand is in “Somebody Loves Me” (see Fig. 4.15).
Figure 4.15: Parallel chromatic scalar passage in the inner voice (the alto melody), Gershwin/Wild: “Somebody Loves Me,” mm. 48–49.

The parallel chromatic chord progression either in an ascending motion or a descending motion appears in Wild’s transcriptions of “Oh, Lady, Be Good!” and “Liza.” The following example in “Liza” is in a descending motion (see Fig. 4.16).

Figure 4.16: Parallel chromatic chord progression, Gershwin/Wild: “Liza,” mm. 109–110.
Even though Gershwin and Wild follow the harmony from the original songs in their transcriptions, they often adjust the harmony for a fuller sonority. Three common ingredients that they use to enrich harmonic texture in the transcriptions are block chords, arpeggiated figurations, and rapid single-note figurations. Gershwin often enriches his harmony with block chords (see Fig. 4.17).

![Measure 16](image)

Figure 4.17: Enhancing the harmonic texture with block chords, Gershwin: “Liza,” mm. 16.

Wild not only uses block chords to enhance the harmony, but also is fond of using arpeggiated and rapid single-note figurations to give a fuller texture. Wild’s virtuosic technique is particularly evident in these figurations (see Fig. 4.18 and 4.19).
Figure 4.18: Enhancing the harmonic texture with arpeggiated figurations. Gershwin/Wild: “Embraceable You,” mm. 1–3.

Figure 4.19: Enhancing the harmonic texture with rapid single-note figurations. Gershwin/Wild: “The Man I Love,” mm. 19–22.
4.2.8 Dynamics

In *Piano and Keyboard*, Artis Wodehouse mentioned that Gershwin's use of dynamics is different from that of classically trained pianists. In traditional classical works, dynamics play an important function in shaping phrases. Instead, Gershwin keeps his dynamic range at one level (often a *mf*) for a long period and changes the dynamic level only for major contrasts.\(^\text{20}\) His dynamic levels in these selected transcriptions are frequently written as *mp* and *mf*, with few uses of *p*, *pp*, and *ff*. *Sforzando* is much used in one transcription, "Liza" (see Fig. 4.20).

![Musical notation example](image)

Figure 4.20: The use of *sforzando* sign, Gershwin: "Liza," mm. 58–59.

---

Compared to Gershwin’s dynamics, Wild’s dynamic range shows much contrast and diversity. His dynamic levels in the transcriptions of the *Seven Virtuoso Etudes* are often marked *p* and *pp*, and the ranges are from *ppp* to *ff*. Other signs such as *forzando (fz)*, *forzando piano (fp)*, *forte piano (fp)* and *sforzando (sfz)* are also seen. There are no dynamic markings in the transcription “Fascinating Rhythm,” only *crescendo* and *decrescendo* signs.

4.2.9 **Articulation**

The *legato* mark is not one of the main expression markings in Gershwin’s transcriptions because he barely used the *legato* touch but instead regularly used the lightly detached touch. He used legato only for major special effects. In contrast, because of Wild’s romantic and impressionistic style of performance, the use of the *legato* touch is very important for these transcriptions, particularly for the sentimental “Embraceable You” that contains *legato* marks throughout the whole piece.

As has been noted in the second chapter, the three most prominent markings in Gershwin’s transcriptions in the *Song-book* are *staccato*, *accent*, and *tenuto* marks because the performance of jazz or ragtime quality of the music is based upon these kinds of devices. These articulations are also essential in Wild’s transcriptions.
4.3 Piano Technique of the Transcriptions

Due to Gershwin’s early piano training, his piano technique was limited. This kept Gershwin from performing difficult standard piano works; instead, he played or improvised only his own music in public. Much of his finger technique grew up in the process of improvisation. The transcriptions from *George Gershwin’s Song-book* were the printed forms of eighteen of his famous improvisations of songs. While improvising on his melodies, he was constantly experimenting with chords, runs, and arpeggios, and these techniques have been applied in his transcriptions in the *Song-book*.

In comparison, Wild has a strong classical piano background. His superb keyboard technique not only comes from his study with famous pianists but also from practicing many virtuosic piano compositions. In *The New Grove Dictionary*, his technique is described as: “able to encompass even the most virtuoso works with apparent ease;”\(^{21}\) and in *The Art of the Piano*, David Dubal wrote: “Wild has one of the world’s great piano mechanisms. . . . Few understand the instrument as well as he.”\(^{22}\) Wild not only combined Gershwin’s popular melodies and rhythms with his own improvisation technique, but also with traditional romantic and impressionistic technical approaches in the transcriptions of *Seven Virtuoso Etudes*. These etudes are highly virtuosic in their technical


demands and are valuable as technical exercises. That is why he titled them “virtuoso etudes.” In this section, seven aspects of piano technique that Gershwin and Wild employed in their transcriptions will be analyzed.

4.3.1 Chordal Patterns

Chordal Patterns were one of the most important piano techniques that Gershwin used in the transcriptions of George Gershwin’s Song-book and most of his piano compositions. Because of his great harmonic sense, while improvising he would introduce many chordal combinations or progressions with each variation of a melody. He also had a habit of playing a series of chords at random before composing a song. For Wild’s transcriptions of Seven Virtuoso Etudes, this chordal technique is also significant. Most of the time the chordal pattern takes place when a climax or a full sonority of the melody occurs in the music. There are five kinds of chordal patterns in Gershwin’s and Wild’s transcriptions, including block, chromatic, repeated, scalar, and alternating chordal patterns.

1. Block chordal patterns

This is the most common chordal pattern among the five. Gershwin used some advanced block chordal patterns especially in the transcription “The Man I

---

Love.” He transcribed the single right-hand melody line with block chords for the entire transcription. For the main themes he used large block chordal patterns for both hands to make a full sonority of the melody (see Fig. 4.21).

Figure 4.21: Block chordal patterns, Gershwin: “The Man I Love,” mm. 1–4.

Wild also used the similar block chordal technique for both hands in his “The Man I Love.” He added double notes or octaves between chords rather than the consecutive chords that Gershwin used. Wild used this technique only for the final A section of the piece for the climax of the main theme. These block chordal patterns are difficult to execute (see Fig. 4.22).
2. Chromatic chordal patterns

As mentioned earlier in the discussion of the harmonic element, one of the harmonic progressions Gershwin particularly favors is chromatic chord progression in parallel motion. He applies this technique in three of his transcriptions: “Fascinating Rhythm,” as the introduction to the piece; “Oh. Lady Be Good!,” as an embellishment of the harmony in the middle of the piece; and “I
Got Rhythm,” as a modulatory progression between two keys D-flat major and F major. In “Fascinating Rhythm,” chromatic chords are written for the right hand with an ascending motion (see Fig. 4.23). In the other two transcriptions, choral patterns are written for the left hand with a descending motion (see Fig. 4.24 and 4.25).

Figure 4.23: Parallel chromatic chord progression, Gershwin: “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 1–2 (introduction).

Figure 4.24: Parallel chromatic chord progression, Gershwin: “Oh, Lady, Be Good!,” mm. 23–24.
Unlike Gershwin, Wild seldom uses this technique of chromatic chord progression in his transcriptions. There are only three examples, which appear in “Oh, Lady, Be Good!” and “Liza.” One of the three examples from “Liza” has been mentioned and shown in the harmonic element of this chapter (see page 91, Fig. 4.16). The other two are examples from “Oh, Lady, Be Good!” in descending motion and from “Liza” in ascending motion, which both serve as harmonic decorations (see Fig. 4.26 and 4.27).
3. Repeated chordal patterns

Gershwin used repeated chordal technique only in his transcription “Liza.”

The repeated chords are in constant short-long dotted rhythms in the left hand accompaniment against the right hand melody in octaves (see Fig. 4.28).
Wild also favors this technique of repeated chords and employs them in many of his own piano compositions. However, he does not apply this treatment in his *Seven Virtuoso Etudes*. The next two chordal patterns, scalar and alternating, are employed only by Wild.

4. Scalar chordal patterns

There are two scalar chordal patterns that are included in Wild’s transcriptions. The first pattern occurs in “Fascinating Rhythm” which contains a series of successive scalar chords to decorate the sustained E-flat major chord. These chords can be executed with both hands: the top two notes for the right hand and the bottom note for the left hand (see Fig. 4.29).
Figure 4.29: Successive scalar chord pattern, Gershwin/Wild: “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 21–22.

The second pattern appears in the coda of Wild’s transcription “I Got Rhythm.” It contains scalar chords in the right hand alternating with single notes in the left hand, are required to be executed Prestissimo. These fast scalar chords display Wild’s technical virtuosity (see Fig. 4.30).

Figure 4.30: Alternating scalar chord pattern, Gershwin/Wild: “I Got Rhythm,” mm. 131–134.
5. Alternating chordal patterns

Wild applied alternating chordal technique at the ending of his transcription “Oh, Lady, Be Good!.” In the example, he added a grace note with each right-hand chord only in measure 68. These chords are executed alternately by both hands, and require fast movement of the hands and accuracy of chordal placement at the keyboard (see Fig. 4.31).

Figure 4.31: Alternating chordal pattern, Gershwin/Wild: “Oh, Lady, Be Good!,” mm. 68–69.

4.3.2 Rapid Single-Note Passages

In both Gershwin’s and Wild’s transcriptions, rapid single-note passages are usually composed of irregular scales (combinations of both melodic and chromatic
scales) or arpeggiated passages. Although this technique is significant for
Gershwin’s improvisations of melodies and some of his other piano works, it has
not been much applied in these six transcriptions. Only two brief sixteenth-note
passages occur in “The Man I Love,” one of the passages follows (see Fig. 4.32):

![Musical notation]

Figure 4.32: Rapid single-note arpeggiated passage, Gershwin: “The Man I Love,”
mms. 4.

In contrast, rapid single-note passage is one of the most important
techniques that Wild uses. He employs this technique in all seven etudes,
especially in “Liza,” which is filled with many such passages. One of the rapid
single-note passages that Wild favors using involves alternation of two hands.
Three examples are the following (see Fig. 4.33, 4.34, and 4.35):
Figure 4.33: Rapid single-note scale passage with alternating hands, Gershwin/Wild: “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 49.

Figure 4.34: Rapid single-note scale passage with alternating hands. Gershwin/Wild: “Liza,” mm. 117–118.
Figure 4.35: Rapid single-note arpeggiated passage with alternating hands, Gershwin/Wild: “Somebody Loves Me,” mm. 39.

As has been mentioned previously, Wild applies rapid single-note figurations to enhance his harmonic texture. An example is in the “The Man I Love.” His excellent improvisational ability and finger technique are especially shown through the use of these rapid single-note figurations (see Fig. 4.36).

Figure 4.36: Rapid single-note figurations, Gershwin/Wild: “The Man I Love,” mm. 19–22.
Additionally, Wild uses a rapid scale passage in thirds in the transcription “The Man I Love,” which is also executed by both hands (see Fig. 4.37).

![Figure 4.37: Rapid single-note scale passage in thirds, Gershwin/Wild: “The Man I Love,” mm. 27.](image)

**4.3.3 Arpeggios**

Arpeggios play a major role in many of Gershwin’s piano compositions and improvisations, but like the technique of rapid single notes they are rarely seen in these six transcriptions. The only example is one of Gershwin’s imaginative arpeggiated passages in his “The Man I Love.” This cadential decoration consists of quartal arpeggiated patterns in thirty-second notes decorating the E-flat major chord (see Fig. 4.38).
Figure 4.38: Cadential arpeggiated patterns, Gershwin: “The Man I Love,” mm. 32–33.

Arpeggios are one of the most important techniques in Wild’s transcriptions of *Seven Virtuoso Etudes*. They are often used to decorate a chord or a single note and usually display his dazzling finger technique. The broken chord arpeggiated pattern is his favorite kind of arpeggio. He employs this figuration frequently in his transcriptions. Some of the best examples are in “Fascinating Rhythm,” “Embraceable You,” and “Liza.” The quartal broken chord arpeggiated patterns in “Fascinating Rhythm” are particularly difficult (see Fig. 4.39); the broken chord arpeggiated patterns in “Embraceable You” are sentimental (see Fig. 4.40). “Embraceable You” can be considered an etude especially for his use of *arpeggio* because it is filled with arpeggiated patterns throughout the entire piece. A further
example of triple broken chord arpeggiated patterns in “Liza” is a harmonic decoration (see Fig. 4.41).

Figure 4.39: Quartal broken chord arpeggiated patterns, Gershwin/Wild: “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 58–60.

Figure 4.40: Broken chord arpeggiated patterns, Gershwin/Wild: “Embraceable You,” mm. 41–42.
Like Gershwin, Wild also wrote impressive cadential arpeggiated figurations in the transcription of “The Man I Love.” These arpeggiated passages in the left hand decorate E-flat octaves and trills in the right hand (see Fig. 4.42).
4.3.4 Repeated Note Patterns

Occasionally, repeated note patterns are applied by Gershwin and Wild. They mostly serve as patterns for decoration or accompaniment. The only repeated note pattern that Gershwin uses is in the transcription “Fascinating Rhythm.” The pattern is in repeated double-note harmonic intervals in the left-hand accompaniment (see Fig. 4.43).

![Repeated double-note pattern](image)

Figure 4.43: Repeated double-note pattern, Gershwin: “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 7–9.

Wild also employs repeated double-note patterns in “Fascinating Rhythm” where they serve as a technical decoration for the right hand (see Fig. 4.44).

113
Figure 4.44: Repeated double-note patterns, Gershwin/Wild: “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 45–48.

Furthermore, Wild also applied repeated single-note patterns that Gershwin did not use. They are usually written as consecutive decorative patterns. Examples are the following (see Fig. 4.45 and 4.46):

Figure 4.45: Repeated single-note patterns, Gershwin/Wild: “Liza.” mm. 105–107.
Measure 102–104.

![Musical notation]

Measure 112–114.

![Musical notation]

Figure 4.46: Repeated single-note patterns, Gershwin/Wild: “I Got Rhythm,” mm. 102–104 and 112–114.

4.3.5 Large Skips

In Gershwin’s transcriptions of the Song-book, the large skip technique is very common. It includes jumping in left hand broken chord patterns and stretching in large intervals or rolled chords. The so called “ragtime bass” or “stride bass,” many large skips in a jumping left hand broken chord accompaniment, frequently occurs in his transcriptions (see Fig. 4.47 and 4.48).
Figure 4.47: Left hand broken chord skips, Gershwin: “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 11–13.

Figure 4.48: Left-hand broken chord skips, Gershwin: “I Got Rhythm,” mm. 39–42.

Stretching in large intervals or rolled chords is the other kind of large skips that Gershwin frequently uses. The most common large intervals or rolled chords usually occur in the left-hand bass line and span the interval of a tenth (see Fig. 4.49 and 4.50).
Measure 1–3.

Figure 4.49: Stretching in intervals, Gershwin: “Liza,” mm. 1–3 and 7.

Measure 7.

Figure 4.50: Stretching in rolled chords, Gershwin: “Somebody Loves Me,” mm. 29–31.
Compared to Gershwin’s skip technique, Wild not only uses jumping in left hand broken chord skips, stretching in large intervals and chords or rolled chords, but also uses hand shifting skips that Gershwin did not apply. Wild employs a left-hand broken chord ragtime bass in his transcription of “Fascinating Rhythm” (see Fig. 4.51), and large chordal stretching in tenth intervals in “Oh, Lady, Be Good!” (see Fig. 4.52).

Figure 4.51: Left hand broken chord skips, Gershwin/Wild: “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 11–14.

Figure 4.52: Stretching in chords, Gershwin/Wild: “Lady, Be Good!,” mm. 46–49.
The chords in tenth intervals in the example above may require a slight roll on each chord. Although Mr. Wild has big hands, he often plays a large chord with a quick roll. Rachmaninoff used the same roll technique on large chords.

Moreover, Wild uses hand-shifting skips that Gershwin did not apply in the perpetual motion of “Fascinating Rhythm.” The first example in measure 30 includes not only right-hand shifting skips but also skips in the opposite direction in the left-hand broken chord accompaniment (see Fig. 4.53). The second example contains consecutive skips in the left-hand shifting (see Fig. 4.54). These large skips are executed at an extremely fast speed and are technically challenging especially for pianists who have smaller hands.

![Musical notation]

Figure 4.53: Skips in right-hand shifting, Gershwin/Wild: “Fascinating Rhythm,” mm. 30.
4.3.6 Countermelody

An added countermelody is employed by Wild only in “The Man I Love.” This technique is used in the second A section. While the left hand plays the melody filled with broken chord arpeggiated accompanying figurations, an extra countermelody line is added in the higher register for the right hand (see Fig. 4.55). Because Wild did not want to repeat the main theme and accompaniment patterns twice in the same way, he made it more interesting the second time by adding a countermelody line. This technique is frequently seen in Richard Strauss’s music.25 This complex treatment of playing the main melody with accompanying figurations in the left hand and the countermelody in the right hand is good for practicing balance and voicing between two hands.

---

25 Wild, interview. 20 April 2000.
4.3.7 Pedaling

Gershwin disapproved of the overuse of the sustaining pedal in his transcriptions because the quality of ragtime or jazz requires staccato rather than legato touch. In the introduction of *George Gershwin’s Song-book*, he describes the characteristics of pedaling for the performance of his transcriptions.

One chief hint as to the style best adapted to performance of these pieces is in order. To play American popular music most effectively one must guard against the natural tendency to make too frequent use of the sustaining
pedal. Our study of the great romantic composers has trained us in the method of the legato, whereas our popular music asks for staccato effects, for almost a stencilled style. The rhythms of American popular music are more or less brittle; they should be made to snap, at times to crackle. The more sharply the music is played, the more effective it sounds. . . . Most pianists with a classical training fail lamentably in the playing of our ragtime or jazz because they use the pedaling of Chopin when interpreting the blues of Handy. The romantic touch is very good in a sentimental ballad, but in a tune of strict rhythm it is somewhat out of place.²⁶

When Gershwin does wish the pedal to be used, he marks it with the sign Ped . . .* in the transcriptions. Two transcriptions, “Fascinating Rhythm” and “Oh, Lady, Be Good!,” have no pedal markings.

In contrast, the use of sustaining pedal is much more important and personal in Wild’s Seven Virtuoso Etudes because the romantic and impressionistic style of playing is required in the pieces. All of the transcriptions contain pedal markings that are indicated with two signs, Ped . . * and  \[\text{\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_}\] (or  \[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\] ). The use of sustaining pedal is needed not only in those places that contain markings, but frequently also in places that contain no markings. Frequent changes of sustaining pedal on chordal changes are the most common pedaling used in these transcriptions. In some passages Wild suggests holding the pedal for more than one measure or even several measures mainly for the sonority and effect (see Fig. 4.56).

²⁶ Gershwin, introduction to the Song-book.
Measure 47–48.

Measure 55–57.

Figure 4.56: The use of sustaining pedal, Gershwin/Wild: “Embraceable You,” mm.47–48 and 55–58.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This document provides a comparison study of the selected George Gershwin songs as transcribed for piano by Gershwin in *George Gershwin’s Song-book* and by Earl Wild as *Seven Virtuoso Etudes*. These songs are “Fascinating Rhythm,” “Oh, Lady, Be Good!,” “Somebody Loves Me,” “The Man I Love,” “Liza,” “I Got Rhythm,” and “Embraceable You.” All except for “Embraceable You” were transcribed by Gershwin in the *Song-book*. There are three main components in the study that attempt to give the understanding of the piano transcriptions. Chapter Two contains a discussion of George Gershwin’s life, important works, performances, songs, and piano transcriptions in *George Gershwin’s Song-book*. It focuses on his early musical training, teachers, young professional life, and successful career as a composer, a performer, and a songwriter, as well as general background and style of songs, a discussing of his
improvisational skill, a brief history of the *Song-book*, and influences and style of
the transcriptions in the *Song-book*.

Chapter Three deals with Earl Wild’s biography, music, and his piano
transcriptions of George Gershwin. It concentrates on his early musical
background, piano studies, and long-running musical career, including his
compositions, performances, and recordings. The chapter also gives attention to
Wild’s early influences in transcription and improvisation, and the historical
circumstances and characteristics of his piano transcriptions of George Gershwin.

Chapter Four includes a historical perspective of Gershwin’s seven songs, a
detailed analysis of nine musical elements and seven aspects of piano technique of
the six selected transcriptions from *George Gershwin’s Song-book* and Wild’s
piano transcriptions of *Seven Virtuoso Etudes*. The analysis of the elements and
piano technique in the transcriptions explores differences and similarities in the
transcriptions and keyboard technique of Gershwin and Wild.

Generally speaking, in formal structure, Wild uses more extended musical
forms than Gershwin. Both Gershwin and Wild transcribed some of their
transcriptions to new keys from original keys of songs. Unlike Gershwin, Wild
either changes or omits the tempo markings from the original songs in the
transcriptions. In the use of meter, Gershwin applies single time signature in his
transcriptions; in contrast, Wild employs multiple signatures in two of his

125
transcriptions. Gershwin adheres to the original rhythmic values of the songs in the transcriptions while Wild uses variations of rhythm. Nevertheless, similarities in some of rhythmic patterns appear in both Gershwin and Wild transcriptions. Some different and similar matters in the melody of Gershwin and Wild are discussed in regard to five different devices. Two harmonic features, chromatic scalar melody in inner voices and chromatic chord progression, and harmonic textures with three common ingredients, blocked chords, arpeggiated figurations, and rapid single-note figurations of Gershwin and Wild are examined. In comparison to Gershwin, Wild’s dynamic range is more diverse and contrasting. As to articulation, Gershwin barely uses the legato touch, instead using detached touch; in contrast, Wild uses legato playing frequently in his romantic and impressionistic transcriptions.

Analysis suggests that Gershwin’s technical limitations came from his limited classical piano training. He played or improvised only his own works rather than performing difficult standard piano pieces. In fact, much of his technique came from improvising and the eighteen transcriptions from George Gershwin’s Song-book were improvisations on his songs. In contrast, Wild is highly acclaimed for his superb piano technique. From practicing and performing a large classical virtuosic piano repertoire life long, he is capable of mastering any
difficult work at the piano. His *Seven Virtuoso Etudes* are fine exercises for studying technique.

The piano technique of Gershwin and Wild in the transcriptions is discussed according to seven aspects, which may be summarized as:

1. chordal patterns: block, chromatic, repeated, scalar, and alternating
2. rapid single-note passages: arpeggiated, scale, and scale-in-third passages
3. arpeggios: broken chord and cadential arpeggiated figurations
4. repeated note patterns: single and double notes
5. large skips: jumping in the left-hand broken chord skips, stretching in large intervals, chords, or rolled chords, and skipping in hand shifting
6. countermelody
7. pedaling

While Gershwin was successful in writing small popular song forms and the majority of his compositions are in his popular song style, he had limited success in developing larger forms and musical materials for serious works perhaps because of the limitations of his formal training. This is evident especially in his solo piano works such as the transcriptions in *George Gershwin’s Song-book*. They use only small formal structures and simple elements. Additionally, the technical gaps are also part of the style of the transcriptions. In fact, these transcriptions were never purposely written for playing in serious concerts; instead,
they were originally improvisations on his famous songs used to entertain his friends at private parties.

Wild had a much stronger musical training and piano background than Gershwin. In the transcriptions of *Seven Virtuoso Etudes*, not only are the forms larger and the musical materials more developed, but also the piano technique is much more challenging. These transcriptions were not just the improvisations on Gershwin’s popular melody but a combination of traditional nineteen-century romantic and impressionistic passagework, counterpoint, and even symphonic textures. From the title of the transcriptions, “Seven Virtuoso Etudes,” we can infer that Wild composed them for the purpose of practicing technique and performing on concert programs.

Even though many differences occur in the musical background, transcribing elements, and piano technique of Gershwin and Wild, there is one major similarity in that they both are talented improvisers with great abilities of improvising on melodies of their own or of other composers.

**Recommendations for Further Study**

The study in this document suggests other possibilities for further study, which are related to Earl Wild’s other piano transcriptions. Except for a previous study of Wild’s piano transcriptions of twelve Rachmaninoff songs by Ching-Jen
Wu, no other Wild transcriptions have been analyzed. Further studies of Wild’s other piano transcriptions are recommended. Among these could be:

1. a study of the other two sets of Wild piano transcriptions of Gershwin based on Gershwin’s songs, *Grande Fantasy on ‘Porgy and Bess’* and *Improvisation in the Form of a Theme and Three Variations on ‘Someone To Watch Over Me’;*

2. studies of Wild solo piano transcriptions of other composers (see Appendix B for the list of published Earl Wild piano transcriptions)
APPENDIX A

MUSIC REVIEWS OF EARL WILD

The reviews that were written in the last ten years are divided into two parts, reviewing Earl Wild as a performer and as a transcriber. In the first part the author has selected a few reviews of Wild’s live and recorded performances, covering a wide range of repertoire including various standard works and piano transcriptions. The second part includes reviews of Wild’s musical perception and insight as a transcriber of Gershwin.

1. Reviewing Wild as a performer

Standard Works

“Bravura playing is a given from the now 84-year-old Wild, but what remained in my memory were the quieter, more lyrical moments, where he wove pure magic with his pearly runs and lacy filigree. The central Romanza was simply ravishing, and the dazzling finale sparkled.”

- Alan Linkowski, review of Earl Wild’s concert performance of Paderewski Piano Concerto with Chicago Symphony, Chicago Symphony Hall, American Record Guide 63, no. 3, March/April 2000, 42.
“The real gem of this collection is Earl Wild, who at 83, has been playing the piano for 80 years and giving concerts for over 70. . . . He always placed his legendary technique at the service of his vast repertoire. Everything that he plays emerges with a clarity and simplicity and a welcome freedom from eccentricity. Each jewel in this shimmering collection is played with the consummate artistry that only a true master has at his command. From the tonal luminosity of Claire de Lune and The Maiden and the Nightingale to Alborada del Gracios, Earl Wild shows that he is a master.”


“To these ears it is the finest collection of the complete Nocturnes ever recorded—and that takes in such hallowed figures as Arthur Rubinstein and Guiomar Novaes. The instrument cannot be played more perfectly than it is here. Earl Wild today stands alone as the Last Romantic.”


“It may pass for common knowledge that Earl Wild is among the most brilliant pianists of our time. He was once compared to a perfectly tuned Ferrari and here in these concertos he operates at maximum voltage with spine-tingling wit and precision. The notes stream and cascade from his fingers like diamonds; you may well be listening to one of the most infallible of all keyboard mechanisms. Even in the Balakirev Fantasy for Solo Piano, the performance is of an awe-inspiring verve and perfection. Wild’s larger-than-life brilliance (greatly admired by Horowitz among others) is of the sort dreamed of rather than achieved by his younger colleagues. All recorded rivals are chased into the shadows.”

- Bryce Morrison, review of Earl Wild CD of Scharwenka and Paderewski Piano Concertos, and Balakirev Fantasy for Piano (Elan CD 82266), Gramophone 74, no. 878, July 1996, 58.
“What an extraordinary testimonial to the long and brilliant career of Earl Wild. At the age of eighty, when the physical capacities of most pianists have waned considerably, he has ventured to record the most demanding and taxing of piano works—and with stunning results. There are simply no limitations to Wild’s handling of the intricately complicated and difficult passagework abounding in the Hammerklavier—leaps, polyphonic interchanges, trills, and the like.”


“The music is grand, the recording stunning, and Earl Wild, ‘terrific’. Just wait till you hear Copland’s exuberant pseudo-jazz bounding out of your speakers in ‘you-are-there’ realism, followed by the vigor and sparkle of Menotti’s pair of neoclassic toccatas sandwiching his 1945 concerto’s sumptuous romantic Lento cantilena. . . . what gorgeous music and how magnificently brought to life!”

- Mark Lehman, review of Earl Wild CD of Copland and Menotti Piano Concertos (Vanguard Classics CD SVC-3), American Record Guide 58, no. 4, July/August 1995, 103.

“For his October 28 Carnegie Hall recital, Earl Wild selected a memorable package of his repertoire specialties, all delivered with the panache and commanding authority one would expect of this front-frank virtuoso. . . . It goes without saying that pianistic musicianship on this level is a rare commodity in any era. Make no mistake: Earl Wild has always been, and definitely remains, one of his instrument’s supreme exponents.”

- Donald Manildi, review of Earl Wild’s recital performance of Beethoven’s Pathetique Sonata, Mendelssohn’s Rondo Capriccioso, 4 Chopin waltzes, Ravel’s Alborada del Gracioso and 4 transcriptions by himself and other composers, Carnegie Hall, American Record Guide 58, no.1, January/February 1995, 52.

“Earl Wild, now in his late 70s, remains one of the great piano technicians of our time. He is also a fine musician, and when the two are combined in music as demanding as the Rachmaninoff pieces played here, the results are dazzling. . . . This is easily the most exciting version of the sonata that I know, exceeding even Horowitz in its powerful torrents of sound. . . . The clarity of Wild’s articulation
even in the most dense and difficult pieces is simply astonishing, as is his consistent beauty of tone.”


“Earl Wild is one of our leading living exponents of Rachmaninoff and this is the first time he’s recorded any of the large-scale solo piano works. He faces the challenges head-on. As his performances of the song transcriptions (especially his seductively lavish remodeling of the Vocalise) make clear, he still has the technique to numb us with sheer brilliance. He courageously chooses not to do so; instead we get an uncommonly detailed and seasoned reading. Wild’s concern for inner lines never leads him to clog the horizontal flow. As in his fervent performances of the transcriptions, his technique is absolutely secure.”

- Peter J. Rabinowitz, review of Earl Wild CD of Rachmaninoff’s Variations on a Theme of Chopin, Variations on a Theme of Corelli, Four Song Transcriptions by Wild (Chesky CD 58), Fanfare 15, no. 3, January/February 1992, 303.

“As a Chopin interpreter, Earl Wild has only one peer that I know of, and that is the late, magnificent Josef Hofmann. If I went on for another thousand words, I could not devise higher praise than that. It seems almost incredible that we could have a pianist of this stature and tradition captured in the finest recorded sound I have ever heard. The task of choosing recordings that meet the highest standards of both performance and recording is made ridiculously simple by this disc.”

Piano Transcriptions

“Wild’s own *Etudes*, pianistically riveting, pay homage to Gershwin’s original songs; the performances couldn’t be bettered.”

“Wild’s own transcriptions of *Seven Virtuoso Etudes*, his enormous ‘*Grande Fantasy on Porgy and Bess*’, a neo-Lisztian collage which tells you much about Wild’s formidable technical imagination . . .

“Wild’s 1976 recordings of his grandiose *Porgy and Bess Fantasy* the *Virtuoso Etudes* on Gershwin themes that represent a type of captivating, creative pianism that only someone of Wild’s ultra sophisticated virtuosity could offer.”

“Sitting at the keyboard . . . Earl Wild makes everything look easy. The veteran pianist’s infectious energy and boyish spirits belie his 80 years. He effortlessly negotiates Beethoven’s *Hammerklavier* sonata and his own Gershwin and Rachmaninoff transcriptions with quiet authority that harkens back to the great pianists of yore.”

“When Earl Wild performs, the Golden Age of the keyboard suddenly reappears. Like the great romantic showmen who flourished before World War II, Wild revels in the sensuality and sheer kineticism of the piano, reminding his listeners that it is the only instrument capable of emulating both the tender nuances of vocal music and the thunderous range of the orchestra. When Wild plays, the pallid noodling that often passes for pianism these days vanishes: one hears the grand echoes of
Paderewski, Rachmaninoff and Josef Hofmann. Just turning 80, Wild is as productive and more musically rewarding than ever. . . . Sony Classics has just released a new CD, The Romantic Master, which is largely devoted to Wild’s own dazzling transcriptions, among them the delightful Reminiscences of Snow White, a fantasy on Frank Churchill’s music for the 1937 Disney animated film.”


“Earl Wild’s pianistic prowess is boundless, and this recording is practically a catalog of virtuoso pianism, with touches of swing piano style, but more often with a kind of high romantic playing colored by a contemporary harmonic vision.”


“One thing is certain—Earl Wild would have been a sensation, a scandal, or possibly both, at one of Gershwin’s parties. . . . Gershwin’s much-vaunted Song-Book is as nothing compared to Wild’s Olympian achievements here. He really is a marvel; this is golden-age piano virtuosity cross-fertilized with jazz-age invention—ingenious, quick-witted, and irresistible. . . . This is a gem of a disc—some of the most uninhibited, flamboyant, and yes, outrageous piano playing I’ve heard in ages. It’s a lively, forthright recording with plenty of dazzle in the upper keys. Indulge yourself.”

- Edward Seckerson, review of Earl Wild Plays His Transcriptions of Gershwin CD (Chesky CD 32), Gramophone 68, no. 809, October 1990, 784.

“‘Transcription’ is an almost absurdly inadequate term for what happens here. . . . For anyone who knows Wild’s playing a review is hardly necessary, and it need only be said that he is his usual transcendental self, drawing as beautiful a tone from the instrument as ever. . . .this superlative example of the work of one of the great pianists of our time, with recorded sound up to the highest current standards, will go unheard by many. Demand it from your supplier!”

“This is one of the unique piano recordings of the year; at 75, Wild still has a technique that could be remarkable in a pianist one-third his age but, even more important, he has imagination and he knows how to phrase a piano melody like a singer shaping a vocal line.”

2. Reviewing Wild as a transcriber

**Piano Transcriptions of George Gershwin**

“The greatest praise must be reserved for Earl Wild’s piano transcriptions. By anyone’s standards, they’re a marvel, a thing of real beauty, as good if not better than anything Liszt might have written.”

“They [Seven Virtuoso Etudes and Porgy and Bess Fantasy] show Wild’s understanding of Gershwin’s unique piano style, its energy and verve and yet they beautifully reflect Wild’s own musical personality.”

“Wild’s *Seven Virtuoso Etudes* on Gershwin’s songs are exquisite, building on the composer’s primitive novelty style, early barrelhouse piano, and contemporary classical approaches as well. “Liza,” with its Tatum-esque, machine-gun virtuosity, will leave you breathless, as will the soulful impressionism of “Embraceable You,” the bluesy atmospherics of “Somebody Loves Me,” and the perpetual motion of “Fascinatin’ Rhythm.” In “The Man I Love,” Wild makes the delicate streams of notes surrounding the melody sound as if they are executed by three hands.”
“Most of the Seven Virtuoso Etudes are from the 1950s, and as each of these is developed from just one song Wild is if anything even more inventive than in the Fantasy. This music is often exuberant yet it has many subtle, delicate moments also.”

APPENDIX B

A LIST OF ALL PUBLISHED EARL WILD PIANO TRANSCRIPTIONS

Rachmaninoff/Wild: Thirteen Songs

5. “In the Silent Night”, Op. 4, No. 3

Gershwin/Wild: Seven Virtuoso Etudes

14. “I Got Rhythm”
15. “Oh, Lady Be Good!”
16. “Liza”
17. “Embraceable You”
18. “Somebody Loves Me”
19. “Fascinating Rhythm”
20. “The Man I Love” (version for both hands)

22. Gershwin/Wild: Grande Fantasy on ‘Porgy and Bess’

23. Gershwin/Wild: Improvisation in the Form of a Theme and Three Variations on ‘Someone To Watch Over Me’

24. Tchaikovsky/Wild: Dance of the Four Swans from ‘Swan Lake’

25. Tchaikovsky/Wild: At the Ball


27. Fauré/Wild: Improvisation on ‘Après un Rêve’

28. Bach/Wild: Hommage à Poulenc

29. Chopin/Wild: ‘Larghetto’ from Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor Op. 21
BIBLIOGRAPHY

REFERENCE


BOOKS


ARTICLES


**REVIEWS**


**INTERVIEWS AND PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS**


_______. E-mails to author, July 1999 – present.

_______. Interview by author, Columbus, Ohio, 20 April 2000.

**THESES AND DISSERTATIONS**


MUSICAL SCORES


Wild, Earl. *Seven Virtuoso Etudes*.

“Fascinating Rhythm”

“Oh, Lady, Be Good!”

“Somebody Loves Me”

“The Man I Love” (version for both hands)

“Liza”

“I Got Rhythm”

“Embraceable You”

Published by Michael Rolland Davis Productions, ASCAP, Copyright Earl Wild 1975, Library of Congress PA 705540.

______. “The Man I Love” (version for left-hand alone). Published by Michael Rolland Davis Productions, ASCAP, Copyright Earl Wild 1954.

SOUND RECORDINGS


Gershwin Plays Gershwin, by George Gershwin. Gemm CDs 9483.


**VIDEOCASSETTES**


**ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS**
