Introduction by Karl Scheibe, Professor of Psychology, Emeritus, and Director of the Wasch Center:

I’d like to say something about the man I know. [Musical selections playing in background.] Dick Winslow came to Wesleyan from the Juilliard School in 1949 and retired in 1983. There are so many things to say about Dick and I’m flabbergasted. I did consult with a colleague and he said that Dick is the consummate conductor—none better. I’ve had the pleasure of singing with Dick; he is a great composer as well as a great conductor, and he has a great sense of humor. In 1994 I was up in Antrim, New Hampshire, and Dick had composed a piece for the 23rd psalm, in honor of Philip Hallie, Professor of Philosophy Emeritus, who had just died. Steve Crites and I rehearsed it at Dick’s house and later performed it at Hallie’s memorial service in the Wesleyan Chapel. I think it’s extraordinary that he wrote that piece. It was another expression of Dick’s talent and generosity.

Richard Winslow, John Spencer Camp Professor of Music, Emeritus:

Can you hear me all right? [Dick Winslow pretends to be conducting the music playing in the background. Then he puts on his glasses and starts to speak.]

We’ve been hearing some very beautiful music in the classical tradition [the closing section of the “B-Minor Mass”] and also some beautiful music from Java, in the Asian tradition. This symbolizes a basic assumption right from the get-go in our program—that all musical forms were basically equal…and worthy of study. [Handed out a small booklet.] Please look at the cover. That includes a name rather randomly placed on a sheet because I think the ethnomusicology program unfolded in a rather random manner. There are four names, without one of which the program would not have worked. Vic Butterfield, for example. The second page is kind of a snapshot of the music department over the decades. You’ll notice that in 1944 there was a faculty of two people, Joe Daltry and Ray Rendall, and then there was a third when I joined the department. The department taught about seven courses, all oriented to the European classical tradition.

In 1953, about ten years later, there were now four on the faculty, all professing aspects of European classical music and the curriculum was twice what it had been. And then, skipping
way ahead to ‘06 and ’07, there were some 80 courses, of which I believe 50 or so were aimed at non-Western music—non-European music.

I mentioned Joe Daltry and I want to say a few words about him. He was the first professor of music at Wesleyan, and he came in 1929, I do believe. For a while he taught all by himself. When I came here as a student in 1936 he was the only faculty member in music. He was basically hired to do the chapel music—the choir and the glee club. The idea was that if he had some time he could teach some courses. He became my mentor when I was an undergraduate. He became terrifically important in my life and, I think, in the life of the entire program. He followed me through Navy years, through Juilliard years, and to my astonishment, brought me back to Wesleyan to join the faculty in 1949.

I’ve used the term “big time” and I think all Wesleyan’s music program—please look at page three of your handout—kind of suggests that. When our program started in 1960 there was really only one extant program in the country—what we now call world music, or ethnomusicology—and that was at UCLA. That program became a model for what we did. It was not anywhere near as big then as our program, but it was substantial. Throughout the years, our program became the largest and most substantive in the country. To this day, although there are a lot of programs now in world music, many of them are led by Wesleyan grad students—Cornell, Brown.

I’ll start my narrative in 1951. I’d been here two years. I was writing class notes and I found myself writing, “Bach is the greatest composer who ever lived.” And it ran through my mind, “How do I know that? How does anyone who says that kind of thing know that?” None of us had heard a note of music from China, from India, really from any place in the world. At that stage I saw a film called The River, directed by Jean Renoir, son of a good painter, I believe. All its music was traditional Indian, composed by Uday Shankar, the uncle of Ravi Shankar. [Note: the music was composed by M.A. Partha Sarathy, according to the movie listing.] That music thrilled me. About the same time—on your sheet you’ll see a word—Pliaton, a gamelan orchestra with dancers from the village of Pliaton—made a sensational tour of the Western world. It became the rage in Europe and in England; when they came to the United States they came with a lot of marvelous press. Each village in Bali has its own gamelan, just as in New England in the old days each village had its own town band. Pliaton had such a good one.

The word about it was so great that three couples from Wesleyan, David McClelland and Mary, he was a psychologist, and David and Susan McAllester, and my wife and I went to New York, to the Broadway Theater, during the period while they were playing, and it was simply marvelous. I want to make a break in sequence here and jump ahead to 1968.
In 1968 our program was well underway. My wife and I were in Bali, visiting, and we went to the town of Ubud, where all Americans go, and I realized that the town of Pliaton was just three miles away. One afternoon I walked across country to the town and as I entered the village an old man was sitting in front of the farmhouse taking the sun. As I walked by I said hello and told him that I had heard the gamelan from that village in New York in 1952, and he said, “I was the leader of that group.” [Laughter.] And then he said, “I have something to show you,” and he went into the house and came out bearing a gold record from Columbia Records, which had been given to him when they recorded this group. It sold over 100,000. That ends that story.

Now I’m going to move to David McAllester. He was an anthropologist but most of you realize he was also an ethnomusicologist of first rank. He was hired to come to Wesleyan by Vic Butterfield, who gave us a lot of support in those days. He was with a group that included David McClelland, [unintelligible] the geneticist, Karl Schorske in history, and Steve Bailey in government, all of whom went on to do incredible things when they left Wesleyan. David had done his dissertation at Columbia University on the music and culture of the Navajo Indian. I’m pretty sure that Vic didn’t notice that because he wanted an anthropologist, and David was the first one at Wesleyan. So that’s what he got.

David got up here and all through this was a “closet ethnomusicologist.” But he got together with four other ethnomusicologists from around the country, including Charles Seeger, Pete’s father, and started a national professional ethnomusicology group. David, a major figure in that group, was hardly known at Wesleyan as an ethnomusicologist. It occurred to me in retrospect that David was systematically brainwashing me. He did everything he could to interest me in ethnomusicology and as part of this process he saw to it that I went to a couple of national meetings, one memorable one in Chicago and another one at UC, Berkeley, where I saw by chance another musicologist, Bob Brown. [Laughter.] [Note: Robert E. Brown, an ethnomusicologist who reportedly coined the words “world music”, taught at Wesleyan from 1961-1970.] I will pick up on Bob Brown in a little bit.

European music itself had been changing for a long time. Wagner in the mid- to late-19th century was a first break from Haydn and Beethoven. Debussy in Paris was yet another kind of a break. Debussy’s sense of style had been affected by having heard a Javanese gamelan in Paris. Moving into the 20th century—Schonberg, Stravinsky, Ives—extraordinary things coming out of the Russian tradition. [He then played a piece that symbolized the kinds of changes that were going on in European music.] The way it sets American language to music is quite original.
[Winslow smiling and with obvious enjoyment.] That was Dorothy [unintelligible] one of the great singers of our time.

Now let’s turn to Bob Brown. The first thing is, quite by chance I sat beside him at a concert. I quickly became entranced by learning some things about him—he had had a conservatory education. Played in the orchestra. While at conservatory he chose to take a PhD in the new [ethnomusicology] program at UCLA. In order to even get a PhD the candidate has to list the country whose music he is going to study, including the musicians, as well as learn the language, the performers, etc. So Bob was full of India, came back after three years. By the way, David [McAllester] had never even heard of Bob Brown, but he said hire him and I said yes. We had four musicians in the department and in order to hire another guy we had to eliminate one position. It was the hardest thing I did in my entire life.

Bob arrived in the fall of 1961 and hit the ground running. The first thing he did was to establish a study group in the music of India. It accepted about six students. He did it because he wanted to. One student was memorable to me—it was [can’t find in directory—sounds like “Hall”]. The other was Jon Higgins. Jon was in the study group and was asked to stay on and go for a master’s. Bob began to make noises that if he was going to do what he needed to do, he really needed musicians from India on the staff. And as I said, he had this charismatic personality, so we got musicians from India on the staff. So then we thought we needed a singer on the staff—then one thing led to another and we needed a violinist, a drummer, a singer, to accompany them; we needed instruments for students to learn on, so we got a bunch of instruments—you got the drift. My role in this whole thing was to deal with the administration. Every time that Bob needed something I had to ask for it. My memory is that Vic was incredibly understanding, because he saw that there was a movement into world studies for enrichment. And Bob started working on more—we needed a gamelan. Then a drummer. So we wound up getting two musicians from India, two from Java, two from Africa, and in what seems like a blink of an eye we wound up with a very large faculty of non-Western performing musicians, and Bob built this faculty. Some of you may remember that we had “curry concerts” every Friday night at a farm that Wesleyan was renting. We had food—if it was Indian music we had Indian food.

How could Wesleyan possibly have afforded this? (Charles) Stuart Hedden, class of 1919. In 1939 Hedden, who had a successful career on Wall Street as a financier—he had a friend named Harrison Sayre, another Wesleyan alum [class of 1917], who was president of a small publishing firm in Ohio named American Education Press.

Harrison tipped off Hedden that this would be a good investment, and that Wesleyan should buy it because it was going to go on the market for $5 million. So, Hedden persuaded the
trustees and the administration that Wesleyan could spend $5 million of its paltry $35 million endowment and privately buy this press. He would bring the entire editorial staff—some 20 people at best—to come and live here in Middletown, to be an extension of the Wesleyan faculty. It was titled AEP [American Education Publications] and we titled it the Department of School Services, a division of Wesleyan. The reason for this aspect of the grand plan was cagey—he knew that we might have trouble persuading the IRS that it was educational, not commercial. By the way, the Wesleyan University Press—correctly used—was established five years later. It was a small division of this total enterprise.

Some of the people who came [as editors] were John Maynard and, surprisingly, William Manchester. In 1965, when they wanted to break ground for a new science building, Joe Peoples was the head of the geology department. When they did break ground for a new science tower, Joe Peoples offered a toast to the 16 million unwitting donors to the tower. He said that half of the $28 million [construction cost] was paid for by the 16 million American students who subscribe to our publication, i.e., students who read the newspaper [My Weekly Reader].

Lest we be caught at risk, there was a slush fund, and it was that money that paid for the huge expansion in music. Also with that money Wesleyan built the Center for Advanced Studies, which is behind the Russell House, with the first scholars coming in 1961, including John Cage. He lived at Wesleyan for that year, and he came back several years later. His impact on the Wesleyan campus was very strong. During the ’60s David McAllester couldn’t be both professor of music and of anthropology—he was a distinguished guy—so he became directly part of our faculty. Other people came to support this large format of faculty. We needed a historic musicologist, and we had Jon Barlow, plus Neely Bruce, a pianist extraordinaire who is with us today. In 1968 Alvin Lucier came, and in the 1970s he was full-time. In 1971 Mark Slobin, a very fine ethnomusicologist, joined the faculty from Michigan.

Now about Jon—he stayed here for two years to get his master’s, and then he got a Fulbright to India—that was in 1964. It was so successful that he stayed there and while he was studying voice in Madras with Viswanathan—he was so successful with the Indian people, and he must have given some concert—they asked him back to stay another year. Then the Fulbright people asked him to renew for another year, which was very unusual. They recruited him. In the third year USIS sponsored him on a concert tour of India, which was enormously successful. It was covered by our press, including the New York Times and the New Yorker. He came back to this country a famous man.
Just to jump ahead and give you a quick anecdote: In the late ’60s Betty and I were in Madras and we stopped for a sari. When it became known that we actually knew Jon Higgins we got a terrific price!

He came back and started a PhD at Wesleyan, completed the requirements for that, and took an appointment at York University in Canada, where he was hired to start a world music program. It was going nicely and after a period of time we hired him back as a full professor of music in 1978. In 1984 he tragically died. I have a recording of his—I want you to hear how beautifully he could sing in more than one style. He is accompanied by a drum, mrdangam. We have with us today a student who is going to introduce the drum.

Student:

In India, particularly anything that’s played on the drums, is spoken. [Demonstration.]

Winslow:

Now, we will have Jon Higgins singing [recording of Jon Higgins singing].

In 1965, back to Stuart Hedden: He, in his financial wisdom, decided that it was time to sell the Press (AEP). He had an offer from Xerox Corporation. Not every one of the trustees agreed, but he prevailed and sold it for $50 million, payable at least in part in Xerox stock, which proceeded to inflate highly in value. The Wesleyan endowment, which had been $35 million in 1949, was now $185 million, making Wesleyan one of the richest institutions per capita in the United States, perhaps in the world. I think this was when the administration agreed to fund a brand-new center for the arts. Sam Green [he said “John” but I think he meant Sam] and John Martin were on a sub-committee to identify an architect and they identified Kevin Roche, who by the way was written up recently in the New York Times. He was the architect in residence at the Metropolitan Museum.

Kevin had this idea not to put all the arts departments under one roof—Wellesley College did a similar thing, by the way—but rather to build a separate building for the various arts. There are 11 of them—music, theater, art gallery, cinema, and so forth. One of them is the World Music Hall, which I think is the most interesting building architecturally at Wesleyan—its architectural originality. There was a head-on collision between Bob Brown, who was a very determined man and whose second love in music was the music of Java. He collided head-on with the architects. This was the only building in the Western World that was going to be built for the Javanese gamelan. He knew what it was going to be used for, but it was not in a tropical climate, where it
would typically have open sides, but there was finally agreement between those forces that created the building. [Short question and answer session, questions unintelligible. End of DVD]