



Roy Harris at UCLA: Neglected Documentation

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Roy Harris's death in a Santa Monica hospital October 1, 1979, inspired lengthy obituary tributes by Donal Henahan ("Roy Harris, Prolific Composer of Americana, 81, Dies") and Harold C. Schonberg ("Maker of Homespun Music / Roy Harris in the 1930's Was One of the Big Five Who Hoped to Challenge Dominance of Europe") in the *New York Times* of October 4 (B19: 1-3 and 1-2). That same day the *Washington Post* (B6: 1-2) after headlining his obituary "Composer Roy Harris Dies, Noted for Symphonies 3, 4," quoted Leonard Bernstein as rating the Third "written in 1938 [as] still the finest of all American symphonies." Labeling him "as an authentic American genius," the *Post* credited him with a total of "16 symphonies and 185 other major works, including choral, chamber and band music, and piano concertos composed for his concert-pianist wife, Johana." Other prestigious newspapers followed suit with similarly effusive tributes.

What other earnest of his worldwide reputation at death are presently available? For one matter, general encyclopedias in nearly every language now carry Roy Harris articles: *Grote Winkler Prins* (Amsterdam/Brussels: Elsevier, 1969), IX, 144; *Brockhaus Enzyklopädie* (Wiesbaden: F. A. Brockhaus, 1969), VIII, 192-193; *Aschehougs Konversasjonsleksikon* (Oslo: Aschehoug & Co., 1969), VIII, 626; *Wielka Encyklopedia Powszechna PWN* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1964), IV, 568; *Bonniers Lexikon* (Stockholm: A. B. Nordiska Uppslagsböcker, 1964), VI, 864; and *Meydan-Larousse* (Istanbul: Meydan Yayınevi, 1971), V, 632, by way of examples in Dutch, German, Norwegian, Polish, Swedish, and Turkish. As proof of his continuing stellar magnitude in general histories of music, *The Modern Age* volume of the *New Oxford History of Music* [X] (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), allots him a solo section, pages 614-619.

So far as the tribute of dissertation literature goes, what must be the lengthiest ever devoted to any facet of an American composer is Dan Stehman's Brobdingnagian "The Symphonies of Roy Harris: An Analytical Study of the Linear Materials and of Related Works" (University of Southern California Ph.D dissertation, 1973 [1974]). Totalling 1598 pages divided among four volumes, this labor of love (chaired by Professor Arend Koole) distills sixteen years of research—all but five spent closely knit with the Harris family in such varied capacities as "music copyist, proofreader, and librarian." Alone among Harris researchers, Stehman mastered the total Harris oeuvre to such a degree that he could generalize thus: every one of the 47 movements or subdivisions in Harris's [fifteen] symphonies shares thematic materials with other symphonic movements, or with works of other genres in his total output. After this bold generalization, Stehman continually cites chapter and verse to prove his point. As a further sample of generalizations that only Stehman is equipped to make: he can also decree that Harris's sole direct plainsong borrowing was the *Alleluia Justus germinabit sicut lilium* strewn thickly about in the instrumental greenery of the *Père*

Marquette Symphony (November 8, 1969). Not only Stehman's text, but also his footnotes abound in gold nuggets. Sample: Harris's letter written in November 1961 (his first year at UCLA) already reveals tension between him and Nicolas Slonimsky that rapidly mounted thereafter, eventuating in the rupture of a thirty-year friendship in 1965 (page 595).

Two dissertations prior to Stehman's placed Harris on a pedestal, without however vaunting Stehman's encyclopedic knowledge of the total Harris output: Walter John Halen's 1024-page "An analysis and comparison of compositional practices used by five contemporary composers in works titled 'Symphony'" (Columbus: Ohio State University, 1969 [*Dissertation Abstracts*, XXX/5, March-April, 1970, p. 4479A], order number 70-06789) and Charles Edward Brookhart's 297-page "The Choral Music of Aaron Copland, Roy Harris, and Randall Thompson" (Nashville: George Peabody College, 1960) [*DA*, XXI/9, March 1961, p. 2737], order number 60-5861). In Halen's dissertation, Harris's one-movement nineteen-minute *Symphony No. 7* (1955) completed at Pittsburgh on a Koussevitzky Music Foundation grant takes rank as a work equally as significant as Stravinsky's *Symphony in Three Movements*, Hans Werner Henze's *Symphony No. 2*, and Anton Webern's *Symphony, Op. 21*. In Brookhart's dissertation chaired by C. B. Hunt (who, incidentally, was the first to obtain a Ph.D. in music at UCLA) Harris's four works, *Symphony for Voices* (1935), *Folk Song Symphony* (1939), *Mass for Men's Voices* (1948), and *Folk Fantasy for Festivals* (1956), emerge as proofs that none has surpassed him among American choral composers.

Yet despite the testimony of foreign encyclopedias and histories of music that cannot be accused of chauvinism, and despite the painstakingly minute studies of symphonic and choral facets of his art undertaken in the three representative dissertations cited in the previous paragraphs, Roy Harris's total career cannot be closely clasped in any presently published reference work. Samuel Barber, Aaron Copland, and Virgil Thomson, to cite only three disparate contemporaries, long ago managed to stimulate books published about them by Nathan Broder, Julia Smith, and John Cage. Why not Roy Harris? Actually, he did find a Boswell so famous as Nicolas Slonimsky. But Slonimsky's 23-chapter "Roy Harris: Cimarron Composer," a book-length biography abetted by style critiques, analyses of milestone works, and a superlative annotated catalogue of Harris's compositions to the summer of 1951 (when—commissioned by G. Schirmer—Slonimsky wrote it under the composer's eye at Sewanee, Tennessee), has never been published, even partially. Indeed, it shamefully languishes in a cage-protected typescript at the UCLA Music Library. Even were Harris a less paramount composer, would not Slonimsky's own fame have guaranteed a better fate for a project replete with his usual scintillating thrusts and parries? Richard Larsen—designated the official biographer in 1973—died the day after Roy Harris without leaving anything except a hundred hours of tapes. Robert Strassburg's glossily printed 48-page *Roy Harris: A Catalog of his works* issued by California State University at Los Angeles in 1973 when Harris accepted an appointment as Composer-in-Residence baldly lists none but published works then available (pp. 34-44), and throughout betrays a novice's hand by its inconsistencies in dating, its duplicate listing of works not cross-referenced, its failure to benefit from, or even acknowledge, prior catalogues of Harris's works, and its air of being a mere excuse for a vanity book of family pictures.

To turn from these disappointments to other types of specialized reference



literature that should assist the Harris devotee: Roy Harris's biography in the latest edition of *Who's Who in America* to include him, the 37th covering the biennium 1972-1973, cites his having taught nineteen years at Utah State Agricultural College, 1948 to 1967—in which latter year he purportedly began teaching at UCLA. The *International Who's Who*, 41st edition, 1977-1978, similarly credits him with having begun at Utah State University of Agriculture and Applied Science in 1948 and with having continued in Logan until he began teaching at UCLA—not however in 1967 but supposedly in 1960. Counted either the *Who's Who in America* or the *International Who's Who* way, he spent more time in a Utah town with a population of less than 25,000, than in any other location during a college and university teaching career spanning some forty years.

What was the true chronology of his college and university teaching career? In sequence, he taught at the Westminster Choir College 1934-1938, Cornell University 1941-1943, Colorado College 1943-1948, Utah State 1948-1949, George Peabody College for Teachers (Nashville) 1949-1951 (and Sewanee in 1951), Pennsylvania College for Women 1951-1956, Southern Illinois University 1956-1957, Indiana University 1957-1960, Inter-American University (San Germán, Puerto Rico) 1960-1961, and UCLA 1961-1973 (University of the Pacific at Stockton concurrently in 1961-1963). As this lineup proves, he taught at UCLA twelve years, but nowhere else longer than five. His titles at UCLA ran as follows: Lecturer 1961-1962, 1964-1968; Visiting Professor 1962-1964; Professor-in-Residence 1968-1973. His wife Johana began as Lecturer in 1969, in the same year that he became Professor-in-Residence (and that John Vincent became Professor Emeritus).

The three major unpublished resources for Roy Harris research at UCLA that must here be advertised, even if only in the most preliminary fashion, are: (1) Nicolas Slonimsky's already mentioned 169-page effervescent typescript; (2) an invaluable typed 518 pages in the Oral History Program archives (Bernard Galm, Director) containing transcripts of lengthy interviews with Roy Harris conducted at 1200 Tellem Drive in Pacific Palisades on 26 days (11 days between July 6 and August 20, 1962, by Don Schippers, 15 days between March 14, 1966, and March 14, 1969, by Adelaide Tusler); and (3) a file of some 47 letters and memoranda from Roy or Johana Harris to John or Ruth Vincent dated January 29, 1938, to June 28, 1958, many of which are accompanied by Roy and Johana programs and clippings. Collected in the John Vincent Archive, these latter materials were kindly brought to my attention by Craig Parker who with exemplary thoroughness organized the John Vincent Archive prior to writing his definitive dissertation.

Not the least intriguing aspect of Slonimsky's aborted biography is the number of crossed-out passages, some of which deletions plainly bespeak the censorship of the composer (who forbade any intimation of his two marriages prior to meeting Beula Duffey in the summer of 1935 or of his first daughter born about 1925). To read Slonimsky, Harris would seem to have remained a celibate, immune to the charms of the tea-party women his father sneered at, until the age of 37, well past the dates of his first great national triumphs with the 24-minute three-movement *Symphony 1933* premiered under Serge Koussevitzky's baton by the Boston Symphony Orchestra in November 1933 and at Carnegie Hall in New York City on January 26, 1934, and the revised *When Johnny Comes Marching Home* overture premiered by Eugene Ormandy and the Minneapolis Symphony on January 13, 1935. What Harris did



permit Slonimsky's revealing included such valuable professional landmarks as these: on April 23, 1926, Howard Hanson conducted the Eastman Symphony in the premiere of Harris's Andante from an unfinished "Our Heritage" symphony (page 16), after which Olin Downes, who visited Rochester for the concert, praised the Andante in the *New York Times* of May 9 (VIII, 6: 1) for its "quality of serene nature, a mood that is lofty and not sensuous, a music that has a deep breath." Earlier that same year, on March 15, 1926, the Zoellner String Quartet had premiered at Los Angeles his four-movement string quartet *Impressions of a Rainy Day*—thereafter taking it on their Western States tour. Arthur Farwell (1872–1952) introduced him that same *annus mirabilis* to the founder of Hollywood Bowl Artie Mason Carter and she in turn introduced him to the pianist Elly Ney (1882–1968). The latter brought his Andante to the attention of her husband Willem van Hoogstraten (1884–1965) who programmed it at Lewisohn Stadium in New York in July 1926 and at Hollywood Bowl August 6, 1926. The *Los Angeles Evening Herald* headlined the review of the Bowl event, "Harris's Andante proves L.A. Composer of Strong Talent and Spiritual Depth."

After spending the latter part of the summer at the MacDowell Colony, Harris went next to New York where Alma Wertheim, sister of the tycoon Henry Morgenthau (Secretary of the Treasury, 1934–1945, chairman of the United Jewish Appeal, 1947–1950), gave him \$300 to buy clothes (page 17) and guaranteed him \$2500 annually for four years' European study. His first success at Paris came swiftly. Thanks to Nadia Boulanger the clarinet virtuoso Pierre Cahuzac joined her and others on May 8, 1927, to give a flawless reading of his Clarinet Concerto before the Société Musicale Indépendante. Slonimsky himself conducted the Los Angeles Philharmonic in the world premiere of Harris's *Overture from the Gayety and Sadness of the American Scene* December 29, 1932. Despite a Hollywood Bowl repeat performance the next summer, Harris rewrote it. Under its new title *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*, the work won such sensational favor that G. Schirmer contracted him in 1935. His publishers to 1951 were in succession, Mills, Carl Fischer, and Ricordi.

He gave his first public lecture series in 1932 at the Los Angeles Public Library on melodic writing before Bach (page 46). Two years later he gave a series on medieval music at the New School for Social Research in New York. Although from a 1951 vantage point such a pseudo-learned article as Harris's "Will We Produce a Second Rhythmic 'Ars Nova'?" published in *Musical America*, April 10, 1934, with musical examples from Gregorian Chant, Philippe de Vitry, and Guillaume de Machaut already sounded a pretentious mishmash Slonimsky discreetly passes over it and similar journalistic misadventures to dwell instead on Paul Rosenfeld's ecstatic reviews of Harris's *Symphony 1933* and other newly recorded works in *The New Republic* of November 21, 1934, and on Lawrence Gilman's effusions in the *New York Herald Tribune* of November 15, 1934 (reviewing Harris's *Chorale, for String Orchestra*, Op. 3, played by the New York Philharmonic Symphony under Werner Janssen's baton) and of November 3, 1935 (Klemperer conducting the same orchestra in *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*). Slonimsky credits himself with having saved for posterity the score of one fine work in danger of destruction, Harris's *Toccata for orchestra* (1931)—now in the Fleisher Collection at Philadelphia (page 154).

Slonimsky is especially useful in establishing dates of composition and premiere dates (with performers) of the items listed in the *Catalogue of Works* (pages 153–169).

He also mentions such details as Koussevitzky's cutting 13 pages from the first movement of *Symphony 1933* before its New York premiere, G. Schirmer's sending the *Symphony No. 3* to Toscanini in Italy, and the A. W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust's payment of \$25,000 yearly during his quinquennium at Pittsburgh. Although less fortunate composers may still balk at Harris's crass boasting that after *Symphony 1933* he composed solely on money commissions, Slonimsky quotes with the composer's own apparent hearty relish Marshall Sprague's tasteless article in the *New York Times* of February 15, 1948, "Composing for Cash." This impudence so hotly angered the moderator of St. Patrick Cathedral's choir that he at once publicly denied promising Harris a hefty sum for any Easter Mass. As a result, Harris's *Mass for Men's Voices* (purportedly based on New Mexico folksongs) had to await its less auspicious premiere by the Princeton Chapel Choir at St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University, May 13, 1948 (page 90).

Slonimsky records the births of the first three children—Patricia Duffey March 28, 1944, Shaun Dufey March 19, 1946, and Daniel Duffey March 2, 1947. So far as Harris's own personal religious background goes, Slonimsky describes his paternal grandfather as a 6-foot, 3-inch [Methodist] circuit rider who at 63 weighing 240 pounds won a rail splitting contest. In *Who's Who in America*, Vol. 22 (1942-1943), page 1011, Harris also identified himself as Methodist. Slow, however, to reward musical genius, this denomination never took any official cognizance of him in such form as a commission to write a work for premiere at a quadrennial General Conference.

Leaving Slonimsky for another body of unpublished Harris data at UCLA, we next hear Harris telling Adelaide Tusler on March 14, 1966, that he spent only two semesters at the Los Angeles State Normal School on Vermont Avenue (out of which grew UCLA). In 1918 Frances A. Wright headed a Music Department consisting of four female music educators. Harris informed her, "You're not doing a very good job." "What do you expect from us?" she countered. "Learning how to write symphonies," he replied. "Well, what in *hell* are you doing here?" she demanded. According to Harris, she was a wonderfully brave soul to whom he sent a telegram when Toscanini nationally broadcast his *Symphony No. 3* March 17, 1940. At Berkeley, where he enrolled in the fall of 1919, he worked in Barney's Beanery and tended a pair of old maids' garden. A program annotator for the San Francisco Symphony induced Alfred Hertz (1872-1942) to examine one of his scores. Hertz encouraged him to continue but Albert Israel Elkus (1884-1962) told him that European composers his age had already forgotten more than he knew, and advised him to stop dreaming of a musical career. Elkus's cold-shouldering did not prevent his profiting greatly from Berkeley courses in sociology and philosophy taught by Jessica Blanche Peixotto (1864-1941) and Stephen Coburn Pepper (1891-1972).

Upon returning to Southern California, Harris began studying with Arthur Farwell. Harris recalls that this "fantastic fellow" was a cousin of Ralph Waldo Emerson and a pupil of Englebert Humperdinck. Farwell introduced him to Modest Altschuler (1873-1963), who shamed Artie Mason Carter and other wealthy patrons into aiding him when he announced at a banquet that in the Soviet Union a genius of Harris's calibre would be absolved of financial worries. Skipping from Los Angeles to Paris, Harris awards Nadia Boulanger five stars when he declares her the peer of his wife-to-be Johana, so far as musicianship, sight reading ability, and wide musical

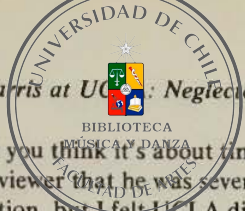
knowledge go. In the same breath, Harris continues by lauding Toscanini as the most superlative musician known to him, worthy in every way of his unique fame. Toscanini exhaled "love" in Harris's personal encounters. At a party given in Harris's honor by Johana's piano teacher Ernest Hutcheson (1871-1951), the guests included both Toscanini and Rachmaninoff. Toscanini, who had just conducted the Third, was asked by Rachmaninoff how he liked Harris's music. "It's important and at present too difficult for me to grasp completely, but I want to conduct much more of it," was the maestro's reply.

In his interview of April 27, 1966, Harris describes his first Soviet Union visit during September-October of 1958. With him went Roger Sessions, Peter Mennin, and the Black composer Ulysses Kay. After tedious instructions by the State Department on how to parry questions dealing with Black-White amity in the United States, Harris reports that Soviet colleagues never even so much as mentioned Blacks to any of the four. Radiating warmth to Russian officialdom, Harris reports that on his 65th birthday, three of his symphonies were broadcast in the Soviet Union.

At the next interview, May 6, 1966, Harris emphasizes the brevity of the Pasadena grant, which lasted only one year, 1930-1931. Upon his return to New York, he became the protégé of Mary Dows Herter Norton, wife of the publisher William Warder Norton. With characteristic exuberance Harris tells how the Nortons established him in their Wilton, Connecticut, mansion. He continues with a recital of events leading to the premiere of the Third, including Hans Kindler's rejection of the score after he had revised it from a Violin Concerto originally intended for Jascha Heifetz. During this May 6, 1966, interview, Adelaide Tusler indiscreetly queried whether he had a family when in the summer of 1935 he met Johana *née* Beula Duffey (married October 10, 1936). Both taught the summer of 1935 at Juilliard. "No, no," Harris replied. It was Johana who persuaded him to quit Westminster Choir College, where he had taught since 1934, he says, and to settle in 1938 at Upper Montclair, New Jersey. In this interview, Harris reports composing the Third at Upper Montclair, rather than in Princeton (as Stehman alleges). Five students lived with the Harrises at Upper Montclair, fulfilling apprenticeships and doing household chores. Thus began a pattern of Harris household affairs that lasted through the next four decades. At Cornell, where he began a two-year teaching stint in 1941, he enjoyed President Edmund Ezra Day's favor, managed to institute a Ph.D. in composition, but infuriated fellow faculty by monopolizing press attention.

In his interview of October 1, 1968, Harris recounts the circumstances leading to his appointment to teach at UCLA in the fall of 1961. A telegram sent him in Puerto Rico brought him to conduct his *Symphony No. 7* in Royce Hall, UCLA, on June 7, 1961 (as one event among many in the so-called Los Angeles First International Music Festival). The day previous, June 6, Harris moderated an International Composers Conference in Schoenberg Hall, UCLA, attended by the following celebrities present in Los Angeles to hear or conduct their works at the Festival (alphabetical order): Karl-Birger Blomdahl, Werner Egk, Lukas Foss, Blas Galindo, Iain Hamilton, Kara Karayev, Tikhon Khrennikov, Darius Milhaud, Walter Piston, Miklos Rozsa, Igor Stravinsky, John Vincent, Elinor Remick Warren, and Franz Waxman.

Again making it appear (as with all his previous moves) that the appointment to teach at UCLA with a visitor's status beginning in the fall of 1961 was the result of importuning rather than something ardently sought, Harris quotes Dean William Melnitz of UCLA College of Fine Arts as having asked while he was in Los Angeles



the first week of June 1961, "Don't you think it's about time you returned home?" In an aside, Harris next tells his interviewer that he was several times previously offered the "Schoenberg Chair of Composition, but I felt UCLA didn't do very well by Arnold Schoenberg financially or any other way and I couldn't really afford to take the Chair." But according to him, Dean Melnitz could not be gainsaid in June 1961, when he insisted, "Well, I think we'd better keep you" and assured him that salary would now pose no barrier. "We really need a composer," purportedly said Melnitz (both Lukas Foss and John Vincent were then teaching composition at UCLA, not to mention also Paul Des Marais, Boris Kremenliev, and Roy Travis).

Although he was assigned Modal Counterpoint the first year, his schedule otherwise met all his best expectations. Never was he required to begin before one in the afternoon. His newfound leisure and sense of fulfillment spurred him to a vast creative outpouring, that included all his symphonies from the Eighth onward. On his 70th birthday UCLA bestowed its higher accolade, the title of "professor-in-residence." The one disappointment that marred Southern California on his "return home" was Zubin Mehta's steadfast refusal to program either his own works, any other Southern California composers' works, or for that matter any United States composers' works whatsoever. (He counts Aurelio de la Vega as Cuban.)

His appraisals of fellow faculty at UCLA also breathe bonhomie. He graciously commends Robert Stevenson, "a fellow Juilliard pupil of Ernest Hutcheson with Johana." Boris Kremenliev "lived with us at Colorado Springs several months," he reports. John Vincent he calls "a pupil of mine who got his doctor's degree under me at Cornell."

Not surprisingly under these circumstances, the third chief Roy Harris archival source at UCLA consists of a batch of some 47 letters and memoranda from Harris to Vincent. As classified by Craig Parker, for whose help in preparing the rest of this article I am vastly indebted, the connections between Harris and Vincent that are documented in the Vincent Archive proceed in the following chronological order:

- 1937
September 9 Harris inscribes a manuscript copy of *Four Minutes Twenty Seconds* "To John Vincent whom I have just recently had the pleasure of meeting and who[m] I hope to see much more of—Greetings.
New York. Roy Harris.
- 1938
January 19 Harris's hurried note on Westminster Choir College stationery postmarked at Princeton, New Jersey, asks "John Vincent / Music Department / College / Bowling Green / Kentucky" about his married life, Yankee cooking. On this date Harris is "Director, American Music Festival."
- January 29 Harris writes: "I am pleased to inform you that the jury chose your Sapphic Choruses [*3 Grecian Songs*] as one of the five from a group of 155 submitted for the choral contest of the W.P.A. It will be broadcast at some future date by Lehman Engel. I would like to say here that you overworked the parallel thirds idea in the women's voices. Have not yet received your string quartette, but am going to program it on the assumption that it will arrive. The festival will be the last week in March and [Feri] Roth [1899-1969] has agreed to arrive here one month in advance, to concentrate on the festival music, so you can be confident of a good performance of your quartette." In the next paragraph Harris asks to give a lecture-concert with Johana at Bowling Green during the school week of March 21-25.

- March 7 "I have completed my concerto for Heifetz. It is about 25 minutes in length, in one movement without interruption. Will bring it with me when we come. P.S. Victor has just issued my Symphony for Voices, recorded by Westminster Choir."
- March 11 Harris announces that Johana will play a late Beethoven Sonata, either opus 109 or 110, the Bach-Busoni Chaconne, and his own Sonata (the program actually given at Western Kentucky Teachers College in Van Meter Hall March 22 substituted four short Chopin items for Beethoven). Harris continues: "My composer proteges are beginning to howl that I am going away from them at spring vacation, just when they were looking forward to a week of work uninterrupted by school curriculum."
- March 21 (Monday) Harris's Western Union telegram announces Johana's arrival by train Tuesday from Cincinnati. "I arrive by plane in time for Wednesday" [lecture].
- April 11 Johana's note from Boston College (written at The Vendome) states: "I have been spending some days from 6 am to 2:45 pm (stopping for lunch) making piano reduction for R.H.'s fiddle concerto . . . (I play tomorrow with a *superb* quartet from Boston Symphony. 'Chardon' is the name.)" She continues: "Roy's mother arrives in Princeton in a day or so to stay all spring. She will be shocked by our news. The last she knew we were to buy a home!! We are stimulated by our move & eager & wondering. The future is a mystery, concretely. No further news yet. Friends, you shall know, when there is. We *may* rent a loft, in N.Y.!!"
- December 3 Harris's letter in his own hand (return address 125 Cooper-Avenue, Upper Montclair, New Jersey) begins: "My dear John Vincent: / The Symphony is all done and parts copied—but rehearsal time insufficient so Kindler will substitute 2 movements from the Time Suite for the program of the 28th, and do the Symphony in the Spring." In the next paragraph he alludes thus to John Vincent's embryonic *The Diatonic Modes in Modern Music*, the manuscript of which Harris had shown W. W. Norton: "Norton says the production of the Thesis would be suicidal—that he thinks it should be done but that it must be done by a University Press. I think it must be done. We must get our heads together on it. When should I send it? At once, or bring it to Washington[?]"
- 1939
October 9 Harris's handwritten note postmarked this date begins with an explanation of "the tardiness of this letter." Having just returned from Boston, he urges Vincent to engage "a singer—Dorothy Maynard who's being strongly recommended by Koussevitsky—He used her in Our Festival. She is fine & probably not expensive like Anderson yet." Continuing in a new paragraph, Harris writes: "Toscanini announced my Symphony for his 2nd concert and then postponed it to March. Reason: because an old American composer named Templeton Strong [George Templeton Strong (New York City, May 26, 1856-Geneva, Switzerland, June 27, 1948)] is 83 yrs. old and T— wants him to hear his work [*Die Nacht*, orchestral suite, October 21, 1939] before he dies. How are plans shaping for Our Spring sojourn in your precincts?"
- October 23 In the role of her husband's secretary, writing from their abode at 160 Cabrini Boulevard, New York City, Johana begins: "Dear Vincents— Business first. Roy asks me to tell you that he has written [Edwin John] Stringham [1890-1974], whom we know very well. Good luck, in the best results." She continues: "The 4th Symphony is shaping beautifully & we're

all crazy wild over American Folk Music." She anticipates giving a historic survey of piano literature at Williams College in twelve recital-lectures, and bespeaks her pleasure in teaching at Henry Street Settlement. Her household now includes six, the extra four being her husband's aides and factotums. Her concluding paragraph: "I've got a splendid less-known comer violinist for your suggested concert—Carroll Glenn. Shall I send her data?"

- 1940
January 9 In his own handwriting Harris acknowledges the Vincents' Christmas gift of a sugar-cured ham. Apropos of John Vincent's application for a teaching post at Teachers College, Columbia University, Harris continues: "I called up Stringham and spoke to his wife; he was in bed. And gave you the highest recommend[ation] I know how to give. It will delight us to have you nearer. Yet I wonder if you are not happier as master of all you survey?"
- January 31 After congratulating the Vincents on their firstborn (John III), Harris writes: "We hope to have a Bambino as Johana approaches 30. Meanwhile will carry on piling up the literature—I wonder what for? I am sure the world at large does not want it."
- March 13 "This is to advise you that Toscanini will be broadcasting my Third Symphony this coming Saturday night, the sixteenth, over NBC. Hope you can listen in and advise your students, and see if possible to get some good letters plugging American music to go to either Toscanini or NBC, Rockefeller Center, New York City, about the affair from Bowling Green, as an educational center. It all goes to help the whole cultural situation along because these big broadcasting companies judge everything by their fan mail."
- March 18 Harris sends Noel Straus's *New York Times* review published that day (and in late editions of March 17) of Toscanini's performance with the NBC Symphony of his *Symphony No. 3*. "Roy Harris's Third Symphony which had been performed here twice previously by the Boston Symphony under Serge Koussevitzky, again impressed as that composer's most satisfying and important contribution to the literature of the orchestra," wrote Straus—who, however, traced the pastoral section to Wagner's *Waldweben* in *Siegfried*, and claimed that "the fugue leans heavily on Stravinsky's *Petrushka* as the final pages do on Mussorgsky." Straus's last sentence: "One cannot escape the impression that, arrived at the fugue, the inspiration sustained in the first three sections begins to falter and the whole work seems therewith to launch into a new and unrelated path."
- September 29 Still at 160 Cabrini Boulevard, Harris encloses clippings from *The Nation*. "The enclosed clippings are self-explanatory. You and Ruth have both shown me that you have a strong positive reaction to my music which means a great deal to me. I wish therefore, that you can take time to write the editors of *The Nation* a strong rebuke of [Bernard H.] Haggin [music editor of *The Nation*, 1936-1957]. He has been consistently saying the most damning things about my music without ever being specific—just vague generalities which are calculated to tear down the thing that I am working so hard to build up. I have no comeback to him unless you people who believe in my music will call his hand. Of course I must add that he has been consistently damning all modern music, especially American music, but has taken a particular dislike to my career because it is forging ahead so conspicuously."



- October 11 Now at 21 Chittenden Avenue, Washington Heights, New York City, Harris handwrites an Airmail Special Delivery (costing 16 cents postage) asking Vincent how he wants his name to be printed in the dedication of *A Red Bird in a Green Tree: A Christmas Song* (New York: Mills Music Inc., 1619 Broadway, 1940), 16 pages, selling for 25 cents. (In 1979 Belwin-Mills and the Roy Harris Archive reissued *A Red Bird In A Green Tree* with a new cover and new selling price of 75 cents.)
- 1941
January 18 Johana writes that Wray [Lundquist] is copying her husband's music day and night, prior to being drafted into the army.
- January 30 In a seven-paragraph letter from 21 Chittenden Avenue, Washington Heights, New York City, Harris invites Vincent to take his doctorate at Cornell, where Harris expects to be appointed the next academic year. "There is a strong possibility that Cornell University will appoint me to a Chair of Composer-in-Residence with the status of Professor, and Jo to the Piano Department. The plan is to give Doctors' Degrees for Composition as well as Musicology. As you probably know, Dr. Otto Kinkeldey is one of the foremost living musicologists and a really great scholar. He is the greatest living authority on Keyboard Music of the 16th Century. Also Egon Petri will be appointed for this coming year as Pianist-in-Residence with the status of Professor. / I believe that there is a strong possibility that at last we are going to find a place where we can build a really great department of music without having to do all the work ourselves. We will know probably within the next six weeks. / Incidentally I must tell you that I received a letter from Rutgers University that I am to be given a Doctor's Degree next October, which brings me to the point of your Doctor's Degree. I thought that it would be much more valuable to you to have a Doctor's Degree from Cornell University than it would be from The Eastman School of Music and, incidentally, that you come there and write a symphony and perhaps several fine choral works and take some course with Kinkeldey in which you may be especially interested. Of course we would love to have you there instead of going to Eastman. If I am appointed to this position, the only teaching I will do will be one pre-seminar course for seniors and Composition for Doctor's Degree candidates' post-graduate work. I will be allowed to choose or reject whatever students I teach. / If I go there, I intend to establish a high tradition for Composition and nothing could be better than to have you be the spearhead of that tradition."
- March 25 The Cornell appointment still lacking official confirmation, Harris asks Vincent to avoid committing himself to Eastman a while longer and encloses a typewritten letter dated Sunday, March 15, from Paul Weaver, head of Cornell Music Department, beginning thus: "I have just told President Day about yesterday's conversation with Mr. Dollard of the Carnegie Corporation. Dr. Day feels as I do, that it is altogether probable that the Corporation will give us the grant-in-aid for your appointment here. / Dr. Day asked me to tell you that, and to add that he now feels confident that we will be in a position to work out this whole arrangement with you."
- April 5 In another handwritten two-page letter, Harris opens: "Ever reassurances from Cornell—but no contract yet. I do expect it to go thru before the 15th or 20th of April, But *do* expect it." He continues with queries concerning the dates for Johana's proposed Bowling Green concert and for the Bowling Green performance of his Folk Song Symphony. He announces that he will

April 25

himself conduct his "new Band piece 'Cimarron' in Enid, Oklahoma [Tri-State Band Festival] around the 15th-20th [April]," probably April 19.

Back at 21 Chittenden Avenue, Washington Heights, New York City, after Detroit and Enid, Harris encloses two Detroit newspaper reviews dated Wednesday, April 9, of an all-Harris Festival Concert Tuesday at Mackenzie High School attended by 2500. Some 200 students from Central High School joined the augmented Michigan WPA Symphony conducted by Valter Poole to perform the Folk Symphony. Poole also conducted the Third, which according to the reviewer for the *Detroit News*, Russell McLauchlin, is "a perplexing, much confused and entirely unstimulating piece of music. . . . How anybody could have written that thing and also the 'Folk Song' Symphony is a problem. The 'Folk Song' Symphony is really a memorable accomplishment."

May 3

In an Air-Mail-Special, Harris encloses Johana's Bowling Green program for May 12, plus ecstatic reviews of her performance of the Schumann Concerto, Valter Poole conducting the Detroit Symphony, December 5, 1940.

August 11

From Colorado College after "three days of Roy's ballet [*From This Earth*] for Hanya Holm," Johana writes: "I imagine Sept. the middle! or so—we shall go to Ithaca. It is so splendid to anticipate the companionship as well as musical growth."

Upon completing his Ph.D. in 1942 at Cornell (where his dissertation consisted of three compositions, *3 Jucks* [ballet in 3 tableaux], *String Quartet in G*, and *3 Grecian Songs* [double mixed unaccompanied chorus]), John Vincent returned to Bowling Green. On January 31, 1944, Harris (now Composer in Residence at Colorado College) wrote asking for a lecture between March 14 and 22 paying about \$100, that would tie in with an appointment "to see Stokowski in Chicago on the 14th," "two lectures at Western College, Oxford, on March 21st and 22nd," and the Music Teachers National Association convention at Cincinnati March 23-24. In a P.S. he added: "If it is agreeable with you two I will come whether I get the lecture or not. But hope you can land something."

On January 1, 1946, Vincent began his professorship of music at UCLA (associate professor 1946-1947) that lasted until his retirement 23 years later. On August 3, 1948, Harris conducted the world premiere of Vincent's *Recitative and Dance* for solo cello and string orchestra at Colorado College, a performance attended by the Vincents. A nationwide broadcast over ABC followed August 14, 1948. Since he was by no means yet a consecrated composer, Johana Harris's linking of her husband's *Contrapuntal Suite* and Vincent's *Recitative and Dance* in her two-column review, "Americana Concert Climax of Summer Festival," published in the *Colorado Springs Telegraph* of Wednesday, August 4, did him no small favor.

A happy addition to the list of fine musicians in Colorado Springs this summer is Dr. John Vincent from the University of California at Los Angeles, whose composition a *Recitative and Dance*, the *Sinfonia* presented with the desired sensitivity to support Leonard Rose's cello soliloquy.

The overall impression of the first movement is serene and contemplative, a mood too seldom in our lives today. The second movement had in the writing and performance, inescapable fire, dash and vigor—a hot-blooded irresistible piece, it perfectly complemented the preceding

movement. Fugue there was, too, and finely wrought, but, as always, the message comes first; relentless drive was in this case, the most important factor.

In recompense for this kind of handsome treatment, Harris had the right to hope for some return favors. Vincent's letter dated July 6, 1948, enclosing a two-page errata list for his *Recitative and Dance*, ended with the assurance that his next letter would specify the terms on which Harris would be invited to do a week's lecturing and guest teaching in the UCLA Music Department.

Elevated to the UCLA Music Department chairmanship in the fall of 1947, Vincent made good on his promise by inviting Harris to be a weeklong guest of the UCLA Composers Council the next academic year. Again on May 7 and 8, 1951, Harris—at Vincent's instigation—gave the sixth and seventh seminars of the 1950-1951 UCLA Composers Council. In March 1952 while en route to the Music Educators National Conference in Philadelphia Vincent (now ousted from the departmental chairmanship at UCLA) stopped in Pittsburgh to enlist Harris's aid in what proved to be a futile application for the deanship of Fine Arts at Carnegie Tech. Harris's letter of April 1 began: "I have talked to Mr. Warner about prospective candidates for Dean of Fine Arts for Carnegie Tech," but quashed all Vincent's hopes of recouping his débacle at UCLA with a deanship in Pittsburgh.

In 1954 Harris began probing Vincent for a permanent position at UCLA. On February 4, 1954, he wrote "[I] Will be able to write you more definitely about our future in a month." On July 27, 1954, he typed a long letter addressed to "Dr. John Vincent, Director of Huntington-Hartford Foundation, Pacific Palisades" beginning: "I find myself in a strange quandary, and take this opportunity to write to you at length about it." Reviewing his status at 56, he found himself America's most fecund symphonic composer, and possessor of a ten-year contract with Associated Music Publishers "owned by National Broadcasting Company, Columbia Broadcasting Corporation and Mutual" that guaranteed him "enough to live comfortably in Europe or Mexico or South America but not enough to give me the peace of mind I need to do my major works (which people seem to want) and live in America." In the third paragraph he "wonders whether the fears of the culture hounds are going to be true that as far as the arts, religion, and education are concerned the century of the common man will be the century's lowest denominator."

In his next letter—still written on two-year-old "Pittsburgh International Contemporary Music Festival November 24-30, 1952" stationery—date-stamped June 25, 1954, when Vincent received it, Harris repeats himself when mentioning his "10 yr. contract with Associated" after having "quit ASCAP for professional reasons." He comes closer to his purpose in writing when he says that "Wallenstein has informed Associated that he plans to do the Harris 7th with the L.A. Philharmonic next season. The thought occurs to me: would you be interested to have Johana do the Fantasy with your Little Symphony during the same time that Wallenstein does the 7th; if, when & as? The Piano & Orchestra Fantasy is based on = 'The Trumpet Sounds it in my Soul'—'Lil Boy Nam'd David' & 'True Love Don't Weep.' It is a pastorella with much pianism colors—roulades—pryotechniques—as ornamentation—not at all similar to the 7th." As peroration he ends this three-page plea by "hoping to come 'chez vous' for a few months work. Love to 'You Alls'—As Ever Roy."

In his five-page handwritten letter of Sunday September 5, 1954, he appeals for Vincent's help in relocating, as recompense for his own oft-bestowed help. "It seems

you and Ruthie have guided your craft so much more wisely than I have. You have been so much more patient with the slow working of development in the scheme of things—especially the arts. / Then I must remind myself that we must not quarrel with our own destiny and its road. We must realize that one pays for everything in kind. / I fear that I have not learned yet the subtle workings of the Law of Compensation. But I am trying." He continues: (1) I belong in Southern California, the land of my youth. I am 56 and at the threshold of my greatest quantity-quality output. (2) I and my children need sunshine, quiet, peace and a chance to live with the seasons, to plant and grow fruits and vegetables, to walk in the dawn in familiar quiet places, to bathe in the Pacific, to dream under sycamores, to listen to the mockingbird by moonlight." He ends with a reference to other composers who found their last haven in Southern California: "It seems such an irony that Stravinsky, Toch, Milhaud, S[c]hoenberg [misspelled, died in 1951] can live out the days of their maturity in the land of my people—while I may not."

Vincent rose to none of these endearments. Next year Harris did take some solace for not being in California with a letter dated August 16, 1955, in which he exulted that "Jo recorded my Fantasy for Piano and Orchestra with the Symphony of the Air Orchestra for M-G-M" and that "the Seventh Symphony received the Naumburg Prize and will be recorded by the Philadelphia Orchestra, under Ormandy for Columbia." Going on in like vein, he tells Vincent that "prior to the recording, Ormandy will perform the work three times in Philadelphia, then in New York (November 1st), then in Washington (soon after) and Baltimore." Harris urges Vincent to time one of his Eastern visits to hear one of these performances.

Mistakenly believing that all this brave news would incite Vincent, Harris still kept hoping. On January 4, 1956, he wrote: "As you know our 5-year grant comes to a close in September." Not yet seemingly aware that for Vincent the thought of his becoming a UCLA faculty member was poison, he begged for any escape from Pittsburgh to Southern California: "It is too dour—I need more quiet and more sun than this town affords." In 1956-1957 Harris did at last escape from Pittsburgh—however not to yearned-for Los Angeles but to Carbondale, Illinois, for a year, and thence to Bloomington, Indiana, for three years. In Carbondale it now behooved Harris to turn courtier. When writing an undated letter (probably in March 1957) from apartment O, 813 South University, he saluted the coming Philadelphia premiere [April 12, 1957] of Vincent's Symphony in D: "Here's to a great grand success which I am sure you will have with Ormandy" and advised him not to "forget to follow up with a visit to Charles Wall, President of Associated [Music Publishers] when you are in N.Y."

On October 18, 1957, Vincent replied to Harris's application sent from Bloomington for a Huntington-Hartford Foundation residency: "I have already begun processing your application and will hope to find an answer for you before too long." Since such residencies were then within Vincent's gift, his requiring Harris to make a formal application measures the distance now separating former master and pupil. Vincent does throw out a morsel: "Artie [Mason Carter] and I are continuing our efforts about the Eighth Symphony." To show who now has the inner track with Harris's long-ago first patroness, he next adds a paragraph discoursing on her personal finances. Then comes: "I go to Birmingham [Alabama] to conduct my Symphony on November 19 and then fly to Washington for the performances on the 20th and 21st."

Harris's carefully typewritten letters from Bloomington dated December 12, 1957, and June 28, 1958, dwell on Ormandy's conducting of the Third at the Hollywood Bowl opener on July 5, 1958—a performance attended by Harris. Thus ends the file of dated Harris letters in the John Vincent Archive. One undated letter from Pittsburgh gives Harris's *ex post facto* analysis of the Third. He now sees it as illustrating the progression from organum through faux-bourdon and the other historical stages of polyphony to fugue and changing harmonies over pedal point. He asks Vincent not to disclose him as the author of this erudite "history-of-musical-progress" analysis of the Third, but instead to publish it in his own words—after which Harris will quote it approvingly "with Vincent's permission." In this undated letter on Chatham College stationery he inveighs against Hanson's Mercury recording: "He monkeyed with my orchestration and spoiled some of the best part of it (in the Pastorale)—and plays the opening much too *fast!*" Harris spells Hanson in this letter, as elsewhere in all his handwritten correspondence, with an *e* (Hansen) and Koussevitzky with an *s* (Koussevitsky).

In reply to this undated letter, Vincent did tape an exegesis of the Third saying approximately what Harris wanted said (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation aired it October 27, 1957). Always the obedient friend in his early years at UCLA, Vincent conducted Harris's works in Royce Hall: the Folk Song Symphony June 5, 1946 (UCLA Symphony Orchestra, A Cappella Choir, Women's Glee Club), the Third December 7, 1948, and *Kentucky Spring* May 8, 1951 (both University Symphony Orchestra). But as proof that all this friendship became faded flowers after 1955 and dust after 1961, consider the three additional evidences: (1) When Vincent rounded South America on a United States State Department-sponsored tour in 1964, he conducted not so much as a token work by Harris, instead preferring Samuel Barber, Leonard Bernstein, Paul Creston, Alexei Haieff, Alan Hovhaness, and of course his own Symphony in D, *Symphonic Poem After Descartes*, and *Benjamin Franklin Suite*. (2) After having permitted Harris five residencies at the Huntington-Hartford Foundation before Harris started at UCLA (August 8–September 11, 1956; August 1–August 31, 1957; August 10–August 25, 1958; July 21–August 19, 1959; September 28–October 30, 1961) he allowed him none thereafter. (3) In reply to Music Department Chairman Jan Popper's suggestion February 14, 1964, that Harris be named to the crucial Music Department Graduate Committee, Vincent countered with a carefully couched letter of that same date that quashed Harris's hopes of making a dent on departmental policies.

Feb. 14, 1964

Dear Jan,

Since you ask, I do very seriously object to having Roy Harris represent the composers on the Graduate Committee. I, too, want every one to be happy but far more important is it that the work be done well and that a broadly tolerant attitude toward the various styles of composition be maintained. Further, the importance of the Graduate Committee is such that the composers' representative should be one who knows the history of the graduate work here and the workings of the University. On all these counts Roy Harris is not the best-qualified representative.

As alternatives, (1) let Harris be Chairman of the Composers Council and Chairman of the Composers' Committee (my present assignments) and make me the Graduate Committee representative or (2) leave me in my present post or one of them (R.H. taking the other) and let Roy Travis represent us on the Graduate Committee.

I know Roy Harris and have a full knowledge of his history on six other campuses before coming to us. He will be a stormy petrel on occasion but will then be neglectful of his assignments on



other occasions but always he is the complete individualist, the academic non-conformist. Further, he will seek to set up impossible criteria which evaluate quality with style to the confusion of both.

This is not said to disparage Roy Harris—it is said to you in confidence as one who has known and mainly been friendly with him for 30 years. Let's work with him realistically and I hope constructively but let's not ignore the past as the only guide to the future.

Sincerely yours, John