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Movies at the Met? Space and Meaning in Early Film Screenings

In the summer of 1915, audiences streamed through the doors of Chicago's venerable Orchestra Hall, filing under the façade's frieze inscribed with the names of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and Wagner. Upon taking their seats, attendees heard performances by twenty-five members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, vocal soloists, and the hall's celebrated Lyon & Healy organ. The Orchestra Hall stage—redecorated as an "Italian garden" complete with greenery and fountains—featured a large screen, on which spectators gazed at Paramount feature films, travelogues, comedies, and Strand *Topics of the Day*. Advertised as "lending tone to cinema art," the interspersed film and music events attracted a mixed crowd, from Chicago high society to the city's middle class, from movie fans to dedicated music lovers.¹

The 1915 Orchestra Hall photoplay season was not an anomaly. In the early twentieth century, opera houses and concert halls often cohabited with the emerging film industry. Alongside symphonies, chamber music, or opera, musical spaces hosted screenings of travelogues, educational pictures, single-reel story films, and feature attractions. From the Philadelphia Academy of Music, which hosted Henry Renno Heyl's

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phasmatrope in 1870, to New York's Carnegie Hall, which screened travelogues on the main stage and feature films at the downstairs Carnegie Lyceum in the 1910s, the efforts to uplift motion pictures and the practicalities of sharing space prompted a rich and varied history of film screenings at early twentieth-century music venues.² These cohabitations reveal complex bonds between space, social hierarchy, genre, and media, narratives shaped by distinctively American factors ranging from desires for cultural legitimacy to mechanisms of subsidizing musical institutions to national and local strategies of motion picture exhibition.

In this study I examine three such cases from the 1910s, an important era of expansion for both U.S. symphonic institutions and the motion picture industry.³ I begin with cinematic initiatives in Chicago's Orchestra Hall from 1914 through 1916; I then turn to a single motion picture screening in Boston's Symphony Hall in 1915, followed by multiple failed attempts to open New York City's Metropolitan Opera House to the movies from 1914 through 1918. In each case, a preexistent, prominent music venue's particular meanings shaped the successes (or struggles) of sharing space with the emerging motion picture industry. In spite of the carefully constructed cultural position of classical music in the United States—dominated by “sacralized” approaches to instrumental music and elite audiences for foreign-language opera—film made inroads into nearly all these spaces during the 1910s.

Screenings Onstage: Motion Pictures in Musical Venues

Mark Clague has argued that in the American context the “prime mover of culture is not the patron, composer, performer, or even listener, but rather the institution that brings these actors into relation to one another. . . . [T]hese institutions develop and propel a particular use of culture for a particular purpose in a specific place.”⁴ As Clague's study of Chicago's Auditorium Building illustrates, institutions work in tandem with meanings generated by space and place. In the development of performance studies—shifting from textual analysis to performance events—Richard Schechner called attention to the relationship between the production and the “space(s) where it takes place.”⁵ While musicological attention to place was once quite rare, music scholars across subdisciplines have drawn on philosophy, sociology, cultural geographies, and studies of urban spaces to forge a new attentiveness to the phenomenology of music as experienced in social space. Robert Fink described this as a shift from a paradigm focused on an “imagined historical time”—the “when” of music—to a paradigm attuned to the “where” of music.⁶ Considering this shared spatial zone in the early twentieth century helps us continue to jettison disciplinary constraints focused on texts and composers—for film, an overemphasis on searching for surviving prints—recentering

instead on a complex network of space, institution, genre, performance, and audience experience and interpretation.⁷

Theater historian Marvin Carlson has discussed how every element of a theatrical space communicates meaning, from lobbies and bars visited during intermission to decorative interior details to elements on a façade.⁸ How, for example, does the internal organization of boxes delineate social stratification and display of the spectators themselves? To what extent do canonic names on a proscenium arch impact a spectator's experience? What does the proportion of public or social spaces to backstage areas demonstrate about economics and priorities? How does classicizing external decoration express grandeur or cultural respectability? How, even, does the particular soundscape of a theater impact audiences?⁹

Beyond such considerations of the performance space itself, the location of a venue within a cityspace lends additional layers of meaning.¹⁰ Drawing on scholarship by Henri Lefebvre, Roland Barthes, and Michel de Certeau, among others, spatial theory analyzes how urban space is not "a thing" but a process of dynamic relations in everyday life.¹¹ Even the route to a particular performance location is socially meaningful; urban planner Kevin Lynch described how individuals continuously construct mental maps of urban surroundings through "paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks."¹²

Interior, exterior, relational, the meaning of spaces is always fluid, never completed. As Martina Löw notes, "Spaces are, first, an expression of the possibility of pluralities; second, they point to the possibility of overlapping and reciprocal relations; and third, and for this very reason, they are always open and indefinite with respect to future formations."¹³ If theaters as places of performance are saturated with meaning, how do those meanings impact audiences when new behaviors emerge, such as the screening of motion pictures in concert halls or opera houses? I argue that filmgoers in such liminal spaces were often "ghosted" by the memories of past musical performances. Audiences frequently blended spectatorship practices from the opera house or concert hall—including such elements as attentive listening and applause etiquette—with emerging conventions for viewing motion pictures. Driving the habitual route to the venue, striding through the familiar sights, sounds, and smells of the lobby, perhaps greeting ushers or friends from the regular concert season before once again hearing strains of music filling a well-known hall: for many audience members, music was one thread in the complex fabric of memory associated with such places.

Chicago's Orchestra Hall

At the dedication of Chicago's Orchestra Hall in December 1904, politician George E. Adams praised the thousands of subscriptions that helped

construct an edifice for “the highest manifestation of the most spiritual of the arts.”¹⁴ For the new Michigan Avenue venue, architect Daniel Burnham created a lofty half-domed interior hall with three batteries of organ pipes. Illuminated by rows of electric lighting, the auditorium was divided into a main floor, a row of boxes, and two balconies, the latter festooned with bas-reliefs in the style of Louis XV. Public spaces, such as the grand foyer behind the boxes, echoed the vaulted ceilings and refined decorations (fig. 1).

Erected as a permanent home for conductor Theodore Thomas’s ensemble, Orchestra Hall was the first Chicago venue designed to house a single musical institution. The space was inextricably bound to Thomas’s vision—Rose Fay Thomas later described his initiative as “the establishment of his orchestra, permanently endowed, in a building of its own, where he hoped it would be the foundation upon which would rise an art institution of the noblest and broadest character.”¹⁵ For Thomas, the orchestra musicians, and Chicagoans, Orchestra Hall was a grand “music temple,” a site for what Lawrence Levine and other scholars have analyzed as the “sacralization of culture.”¹⁶ In his 1904 dedication speech, Adams deemed Thomas’s orchestra the sanctifying entity, noting: “We have built here a noble hall of music. It is a merely material structure of brick, and stone, and steel. We have not, and we cannot, put into this building its living soul. That is a task for other hands than ours.”¹⁷ If the auditorium was consecrated through orchestral performances of the great masters, Burnham reiterated these values on the building’s façade. He added an elevation bearing the names of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven,



Figure 1. View in balcony foyer, Orchestra Hall, Chicago, *Inland Architect and News Record* (Chicago) 45, no. 2 (March 1905): xvii.

Schubert, and Wagner, an example of what Katherine Bergeron has deemed “the canon at a glance; a solemn spectacle of the disciplining of music.”¹⁸

Orchestra Hall’s sacralizing mission shaped nonmusical events held in the space. When the venue was rented for political meetings, speakers and audience came attired in clean collars and white gloves, with behaviors mirroring concert hall etiquette. In 1905 the atmosphere at an Orchestra Hall “reading” by Lake Forest University president Richard D. Harlan was described as “more refined . . . [with] a kind of social uplift in the atmosphere” (fig. 2).¹⁹ A 1906 Democratic Party meeting was “in perfect keeping with the tints of the hall and its delicate shading. . . .



Figure 2. [John Tinney] McCutcheon, “Mr. Harlan Led with His Right Last Night at Orchestra Hall,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, February 25, 1905.

[T]he audience was ushered into the hall by a long continued offertory on the pipe organ, filling the auditorium with sounds symbolic of the occasion while the high browed democrats were filling the seats."²⁰ A month later, tensions erupted when organizers of a hospital benefit invited white supremacist Benjamin Tillman to give a lecture in Orchestra Hall. Chicago's black press denounced the invitation: the *Broad Ax* called for the city's African American community to occupy Orchestra Hall's steps in protest. While outcry over the benefit rightly focused on it as an explicit sanction of Tillman's invocations to racial violence, some press accounts found Tillman's rhetoric *particularly* horrendous in the environs of Orchestra Hall. Describing the venue as a "temple dedicated to the highest, purest, and noblest in music," the *Inter Ocean* lamented that on November 27, 1906, "profane and vulgar shouts rang through the hall dedicated to the memory of Theodore Thomas—they came from Mr. Tillman."²¹

Orchestra Hall's "refined, highbrow" atmosphere originated in part from Thomas's conception of the noble purity of symphonic music.²² Yet Orchestra Hall's association with Chicago's social elites complicated the connection between venue, institution, musical style, and social class. In an acutely class-conscious city—riven with residual anxieties linked to the nineteenth-century labor movement and the Haymarket Square affair—Orchestra Hall's social construction was initially ambiguous. In its first months of operation, reports hint at occasional disconnects between space, mission, and class, ranging from grumbles that fashionable people would never climb the stairs to the hall's first balcony—although the sound was best from those seats—to society patrons getting lost while using the unfamiliar stage entrance.²³ Yet less than a year after its dedication, the *Inter Ocean* noted that the hall that Thomas wished "to disseminate culture among the *whole* public . . . is in a fair way to become, if not openly named, 'Society hall.'"²⁴ In the innumerable cotillions, suppers, and benefits at Orchestra Hall, Chicago's beau monde claimed spaces within the venue as their own, holding dances in the foyer and temporarily redecorating the auditorium.

Society functions and the central musical mission overlapped in Orchestra Hall spaces. A 1905 string quartet series, for example, was held in the public social space of the foyer. Showcasing a genre for serious musical connoisseurs, the series was financed, advertised, and attended by society women. Nor were such relationships unusual—Daniel Cavicchi has analyzed the central importance of white elite and middle-class women in developing nineteenth-century concert culture and musical reform.²⁵ Thus, Orchestra Hall was not just a temple to the "most spiritual of arts." Even in this venue, firmly dedicated to the sacralization of music, social hierarchies generated a bifurcated set of spatial meanings. Provided an event was palpably endorsed by Chicago social elites,



Figure 3. Billiards tournament, Thomas Orchestra Hall, ca. 1908. Geo. R. Lawrence Co., Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, LC-USZ62-134939.

Orchestra Hall was open not just to musical performances but also to a wide range of “society” happenings, ranging from billiard tournaments to an annual charity gala’s temporary electric baseball scoreboards (fig. 3).

Screenings at Chicago’s Orchestra Hall

Motion picture screenings at Orchestra Hall began in the venue’s inaugural 1905 season, commencing with regular visits from travel lecturers Burton Holmes and Dwight Elmendorf, whose didactic entertainments combined spoken remarks, hand-colored magic lantern slides, and motion pictures. Film scholar Charles Musser has described illustrated lectures as genres adapted “so that patrons of genteel culture could experience moving pictures without ever having to enter a vaudeville house.”²⁶ Burton Holmes, himself from an upper-class background, crafted his approach to appeal precisely to both audience expectations and spatial and behavioral codes of venues such as Orchestra Hall. His pricing structure reinforced the hall’s spatial stratification—selling expensive box seats for a “course” through subscriptions—while both Holmes and his audience sported immaculate evening clothes. Logistical details for

motion picture media did necessitate some changes; Holmes lectured in a darkened Orchestra Hall, offering his society audiences fewer opportunities for social display. One 1908 reviewer noted that Holmes's "conversational tone emerging from the void" did not hold the audience's attention in an auditorium designed for the acoustics of a large orchestra and the bright illumination of a symphonic concert.²⁷

Occasionally, the Theodore Thomas Orchestra and lecture/film travelogues shared the stage. An April 1906 Orchestra Hall benefit performance for victims of the San Francisco earthquake featured both the orchestra and Elmendorf's illustrated lecture on the devastated city.²⁸ Critics at times even linked the regular symphony series to travelogues, creating a cross-genre metanarrative for events within the same space. Reviewer W. L. Hubbard connected a 1908 symphony matinee featuring Wagner, Brahms, and Tchaikovsky with Elmendorf's evening travel lecture on Yellowstone. "Listening in the afternoon to the superb performance . . . it seemed that the beauty of wondrous paintings was being disclosed," Hubbard wrote, continuing that "in the evening when gazing upon the splendid reproductions of the scenes of Yellowstone park it was as though the tonal beauty of the afternoon had found visualization in the pictures there revealed." Hubbard encouraged audiences to test his theory themselves by attending repeat performances of both the Elmendorf lecture and the orchestra concert.²⁹

In addition to travelogues, Orchestra Hall hosted other motion picture screenings in the early twentieth century, such as L. Frank Baum's 1908 *Fairylogue and Radio-Plays*.³⁰ This two-hour production included an onstage orchestra playing incidental music by Nathaniel D. Mann, live performers, and a stereopticon screen featuring 114 magic lantern slides and 23 stencil and hand-colored films. Didactic multimedia events mixing lectures, motion pictures, and live musical performances also proliferated, such as the April 1913 show featuring three motion picture reels of Tuskegee students, a vocal octet, and a lecture by Booker T. Washington.³¹

During this early era at Orchestra Hall, connections between live musical performance and motion pictures mirrored practices at other venues featuring educational and "improvement" films. Orchestra Hall's spatial characteristics, however, likely affected the audience experience. The auditorium—much larger than a nickelodeon or storefront theater—may have limited audiences' ability to clearly see the screen, while musicians seated onstage would have been plainly visible. Depending on the size of the musical forces for any given engagement, Orchestra Hall's acoustic design may have foregrounded musical accompaniment more than in other early motion picture venues. While there is scant evidence of audience reaction from this period of Orchestra Hall screenings, the venue's confluence of genre, space, and hierarchy likely shaped audience

experience (rather than transforming the manner in which live performance was connected to motion pictures).

Beginning in the summer of 1912, an annual rhythm emerged at Orchestra Hall: illustrated travelogues intermingled with the regular orchestral concerts during the November to May symphony season, followed by summer photoplays when the Chicago Symphony Orchestra decamped for the Ravinia Festival in Highland Park. Summer rentals began humbly with a brief run of Kinemacolor productions in September 1912. Critic Eric Delamarter noted that renting Orchestra Hall during the summer made sense from a business standpoint but that there “has been some objection to the scheme of moving pictures on a large scale in that edifice for some time.”³² While the subsequent summer featured a more extensive multiweek run of Pathé’s *Les Misérables*, the Orchestra Hall summer photoplay series markedly expanded its scope in the period from 1914 through 1916.

Announced with the eye-catching headline “‘Movies’ Invade Orchestra Hall,” the summer of 1914 inaugurated the venue’s first regular film season. Harry Lubliner and Joseph Trinz paid a sizeable sum to rent the hall; during their season, some practices plainly came from cinematic spectatorship, such as continuous bills running from noon to 11:30 p.m. Other elements of the experience were specific to the venue. Lubliner and Trinz hired regular Orchestra Hall personnel as staff; while working the summer film series, familiar ticket sellers and ushers may have welcomed regular Chicago Symphony patrons.³³ Even the stifling atmosphere in the hall was shaped by its atypical status. Like many temporary summer film houses in the Chicago Loop, Orchestra Hall suffered from a lack of adequate ventilation, as it was not subject to the health department regulations required of outlying movie houses.³⁴

In 1915 the Strand Theatre Company rented Orchestra Hall for a twenty-three-week summer movie season. Describing “the music lovers’ temple” as a venue of “international prominence,” the Strand business partners traded on Orchestra Hall’s elevated status to launch their “big new idea,” namely, blending special musical performances with Paramount feature films.³⁵ They temporarily refitted the hall as an “Italian garden scene,” framing the familiar stage with greenery and fountains. In addition to visually signaling the hall’s altered use, the additional decor also filled out empty space—a truly enormous screen would have been needed to fill the entire Orchestra Hall stage.

The Strand business partners hoped to straddle constituencies by charging relatively cheap admission prices per show: unlike the season subscription model of the Chicago Symphony, the 1915 film tickets ranged from ten to fifty cents per seat for a single show.³⁶ Yet the partners also deployed special programming, gala events, and the venue’s prestige to attract middle- and upper-class audiences. They arranged a special

invitation-only gala for opening night. On April 30, 1915, the Strand season launched with all the trappings of an exclusive society event: boxholders were listed in the papers, Chicago's mayor was in attendance, and a supper dance was held after the showing at the luxury Blackstone hotel.³⁷ Despite the familiar sight of the beau monde at Orchestra Hall, cinematic spectatorship created new problems for conspicuous social display. Reporter Kitty Kelly noted that "society in all its gala dress was there, but alack, there was no glory to bask in, for when you have music to soft lights and pictures to no lights there's no chance even for a dog collar of diamonds. And those things we had continuously from 8:46 on, for the party was almost as prompt as a train schedule. But finally somebody realized something and before the feature picture unreeled the lights flashed on and the audience devoted itself to observing what were its component parts."³⁸ While the Strand venture drew society to its old haunts, Orchestra Hall's temporary refitting as a high-class picture house revealed conflicting ideas about social class, aesthetics, and spectatorship.

The 1915 Strand season featured an orchestra of more than two dozen players from the ranks of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (an important marketing enticement). This motion picture ensemble, led by conductor Arthur Dunham, accompanied a rotating roster of vocal and instrumental soloists—including performances on the Orchestra Hall Lyon & Healy organ, billed as the "finest in the city." Dunham's orchestra played music not only during the pictures but also between films. On a May 1915 program, for example, the ensemble performed an overture by Weber prior to a motion picture travelogue of Florida. A short vocal solo and Joseph Hellmesberg's *Bal-Scène* followed, then after the short film *Kittens at Play*, a vocal quartet sang "My Lady Chlo." The Belasco/Lasky film *The Woman* was the feature attraction, after which the bill concluded with Fritz Kreisler's solo violin piece *Caprice Viennois* and a comedic photoplay. Tastefully rendered by Dunham and the CSO orchestral players, the repertoire was more like the mixed bills of mid-nineteenth-century orchestral concerts than the regular-season CSO programming.³⁹ Behavior during the show likewise seemed less akin to sacralized symphonic listening practices and more like the episodic listening of a society event. During the April 1915 gala, audiences conversed quietly during the opening reels and the intermission concerts; only when the feature film began did a "solid silence settle over the auditorium."⁴⁰

The Strand season was wildly successful, and the subsequent summer's initiative was even more ambitious, advertised as Orchestra Hall "cinema concerts." Operated by a new management group and backed by Chicago firm Wessels and Voegeli, the 1916 "cinema concerts" incorporated much the same approach as the 1915 season, including the CSO players, Dunham, and even the Italian garden stage set. One novelty of



Figure 4. Arthur Dunham conducting an orchestra from the motion picture screen at Orchestra Hall, Chicago, 1916. Observe the partial view of the “Italian garden” set in the front and to the sides of the orchestra. *Musical America*, February 10, 1917, 48. Courtesy of Cornell University Library, The Sidney Cox Library of Music and Dance.

the 1916 season was an unusual blending of motion pictures and musical performance; for several weeks in July, Dunham conducted his orchestra “from the screen” (fig. 4). The orchestra sat facing the screen, following the conductor’s movements during a rendition of the overture to *Guillaume Tell* and Felix Mendelssohn’s “Spring Song.” The initiative created a stir, even drawing spectators who were not “movie fans.” Gazing at the extreme close-up of Dunham’s face as he conducted, reviewers attended carefully to his facial expressions, assessing him almost as an actor working in partnership with the orchestra.⁴¹

Though successful, Orchestra Hall’s 1916 cinema concerts were nevertheless mired in a web of conflicting ideas connecting venue and institution to social class and artistic genre. One reviewer reported repeat attendance at the cinema concerts, perhaps by regular symphony patrons, noting that “last night a house full of guests entered through its flower decked lobby and sat themselves down in the familiar nooks.”⁴² In his assessment, however, *Tribune* music critic Delamarter noted that crowds stepped on his feet “as they climb over you, selfish and obstinate in an aisle seat.” While grumpily admitting his own dislike of films and the “tactless” crowds attracted by the cinema concerts, Delamarter enjoyed Dunham’s musical program, deeming it the best music available

downtown. Both Delamarter and his film critic colleague Kitty Kelly pondered the motivation of the Orchestra Hall audiences; Kelly suggested that the cinema concerts attracted multiple constituencies. In her opinion, some audiences attended for the music, others were bored by the “noise” and wanted to see the films, while a third category “simply goes.”⁴³

Bound both by sacralized musical philosophies associated with Theodore Thomas and the claims of Chicago’s social elites, Orchestra Hall nonetheless featured motion picture screenings throughout the early twentieth century. Beginning with film genres carefully aligned to the house’s social class, the rhythms of the orchestral season helped open this “grand music temple” to recurrent film seasons throughout the 1910s, particularly during the CSO’s summer residency in Highland Park. Yet as Orchestra Hall hosted the movies, entrepreneurs, critics, and audiences traded on memories and meanings linked to the space’s primary function, forging new connections between symphonic culture and cinema.

*Boston Symphony Hall,
Geraldine Farrar, and Carmen (1915)*

Constructed by McKim, Mead, and White in 1900, Boston’s Symphony Hall was the permanent home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. While Chicago’s Orchestra Hall had been funded through public conscription, both the BSO and its venue were dependent on the largesse of a single patron, Henry Lee Higginson. Although Symphony Hall was modeled on Leipzig’s second Gewandhaus Concert Hall, it also reflected Higginson’s philosophies. Rather austere in its long shoebox shape, the hall’s focus is on the stage and on the superb, scientifically derived acoustics. There are two balconies, no boxes, and a large proportion of orchestra seats. The minimal decoration features traditional theatrical signifiers via the Greek and Roman plaster statues lining the upper-level walls of the hall, while the top of the proscenium bears a single canonic name: Beethoven (fig. 5). Following Symphony Hall’s dedication ceremony, the *New York Tribune* noted that Higginson’s sole assumption of the lease ensured that “the hall will be preserved against ignoble uses.”⁴⁴

The 1915 gala premiere of Cecil B. DeMille’s motion picture *Carmen* at Symphony Hall entangled the established meanings and behaviors of this renowned music venue with the emerging star system of the feature film era. DeMille’s *Carmen* showcased soprano Geraldine Farrar, one of America’s most famous opera singers: she had spent six seasons at the Metropolitan Opera, including a triumphant recent appearance in Bizet’s *Carmen*. In their studies of opera singers and silent film, both Paul Fryer and David Schroeder note the synergy of filming an opera singer in a role already associated with that star.⁴⁵ DeMille himself later recalled the



Figure 5. Boston Symphony Hall prior to installation of some of the statues, ca. 1901. Photograph by Minot Beale. Courtesy of Boston Symphony Orchestra Archives.

excitement that a “nationwide movie audience would see her [Farrar] in the same role in which opera-goers had thrilled at hearing her at the Metropolitan.”⁴⁶

While convincing Farrar to sign a motion picture contract, in January 1915 Broadway producer Morris Gest took her to New York’s Strand Theatre for a screening of the DeMille/Lasky film of David Belasco’s *Girl of the Golden West*. According to Gest, “her amazement knew no bounds once she had entered the Strand. ‘Why,’ she cried, ‘it is almost as big as the Metropolitan Opera House! I had no idea so many people went to see moving pictures—and such people!’”⁴⁷ Farrar’s impression hinged on the size and prestige of new movie palaces such as the Strand, as well as the social class of people drawn by such venues.

Luring Farrar into the motion picture industry was a major coup breathlessly reported by national newspapers and fanned by an aggressive press campaign. After she spent June and July filming *Carmen* in Los Angeles, the completed film was privately screened at Hollywood’s Isis Theater on July 28, 1915. As Lasky prepared to distribute the motion picture through Paramount, he was rumored to be arranging a New York

private screening of *Carmen* "at some large theatre, possibly the Metropolitan Operahouse, with heads of that organization, opera singers, and newspaper people as guests."⁴⁸ This screening never materialized but commenced a pattern of linking the motion picture *Carmen* with a preexistent prestigious musical venue. *Carmen*'s actual prerelease screening took place in September at the Chicago convention for Paramount pictures. The film was shown in Chicago's Orchestra Hall; as another example of the combination of motion pictures and elite society, newspapers noted that in addition to theater managers and Paramount representatives, special invitations to the screening "were sent to over two hundred society people of Chicago."⁴⁹

Even at the Chicago prerelease screening for industry representatives, *Carmen* was connected to both high society and to a classical music space. Although *Carmen* would be distributed throughout the United States in theaters playing Paramount films, Lasky's production company arranged a special premiere at Boston's Symphony Hall. Geraldine Farrar personally selected Symphony Hall for *Carmen*'s gala public opening, overtly referencing spatial memories of her earlier live performances at the venue. Farrar's mother described the selection as an homage to both the city (Boston) and the space (Symphony Hall) where Farrar had first appeared onstage.⁵⁰ Staging *Carmen* at Symphony Hall traded on the space's institutional and musical semiotics, encouraging spectators to meld musical ways of listening and looking with emerging filmic spectatorship practices.

Staging Boston Symphony Hall

The desire for social uplift was repeatedly invoked in the extensive press campaign for *Carmen*. In interviews, Farrar professed a desire to acquire new fans, particularly those who could not afford opera tickets or lived outside of major metropolitan areas.⁵¹ Yet just as the social class of attendees at the Strand Theatre had impressed Farrar, her motion picture collaborators banked on Farrar's ability to attract opera-going audiences to motion picture screenings. For the Symphony Hall *Carmen* premiere, every detail of the advance presswork was designed to attract society interest (or assuage anxieties about propriety). In addition to the choice of venue, advertisements were produced in elegant script, auditorium seats were procured through ticket reservations sent by post, and hundreds of messenger boys waited outside Symphony Hall to buy or collect tickets.⁵² Within this audience-building initiative, *Carmen*'s publicity team had to carefully negotiate Boston's distinctive social norms. Debates on elitism versus populism, sacralization of instrumental music, aesthetics as moral imperative, and New England transcendentalism dominated musical culture in nineteenth-century Boston. By the early

twentieth century, Boston had the longest-running symphony orchestra in the United States, a revered ensemble bound by its mission to German symphonic “masterpieces.” Boston audiences had other local idiosyncrasies: they were purportedly not as interested in ostentatious visual displays of social class as New Yorkers, and they had been slower to accept moving pictures than other cities.⁵³

On October 1, 1915, the Symphony Hall *Carmen* gala attracted multiple classes, assisted by “popular” ticket prices ranging from fifty cents to two dollars. The *Boston Post* noted that “there were all sorts and manner of people. They came afoot, in trolleys, by automobile. Every man and his wife was out to see Miss Farrar, and business-suit clad men and shirtwaisted women rubbed shoulders with neighbors in full dress.”⁵⁴ Yet the press campaign’s targeting of upper-class audience members bore fruit as the premiere appropriated the atmosphere of an operatic or symphonic opening night. Automobiles conveying Boston’s Back Bay contingent snarled traffic in the front of Symphony Hall. While the venue’s lack of box seats did not easily lend itself to a hierarchical register of attendees, newspapers nonetheless noted the gala’s social brilliance. Reporters enumerated dignitaries in the audience, highlighting individuals representing Boston and New England society and municipal officials.⁵⁵ Prior to the start of the screening, the *Boston Journal* pointed out the bonhomie between affluent and influential audience members—likely regular attendees at Symphony Hall—noting that “it was getting to be a regular sort of ‘old home night’ staged in the most sacred shrine of music in the Western Hemisphere.”⁵⁶

Newspapers highlighted the significance of a film screening in the hall, stating that “for the first time in its history Boston’s magnificent Symphony Hall, dedicated to the cause of music and home of the famous Boston Symphony Orchestra, will be converted temporarily into a motion picture theatre.”⁵⁷ Commentary not only stressed the venue’s connection to the BSO but also described the hall as a “sacred” space.⁵⁸ These accounts claimed that Farrar’s film endeavor was legitimized by the space itself, “the largest auditorium devoted exclusively to music of the better sort.”⁵⁹ Dubbing Symphony Hall the “most sacred shrine of music in the Western Hemisphere,” the *New York Tribune* noted: “Boston’s Symphony Hall and Miss Geraldine Farrar have had their photo play debut together, have tasted at the spring of the ‘movies’ and proclaimed the waters good. The ghost of Beethoven, which is said to have its habitat upon the arch in the season, covers Major Higginson’s great orchestra, did not discord in the midst of proceedings and cry ‘forbear!’ neither did the sacred cod flap despairingly under the gilded dome of the Capitol. In short, Boston has definitely decided that the ‘movies’ are art, has decided it because Boston’s own Geraldine Farrar brought the ‘movies’ to her.”⁶⁰ Through the references to Symphony Hall as sacred

space, to high-art German repertoire, to the BSO and Higginson, and to the dignified longevity of Boston's central role in American artistic history, the *Tribune* columnist prepared readers for skepticism toward film in Symphony Hall. Yet Farrar and her film triumphed nonetheless.

Motion picture impresario Samuel "Roxy" Rothapfel—manager of one of New York City's earliest movie palaces, the elaborate Strand Theatre—staged the *Carmen* gala. In the public spaces of Symphony Hall, dozens of floral arrangements for Farrar crowded the front lobby and the foyer. Inside the auditorium, a large red plush curtain covered the picture screen; the projection machine and operator's booth were temporarily erected on the first balcony; and the stage was empty except for the musicians' seats, which were somewhat obscured by large potted plants.⁶¹ The *Boston Post* noted that audience members "entered to find the interior of the hall perfectly familiar," indicating spectators blended these new elements with prior understandings of Symphony Hall.⁶² Indeed, Symphony Hall's preexistent meanings spilled over onto opening night audiences who entered the auditorium to watch a motion picture beneath the canonic name of Beethoven. Prior experiences in the hall summoned aural and visual codes of symphonic attendance—and for some, memories of Farrar in the opera house or concert hall—yet the motion picture *Carmen* also elicited emerging cinematic spectatorship practices. The overlapping of these conventions within this sacred musical space—cum—temporary film venue demonstrates the ways space and institution shaped spectators' sensory experiences and aesthetic judgments.

While soundscapes inside historical musical venues are difficult to analyze, accounts offer hints of the *Carmen* premiere's sonic environment. The intense publicity blitz itself contributed to the soundscape; prior to the start of the film, all that could be heard inside the auditorium was "the chatter of voices and the steady clicking of a score of telegraph instruments, set up in the special telegraph operating room just outside the auditorium, so great was the interest in the first presentation of the piece that stories of it were wired direct from the hall to cities and towns in every part of the country."⁶³ Intriguingly, Lasky, DeMille, and the rest of the film company judged the success of the production largely through the aural experience. Unable to attend the Boston premiere, they crowded around the receiver of a direct telephone connection between the Lasky studio and Symphony Hall. The *Washington Post* noted that over the telephone line, Lasky and others heard the vast crowd in Boston, the strains of the orchestra, and the applause of the audience, sounding "like the sharp beats of hundreds of typewriters, which swelled into a steady roar as the picture ended."⁶⁴

Joining the sounds of the crowd was the live music accompanying *Carmen*, a score specially crafted for the Symphony Hall premiere. Roxy

Rothapfel, working in tandem with Hugo Riesenfeld, fashioned the music out of excerpts from Bizet's opera.⁶⁵ A fifty- to sixty-member "operatic" orchestra was hired for the premiere—though likely not comprised primarily of Boston Symphony Orchestra players, as Higginson generally forbade BSO musicians from taking outside gigs.⁶⁶ As the gala audience in Symphony Hall listened to the special score—beginning with a medley of popular airs entitled "Europe in Conflict," followed by an elaborate new overture—they seemingly imported elements of the sacralized practices they habitually employed in this space.⁶⁷ One reviewer noted that "there was not a sound, save now and again when some overcome by the realness unfolding before them burst into sobbing."⁶⁸ Unlike some later screenings of DeMille's *Carmen*, there was no attempt to incorporate phonograph recordings of Farrar's voice or to feature live singers as part of the score. Yet as Fryer and Schroeder discuss, motion picture audiences may have imagined the voice of a well-known opera singer starring in "silent" film. Audience members at Symphony Hall could construct a vocal soundscape for DeMille's *Carmen* based on memories of Farrar's recordings or potentially, even recent memories of her live voice. Farrar had not performed as Carmen in Boston prior to 1915 but had frequently sung other roles on Boston stages while on tour with the Metropolitan Opera. Moreover, she had appeared on the Symphony Hall stage many times as a solo artist, including a 1913 recital of Mozart and Wagner.

Symphony Hall was constructed as a sonic temple, as opposed to a primarily visual venue, recalling John Sullivan Dwight's belief that it would be better if performers were invisible in order not to distract the listener with "their bones and muscles."⁶⁹ Yet the 1915 *Carmen* gala nonetheless introduced multiple ways of looking within this space. The motion picture itself featured film's manifold viewpoints, namely, different camera shots and angles / points of view. Acting touches lost in the immensity of the Metropolitan Opera House could be glimpsed in film close-ups—DeMille famously noted the motion picture's "ability to photograph thought" through close-up shots of an actor's eyes and facial expressions.⁷⁰ On the other hand, the technology of early cinema cameras limited the feasibility of multiple close-ups. For longer shots, as Fryer has analyzed, the amplified gestures common to operatic acting helped overcome the distance between actor and viewer (just as they helped convey gestural meaning from the stage to the upper boxes of the opera house).⁷¹ Both Farrar and reviewers noted the different experience of time and space between filmic and operatic acting; the motion picture medium freed her from having to cross or come downstage in a certain number of bars.⁷²

In a shift from symphonic to cinematic spectatorship, the lights in Symphony Hall were extinguished at the moment the overture began,

and "save for ten minutes intermission the hall remained in darkness." At the end of the film, "the hall, in darkness for so long, filled suddenly with light."⁷³ This forged a new aesthetic tension; on the one hand, with its relative lack of boxes, Symphony Hall was not a space fundamentally constructed for social display. One reviewer noted that audiences could focus more easily on Farrar in this setting than in the opera house, with its "multitude of things that distract you."⁷⁴ On the other hand, Symphony Hall was primarily designed for acoustic supremacy, so shifting the hall's *aural* emphasis to the *visual* primacy of a motion picture created a new aesthetic mismatch. Indeed, several reports complained that the screen was too small for such a venue.⁷⁵

Farrar's attendance at the premiere added yet another visual and performative layer.⁷⁶ Dressed in vaguely Spanish style and accompanied by an entourage, she entered Symphony Hall around 8:15 p.m. on the arm of her manager, Charles A. Ellis. Taking an aisle seat in row H of the orchestra section, Farrar settled in with the rest of the audience to watch the opening five cinematograph studies and *Carmen* (figs. 6a and 6b).⁷⁷ Farrar's presence created a type of *mise en abyme*, where the audience watched the diva watching herself. Her placement in the center of the auditorium near the screen—notably *not* a box seat, as might be more typical at a different venue—recalls the spectacle of watching royalty. The *Boston Journal* commented that "the scene in the hall was a remarkable event all by itself, perfectly staged, so to speak and enthusiastically acted by the heroine of the evening and her admirers. It was as fully interesting and exciting as the *Carmen* film itself. . . . [T]he power of her personality was much more evident in these scenes of triumph than it was in the picture."⁷⁸

The sense of watching both film and "live" events simultaneously unfolding in Symphony Hall was enhanced by preexistent blurrings between Farrar and technology. As Jennifer Fleegeer has analyzed, advertisements for Farrar's Victor Red Seal recordings encouraged audiences to blur boundaries between "the real singer and her mechanical substitute."⁷⁹ At the Symphony Hall gala, Farrar similarly encouraged conflating her onscreen presence with a live performance. She told an interviewer before the screening that she was "very nervous and wondered if she would have stage fright."⁸⁰ She was also visibly moved by watching herself; one review noted that just as the onscreen *Carmen* was stabbed, "the living *Carmen*—Miss Farrar—in [row] H, to all outward appearances—to the eyes of all those sitting near her in Symphony Hall—had received a death blow."⁸¹ In opera, of course, a diva cannot watch herself sing. The advent of film, however, ushered in the possibility of these uncanny doublings. Symphony Hall attendees could not only watch Farrar watching herself, but both Farrar and the audience could also recall the ghosts of her past performances in this very space, producing a palimpsest of imagined, remembered, and real presences. Nor were such connections limited to the past, since *Carmen's* printed program



Figure 6a. Cover of *Carmen* program book, Boston Symphony Hall premiere, October 1, 1915. Courtesy of Boston Symphony Orchestra Archives.

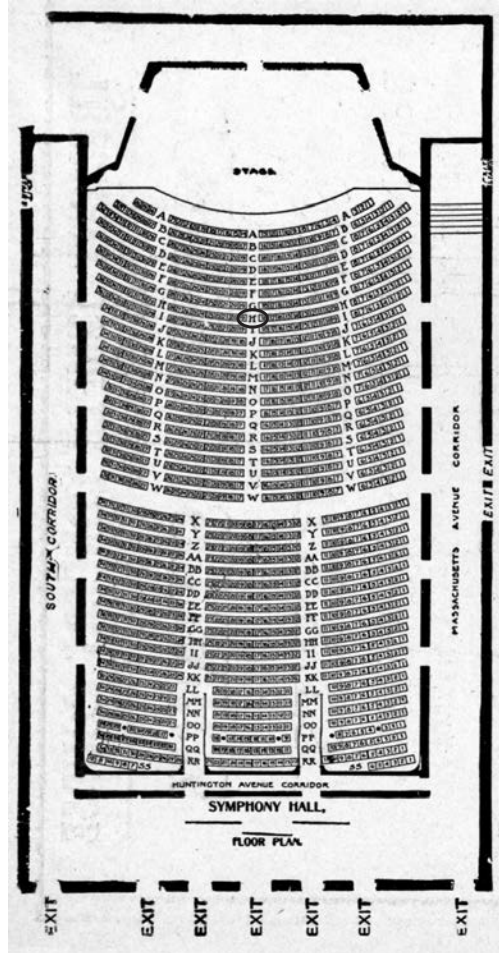


Figure 6b. Geraldine Farrar's seat during the premiere (circle indicates row H). *Carmen* program. Courtesy of Boston Symphony Orchestra Archives.

pointedly encouraged audience members to return to Symphony Hall to hear Farrar in a November concert.⁸²

Spectators intensified the ambiguous boundaries between this “living *Carmen*” and her onscreen counterpart. Upon first entering the auditorium that evening, Farrar bowed left and right, acknowledging the wildly enthusiastic five-minute ovation from the audience—the *Moving Picture World* described the applause as cheering Farrar “in the fashion of an excited political gathering, uproariously welcoming a presidential candidate.”⁸³ After intermission, the audience applauded again, this time at the first sight of Farrar onscreen. At the film’s end, they cheered Farrar’s film performance with a five-minute ovation. When she stood and acknowledged the musicians, they in turn applauded her—as if they had actually just collaborated.⁸⁴ After receiving a gigantic basket of roses,

she bowed again, declined calls for a speech, and left the auditorium. These rituals mapped established reaction to live performance from an operatic diva onto the mechanical reproduction.

Within the generally effusive reviews of the gala, a few detractors lamented Farrar's involvement with motion pictures. Alongside complaints about the quality of the script, based on Mérimée, and the occasionally inept renderings of Bizet, both Philip Hale and Olin Downes questioned why a peerless opera singer would agree to become merely one of a crowd of talented new movie stars.⁸⁵ Such criticisms demonstrate lingering unease about the value of films as opposed to operas or symphonic music. Yet as a marketing gamble, the Symphony Hall gala paid off. H. Earle Johnson's later assertion that "there was a vague feeling that the air of Symphony Hall had been polluted" was an outlier, and even he admitted that "the public came nevertheless."⁸⁶ Along with the *Carmen* premiere's notable success, the connections between Farrar and Symphony Hall generated complex new links between symphonic and cinematic spectatorship practices; these links exemplify Martina Löw's description of spaces as "expressions of the possibility of pluralities."⁸⁷ Watching *Carmen*, Boston audiences fused past and present, symphonic and cinematic, and the singer in the flesh with the onscreen diva.

Preserving the Citadel: The Metropolitan Opera

Constructed in 1883 with the fabulous wealth of seventy stockholders drawn from New York's nouveau riche magnates, the Metropolitan Opera house was situated within the Times Square theater district, farther uptown than its older rival the Academy of Music. Bedecked with operatic signifiers such as Francis Lathrop's painting *Apollo Crowned by the Muses* and a proscenium bearing the canonic names of Gluck, Mozart, Verdi, Wagner, Gounod, and Beethoven, the Met's immense auditorium was devised as a social showcase, comprising three tiers of boxes and a row of baignoires nicknamed the "Diamond Horseshoe" (figs. 7a and 7b). Architect J. Cleaveland Cady noted the social aspect as an indispensable element, adding that "boxes afford a rare opportunity for the display of beauty and toilets. They also give opportunity for the informal exchange of social courtesies, being open to select callers through the evening; the long waits between the acts especially favoring such interchange."⁸⁸

The primacy of social display was evident in the Metropolitan Opera's famously poor sight lines—only half the stage was visible from many of the side seats—and the electric lighting, which illuminated the audience as brightly as the stage. Public spaces were carefully crafted to facilitate social interaction within strict class and gender boundaries, including salons between the boxes and corridors, separate dressing/smoking rooms for men and women, and covered carriage entrances on 39th and 40th Streets to avoid the "general populace" on Broadway. Even the



Figure 7a. Interior of Metropolitan Opera House, ca. 1912. *The Victor Book of the Opera: Stories of Seventy Grand Operas with Three Hundred Illustrations & Descriptions of Seven Hundred Victor Opera Records* (Camden, NJ: Victor Talking Machine Company, 1912).



Figure 7b. Detail, proscenium arch, upper left corner, Metropolitan Opera House, ca. 1966, prior to demolition. Jack E. Boucher, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, HABS NY,31-NEYO,79-13.

venue's soundscape was marked by social class, from the auditorium's generally restrained applause to the sounds of the sidewalk; in 1918 Montville Morris Hansford recalled the "carriage calls that cleave the air in front of the Metropolitan."⁸⁹

Despite the broad popular appeal of stars such as Caruso and Farrar and operas in English for middle-class audiences, by the early twentieth century foreign-language opera in the United States was firmly ensconced as the province of the upper classes.⁹⁰ The Metropolitan Opera—and its venue—was central to the development of this cultural hierarchy as the example par excellence of luxurious foreign-language opera performed for elites in a major metropolis. Firmly on the side of symphonic music, Thomas Whitney Surette wrote in 1916 that a few rich men "think it part of the life of a great city that there should be an opera house. . . . [I]t does not exist for the good of the whole city, but rather for those of plethoric purses."⁹¹ While this statement bore little relation to venues in smaller cities, the Met jealously guarded its status as a space for elite urban audiences.

By the 1910s New York City's swelling population, diverse social classes and ethnic groups, and history as an entertainment hub allowed for a multiplicity of specialized venues within the metropolis's crowded artistic economy. These local factors shaped the unique trajectory of the motion picture industry within New York City's boroughs; Eileen Bowser, Richard Koszarski, and others have analyzed how the Broadway entertainment district was initially slow to convert to motion picture theaters due to city-specific legislation, pressure from theatrical operators, and competition from other art forms. By 1914, however, two large movie venues had opened on Broadway, followed by the elaborate picture palaces of the late 1910s and 1920s.⁹² Conversely, the Metropolitan Opera labored to defend its niche as an elite venue within the vast early twentieth-century New York City entertainment economy. Specialization in a single musical genre—indeed, in foreign-language opera specifically—tied the Met as institution and venue to foreign-language opera's cultural capital. The wealth of the Metropolitan Opera Board, the structure of its business operation, and the power of its boxholders likewise maintained the opera house venue as a display case for the financial largesse of its patrons, as well as limiting the feasibility of major institutional changes.

Distinguished by this particular nexus of space, institution, genre, and class, the Metropolitan Opera was an anomaly in the early twentieth century—no real cohabitation practices between opera and motion pictures emerged at the house. While the Metropolitan Opera Board rented the hall for special events, the 1910s were marked by a series of failed attempts to secure the Metropolitan Opera House for motion pictures (as well as several thwarted endeavors to form a Metropolitan Opera film company).⁹³ Requests came from impresarios, musicians, social

acquaintances, and other interested parties. Even when opera administrators supported these initiatives, institutional policies made cinema rentals difficult. Under the terms of the lease, administrators required consent from the Executive Committee of the Metropolitan Opera & Real Estate Company for any rentals other than concerts, theatrical representations, or balls.⁹⁴ Due to legal monopolies restricting genres to specific venues, categorizing events was essential. Yet such restrictions caused problems for opening the opera house to the movies: Met administrative secretary Edward Ziegler noted his uncertainty that “motion pictures will come under the headline ‘theatrical representation.’ . . . [M]otion pictures are always regarded as something quite separate from any other form of theatrical entertainment.”⁹⁵

Questions of prestige, standards, and preservation of the Met’s particular sociospatial cachet, however, eclipsed these logistical concerns. Any rental request outside of the house’s normal sphere—from a 1915 charity boxing match to a 1919 charity fashion fête of “modishly clad manikins [*sic*] parading across the stage and then down the aisles”—generated a flurry of correspondence from Met secretary Ziegler or comptroller John Brown to Metropolitan Opera Board chairman Otto Kahn or even Real Estate Company head George G. Haven Jr.⁹⁶ While not hostile to motion pictures in particular, these Met administrators were clearly concerned about preserving the general “standards” and prestige of the institution.⁹⁷

Certain members of the Metropolitan Opera Board, however, strongly disapproved of “tainting” the house through any association with motion pictures. Their aversion reflected both the desire to preserve the opera house as a sacred space apart from the middle classes and a disavowal of cinema’s uplift project; despite radical changes in cinema’s subject matter, scope, and audience during the 1910s, some board members continued to see motion pictures as art for the unwashed urban masses. Save a sole charity function in 1914, these board members, institutional policies, and logistical concerns ultimately precluded the Metropolitan Opera House from sharing its stage with films. The following brief case studies present a capsule history of both cinema’s desire to breach these walls and forces within the Metropolitan administrative structure with an equal determination to exclude such interlopers.

Movies at the Met? Prestige, Technology, and Power

In the spring of 1914, Met comptroller John Brown exchanged correspondence with board chairman Otto Kahn regarding a rental request for a “gambol” (a type of theatrical production) from the Lambs, an all-male social/dining club comprised of theatrical elites.⁹⁸ Juggling the complicated master schedule of rehearsals, load-ins, performances, upcoming hall renovations, and additional rental requests, Brown and Kahn agreed

to rent the hall on May 22 and 23.⁹⁹ At the two All-Star fund-raising gambols—preceded by street parades led by John Philip Sousa and his marching band—the capacity crowd at the Metropolitan Opera House viewed a blackface minstrel show, female impersonators, dances, musical numbers, a miracle play, and a set of motion pictures.¹⁰⁰ The films featured Lambs unable to take part in the gambol in person, with onstage commentary from travelogue king Burton Holmes. Stars such as John Drew and John Mason “sang” Lambs club songs onscreen; while their lips moved, an onstage performer provided live singing roughly synced with the film images.¹⁰¹ These motion pictures appear to be the *only* film screening at the Met in the 1910s. The singularity of this project may have been linked to the power of the Lambs organization or perhaps the situation of the films within a variety bill (as opposed to a feature film). Indeed, the unique aspect of the Lambs screening may have been the subject of a May 1914 letter from Brown to Kahn, stating that “this is something we have never done, and I am not in favor of starting it in this instance, as I think it is a bad precedent to establish.”¹⁰²

That same month, the All-Star Feature Corporation attempted to secure the opera house for the U.S. premiere of the Italian historical film *Cabiria*. Directed by Giovanni Pastrone with a story and titles credited to Gabriele d’Annunzio, *Cabiria* was a landmark film in its marriage of spectacular production, literary aspirations, and a prodigious international publicity campaign. With a sprawling sword-and-sandal setting, links to high-art figures such as d’Annunzio, and music by Ildebrando Pizzetti, *Cabiria* seemed a particularly promising choice to inaugurate the Metropolitan Opera House as a venue for films of a certain class.¹⁰³ After attending a preview at the Astor Hotel in May 1914, theater impresario and motion picture enthusiast Robert Grau wrote a letter to chairman Kahn asking him to see *Cabiria*. He pressed Kahn to consider presenting the film at the Metropolitan Opera House, “where, with the environment it is justly entitled to and the musical setting such as an Otto Kahn can influence, *Cabiria* would remove the last barrier which yet distinguishes the two-dollar-a-seat production from that of the film studio.”¹⁰⁴

All-Star Feature Corporation representatives Harry Raver and Augustus Thomas contacted Metropolitan Opera administrators about *Cabiria* but were rebuffed in their inquiry and ultimately rented the Knickerbocker Theatre. After meeting with Thomas, Brown wrote to Kahn that “I think that the only reason they wanted to place the film in this theatre was owing to the prestige it would give them, and I am very glad, indeed, that the subject has been disposed of in this way, inasmuch as I do not think the Metropolitan Opera House should favor a precedent of this nature, because if we did, Heaven only knows where it will lead to, and I know we would receive at least a million requests for similar bookings, the minute we started it.”¹⁰⁵ In 1914 Met administrators were particularly sensitive to

tradition and precedent but also seemingly hostile to sharing their stage with film corporations that hoped to appropriate the house's prestige.

For film corporations such as All-Star, uniting the opera house and new technology seemed an ideal partnership; from its inception, the Metropolitan Opera was a locus for the possibilities of technological ingenuity. Thomas Edison had famously envisioned the opera house as a ghostly space for technological reanimation, believing the kinetograph and kinetoscope would enable grand opera to be given at the Metropolitan Opera House "with artists and musicians long since dead."¹⁰⁶ By 1904 the public firmly connected Metropolitan Opera singers with the phonograph, due in large part to Enrico Caruso's exclusive contract with the Victor Talking Machine Company. Victor in turn linked the Metropolitan Opera House to Victor's own products through advertisement, asking consumers to imagine a recording's sonic origin point within the grandiose space of the opera house. Richard Leppert has analyzed how *The Victor Book of the Opera* (1912) highlighted operatic performance spaces (including the Met) while simultaneously attempting "to suture home listening to the experience of live opera performed in the world's prestigious venues."¹⁰⁷

Met administrators had a more complex relationship with technology. Initially either hostile to sound recordings or oblivious to the marketing potential of connecting artists and technology to institution and space, comptroller Brown later noted that administrators "lost a great deal of money through our laxity with the phonographs."¹⁰⁸ By the mid-1910s opera administrators were hoping to preempt similar problems with the movies by creating more robust contract clauses—the Met required retainers from singers and/or film companies in exchange for contractual consent to appear onscreen.¹⁰⁹ Yet Brown, Kahn, and other opera executives were clearly tempted to create their own business ventures between house artists and motion picture corporations. In April 1915, after observing two performers at New York's Hippodrome "in moving pictures posing for an operatic aria" while accompanied by orchestra, theater impresario Julius Hopp wrote excitedly to the Met office that the same technique might be used in a "Metropolitan Opera House Kinemacolor project."¹¹⁰ Despite chairman Kahn's positive response to Hopp's proposition, no such project materialized. Another projected operatic film company—the Metropolitan Opera Stars Film Corporation—spanned 1915–16, with Brown and Kahn serving as shareholders along with the Metropolitan Opera Company.¹¹¹ Brown enthusiastically led this initiative; noting that the "Metropolitan Opera Company cannot afford to risk its prestige" by starting with an inferior picture, he consulted with German author and filmmaker Hanns Heinz Ewers. The project never moved past this planning stage, collapsing entirely when Brown later departed from the Met.¹¹²

During these unrealized Metropolitan film company projects, efforts to rent the opera house continued unabated. In August 1915 Robert Grau was employed by Universal to secure publicity for Anna Pavlova's new film *The Dumb Girl of Portici*.¹¹³ Applying to Kahn in hopes of renting the house sometime in the early fall of 1915, Grau noted that Pavlova had suggested the venue: since "she had faced the public first on the stage at the Metropolitan she hopes she will make her screen debut there also." Like Farrar in Boston, Pavlova's suggestion conflated a spatial memory of triumphant noncinematic performances and a desire for the prestige of the operatic venue—Grau noted in his plea that even a single week's engagement at the Met would give the project "glamor."¹¹⁴ Also echoing Farrar's *Carmen*, publicity for this anticipated screening noted that Pavlova would appear in person "after the film has been shown to bow her thanks."¹¹⁵

When Kahn demurred that the house was always unavailable for two months prior to the opera season, Grau pleaded that the Pavlova picture could appear for a single morning or afternoon showing. Anticipating counterargument, Grau added that Pavlova's film would be for "invited guests selected from New York's Blue Book. This would not be advertised or will there be any tickets sold."¹¹⁶ Grau's conciliations demonstrate his awareness of incompatibilities between the Metropolitan Opera's social function and overt publicity campaigns for motion pictures. In his reply, Kahn regretted his inability to help Grau and Pavlova but noted that it was impossible to satisfy the request, "as the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Opera have made it a definite rule, not to rent the house for moving picture productions. . . . [T]hey have declined innumerable requests of that nature." Kahn could not make any exceptions to the policy "unless the Board of Directors should reconsider their objections."¹¹⁷

January 1916 brought another request to hire the opera house for a film venture; this application came from composer Victor Herbert, who hoped to rent the Met for twenty weeks beginning in May 1916. Herbert was writing the score for "a tremendous picture production" organized by Thomas Dickson—the unnamed film was undoubtedly *The Fall of a Nation*. Herbert proposed \$70,000 in rental fees and noted that his association would charge \$3.00 (more than the most expensive movie houses). Intriguingly, Kahn noted that J. B. Duke of American Tobacco had personally advocated for Dickson to be permitted to rent the opera house. The board remained unmoved, and *The Fall of a Nation* premiered in Los Angeles in May 1916.¹¹⁸

A major attempt to open the Met to motion pictures occurred in the spring of 1918, prompted in part by financial concerns related to World War I. The *Exhibitors Herald* announced that Roxy Rothapfel, now managing multiple New York movie palaces, including the Rialto and Rivoli Theatres, had accomplished "the heretofore impossible" by renting the

Met for a summer film season.¹¹⁹ Rothapfel would allegedly employ the Met orchestra, directed by Hugo Riesenfeld, with D. W. Griffith's patriotic *Hearts of the World* serving as a feature attraction. Kahn underscored both the prestige and the patriotism angles in a March 1918 press release, describing the Met as an "ideally situated and equipped theatre in which to show war films and other films of high artistic ideals and the utmost dignity." He praised Rothapfel's taste, commenting that the Met would not suffer a "loss of prestige through housing films under his direction."¹²⁰

Yet the initiative folded—press reports cited displeasure from Met boxholders. In an interview, Rothapfel defended the class of his Rialto and Rivoli audiences; no matter the concerns of the Met elites, his cinemagoers would not "whittle their initials on the furniture at the opera house or steal the portieres as souvenirs of their visit."¹²¹ While perceptions of class difference between opera audiences and moviegoers were clearly the continued point of contention, it is telling that Rothapfel couched his defense by referring to possible damages to the opera house itself. He noted that motion pictures didn't need the Met's patronage, that "within a very few years there will be other theaters erected which will make the Metropolitan look decidedly antiquated by comparison." The Met board struck back, stating that it had agreed "conditionally and informally" only to screen Griffith's *Hearts of the World*.¹²²

As Kahn noted in 1916, administrators received innumerable requests to open the Metropolitan Opera to cinema. The enduring ties between opera and technological innovation and the legitimizing power of this venue enticed film impresarios, particularly during this period of expansion and aspiration for the motion picture industry. The affinity between opera and film as both visual and musical art forms suggests a natural potential for cohabitation—films in an opera house might make more sense than films in halls designed for orchestral music. Yet the Metropolitan Opera House's specific confluence of space, class, genre, and institution rendered it an exceptionally poor match for the flickering light of films. The preponderance of boxes, private social spaces, and poor stage sight lines were designed for brightly illuminated social display, not individual viewing in a darkened auditorium.¹²³ The cavernous hall with its vaulted ceiling would have required an extremely large motion picture orchestra. The power of the Met's boxholders and the enduring role of this particular opera house as a space apart for urban elites encouraged the continued exclusion of interlopers like Rothapfel's audiences. Logistically, the complicated house schedule made it difficult to arrange rentals, unlike the annual summer recess of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Finally, the unique administrative structure of the Real Estate Company and Metropolitan Opera Board enabled powerful voices to veto rental initiatives. If the strong resistance to screening films

at the Metropolitan Opera was quite unusual among U.S. music venues, it nonetheless demonstrates the powerful connections between space, institution, and meaning.

*Postlude: Movies in the Concert Hall,
Opera at the Metroplex*

In many ways these are atypical stories—three musical spaces unusually saturated with meaning. Chicago's Orchestra Hall and Boston's Symphony Hall are likely the two best-known examples of purpose-built orchestral venues in the United States. Constructed within five years of each other, each hall was designed to house one of the longest-established American orchestras, ensembles founded to proselytize and protect sacralized orchestral repertoire. Nor was the Met, as the venue for nouveau-riche elites in the nation's largest metropolis, much like other opera houses. The specific setting for each venue mattered, showcasing different values attached to musical spaces as cultural institutions in Chicago versus Boston versus New York. Local issues from crowd control to concert dress to institutional administrative structure helped determine the fate of motion picture ventures in each space.

The three cases seem an odd inversion: the two concert halls devoted to "sacred" orchestral music did allow motion pictures, while the opera house—already dedicated to a multimedia stage genre—was the most persistently inaccessible to cinema. Whether venues welcomed or eschewed film, however, this study reveals the complex ways in which entrepreneurs, critics, and audiences wove spatial meanings into their experience of genre, institution, performance, and formulation of cultural hierarchy. No matter how "highbrow" the venue, musical listening and film spectatorship constitute complexly interconnected histories in the early twentieth century.

While this analysis has focused on the confluence of space, genre, and institution via three studies, further areas of research beckon. Analyzing spatial cohabitation during the initial years of cinema or the heyday of the picture palaces would enrich our understanding of pivotal developments in film history; likewise, the plethora of spaces in the 1910s that transitioned from musical venues to full-time movie houses deserves further study. Additional work on "opera houses" in smaller cities, as opposed to major urban centers, would help correct "Gothamcentric" tendencies in both music and film histories.¹²⁴ Conversely, while this study focused on uniquely American manifestations of space and place, international cohabitations—such as the 1914 "high-grade photoplays" at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, the 1924 screening of Fritz Lang's *Die Nibelungen* in London's Royal Albert Hall, and the 1926 film treatment of *Der Rosenkavalier* at the Dresden Semperoper—promise different narratives.

Motion pictures still screened in preexistent music venues throughout the 1920s, yet practices gradually shifted during this period due to the explosion in custom-built movie houses, the emergence of the studio conglomerates, and eventually the primacy of talking picture systems. While a comprehensive examination of how audiences encounter media in spaces designed for other genres is beyond the scope of this study, twenty-first-century performance culture offers compelling new cohabitation practices. In particular, symphony orchestras providing “live” musical accompaniment to films with synchronized sound and the opera house in the movie theater—namely, the *Metropolitan Opera: Live in HD*—each engage with the questions of this study in fascinating ways.

“Live synch” or “symphonic cinema,” a live orchestral accompaniment to a film version stripped of its musical soundtrack, has recently emerged as a lucrative multinational business headed by corporations such as CineConcerts, Symphonic Cinema, and FILM CONCERTS LIVE!¹²⁵ In these products—which trade on the audiovisual familiarity of the original films—the filmic musical texts are sometimes altered, often through addition of overtures or “new music leading into and out of intermission.”¹²⁶ For the June 2015 *Back to the Future* live synch at the Hollywood Bowl, Alan Silvestri added twenty minutes of new scoring, including two overtures, end credit music, and recomposed themes from *Back to the Future II* and *III* for foreshadowing purposes.¹²⁷ Though initially nervous about such additions, Silvestri noted, “I felt actually OK . . . about this because [the concert] would be a different venue, a different setting. If people wanted to see the movie exactly as it is, the theater is the place to go.”¹²⁸

Silvestri rationalizes this textual fluidity not just as a new product but also as linked to the space itself: audiences expect symphonic overtures and intermission music from orchestras in concert halls. Symphonic cinema producer John Goberman conflates venues with medium and genre, stating, “The music is really symphonic, so what better way to hear it than in the concert hall? If you’re going to play the original music from the film, the best way to hear it is with the *form* that dictated the structure of the music.”¹²⁹ In a telling inversion of early twentieth-century relationships between art music and film, film writer Phil De Semlyen called London’s Royal Albert Hall an “austere old dome . . . a fittingly grand venue to celebrate not just a classic sci-fi, but the work of the great James Horner, who died last year.”¹³⁰ The cultural capital of a venue designed for art music is deployed to worship at the newer altar of film composers. Some venues are themselves palimpsests, as orchestras perform live-synch music in concert halls such as the St. Louis Symphony’s Powell Hall, which was once a movie and vaudeville house.¹³¹

Classical music venues generate certain expectations, but cinematic spectatorship practices and sensory experiences seep into these concert halls as well. One *Los Angeles Times* critic noted of a Hollywood Bowl

live synch that “the audience hadn’t quite worked out exactly when the show is over. So conditioned are L.A. audiences when credits roll to rush for the exits that some could not stop themselves Friday evening from leaving before the Philharmonic had finished playing through the final credits.”¹³² Live synchs also import an aura of filmic festivity to the concert hall: many productions include live appearances from original cast members, and audiences replicate the atmosphere of a film premiere by attending in costume.¹³³ Even the smells of the movieplex intrude as buttery popcorn odors waft through lobbies of orchestral venues.¹³⁴

A second contemporary cohabitation practice is opera (or the opera house) in the movie theater, namely, the Metropolitan Opera cinema simulcast series, initiated by Peter Gelb in 2006.¹³⁵ Jeremy Tambling and Marcia Citron have analyzed how earlier opera films and relays fetishized the opera house site by including framing shots of the auditorium or proscenium arch.¹³⁶ In the case of *The Met: Live in HD* broadcasts, the Lincoln Center auditorium interior is foregrounded; James Steichen has noted that the broadcasts serve “double-duty as institutional documentary, mediatizing the institution and staging the Met *itself* for the public.”¹³⁷ Broadcasts augment the visual impression of live attendance with aural cues: simulcasts usually begin with muted precurtain chatter, followed by the clamor of the Met orchestra tuning. In his review of the 2006 HD broadcasts, Anthony Sheppard noted that these sounds “transformed the movie house and made me feel as though I was entering the opera house itself.”¹³⁸ Yet any perception of actual attendance at Lincoln Center is belied by numerous details, from how spectators arrive at the cineplex, purchase a ticket, or enter the theater to the way the cinema lights dim just as the stage lights come up in the opera house, or even how simulcast intermission features escort movie audiences through publicly inaccessible parts of the Met.

Live in HD broadcasts also reshape or blend spatial understandings, sensory experiences, physical/ritual elements, and spectatorship practices from the Met and the movieplex in complicated ways. Smells of *Live in HD* broadcasts generally belong to the movie house—many early reviewers noted the novelty of “munching popcorn and slurping soda” during an opera—but some operagoers smuggled more substantial snacks into the simulcasts or looked for the bar refreshment services at intermission. A few cineplexes offered special lunch and alcohol packages along with HD tickets.¹³⁹ Certain spectatorship practices are a particularly intricate amalgamation of operatic and cinematic: early *Live in HD* moviegoers applauded Metropolitan performers, although the singers and orchestral musicians in New York could not hear this applause. Sheppard noted that at his 2007 viewing “we remained in our seats throughout the curtain calls . . . while we watched the Met audience in the orchestra section of the house pack up and abruptly depart.”¹⁴⁰

Live synchs and *Live in HD* ask us to engage with multimedia genres in spaces not originally designed for them, and as audiences we often entangle spectatorship practices not only from experiences of a musical genre but also from memories, practices, and expectations within a specific space. A century ago, screening motion pictures in preexistent music venues elicited similar questions. In Chicago's Orchestra Hall and Boston's Symphony Hall, film screenings negotiated preexistent social class expectations and spectatorship practices relatively successfully, while institutional roadblocks and spatial meanings at the Metropolitan Opera precluded the venue from hosting films. Each of these case studies initiates a more nuanced understanding of the pluralities of venues, prompting us to attend closely to the ties between space, institution, genre, and meaning as we study multimedia performances across the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

NOTES

A preliminary version of this study was presented at the American Musicological Society meeting in Vancouver in November 2016. I am grateful for input along the way from friends and colleagues at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and SUNY Potsdam and to the anonymous reviewers of this journal for their diligent and thought-provoking comments. Many thanks to the staff of the Library of Congress, Music Division; the Archives of the Metropolitan Opera; the Boston Symphony Orchestra Archives; Cornell University Library, the Sidney Cox Library of Music and Dance; and the Princeton University Department of Rare Books and Special Collections for their assistance with this project.

1. See "Modern Entertainment: A Big New Idea at Orchestra Hall," *Chicago Tribune*, April 25, 1915.

2. Heyl described his phasmatrope as "photographs of living objects shown as if in motion"; his presentation also included musical accompaniment. Heyl papers in the Franklin Institute, cited in M. J. McCosker, "Philadelphia and the Genesis of the Motion Picture," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 65, no. 4 (October 1941): 407. In 1897 the academy also served as the site for Klaw and Erlanger's motion picture *The Horitz Passion Play*, accompanied by lantern slides, spoken commentary, and organ and choral music. As one example of a Carnegie Lyceum event, in 1912 the venue screened Albert Capellani's *Les Misérables*.

3. The period from 1890 to World War I marked an explosion in the founding of symphony orchestras in the United States, as well as the construction of custom-built halls to house these institutions. See John Spitzer, "The Ubiquity and Diversity of Nineteenth-Century American Orchestras," in *American Orchestras in the 19th Century*, ed. John Spitzer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 22. For the motion picture industry, the 1910s were characterized by pivotal innovations including the development of the feature film and construction of the early movie palaces.

4. Mark Clague, "The Industrial Evolution of the Arts: Chicago's Auditorium Building (1889-) as Cultural Machine," *Opera Quarterly* 22, nos. 3–4 (2006): 480–81. For more detail on what Clague describes as "the institutional muse" and an in-depth analysis of the intersection of space, institution, and Chicago's urban environment, see Clague, "Chicago Counterpoint: The Auditorium Theater Building and the Civic Imagination" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2002), 54–57.

5. Richard Schechner, *Environmental Theater* (New York: Applause, 1994); and Schechner, *Performance Theory* (New York: Routledge, 1988). See also David Wiles's introduction—particularly his discussion of Mike Pearson's 1988 manifesto—in *A Short History of Western Performance Space* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 2–3.

6. Fink differentiates between place as the physical environment through which we move and space as the practice and lived experience of place. Robert Fink, "File Under: American Spaces," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 64, no. 3 (Fall 2011): 708. Walter Benjamin likewise called attention to the importance of place for a performance, stating that "even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be." "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken, 1969), 220.

7. While searching for prints and texts was central to much early film scholarship, there is a well-established body of work on film spectatorship in the early era. See, for example, Miriam Hansen, *Babel and Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994). Scholarship on the changing audience of films during this period is also invaluable, such as the first two volumes of the University of California History of American Cinema series: Charles Musser, *The Emergence of Cinema: The American Screen to 1907* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); and Eileen Bowser, *The Transformation of Cinema, 1907–1915* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

8. Drawing in part on Barthes's *Elements of Sociology*, Marvin Carlson notes that "a semiotic approach to theatre architecture should encourage us to look not only at the traditional elements of stage and auditorium but at every distinct element of the theatre complex for what it may reveal about the meanings of this building for its society" (*Places of Performance: The Semiotics of Theatre Architecture* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989], 9). We should also analyze the semiotics of cafés, offices, and retail spaces included in theatrical building complexes—Clague discusses the Auditorium Building's multiuse spaces in "Industrial Evolution of the Arts," 481, 487–92.

9. While soundscapes inside historical musical venues are difficult to analyze, see Tamara Levitz for a fascinating rereading of the apocryphal "riot" at the *Rite of Spring* premiere. Analyzing sources of noise within the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées on May 29, 1913, Levitz uses this spatial analysis to resituate the "riot" as xenophobic backlash rather than protests over new musical language. "Racism at *The Rite*," in *The Rite of Spring at 100*, edited by Severine Neff, Maureen Carr, and Gretchen Horlacher with John Reef (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), 146–78. Current scholarship is also greatly expanding information on historic urban soundscapes, particularly through the use of digital humanities projects and mapping. See, for example, historical soundscapes of New York City at <http://vectorsdev.usc.edu/NYCsound/777b.html>; or Mylène Pardoën's Bretez project representing the Grand Châtelet district of eighteenth-century Paris, <https://lejournal.cnrs.fr/articles/ecoutez-le-paris-du-xviii-siecle>

10. For theaters, location is often particularly meaningful vis-à-vis the relationship to a theater district. Carlson provides a capsule European history of theories on theatrical location, from Voltaire's 1748 call for monuments facing major public squares to the monumental opera houses of the nineteenth century. See *Places of Performance*, 88.

11. Barthes describes the city as a type of discourse that we "speak" by living in it, wandering through it, looking at it. See "Semiology and the Urban," lecture given on May 16, 1967, at the Institut Français. Lefebvre notes that social spaces are "not things, but interpenetrate one another and/or superimpose themselves upon one another" (*The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith [Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991], 86–87). See also Henri Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities*, selected, trans., and introduced by Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996); and Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

12. Lynch considers how people construct mental maps of their urban surroundings, theorizing his five elements as (1) channels along which the observer moves; (2) organiza-

tional elements that are not traversable; (3) districts with common identifying characters; (4) points through which an observer can enter a city; and (5) external, singled-out point references. Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1960), 46–48.

13. See Martina Löw, “The Constitution of Space: The Structuration of Spaces through the Simultaneity of Effect and Perception,” *European Journal of Social Theory* 11, no. 1 (2008): 26. I wish to thank Fanny Gribenski for bringing Löw’s work to my attention.

14. “Orchestra Hall Is Dedicated,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 15, 1904. The financing of Orchestra Hall via endowment, as opposed to reliance on ticket sales, is detailed in Rose Fay Thomas, *Memoirs of Theodore Thomas* (New York: Moffat, Yard and Company, 1911), 510–46. Fay Thomas includes a February 1903 circular from orchestra trustees to the Chicago public; the trustees link the hall’s construction to the continued survival of the Thomas orchestra, as well as the “dignity” and “authority” of the ensemble (515).

15. Fay Thomas, *Memoirs*, 539. Fay Thomas also discusses the mismatch between the Thomas orchestra and Chicago’s preexistent auditorium building.

16. Lawrence Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988). Levine’s pioneering discussion of sacralization, hierarchy, and the hardening of categories between high and low art repertoires in the nineteenth century has been critiqued and refined by a number of scholars, including Ralph Locke, “Music Lovers, Patrons, and the ‘Sacralization’ of Culture in America,” *19th-Century Music* 17, no. 2 (Autumn 1993): 149–73; Daniel Cavicchi, *Listening and Longing: Music Lovers in the Age of Barnum* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2011); John Spitzer, “Orchestral Repertory: Highbrow/Lowbrow,” in *American Orchestras in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. John Spitzer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 367–71. Judith Tick describes Thomas’s approach as “musical manifest destiny” (*Music in the USA: A Documentary Companion*, ed. Judith Tick and assistant editor Paul Beaudoin [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008], 270).

17. “Orchestra Hall Is Dedicated.” Thomas died just after the hall’s dedication, and both he and other prominent figures were memorialized and eulogized in this space.

18. Bergeron’s discussion concerns a frieze at Paine Concert Hall at Harvard University. See “Prologue: Disciplining Music,” in *Disciplining Music: Musicology and Its Canons*, ed. Katherine Bergeron and Philip V. Bohlman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 1.

19. Reporter Willie Dearborn noted that President Harlan—scion of a prominent family involved in local and national government—attracted high-society audience members interested in politics. Writing that Orchestra Hall “resounded with the note of political aristocracy,” Dearborn described the evening’s atmosphere in detail, concluding that “no symphony or sonata or suite ever played in the hall brought forth enthusiasm more correctly expressed” (“Reading by Harlan Gives Music Hall Aristocratic Tone,” *Inter Ocean*, February 25, 1905).

20. “Poesy in Politics: Col. Lewis Shines,” *Chicago Tribune*, October 23, 1906.

21. After pressure from African American clergy and community members, Chicago mayor Edward Dunne refused to preside over the event, yet Tillman was still supported by an armed escort from the train station and heavy police presence at his event. For coverage of the Tillman visit, see the *Broad Ax*, particularly “The Brave and Liberty-Loving Afro-Americans in This City Should Assemble in Orchestra Hall,” November 17, 1906, and “Great Arising among the Afro-Americans in Chicago This Week,” November 24, 1906. For details on the speech, see “Tillman, Guarded by Police, Speaks to a Jeering Crowd,” *Inter Ocean*, November 28, 1906.

22. Thomas was certainly invested in educating the taste of the masses during his earlier tenure in New York City; it is unclear, however, precisely how his objectives changed during his time in Chicago. He seems to have been most interested in the quality and permanence of his ensemble, an institution that did not rely primarily on ticket sales—or the pleasing of popular taste—for support. In his discussion of the separation of high art and popular repertoires in the nineteenth century, Levine analyzes how orchestra and venue needed to be “independent of the market place” in order to realize Thomas’s goals for “high art.” See

Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow*. Mark Clague notes the lasting influence of the CSO as the first "corporate" model of orchestra financing. See Clague, "Building the American Symphony Orchestra: The Nineteenth-Century Roots of a Twenty-First-Century Musical Institution," in Spitzer, *American Orchestras in the Nineteenth Century*, 25–52.

23. "Kirmess Dancers in Public Rehearsal," *Inter Ocean*, January 4, 1906. The reviewer puns on Edgar Allan Poe by referring to the stage entrance and backstage maze as "like the route obscure and lonely, haunted by ill angels only."

24. Willie Dearborn, "The Whirl of Society," *Inter Ocean*, December 31, 1905. Members of the orchestra also often provided musical accompaniment for social events. As season ticket holders were the same from year to year and greeted each other at the start of each season, this newspaper described the boxes as "little neighborhood colonies." "Woman and Her Varied Interests: What Some People Are Doing in Society," *Inter Ocean*, October 20, 1913.

25. Cavicchi, *Listening and Longing*, 153.

26. Charles Musser in collaboration with Carol Nelson, *High-Class Moving Pictures: Lyman H. Howe and the Forgotten Era of Traveling Exhibition, 1880–1920* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 80. Germain Lacasse analyzes the importance of the voice and the lecturer as mediator between tradition and modernity (the cinema of attractions). See Lacasse, "The Lecturer and the Attraction," in *The Cinema of Attractions Reloaded*, ed. Wanda Strauven (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006). For more on visits of travel lecturers to higher-class venues, see Musser, *The Emergence of Cinema*, 38–42; Bowser, *The Transformation of Cinema*, 13, 44. In a similar venue to Orchestra Hall, H. Earle Johnson recalls that travelogues were the only films that Back Bay audiences would tolerate in Boston's Symphony Hall. See *Symphony Hall, Boston* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1950), 274–75. Elias Burton Holmes (1870–1958) started touring in the early 1890s and coined the term "travelogue." The Burton Holmes collection at UCLA contains thousands of his glass lantern slides: <http://www.cdhl.ucla.edu/projects/burton-holmes-digital-archive/>. Beginning in 1897, Holmes used the *chronomatographe* of Gaumont, working with projectionist Oscar Depue. See Musser, *High-Class Moving Pictures*, 81.

27. A 1908 review comments, "For such lectures as these the hall is necessarily transformed into a cave of gloom; the audience sits in utter darkness, watching the illuminated screen; and a conversational tone, emerging from the void, does not lay a compelling hold upon the attention. Talking in the dark in competition with stereopticon views requires a special technique. The lecturer must make his personality felt in spite of the difficulty of vision. L. Frank Baum, who recently delivered some 'fairylogues' at Orchestra hall, adorned himself in white clothes after the Mark Twain fashion, and loomed up as effectively as if a spotlight had been thrown upon him. The trick gave opening for facetious comment, but it was effective nevertheless" (Charles W. Collins, "Burton Holmes in Hawaii," *Inter Ocean*, November 20, 1908). Lighting practices in concert halls were shifting in the early twentieth century, with more concert halls starting to lower lighting due to Wagnerian influence and sacralized listening practices. Press accounts of early film, however, indicate that the lights during motion picture screenings were significantly lower than in concert halls. For a discussion about morality concerns related to dimly illuminated movie houses, see Bowser, *The Transformation of Cinema*, 39.

28. "Music and Concerts," *Chicago Tribune*, April 29, 1906.

29. W. L. Hubbard, "Beauty in Music and Pictures," *Chicago Tribune*, February 22, 1908.

30. This was based on the characters from *The Wizard of Oz* but appeared prior to the 1910 screen version of *The Wizard of Oz*. See Burns Mantle, "News of the Theaters," *Chicago Tribune*, October 3, 1908; and Artemis Willis, "Marvelous and Fascinating: L. Frank Baum's Fairylogue and Radio Plays," in *Performing New Media, 1890–1915* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015), 141–50.

31. Advertisement for "Orchestra Hall: Moving Pictures," *Chicago Tribune*, March 30, 1913.

32. Eric Delamarter, "Matters of Interest in the Theaters," *Inter Ocean*, September 1, 1912.
33. "'Movies' Invade Orchestra Hall," *Chicago Tribune*, April 25, 1914.
34. Kitty Kelly, "Photoplay Stories and News," *Chicago Tribune*, July 14, 1914. Two summers later, Orchestra Hall management installed an "air-washing" device to alleviate the problem. See "Making Orchestra Hall a Summer Resort," *Chicago Tribune*, July 13, 1916.
35. "The Strand Theater Co.—Chicago," *Dixon Evening Telegraph*, April 30, 1915.
36. The pricing structure contrasted with the typical season subscription approach of the Chicago Symphony; in 1916 the symphony orchestra season subscription rates ranged from twelve dollars to thirty-five dollars for a twenty-eight-concert series. *Chicago Tribune*, September 10, 1916.
37. "Society and Entertainments," *Chicago Tribune*, April 28, 1915.
38. Kitty Kelly, "Chicagoans See Novel Film Show," *Chicago Tribune*, May 1, 1915.
39. Program details from Jas. S. McQuade, "Chicago Letter," *Moving Picture World*, May 8, 1915, 884. The Weber work may have been the *Oberon* overture, while the vocal quartet number, subtitled "Negro Love Song," was composed by Henry Clough-Leigher (lyrics by Myron Freese) and published in 1901. For more on the change in orchestra programming in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, see Spitzer, *American Orchestras in the Nineteenth Century*.
40. Kelly, "Chicagoans See Novel Film Show."
41. For a positive review from a movie skeptic, see C.E.W., "Music in Chicago: Orchestra Hall," *Music News*, July 21, 1916. See also Kitty Kelly, "A Happy Program at Orchestra Hall," *Chicago Tribune*, July 13, 1916; and Farnsworth Wright, "Conducts an Orchestra by Motion Picture," *Musical America*, February 10, 1917, 48.
42. "Photoplays at Orchestra Hall," *Chicago Tribune*, May 6, 1916.
43. Delamarter, "Our National Hymn: Jottings," *Chicago Tribune*, May 21, 1916.
44. Symphony Hall was one of the first concert halls built in consultation with a professor of physics, Professor Wallace C. Sabine of Harvard University. The statues were chosen by a committee of two hundred chaired by Mrs. J. W. Elliot and include Apollo, Athena, Sophocles, Euripides, satyrs, and an Amazon. For more on the hall's construction, design, and history, see Johnson, *Symphony Hall*. For commentary on the opening, see "Social Aspect of the Opening," *New York Tribune*, October 16, 1900.
45. David Schroeder, *Cinema's Illusions, Opera's Allure: The Operatic Impulse in Film* (New York: Continuum Books, 2002), 17; and Paul Fryer, *The Opera Singer and the Silent Film* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2005), 95, 106–10.
46. The five-reel *Carmen* was directed by DeMille to a scenario by William DeMille based on Prosper Mérimée. The film was produced by the Jesse L. Lasky Feature Play Company and distributed by Paramount Picture Corporation. Prints exist in the International Museum of Photography and Film at the George Eastman House film archive (Cecil B. DeMille Collection). For discussion of Farrar as star, see Cecil B. DeMille, *The Autobiography of Cecil B. DeMille*, ed. Donald Hayne (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1959), 139.
47. Morris Gest, "Winning Farrar: How the Most Famous Prima-Donna in the World Was Secured for the Photoplays. The Man Who Turned the Trick Tells the Story," *Photoplay Magazine*, July 1915, 115–17. Gest (a longtime friend of Farrar's) recalled he took her to opening night of the Belasco film at the Strand.
48. "At the Stage Door," *Los Angeles Times*, July 29, 1915. Part of Farrar's contract stipulated distribution procedures: the April 1915 contract between Farrar and Jesse L. Lasky Feature Play Co. stated: "The Producer promises and agrees that the motion picture photoplays in which the Star shall appear, set and pose for, will be exploited and exhibited in the most approved and dignified manner consistent with the customs and usages of the Producer to the end that the greatest artistic and financial returns shall result therefrom and generally in the same manner as the so-called Lasky Belasco production series are now being exploited and exhibited by the Producer" (box 12, Geraldine Farrar Collection, Library of Congress).

49. "C. E. Tandy Sees an Advance Showing of Farrar in *Carmen*," *Atlanta Constitution*, September 5, 1915. The account describes Orchestra Hall as "one of the largest and most beautiful moving picture houses in the country."

50. Farrar first appeared in concert at Symphony Hall on January 27, 1908; in an interview regarding the *Carmen* premiere, Farrar's mother noted: "Wasn't it fine that Geraldine could be presented to the public for the first time on screen in Boston, and at Symphony Hall of all places else? For you know it was right in this hall as a little girl that Geraldine made her first bow to an audience in this country" ("Farrar's Debut as Movie Star," *Tennessean* [Nashville], October 17, 1915). Geraldine Farrar's request to inaugurate *Carmen* at Symphony Hall was highlighted in the gala's program, which noted, "Exhibited in Boston as first city by special request of Miss Farrar" (*Geraldine Farrar: Her Photo Dramatic Debut in Carmen*, Boston Symphony Hall program, October 1915, 13). I wish to thank Bridget Carr of the Boston Symphony Orchestra archives for providing a copy of the *Carmen* program.

51. Widely printed interview with Farrar; see "Geraldine Farrar Here a Convert to Movies," *New York Sun*, August 21, 1915.

52. Sumiko Higashi describes the advertisement script—and cites the cover of the November 6, 1915, issue of *Motion Picture News*—in *Cecil B. DeMille and American Culture: The Silent Era* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 22. For descriptions about ticket purchasing, see "'Hub' Mail-Orders Itself in Hall for *Carmen* Peep," *Motion Picture News*, October 9, 1915.

53. For more on class and music in early nineteenth-century Boston, see Michael Broyles, *Music of the Highest Class: Elitism and Populism in Antebellum Boston* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992). For discussion regarding Boston's late embrace of the movies, see "The Fall and Capture of Boston," *Motion Picture News*, October 16, 1915.

54. "Geraldine Farrar Makes Debut in Moving Pictures," *Boston Post*, October 2, 1915.

55. One reviewer likened the event to a "Patti or Tetrizzini premiere in opera" ("Geraldine Farrar in *Carmen* Film," *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 10, 1915). The Back Bay was a residential district for fashionable, affluent Bostonians. Around twenty-five hundred people attended the first screening; there were twenty screenings of *Carmen* at Symphony Hall (one every afternoon and evening except Sunday) through October 15. See "Geraldine Farrar Scores Triumph in the 'Movies,'" *Atlanta Constitution*, October 2, 1915. While details varied from city to city, many later screenings of *Carmen* likewise noted the high number of society attendees. In San Francisco, for example, "the lobby of the Imperial Theater has resembled a grand opera-house entrance all week" ("*Carmen* Playing to Large Crowds," *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 16, 1915).

56. E. F. Harkins, "Miss Farrar Acclaimed at Movie Debut. Receives Triumphant Greeting from Audience at Symphony Hall," *Boston Journal*, October 2, 1915.

57. "Symphony Hall for Films," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, September 26, 1915.

58. "With the advent of *Carmen* we behold Symphony Hall, Boston's sacred temple of music, given over for twelve days and evenings to a motion picture" ("The Fall and Capture of Boston," *Motion Picture News*, October 16, 1915).

59. "Farrar's *Carmen* to Be Shown First in Boston," *Altoona (PA) Tribune*, September 23, 1915.

60. "Farrar Gazes on Farrar in Films," *New York Tribune*, October 3, 1915.

61. For details on the hall decoration, see "Guest at Own Debut," *Arizona Republic*, October 10, 1915; and "Boston Welcomes *Carmen* Picture," *Jackson (MS) Daily News*, October 17, 1915 (originally special from the *New York Morning Telegraph*). The projection was by Baird Machine Company of New York. See *Farrar: Her Photo Dramatic Debut*, 17.

62. "Geraldine Farrar Makes Debut."

63. "Geraldine Farrar Makes Debut." More than fifty critics from across the country attended the *Carmen* film premiere, including both music and dramatic critics from New York and Boston and special writers from all the moving picture trade journals.

64. "Applause Heard 4,000 Miles Away," *Washington Post*, October 24, 1915. Lasky and the other cast members screened the film simultaneously with the premiere in Boston in order to follow along in real time with audience reactions.

65. Several newspapers reported that Farrar also had a hand in crafting the musical accompaniment, though her name is not noted on the title page of the published score. "Farrar at Boston First," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, September 26, 1915. For the Paramount score, see S. L. Rothapfel and Hugo Riesenfeld, *Paramount Photoplay Music for Carmen* (New York: G. Schirmer, 1915). For an analysis of the score's genesis and performance, see Gillian B. Anderson, "Geraldine Farrar and Cecil B. DeMille: The Effect of Opera on Film and Film on Opera in 1915," in *Carmen: From Silent Film to MTV*, ed. Christopher Perriam and Ann Davies (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), 23–35.

66. Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow*, 123–25. Due to inadequate rehearsal time, difficulty syncing with the images onscreen, or a desire to give a high-level performance, the Symphony Hall premiere was preceded by an all-night rehearsal. Leslie H. Allen, "Geraldine Farrar Scores Triumph in *Carmen*," *Motion Picture News*, October 16, 1915.

67. The medley of popular airs allegedly upset some audience members at the Boston premiere. See Olin Downes, "Boston Sees Miss Farrar as *Carmen* in Moving Pictures," *Musical America*, October 9, 1915. Many scholars have analyzed the shift in listening practices at symphony concerts and in the opera hall over the course of the nineteenth century. For a summary and critique of several of these studies, see Cormac Newark, "Not Listening in Paris: Critical and Fictional Lapses of Attention at the Opera," in *Words & Notes in the Long Nineteenth Century*, ed. Phyllis Weliver and Katharine Ellis (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2013), 34–54.

68. "Geraldine Farrar Makes Debut." This was echoed in other halls across the country; in San Francisco "most everybody who usually goes to the opera or to straight drama was at the Imperial last night—the most ominously silent house that one could experience" ("*Carmen* Playing to Large Crowds").

69. John Sullivan Dwight, "Best Seats," *Dwight's Journal of Music*, October 31, 1874, 326, cited in Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow*, 121. The tension between visual modes of performance and sacralized listening practices (which attempted to minimize or negate the performing body) has been extensively discussed in musicological literature; see, for example, Lawrence Kramer's writing on Liszt and virtuosity in *Musical Meaning: Toward a Critical History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 68–99.

70. DeMille, *The Autobiography of Cecil B. DeMille*, 141.

71. Fryer, *The Opera Singer*, 45–46. Rebecca Mitchell also discusses the issue of camera work and looking in her "Opera in a New Age: Mass Media, the 'Popular,' and Opera, 1900–1960" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 2014), 59. In her monograph of opera onscreen, Marcia Citron analyzes ways operatic films have varied the vantage point—and sometimes suggested attendance at a live opera performance—from "static shots of the plane of the front of the stage" to more fluid camera work. See Citron, *Opera on Screen* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 20–68.

72. See "Opera and the Movies," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, August 22, 1915; Britt Craig, "Farrar Thrills Big Audience by Her Acting in *Carmen*," *Atlanta Constitution*, October 5, 1915; "Beautiful Singer Is Remarkable on Screen," *Daily Press* (Newport News, VA), December 1, 1915.

73. "Geraldine Farrar Makes Debut."

74. "Beautiful Singer Is Remarkable."

75. Downes, "Boston Sees Miss Farrar."

76. In her excellent study of this aspect of Farrar's *Carmen*, Melina Esse inverts the material at the heart of Auslander's discussion of "liveness" to analyze how in early motion pictures "modes of technological reproduction sought to borrow the frisson of the live" ("The Silent Diva: Farrar's *Carmen*," in *Technology and the Diva: Sopranos, Opera, and Media*

from *Romanticism to the Digital Age*, ed. Karen Henson [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016], 201).

77. Farrar's entourage included her father and mother, various actors and theater producers, and several opera singers and administrators. "Geraldine Farrar Makes Debut." The cinematograph studies included a cavalry drill, two nature films (studies in horticulture and the birth of a butterfly), a sunset, and a travel scene from Niagara Falls.

78. Harkins, "Miss Farrar Acclaimed."

79. Jennifer Fleegeer, *Mismatched Women: The Siren's Song through the Machine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 48–50. Fleegeer cites an advertisement comparing Farrar to the Victor machine and asking "Which is which?"

80. "Farrar Gazes on Farrar."

81. "Geraldine Farrar Makes Debut." Farrar's reaction to seeing herself onscreen is also discussed in Esse, "The Silent Diva," 106–7.

82. The program also included advertisements from Oliver Ditson and Henry F. Miller & Sons Piano Co. for a *Carmen* vocal score and Farrar's Victor recordings of *Carmen*. Farrar: *Her Photo Dramatic Debut*, 9, 11.

83. W. Stephen Bush, "The *Carmen* of the Films: Miss Geraldine Farrar Makes Her Screen Debut at Boston under Most Auspicious Auguries," *Moving Picture World*, October 16, 1915.

84. Esse notes that during other screenings of *Carmen* across the country, Farrar was frequently also showered with applause (as if she was present in person). "The Silent Diva," 110.

85. "Miss Farrar as Movie *Carmen*—Makes Picture Debut in Boston—Philip Hale's Criticism," *Hartford Courant*, October 4, 1915; and Downes, "Boston Sees Miss Farrar."

86. Johnson, *Symphony Hall*, 274. In the sixth chapter of his book, Johnson has a wide-ranging discussion of nonmusical events at Symphony Hall, ranging from travelogues to political speeches to cooking and auto shows.

87. Löw, "The Constitution of Space," 26.

88. The older New York Academy of Music was located on 14th Street and owned by two hundred stockholders comprising the patrician families of New York City. By the late nineteenth century, newly wealthy patrons eager to flaunt their wealth and culture were unable to acquire boxes at the academy; one group of benefactors founded the Metropolitan as rival to the academy. For more on social class, opera companies, and language in nineteenth-century America, see scholarship by Katharine Preston, including a brief introduction in "Opera Is Elite / Opera Is Nationalist: Cosmopolitan Views of Opera Reception in the United States, 1870–1890," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 66, no. 2 (Summer 2013): 535–39. The completed Metropolitan auditorium was the largest in North America, with a stage ninety-two feet deep. The focus on upper-class display and stockholder investment was reflected in the percentage of boxes, which comprised at least 25 percent of the entire available seating. *Harper's Weekly* noted that "the habitual opera-goer goes not to see the opera, but to see the other habitual opera-goer, and looks with pity, not untinctured with contempt, upon the countryman who abides in the parquette." *Harper's* also gave an account of the 1883 design, which noted 3.5 tiers of boxes (122 altogether): the half tier was baignoire boxes (the side walls of the parquet), followed by the parterre, the first and second tiers, then the balcony and the gallery. Parterre and first tier were distributed among stockholders, while twelve baignoires and thirty-six second-tier boxes were at the disposal of the manager. Boxes measured seven by thirteen feet and were intended to hold six people each. After a fire in 1892, the house was redesigned with two tiers of boxes and the elimination of the baignoires. See "The Metropolitan Opera House," *Harper's Weekly*, October 27, 1883, 683–84. For comments on boxes and social class, see J. Cleaveland Cady, "The Essential Features of a Large Opera House," *Inland Architect and News Record*, October 1887, 47.

89. In regard to generally restrained applause at the Metropolitan Opera, see Walter Damrosch's comments in the early 1920s: "Claque at Opera, Damrosch Charges," *New York Times*, April 6, 1922. Hansford's comments refer to a series of high-class photoplays at

the Strand in 1918; in his opinion, the soundscape of the Metropolitan Opera House “was the only thing lacking to give the correct operatic tang” to the productions at the Strand. Hansford, “Preparing Music for Photoplay Accompaniments,” *Dramatic Mirror of Motion Pictures and the Stage*, January 19, 1918, 12.

90. For an excellent analysis of the development of class-based and racial hierarchies in relation to opera in nineteenth-century America, as well as a valuable decentering of the Metropolitan Opera within this narrative via studying opera in English and in other regions of the United States, see Kristen M. Turner, “Opera in English: Class and Culture in America, 1878–1910” (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2015). For additional discussion of the changing social class of opera over the course of the nineteenth century, see Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow*, along with the corrective by Locke, “Music Lovers.”

91. Thomas Whitney Surette, “The Opera,” *Atlantic Monthly*, April 1916, 275.

92. Bowser, *The Transformation of Cinema*, 121–36; and Richard Koszarski, *An Evening’s Entertainment: The Age of the Silent Feature Picture, 1915–1928* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1990), 9–62.

93. For a reference to “picking up a little rental money,” see John Brown to Otto Kahn, March 19, 1914, folder 21, box 165, Otto Kahn Archive, Princeton University (hereafter OKA). Referring to budget woes during World War I, Ziegler wrote to Kahn that “I think it would be a pity to let slide an opportunity to earn this amount of money when we consider the doubtful conditions that are apt to prevail next year” (March 14, 1918, folder 1, box 168, OKA). Rentals were supposed to only take place according to a specific fee structure, although frequent irritated letters from the board suggest this policy was flexibly enforced. I thank the staff of Princeton University Department of Rare Books and Special Collections for their excellent support with accessing the Otto Kahn Archive.

94. The Executive Committee had the right of refusal. See Ziegler to Kahn, March 14, 1918, and November 19, 1918, folder 1, box 168, OKA. These letters concerned rental requests from Morris Gest for a summer movie season at the Met and from the New York Federation of Churches for a church bazaar.

95. One particularly contentious issue concerned the numerous legal disputes between the Met and Oscar Hammerstein regarding opera presentations in New York City. For an account of grand opera as the Met’s particular territory, see Paul D. Cravath to Otto Kahn, August 27, 1914, folder 1, box 166, OKA. For correspondence regarding the legal categorization of motion pictures, see Edward Ziegler to Otto Kahn, March 14, 1918, folder 1, box 168, OKA.

96. For the boxing and wrestling match—of which Brown noted that the “nature” of the entertainment required the sanction of the board—see Brown to Kahn, February 4, 1915, folder 3, box 166, OKA. Brown specifically noted that tickets would be sold to this performance, a stipulation that obviously mattered to the Met. For the fashion fête—Ziegler commented that this was “not exactly the kind of entertainment the Metropolitan has been in the habit of housing,” with Kahn also not favorably disposed toward the request—see Ziegler to Kahn, October 23, 1919, and Kahn to Ziegler, October 24, 1919, folder 2, box 168, OKA.

97. In the spring of 1914, as Brown contemplated a rental request from impresario Julius Hopp, he assured Kahn that “I would, of course, see to it that his Festival is up to standard” (March 19, 1914, folder 21, box 165, OKA).

98. Based on a London model, the New York Lambs were founded in 1874. See “Charles Lamb, the Father of the Lambs’ Club,” *Indianapolis News*, May 9, 1914, for a brief history of the organization.

99. For letters about general scheduling difficulties at the venue, see Brown to Kahn, October 8, 1914, folder 21, box 165, OKA; and Ziegler to Charles Mackay, August 18, 1919, folder 2, box 168, OKA. For correspondence about scheduling the Lambs, see Brown to Kahn, March 4 and 19, 1914, folder 21, box 165, OKA. The Lambs had already held “All-Star” gambols at the Metropolitan Opera in 1898, 1909, and 1912 (and would rent the space

in 1916 and 1918 as well). Lambs' All-Star gambols typically drew upper-class audiences and raised funds through temporarily auctioning off opera boxes to the highest bidder. The 1909 show (held at the Metropolitan Opera House) "resembled one of the busiest nights of the opera season. Persons well known in society occupied the boxes, and the carriages blocked Broadway and the near-by streets for blocks" ("Lambs' Star Gambol Brings in \$32,00," *New York Times*, May 25, 1909).

100. The New York City Lambs' gambol was the first stop of an eleven-city tour in 1914. Sousa and the Lambs included street parades in each city; in New York City the street parade (4:45 on Friday, 11:15 on Saturday) wound from West 44th Street west to Broadway, south to 42nd Street, east to Fifth Avenue, south to 25th Street, west to Broadway, north to 44th Street and the clubhouse. The route on Saturday terminated at the Met. See "Plays and Players," *New York Sun*, May 20, 1914. See also "Sousa a Lamb 'Star,'" *Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 5, 1914. The Lambs had a history of staging minstrel shows at the Metropolitan Opera House. The 1898 show was described as "an old-fashioned negro minstrel entertainment, greatly magnified, with more renowned end men, interlocutors, song and dance men, stump speakers, knockabout comedians, female impersonators, ballad singers, and instrumentalists than any grand, combined Mastadon Minstrels ever had before" ("The Week at the Theatres," *New York Times*, May 8, 1898). The 1914 show featured a minstrel act with actor De Wolf Hopper as interlocuter and a number of other theatrical figures as end men, all dressed in white "middy suits" and blackface. For a discussion of female impersonation and Julian Eltinge, see "Eltinge Tells of His Forebear 'Boy Actresses,'" *New York Tribune*, May 17, 1914, as well as Marybeth Hamilton's "I'm the Queen of the Bitches: Female Impersonation and Mae West's *Pleasure Man*," in *Crossing the Stage: Controversies on Cross-Dressing*, ed. Lesley Ferris (London: Routledge, 1993), 107–19.

101. Additional celebrities featured in the films included Clifton Crawford, Joseph Coyne, Otto Goritz, and Raymond Hitchcock. In New York, Glenn Hall sang the onstage songs; in touring performances different stars performed the singing accompaniment. See "Lambs in Gambol on Big Battleship," *New York Times*, May 23, 1914; and "Lambs Gambol Is an All-Star Show," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 24, 1914.

102. Brown to Kahn, May 15, 1914, folder 21, box 165, OKA. While Brown's comments are related to the Lambs gambol, the letter does not explicitly note that his concerns relate to the films—the original accompanying enclosed letter is not preserved in the Kahn archive.

103. *Cabiria* was the first appearance of the Maciste character. For a brief discussion of *Cabiria*, see Ivo Blum, "Italia," in *Encyclopedia of Early Cinema*, ed. Richard Abel (New York: Routledge, 2005), 333–34. There are a number of specialist studies of this film, including *Cabiria e il suo tempo*, ed. Paulo Bertetto and Gianni Rondolino (Milan: Il Castoro, 1998). For more on the music and publicity of this film, including details on the role of Pizzetti's student Manlio Mazza in the composition of *Cabiria's* score, see Martin Miller Marks, *Music and the Silent Film: Contexts and Case Studies, 1895–1924* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 103–8.

104. Grau, *The Theatre of Science: A Volume of Progress and Achievement in the Motion Picture Industry* (New York: B. Blom, 1914), 275.

105. Brown to Kahn, May 20, 1914, folder 21, box 165, OKA. The individuals named in correspondence about this project include Harry Raver, American representative of the Itala Film Company of America (which partnered with distribution company Exclusive Supply Corporation), and Augustus Thomas, director-general of the All-Star Feature Corporation. For more on All-Star Feature Corporation, see *Moving Picture World*, April 11, 1914, 160, 551.

106. "Edison's Invention of the Kinetophone: Introduction," *Century Magazine* 48, no. 2 (June 1894).

107. Leppert, *Aesthetic Technologies of Modernity, Subjectivity, and Nature: Opera, Orchestra, Phonograph, Film* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015), 102. In chapter 3 of this monograph, Leppert analyzes the relationship between Caruso, the phonograph, and the

resultant shifts in listening habits. He notes that Victor assumed (or pretended) that most of its consumers were already regular opera attendees while simultaneously acknowledging that recordings could collapse space and enable those outside of urban centers to experience far-off voices.

108. Brown to Kahn, March 28, 1916, folder 3, box 167, OKA. In 1915 Kahn urged a complete revamp of contract policies vis-à-vis singers and phonograph companies, culminating in a negotiated deal with Victor—a lump sum for existent contracts and a percentage of record sales for new contracts. Kahn to Brown, January 12, 1915, folder 3, box 166, OKA. This letter was precipitated by three records made by baritone Carl Schlegel for Victor Phonograph Company. See also letters from Alfred Seligsberg to Kahn, December 10, 1915, folder 4, box 166, OKA, and Brown to Kahn, January 11, 1915 (folder 3, box 166, OKA), January 13, 1916, and April 13, 1916 (folder 3, box 167, OKA). This contract was itself renegotiated in 1917; see telegram from Ziegler to Kahn, March 10, 1917, folder 5, box 167, OKA. See also Geraldine Farrar's 1908 contract with the Met; article XIII states, "She will not sing or perform or render any professional services for or under the management of any person, firm or corporation other than the company." An annotation in the margin clarifies that "this restriction does not refer to the Victor Talking Machine Company, with whom the artist has already signed a contract" (box 12, Geraldine Farrar Collection, Library of Congress).

109. Brown to Kahn, March 28, 1916, folder 3, box 167, OKA. While this letter concerns movies and the Met, it also reflects on continued problems with phonograph contracts.

110. Copy, Julius Hopp to Brown, April 2, 1915, folder 3, box 166, OKA. Brown sent an accompanying letter with the copy on April 8, 1915, and Kahn responded on April 9, 1915. Hopp noted that he had been negotiating such a project with Kahn for the past few years; his letter stated that the motion pictures negated any need for scenery, and since the war in Europe precluded a summer season abroad, Met singers were free during the summer of 1915.

111. The beginnings of this project were initiated by a movie contract offer from World Film Corporation for star baritone Antonio Scotti. Kahn noted that a retainer request seemed eminently fair, given that the film opportunity had come to Scotti "as a direct result of his connection with the Metropolitan and because of the reclame [*sic*] and prestige which his impersonation of the character in *Oracolo* received through being presented on the Metropolitan Opera stage" (Kahn to Seligsberg, June 24, 1915, folder 4, box 166, OKA). See also Brown to Kahn on June 17 and 23. For information on Metropolitan Opera Stars Film Corporation, see Seligsberg to Kahn, March 27, 1916, folder 3, box 167, OKA. Seligsberg questioned Kahn regarding the capital stock of the new film company, suggesting the Met board chairman might prefer subscriptions to be listed under Victor Herbert's name (as opposed to Kahn's). See also Brown to Kahn, March 20, 1916, folder 3, box 167, OKA.

112. Met singers Andrés de Seguro and Pasquale Amato hoped to manage the Met Opera Stars Film Corporation, though Brown wished to hire a professional moving picture man such as Ewers. Ewers suggested having the films made by Edison and released through Paramount. See Brown to Kahn, March 28 and April 14, 1916, folder 3, box 167, OKA. Brown quit his job as comptroller in May 1916.

113. For the initial letter about this project, see Grau to Kahn, August 12, 1915, folder 12, box 101, OKA. *The Dumb Girl of Portici* was Universal Picture #1250, directed by Lois Weber and Philipps Smalley. The film was screened initially at Clune Auditorium, then opened in Chicago in February 1917.

114. Grau to Kahn, August 13, 1915, folder 12, box 101, OKA. Grau reiterated this in a letter two weeks later, noting his hopes that this private exhibition would be held "in the same auditorium where Pavlova has always made her conquests." Pavlova had a long-standing professional relationship with Kahn—he had supported her initial United States tour in 1910.

115. "Pavlova Screens at Metropolitan," *Atlanta Constitution*, September 15, 1915.
116. In his initial letter from August 13, Grau stated that even if a prolonged engagement was impossible, he hoped for a single week. Upon no response from Kahn, Grau sent an August 27 follow-up letter bargaining for a single showing. Grau to Kahn, August 27, 1915, folder 12, box 101, OKA.
117. Kahn to Grau, August 30, 1915, folder 12, box 101, OKA.
118. Brown to Kahn, January 9, 1916; Kahn to Brown, January 10, 1916; Brown to Kahn, January 13, 1916; all in folder 3, box 167, OKA. Dicksons's *The Fall of a Nation* also had a New York premiere at the Liberty Theatre on June 6, 1916.
119. "Rothapfel Leases Metropolitan, N.Y., for Picture Shows; First Time in History that Noted Playhouse Has Been Let for This Purpose," *Exhibitors Herald*, December 29, 1917. See also "Films and Concerts in the Metropolitan: Directors Finally Won Over to a Summer Season of War Movies and 'War Thrift,'" *New York Times*, March 21, 1918.
120. "Opera House to Show Pictures: Metropolitan Will Be Taken Over for Summer by S. L. Rothapfel," *Dramatic Mirror of Motion Pictures and the Stage*, March 30, 1918.
121. "Rothapfel Doesn't Care a Bit: Abandonment of Metropolitan Opera House Plan Not Regarded as Loss to Pictures," *Dramatic Mirror of Motion Pictures and the Stage*, April 6, 1917.
122. "U.S. Haste Costs Rothapfel the Metropolitan—Wanted Films Shown Quickly," *New York Clipper*, March 27, 1918.
123. Metropolitan Opera archivist Peter Clark commented on this issue, noting that sight lines at the opera house would not have been conducive for a film showing. I wish to thank him for his communications on this subject.
124. In 1915 William A. Brady noted in an interview that "with two exceptions, every theater in New York City could be converted into a playhouse. . . . [T]hey have taken our plays, they have taken our actors, and now they are taking our theaters." Interview printed in multiple newspapers, including "Sorrows of Satan Dale over Decay of the Stage: The Critic Actors Consider the Devil Incarnate Laments Quality of Popular Taste as Brady Does," *Courier Journal* (Louisville, KY), August 15, 1915. Problems with a narrow focus on New York ("Gothamcentrism") in theater or film studies have been discussed by Robert C. Allen in "Decentering Historical Audience Studies: A Modest Proposal," in *Hollywood in the Neighborhood: Case Studies of Local Moviegoing*, ed. Kathryn H. Fuller-Seeley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 20–33.
125. These are films that originally contained synchronized sound—such as *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *The Lord of the Rings*, and *Harry Potter*—not "silent" films played with live accompaniment (although the latter practice has also skyrocketed in recent years). The L.A. Philharmonic's 1987 rendition of *Alexander Nevsky* is credited as being the first example of live synch; today's technology generally uses click tracks and a TV monitor with visual cues for the conductor.
126. Melinda Newman, "'Jurassic' Symphony: The 1993 Dinosaur Blockbuster Gets an Orchestral Makeover," *Billboard*, January 15, 2016, <http://www.billboard.com/articles/news/magazine-feature/6843746/jurassic-park-orchestral-concert-treatment-theaters>.
127. "LA Phil Celebrates 30th Anniversary of *Back to the Future* with Screening of Entire Film at the Hollywood Bowl with Live Orchestral Accompaniment," Hollywood Bowl press release, June 10, 2015, <http://www.hollywoodbowl.com/press/la-phil-celebrates-30th-anniversary-of-back-to-future-screening-of-entire-film-hollywood-bowl>.
128. Austin Siegemund-Broka, "Why *Back to the Future* Composer Is Writing New Music for the Film," *Hollywood Reporter*, June 26, 2015, <http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/heat-vision/alan-silvestri-back-future-s-804979>.
129. John Burlingame, "Live Movie Concerts a Cash Cow for Orchestras," *Variety*, April 28, 2015, <http://variety.com/2015/music/features/live-movie-concerts-a-cash-cow-for-orchestras-1201483456/>.

130. De Semlyen, "Aliens Books a Royal Albert Hall Date with the Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra," *Empire*, February 16, 2016, <http://www.empireonline.com/movies/news/aliens-books-royal-albert-hall-date-royal-philharmonic-orchestra/>.

131. Discussing the presentation of Charlie Chaplin silent films at Powell Hall, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra conductor David Robertson noted, "What's fun for me is that you really get the whole great experience of seeing the film and find out why the big movie palaces (at the time), like the Fox and Powell, worked so well" (Sarah Bryan Miller, "See and Hear Chaplin's Films as They Were Meant to Be Enjoyed," *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, December 28, 2006).

132. Martin Miller, "E.T. Comes Home to the Hollywood Bowl," *Los Angeles Times*, September 5, 2015, <http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/arts/la-et-cm-review-e-t-comes-home-to-the-hollywood-bowl-20150905-story.html>.

133. The August 2016 Boston Symphony Orchestra live synch of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* featured fans in Harry Potter-themed attire. The orchestra sold Harry Potter merchandise, and refreshment booths had Harry Potter-themed appetizer and drink offerings. Examples of original cast appearances include the 2011 New York Philharmonic's live synch of *West Side Story* and the 2016 Hollywood Bowl live synch of *Back to the Future*, which also featured a replica of Marty McFly's 4x4 truck and three DeLoreans.

134. See Bryan Miller's review of the St. Louis Symphony Wizard of Oz live synch (*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, December 30, 2008).

135. Productions began in December 2006. As of the 2016–17 season, *The Met: Live in HD* reached more than two thousand venues in seventy countries. The Met calls these "performance transmissions," though it initially described them as "live cinema."

136. Jeremy Tambling, *A Night In at the Opera: Media Representations of Opera*, ed. Tambling (London: John Libbey and Co, 1994), 8–9; and Citron, *Opera on Screen*, 50–51.

137. James Steichen, "The Metropolitan Opera House Goes Public: Peter Gelb and the Institutional Dramaturgy of the Met; Live in HD," *Music and the Moving Image* 2, no. 2 (2009): 24–30. Paul Heyer notes that the initiative for digital broadcast content quickly spread beyond the Met to companies such as Covent Garden and the Royal Ballet, each with its own physical location that might be fetishized by viewers. Heyer, "Live from the Met: Digital Broadcast Cinema, Medium Theory, and Opera for the Masses," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 33 (2008): 591–604.

138. W. Anthony Sheppard, "Review of the Metropolitan Opera's New HD Movie Theater Broadcasts," *American Music* 25, no. 3 (2007): 383–87. In his reading of this event, Sheppard introduced the idea of "presence envy" but ultimately concluded that the Met broadcast might offer a richer experience than "in-person" attendance.

139. For an apocryphal reference to a live transmission where a couple searched for the "Champagne bar" at Toronto's Scotiabank theater, see Kay Armatage, "Operatic Cinematics: A New View from the Stalls," in *Audiences: Defining and Researching Screen Entertainment Reception*, ed. Ian Christie (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012), 219. A number of theaters have offered special meal packages for the Met, such as the Riverside 12 theater in Reno, Nevada. For one of many references to refreshments, see Andrew Moravcsik, "Sopranos at the Cineplex: The Met Is Drawing in New Fans by Broadcasting Live to Cinemas; Popcorn Munching Encouraged," *Newsweek*, March 19, 2007.

140. Sheppard, "Review," 385.