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SOUNDS OF NATIVE OKLAHOMA:
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FRED CARDIN, JACK F. KILPATRICK, AND TESSIE MOBLEY
FOR THE MUSICAL CULTURE OF AMERICA

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A THESIS APPROVED FOR THE
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

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Abstract

By showcasing three biographies of notable twentieth-century Native American musicians, this project provides a cultural context for debating issues of inclusion in the development of American classical music life. The research deviates from established musicological protocols to examine the concerns of cultural appropriation and exoticism in greater detail. Consequently, this approach delves into the musicological trends that have excluded Native Americans from the study of twentieth-century concert culture in the United States. With the aim of incorporating these narratives into American classical music curricula, the narratives explore musical profiles through the lenses of burgeoning discussions about the historical invisibility of Native Americans in the United States.

This work contributes to recent efforts broadening the discussion about what constitutes music history in America by driving attention to subjects that American musicologists often overlook. Though mixed-race Native Americans have been criticized in other disciplines for being used as assimilationist figures, this work contradicts such an imperialist perspective. Evidence in this project suggests that cultural relations between white and indigenous peoples during the early twentieth century were more than antagonistic. These three musicians fought against ideologies in urban environments that discriminated against and oppressed Native Americans. In this thesis, Native American artists Fred Cardin, Jack F. Kilpatrick, and Tessie Mobley are regarded as contributors to the communication and preservation of indigenous identities in North American culture. By revealing these biographical accounts of opposition to assimilation, this work reframes some of the prevalent misconceptions about Native Americans in the history of America and its classical music.

Introduction

At the time of writing this document the United States of America is facing a social challenge at its border with Mexico revealing dehumanizing racism in its immigration policies. To understand these attitudes towards immigrants, we must acknowledge America's colonial past and historical implications in real-life policy. Under colonial times, European settlers stole indigenous territories, yet few critics have linked immigration laws to historical colonial crimes today. Instead, policymakers have created a divisive environment in which asylum seekers of Native descent are not welcomed in the United States. However, ancestors of many American politicians were once immigrants too. They were colonists who instilled a cultural sense of inferiority in people of color. Those colonists assumed ownership of the territories where indigenous peoples once existed. If a relevance in American musicology is to be communicated, music history can no longer neglect problems of cultural oppression that have developed since the colonial period. Musicologists must discuss the significance of indigenous peoples in American history, which has been overlooked by centuries of Eurocentric protocols. Only by confronting the consequences of an imperialism past would the arts be able to press forward with conscious inclusivity.

Our general understanding of the musical identity in North America has often been detached from many issues related to colonialism. Increasing numbers of culture and music scholars, concerned about these problems, have begun to identify untold stories and problems in selecting the music that defines nationhood. Among those overdue, the subject of indigeneity remains circumventing musicological efforts to make narratives more inclusive. While some approach these goals from an ethnographic or anthropological framework, narrow considerations in historical musicology consider Native America as an aesthetic and ethical value opposing

assimilation. Natives were such before America. Indigenous peoples struggled to prevail amidst invasions of foreign settlers, and music history seems to have forgotten about the achievements of Native Americans subsisting in the Western aesthetics.

In countries such as the United States of America, settlers who redefined indigenous territories paradoxically feared and exoticized Native American identities. This study, however, is not solely concerned with indigenous musical exoticism and similar ethnic conflicts. Beyond from that aspect, this paper primarily examines the cultural context of twentieth-century classical music scene from the perspective of three prominent Native American musicians: Fred Cardin (Quapaw), Jack F. Kilpatrick (Cherokee), and Tessie Mobley (Chickasaw). These artists were three successful Native American figures born in present Oklahoma. Additionally, this investigation attempts to contextualize their lives within the framework of significant political and social events that occurred during their lifetimes and historical precedents that affected Native American people.

Building on excellent scholarship in the humanities and advocating for the importance of Native American studies, my project focuses on Oklahoma, a destination for those removed during the Trail of Tears after the 1830 Indian Removal Act. By analyzing forgotten stories and artistry of these Native American artists, this study aims to understand the context in which they lived from a cultural perspective as well as to describe the political implications that shaped their lives and work. Similarly, this document encourages further research into other examples of marginalized cultures and their backgrounds in North America. Continuing the efforts for a post-colonialist musicology, this work also advocates for inclusion of marginalized figures in the general discourse of musical history from the United States of America, which has arguably excluded their backstories as antithetical to the nationalist ideologies of the time. Nevertheless,

examining the challenges and reasons for the invisibility of these profiles can reveal information about American values. Acknowledging these stories means more than an apology; historiographical diversity conveys an important assessment into our past that guides our present actions in a humanist manner.

Attempts to contextualize stories, such as those of successful Native American musicians, can help us understand some of the factors that have rendered them historically invisible. Here stands a debate on how their existence provides insight to the social conditioning of cultural assimilation. Historical initiatives in musicology of this nature may offer music more relevance in nowadays by causing readers to reflect on relatable histories of marginalized figures, which increases the value of classical music for multicultural audiences. While this research will not solve these social constructions on its own, and historians must continue to investigate what affects marginalized ethnicities in the present day. Musicologists must accept the responsibility of continuously evaluating established beliefs about classical music to maintain their relevance in academia; ignoring this obligation is disingenuous. Music has had an impact on the social environment and ideologies of its time and continues to do so. Accepting that premise could increase the interdisciplinary value of musicology while also alleviating the current lack of interest in the fine arts. This document wholeheartedly invites an open-minded approach to the writing and appreciation of classical music history from the United States.

Native Americans and the United States

For readers unfamiliar with colonial United States history, this foreword aims to introduce the tensions between Natives and colonists, mainly in the cultural context, that led to serious conflicts among these societies. From the earliest days of colonialism, the Jamestown colony enticed European imagination into believing the love story of Pocahontas and John Smith,¹ feeding into the fascination for alliance among Native Americans and Europeans. Nowadays, however, we understand that most colonists sought interactions with the native populations mostly for means of survival. Those love stories soon turned into a relentless desire for territorial expansion. Native Americans were not going to leave their lands without fighting. While the young American republic dealt with natives without regard to politics or humanity, alliances of Indian tribes resisted their efforts to have their lands, lifestyles, or beliefs stripped away from them. Therefore, sporadic wars occurred among European settlers and Indian tribes from the seventeenth century until well into the twentieth century. Although it is difficult to argue when settlers became American, European colonists might have adopted a sense of territorial property after severing



Fig. 1, Simon van de Passe, *Pocahontas*, illustration in *Baziliologia A Booke of Kings*, London, Compton Holland, 1616, Copper Engraving, National Portrait Gallery, London.

¹ Jamestown is a historic site in east Virginia and considered the first permanent English settlement in North America. The story of Pocahontas and John Smith is now part of mainstream American culture, but a great source to learn the veracity of this legend is Camilla Townsend, *Pocahontas, and the Powhatan Dilemma: The American Portraits Series*. (NY: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2005).

political connections to Great Britain on July 4, 1776. That sense of ownership at the birth of the United States of America brought to Native Americans periods of massacre, removal, and endless injustices prevalent to this day.

The nineteenth century was a time of expansion westward and mass migration promoted by leaders such as Thomas Jefferson. Through institutions such as the Office of Indian Affairs, the government created a model of westward expansion known as the Removal Era (1830–1850), forcing the displacement of thousands of Native Americans. One of the most well-known events related to this expansion is known as the Trail of Tears that displaced Indian Americans to present-day Oklahoma.²

If ever we are constrained to lift the hatchet against any tribe, we will never lay it down till that tribe is exterminated, or driven beyond the Mississippi: adjuring them therefore, if they wish to remain on the land which covers the bones of their fathers, to keep the peace with a people who ask their friendship without needing it, who wish to avoid war without fearing it. In war they will kill some of us; we shall destroy all of them.³

Thomas Jefferson, Third U.S. President

By eulogizing cultural expressions such as the American Wild West, the United States of America sought to absolve itself of its corruption and inhumane behavior that resulted in the annihilation of Indian Americans. Culture became an effective way to affirm that rhetoric. And, by the 1840s, the need for redemption evolved into a shameless sense of superiority historically

² Andrew K. Frank, “Trail of Tears (term),” *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, accessed Oct. 6, 2020, <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=TR003>.

³ Thomas Jefferson. *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson: 1807-1815*. Edited by Paul Leicester Ford. (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1898): 133.

termed as the Manifest Destiny,⁴ a white supremacist belief giving American settlers the divine right to expand their territories and justify the genocide of Native Americans. Of the millions of Native American peoples that once lived in the vast landscapes of North America only 250,000 survived by the twentieth century.⁵ But such horrible happening did not go unnoticed, Catherine Beecher was among the female activists that opposed these murderous legislations and ideologies.⁶

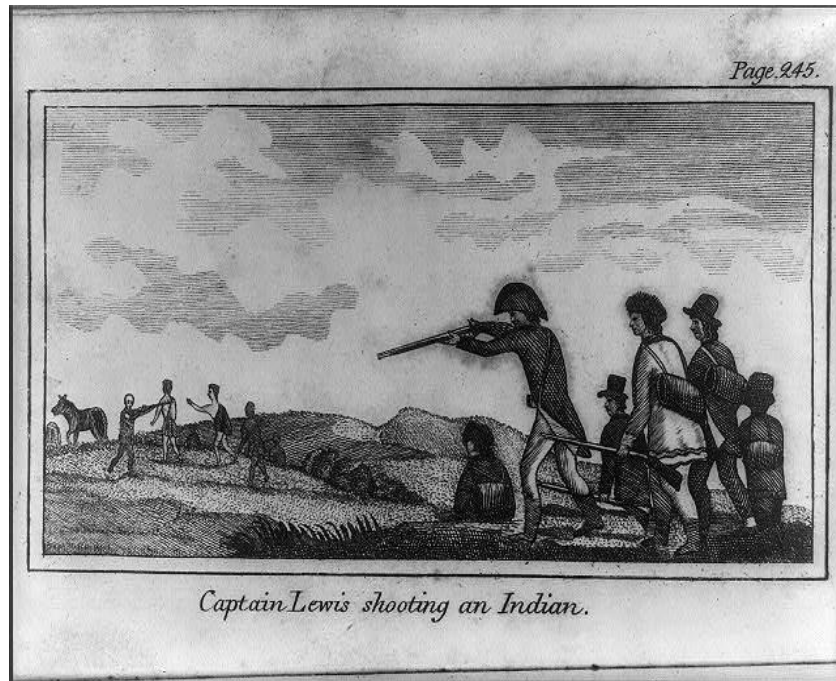


Fig. 2, *Captain Lewis shooting an Indian.* paper engraving printed for Matthew Carey. 1810. Library of Congress Washington, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2001699660/>.

The conflicts and injustices against indigenous American peoples took a different course of action from that point on; they would become strategies for Indian assimilation into American culture. While resistance to the removal campaigns never ended abuses of power, politicians

⁴ Robert J. Miller, *Manifest Destiny and Discovery in Native America, Discovered and Conquered: Thomas Jefferson, Lewis & Clark, and Manifest Destiny.* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2006): 115-163.

⁵ Russell Thornton. "Overview of decline: 1494 to 1890-1900" in *American Indian Holocaust and Survival: A Population History Since 1492.* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1987): 42-59.

⁶ Alisse Theodore, "'A Right to Speak on the Subject': The U.S. Women's Antiremoval Petition Campaign, 1829-1831." *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 5, no. 4 (2002): 601-623. Accessed March 24, 2021. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41940290>.

should have thought about America's ways of presenting themselves to the rest of the West. Certainly, US culture would have at least wanted to redefine itself in contrast to its European origins. As indigenous peoples have continued to fascinate the European mainstream imagination, Americans aim to regulate and control their indigenous heritage to their standards and values.



Fig. 3, George Catlin, *Buffalo hunt, chase*, 1845, lithograph, New York Public Library Digital Collections.

According to the nationalistic romantic movements, American artists started to recreate America's beauty with folk elements in art. On one side, the Hudson River School was one of the first groups to produce art that would recreate the beauty of American countries, as in the work of German-American painter Albert Bierstadt. It is around this time that American people finally begin to express a sense of concern about the extinction of Native heritage,⁷ inspiring George Catlin to paint many portraits of Native Americans and to publish scholarly research about native

⁷ Tom Holm. "The Vanishing Policy" in *The Great Confusion in Indian Affairs: Native Americans and Whites in the Progressive Era*. (University of Texas Press, 2005): 1-22.

peoples' lifestyle. While other arts continued to integrate folk elements into traditional norms, classical music compositions in America would not break through its Eurocentric framework until the very last decades of the nineteenth century.

Long before it found a home in the works of Ives, Copland, and Gershwin, America's desperation to rediscover its musical identity turned to the ancient spirituality of Native American sounds. Prior to the twentieth century, an influential group of American composers, dubbed the Indianist movement, borrowed thematic material from Native American folk music. While the word "Indianist" is used loosely, works by Mac Dowell, Amy Beach, Charles Cadman, and Thurlow Lieurance demonstrate this compositional style rooted in nationalism. Tara Browner distinguishes this tendency from the nationalism that emerged in Europe as "a nationalistic cross-cultural appropriation (to) represent musically nationalistic impulses" rather than depicting ethnocentrism, their own culture.⁸ Although many Native American composers began to incorporate their heritage into their work, most Indianist composers were white Americans or European immigrants. One well-known instigator of this behavior, though never explicitly linked to this the Indianist movement, was Czech composer Antonin Dvořák.

So-called Russian, Bohemian, or any other purely national music has no place in art, for (...) we have seen the Viennese Strauss family adopt the cross-rhythms of the Spanish (...). Grieg the Norwegian writes Arabian music; and, to cap the climax, we here in America been offered a pattern for an American [music] by the Bohemian Dvořák - though what the negro melodies have to do with Americanism in art still remains a

⁸ Tara Browner. "'Breathing the Indian Spirit': Thoughts on Musical Borrowing and the 'Indianist' Movement in American Music." *American Music* 15, no. 3 (1997): 265-84. Accessed March 25, 2021. doi:10.2307/3052325.

mystery (...), - why cover it with the badge of whilom slavery rather than with the stern but at least manly and free rudeness of the North American Indian? (...) Masquerading in the so-called nationalism of Negro clothes cut in Bohemia will not help us. What we must arrive at is the youthful optimistic vitality and the undaunted tenacity of spirit that characterizes the American man.⁹

Edward MacDowell, American composer

Spending three years as the director of the National Conservatory of Music of America, Dvořák's nationalist views produced successful protegees. Dvořák integrated African American spirituals into his music for American audiences, demonstrating a desire to transcend Austro-Hungarian aesthetics.¹⁰ Years after Dvorak's time in America, African American music has occupied an important place in American culture, serving as a stronghold for recent American classical music research. The study, on the other hand, focuses on three Native American musicians who also played an important role in introducing Native American music in the United States. These musicians were associated with the Indian Territory, which is now the state of Oklahoma and was built on systematic racism against indigenous peoples.

Literature Review

Exploring Native American's diverse heritage in twentieth-century culture might appear an endless mission; thankfully, excellent scholarly documents have been created to guide the nature of this endeavor. Currently, the best biographical work about any of these musicians is a

⁹ Lawrence Gilman, *Edward MacDowell: A Study*. (New York: John Lane Company, 1908): 83-85.

¹⁰ Maurice Peress, *Dvořák to Duke Ellington: A Conductor Explores America's Music and Its African American Roots*. (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008): 5-6.

chapter about Tessie Mobley in *Dynamic Chickasaw Women* by Phillip C. Morgan and Judy G. Parker.¹¹ Similarly, John W. Troutman contextualizes Fred Cardin's life in a section of his chapter "Hitting the Road: Professional Native Musicians in the Early Twentieth Century" in *Indian Blues: American Indians and the Politics of Music, 1879–1934*.¹² Although there is no recent biographical work on Jack F. Kilpatrick in musicology, he is mentioned in periodicals and several music dictionaries.

Among the most up-to-date and comprehensive studies of Oklahoma's Native American tribes, Blue Clark's *Indian Tribes of Oklahoma* offers socioeconomic and historical information of the numerous tribes in this state known as the "Indian Country."¹³ After an insightful introduction that extends to prehistoric times, Clark provides a repository of concise histories for each of the different Tribes living in Oklahoma. Another exemplary work about Oklahoma's history is *The WPA Guide to 1930s Oklahoma*,¹⁴ a publication edited by the renowned historian Angie Debo under the American Guide Series. Pioneering Native American studies, Debo's influential publications provide a foundation to today's activism on behalf of Indian Americans. This guide's republication enhances the fascinating collection of essays by adding a restored piece by Angie Debo. The first part of the book, "The General Background," provides astonishing information about Oklahoma's musical activities, recognizing the merits of Native Americans.

¹¹ Phillip Carroll Morgan and Judy Goforth Parker, *Dynamic Chickasaw Women* (Chickasaw Press, 2011).

¹² John W. Troutman, *Indian Blues: American Indians and the Politics of Music, 1879-1934* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009).

¹³ Blue Clark, *Indian Tribes of Oklahoma: A Guide* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009).

¹⁴ *The WPA Guide to 1930s Oklahoma* ed. Angie Debo (University Press of Kansas, 1986).

Some work has been written about Indigenous heritage in classical music of the United States, but not enough has been done to convey the extent of influence of Native American artists, in the United States and internationally. In 2020, the American Musicological Society dedicated a short post in memoriam to the illuminating work of the late Dr. Michael Pisani, whose book *Imagining Native America in Music* provides an excellent model for the whole of this thesis.¹⁵ This book presents a history of Native American inspiration in classical music. Pisani's investigation is a thematic examination of nationalist aesthetics in Native American music informed by the theoretical framework of ethnomusicologists. Although Pisani conveys some of the political circumstances that have shaped American history, Troutman's *Indian Blues* takes the issues of assimilation to new levels by exploring the political implications of musical practices in Indian reservations and boarding schools. These publications guide this research with a model of musicology studies related to Native American culture.

Gathering information about these musicians is an extraneous component of the research as very little scholarly work has been written about them. Nevertheless, some aspects of their lives have been documented across different disciplines, especially in anthropology and cultural studies. Although a complete reference to all significant scholarly research is too widespread and abundant for a single researcher to convey, some recent interdisciplinary work includes Michael Snyder's *Our Osage Hills*,¹⁶ Keith Parker's *Seven Cherokee Myths*,¹⁷ and Richard Green's *Te Ata*

¹⁵ Michael Pisani, *Imagining Native America in Music* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

¹⁶ Tessie Mobley's involvement in the in the 1930s film *Whoopie!* is described in the chapter "Cimarron Manie: Edna Ferber, Louis Brave, Lushanya, and Chief Bacon Rind" Michael Snyder and John Joseph Mathews, *Our Osage Hills: Toward an Osage Ecology and Tribalography of the Early Twentieth Century* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2020): 175-178.

¹⁷ The ethnographic legacy in *Friends of Thunder Folktales of the Oklahoma Cherokees* (University of Oklahoma Press and London, 1995) by Kilpatrick and his wife Anna Gritts Smith (later Anna G. Kilpatrick) is referenced in: G. Keith Parker, *Seven Cherokee Myths: Creation, Fire, the Primordial Parents, the Nature of Evil, the Family, Universal Suffering and Communal Obligation* (Jefferson, N.C: McFarland & Co, 2006): 195.

Chickasaw Storyteller, American Treasure.¹⁸ Furthermore, Victoria Lindsay Levine has explored the musical transcriptions of folk tunes to European notation by Jack F. Kilpatrick.¹⁹ Cathleen D. Cahill has argued for the political symbol that singers such as Tessie Mobley represented in the activism for the respect and preservation of indigenous traditions.²⁰ Fred Cardin's image also represents a powerful statement for Paige Clark Lush, who explains his performances with the Indian String Quartet as an attempt to merge traditional European repertoire with Indian-inspired aesthetics through quartet arrangements of Indian tunes.²¹ Further aspects of their lives can be drawn from the printed press and the personal writings by these musicians. This project also necessitates an objective approach to assess the variety of sources, both academically and in the daily press, in developing a narrative about these three figures and their influence in American musical culture.

Theoretical Framework

The conceptual considerations in this project revolve around the issues of power over culture, while considering the ways these ideas have evolved through history. First, we might begin our exploration of these concepts by understanding the definition of culture. While it remains an evolving concept, culture can be defined for its function in society as a representation

¹⁸ Fred Cardin's performances with Te Ata, an interpreter, are depicted in pages 70-75. This collaboration was part of the Chautauqua circuit, which will be discussed in the chapter of Fred Cardin. Richard Green, *Te Ata: Chickasaw Storyteller, American Treasure* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006).

¹⁹ Victoria Lindsay Levine, *Writing American Indian Music: Historic Transcriptions, Notations, and Arrangements*. (A-R Editions, Inc., 2002): 196-197.

²⁰ Cathleen D. Cahill, "Urban Indians, Native Networks, and the Creation of Modern Regional Identity in the American Southwest." *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 42, no. 3 (July 1, 2018): 71-92. Accessed March 28, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.17953/aicrj.42.3.cahill>.

²¹ Paige Clark Lush, "All The American Other: Native American Music and Musicians on the Circuit Chautauqua." *Americana: The Journal of American Popular Culture, 1900 to Present* 7, no. 2 (Fall, 2008), https://americanpopularculture.com/journal/articles/fall_2008/lush.htm

of lifestyle as well as the philosophical and artistic activities that people or community value.²² The “Cultural Production,” as described by Raymond Williams, exists in the shared creativity of artistic works, including the musical, that represent groups of people or humanity.²³ The concept of cultural production refers to the most noticeable representation of a culture as it is most often represented in tangible artwork that we can appreciate physically or intellectually. Cultural production, thus, expresses our ideologies and shared ways of life in the most material manner, and this kind of representation most often expands farthest from its original context. Therefore, the cultural production of a community is susceptible to being absorbed by other entities. Hence, we must consider the constantly occurring issues of appropriation, which can inevitably occur in culture as a shared ideological collective.

Opposing views to the politically charged concept of cultural assimilation often ignore the ethical issues of ownership by focusing on the shared aspects of a culture. This mindset allows a dominant culture to assert superiority, divorce another culture from its original meaning, and align it to the parameters of the dominating culture. Cultural assimilation is the result of this process. As Ibram X. Kendi argues, assimilationist agendas convey the “racist idea that a racial group is culturally or behaviorally inferior [by] supporting cultural or behavioral enrichment programs to develop that racial group.”²⁴ At first glance, assimilation seems like a unifying force that intends to bring unfamiliar cultures into a consensus. However, this approach inherently patronizes a weaker racial group that must sacrifice their values to incorporate themselves to the standards of the dominating culture. When referring to the early twentieth century, Susan Scafidi

²² Bruce Burgett and Glenn Hendler. *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*. (New York: New York University Press, 2007): 71.

²³ *ibid.*

²⁴ Ibram X. Kendi, *How to Be an Antiracist*, First Edition. (New York: One World, 2019): 24.

claims the appropriation of cultural products might offer an opportunity to claim ownership over any ethnic group resisting to assimilate.

Few of us wish to bring the homogenizing melting pot to a rapid boil. We instead celebrate our diversity (and demonstrate our individual *savoir faire*) through consumer culture (...). Indeed, the tension-filled history of American immigration and even internal migration indicates that the cultural products of others are often easier to accept and assimilate than the individuals (or huddled masses) themselves.²⁵

Susan Scafidi, legal scholar.

Furthermore, the appreciation of foreign culture by a dominating force can be completely inconsistent to the treatment of individuals from which the culture is being claimed over or appropriated. Nowadays, post-colonialist cultural scholars understand that humans, and their culture, must be respected as equals despite their differences. They reject the need for a culture to "grow" in compliance with the appropriate of another culture. Assimilation is a racist mentality that is fundamentally opposed to equity. Since conventional scholarship in the arts has concentrated on European aesthetics, academia has built a superiority over other non-western cultures. Several other fine arts disciplines elevate the work of a few at the expense of others.

Conscious of these issues, recent musicological research has produced various works in the name of diversity, hoping to improve the quality of discussion regarding marginalized ethnicities. But it can be problematic to navigate cultural representation issues in classical music without an understanding of the cultures being described. In the case of native American

²⁵ Susan Scafidi, "Preface and Acknowledgments" in *Who Owns Culture? Appropriation and Authenticity in American Law*. (New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press, 2005), xi.

influences in classical music, the European aspiration for cultural autonomy justified colonization efforts by normalizing indigenous appropriation. Rather than illustrating an accurate representation, whiteness in American music was concerned with exoticizing Native American cultures as barbaric. Therefore, Pisani's interpretation of Native American exoticism refers to this tendency as an “imagined Native America” that is socially constructed to accommodate influences from dissimilar, and sometimes opposing, cultures. Indigenous exoticism, rather than being an honorable representation of Native Americans, became a stereotypical tool for white nationalist unity. While music scholarship has researched American nationalism, Pisani claims that few have considered cultural misinterpretations as a component of that notion.

Pisani places considerable emphasis on misrepresentation in the context of exoticism. By expanding on Tara Browner's work, he also identifies cultural appropriation issues in the context of musical borrowing. The methods of both authors are relied on theoretical semiotic analysis. Their work provides some solutions to concerns regarding the indigenous imagination in some musical compositions by evaluating the types of tropes that indigenous imaginations use. Thus, in exploring issues of representation, *Imagining Native America in Music* guides this research project with evaluative model to Native American identity surviving the threat of assimilation into the dominating aesthetics of Western classical music.

For the discussion of musical exoticism, Ralph P. Locke provides a compendious definition to this term suitable for this study's purpose despite being a frame developed for repertoire in the Western tradition. In the conceptual groundwork of his *Musical Exoticism: Images and Reflections*,²⁶ Locke identifies this phenomenon as a frequent tendency among

²⁶ Ralph P. Locke, *Musical Exoticism: Images and Reflections* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

musical societies to interpret otherness, exposing their curiosity. Locke views exoticism as an evocation, like Pisani's imaginations, of a contrasting cultural entity, often defying another culture's norms. Nevertheless, some similarities among the contrasting cultures might be noticeable in these evocations. If successful, the work may erase some disparities between an evoked culture and the creator of the evocation. Because my study brings these considerations beyond the artwork, to the artists' life, some social considerations serve the arguments in the biographies in this project.

In this project's case studies, the persons being studied here were partly of white descent, and, therefore, these three musicians were constantly living in a bicultural context. For this aspect, Theda Perdue's *Mixed Blood Indians* delves into a compelling range of issues faced by mixed-race Native Americans,²⁷ who were historically ignored and oppressed by both Native and European cultures.²⁸ In the culture of the United States, some of these considerations must be examined more closely. Native American cultures, justifiably enduring the threat of assimilation, often disregard members of multiracial ethnicities. In dealing with Native American cultural identity in the performing arts, Donald Fixico's *Daily Life of Native Americans in the Twentieth Century* attests to the issues of assimilation into dominant white culture, but he fails to identify the achievement of bicultural Natives in classical music claiming that "symphony conductors and opera singers are as yet nonexistent among American Indians."²⁹ Similar arguments in Native American studies leave one to question whether musicology's failure to convey Native American profiles in classical music is responsible for invisibility in other fields. Furthermore, can these musicians figure within the study of Native American culture despite only being partially part of

²⁷ Theda Perdue, *Mixed Blood Indians: Racial Construction in the Early South* (University of Georgia Press, 2010).

²⁸ Theda Perdue, *Mixed Blood Indians: Racial Construction in the Early South* (University of Georgia Press, 2010).

²⁹ Donald Lee Fixico, *Daily Life of Native Americans in the Twentieth Century* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 2006): 132.

such heritage? In assessing the social and artistic merits of these case studies the investigation responds to a set of questions.

Methodology and Design

This project is guided by a case study examination addressing evolving conceptions of cultural representation. While cultural assimilation has been under attack in the recent decades, some cultures only hoped to survive in any form, amid an assimilationist culture, even if their cultures were misrepresented. Today, however, we are becoming more embracing of cultural diversity in our societies, so we must start investigating past problems in the assimilationist music cultures. It comes as a great surprise to realize that these artists might have been involved, perhaps unknowingly, in the process of cultural assimilation, “taming” and reframing Indianness to better serve white aesthetics. However, if their intentions were to promote a component of their heritage that no one else understood, we must ask:

- 1) How were these musicians seeking to represent indigenous culture through their artistic careers? and how could they have misrepresented it?
- 2) What has led to the disappearance of these once-famous artists from the general historical narratives of American music?
- 3) How does the inclusion of these figures in musicology change the field?

In addressing the cultural aspects of their artistry and their cultural products:

- 1) What did it mean for these artists to have a career in classical music?
- 2) How was the music of these Native Americans and to whom was it created? For what purpose?

- 3) Did the art of these musicians present an exoticized or accurate description of their Native American culture?

This work attends to the considerations of heritage and representation by asking these and other questions. By positing hypotheses based on historical evidence, this research employs an inquisitive stance as a methodological approach for addressing representational issues in musicology.

This document is divided into two sections. The first section provides conceptual context for the work by situating it within the social and cultural landscape of Oklahoma during their lives. The second group of chapters delves into these figures' musical lives, with a particular emphasis on their musical achievements during the early twentieth century, as this is when their careers were most active. While the state of Oklahoma unites these stories, the evidence is not limited to geographical considerations, as each of these musicians achieved national and even international success to varying degrees.

Terminology and Limitations

When referring to Native American peoples in this project, the possible issues of terminology stand with the approach taken by John W. Troutman, who prefers to refer to each Native American primarily by their affiliation to Tribes. Troutman notes that many labels have been associated with this heritage, such as First Nations People, American Indians, Indigenous, and others.³⁰ Michael A. Peters and Carl T. Mika debate terminology from an international

³⁰ John William Troutman, *Indian Blues: American Indians and the Politics of Music, 1879-1934*. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009): 263-264.

perspective despite not presenting many definitive solutions.³¹ As in Troutman's work, these terms will be used interchangeably through this document. Conscious of the respect due to this subject, this work acknowledges that nomenclature errors may exist in the accounts of these people and the places where they lived. These are my errors, and I apologize profusely for any questionable claims encountered in my research on these subjects.

How native is Native American enough for the United States? While the Native DNA considerations have been heavily politicized since the Blood Quantum laws, this investigation remains concerned chiefly with the aspects of inclusion of heritage rather than percentages of Native American ancestry. This very controversial aspect is a topic of much debate up to this day, but the narrative considers all these artists Native American for the purposes of this study. In most cases, these musicians were born of a family that respected and preserved their traditions, which can be arguably felt through the artistic legacy that surrounded them. Nonetheless, as is the case of bicultural ancestry, the issue of partial identification with a cultural ethnic group must be explored further.

This project intends to use these Native American artists to critique and broaden the protocols inherent to the study of North American music. Such investigation will uncover vexed aspects in the understanding of American values. Like these musicians, there are many other examples of excellence in classical music by marginalized figures. While this thesis is mostly introductory, this project hopes to investigate and publish these themes further. Despite the support of the research grants that have been bestowed to this project, the efforts to research this

³¹ Michael A. Peters and Carl T. Mika. "Aborigine, Indian, Indigenous or First Nations?" *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 49, no. 13 (November 10, 2017): 1229–1234. Accessed March 28, 2021. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/citedby/10.1080/00131857.2017.1279879>.

topic have been significantly impacted by COVID-19 contingencies. *Sounds of Native Oklahoma* aspires to evolve into a monograph reflecting the necessity to convey marginalized figures in the study of music history, assessing the established notions in aesthetics and ideologies in North American culture. As diverse audiences and performers continue to serve music, musicology must convey the stories that readers correlate to our current values, and our humanistic aspirations must engage in advocacy for those stifled by racism and prejudice.

Musicology is often discussed and criticized in this document over its lack of regard for Native American subjects in music history. However, the overgeneralization of musicological studies in our present day might obscure what is being criticized. The critique here is mostly directed at the instruction of historical narratives taught in American conservatories and universities. Most standard music history textbooks in America never express any of these stories, and those books often overlook the social and political circumstances related to the canonical American figures they champion. In relation to this research, music history textbooks and instruction in America have mostly ignored the challenges and accomplishments of artists of color. Native Americans remain invisible in American classical music. Musical historicism placed more importance on the technical elements of culture, often at the cost of culturally relevant biographies. These factors have contributed to the development of an American concert culture and audience consumerism that is mostly devoted to American composers in accord with white aesthetics. Though performers and concert programmers can learn from this research, my primary objective is to make information available for American musical curricula to promote a more diverse musical instruction in the future. This effort might lead to a more diversified engagement between classical music and its multicultural audiences.

On the Ethnic Background of these Native Americans

Though this investigation is focused on Native American music culture in Oklahoma, the prairies of the sooner state have historically been home to a diverse range of ethnic groups. Following the Indian Removal Act of 1830, the numerous tribes were forcibly moved to Oklahoma. The term “Trail of Tears” was coined to refer to the federal government's relocation of these groups of Native Americans.³² Along with the concentrated indigenous diversity, the American Plains was subsequently populated by European migrants and African slaves. Each of these newcomers brought with them opposing cultures that often clashed with indigenous populations. Despite the difference, some groups of Native Americans stood out for their willingness to empathize with whites. These communities were dubbed "the five civilized tribes," a phrase coined by nineteenth-century colonial rhetoric.

The Five Civilized Tribes

Because of their apparent adjustment to the Anglo-American way of life, the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole nations were called the “Five Civilized Tribes.” These were the communities more receptive to the United States’ displacement and assimilation propaganda, which intensified under Andrew Jackson’s presidency. Among the aspects the civilized tribes had to adopt was a peasant lifestyle. Agriculture, as well as other European cultural norms, were adopted by these cultures. In retrospect, the phrase was used to differentiate these five nations from other Indians labeled as “savages” because they subsisted largely on hunting. But even these five tribes were unable to escape the prejudice that had forced them to leave their ancestral homelands in the Southeast. Indeed, bigotry grew in the late nineteenth

³²Andrew K. Frank, “Trail of Tears (Term)” *Oklahoma Historical Society*, accessed April 20, 2021, <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=TR003>.

century. Although African Americans faced the most brutal violence, Indian populations suffered near-irreparable damage.³³ Thus, assimilation cannot be easily condemned, as Natives witnessed the atrocities committed against people enslaved by whites. Furthermore, the few of these five tribes that opposed the government's policies were often restricted until they were subjugated to deportation in concentration camps. During this period, death and disease among indigenous people were common and almost one in four Cherokees died.³⁴ When analyzing the lives of descendants from those tribes, we must understand their historical challenges, as those shaped the behavior of subsequent generations. Even though the Quapaw, one of the contexts examined for this research, did not figure into this grouping, two of the profiles in this investigation originated from Cherokee and Chickasaw civilized tribes. These three specific backgrounds must then be examined as they relate the musicians being researched.

Quapaw Ancestry of Fred Cardin

The Quapaw were inhabitants of the Lower Mississippi Valley. The first recorded encounter between Quapaw and Europeans occurred in the seventeenth century, when the French Jacques Marquette and Louis Jolliet traveled down the Mississippi River.³⁵ These French missionaries founded villages along the Quapaw River's banks approximately twenty miles north of Arkansas. Indeed, when Fred Cardin arrived in Philadelphia to study at the Curtis Institute of Music, his ethnicity was classified as "French Indian."³⁶ Moreover, Fred Cardin graduated from Curtis after studying at the Conservatoire Americain in Fontainebleau, France. Fred Cardin's

³³ Theda Perdue, *Mixed Blood Indians: Racial Construction in the Early South* (University of Georgia Press, 2010): 97-98.

³⁴ K. Frank, "Trail of Tears"

³⁵ Timothy James McCollum, "Quapaw (Tribe)," *Oklahoma Historical Society*, accessed April 20, 2021, <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=QU003>.

³⁶ This information was kindly given by Kristina Wilson, Curtis Institute of Music Archivist. Kristina Wilson, "RE: Fred Cardin Inquiry - Curtis Institute Archives," February 26, 2021.

European ancestors may thus be descended from those explorers. His fluency in the French language may have facilitated his formative years in Fontainebleau.

The Quapaw Villages were communities living in bark-covered longhouses that supported many families. Additionally, the Quapaws were hospitable to members of other tribes, especially the neighboring Miamis and mixed-blood people, and their social structure was recorded as patrilineal.³⁷ Quapaw and French relations were loyal, as they often traded and interacted throughout the eighteenth century. Therefore, French explorers established a relationship with the Quapaws through the exchange of gifts and imported European goods. Gifts included weapons and fur clothing.³⁸ The Quapaws also contacted Spanish and English settlers in America because of their alliance with the French.

The Quapaw society shared many social and ideological systems with Europeans. The hereditary chief position remained the primary mode of leadership among the Quapaw well into the twentieth century.³⁹ The majority of Quapaw relations with the French ceased after the selling of the Louisiana Territory in 1803. After Americans took over their lands, the age of removal to Oklahoma began, and Quapaws too walked the “trail of tears.” They settled in the Indian Territory's northeastern corner, near present-day Miami, Oklahoma. While Fred Cardin was a devout Catholic throughout his life, the peyote faith developed in the Quapaw nation as a convergence of Catholicism and Native American spirituality. The twentieth century also brought prosperity to Oklahoman Quapaw, after minerals were found on their allotment only a few years prior to statehood.⁴⁰ Even though Fred Cardin's father was a railroad laborer, he may

³⁷ Blue Clark, *Indian Tribes of Oklahoma: A Guide* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009): 333-336, accessed April 20, 2021, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ou/detail.action?docID=3571288>.

³⁸ Clark, 306.

³⁹ Timothy James McCollum, “Quapaw (Tribe),”

⁴⁰ Blue Clark, 309

have been aware of the difficulties faced by Quapaw miners in dealing with the United States. The United States government desired Quapaw's resources. As a result, the Quapaw lobbied Washington, D.C., in the twentieth century, against controls on minerals discovered on their territories. Despite their difficulties during the displacement period, the Quapaws remain one of the few tribes indigenous to current Oklahoma's grounds. Their ancestors' customs and values have withstood the test of time. Today, the Quapaws continue to work with the Environmental Protection Agency to address the harm caused by irresponsible mining activities on their territories, which remains home to both Native and White people.

Cherokee heritage in Jack F. Kilpatrick

The Cherokee Nation is currently Oklahoma's largest Native American group. There are descendants of the sovereign tribal government that lived over much of the southeastern United States before European colonization. Due to the reach of their territories, Cherokees encountered many explorers from most European colonial powers.⁴¹ The Cherokees, however, were not as accommodating to outsiders, especially if they perceived them as enemies. Their Booger Dances, for example, mocked their Indian opponents, and those rituals often depicted Europeans as obscene and intimidating by using masks and costumes.⁴²

The Cherokees had established villages with plazas and a matrilineal social system by the time Europeans arrived. The Cherokees were admitted to the clan exclusively through their mothers, as they held most positions of power in their communities. Europeans were perplexed by female leadership, so they referred to their society as a petticoat government.⁴³ Jack F. Kilpatrick's mother descended from these Cherokee women, and his father was of Irish ancestry.

⁴¹Rennard Strickland, "Cherokee (Tribe)," *Oklahoma Historical Society*, <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=CH014>.

⁴² Blue Clark, 64

⁴³ Strickland, "Cherokee (Tribe),"

Long before his musical dramas were inspired by the Trail of Tears, Kilpatrick knew that Cherokees were compelled to sign a resettlement treaty during the American westward expansion. Kilpatrick sympathized with Cherokees who had been forced to cede their lands east of the Mississippi in order to survive. We now know that nearly a quarter of those Cherokees perished on the Trail of Tears. Kilpatrick created musical dramas based on the Trail of Tears as a result. Other Cherokees who lived in present Texas were also forcibly relocated to Indian Territory. Kilpatrick's appointment as a professor at Southern Methodist University in Dallas could have been influenced by Cherokees returning from Oklahoma.

The Cherokee people have been recognized for their patriotism and long-standing military service since the period surrounding World War II. Kilpatrick also shared a willingness with twentieth-century Cherokees to serve in the U.S. military during World War II. While Kilpatrick taught at the United States Naval Academy in Washington, other Cherokees earned the highest ranks and distinctions for their service. Furthermore, Cherokees have extensively reached out in efforts to preserve their culture and identity. During the 1950s, the Cherokee Nation established traditional homecoming activities known as the Cherokee National Holiday and the Cherokee National Historical Society.⁴⁴ The Cherokees' ideological views continue to fascinate us even today. Traditional Cherokee legends attributed the origins of the southeastern Indians to two domains, upper and lower. Cherokees believed that the upper world was filled with spirits, order, and peace. Meanwhile, the lower world was dominated by water, chaos, and beasts. Conflicting forces had to be balanced to achieve stability. Kilpatrick must have valued these philosophies because he included them in his ethnographic publications.

⁴⁴ Blue Clark, 71

Chickasaw Spirit of Tessie Mobley

Chickasaws lived in progressive cities where Matrilineal leaders ruled over all civil affairs. Each town had its own council house, ceremonial plaza, and ball field. Summer residences were open-sided arbors, whereas winter residences were wattle-and-daub structures.⁴⁵ Chickasaws appeared to be the most like Europeans in terms of urban vibrancy.

In the eighteenth century, the Spanish were among the first Europeans to interact with the Chickasaws. The Chickasaws first encountered Hernando de Soto's Spanish explorers in what is now northern Mississippi.⁴⁶ Despite sometimes fatal encounters with Spaniards, the Chickasaws came to rely on European trade for firearms, knives, and metal cooking pots. As a result, they began to work with English protestants. These commercial interactions could have influenced the English willingness to engage with the Chickasaw. These first mercantile relationships may have persuaded Tessie's father, who was of English ancestry and had moved from Georgia to Indian Territory, to marry Tessie's Chickasaw mother. Tessie Mobley's close relationship with her Chickasaw grandmother stems from the tribe's regard for the elders. Traditionally, each Chickasaw tribe had an elder's council in charge of the village's civil affairs. Furthermore, considering the Chickasaw athletic spirit, Mobley's sporting interests in joining the University of Oklahoma rifle club and learning archery make more sense. Stickball games were traditionally played by Chickasaws as a common sporting contest in which female athletes competed.

The Chickasaws were the last tribe to be relocated to the Indian Territory. Following the injustices of the removal period, they used education to resurrect their ancient glory.⁴⁷ Tessie Mobley was one of the students who attended these schools. Her alma mater, the Bloomfield

⁴⁵ *ibid*, 95

⁴⁶ *ibid*, 96

⁴⁷ Amanda J. Cobb, "Chickasaw Schools," *Oklahoma Historical Society*, <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=CH034>.

Academy, began promoting Chickasaw culture in the form of ceremonials.⁴⁸ The Chickasaw were politically driven.⁴⁹ Thus, when we consider Tessie Mobley's assessment of the rise of authoritarianism in Europe, we must accept the Chickasaw inherent political will. Chickasaw's political challenges may have an impact on her progressive political criticism.

Cultural Misrepresentation into the Twentieth Century

These cultural comparisons highlight some of the musicians' resemblances to their respective tribal affiliations. However, most of this information pertains to a post removal era. The twentieth century was a time when cultural assimilation into the American way of life was still encouraged in the United States. As a result, mainstream American culture exerted a strong influence on cultural appropriation of Native American traits, normalizing assimilationist rhetoric. While these issues have been rarely addressed in classical music, Native Americans have spoken out against the entertainment industry's misrepresentation of their identities. Hollywood has largely profited from the stereotyping of Native peoples as savages or unintelligent. Even then, it could be argued that classical music, like mainstream culture, was involved in issues of representation. Some aspects of these professionals raise concerns about the authenticity of Indigenous heritage. However, we must not underestimate the difficulties of surviving in an assimilationist world. Understanding how assimilation influenced the actions of these Native American musicians can help to justify what we may now perceive to be dishonest to their lineage. From that perspective, we must first recognize the bravery of pursuing an artistic life that embraced Native American culture.

⁴⁸ Blue Clark, 99-100

⁴⁹ James P. Pate, "Chickasaw," *Oklahoma Historical Society*, <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=CH033>.

Native American Cultural Challenges in the Early Twentieth Century

My name is Sacheen Littlefeather. I'm Apache, and I am president of the National Native American Affirmative Image Committee. I'm representing Marlon Brando this evening and he has asked me to (...) share with you (...) that he very regretfully cannot accept this very generous award. And the reasons for this being: the treatment of American Indians today by the film industry [,] on television in movie reruns, and also with recent happenings at Wounded Knee. I beg at this time that I have not intruded upon this evening and that we will in the future, our hearts and our understandings will meet with love and generosity.⁵⁰

Sacheen Littlefeather, 45th Academy Awards in 1972

Forty-five years after Sacheen Littlefeather's appearance at the Oscars, the American public was finally allowed to hear the full speech condemning Hollywood's misrepresentation of Indianness on the Native Trailblazers radio program on March 23, 2018. For the urgency of these issues, the message was long overdue. But to understand the need for this political statement in the mainstream, causing jeering in the audience and John Wayne's attempt to physically attack Littlefeather, we must understand how American culture assimilated and misrepresented Indigenous heritage up to this point.

Assimilate in Order to Survive

Oklahoma's Native Americans have a complicated, interesting, and unique history. Their tale is one of adversity, collective and individual triumphs, and cultural clashes with the American establishment. Many themes in the art of Oklahoma's Native Americans are linked to

⁵⁰ "Marlon Brando Academy Awards Acceptance Speech," accessed April 12, 2021, <http://aaspeechesdb.oscars.org/link/045-1/>.

the human physical and spiritual power. Understanding these topics provides insight into Indian identity, but we must also consider their difficulties. If Native Americans were to survive in the United States, they had to negotiate two ideologies: adaptation and integration. Those aspects became an important parts of Indian life in Oklahoma during the twentieth century, especially after their forced relocation into Indian Territory. This should be remembered when considering how these musicians were involved in assimilationist practices.

Indian Boarding Schools

The first and most misleading assimilation strategy was the Indian Boarding Schools. Their primary problem was their mission to “civilize” indigenous youth, frequently through inhumane ways and despite their racial identity. The primary objective of these institutions was to subjugate indigenous people to white American civilization, which in our current conception meant assimilationist ideas and values. There is no specific ethnic heritage that needs to be merged into another group. The implication for the need for guidance means a patronizing position. Still, the case of Fred Cardin complicates our assessment of assimilationist education since he significantly gained from those models.

School administrators championed Fred Cardin's success as the ideal product of American Indian Boarding Schools.⁵¹ Although Cardin received significant financial and medical assistance from Carlisle Indian Industrial School, it is important to remember that educational practices improved only after activists spoke out against the schools' lack of morals and ethics. As Trautman described, these schools' musical curricula aimed to domesticate indigenous life, while instruction was frequently monitored for any indication of savagery.⁵² As

⁵¹ Troutman, *Indian Blues*: 228

⁵² Troutman, 12

we shall see, the figure of Fred Cardin served as a model of assimilation in the form of a music career. However, little was said about this institution's leadership restructuring or about use of young musicians for lucrative concerts at Carlisle. Today, Fred Cardin's dedication to classical music may seem at odds with his indigenous heritage, but we must not forget that through his musical ability, he attempted to represent Native American culture.

The Indianist Movement

The next potential source of contention in this investigation is Jack Frederick Kilpatrick's musical output devoted to the representation of indigenous themes in classical music. This approach to classical music composition could be classified as part of the Indianist Movement. Between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Indianist Movement was a flourishing trend in American classical music. It is believed that composers of this movement sought to combine American Indian musical ideas with some of the fundamental principles of classical music to create a new American nationalist aesthetic. Tara Browner was one of the first researchers to pose questions about cultural appropriation in music when a ruling group appropriates folk elements from marginalized cultures to construct a meaning that was not originally intended.⁵³ The case of Kilpatrick is characterized as exceptional, even though indigenous ethnicity embodied a small part of his ancestry, for his remarkable dedication to Cherokee research.

Additionally, Jack F. Kilpatrick made no reference to this movement, even though he spent his youth living with several composers associated with this style. Charles Sanford Skilton, Arthur Nevin, Arthur Farwell, and Charles Wakefield Cadman were all practitioners.⁵⁴ Kilpatrick's works were frequently exhibited alongside those of the movement, but the primary

⁵³ Tara Browner. "Breathing the Indian Spirit: Thoughts on Musical Borrowing and the Indianist Movement in American Music." *American Music* 15, no. 3 (1997): 265-84. Accessed March 25, 2021. doi:10.2307/3052325.

⁵⁴ Browner, "Breathing the Indian Spirit"

distinction was the degree of reverence and authenticity Kilpatrick invested in his work. Unlike Kilpatrick, not all Indianist composers expressed a valid interpretation of Native American culture. Much of the Indianist music adhered to the exoticism parameters defined by Ralph P. Locke and Michael V. Pisani.

In fact, Pisani maintains that there was never a true Indigenist movement in American since their music mostly represent white nationalist sentiments through Indigenous exoticism.⁵⁵ Cases of American composers appropriating indigenous melodies were only one facet American fascination with the westward expansion. Thus, including Kilpatrick in the Indianist movement diminishes the significance of his scholarly work on Native American culture. His music serves more as an informed representation rather than an assimilationist conduit.

Indian Princess Phenomenon

Finally, when discussing assimilation, we must address the fact that Tessie Mobley was often referred to as “an Indian Princess.” This labeling can be mostly attributed to the press at the time, particularly European. The example of Pocahontas is instructive here because the Indian princess phenomenon existed in popular culture, frequently unnoticed. Native American scholars frequently criticize Indian princesses for perpetuating stereotypes. The primary issue with Indian princesses is an erasure of traditional principles of freedom paradoxically translated into subservience to the white man. Pocahontas, for example, represents the sacrifice of a woman who left her clan and identity in the name of love for one European settler.⁵⁶

Furthermore, the troublesome aspect of these princesses was its conformity with white hierarchical values. Women frequently held positions of leadership in their tribal communities. It

⁵⁵ Michael Pisani, *Imagining Native America in Music* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005): 185.

⁵⁶ Rayna Green, “The Tribe Called Wannabee: Playing Indian in America and Europe,” *Folklore* 99, no. 1 (1988): 30–55, accessed April 21, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1259567>.

has also been recorded that white settlers also pretended to be Native American to claim these royal titles of indigenous tribes. The allusion of the Native American princess was a way to attain that status. The case of Tessie Mobley, however, shows that she was proud of her identity, which she embraced from a very young age and long before her fame. Furthermore, Tessie Mobley's "princess" labeling in some respects was more designed to depict her closeness to the Chickasaws. The princess labeling could have been used to justify her political involvement in Europe. Nevertheless, Tessie Mobley rarely used the label herself during her operatic career. As an opera star, she much preferred the name Lushanya "Songbird of the Chickasaw." This label was a way to express belonging to her Chickasaw origin rather than political title.

Three Native American Musicians from Oklahoma

These three biographies are provided as the foundations for the rest of this investigation. Instead of some straightforward chronicles, the stories frequently feature an episodic approach in which significant points of American musicology are recorded. The narratives also retain a constant appraisal. On all these precepts, Native American ancestry and family histories are significantly referenced and contextualized when researching their background during their upbringing, as well as in the analysis of their accomplishments in their adult lives. Also, the amount of personal and daily specific information that is occasionally referenced exists to allow readers to perceive the circumstances that led to their decision to pursue musical careers.

Each of these cases starts and concludes with a broad overview. The introductory material is used to condense or outline their biographical importance as well as the current state of that relevance in the humanities. It remains important to acknowledge that historic periodicals may provide an ambiguous view of events in these lives, so this information is used cautiously. This project's initiative, however, can be maintained with an aim to sparking debates about the veracity of such primary sources. For whatever interest these accounts might provoke in academia or the performing arts, it is important to bring these discussions into the bigger picture of music history in the United States.

Pejawah: William Frederick Cardin (1895-1960)

The music of the Indian tells a story of those trees. It talks of flowers and grass and hills and valleys in a language all America should know. It is an important and valuable part of the Nation's heritage, and it should not be allowed to die.⁵⁷

Fred Cardin, interview with the *Philadelphia Inquirer*

The multifaceted musician Pejawah, later taking the name William Frederick Cardin, was among the most active figures interested in recognizing Native American heritage as integral to American classical music. Commonly known as Fred, he was hailed as the greatest Native American violinist of his time. Fred Cardin also carried out the roles of orchestral conductor and composer in the United States' eastern region, and his accomplishments led him to continue his musical studies at the Conservatoire Américain de Fontainebleau, in France, and at Curtis Institute of Music.

As a composer, Cardin pioneered Native American music as an integral part of classical music and American culture. In performance and composition, his work was grounded in the aim to revolutionize the Indianist movement and to bring awareness towards the need to protect Native American music and culture. Most of his compositional works were in close collaboration with Indianist composers of the previous century, especially Thurlow Lieurance, a musicologist invested in collecting and researching Native American music.

In addition to his time in Philadelphia Cardin also performed with the Kansas City Symphony and served as part of the University of Nebraska's music faculty before joining a cultural movement prompting American culture known as the Chautauqua Circuit, playing in the

⁵⁷ Louis Schlosberg, "Heap Fine Musician: The Indian Boy Named for a Wildcat Became a Maestro in Reading, PA," *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, April 30, 1950) <http://www.newspapers.com/image/173795069/?terms=Schlosberg&match=1>.

Indian String Quartet. As the first violinist of the Indian String Quartet (or Indian Quartette), Cardin led this musical enterprise to promote Native American culture. The performances of this quartet juxtaposed European repertoire and Native American music. The Chautauqua Circuit was described as a truly American phenomenon. He collaborated to provide education and entertainment for millions of American audiences interested in defining a true American cultural identity.

Fred Cardin ultimately transitioned into a career devoted to music education as well as many forms of musical community service through his work at the public schools of Reading, Pennsylvania. This happened after he succeeded John Phillip Sousa's work with the Maine band Ring Gold Band. He also served as music director of Reading Civic Opera and was a violinist of the Reading Symphony Orchestra. Fred Carding's impact on its community as a music educator and advocate of diversity was celebrated by those around him when he was featured on national television in the last decades of his life.

Musical Upbringing

The Quapaw tribe of Oklahoma welcomed Pejawah, meaning big cat, in 1895 who was destined for a bright future as a violinist and as one of the greatest advocates for indigenous musicians. While information about his parents remains very obscured, Pejawah was often labeled as a full-blooded Indian American, but this claim was falsely attributed to other Native American public figures by the news. We know that his father, Alexander F. Cardin, was an adopted Quapaw who fell victim to the unjust bargains over land allotment, which forced him to work at railway train stations for small income.⁵⁸ We also know that he was later baptized with

⁵⁸ John W. Troutman, *Indian Blues: American Indians and the Politics of Music, 1879-1934*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009): 217.

the name Frederick William Cardin by the Catholic church. The young Pejawah grew up near present-day Miami, Oklahoma. While living there, he attended the St. Mary's Catholic school, "which produced several accomplished musicians."⁵⁹ He lived in the Indian Territory until he was one of the many Indians sent to the Carlisle Indian Industrial School. While very scarce



Fig. 4, Fred Cardin "Pejawah".
Courtesy of the Music Archives at
the Curtis Institute of Music.
"MacDonald Studio/Curtis Institute
of Music Archives"

information exists about his education at Carlisle, Fred Cardin found significant support at the Boarding school. Nevertheless, Carlisle's sole purpose was to be an institutional model for the assimilation efforts by the United States to deprive Native American children from their heritage.

Pejawah entered the Carlisle Indian Industrial School at age fifteen,⁶⁰ on September 21, 1910, immediately showing an interest to continue playing the violin in that institution. While a student, he received significant support from Carlisle's music director Fred Stauffer, and Pejawah performed at "practically every function that required music."⁶¹

Fred Cardin even recited a poem on one occasion for Carlisle's celebration of Washington's birthday.⁶² But the musical activities at the boarding school were not trivial matters in their

⁵⁹ "Notes From Your Town," *Miami News-Record* (Miami, Oklahoma, May 20, 1959), accessed April 10, 2021, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/75348496/miami-news-record/>.

⁶⁰ "Fred Cardin Student File | Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center," n.d., RG 75, Series 1327, box 140, folder 5529, National Archives and Records Administration, accessed April 12, 2021, http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/student_files/fred-cardin-student-file

⁶¹ Troutman, *Indian Blues*: 217.

⁶² "INDIANS CELEBRATE WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY," *The Sentinel* (Carlisle, Pennsylvania, February 23, 1911), accessed April 13, 2021, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/75364276/the-sentinel/>.

community since large audiences frequented the music concerts at Carlisle. The school reported as many as three thousand applications for people wanting to attend music shows.⁶³ Fred performed music by Dancla, Bach, and others. However, the music of the Indianist movement appealed to him as much as to learn how to play oboe just for a melody in an Indianist song by Charles Wakefield Cadman.⁶⁴ A few months after Fred Cardin impressed with his multifaceted talent, the young violinist amazed the entire state when he won a scholarship to study at the Dana Musical Institute in Warren Ohio after his graduation. Fred's musical director, Mr. Stauffer had studied at the Dana's Musical Institute as well. Fred graduated from the Indian boarding school in 1912, and he moved to Ohio in the following year.

Moses Friedman financed Cardin's move.

Friedman was the second superintendent at the boarding school, and he continued to support Cardin's musical career financially many years after Fred graduated from Carlisle. Friedman was a descendant of Jewish Immigrants.⁶⁵ Fred owed much of his success to superintendent Friedman and the music director Fred Stauffer, who represented a new leadership at the school

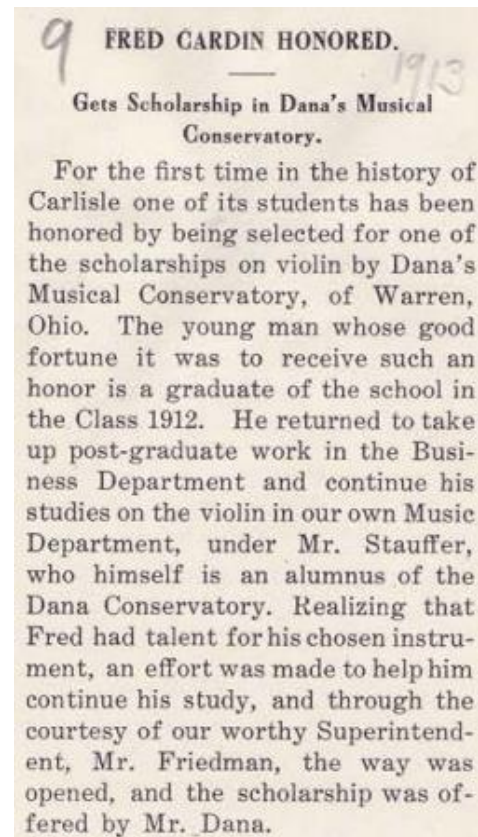


Fig. 5, Undated clipping in Carlisle's archives: RG 75, Series 1327, box 140, folder 5529.

⁶³ "INDIANS GAVE A FINE GYMNASTIC EXHIBITION: LARGE NUMBER OF VISITORS SAW THEM THIS AFTERNOON.," *The Sentinel* (Carlisle, Pennsylvania, April 2, 1912), <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/75670748/the-sentinel/>.

⁶⁴ "INDIAN BAND MAKES A HIT," *The Sentinel* (Carlisle, Pennsylvania, April 2, 1913), accessed April 13, 2021, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/75672765/the-sentinel/>.

⁶⁵ Genevieve Bell, "Telling Stories out of School: Remembering the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, 1879-1918" (PhD diss, Stanford University, 1998): 88."

much more sensitive to the needs of Native American students. Although Cardin's success was depicted as an unprecedented event in history, Indian boarding schools in the United States had previously known another violinist enrolled in these programs that would set the scene for Carlisle's success and well-being.

As Fred Cardin, the White's Indiana Manual Labor Institute discovered musical aptitude in an eight-year-old girl baptized as Gertrude Simmons Bonnin better known today as Zitkala-Sa,



Fig. 6, Photo of Zitkala-Sa (Gertrude Simmons Bonnin), who was a Native American music educator and political activist. (Photo from Wikimedia Commons).

meaning Red Bird. She was given a violin during her time at the boarding schools. She was affectionately known as Gertie, but she lived in deplorable conditions at the labor institute. Few dared to speak about the inhumane treatment of children at boarding school, who lived suffering disease and hunger.⁶⁶ These experiences prompted her activist mindset years later. But first, Zitkala-Sa received a violin and lessons from the Quakers running her boarding school, and she eventually became a concert violinist. From 1897

to 1899 she studied at the New England Conservatory. In 1990, Zitkala left Boston to teach at the Carlisle Indian School, one decade prior to Cardin's enrollment at that same institution. Zitkala-Sa was also an activist for

⁶⁶ Dovie Thomason, "The Spirit Survives" in *Carlisle Indian Industrial School: Indigenous Histories, Memories, and Reclamations*, Jacqueline Fear-Segal and Susan D. Rose, eds., (Lincoln ; London: University of Nebraska Press, 2016): 325-320.

exploited” students.⁶⁷ The support that Fred Cardin found at Carlisle most beholden to Zitkala-Sa’s activism against the abuse of Native American children.

A great general has said that the only good Indian is a dead one, and that high sanction of his destruction has been an enormous factor in promoting Indian massacres. In a sense, I agree with the sentiment, but only in this: that all the Indian there in the race should be dead. Kill the Indian in him and save the man.⁶⁸

Capt. Richard Henry Pratt's, Carlisle Boarding School founder.

By the time of Fred Cardin's arrival to Carlisle in 1910, the boarding school had a strong musical curriculum and operated under a new superintendent, Moses Friedman. The music ensembles directed by Zitkala-Sa had been heard at the Paris Exposition of 1900; she had also performed as a soloist on that occasion.⁶⁹ Furthermore, Zitkala-Sa had already voiced her disapproval for the assimilationist agenda at the Carlisle boarding schools in *Harper's Monthly*, a cultural magazine. She revealed how such a schooling system only prepared students for inhumane labor and a profound loss of Native American identity. Fred Cardin would never study under the progressive influence of Zitkala-Sa, as she was fired by Colonel Pratt in 1901 for her critical arguments against Indian boarding schools in the press.⁷⁰ But six years before Fred Cardin’s enrollment, Pratt was forced to resign as superintendent of the Carlisle School. Criticism over Carlisle’s instruction affected the future of the boarding school. Zitkala-Sa’s activism cemented the success of future generations of Native Americans. Owing to the

⁶⁷ Helen Rappaport, “Bonin, Gertrude (Zitkala-Sa/Red Bird)” in *Encyclopedia of Women Social Reformers* (Santa Barbara, CA, ABC-CLIO, 2001): 100-101.

⁶⁸ Richard H. Pratt, “‘Kill the Indian, and Save the Man’: Capt. Richard H. Pratt on the Education of Native Americans,” accessed April 14, 2021, <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/4929>.

⁶⁹ Helen Rappaport, 100.

⁷⁰ “Zitkala-Ša (Red Bird / Gertrude Simmons Bonnin)” accessed April 12, 2021, <https://www.nps.gov/people/zitkala-sa.htm>.

principles of human rights, Fred Cardin was to continue the legacy laid out by Zitkala-Sa even though these talented violinists never coexisted in the same place.

Maintaining close connections with his boarding school, Fred Cardin spent three years as a student at the Dana's Musical Institute while freelancing around the United States to build his reputation as violinist. He was a student of Jacob Gimbel, who bestowed a violin to the young Fred. Nevertheless, Cardin was still quite dependent on the financial support that Carlisle provided him for his living expenses. He was involved in significant musical events: in 1914, Fred Cardin requested permission to perform at the World's Fair in San Francisco. The following year he obtained a job with the orchestra of the Chautauqua Institute in New York, but he felt ill with Typhoid fever. He resigned from this job and moved back to Carlisle to receive medical treatment. While recovering, Cardin offered a collaborative concert, showcasing some of his own works. He had certainly produced several works close to the Indianist movement by 1915.⁷¹ Unemployed and full of medical bills, the twenty-year-old violinist seemed to have lost his only chance of living a musical dream, but Carlisle was yet to surprise him again. Fred Cardin was contacted by his childhood friend William Palin, whom he also met at Carlisle, who expressed his intention of recommending him for the position of first violinist of the Indian String Quartet, where he played as a violist. Based on the Salem Indian School in Chamawa, Oregon, the Indian String Quartet was a chamber music ensemble managed by Ruthyn Turney that had already performed on tour.⁷² Fred left Carlisle for that job in 1916.⁷³ This post was an exciting project for

⁷¹ "Indian Violinist," *The Parsons Daily Sun* (Parsons, Kansas, October 6, 1915), accessed April 13, 2021, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/75682301/indian-violinist/>.

⁷² Troutman, 218.

⁷³ "Fred Cardin Left This Morning." *Parsons Daily Eclipse*. Parsons, Kansas, September 7, 1916. Accessed April 14, 2021. <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/75691901/parsons-daily-eclipse/>

Cardin as the Indian String Quartet offered a venue for him to embrace his interest in Native American influences in classical music.

The Indian String Quartet



Fig. 7, Members of the Indian String Quartet. Clippings from “*The Indian String Quartet: and Mr. Richard H. Kennedy*” The University of Iowa Libraries: Redpath Chautauqua Collection (MSC0150)

The Indian String Quartet was initially composed of three Native American musicians plus Turney, but they soon began to look for an Indian first violin as their intended to be as an indigenous ensemble. William Pallin, Fred's childhood friend and violist of the quartet, introduced him to the other members of the group. The second violinist, Alex Melodivov, was an Alaskan member of the Aleut tribe who had studied in Russia before moving to Oregon. Similarly, the cellist William Reddie was also from Alaska, but he was part of the Haydah tribe. William Pallin belonged to the Flathead tribe of Montana before his time at Carlisle. With Fred Cardin's addition into the group, Turney moved to his administrative capacity, and they soon began to tour northwest regions. Their transportation was facilitated by Richard Kennedy, a Harvard graduate often serving as presenter and lecturer of Native American culture. Although

Kennedy's role as part of these tours was often seen as irrelevant, he took every opportunity to promote the educational aspect of the string quartet project.

The concert format of the Indian String Quartet presented a combination of European classics and Native American tunes arranged for string quartet. Oftentimes performances offered a first half of European works and a second part exclusively for music of the Indianist movement. Their performances were very popular in the Lyceum projects as well as for the Chautauqua communities. The Native American musician selections in the program were enhanced by the addition of traditional Indian clothing and colorful headdresses. While misuse of headdresses has been criticized in our modern times for issues of cultural appropriation, the members of Indian String Quartet made it clear that the use of these costumes should be respected. They also demanded to perform for Native American boarding schools. Therefore, Fred Cardin returned to Carlisle to present the Indian String Quartet in a concert that juxtaposed music by European classics as well as Native American music heritage.

The Indian String Quartet disbanded due to the unsatisfactory conditions these musicians were subjected to during their concert tours. Furthermore, despite not having the rights of American citizens, Fred Cardin and the other members of the quartet were drafted into the First World War. Fred Cardin served in the army as part of both the 313th Cavalry and the 69th Field Artillery of the 95th U.S. Division.⁷⁴ After the war, Fred Cardin's next step in his musical career also came from a good friend.

⁷⁴Marion Eleanor Gridley, *Indians of Today*, (Chicago, 1936): 28, [http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.\\$b59295](http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.$b59295).

Collaborations with the Chautauqua Circuit

Even years before the Indian Citizenship Act, granting citizenship to all Native Americans born in the United States, Fred Cardin mustered the courage to begin managing musical projects of his own. The Indianist composer and ethnographer Thurlow Lieurance helped Fred Cardin more than ever before, reuniting long after a visit to the famous Lake

Minnetonka.⁷⁵ The lake was the direct reference for his most famous song *By the Waters of Minnetonka*, a place where Cardin had shot arrows during their visit.

Together they created the Cardin-Lieurance Orchestra and String Quartet.

Fred Cardin also began his own musical collective with Native American artists called Indian Art and Musical Company. Cardin's new musical enterprise was less



Fig. 8, Photo of Indian String Quartet in traditional clothing. Clippings from “*The Indian String Quartet: and Mr. Richard H. Kennedy*” The University of Iowa Libraries: Redpath Chautauqua Collection (MSC0150)

concerned with honoring the classical but rather introduced audiences to more varieties of Native American music. Their programs, however, also combined some Indianist compositions by Kreisler, Lieurance, and Cadman.⁷⁶ This collective consisted of pianist Wanita Cardin, soprano Sensa Carey, and the famous Chickasaw storyteller Te Ata. The former cellist of the Indian String Quartet, William Reddie, soon joined the group after Te Ata left the company. The

⁷⁵ “Visits Scene After Writing the Song,” *The Windsor Star* (Windsor, Ontario, Canada, August 2, 1926), <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/75668180/visits-scene-after-writing-the-song/>.

⁷⁶ Paige Lush, *Music in the Chautauqua Movement from 1874 to the 1930s* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc, 2013): 161.

project was particularly successful in New York, and by the 1920s, Fred Cardin's Native American companions had already created a network of musical companies.⁷⁷ These new groups were interested in bringing Native American references to every performance, in the form of musical selections and clothing.⁷⁸ The need for Native Americans to embrace their Indianness



Fig. 9, "The Cardin-Lieurance Orchestra and String Quartet"
The University of Iowa Libraries: Redpath Chautauqua Collection (MSC0150)

corresponded to postwar anti-Germanized cultural life in music and art. During the best years of the Chautauqua Circuit in the United States, the musical representation by Native American groups, such as Cardin's musical companies, were presented as inherently American and free of any European association.

The Chautauqua Movement, also referred to as the circuit, involved a series of traveling events that were often viewed as American cultural phenomena intended to educate rural areas in America. Fred Cardin felt at home during these events as he previously served in the circuit's orchestra, before resigning due to illness. Furthermore, Cardin had also attended these events while on tour with the Indian String

Quartet. Cardin may have been inspired by anti-German sentiments in the Chautauqua movement to portray his musical organization as purely American. Nevertheless, his groups

⁷⁷ Troutman, 226.

⁷⁸ Lush, 161

would occasionally introduce classical music of the nationalistic style. Music from Eastern Europe, as well as works by Russian and Bohemian composers, were frequently featured on their concert programs.

Composing and Teaching

Throughout this time, Fred Cardin felt compelled to return to composing musical works by furthering his musical education. Cardin began to distance himself from performance at the Chautauqua Circuit by pursuing private composition instruction with Thurlow Lieurance. Fred Cardin applied for admission to the Curtis Institute of Music as a composition student in September 1926, and he was accepted to the class of Reginald Morris. Prior to this, however, Fred Cardin had been a composition student at the Conservatoire Americain in Fontainebleau in France.⁷⁹ The Fontainebleau Schools must have played a significant role in Fred Cardin's artistic development, as he would have studied alongside Aaron Copland and under Nadia Boulanger. Many other influential figures in the history of American music were part of this institution. When he returned from France, Cardin graduated from the Curtis Institute of Music, after only one year of instruction, with a degree in composition in 1927.⁸⁰ Fred Cardin then continued post-graduate education at Temple University and the



Fig. 10, Fred Cardin as he appears in "The Etude Historical Musical Portrait Series." *Page 460 July 1932* Courtesy of the Curtis Institute of Music.

⁷⁹ Troutman, 226

⁸⁰ Claire Thai, "A Language All America Should Know : Composer, William Frederick Cardin 'Pejawah,'" <https://blog.curtis.edu/rrcblog/william-cardin-pejawah-composition-1927>

University of Pennsylvania.⁸¹ The 30-year-old Fred Cardin's next step was to devote the rest of his life to educating and leading musical institutions in the United States.



Fig. 11, Fred Cardin teaching at the Reading High School, photo in the Philadelphia Inquirer April 30, 1950.

Cardin spent most of his adult life teaching and occasionally composing classical music with Native American influences. His first teaching position was as a violin instructor at the University of Nebraska, where he must have composed his Indianist songs for native American pageants. One of his compositions, “Great Drum,” for a large chorus and narrator, was performed in a New York’s Town hall.⁸²

He published “Cree War Dance” for Violin and Piano with the Carl Fischer Publishing Company. Other of his published works include: “Lament” and “Ghost Pipes (Indian Idyl)” with the Theodore Presser Company. Cardin's friendship with Thurlow Lieurance is reflected in the sound of his compositions, even though he never claimed any affiliation to the Indianist

⁸¹ Troutman, 226-227

⁸² Troutman, 226-227

Movement. During the last decades of his life, he worked as a conductor and artistic director. Cardin became a teacher in Reading, Pennsylvania, and he briefly functioned as the band director succeeding John Phillip Sousa in the band Ring Gold Band.⁸³ Fred Cardin's passion for music never wavered. However, his career came to an unexpected end when he died of a sudden heart attack on August 29, 1960. He continued to work as a music educator until his last moment, dying at the end of a rehearsal with the Ring Gold Band.

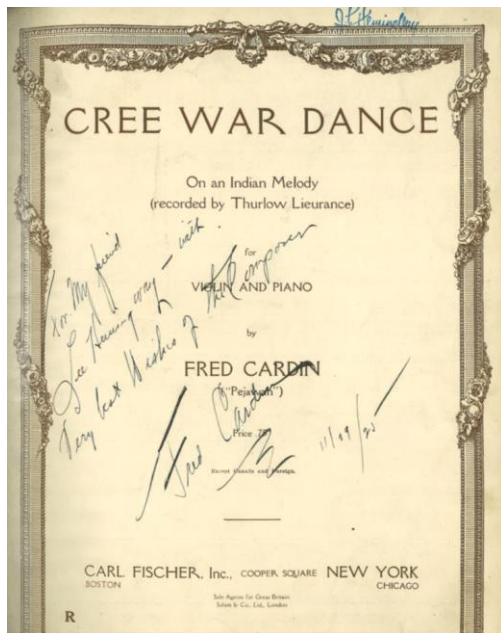


Fig. 12, Front page of Cardin’s Cree War Dance: on an Indian melody recorded by Thurlow Lieurance. Published by Carl Fisher Inc. Courtesy of the University of Nebraska Lincoln

The sudden death of Fred Cardin saddened the Native American community, and his beloved family was distraught. About a year before his death, Fred Cardin was featured on Dave Garroway's TV show *TODAY*,⁸⁴ opening the way for his legacy to gain national acclaim. Cardin's historical pageant, *Thunderstorm*, was also held at high school graduation ceremonies in his name. His wife, Mrs. Gertrude Cardin, and many of his fans were left to carry on his legacy and remember his love of music.

Fred Cardin consistently chose the hard road of life as it related to coping with difficult circumstances for classical musicians from underrepresented

backgrounds in the twentieth century. His life may have been marked by many unexplained personal setbacks and extreme racial prejudice during his musical studies, but his biography

⁸³ “Notes From Your Town.” *Miami News-Record*. Miami, Oklahoma, May 20, 1959. Accessed April 12, 2021. <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/75348496/miami-news-record/>

⁸⁴ “Notes From Your Town,” *Miami News-Record* (Miami, Oklahoma, May 20, 1959), accessed April 12, 2021, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/75348496/notes-from-your-town/>.

leaves us only to speculate. Although many persons of color in the United States overcame sickness and the adversity of American assimilationist movements, Fred Cardin's story in classical music is different as we must never neglect the significance of his struggles for survival. These struggles continue to affect working-class classical musicians of all races, as pursuing a career in music is frequently difficult even in the twentieth-first century. Musicians surviving in this harsh world can identify with Cardin's biography, which is defined by an unrelated passion for music and an indigenous heritage. Much of Fred Cardin's life, particularly his younger years, is a clear indication of the struggles and triumphs experienced by musicians from underrepresented in the music world. The methods in which musicologists use this information provide an opportunity to see the difficulties in the life of the musician.

Jack Frederick Kilpatrick (1915-1967): “leading symphony composer” forgotten in a box.

In 2018, the University of Oklahoma formally acquired dozens of musical works by Jack Frederick Kilpatrick, discovered in its music school. The librarians at the University of Oklahoma, particularly Matt Stock, oversaw disseminating information about the discovery of his music.⁸⁵ This recent finding has given new life to Kilpatrick's life and works. The Oklahoma City Philharmonic has been eager to perform this fascinating corpus. This musical revival has also come with interest in his biography. Yet, we know very little about this composer.

Kilpatrick's orchestral music was favored by conductor Leopold Stokowski, who referred to him as “America's Leading Symphony Composer.”⁸⁶ While he is best known today as an influential ethnographer, Kilpatrick's music once embodied a kaleidoscope of American references. Among those sources, his Cherokee ancestors were a frequent source of inspiration for him. Yet, it is still tragic to realize that Kilpatrick's works, once widely performed, were found in a storage box which was destined for disposal. In Europe and the United States, leading symphony orchestras regularly performed Kilpatrick's compositions.⁸⁷ Furthermore, this recently found archive demonstrates the importance of Native American influence on American concert culture. As a result, humanists and scholars in Oklahoma cataloged these works for them to be played in concert halls once more.

For this restoration project to succeed, the circumstances that catapulted Kilpatrick's works to global notoriety must be investigated. Our capacity to study and comprehend American

⁸⁵ Matt Stock, “From Storage Room to Stage: Connecting with Cherokee Composer Jack Kilpatrick” (Presented at the MPMLA Chapter Meeting at the University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah, May 18, 2019), accessed May 16, 2019, <https://music.utah.edu/mckay-music-library/mpmla2019/mpmla2019-program.php>.

⁸⁶ “Voice In Wind Nears End Of First Week's Showing,” *The Bradenton Herald* (Bradenton, Florida, February 8, 1956), <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/76110195/voice-in-wind-nears-end-of-first-weeks/>.

⁸⁷ “From Storage Room to Stage: Connecting with Cherokee Composer Jack Kilpatrick” University of Oklahoma Libraries 2018-19 Progress Report, University of Oklahoma, Aug. 06, 2019, 14. https://issuu.com/oulibraries/docs/ou_libraries_progress_report_2018-2019-hyperlinked/14

classical music has seldom considered the work of composers like Kilpatrick, who were concerned with the appropriate portrayal of indigenous cultures in classical music. He was intrigued by Cherokee songs and rhythms since childhood, which he enjoyed and practiced alongside Western classical music traditions. Jack Frederick Kilpatrick, a Cherokee ethnographer, was once one of the top composers in the United States. The resurgence of his works has reintroduced us to Native American aesthetics in classical music, and the question of who produced those evocative sounds is raised in his art.

Early Years and Education

Jack F. Kilpatrick was born in the small city of Stillwell, in the northeast of Oklahoma on September 23rd, 1915.⁸⁸ His early musical interests became clear in Stillwell. As a youngster, he began creating simple arrangements and compositions for informal musical gatherings, in addition to participating in informal musical activities in his community. Kilpatrick's interest in composition grew to the point where, while still in high school, he composed a serious score based on religious scripture. Kilpatrick was also trying to investigate his Cherokee ancestry during childhood by frequenting the nearby Cherokee communities and learning about their rituals. Kilpatrick must have been learning the rhythms and melodies that would later shape his career. He also met his future wife, Anna Gritts, a Sequoyah descendant, during those explorations. The aspirations of this Cherokee youngster continued in his adolescence, always fascinated with the purest forms of Native American lifestyles.

Jack F. Kilpatrick was also inspired by cultural traditions during this time, and he decided to devote his life to preserving Native American cultural heritage through music. His musical

⁸⁸ Nicolas Slonimsky, "Kilpatrick, Jack (Frederick)" *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Twentieth-Century Classical Musicians* (New York : Schirmer Books, 1997): 686. <http://archive.org/details/bakersbiographic0000slon>.

abilities earned him admission to California's prestigious Redlands Conservatory of Music, where he earned his first music degree in 1938.⁸⁹ It is remarkable that any mixed Cherokee individual was admitted into a higher education institution in the early twentieth-century United States, as these opportunities were largely reserved for the elites. The young composer returned to Oklahoma the following year. During the Great Depression, he was hired by the Works Progress Administration's Music Program to work as an arranger and composer for the Oklahoma Symphony Orchestra in Oklahoma City. During these years, Kilpatrick married Anna Gritts, the same girl who accompanied him on his expeditions to the Cherokee reservation. Anna and Jack had six children together and were also involved in well-known ethnographic research on Native American heritage.



Fig. 13, Photo of Jack Frederick Kilpatrick in *From Storage Room to Stage: Connecting with Cherokee Composer Jack Kilpatrick*. University of Oklahoma Libraries 2018-19 Progress Report, (Norman, OK: *The University of Oklahoma Press* 2019): 14.

Mature Career

Oklahoma City proved to be the ideal environment for Kilpatrick's orchestral works to flourish. When premiered at Oklahoma City University's American Music Festival in 1939,⁹⁰ his music delighted the audience. By the next year, music aficionados could see him promoting

⁸⁹ Lee Stern, H. H. Stern, and S. G. Schoenbrod, eds., *Who Is Who in Music: A Complete Presentation of the Contemporary Musical Scene, with a Master Record Catalogue* (Lee Stern Press, 1940): 252.

⁹⁰ This information is in the private archives of the Oklahoma City Philharmonic Archives. The concert took place on February 26th, 1939 and included Kilpatrick's *Saturday Night on Echota Hill*. The performance was conducted by Clyde Roller.

indigenous music in Oklahoma City.⁹¹ Furthermore, through his opera seminars at the Oklahoma City Music Club, Kilpatrick exposed Oklahomans to the standard repertoire.⁹² As a twenty-five-



Fig. 14, Photo in “Dr. Jack Kilpatrick to be Honored at the 1959 Festival” in a booklet for the *Twelfth Annual Strawberry Festival at City of Stilwell. 1959.*

year-old composer, Jack had already produced works of significant quality, such as his *Romanza for Oboe and Strings*, the *Cherokee Suite*, and *Four Ozark Dances*.⁹³ During this period, he started to accept invitations to act as a guest conductor in other states, and his compositions were being more frequently performed. Additional work for the symphony and a fellowship at the prestigious MacDowell Colony in

New Hampshire followed as the young composer established his reputation.⁹⁴ The American Academy of Arts and Letters sponsored his summer studies at the MacDowell Colony.⁹⁵ Thus, Oklahoma continued to

honor Jack F. Kilpatrick’s musical career. In 1946, Jack F. Kilpatrick was selected to represent the state of Oklahoma at the National Composer's Conference in Detroit.⁹⁶ When the United States officially joined the war, Jack F. Kilpatrick served as a music instructor at the US Naval

⁹¹ “Music Cub Studies ‘Madam Butterfly’: Music From Opera Presented by Singers,” *The Oklahoman*, March 24, 1940.

⁹² Nicolas Slonimsky, 686.

⁹³ “A Hick at Heart,” *The Daily Oklahoman* (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, June 8, 1941) <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/76095950/a-hick-at-heart/>.

⁹⁴ *ibid.*

⁹⁵ “Symphony Orchestra’s Concert Is Set Friday,” *The Charlotte Observer* (Charlotte, North Carolina, December 2, 1941) <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/76097188/symphony-orchestras-concert-is-set/>

⁹⁶ “Jack F. Kilpatrick Chosen Outstanding Composer,” *Stilwell Democrat-Journal* (Stilwell, Oklahoma, May 9, 1946), <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/76098199/jack-f-kilpatrick-chosen-outstanding/>

Academy in Washington,⁹⁷ and he began graduate studies in D.C. at The Catholic University of America. Having completed his graduate studies in 1948, Kilpatrick went on to work for the Southern Methodist University in Dallas as a professor of musicology and music theory.

Jack F. Kilpatrick was especially successful as a composer in the decades after World War II, composing hundreds of works. By 1957, orchestras in Rome, Cologne, Rochester, London, Washington, and Honolulu had all performed Kilpatrick's orchestral repertoire. Kilpatrick's last symphonies were commissioned by the state government.⁹⁸ The San Antonio Symphony commissioned and premiered Symphony No. 7, "The Republic of Texas," for Texas Independence Day.⁹⁹ The state of Oklahoma commissioned Symphony No. 8, "Oklahoma," to commemorate the state's 50th anniversary of statehood.¹⁰⁰ These symphonic works were written for vast forces. In Kilpatrick's symphonic works, orchestras

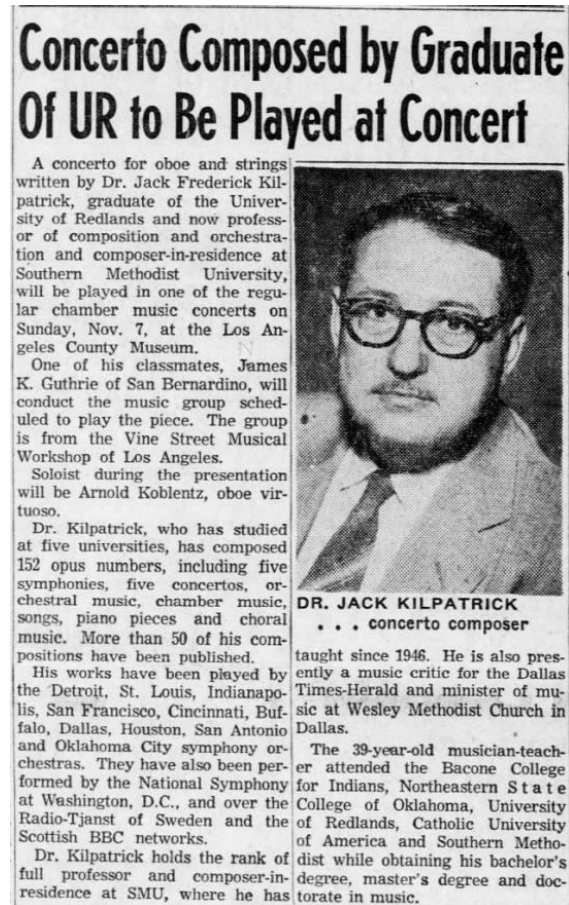


Fig. 15, Photo and clipping of Jack F. Kilpatrick in *The San Bernardino County Sun* newspaper printed on October 29, 1954.

⁹⁷ "State Indian's Music In Capital Spotlight," *The Daily Oklahoman* (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, May 30, 1944), <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/76096912/state-indians-music-in-capital/>

⁹⁸ Nicolas Slonimsky, 686.

⁹⁹ "Texas' Music To Be Played In San Antonio," *Victoria Advocate* (Victoria, Texas, February 24, 1957), <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/76103245/texas-music-to-be-played-in-san/>.

¹⁰⁰ "Oklahoma City Conductor Can't Find Indian Who Can Dance Authentically For Celebration.," *The Independent-Record* (Helena, Montana, November 15, 1957), <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/76103764/oklahoma-city-conductor-cant-find/>.

collaborated with soloists, dancers, narrators as well as movable scenery. Kilpatrick's works include musical adaptations of well-known historical dramas, including Kermit Hunter's *Unto These Hills*. This play chronicles the life of Cherokees during the Tears Trail, when they were forcibly relocated by the US government to the Indian Territory, present Oklahoma. Kilpatrick's *Unto These Hills* debuted as part of the Cherokee Tribal Council meeting on June 29th, 1969, two years after the composer's death. Other Kilpatrick's historical dramas include *The Golden Crucible*, which premiered in Pittsburgh in 1959, and *The Blessed Wilderness*, which debuted in Dallas, Texas on April 18, 1959.¹⁰¹ Additionally, Kilpatrick wrote eight symphonies as well as music for chamber and choral ensembles.

Final Years as Native American Scholar and Conductor.

The final decade of Kilpatrick's life was blighted by disease. He spent most of his efforts during this time working on ethnography and composing his final works. In 1960, a latent case of malaria compelled him to take a year off from teaching, and he and his wife Anna worked on the publication of substantial quantities of research on Cherokees, including translations of mid-nineteenth century reports in the book *The Shadow of Sequoyah* (1965).¹⁰² Other important publications by the Kilpatricks include *Muskogean Charm Songs Among Oklahoma Cherokees* (1967), *Friends of Thunder Folktales of the Oklahoma Cherokees* (1964), and *Walk in Your Sol: Love Incantations of the Oklahoma Cherokees* (1965). Nonetheless, as Kilpatrick's health deteriorated, his writing ceased. Impressively, he rarely declined invitations to conduct orchestras as a guest conductor. The composer was also quite moved by the establishment of The Kilpatrick Society in Dallas, Texas, devoted to honoring his work. Members from 42 cities and

¹⁰¹ Nicolas Slonimsky, 686.

¹⁰² Oklahoma Historical Society and Oklahoma Historical Society, *Chronicles of Oklahoma* (Oklahoma City, Okla., Oklahoma Historical Society, 1969): 318. <http://archive.org/details/chroniclesofokla4719okla>.

21 states represented The Kilpatrick Society.¹⁰³ Kilpatrick's pen and baton eventually came to rest in 1967, when great Cherokee composer died of a heart attack.



Fig. 16, Photo of Jack Frederick Kilpatrick and his wife Anna Gritts Kilpatrick from Dallas News, the photo can be found in in their book *Run Toward The Nightland: Magic of the Oklahoma Cherokees* (1967)

The discovery of Kilpatrick's scores piqued the attention of the musical communities in Oklahoma. The Oklahoma City Philharmonic's maestro Alexander Mickelthwate, a German-born orchestral conductor in Oklahoma City, continues to program Kilpatrick's works. Dr. Christina Giacona, an ethnomusicological scholar, oversees curating Kilpatrick's scores at the University of Oklahoma.

These continuing efforts have resulted in local musicians being interested in studying and performing these recently discovered pieces.

Kilpatrick's works once captivated Oklahoma's artistic organizations, and they still do today.

Presently, audiences in Oklahoma today, as in the early-twentieth century, continue to be fascinated by Native American culture. Native American is once again part of the concert culture in the state, an effort inspired by Kilpatrick's musical legacy as a composer. Indeed, The Oklahoma City Philharmonic programmed Kilpatrick's *An*

¹⁰³ "REDLANDS FAVORITE SON: Society Formed to Honor Composer While He Is Alive!," *The San Bernardino County Sun* (San Bernardino, California, August 9, 1959), <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/76104771/redlands-favorite-son-society-formed/>.

American Indian Serenade to lead this revival campaign, as part of the orchestra's opening concert for the 2019-20 season.¹⁰⁴

As musicologists unearth the lost works of American concert culture, we should turn our attention to Oklahoma, where amazing secrets and surprises might await those willing to investigate. The Sooner state has a rich history of indigenous legends and colonial battles, which Jack Frederick Kilpatrick took great inspiration from for his musical output. Continuing to appreciate his music can shed light on the ways in which Native American people and culture found a place in the modern American life.

¹⁰⁴ Brandy McDonnel, "Season Announcement: Oklahoma City Philharmonic Reveals 2019-2020 Classics and Pops Plans," *The Oklahoman*, March 3, 2019, <https://oklahoman.com/article/5624664/season-announcement-oklahoma-city-philharmonic-reveals-2019-2020-classics-and-pops-plans/>.

Tessie “Lushanya” Mobley (1906-1990): The Songbird of the Chickasaw

Equally capable of conquering the most prominent opera stages and excelling in mounted archery, Tessie Mobley inherited the outlook of matrilineal Chickasaw societies. Her character manifested through determination to become one of the world's greatest singers of all time. Tessie was born in the Indian Territory's prairie, today's Ardmore, Oklahoma, and was better known as Lushanya, meaning "Songbird of the Chickasaw." Her performances were praised by opera connoisseurs and drew the interest of influential figures such as Benito Mussolini, Adolf Hitler, and King George and Queen Mary of England. Sometimes referred to as an "Indian princess," her personality was also that of a witty diplomat with an unmatched elegance among opera stars. This woman's courage, while studying in Berlin and Rome during the rise of Nazism, endures through her written memoirs, which include mesmerizing concerns about the eventual outbreak of World War II. Since pre-war nationalist conflicts were unable to intimidate her musical ambitions, efforts by music reviewers to shun her career following her return to America were meaningless. However, our composer-centered historiography has succeeded in erasing her legacy from the research of twentieth-century American operatic biographies.

Lushanya was the most famous Native American soprano who ever lived, according to some historical accounts. Nonetheless, Tessie Mobley was only one artist in a network of Native Americans championing indigeneity through singing. Lushanya's accomplishments in opera provided a platform for these and other classical musicians to be supported by a better future. While mainstream culture often portrayed these characters as symbols of assimilation, individuals such as Tessie Mobley challenged the structural inequality and misogyny that controlled the United States' music concert scene. When culture comes to grips with its

assimilationist past, musicology should attempt to include Tessie Mobley's exceptional career as another reminder of Native Americans' persistence in the face of extinction.

Formative Years

Tessie Mobley inherited Chickasaw ancestry from her mother, Tennie Worsham-Mobley, and English from her father, Benjamin E. Mobley.¹⁰⁵ Born in December 1906, one year before Oklahoma's statehood, Tessie Mobley was named Aurelia Guy Mobley, later acquiring the nickname Tessie during childhood.¹⁰⁶ She was raised along with six siblings; her sister, Marie Muchmore, witnessed and filmed President John F. Kennedy's assassination. Tessie grew quite fond of her grandmother Lucretia Mcgee Worsham, who only spoke in the Chickasaw language. Perhaps due to that kinship, Tessie became very close to her Chickasaw heritage, mastering the tribal arts of archery, horse training, and many other inconceivable deeds for women at that time.¹⁰⁷ Her fascination for Native American heritage was shared with an affinity for the music of white Americans. The six-year-old Tessie Mobley began her musical training through piano and violin lessons that incited in her mind the dream of becoming a concert soloist.¹⁰⁸ However, the Chickasaw girl was primarily known among her community for her voice.

Locals quickly recognized a talent that would eventually propel her to fame. She became involved in several glee clubs and musical theater productions in her community, and one of her performances was covered by a newspaper when she was still a high school freshman. The daily press announced in March 1921 that the teenage girl captivated the audience and critics present

¹⁰⁵ Dorothy G. Tuttle and Larry E. Washam *Worsham & Washam Family History*. (Self-published: Tuttle and Washam, 2000).

¹⁰⁶ Phillip Carroll Morgan and Judy Goforth Parker. *Dynamic Chickasaw Women*. (Ada, OK: Chickasaw Press, 2011): 93.

¹⁰⁷ Glenda Galvan, "Lushanya/Tessie Mobley, 1906–1947," *The Journal of Chickasaw History* 6, No. 3 2000.

¹⁰⁸ Morgan and Parker, 96.

at the High School Mothers Club with her rendition of Caroline Strahley's "At the Matinee."¹⁰⁹ Nevertheless, if Tessie Mobley felt welcomed into the predominantly white urban communities on that day, the Chickasaws might have been horrified by another event that missed a news headline a few months later. The Tulsa Race Massacre of 1921 is the name given for that incident nowadays. But this horrendous attack, in which the white mobs murdered thousands of African Americans, has been forgotten and hidden away from local news until recent years.¹¹⁰

It is hard to discern whether those fears led Tessie and her sister Marie to participate in the minstrel show *Happy Minutes with Ahmes Dixie Minstrels* organized by the masonic lodge *The Grotto* the year after Tulsa's murderous event.¹¹¹ Was Tessie Mobley hoping for racial tolerance knowing the consequences of conflict? Contrasting views might arise over the artistic careers of Indian Americans trying to integrate into the dominant white society during the early twentieth century. For better or worse, Tessie Mobley continued to be active in local plays, particularly at the Palace Theater.¹¹² She began transitioning into voice lessons as she approached vocal maturity, only continuing her study of the piano for a few more years. With the encouragement of her family, Tessie Mobley was determined to seek a college education that would lead to a career in opera.

¹⁰⁹ "Daily Ardmoreite (Ardmore, Okla.), Vol. 28, No. 135, Ed. 1 Sunday, March 20, 1921." *The Gateway to Oklahoma History*. The Ardmoreite Publishing Company, March 20, 1921. Accessed April 6, 2021. <https://gateway.okhistory.org/ark:/67531/metadc158779/m1/6/zoom/?q=%22Tessie%20Mobley%22&resolution=3&lat=5624.558176232439&lon=2138.4584896606875>

¹¹⁰ Krehbiel Tulsa, Randy. "Tulsa Race Massacre: 1921 Tulsa Newspapers Fueled Racism, and One Story Is Cited for Sparking Greenwood's Burning." *Tulsa World*, May 31, 2019. Accessed April 6, 2021. https://tulsa-world.com/news/tulsa-race-massacre-1921-tulsa-newspapers-fueled-racism-and-one-story-is-cited-for-sparking/article_420593ee-8090-5cfc-873e-d2dd26d2054e.html

¹¹¹ "Daily Ardmoreite (Ardmore, Okla.), Vol. 29, No. 244, Ed. 1 Sunday, November 19, 1922." *The Gateway to Oklahoma History*. The Ardmoreite Publishing Company, November 19, 1922. Accessed April 6, 2021. <https://gateway.okhistory.org/ark:/67531/metadc159464/m1/9/zoom/>

¹¹² "Daily Ardmoreite (Ardmore, Okla.), Vol. 29, No. 209, Ed. 1 Sunday, October 8, 1922." *The Gateway to Oklahoma History*. The Ardmoreite Publishing Company, October 8, 1922. Accessed April 6, 2021. <https://gateway.okhistory.org/ark:/67531/metadc159428/m1/9/zoom/>

Vocal Training

Mobley pursued her education at the University of Georgia, The University of Oklahoma, and she graduated from the Christian Female College in Columbia, Missouri.¹¹³ During her time at the University of Oklahoma, Tessie was a student of William G. Schmidt, a German voice professor who launched the career of her contemporaries, as tenor Joseph “Bentonelli.”

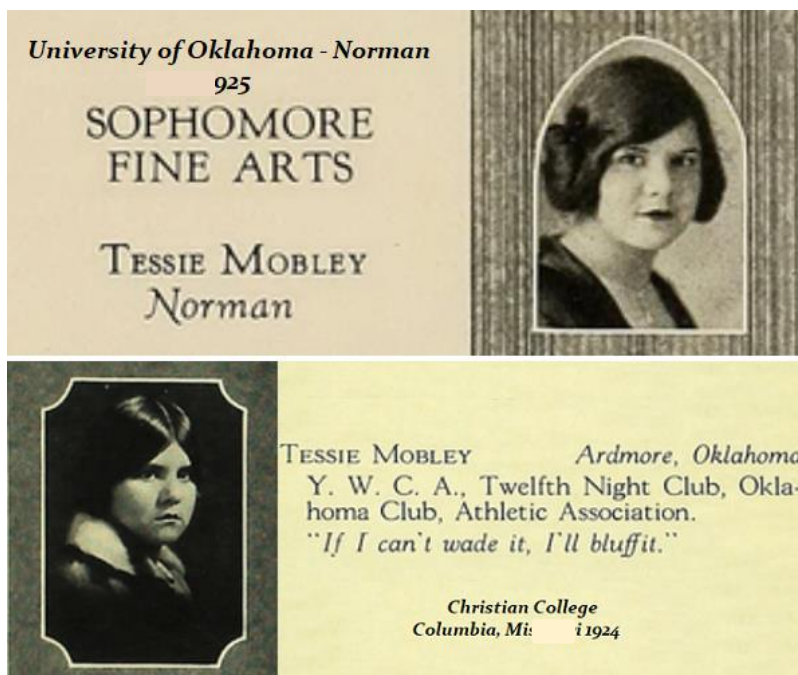


Fig. 17, Recital programs of Tessie Mobley. in Find a Grave, database Memorial No. 19652969.

While Mobley may not have received the endorsement that Schmidt gave to Joseph, the soprano was later encouraged by the Native American singer Tsianina Redfeather Blackstone, who referred to Mobley as her pupil.¹¹⁴ Indeed, both singers shared a determination to bring indigeneity to the music stage. In 1923, while a still student at the Christian Female College,

¹¹³ Morgan and Parker, 96.

¹¹⁴ Morgan and Parker, 106.

Tessie performed Indianist songs wearing Native American clothing for the first time. A New Yorker music critic described the performance in an article for the magazine musical courier.

Tessie Mobley sang a group of Lieurance songs in authentic Indian costume - her own, since she comes from Oklahoma and has Indian ancestry. It was one of the most cajoling voices I have heard, warm and full and vibrant. If standing before an audience of about 200 classmates, her straight-black hair in two long plaits, and her brilliant blanket clutched in solid fold, worried the little singer, she did not show it.¹¹⁵

Katharine Lane Spaeth

Soon after finishing college, Tessie Mobley married the Osage actor, Louis Bidd Brave in 1926, and they moved to Hollywood with the goal of build their careers in the entertainment industry. During this time, she appeared in several movies and worked as an advisor on Indian themes, as well as doing concerts and radio engagements. The married couple was quite successful on the west coast, and Tessie's participation in the 1930s movie *Whoopie!* was profitable in the box office, putting her public image on international screens. Tessie, however, kept wanting to be an opera singer, so her greatest motivation in California was studying with the voice teacher Emma Loeffler de Zaruba.¹¹⁶ There she adopted the name "Lushanya" as her artistic persona around the decades she lived in California. Lushanya also caused a sensation for becoming the first Native American female passenger of the Western Air Express in a route from Los Angeles to Albuquerque, and the news emphasized she held ticket No. 1.¹¹⁷ The name

¹¹⁵ Katharine Lane Spaeth, *The Outskirts of America's Music Musical Courier and Review of Recorded Music*. Vol. 87, No 1 Musical Courier Company, 1923.

¹¹⁶ Cahill, Cathleen D. "Urban Indians, Native Networks, and the Creation of Modern Regional Identity in the American Southwest." *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 42, no. 3 (July 1, 2018): 71–92. Accessed March 28, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.17953/aicrj.42.3.cahill>

¹¹⁷ "MAYOR TINGLEY, OTHER LEADING MEN OF CITY TO WITH PRINCESS." *Albuquerque Journal*. Albuquerque, New Mexico, May 15, 1929. Accessed April 7, 2021. <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/75298557/albuquerque-journal/>.

Lushanya was also accompanied with a sense of diplomacy as she was often referred to, particularly overseas, as a Indian princess.



Fig. 18, Mobley in the role of Matape for the American musical comedy *Whoopie!* (1930). She obtained this role unintentionally during a visit to the movie's set.

The Genesis of Lushanya

As customary of her time, Tessie was a woman of many names, but "Lushanya" seemed to be the name that best represented her artistic career. The meaning of this name has been consistently regarded as "The Songbird of the Chickasaw," providing an immediate vantage point to her indigeneity. Although the real origin of this name remains a mystery, the Indian Ceremonials of 1929 at the Hollywood Bowl would pave the way for her name to become an international operatic sensation for many decades.¹¹⁸ Such success was thanks to Tsianina and Charles W. Cadman, who supported her talent after one of their performances at The University

¹¹⁸ Morgan and Parker, 106.

of Oklahoma.¹¹⁹ Tsianina and Cadman were approached by the young Tessie, who sang for them in hopes of becoming part of their chorus. Thus, a fruitful alliance formed between Lushanya and Tsianina. Furthermore, Lushanya might have also been persuaded by Tsianina, who studied singing in Italy for years,¹²⁰ to continue her vocal training in Europe. The reasons that eventually led Tessie Mobley to move her career away from mainstream culture and into the realm of opera remain puzzling, especially when considering that her marriage came to an end when she moved to Europe. For a woman in her mid-twenties to drastically change the course of her life, Tessie Mobley's operatic success was a remarkably impressive achievement. Today it remains unbelievable that a divorced Native American female would take charge of her destiny with such conviction at that time. By the 1930s, Lushanya embarked on a mission to build her vocal career in opera, studying in the best conservatories and performing leading roles for the most prestigious opera houses in Europe.

Operatic Career and Diplomacy in Europe

Although opportunities for Americans in the years around The Great Depression were limited, Tessie Mobley won a scholarship that allowed her to study at the Berlin Academy. Her education in Germany was the beginning of a bustling artistic career.

Here I am In Berlin, another point I thought on and won. (...) Little by little, I make my dreams come true. (...) I won a scholarship at the Hochschule fur Musik in Berlin. I put in my allotted time there, and then I went to Italy for more work at the Royal Academy of St. Cecilia in Rome. When I completed that term, I set out on a concert tour

¹¹⁹ Snyder, Michael, and John Joseph Mathews. *Our Osage Hills: Toward an Osage Ecology and Tribalography of the Early Twentieth Century*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2020.

¹²⁰ Morgan and Parker, 110.

of Egypt, Italy, and Sweden, making a stop-over in London, where I appeared as soloist with the London Philharmonic [at the Royal] Albert Hall. ¹²¹

Tessie Mobley, from her diary entries.

At the Hochschule in Berlin, she was a student of Lula Mysz-Gmeiner, a renowned Romanian voice instructor. While a student, Tessie Mobley successfully appeared in professional concerts in Holland, Sweden and several times in Germany during her two-year scholarship study in Berlin.¹²² Some of her concerts were opportunities to introduce American indigeneity by performing in “Indian costumes [and a music program] of varying character [that] pleased the Germans.”¹²³ These concerts that honored her heritage were even more remarkable as in her diaries she recorded the effects of Nazism in Germany, filling her school with the consequences of terror and xenophobia. In her personal journal, Tessie reports how her friends and teachers were dragged into the Nazi troops. In some cases, as with Georg Schünemann, those close to her were losing their jobs at the academy during the rise of Nazi socialism. Her political views on these issues are articulated in her writings with blazing rhetoric for such a young person in the twentieth century:

Direktor Schunamann (Georg Schünemann) was dismissed from Hochschule yesterday, after serving more than 20 years - not because he was unfit or incapable, or Jewish - but because he was not with the right party. He’s [a] social democrat; tried lately to join Nazis, but [he was] not accepted. He cried like a baby. It came so sudden, too. The new Direktor was in office the day schumann went out. (...) And Herr Prof. Kreutzer had

¹²¹ Morgan and Parker, 97 and 102.

¹²² *ibid*

¹²³ “American Indian Princess Scores.” *The Windsor Star*. Windsor, Ontario, Canada, June 6, 1932. Accessed April 7, 2021. <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/75279630/>.

built his career here. (He) spent what he has made, saved nothing, in his 50s - [He was] dismissed from H(hochschule) because he's a Jew, (...) And what is it all for - will it make things better? I cannot see it. I believe the people themselves are not wholly in sympathy or wholly responsible, but these men have swept into power when the country was weak with political quarrels, and they stepped in and took charge. I do not feel all is for principle or good of [the] country, but each has his hand out - or I should say, for what he can get - and it's the same reason men are joining up, for personal benefit and gain. (...) Are there no ideals left? (...) No principles, codes -honor? (...) I believe that always the majority of people will be victims or scapegoats of the few who lead, and it depends upon the leaders, how the country and people will live and prosper. (...) I believe it is impossible for majority people to rule - in the U.S also - because there are always the little party leaders and the big party leaders and petty politicians and big politicians with their axes to grind. (...) If the mass would ever arouse, (...) they're too sluggish and unthinking or uncaring. I am wondering what this time next year will bring?¹²⁴

Tessie Mobley, diary entries.

Tessie Mobley soon began to see herself, more than just a singer, as a cultural ambassador of the Indian heritage navigating the circumstances and policies of foreign countries. Certainly, her views on the alarming rumors of war intensify as one continues to read her thoughts. Mobley left Germany on March 30th, 1934, concluding a two-year scholarship program with the Hochschule. Her memories are more unsettling knowing that "Adolf Hitler requested Miss Mobley to sing in her Indian Language for phonograph records."¹²⁵ Though her

¹²⁴ Morgan and Parker, 99-101.

¹²⁵ "INDIAN GIRL SINGS "AIDA" *New York Times*, May 22, 1937, <https://www.nytimes.com/1937/05/22/archives/indian-girl-sings-aida-lusschayna-mobley-a-chickasaw-makes-opera.html>



Fig. 19, Photo and clipping of Mobley and Tsianina in “Indian Girl Singer Due to Make Mark” *The Oklahoma News*, Dec. 28, 1927.

interactions with the Führer are mostly unknown, but Mobley's career also attracted the attention of the fascist Prime Minister Benito Mussolini. Tessie Mobley was awarded one of the twelve scholarships given in a competition at the University of Rome.¹²⁶ Therefore, Lushanya moved to Italy to study at the Royal Academy of St. Cecilia, in Rome, Italy. Her career was, once again, turned into a diplomatic role as more politicians continued to follow her voice.¹²⁷ The following year, 1935, media outlets reported that she was to perform at the coronation of English Royalty.¹²⁸ In 1935, She was also in a leading role at Samuel Coleridge Taylor *The Song of Hiawatha* for the Royal Choral Society while in London.¹²⁹ The following year, she sang *The Star-Spangled Banner*, the National Anthem for the United States, at the Democratic Party National Convention in Philadelphia.¹³⁰ As outstanding

¹²⁶ *ibid.*

¹²⁷ “Indian Studies Music in Rome.” *The Leader-Post*. Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada, November 3, 1934. Accessed April 7, 2021. <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/75305547/the-leader-post/>

¹²⁸ “ROYALTY TO HEAR INDIAN.; Tessie Mobley, a Chickasaw, to Sing Before King George.” *New York Times*, January 27, 1935. Accessed April 7, 2021. <https://nyti.ms/2R5ZiW7>

¹²⁹ Richard Green, *Te Ata: Chickasaw Storyteller*, American Treasure. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006), 177.

¹³⁰ Fauser, Annegret. *Sounds of War: Music in the United States during World War II*. (NY: Oxford University Press, 2013) 102.

as it might appear, political involvement served Lushanya mostly as advertising since she remained committed to opera.

All the while, the most remarkable milestone in Lushanya's career came with her debut at the Trieste Opera House in 1937. Singing the title role in *Aida*, this vital turning point precipitated numerous professional engagements in opera houses across Italy, making her an "Aida of the first order" for "the most sensational debut in Italian opera in 30 years."¹³¹ *Tosca* was another leading role that allowed her to reach new heights when she became the first Native American to sing at La Scala in Milan,¹³² and it was that same learning role that impressed the first *Tosca*, Romanian soprano Ericlea Darclee, so much to the point of giving her a dress used at the premiere.¹³³ During her time in Italy, the famous soprano Luisa Tetrazzini offered lessons and boarding to Lushanya soon after her success in Trieste.¹³⁴ Mobley's life in Italy was luxurious. She performed in Florence in the summers and in Naples, Venice, and Milan in autumn. She became known among the elite in private concerts at the Lyceum Romano, where she made successful presentations and important connections. One of her benefactors introduced her to the American painter living in Rome Alfred Everitt Orr, who expressed interest in painting her portrait.¹³⁵ News of her success soon reached Oklahoma as her hometown's newspapers reported that the Italians contacted their offices in Oklahoma City wanting to know more about Mobley. When approached by the press of *Il Piccolo di Trieste*, they noted:

She possesses authentic vocal qualities out of the ordinary and knows how to win the sympathy and approval of her audience as well through sweetness of accent as through

¹³¹ Morgan and Parker, 111.

¹³² "Chickasaw.Tv | Tessie 'Lushanya' Mobley." Accessed April 7, 2021. <https://www.chickasaw.tv/profiles/tessie-lushanya-mobley-profile>

¹³³ "Boston Opera House 'Tosca.'" *Daily Boston Globe*, March 8, 1943.

¹³⁴ Charles Neilson Gattey, *Luisa Tetrazzini: The Florentine Nightingale*. (UK: Amadeus Press, 1995): 258.

¹³⁵ Morgan and Parker, 104



Fig. 20 Photo of Tessie Mobley for Tosca for La Scala's Tosca in December 1938. She became the first Native American Opera singer to sing at La Scala.

power and intonation. One may speak highly of her without making concessions to the enthusiasm of the moment, because Lushanya overcame all the difficulties which this opera presents with great dignity and conscientiousness, subjecting herself to an analytical examination of long duration that was favorable to her from every point of view.¹³⁶

Newspaper *Il Piccolo*, quoted in *The Oklahoman*.

By 1939, the American concert life began to anticipate

Tessie's return from Europe after nearly five years of training and concertizing. The anticipation coincided with the start of Second World War. Lushanya had already

traveled back to the United States during her participation at the Democratic convention in Philadelphia. Therefore, she unsurprisingly decided to relocate back to America as the horrors of war prevailed in Europe. She soon secured posts working at the San Carlo Opera Company as well as many concert engagements throughout the Americas.

Return to America and Legacy

The audiences in the state of Oklahoma received her enthusiastically in a concert dedicated to her, as part of the Starlight series, where she sang some beloved opera arias coupled with Indianist songs.¹³⁷ No longer was she advertised as a Native American but as an operatic celebrity in Oklahoma City. She was expected to attract thousands of audience members, a

¹³⁶ Kirkpatrick, Albert. "Music News and Views." *The Oklahoman*, February 6, 1938.

¹³⁷ "Oklahoma's Own Operatic Soprano To Sing Tuesday: Tessie Mobley Will Be Soloist at the Orchestra's Starlight Concert." *The Oklahoman*, August 6, 1939.

newspaper reported six thousand people.¹³⁸ Mobley's audience included many of the Native Americans that she sought to represent. The event was so successful that the American journalist Burton Rascoe listed Tessie Mobley as one of the thirty-two noted Oklahomans that contributed "to the cultural welfare of our time,"¹³⁹ and another article dedicated to her appeared in the Bureau of Indian Affairs' publication *Indians at Work*.¹⁴⁰ She finally joined Boston's San Carlo Opera Company, and there she received harsh criticism. Unpleasant reviews came from Chicago's *Daily Tribune* during the company tour in that city, and, on one occasion, this critic described Tessie's rendition of *Il Trovatore's* Leonora as "not adequate to the standard of a major opera house, [because she had] presented the skeleton of Leonora's music without music of the flesh and blood."¹⁴¹ Thankfully, Other critics, such as Vivian McCullough, dedicated entire pages of newspapers to articles praising her achievements in opera.¹⁴² Lushanya revealed her intentions to return to Europe in McCullough's article for a local newspaper, which were thwarted by the outbreak of Second World War. Nevertheless, Mobley joined a group of American musicians that performed for the United States troops during WWII.¹⁴³ Tessie continued to shine as part of the San Carlo productions in the years after wars. San Carlo's productions even toured as far as in Australia with Mobley.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁸ "Lushanya to Sing To Large Audience At Tonight's Revue." *The Oklahoman*, August 8, 1939.

¹³⁹ Rascoe, Burton. "This Month." *The Sooner Magazine*, June 1939.

¹⁴⁰ Office of Indian Affairs "Oklahoma Indian Girl Appears in Opera Role" *Indians at Work* 7, No. 1. (Sep. 1939.), 19. <https://library.si.edu/digital-library/book/indiansatwork711939unit>

¹⁴¹ Smith, Cecil. "BRUNA CASTAGNA SINGS CARMEN IN A CAPABLE WAY: Forgets Frills, and It's Quite a Relief! 'CARMEN.'" *Chicago Daily Tribune (1923-1963)*. Chicago, Ill., United States: Tribune Publishing Company, LLC, November 30, 1941, sec. PART 1. Accessed April 7, 2021.

<http://www.proquest.com/docview/176741147/abstract/D082294BAAED49A7PQ/1>.

¹⁴² Vivian McCullough, "The Chickasaw Bird That Sings." *The Daily Oklahoman*. Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, June 22, 1941. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/447966004/>

¹⁴³ Linda W. Reese, "Mobley, Tessie (1906–1990)." in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, ed. Dianna Everett, (Oklahoma City, OK: Oklahoma Historical Society, 2009) accessed Oct. 14, 2020, <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=MO035>

¹⁴⁴ "Stage Outlook For 1941." *The Age*. Melbourne, Australia, January 11, 1941. Accessed April 7, 2021. <http://www.newspapers.com/image/123399933/>



Fig. 21, Photo of Tessie Mobley wearing traditional clothing “Prairie Prima Donna.” *The Pittsburgh Press*. (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, December 13, 1942).

While in the United States, the press also started to comment on her modest character, portraying her introducing whites to the traditions of Indian lifestyle. Just as it seemed that neither war nor prejudice would stop Lushanya, love would end her concert life as she decided to retire to manage her beloved husband's career, the Chilean tenor Ramon Vinay, around the 1940s. Not only had Tessie proven to be an excellent delegate in her years among world leaders and in Hollywood, but it was she that introduced opera conductor Arturo Toscanini to Vinay in Mexico City.¹⁴⁵ Lushanya was no stranger to the Mexican operatic scene, having already sung leading roles at the Mexican National Opera twice.¹⁴⁶ Hence, she possibly met Ramon while he was beginning his career in Latin America. Ramon and Tessie were a highly profitable team, and the Vinays lived in France, Spain, and America.¹⁴⁷ Often frequenting the musical capitals of the

¹⁴⁵ Morgan and Parker, 99-114.

¹⁴⁶ Glismann, David. “Lushanya Scores in Mexico.” *The Oklahoman*, September 9, 1945. Accessed April 7, 2021.

¹⁴⁷ Reese, “Mobley, Tessie (1906–1990).”

world, Mr. and Mrs. Vinay became well known throughout Europe. They simply had no time for children.¹⁴⁸ Lushanya would occasionally appear back on stage well into her 40s, singing in Milan.¹⁴⁹ When asked about her preferred audiences, Lushanya hesitantly admitted that most



Fig. 22 Photo of Tessie Mobley and Ramon Vinay, around 1975, in Find a Grave, database Memorial No. 19652969.

Italians provided the most challenging taste as "they know every note, they can tell when you breathe in the wrong places," yet she regarded American audiences with affection as some of the most "enthusiastic."¹⁵⁰ After living in a luxurious French chateau, the couple lived and enjoyed their retirement in Fort Worth, Texas.¹⁵¹

In 1964, Tessie Mobley was recognized by the State of Oklahoma when she was inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame.¹⁵² Such recognition must have made the entire Chickasaw nation proud, who added her to their own Chickasaw Nation Hall of Fame posthumously in 2009.

Interestingly, Tessie's brother, Gerald Mobley, collaborated with the local newspapers around this time, reporting for an exciting article about the life of his sister in Europe.¹⁵³ Most of her memorabilia has been given to a museum near to her hometown, probably hoping to bring some veracity to an otherwise unbelievable tale. Tessie Mobley passed

¹⁴⁸ Glenda Galván, "Lushanya/Tessie Mobley, 1906–1947,"

¹⁴⁹ "Indian Soprano Back From Tour." *Daily News*. New York, New York, February 10, 1950. Accessed April 7, 2021. <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/75329908/daily-news/>.

¹⁵⁰ Cruger, Dorothea. "And Now We'll Hear a Chickasaw Damsel Warble Carmen!" *The Washington Post (1923-1954)*. June 15, 1951, Accessed April 7, 2021. <http://www.proquest.com/docview/152345496/abstract/2080628CD2DA4108PQ/1>.

¹⁵¹ Glenda Galván, "Lushanya/Tessie Mobley, 1906–1947,"

¹⁵² Glenda Galván, "Lushanya/Tessie Mobley, 1906–1947,"

¹⁵³ "Gerald Mobley Writes Details of Vacation in Europe." *The Daily Ardmoreite*. Ardmore, Oklahoma, January 24, 1962. Accessed April 7, 2021. <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/75331526/the-daily-ardmoreite/>

away at her home in Fort Worth, Texas, on December 19, 1990, and her grave is located in Ardmore, Oklahoma.¹⁵⁴

Tessie Mobley's impressive career highlights should not be discounted as unusual, as many Native American singers have gained varying degrees of success as performers. For example, the Oklahoman coloratura soprano Princess Pakanli (D. Maud Underwood) was very famous in the years before The Great Depression on KVOO, the "Voice of Oklahoma," in the 1920s.¹⁵⁵ Also, the Choctaw singer Wesley Leroy Robertson, known as "Ish-ti-opi," has been regarded as an Native American activist, who gained national notoriety after Broadway performances in 1927.¹⁵⁶ And, of course, Tessie's own inspiration Tsianina Redfeather was an equally impressive singer of Creek and Cherokee parents, who was trained in opera in the United States and Italy.¹⁵⁷ Further research on the networks and achievements of these and other Native Americans singers can potentially reveal untold stories about inclusion in the concert halls during the twentieth century.

Understanding the factors that led to such an exceptional woman's existence being forgotten today sheds light on the historiographical issues inherent in classical music studies. A music history that focuses solely on the lives of "genius" composers ignores how performers like Mobley changed the concert stage by demanding the respect and recognition that Native Americans deserved. Tessie Mobley's achievements were equivalent to those of most opera's leading figures of her time, but the structural challenges and criticisms she faced raised her to a

¹⁵⁴ Reese, "Mobley, Tessie (1906–1990)."

¹⁵⁵ Robert A. Warrior, *The World of Indigenous North America*. (New York: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2017), 278.

¹⁵⁶ Mary Philips, "The Archivist: Choctaw Indian performer gave a voice to his people" *The Oklahoman* Aug. 14, 2017.

¹⁵⁷ Paige Clark Lush, "The all American Other: Native American Music and Musicians on the Circuit Chautauqua." *Americana: The Journal of American Popular Culture, 1900 to Present* 7, no. 2 (Fall, 2008), https://americanpopularculture.com/journal/articles/fall_2008/lush.htm

completely different level. Her bravery in embracing her ethnicity during assimilationist campaigns is an empowering narrative. Even though excellent scholarship has emerged in other disciplines, Musicology has struggled to recognize the significance of Tessie Mobley's international career, and her absence from music history might make us to rethink the voices we promote in music history classrooms. While our society continues to struggle with issues of inclusion, increasing our understanding of artists such as Tessie Mobley offers a perspective through which musicology can view the variety of backgrounds reflected in opera.

Conclusion

This project aimed to broaden our understanding of the historiographical possibilities available in American musicology by highlighting the accomplishments of a chamber composer, a symphonist, and an opera star, all of whom share a Native American ancestry from the state of Oklahoma. More than most artists of their generation, these musicians made a conscious effort during their careers to uphold both Western and Indigenous culture. Their art is defined by an unwavering love for Indigenous traditions, even though they are no strangers to behaviors assimilated by their century's racial context. Although the written press and institutions that sponsored these artists exoticized their careers in many of these instances, we must note that their primary goal was to save their indigenous background from extinction. How do we understand their past within the framework of our contemporary academic environment?

Historical music research must reconsider the factors that allow these biographies to go unnoticed, since this is an unsolved problem in musicology. Disrespect for Native Americans is still prevalent today, and it has resulted in a never-ending fight for cultural acceptance. Musicologists, especially historians, must question what has been done to solve these issues and what can be done going forward. On one hand, we can argue that the patterns that have pushed these profiles into obscurity may be motivated by American society's struggles of identity and racist rhetoric. It remains necessary to remind political leaders that American nationalism was built on stolen land. However, how does music history contribute to the advocacy?

This kind of historical perspective on music history has the potential to transform the practices of modern musicology, making it more relatable to the issues of our era. Historically, musicology protocols have been often suppositious or even devoid of ethical and social commentary, but it is important now more than ever to explain the importance of learning music

history. This research represents only one of a plethora of injustices that musicology should examine and convey in the American music history curriculum. Might it be that efforts to address America's ethnic assimilation issues will alter musicology? Naturally, because inclusivity and openness foster the discipline and importance necessary for humanistic research to flourish. However, deferring these purposes may imply a refusal by the Americanist project to recognize its colonial abuses, particularly those perpetuated in the modern era.

Invisibility is a modern form of anti-Native American bigotry. Simply put, racism occurs when a group of people is seen as inferior to another and nothing is done to achieve equity. We seldom hear the bigotry occurs when a group of individuals is rendered invisible. Nonetheless, researchers suggest that a lack of sensitivity to realistic, contemporary, and humanizing portrayals of Native people instills a deep and tenacious latent bias in the American mind. The United States is currently home to hundreds of recognized tribes. Native Americans continue to live in modern-day America despite deliberate prejudice. They also made extraordinary contributions to both classical and other musical genres. Natives are resilient, talented, and modern. Native Americans are demanding an increasing amount of accurate information about their past. How long would it take for music history to respond to their appeal?

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