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CONTENTS | ORIGINATORS

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

2 | On the Concept of 'Originators'

Jörg B. Quenzer

ARTICLES

11 Divine Authorship in the Mesopotamian Literary Tradition

Szilvia Sövegjártó

23 | A Two-Line Letter Fragment and its many Originators

Uta Lauei

39 | Images of the Four Evangelists: Visual Discourses on the Originators of the Word of God

Bruno Reudenbach

53 | From one Cast and yet with Many Contributors: Medieval Bronze Baptismal Fonts and their Originators

Jochen Hermann Vennebusch

- 75 Nichiren's *Daimandara*: Originators and Originating Factors in the Serialised Production of Written Artefacts

 Steffen Döll
- 94 | Creating Multiple Originals of Estate Inventories in Fourteenth-century Jerusalem
 Said Aljoumani and Anna Steffen
- 119 | Creating, Confirming, Reconstructing Authority The Originators of the Hanserezesse

 Ulla Kypta
- 135 | One *Miserere* Many Originators: Manuscripts of 'Allegri's *Miserere*' as Originals
 Oliver Huck
- 159 A 'Fake' Original and an 'Original' Fake Two Cases in the Mackenzie Collection

 Neela Bhaskar
- 173 | Abu Bakar, the Temenggong of Johor, and the Creation of a Unique Type of Malay Land Deed
 Elsa Clavé
- 187 The Scribe, the Speaker, and the Political Body: Parliamentary Minutes and their Originators in Nineteenth-century Germany
 Hannah Boeddeker
- 197 | James Last's *Instrumentals Forever* Autographs of Popular Music and the Network of Originators

 Janine Droese and Knut Holtsträter
- 224 Written Artefacts in Performance, Writing as Performance: Origination and Dissemination
 Franz Anton Cramer
- 233 | Contributors
- 236 | Index

Article

James Last's *Instrumentals Forever* – Autographs of **Popular Music and the Network of Originators**

Janine Droese and Knut Holtsträter | Hamburg and Freiburg

1. Popular music and musical notation

In 1982, Philip Tagg postulated that 'popular music, unlike art music, is [...] stored and distributed in non-written form'. This credo has influenced the culture of popular music research since the founding days of the discipline. In the meantime, however, the perspectives on the production and distribution of popular music have broadened and diversified by integrating scholarly methods from older sister disciplines such as music philology and music history. Written artefacts from the realms of popular music are slowly moving into the focus of scholarly research and are thus being acknowledged and examined in the same ways as similar kinds of manuscripts that originated in Western art music.²

In addition, an increasing number of estates of twentiethcentury popular music artists, particularly from the 'boomer' generation, are being archived by institutions³, thus making popular-music manuscripts accessible for scholarly research. This also applies to the artistic estate of James Last, who passed away 2015. It has been held at the Centre for Popular Culture and Music (ZPKM) in Freiburg since 2022⁴ and

includes business and personal documents, Last's record collection (containing his own records as well as those of others), his working library (containing prints of his own and other people's music), as well as autograph scores of his compositions and arrangements⁵ – including that of the studio album Instrumentals Forever (1966)6, which will be the focus of this contribution – and parts written by copyists.

Our following observations are based on all music manuscripts of Instrumentals Forever that have been handed down to us. Furthermore, we will also use business documents and autobiographical sources to illustrate the

editions in mind. He noted that text-critical procedures would have to be adapted to make them applicable to sonic sources (ibid.). Thus, it is unclear to which extent he views manuscripts (here, quite conventional ones such as autographs or manuscript copies) as sources that are available to popmusic research on a noteworthy scale. His approach might thus head in the direction of a definition of popular music that is strongly aimed at music in mass media, as advocated by Ralf von Appen, Nils Grosch and Martin Pfleiderer in the introduction to the anthology in which Obert's contribution was published (von Appen, Grosch and Pfleiderer 2014). However, this view of popular music tends to be that of a domestic consumer, omitting the everyday working life consisting of stage and studio performances as well as all kinds of music-making outside the professional recording studio. In fact, the predominant perspective in research (due to lack of sources or ignorance) is that composing occurs spontaneously while playing and recording on audio media (as, for example, in US rock 'n' roll and English beat, the genres that are assumed to have given 'birth' to pop music in the narrower sense). See also the remarks by Sallis 2015, 3-4.

¹ Tagg 1982, 41.

² See Muir 2010 for early blues and Holtsträter 2024 for mainstream rock and pop music. There is, of course, a plethora of research on popular resp. folk music of the nineteenth century and earlier times, which focuses on musical or text manuscripts in relation to processes of oral tradition and musical and cultural lore. Jazz, in a very similar way, has been stylised as a kind of music that does not rely on or is even reluctant to writing. However, it seems that the scholarly discussion is a little more advanced in this case. See, for an overview, Huck 2021, esp. 990-994.

³ See in addition to numerous artistic estates in libraries in the USA and, for example, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences or estates in the Popular Music Archive of the University of Liverpool, also the German archives and museums gathered in the Archivnetzwerk Pop https://www.archivnetzwerk Pop https://www archivnetzwerk-pop.de> as well as the Komponistenarchiv Hellerau, Leipzig.

⁴ The estate was donated to the ZPKM by James Last's community of heirs (Christine, his widow, and Ron and Caterina, his children with his first wife Waltraud) in the summer of 2022. It is now implemented as 'James Last Archiv'. Simon Obert noted already in 2014 that, with the increasing availability of sources, 'the relevance of source-based pop music research will increase' (Obert 2014, 218). He makes clear that he understands sourcebased pop music research ('quellenfundierte Popmusikforschung') to mean above all text-critical research and ultimately has historical-critical music

⁵ The estate consists of some 200 removal boxes. Most of these boxes contain records and audio tapes. Autograph scores can be found in 36 boxes while seven boxes contain business related papers.

⁶ Stereo-LP 184 059 Polydor, West Germany 1966. In addition to the stereo version on which our analysis is based, there is also a much rarer mono pressing with the catalogue number 84059. Further media releases and reissues will be discussed in the following. Nonetheless, we want to stress that the CD-album Instrumentals Forever, catalogue number 557 969-2, which was released in 1998, is not identical with the 1966 album discussed here. The cover resembles that of the album of 1966 - only the logo seems to be slightly different and the model's face behind the tuba is changed. But a closer look reveals that this CD is a re-issue of the LP compilation from 1982 named Instrumental [sic] Forever, which combines works of different decades. Obviously, somebody at Polydor mixed up the albums from 1966 and 1982. Last's autograph scores are located in archive boxes 1 to 70 (original numbering), which are in removal boxes 101 to 136 of the James Last Archiv, ZPKM, University of Freiburg; the score of Instrumentals Forevers is in archive box 19, removal box 110.

album's production process, thus highlighting the network of originators involved in the production. This network is highly heterogeneous: it includes both musicians and family members, the composers of the arranged originals as well as the employees of the production companies. The focus of our investigation is on the autograph score, which reveals traces of, or references to, these diverse originators. Concerning the artistic process, the manuscript score is – as are the scores of the other albums – an original: on the one hand, it bears the composer's authentic handwriting and, on the other, it is the authoritative source, which serves as the reference for all actions until the record is made. It can be seen as the starting point of the working process, but it also serves as a guiding reference within it and as the endpoint of the production, which undoubtedly aimed at the recording in the studio. All changes made during the recording process in the studio are transferred to it.

However, before we discuss the album and its manuscripts in more detail, we will give a brief biographical sketch of James Last, whose music until now has received almost no attention from researchers.

2. James Last

James Last was born as Hans Last in Bremen in 1929.8 After a short but in-depth education in classical music in his youth, he switched to dance music and jazz after the end of World War II. He soon became a renowned bassist and sought-after studio and dance orchestra musician in his native city, working for the newly established Radio Bremen among others. Within a very short time, his activities as a band leader and as an arranger (for example, for Helmut Zacharias, Caterina Valente, Freddy Quinn, and Wencke Myhre) and later as a composer made him one of the world's most influential and successful entertainment musicians. Records from his album series such as Sing mit (Sing along, 1973) and Non Stop Dancing (series, 1965-1985) found their way into a vast majority of German households, as is evidenced by the high sales figures. Those who did not own a record by him probably perceived his music via TV shows, TV series, and as jingles or interludes on the radio, where it was also very present. Last celebrated his greatest successes in the late 1960s and 1970s; with about 80 million records sold and 200 Golden Records awarded to him, he was one of the most successful bandleaders of the second half of the twentieth century.

James Last, like any successful artist, was surrounded by a large number of collaborators and institutions, and thus involved in obligations, agreements and decision-making processes that were intended to structure and facilitate his working life, but did, of course, also influence his work. In his autobiography, he describes bi-weekly meetings with two executives from Polydor, Werner Klose (Marketing) and Ossi Drechsler (Artist and Repertoire):

Every two weeks I would meet privately with Werner Klose and Ossi Drechsler for a brainstorming session to discuss new plans and current projects. It was always important to us never to put an idea, no matter how good, into practice according to conventional patterns – there always had to be something unusual and creative. The title of the album, individual songs, the cover – something had to be there to trigger discussion in the press or among fans, otherwise the album would never make the top. Sometimes the ideas for a new production came from Wer-

⁷ Last only began to work with music notation software in the 1990s, all scores of the earlier times, as far as they are transmitted and we were able to access them, are autograph manuscripts.

⁸ Biographical information on James Last is available in a variety of sources – not least in his autobiographies and their various versions (1975, 2006a and 2015) as well as in Willox 1976 and Elson 1982. Since Last's daughter Caterina translated his 2006 autobiography into English (i.e. Last 2006b), the German and English versions are equally authorised; we quote from both in the following. As was common for LPs at the time, there is a biographical sketch on the record cover. It is unclear who wrote these liner notes - a German and an English version of the text are found in the estate without reference to an author, each typewritten on a separate sheet of paper with Polydor letterhead (box 706, 'Polydor / Dtsch. Grammophon Ges. / Inl. und Ausl.'; the German version is dated 'März 1966', the word 'Information' is added to the top of the page). The text is headed 'Biographie / Hans Last ohne Rast / Immer auf der Spur neuer Ideen' ('Biography / Hans Last without rest / Always tracing new ideas'); for biographical information including an excerpt discography see Holtsträter 2023. A (very short) article on James Last was also included in the supplementary volume of the Riemann Musiklexikon in 1975 (Anon. 1975, 19). Carl Dahlhaus had apparently tried to get James Last to provide the information for the article himself. Within the correspondence, we find two undated letters from Carl Dahlhaus to Last. Both of them – the first a request and the second a reminder – were accompanied by a form issued by the publishing house Schott, in which biographical data is to be filled in as well as a list of works. In the reminder, Dahlhaus asks for the sheet to be sent in by 20 June 1969, and notes that, if the reply was not delivered in time, they would feel 'obliged to draft an article on the basis of other documents, which may be incorrect' ('veranlaßt einen Artikel anhand anderer Unterlagen, die fehlerhaft sein können, abzufassen'). The two blank questionnaires surviving in the estate, as well as the sparse information in the article, indicate that Last never responded. (Folder 'Div./Korrespondenz A-Z/Agenturen' under 'R', in box 706, James Last Archive, ZPKM, University of Freiburg.) This information was adopted and slightly updated for the paperback edition of the Riemann Musiklexikon (Anon., 1998a and 1998b).

⁹ As a breakdown of sales revenue from Deutsche Grammophon, Polydor's parent company, shows (in archive box 'Polydor / GL', in box 703, James Last Archive, ZPKM, University of Freiburg), sales figures plummeted in the mid-1980s.

ner or Ossi, and sometimes from me. A regular bazaar of ideas would develop, something like this: Werner wanted an LP with marching music, but that wasn't quite my taste, so we'd trade. I'd say, 'OK, you'll get your marching music if I get a modern choir LP.'10

While Last describes a fruitful collaboration, in which his own opinion was usually considered important, he reports anecdotally that his artist name, 'James' – instead of 'Hans' – was created by Polydor without him even having any knowledge of this. He describes that he and his wife Waltraud were about to go to the *Deutsche Schlager-Festspiele* at Baden-Baden in 1965:

We were just getting into the car when the postman came running towards us, waving a cardboard box containing the first *Non Stop Dancing* record, hot off the pressing plant. Naturally, we could hardly contain ourselves: Waltraud tore open the package, pulled out the LP – and gaped at me in amazement. 'Look, they've put "James Last" on it. Why? Your name is Hans, they all know that, so why have they put James?' I had no idea. When we got back, I asked Polydor and their answer was, 'the music is so international, James simply sounds better'. The funny thing is, today all my English fans call me Hansi, but in Germany I am still James.¹¹

It is not uncommon for popular artists to have their stage names suggested or given to them by others. But in this case Last is presented with a *fait accompli*, his possible wish to change the name again would have caused costs and would have put him in an unfavourable position with his record label at this early stage of his career. Thus, Polydor – and especially Drechsler and Klose – were also originators, albeit not of the manuscript, but of the persona James Last'. 13

3. Instrumentals Forever as an album record

To understand the manuscripts for *Instrumentals Forever*, and especially the relation of Last's arrangement to the original songs, it is necessary to first look at the finished product, i.e. the studio production. The album *Instrumentals Forever*¹⁴, which was released in 1966, was intended to introduce Last to an international, namely the British, market. In his autobiography, Last states:

Right from the beginning I also produced albums aimed at the international market. *That's Life* or *Instrumentals Forever* were primarily intended to make me known in the English-speaking world. My breakthrough in Britain came when Polydor started a huge advertising campaign there. After an initial knock-back from Polydor in London, who feared this 'kraut' music would leave the British public cold, the company brought out a compilation called *This is James Last* and sold it at a rock-bottom price. The album promptly shot into the charts and was an enormous hit, catapulting me to fame there.¹⁵

 $^{^{10}}$ Last 2006b, 67–68. We use here, and in the following, the translation by Caterina Last (Last 2006a). Nonetheless, because there are sometimes a few differences in wording and meaning, we give the text of the updated German re-issue in the footnotes: 'Gemeinsam mit Werner Klose und Ossi Drechsler trafen wir uns alle 14 Tage im kleinen Kreis zu einer Art Brainstorming, bei dem über neue Pläne und laufende Projekte diskutiert wurde. Wichtig war uns immer: Eine noch so gute Idee darf nicht nach herkömmlichen Strickmustern umgesetzt werden, sondern es muss immer Bruchstellen geben. Der Titel des Albums, einzelne Songs, das Cover – irgendetwas muss Diskussionen in der Presse oder bei den Fans auslösen, sonst landet ein Album nie an der Spitze. Manchmal kamen die Ideen zu neuen Produktionen von Werner oder Ossi, manchmal von mir. Es entwickelte sich ein regelrechter Ideenbazar, etwa so: Klose wollte eine LP mit Marschmusik haben, das war aber nicht ganz nach meinem Geschmack. Also tauschten wir. Ich sagte: "Okay, du bekommst deine Marschmusik, aber dafür bekomme ich eine moderne Chor-LP." Last 2015, 99.

¹¹ Last 2006b, 44–45, and Last 2015, 69–70: 'Waltraud und ich wollten wenig später nach Baden-Baden zu den deutschen Schlagerfestspielen fahren. Wir stiegen gerade ins Auto ein, da kam uns der Briefträger entgegengelaufen und winkte uns mit einem Pappkarton zu, in dem die erste druckfrische *Non Stop Dancing*-Scheibe steckte. Wir waren natürlich beide enorm neugierig auf die Platte: Waltraud riss die Verpackung auf, holte die LP heraus – und sah mich völlig verwirrt an. "Du, da steht 'James Last' drauf. Wieso das denn, du heißt doch Hans, das wissen doch alle, wieso denn nun James!?" Ich hatte keine Ahnung. Nach unserer Rückkehr fragte ich bei Polydor an, und die Antwort lautete: "Die Musik ist so international, James klingt da einfach besser." Der Witz ist: Heute sagen die englischen Fans alle Hansi zu mir, in Deutschland hingegen bin ich nach wie vor James.'

¹² In fact, Last let everyone call him Hans or Hansi and, as his life documents in the archives show, did not use the registration of an artist's name as was possible in Germany.

¹³ The name 'James Last' is closely connected to a wordmark logo, which is not only used for Last's records, but, e.g., also on the front cover of his autobiographies. The Japanese album release of *Instrumentals Forever* is titled *Hans Last and His Orchestra: Mood Music Forever* (Polydor SLPM 1334); the cover depicts a romantic couple on the banks of the Seine in Paris with the Eiffel Tower on the horizon. Naming him 'Hans Last' in this context might be an admission to the language skills of the Japanese audience at the time.

¹⁴ Contract of Deutsche Grammophon with Hans Last of 22 August 1966 for 'LP. ''Instrumentals Forever'''(contract form with typoscript and handwritten entries [3 pages], the revenue share is regulated on p. 2). Archive box 'Polydor / GL', in box 703, James Last Archive, ZPKM, University of Freiburg.

¹⁵ Last 2006b, 61–62, as well as Last 2015, 91: 'Von Anfang an produzierte ich auch Alben eigens für den internationalen Markt: *That's Life* oder *Instrumentals For Ever* sollten mir vor allem im englischen Sprachraum Bekanntheit verschaffen. Der Durchbruch in Großbritannien gelang, als Polydor eine große Werbeaktion in England startete: Unter dem Titel *This is James Last* brachte die Firma eine Compilation zum Dumpingpreis auf den Markt, was meinen Bekanntheitsgrad auf der Insel schlagartig

The song selection of *Instrumentals Forever* covers a large variety of musical styles and genres. With his arrangements as well as with his production style in the studio, Last brings this heterogeneous basis together within the genre of easy listening. 16 This genre is characterised by very high production standards and engineering standards according to audio 'high fidelity'. 17 Furthermore, and in consequence, it uses the possibilities of stereophony, which was becoming popular in the home audio consumer markets at the time. However, there are features that unite the pieces selected for the album from the beginning: they were either instrumental pieces from the start (e.g. Patricia or Anna) or at least well known as film music and/or in an instrumental version. The song Moon River, for example, was composed by Henry Mancini for the film Breakfast at Tiffany's (directed by Blake Edwards, Paramount USA 1961), where it is used in an instrumental and a vocal version respectively. 18 The 'In' Crowd was first recorded by Dobie Gray in 1964 in Motown style, but then transformed into a soul-jazz number by the Ramsey Lewis Trio in 1965. In addition, all songs selected for the album were internationally well known; thus, Polydor and Last could count on them being known to the envisaged listeners.19

vervielfachte. Trotz anfänglicher Ablehnung von Polydor England – man befürchtete, dass diese "Krautmusik" das englische Publikum kalt lassen werde – schlug das Album gewaltig ein und landete prompt in den Charts.' The compilation (Polydor, Stereo 104 678, England [1966]), was priced at 12 shillings and 8 pence (around 10 euros today) and contains two tracks from *Instrumentals Forever: Delicado* and *Sail Along Silv'ry Moon*.

It is noticeable, however, that Last also made use of music that had already been arranged and recorded in the past by well-known bandleaders of the easy listening era, such as the US-Americans Billy Vaughn and Les Baxter, or the German Bert Kaempfert. The song *April in Portugal* is an example. It originated as a fado by Raul Ferrão, but was soon recorded in many other versions, of which more than one charted — among them the version that Les Baxter recorded with his orchestra. It seems that Last was seeking a direct confrontation with the arrangement style and studio sound of these famous bands. This means that not only the composers of the melodies are potential additional originators, but also that some arrangers and interpreters of earlier versions can have the same status.

The total length of the album is around 36 minutes, and the length of the twelve tracks ranges from around 2:20 to 3:50 minutes, with most tracks being in the 3-minute range. The following table lists the tracks of *Instrumentals Forever*, and gives information on the composer, year of composition and original genre. It also provides some information on the recording history and context – but, due to the limited space, these insights are by no means exhaustive.

Instrumentals Forever was not as successful as other albums of Last that were released in the same year, such as Trumpet à gogo (LP, Polydor: 249 040) or Ännchen von Tharau bittet zum Tanz (LP, Polydor 249 028). The album had no entry into the German or English LP charts, but some tracks from the album reached a larger English audience via the LP compilation This Is James Last, which was released in 1966 and spent a total of 18 weeks in New Musicals Express's charts 'Britain's Top 15 LPs', peaking at number seven.²⁰

¹⁶ On easy listening as a category in music radio programming and for the hit charts, see, e.g., Hyatt 1999, xx. Easy listening with its numerous and often nameless musicians and instrumental medleys was, in terms of copyright, a vast market for secondary profit and was also a very important workplace for most dance orchestras. James Last's so-called 'Happy Sound', which is a sub-category of easy listening, is probably the reason for his huge popularity and success.

¹⁷ High fidelity or Hi-fi can be reduced to three main features: low noise, high dynamics and a wide frequency range. In Germany, the DIN NORM 45500 standardised high fidelity in 1966. Concerning the development of hifi and stereo culture in society, Germany followed the USA one or two years later and held the leading position in Europe.

¹⁸ Dubowsky 2021, 1–37, 167 193, has already described an especially close relationship between easy listening and film music, with a focus on Henry Mancini, among others.

¹⁹ It was important to Last or his partners at Polydor that the arranged titles are well known on the target market, which is particularly evident on albums where Last adapts repertoire from a particular national or folk music tradition, e.g. albums for Japan, Holland, Ireland, Scotland, Spain, Italy, etc. (Last 2006b, 62, and Last 2015, 91–92).

²⁰ See Ehnert 1988, 68–70, who evaluated the charts of the German music business magazine *Musikmarkt*; see also Ehnert 1987, 74, who refers to the charts of the English magazine *New Musical Express*. A search at www. worldradiohistory.org on 30 May 2023 did not reveal any chart entries for the album in the relevant English music magazines such as *Melody Maker* or *Music Week*. However, this finding has little significance for the actual sales figures because the album charts of these magazines tend to cover other genres such as beat, jazz and vocal pop. In *Record Mirror* of 15 April 1967, there is an advertisement for *This Is James Last*, which also mentions *Instrumentals Forever*.

Table 1: List of all tracks of Instrumentals Forever

Track	Title (spelling of the labels of the German pressing) ²¹	Composed by (Lyrics by)	Year, genre origins	Context
A1	Moon River	Henry Mancini (Johnny Mercer)	1961, film music, ballad	Music for the film <i>Breakfast at Tiffany'</i> s
A2	Telstar	Joe Meek	1962, beat	Recorded by The Tornados
A3	Canadian Sunset	Eddie Heywood (Norman Gimbel)	1956, easy listening	Recorded by Heywood and Hugo Winterhalter (instru- mental) and by Andy Williams (vocal, both 1956)
A4	Patricia	Perez Prado	1958, dance music	Dance music
A5	Moonglow and Picnic	Will Hudson (Irving Mills and Eddie Delange)	1956, film music	Actually <i>Moonglow and Theme From 'Picnic'</i> , Music for the film Picnic (1955), recorded by Esther Philips (vocal, 1965)
A6	Anna	Roman Vatro (Armando Trovajoli)	1963, film music, dance music	Recorded by The Spotnicks
B1	Theme from A Summer Place	Max Steiner	1959, film music	Music for the film <i>A Summer Place</i> , recorded by Percy Faith (instrumental, 1960) and Cliff Richard (vocal, 1965, lyrics: Mack Discant), among others
B2	The 'In' Crowd	Billy Page (incl. lyrics)	1964, Motown	Dobie Gray (vocal, 1964) and Ramsey Lewis Trio (instrumental, 1965)
В3	April in Portugal	Raul Ferrão (José Galhardo)	1947	First composed as a fado with Portuguese lyrics, it was recorded multiple times in 1953 and held several charts positions in that year, e.g. in the version of Les Baxter and his orchestra. More recent releases by Bing Crosby (vocal) and Don Costa (instrumental, both 1961)
B4	Moulin Rouge	Georges Auric (William Engvick)	1952, film music, ballad	Actually <i>The Song from Moulin Rouge (Where Is Your Heart)</i> , recorded by Percy Faith (1953, with singer Felicia Sanders) and Connie Francis (1961)
B5	Sail Along Silv'ry Moon	Percy Wenrich (Harry Tobias)	1937, classic pop	(also 'Silvery') Hit for Bing Crosby (1937), recorded by Billy Vaughn (1957) and Martin Denny (1964), among others
B6	Delicado	Waldir Azevedo (Jack Lawrence)	1951, easy listening / Latin	Hit for Percy Faith (instrumental) and Dinah Shore (vocal, both 1952)

²¹ Instrumentals Forever, Polydor 184059, Stereo-LP, Germany 1966. The spelling of the song titles on the covers and labels of the German and the English pressing are slightly different, but the order of the tracks is identical. The album was also distributed as Mono-LP, 84059 and as (Stereo-) compact cassette, Polydor 914 506, as well as 8-track-cartridge, Polydor P-8-184 059. On the compact cassette, however, the last tracks of each side are exchanged. The order on the 8-track-cartridge which was produced for Canada, is the following (in relation to the LP): A1, B2, B5, A2, A3, B3, A4, A5, B4, A6, B1, B6. These adjustments were presumably made to match

the lengths of the tracks to the technical needs of the medium. As an information sheet from Polydor in Last's business documents explains, this was necessary for error-free, automated production in the copying plant. In addition to these immediately or timely released media formats, there are also numerous other re-releases of the album on LP, MC and CD in later years. For example, the release on compact cassette, *Instrumentals Forever*, *Folge 1* [sic!] (Karussell 829 591-4, Germany [presumably 1990s]) features the order of the 1966 LP release.

4. *Instrumentals Forever* in its musical manuscripts

The autograph score of Instrumentals Forever reflects this diversity of originators in that it is organised in twelve individual booklets, each containing the arrangement of one song (see Fig. 1). These booklets are made of several bifolii of commercial music paper (Star Nr. 11, 28 staves), which are connected with transparent adhesive tape.²² The outermost bifolio is used as the cover; it is not pasted to the others, but loosely placed around them. Last designed fol. 1r of each booklet as a title page (see, e.g., Fig. 2, showing the title page of *Telstar*), and the musical notation usually begins on fol. 1v. The pages have an autograph pagination, which includes only those pages with notation on them and thus starts with '1' on fol. 1v. To form a unit, the twelve booklets are joined by a large sheet of blank paper that was placed around the stack. On this paper, somebody noted the name of the album, the release year and the booklets/tracks that the compilation contains – strangely in this case 'A 1–6, B 1-7, kpl'. Since we did not find any other evidence that, at some time, a seventh arrangement had been planned for the B-side of the record, the 'B 7' probably never existed, and this note must be deemed erroneous. We are not sure who added these wrapper papers at which time, they could have been added directly after the production was made but could also have been made years later as part of a cleanup and sorting process.

Usually, the complete instrumentation is only noted at the beginning of the arrangement, i.e. before the first stave of each part on page 1 (fol. 1°). A short version of the instrument names and similar information is found on each verso page. The score is written in pencil, but Last used a blue felt-tip pen for the title pages. Since the rehearsal letters in the score are also drawn in blue felt-tip pen, it can be assumed that Last added this layer of writing after the score had been written.

The title pages are all structured alike: a number is noted at the centre of the top of the page, which seems to stand for the originally planned sequence of the pieces within the album (in Fig. 2, the '1' thus indicates that *Telstar* had been planned as the first track on the A-side of the LP). Below, Last notes the title of the arrangement – which is, at the same time, of course (one of) the title(s) of the arranged song, and underlines it. For each title, he provides information on the

originator of the original music (in the case of *Telstar*/Fig. 2: 'Musik: Joe Meek') and on himself as the composer, and thus originator of the arrangement ('Arr: Hans Last').²³

For nearly all titles, Last flanks this information with details of the respectively responsible record label and, if applicable, publisher (which, in the case of arrangements of protected works, also takes care of the copyrights). ²⁴ In the case of *Telstar*, to name but one example, Last notes 'Radio Tele Music', a publishing house that still exists ²⁵ and was obviously authorised to administer the copyrights for Meek in Germany. Thus, the score provides a condensed overview of all relevant information regarding the legal aspect of the music. ²⁶

Nearly all of the scores of *Instrumentals forever* show traces of at least three further layers of scribal activity. On the one hand, they received a new numbering on the title pages, which was added in red felt-tip pen. This numbering, which relates to the actual order of the pieces on the A-and B-side of the record, is only missing on the title page of *Canadian Sunset* (A3), and was probably written by Last himself.²⁷ The same red felt-tip pen was used to note 'Instrumentals Forever 1966' on the first booklet of the

What we describe here seems to be valid not only for the scores of Instrumentals Forever, but also to document Last's usual way of writing and organising his sheet music.

²³ It is striking that he always uses 'Hans' here, never 'James'. Exceptions are *Moonglow and Picnic*, *Moulin Rouge* and *Sail Along*, *Silv'ry Moon* – on the title pages to these parts of the score, Last is missing as the arranger's name.

²⁴ Once again, with the exceptions of *Moulin Rouge* and, in addition, *The 'In' Crowd*.

²⁵ It is part of Meisel Music, Berlin.

²⁶ In the case of arrangements of unprotected works, the scores documenting the work are also important as regards the publication (in print) and the copyright registration. We thank Dr. Wolfgang Staniček, Bosworth Wien, for his information on the workflow and the written artefacts that emerge from it. On the strong connection between musical manuscripts and questions of copyright in jazz music in the US, see Chevan 1997 who based his observations on the copyright deposits of Louis Armstrong.

²⁷ In the case of *Anna*, no red numbering had been added, but the pre-existing blue '6' had been provided with an 'A' in pencil. The position of the song on the sides of the album was important information for the final editing of the tapes onto a stereo master tape, because this master tape was then used to cut the record master at Polydor's pressing plant. With the master tape, Last and his team of producers completely handed over control to the following production line; subsequent mistakes on the recording (regarding sequence, recording or mix) could only be rectified with additional effort and considerable financial loss. Although Last would receive test pressings of the record with which he could check the title sequence another time, this phase was only for correcting errors related to the cut or the pressing. We only want to mention that the James Last archive includes 28 boxes of reel-to-reel tapes spanning five decades from the 1950s to the 1990s with all possible combinations of digital and analogue multitrack studio tapes, live recordings and listening copies. The large number of boxes is somewhat put into perspective when you consider that all audio recordings related to music productions over the 50 years were copied to tape, and even listening copies contained only a few minutes of music. So far, we have only been able to find a few complete stereo master tapes.



Fig. 1: Convoluted autograph scores for the album production 'Instrumentals forever', archive box 19 in box 110, James Last Archiv, ZPKM, University of Freiburg. With kind permission by the Last family.

compilation, which is the score of Moon River, as the booklets are sorted in the sequence the pieces appear in the album. Thus, the numbering and the addition of the title to the first booklet might have been added in one go. A second layer, in red coloured pencil, seems to be connected to notes made by Last during the recording process in the studio. These additions are mainly either typical conductor's notes or notes for the sound engineer. As regards the first group, Last, for example, highlights the decrescendo of m. 38-40 (p. 7) of the score of Moon River by noting an additional red decrescendo in the eighth stave, which is not assigned to an instrument in this score (see Fig. 3). And in m. 20 (p. 4) of the score, he marks the beginning of a rising chromatic scale in the violins, which is the introduction to their presentation of the main theme of the music, with a red arrow (see Fig. 4).²⁸ In very few cases, these kinds of notes are also made in black coloured pencil. One example consists of two large '2/4', which Last used to mark the change of time signature between measures 12 and 13 in Delicado (see Fig. 5). To the second group we count notes as the 'Blende' ('fade') on p. 11 of The 'In' Crowd (see Fig. 6)29, or the 'Raus' and 'Rein' ('out' and 'in') added to the rhythm section on the pages 9 and 10 of the score of April in Portugal (see Fig. 7), which were probably made either in collaboration with or for the sound engineer Peter Klemt, and aim at the technical part of the production.

A third layer has been added systematically to the title pages of the booklets. Above the first stave, an unknown hand has written 'Instrumentals Forever' and the count of the respective piece (i.e. A 1, A 2, etc.) in pencil (see Figs 1 and 2).

The title pages have sometimes received additional pencil notes in Last's hand: for example, on *Canadian Sunset* and *Moonglow and Picnic* he noted 'Tromp.' (for trumpet) and on *Patricia* 'Bongos', obviously indicating the most crucial part for the arrangement.³⁰

An entry on p. 1 of the score of *Moon River* remains puzzling. It is written in a red coloured pencil that is slightly darker than the one used for the other notes made in the studio. The instrument names in the prefix to the string section for the second recording are underlined with this pencil, and above them the following is also noted in red: 'in rot' ('in red') (see Fig. 8). Does the note indicate a coloured mark on the tape used to record this second layer?³¹ Or is it some kind of information for the copyist who wrote the parts? In this context, it might be notable that the colour used here might be the same that is used for highlights in the 'Direction' parts that probably existed for all arrangements. Unfortunately, to the best of our knowledge, the 'Direction' part of *Moon River* has not been preserved in the estate.

Nevertheless, the overall impression of the scores is that they are very 'clean': the musical text is written very clearly and shows, as a whole, very few corrections. In this respect, these scores can also be described as fair copies because of their status within the compositional process. However, it is questionable to what extent these fair copies (in German: Reinschriften) were preceded by other writing phases which would have resulted in sketches or drafts.32 On the one hand, what we have found in the estate speaks against the existence of such earlier versions. So far, we have not come across many musical manuscripts in the various parts of the estate resembling the status of a sketch, as we know it, for example, from Ludwig van Beethoven or Arnold Schönberg and normally expect in composers' estates - neither as a reused insert, scratch paper or the like.³³ Only two of the more than 200 boxes in the estate contain mixed manuscripts, sketches and ideas³⁴. Also, these boxes mainly contain letters from other artists in which their authors make suggestions or express requests. Only very few of the manuscripts found there are particell-like sketches. This finding is remarkable insofar as Last, who used his materials until the end of his

²⁸ The scoring is interesting here because a second recording of the strings added later takes up this chromatic scale in the violins and repeats it in the following bar, starting a diminished fourth higher on g^1 instead of d sharp 1 , before joining in in the presentation of the main melody, which they then accompany in the lower third.

²⁹ It is also interesting in this passage that Last has notated the horn part in concert pitch in an empty system above the actual horn system, which is noted in transposed form.

³⁰ The '(Rolf)' on the title page of *Telstar* (Fig. 2) might, besides its being written with the blue felt-tip pen, have a similar function: it might point to the drummer Rolf Ahrens, who could have been foreseen for the drums part which is fundamental for this piece. It is not totally clear to us in all cases why a certain part is indicated and others not.

³¹ For more information on the recording practice, see below.

³² The English technical term 'fair copy' is misleading in this context, for Last did not carry out any copyist's work (from his own sketches) in the preparation of the score, but simply wrote in the 'clean', so the German (and untranslatable) term 'Reinschrift' is more appropriate here.

³³ See also Friedemann Sallis' very general and also very traditional definition of 'sketch' or 'Skizze', because it is embedded into the emphatic 'Werkbegriff' or 'concept of work': 'Musical sketches are objects that composers produce as they create their work, Sallis 2015, 1. In this context, the 'work' is usually the last version of a composition in manuscript or the first printing.

³⁴ Boxes 136 and 137, in the numbering of the Last family.

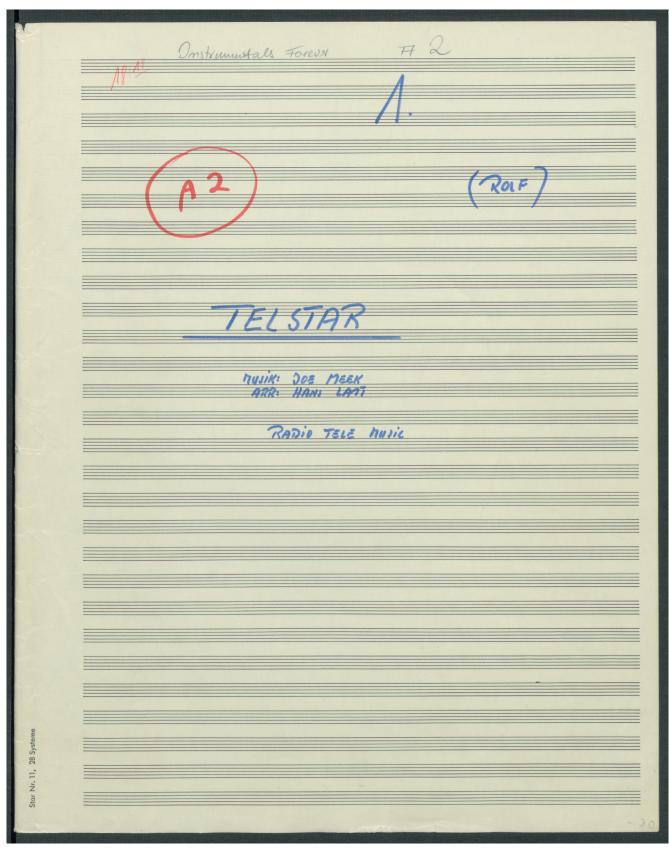


Fig. 2: 'Telstar', score, title page, archive box 19 in box 110, James Last Archiv, ZPKM, University of Freiburg. With kind permission by the Last family.

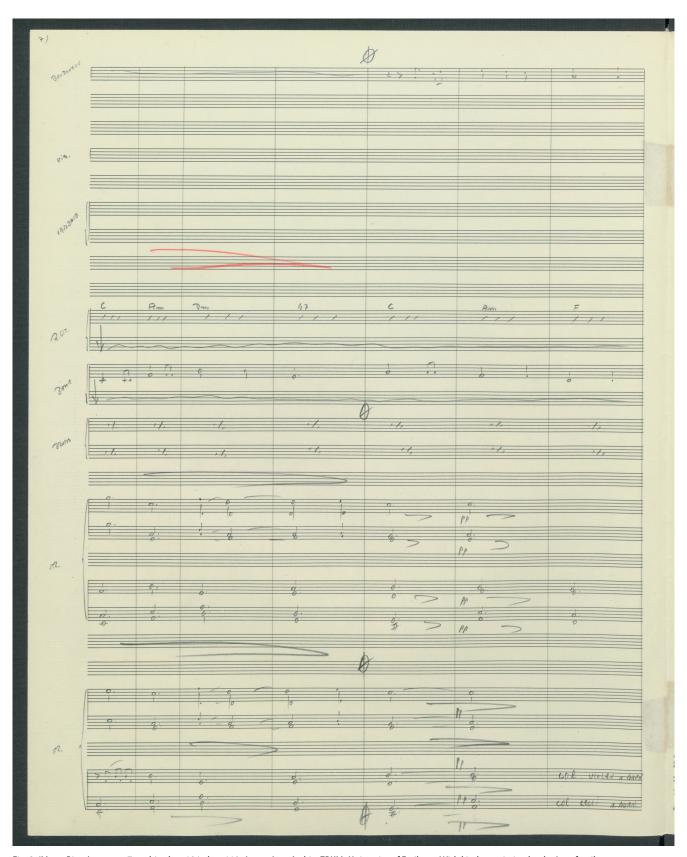


Fig. 3: 'Moon River', score, p. 7, archive box 19 in box 110, James Last Archiv, ZPKM, University of Freiburg. With kind permission by the Last family.

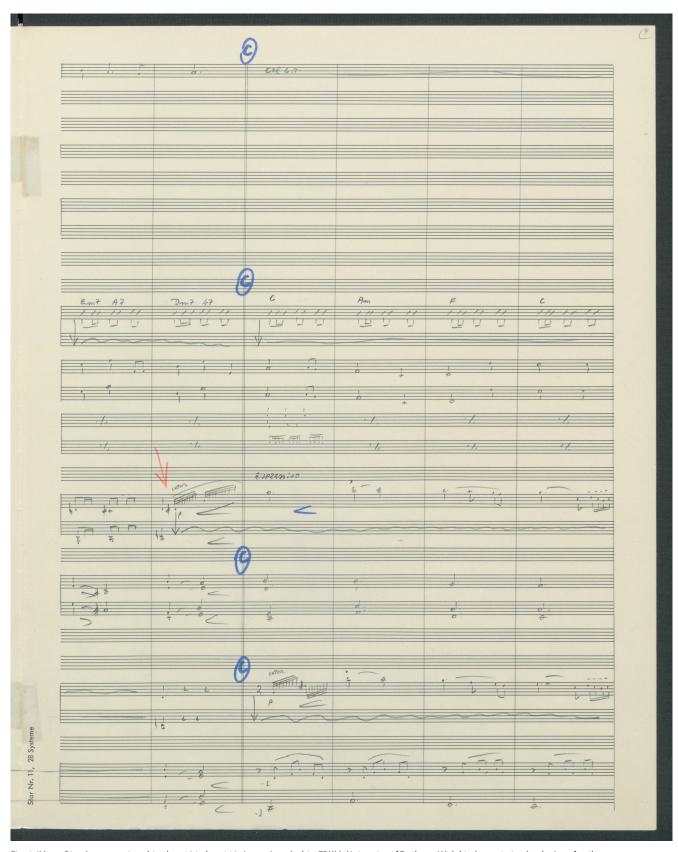


Fig. 4: 'Moon River', score, p. 4, archive box 19 in box 110, James Last Archiv, ZPKM, University of Freiburg. With kind permission by the Last family.

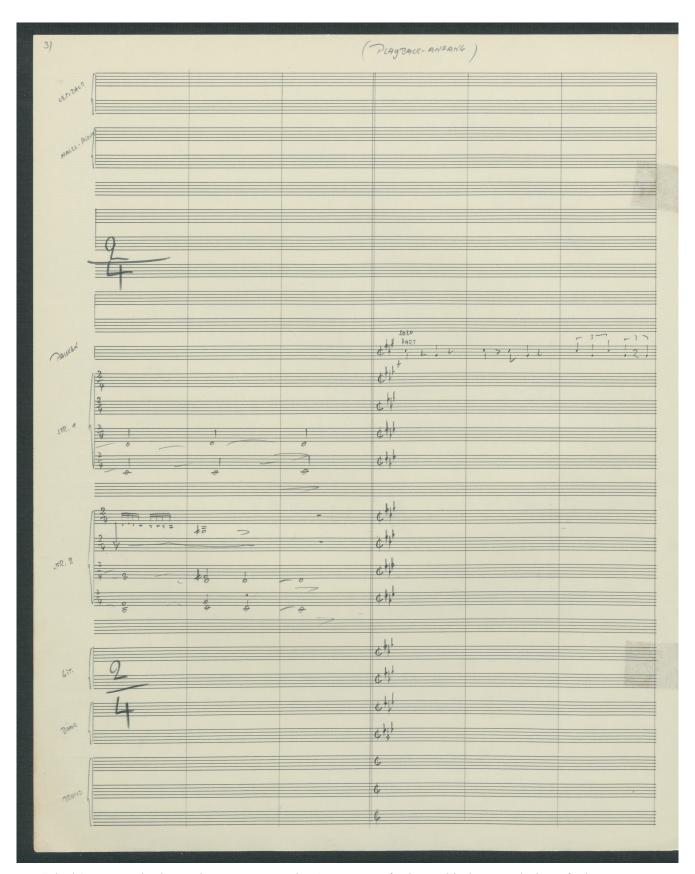


Fig. 5: 'Delicado', score, p. 3, archive box 19 in box 110, James Last Archiv, ZPKM, University of Freiburg. With kind permission by the Last family.

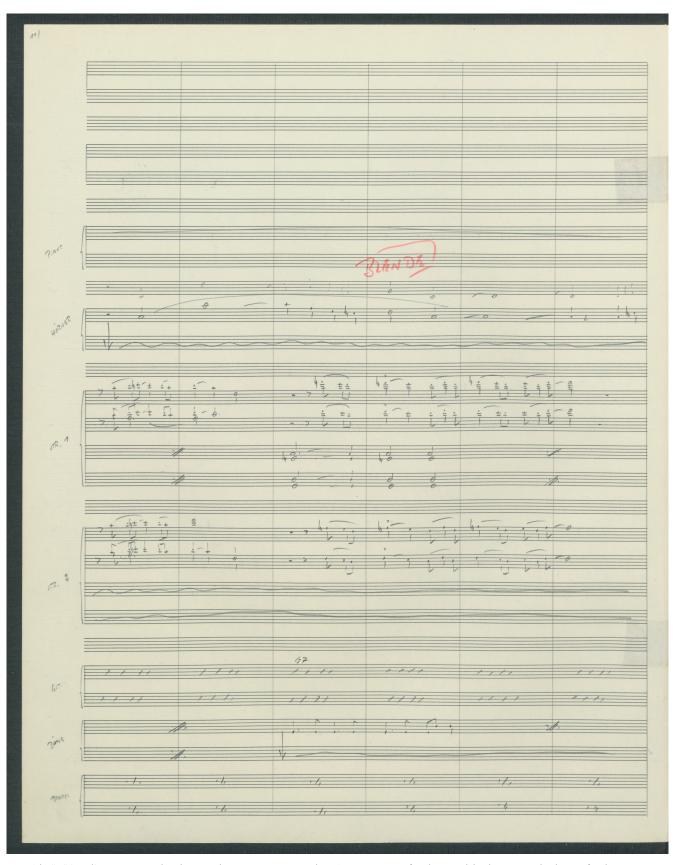


Fig. 6: 'The "In" Crowd', score, p. 11, archive box 19 in box 110, James Last Archiv, ZPKM, University of Freiburg. With kind permission by the Last family.



Fig. 7: 'April in Portugal', score, pp 9—10, archive box 19 in box 110, James Last Archiv, ZPKM, University of Freiburg. With kind permission by the Last family.

life, obviously did not purge his papers for posterity.³⁵ One possible explanation for this complete lack of sketch material might be that Last did not need this kind of preliminary work but was able to write the scores in one go. This assumption would be confirmed by Last himself and his colleagues, family and co-workers, of whom we have statements that writing music impromptu and flawlessly was one of Last's skills benefitting him as an arranger and also as a composer. Comedian, musician and composer Olli Dittrich, a friend of Last's, reported in an interview: 'I once saw how he wrote music. Just like we write a letter by hand'.³⁶ Another possible explanation could be that Last used to dispose of this kind of material as soon as it had become obsolete upon completing the score. This second possible explanation – which, however, does not invalidate the first one because Last's

working schedule still remains impressive – is supported by the finding of a sketch in the score of *Sail along Silv'ry Moon* that will be discussed in more detail below (see Fig. 9).³⁷

A first, integral function of the score is that it serves the copyist as a template for transcribing the parts. Therefore, the 'cleanliness' of the score as a manuscript was also an important prerequisite for the flawless copying of the parts for the studio musicians, which a 'Herr Zucker' probably carried out at the time. Furthermore, there is some evidence that autograph scores were sent to partners for rehearsal (they were probably photocopies): on 10 June 2015, one day after Last's death, the *Bergedorfer Zeitung* published an article portraying the collaboration between James Last and the Bergedorfer Kammerchor. This article, written

³⁵ See Sallis' comments on the 'survival of musical sketches' in various composers of Western art Music (Sallis 2015, 43–46).

³⁶ 'Ich habe einmal gesehen, wie der notiert. Also so, wie wir mit der Hand 'nen Brief schreiben.' The citation comes from minute 1 and 10 seconds from the film documentary *James Last: Mit Happy Music um die Welt* by Thomas Macho (Macho 2019).

³⁷ It should be noted that Last never tired of emphasising that writing music was a time-consuming and physically demanding work for him. See Holtsträter 2024, 181–184.

³⁸ The trombone player Detlef Surmann, who was responsible for copying the parts of Last's arrangements for many years, only joined the band in 1967. Ron Last remembers, in a phone call (2 May 2023), that, as a child, he was often in the car when the scores were brought to the copyist and informed us about the name he remembers in this respect. 'Herr Zucker' is probably the composer Hans Zucker, who lived in Bergkoppelweg 30 in Hamburg Fuhlsbüttel in the 1960s.

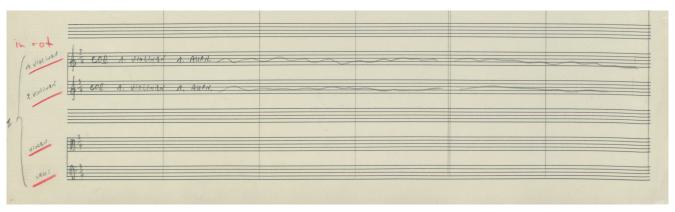


Fig. 8: 'Moon River', score, p. 1, first measures of second string section, archive box 19 in box 110, James Last Archiv, ZPKM, University of Freiburg. With kind permission by the Last family.

by Gerrit Pfennig and Thomas Heyen, is mainly based on information given to them by Hellmut Wormsbächer, the former conductor of the choir, and closes with a quote from him regarding Last's scores: 'Hansis Tod kam viel zu früh. Ich hätte von ihm so gerne noch eine Original-Partitur in seiner Handschrift bekommen. Die waren herausragend.'39

The score to Sail Along Silv'ry Moon evidently shows that it was important to Last to provide his partners with scores that met his high standards. Page 9 of the score is a sketch, as far as we see totally unrelated to the piece itself (see Fig. 9). As the score, it is written in pencil, but in a much sloppier handwriting. The music is notated in groupings of two staves each, with a treble clef in the upper and a bass clef in the lower stave. Here, the bar lines, which in the scores are always drawn very accurately through all staves of the score, are placed very loosely between the staves, and corrections are made by just crossing out the notes. The visual organisation of the writing on the page does not seem very elaborate. Notation in the lower stave is only found in the first group of two staves. The lower stave is empty in all other stave-groupings. But in one line, chord symbols are written below the upper part. Last has crossed out the whole page and has drawn two arrows from the left to the right margin, with their tips pointing right – one in the upper half, one in the lower half of the page, thus indicating that this page had to be skipped. He used the blue felt-tip pen for the arrows, and above the arrow in the upper half he wrote: 'Verzeihung!!!!' ('Sorry').

Thus, it was certainly unintended that the sketch found its way into the booklet. It is noted on the last page of the second double leaf (if the bifolio used for the cover is not counted). Last may simply have accidentally grabbed a double sheet that already had writing on the back when he needed another bifolio for the score. He probably only realised the oversight when he had already written on two or three pages and replacing the paper would have caused a severe loss of time.

As already mentioned, the autograph manuscript served as an exemplar for the copyist, who produced the parts. On the one hand, Last invested a great deal of effort in making the score legible and unambiguous, but, on the other hand, there is a whole series of notations that in a way makes the copyist another originator of the piece. This is mainly due to Last's habit to use abbreviated notation in many places. This does not only apply to the traditional and frequently used 'colla parte' notation. Furthermore, we have instructions as signs for the unchanged repetition of bars in some of the scores. Or we find groups of measures that Last has numbered consecutively. These numbers (or sometimes letters) are then repeated elsewhere over empty measures to indicate to the copyist that he should once again notate the music of the measures designated in this manner (see, e.g., Fig. 10, which shows two pages of the score of *Patricia* in which Last made use of this kind of abbreviated notation. Here, someone else – probably the copyist – added 'wie in C' ('as in C'), to relate to the part from which the music is to be taken.) Unfortunately, within the materials of Instrumentals Forever, only one of the orchestral parts has survived, which is the '1st Drums' part of Canadian Sunset. What has been handed down in a larger number is, besides the scores, the so-called 'Direktionsstimme' ('direction part'). A 'Direktionsstimme' is a part extracted for the sound

³⁹ Pfennig and Heyen 2015 ('Hansi's death came much too early. I would have loved to have received one more original score from him in his handwriting. They were outstanding.'). Translation by the authors.

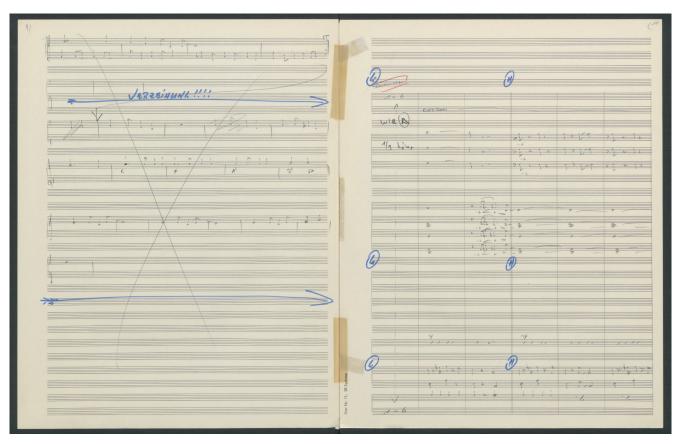


Fig. 9: 'Sail Along Silv'ry Moon', score, pp 9–10, archive box 19 in box 110, James Last Archiv, ZPKM, University of Freiburg. With kind permission by the Last family.

engineer who played an important role in the recording process. 40 These direction parts are preserved from three pieces, *Canadian Sunset* (headed 'Direction', see Fig. 11), *Moulin Rouge* and *Sail Along, Silv'ry Moon*. They look very similar to a conventional lead sheet: they have notation of the main melody, but important information on when the orchestra's other parts set in are also added with details of instrumentation, so that the engineer, when recording and relistening to the tapes, was able to locate the musical events in the composition by reading the 'Direktionsstimme'. The rehearsal letters helped him communicate with the musicians in the recording room about specific musical passages.

Thus, another crucial function of the scores, as well as of the parts, was that they were obviously intended for the recording process in the studio, including the technical process of recording. Above, we have described later additions that are obviously

directed to the sound engineers or the recording process, but there are also many of them in the pencil-written original layer of writing. These are instructions such as 'Fade Out' at the end of *Telstar*, which are also reminders for Last himself (see Fig. 12). Seeing this note, in combination with the 'Bis' on the top of the page while conducting his orchestra in the studio, he knew that he had to have his musicians repeat the last bars sufficiently often to produce enough tape material for the sound engineer to create a good fade-out section to finish the piece. It is not recorded how often the bars had to be repeated; presumably Last and his production team drew on their experience. The double notation of the strings section is another feature of the score obviously pointing to the production in the studio and highlighting the role of the production team as originators. It is found in all scores for this album (see, for example, Fig. 13). They are designated 'Erste Aufnahme' ('first take') and 'Zweite Aufnahme' ('second take').41 Last had only one group of string players; the second group of parts for the strings was recorded separately and added to the existing recording as overdub.⁴²

⁴⁰ In addition to Klemt as production manager, Willox (1976, p. 93) also counts Dieter Queeren as assistant sound engineer in the recording room for the early 1970s. 'Direction' can be understood as a German word, as both variants 'ct' and 'kt' were in use at the time. Sound engineer Peter Klemt, who was the recording engineer for the studio productions of Bert Kaempfert, James Last and other orchestra leaders signed to Polydor, was instrumental in shaping the sound of German-produced easy listening of the 1960s and 1970s; see Last 2006b, 292 resp. Last 2015, 379.

 $^{^{41}}$ See, e.g., the score of *Moon River*, p. 3.

⁴² The indications 'L' (for 'links', 'left') and 'R' (for 'rechts', 'right') that are connected to the instruments names in the scores prescribe the placement of the thus labelled instrument, which was important because the re-

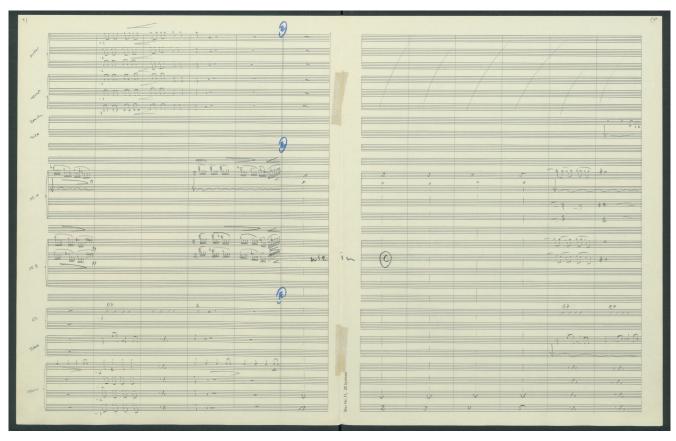


Fig. 10: 'Patricia', score, pp 7–8, archive box 19 in box 110, James Last Archiv, ZPKM, University of Freiburg. With kind permission by the Last family.

Given the fact that Last used to record the strings twice to achieve the typical sound of his arrangements, and that he also often relied on an unusual instrumentation (e.g., four trombones in *Telstar*), he was surely aware that he could not simply adapt this album to the core line-up of his band on a touring stage or a live television-studio situation. This might explain why our initial cursory review of the boxes which contain the parts of his live and touring band did not yield any parts for *Instrumentals Forever*. Based mainly on parts from tours which took place in the 1970s and later, we could see that in many cases Last did reuse the sheet music that had been prepared for the studio recording. This is indicated by numbering such as 'A1' or 'B4', which refers to the tracklisting on the record but does not make sense in the context of a tour. 44

While the aspects described above identify those involved in the technical part of the production as further originators, other notational characteristics convey that the musicians also significantly and decisively contributed to the music's ultimate shape. Last sometimes left considerable lacunae for them, with numerous prescriptions as 'solo', 'fill in' or, even, in the drums part of *Moon River*, 'double time ad lib' (see Fig. 14). This shows that Last actively involved the musicians, usually experienced members of his orchestra. In some scores – although not in any of the scores of *Instrumentals Forever* – Last even connected the names of specific instrumentalists to some of the staves, thus designating specific parts to specific people. It seems that he counted on their personal and musical abilities and idiosyncrasies to achieve a certain musical result.⁴⁵ Directly naming the performing musicians

cording was made with one stereo microphone which was placed centrally in the studio; see Last 2006b, 57–58, and Last 2015, 86.

selection of hits from German (film) Schlager, English Beat and American Soul. However, it must be noted that the generational changes in the band may have corrupted the documentation in the estate. There are hardly any parts that were used by the musicians of the first generation of the band.

 $^{^{43}}$ There are 24 boxes ('Musikermappen', nos 201–224) with parts of his live and touring bands from the 1980s up to 2015.

⁴⁴ In these 'Musikermappen' there are hardly any lesser-known pop pieces from the 1960s, it seems that Last had avoided this repertoire in stage performances and on tour in the 1980s and 1990s and played the songs the audience knew then. But there was still a solid core of 'evergreens' in his live sets of the 1970s and in later times: titles from the Beatles and a small

⁴⁵ See, e.g., the score of track 'A1' in *Hammond à gogo II*, p. 1 (box 110, archive box 19), where the parts of the Hammond Organ received the additions 'Grube' and 'Hausmann', referring to Harry Grube and Hermann Hausmann. See also Last 2015, 74 (Last 2006b, 49–50), on his longtime co-musician Günter Platzeck and his strengths and weaknesses.

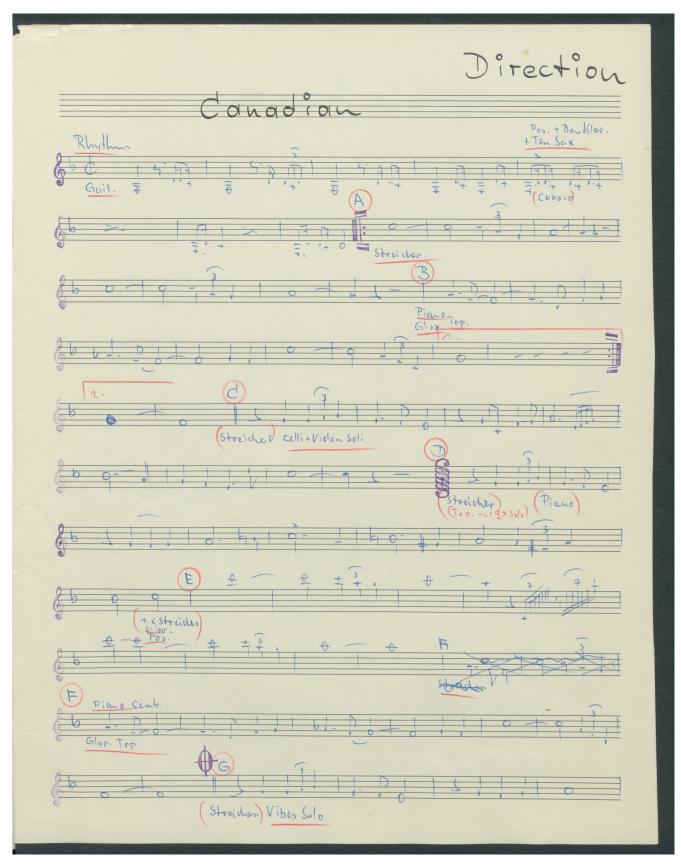


Fig. 11: 'Canadian Sunset', direction part (Direktionsstimme), p. 1, archive box 19 in box 110, James Last Archiv, ZPKM, University of Freiburg. With kind permission by the Last family.

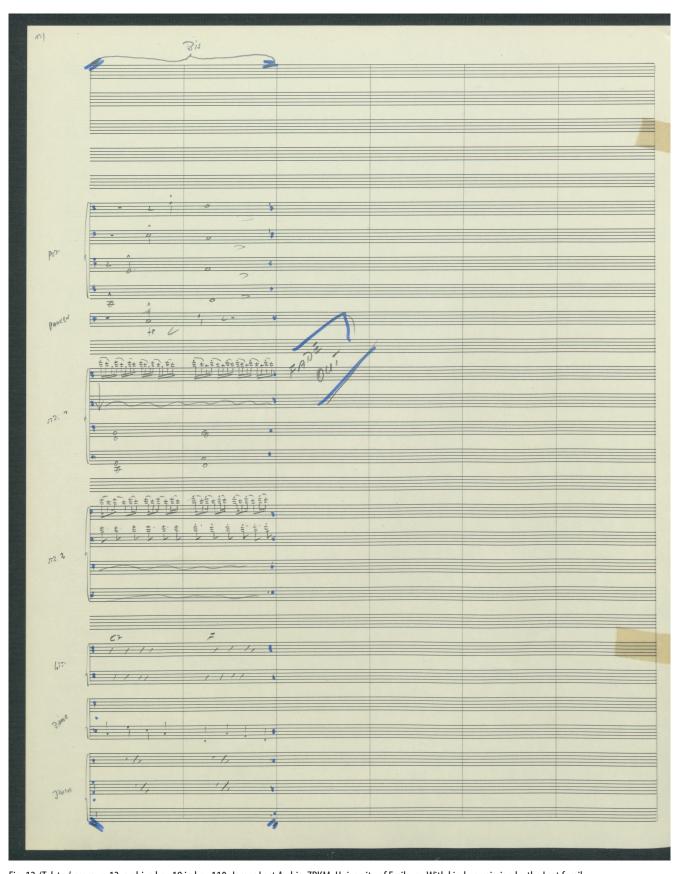


Fig. 12: 'Telstar', score, p. 13, archive box 19 in box 110, James Last Archiv, ZPKM, University of Freiburg. With kind permission by the Last family.

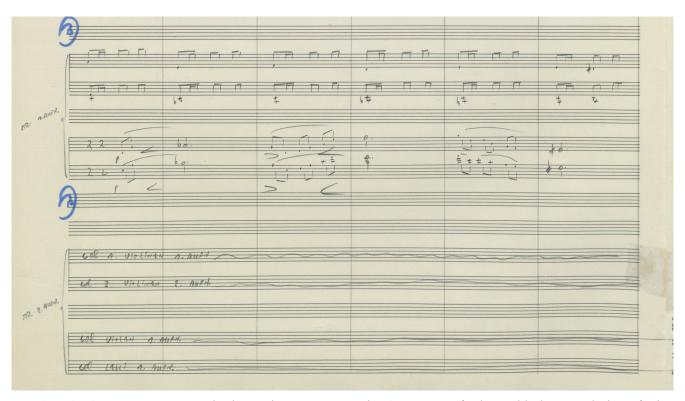


Fig. 13: 'Moon River', score, p. 3, string section, archive box 19 in box 110, James Last Archiv, ZPKM, University of Freiburg. With kind permission by the Last family.

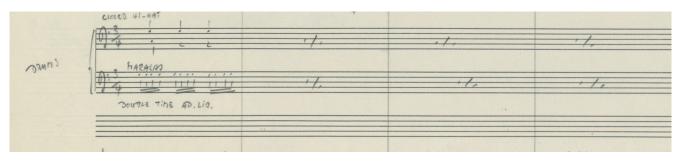


Fig. 14: 'Moon River', score, p. 1, drums, archive box 19 in box 110, James Last Archiv, ZPKM, University of Freiburg. With kind permission by the Last family.

in the score and in the part material, and, in doing so, demanding a certain 'sound' and certain ways of playing by individual musicians, can also be found in Ferde Grofé's 'blue' arrangement of George Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue for George Whiteman's orchestra⁴⁶. It can also certainly be traced in other arrangements in the field of big band swing and jazz.

Thus, we can conclude that the scores are at the centre of the production: they have a normative and a documentative function alike. Their format, with the many booklets, is closely connected with the fact that the music consists of arrangements of songs of different origin. The originators of these songs as well as Last as the originator of the arrangements are named on the title pages, which furthermore point to other relevant actors (especially publishers and record labels). Looking at the notation and at the layers of writing which were added later, it becomes very clear that the score equally addresses the orchestra and its conductor and the sound engineer. At the same time, it is also oriented towards the copyist, whose skills Last relied on when he notated the music with many abbreviations. The way the booklets are made, as well as the sketch which has, probably accidentally, found its way into one of the scores, are suitable to give an insight into Last's way of working, in the way he conceived and notated music as well as in the way he

⁴⁶ See Keikutt 2011, 273. It is noticeable that here, as in Last's case, the names of the interpreters appear in connection with innovative arrangement techniques and thus innovative instrumentation.

involved other people, and took them and their needs into account. In the next chapter, the question of the relationship between the originators of the songs and Last as the arranger will be looked at in more detail. Using the arrangement of *Telstar* as an example, it will be discussed which aspects of Joe Meek's music Last preserved and how he transferred them into his own music.

5. Last's arrangement of Joe Meek's Telstar

There has hardly been any scholarly engagement with Last's musical approach.⁴⁷ Therefore, we want to have a closer look at his arrangement of Telstar to show how he dealt with the pre-existing music. This allows a better insight into the relationship between the originators of the arranged music and James Last as the originator of the arrangement, and the ways in which Last appropriated the music of others, in this case, Joe Meek. Many decisions that Last made in advance of writing the score are not documented as such. For example, Last only uses the distinctive first part of Meek's composition for his arrangement, namely the insistent synthesizer melody which evokes a hymn. The contrasting section functions formally as a bridge in the original and its melody and sound are dominated by the electric guitar, but here it is omitted. Thus, Last reduced the original song form to a series form, which in turn led to a number of other possible compositional choices.

The main melody, performed by the synthesizer in Joe Meek's (and The Tornados') original production⁴⁸ is oversaturated and the midrange is emphasised to the point of distortion, and all musical events in the mix ultimately seem very direct and, for listeners back then, very compressed and intrusive. Last's version places the main melody in a new instrumental part in each of the four repetitions. The first time the melody is played by piccolo, flute and Hammond organ. It is only accompanied by the drums and, only once for a very brief moment, by an ascending figure in the strings that had already been heard in the intro and may symbolise the launch of the telecommunication satellite referenced in the composition's name.⁴⁹ Immediately afterwards, the strings

join the flutes and the organ in the second statement of the melody. The third repetition is dominated by the strings, which are accompanied by a distinctive rhythmic figure played by the trombones. In the fourth and final repetition, the trombones combine with the violas and cellos of both string sections and take over the melody in unison. They are mainly accompanied by the doubled violins which repeat arpeggiomotifs in semiquavers in groups of 3-3-2 throughout the time, giving the music a very restless character.

In addition to the variation in accompaniment, dynamics and timbre, Last also uses the progression through the keys to maintain the listener's attention. He starts in B-flat major, and then proceeds, before the third statement of the melody, to D-flat major, and for the next repetition to F-flat major. The key ranges describe an upward movement by thirds; here, the three key levels B, D and F can be combined into a B major triad. In his autobiography, Last describes that key changes in dance music are an important means of achieving variety. He learned from his father Louis, a recreational musician, that ascending by thirds is particularly effective. It is most probably not coincidental that the chosen key is always one that can be played comfortably by the instrument(s) which take over the melody in the respective section.

The piece is held together, as already done by Meek, by the continuous rhythm of the drums, which is heard throughout the song without any interruption.⁵² Last also takes over the intro, which is characterised by a high noise

point of reference for Last, even before he started to work on the arrangement for *Instrumentals Forever*. In the last measure on p. 8, Last adds the word '(Telstar)' to the organ part, probably to instruct the organist about the sound that he should produce. And, indeed, the sound of the organ, as it is found in the studio recording (Polydor Stereo 237 447) resembles the sound of the synthesizer in *Telstar*.

⁴⁷ Böhle and Hoeldke 1996 is an exception, mentioning Last's style of arrangement several times.

⁴⁸ Joe Meek, *Telstar* and Geoffrey Goddard, *Jungle Fever*, Single, 7", 45 RPM, Decca 45-F 11494, UK August 1962.

⁴⁹ An instruction in the score of Last's Beatles-Medley 'Sie liebt dich / I Want to hold your hand / I should have known better' for the first *Non-Stop Dancing* record (1965, archive box 12 in box 106, James Last Archive, ZPKM, University of Freiburg) shows that Meek's *Telstar* was an important

⁵⁰ In ballads from the 1970s to the 1990s, and especially in the rock and soul-influenced power ballads, the key change or direct modulation up a whole or semitone is part of the common compositional repertoire to generate increased attention at the end of a song and to present the singer with new challenges. See Metzer 2012, 445 446 and Metzer 2017, 140 142. As Michael Buchler observes in the songs of Frank Loesser, these modulations do not necessarily have to end in dramatic climaxes: 'Direct modulations tend to be aurally apparent, even to casual listeners, and yet these modulations by third, fourth, or larger intervals rarely carry any dramatic weight. We hear the modulation, we just do not generally sense that it transmits any extramusical meaning, and neither do we particularly care that the original key will not likely return.' Buchler 2008, 37.

⁵¹ Last 2006b, 4: 'He had perfect pitch, too, and he was the first person to teach me tricks that I could use later – when arranging music, for instance. "When you change key, you have to go up a minor third..." See also 2015, 19: 'Erstaunlicherweise hatte mein Vater ein absolutes Gehör – und er war der Erste, der mir Tricks beibrachte, die ich später beim Arrangieren gebrauchen konnte: "Beim Tonartenwechsel muss du eine kleine Terz hochgehen...").

⁵² In Meek's Telstar, this part is not restricted to the A-sections, but also underlies the contrasting B-sections.

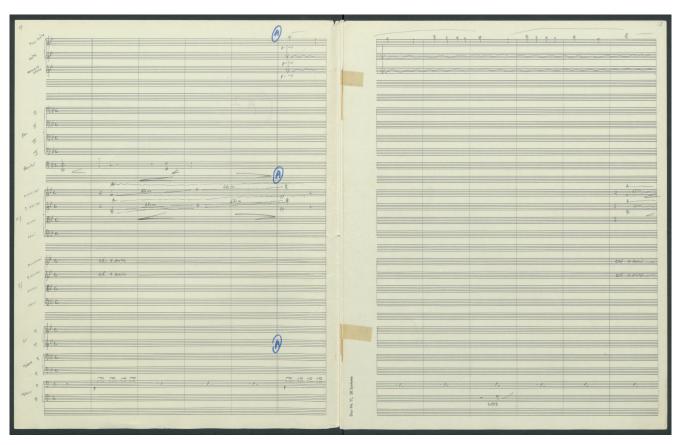


Fig. 15: 'Telstar', score, pp 1–2, archive box 19 in box 110, James Last Archiv, ZPKM, University of Freiburg. With kind permission by the Last family.

component that makes the launch of the rocket apparent. But while the sound has a more technical appearance in Meek's original and is produced by using a modern synthesizer, Last uses the kettledrums and the string section for a similar effect. (See Fig. 15, which shows the first few bars of Last's arrangement of *Telstar*.) Last's arrangement of *Telstar* thus takes similar sonic premises as a starting point but uses the more conventional instrumentation of the studio orchestra to emulate the unusual sound effects of Meek's production.

Nevertheless, there is one more difference between the two kinds of music: in contrast to Meek, Last used the factually existing room of the studio to create an aural perception of space ('Tiefenstaffelung'). To this end, he used means such as the distance of the instruments from the stereo microphone, creating an illusion of distance and depth for the listeners.⁵³

Meek's musical engagement with the satellite seems to be dominated by the technical aspects of aerospace. In contrast, Last emphasises the poetic aspects more strongly. It seems that he wants to evoke in the listener an idea of the calmness, vastness and emptiness of space. This change of perspective seems to turn the grandiose ride in a hell machine into an intricate flight manoeuvre in a beautiful space observed from a distance.

6. Conclusion: Originators in and outside the manuscript sphere

Arrangements of already published and recorded music – and thus arrangements as we find on the studio album discussed here – have a difficult status in music research. Often, they are not regarded as actual, original compositions, and are therefore not deemed worthy of investigation. These doubts regarding the originality of the music and the status of the composition are not only found on the level of aesthetic evaluation but are also reflected in the legal sphere. If arrangements were based on protected melodies, Last could not register them with a copyright collective. Thus, he was usually not remunerated when they were used, ⁵⁴ and the

⁵³ About the use of the room set-up of the instruments in the studio and the reverb effects at that time see Last 1975, 110, and more general, Last 2015, 85–88.

⁵⁴ In the case of titles for which the term of copyright has expired or did not even exist in the first place, it was also possible to legally register the arrangement; see Last 2015, 66. This is also documented by several business correspondence in the estate, in which unclear copyright issues are discussed and Polydor admonishes Last not to arrange any protected works: for example, in the business letters there is a letter from Gottfried Claus, of

scores of arrangements of copyright-protected works only exist as manuscripts and were usually not printed.

However, Last also earned money with these arrangements in the form of a revenue share per sold copy ('Umsatzbeteiligung').⁵⁵ This deal was certainly risky when he signed the contract, but ultimately turned out to be very profitable when his albums became very successful. *Instrumentals Forever*, with its focus on well-known (and copyright protected) instrumental works or instrumental versions, was certainly intended as an investment in the future. Last was able to leave his 'sonic business card' with this album, especially the pieces that had already been interpreted as instrumentals by other famous bandleaders were certainly heard with great attention by the professional audience and representatives of the music industry.

As described above, writing down the details on composers, publishing houses and recording companies of the used songs on the title pages of the arrangements points to this legal situation.⁵⁶ They were necessary at that time insofar as the copyrights for all original works were still valid. Although the composers of the works used by Last

the copyright department of DDG (dated 20 January 1977) to Inge Schierholz (department A&R of DGG and Last's direct contact to DGG) that no more music of Maurice Ravel is to be used and copyright should be cleared in pre-production. See archive box 'Polydor GL' in box 703, James Last Archiv, ZPKM, University of Freiburg.

were of course not directly involved in the production of the album, it can be assumed that arrangements, especially successful ones, were usually approved by the authors of the songs: it is usually predictable and desirable for the authors to have their works licensed. To sum up, we can thus state that the creators of the songs that Last arranged are a very important group of originators for Instrumentals Forever (of course, this is true for other albums as well). They are credited as originators on the booklets of the score and each of these booklets is connected to at least one representative of this group. Where Last arranged music that already had a longer reception history at the time, we can assume that the listeners perceived these melodies as being connected to (and the music partially shaped by) other actors than the composer such as interpreters and arrangers. Except for Last himself, these originators are the most important group in the context of the arrangements. However, once they had granted permission of use, they surrendered any influence on the process of arranging, and thus on the final aesthetic result.

In addition to the persons mentioned by name in the manuscripts, there are others that also had a decisive influence on the creative process. Sometimes, they were even responsible as initiators for the fact that these scores exist at all. It can be assumed that, in line with the industrial processes of producing a studio album, employees of James Last's label Polydor played a significant role. As set out above, the idea for Instrumentals Forever was to establish James Last on the English-speaking market. It was developed in collaboration with Polydor employees at least, and the same can be assumed for the album's title. For example, Polydor established the 'à gogo' series in 1965, which was designed to present Last with a smaller ensemble and a main instrument that changed per album. However, Last was initially sceptical because the choice fell on the Hammond organ, and Last himself documents that the name for the album had not been his idea at all: 'So an astute advertising fellow came up with the name Hammond à gogo, a sort of brand name that we kept up for a whole "à gogo" series.'57 We also know from other people who had the initial idea for the respective album: Last, for example, reports how Harald Vock, the head of entertainment of NDR, suggested to him at a meal in the canteen to make a record of the *Threepenny*

⁵⁵ Contract between Deutsche Grammophon and Hans Last (see n. 14). The revenue share for records which were delivered to West Germany and West Berlin was 7 % of the wholesale price ('Grossistenpreises') (i.e. half of the retail price), when delivered abroad 2% of the German retail price. At the beginning of the collaboration with the DGG, the numbers were a little lower.

⁵⁶ We just want to note that the case of medleys is even more complicated because the length of the music that was used as a basis was relevant for the payments that had to be made to GEMA (Gesellschaft für musikalische Aufführungs- und mechanische Vervielfältigungsrechte). In the business correspondence, there is a letter of 12 December 1969 which the Deutsche Grammophon sent to Last, informing him of the following: 'Ab sofort gelten als Fragmente nur noch Titel mit einer Spieldauer bis zu 1 Minute '45 Sekunden. Alle Titel, die diese Zeit überschreiten, gelten als volle Werke für die GEMA-Abrechnung. Wenn also auf einer LP-Seite, die 14 Fragmente enthält, auch nur ein Titel länger als 1 Minute '45 Sekunden ist, müssen wir überhöhte Lizenzen zahlen. Unsere Geschäftsleitung hat uns deshalb strikt untersagt, Potpourri-Produktionen, bei denen nicht alle Titel innerhalb der o.g. genannten Zeit liegen, abzunehmen. Wir müssen Ihnen also solche Produktionen zur Kürzung der Titel noch einmal zurücksenden.' ('From now on, only titles with a playing time of up to 1 minute 45 seconds are considered fragments. All titles that exceed this time are considered full works for GEMA billing. So, if on an LP side containing 14 fragments even one title is longer than 1 minute 45 seconds, we have to pay excessive royalties. Our management has therefore strictly forbidden to accept potpourri productions where not all titles are within the above-mentioned time. We must therefore send such productions back to you again for shortening of the titles.') Letter with Deutsche Grammophon letter head, enclosed with a page 'DG Aufnahmeplanung und -abrechnung' ('11/69'), in: archive box 'Polydor / GL', in box 703, James Last Archiv, ZPKM, University of Freiburg.

⁵⁷ Last 2006b, 48, and Last 2015, 73: 'So kam ein findiger Werbemann auf den Namen *Hammond à gogo*, eine Art Markenzeichen, das wir gleich für die ganze 'à gogo'-Serie beibehielten.'

Opera. 58 Further, he mentions that his wife Waltraud initiated the title (and, nota bene, the musical style) for the first album of the 'Classics up to date' series⁵⁹. Among this group of originators, which are primarily generators of ideas, Ossi Drechsler and Werner Klose can be ascribed a special status, as has been shown above as well. We can assume that they contributed or were closely involved in developing many ideas – certainly also ideas impacting Instrumentals Forever – on an album and its subject, on the choice of special songs for an arrangement, on the sequence of tracks on a LP etc. Klose was also responsible for the album covers. 60 In addition to Waltraud, Last also mentions his children as a source of ideas and inspiration, and that his son, Ron, even worked with him, especially as a musician and producer, in later times. Furthermore, some of the correspondence in the estate shows that colleagues quite often approached Last with ideas. All in all, however, it is nearly impossible to know in detail who can be counted into this group and to establish how large his or her influence was.

Those who were involved in the production in the studio can be deemed another group of originators: the musicians and the sound engineers; in particular, for example, the keyboarder Günter Platzek and the sound engineer Peter Klemt. While Last gave his musicians the space to express themselves, to bring in their own personal ideas and style, Klemt was significantly involved in the record's sound, thus also leaving his personal mark on the record. These originators probably did not leave any traces in the score in the sense that they had added notes. However, the score is made for them, and thus there are, as has been shown, many instances in which the score received its materiality and visual organisation due to the needs of this group's members. The same holds true for the copyist, who might have left his handwriting in some instances (with black coloured pencil, especially in the passages where no notation is found, but only a reference to another passage that has to be repeated).

Only as a side note it should be mentioned that Last extended the circle of originators even further on other albums. For example, for the production of the *Non Stop Dancing* albums, certainly one of James Last's extremely successful and most idiosyncratic album series, running from 1965 to 1985, extra guests (family, friends, acquaintances

as well as musicians) invited to studio parties were used as producers of the background party sounds in addition to a choir. This is how Last describes the scenario:

We served bread rolls, beer and schnapps to loosen people up, and then Peter Klemt, the sound engineer put on the tape – and the party took off. The choir sang along with everything, and my guests sang, clapped and danced.⁶¹

The vocal phrases that were recorded can actually be found in the respective scores. (In the course of the 1970s, however, the party noises increasingly recede into the background as Last worked with an ensemble of professional, English-speaking pop singers).⁶²

Last's embeddedness in a network of colleagues, friends and family is thus productive for the creation of his music on different levels. The multitude of influences, through which his music is shaped, is certainly not unique to Last. What might be unique is the very visibility of these influences. This is surely due to the fact that Last does not try to present himself as an original genius at all, but openly names where others had good ideas that he used. He was probably able to act in such a way because he was an entertainment musician. Therefore, he operated in a segment where creative originality is not the only essential feature, but where a high degree of professionalism and perfection were considered similarly important. However, what seems typical for Last to us is his remarkably distinctive openness: the openness to absorb the influences and ideas brought to him on the one hand; and, on the other, the openness to report on his network and the role everybody in this network plays in how he creates his music.

⁵⁸ Last 2006b, 52, and Last 2015, 79.

⁵⁹ Last 2006b, 56, and Last 2015, 84.

⁶⁰ Last 2006b, 66, and Last 2015, 97.

⁶¹ Last 2006b, 44, and Last 2015, 68: 'Es gab belegte Brötchen, Bier und Schnaps, um die Leute lockerer zu machen, dann legte Peter Klemt, der Toningenieur, das Band ein - und die Party ging los. Der Chor sang noch einmal alles mit, und meine "Gäste" sangen, klatschten und tanzten.' See also the photos in Willox 1976, page following 96, among which is a press photograph of the recording session with the choir (from the German weekly boulevard magazine Stern), as well as an anecdotal report of Roy Hollingworth from the magazine Melody Maker, where he recounts the amounts of alcoholic beverages and the procedures of the session; see Willox 1976, 148-150. At that time, this kind of media coverage would have to be intended to have an impact on the star persona of Last as a 'party king' ('Partykönig'). However, for Last, this setting also seemed to be important in a musical way, because it produced a very specific sound quality or soundscape which can be described as indeterminable, unpredictable, loose or chaotic, but also as joyful and free-minded. Last was inspired by the Saturday afternoons of his early childhood time when he listened to live music shows on Radio Kopenhagen with his father and when he encountered the same soundscape in these broadcasts; Last 2006b, 43, and Last 2015, 67.

⁶² These are not the only instances in which Last worked with recorded material produced by other people that were not musicians.

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Figs 1–15: Zentrum für Populäre Kultur und Musik, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg.



Fig. 1: View of Trisha Brown's loft with drawings Untitled (New York), 2001, Charcoal on paper, 102 x 120 inches (259.1 x 30 4.8 cm) (wall, left); Untitled (New York), 2001, 102 x 120 inches (259.1 x 304.8 cm) (floor); and Burt Barr's Double Feature, 2000, Lithograph, 53.5 x 38.75 inches (135.9 x 98.4 cm) (wall, right), New York, December 2001. Photography by Burt Barr. Screenshot of the website of the Trisha Brown Dance Company, 5 June 2024 https://trishabrowncompany.org/archive/about-the-trisha-brown-archive.html.

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