

♫ Bulletin



**WW1 COMMEMORATIVE
ISSUE**

Hyperion



The 'Moonlight' sonata sounds newly minted in this remarkable reading, Pavel Kolesnikov's hallmark virtues of 'intelligence, sensitivity and imagination' (Gramophone) guaranteeing a very special Beethoven recital indeed.

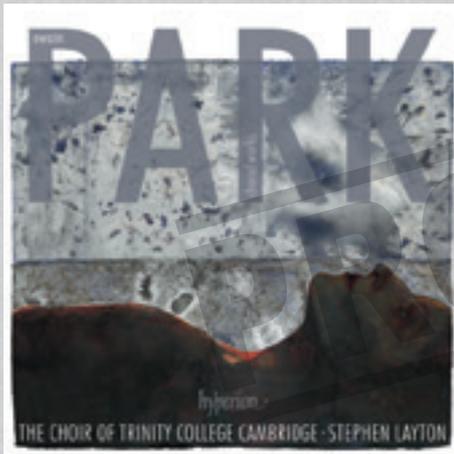
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Beethoven: Moonlight Sonata & other piano music
PAVEL KOLESNIKOV piano

A deeply impressive and eclectic selection of shorter choral works from one of England's brightest composer prospects.

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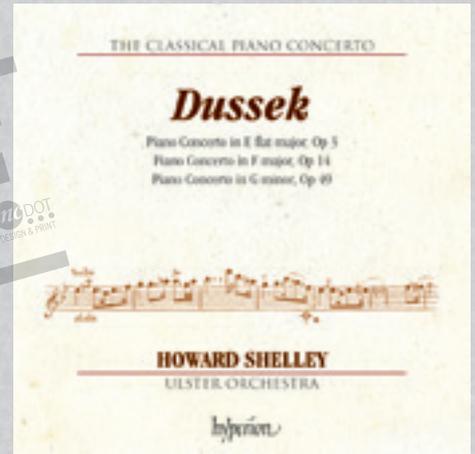
Owain Park: Choral Works
TRINITY COLLEGE CHOIR
CAMBRIDGE
STEPHEN LAYTON conductor



A successor to Howard Shelley's earlier Dussek recordings presents another three fine concertos.

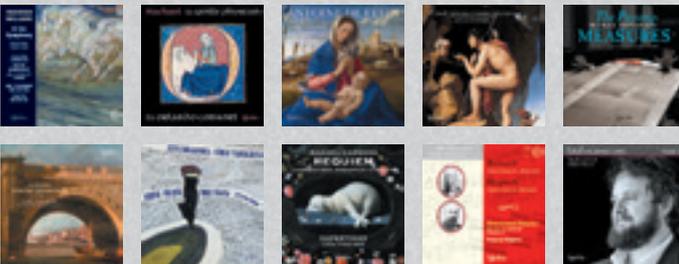
CDA68211
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Dussek: Piano Concertos
Opp 3, 14 & 49
HOWARD SHELLEY piano
ULSTER ORCHESTRA



COMING SOON ...

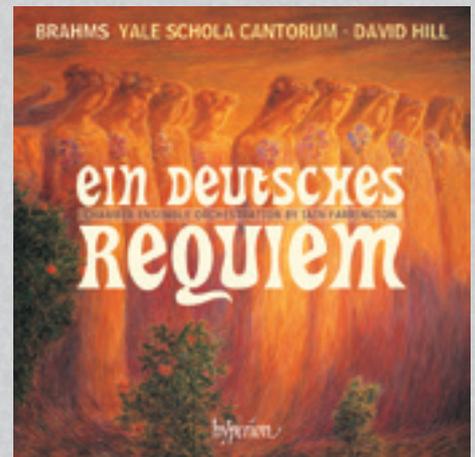
Chopin: Cello Sonata; Schubert: Arpeggione Sonata Steven Isserlis (cello), Dénes Várjon (piano)
Bronsart & Urspruch: Piano Concertos Emmanuel Despax (piano), BBC Scottish SO, Eugene Izigane (conductor)
Liszt: New Discoveries, Vol. 4 Leslie Howard (piano)
Machaut: The gentle physician The Orlando Consort
Vaughan Williams: A Sea Symphony BBC Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Chorus, Martyn Brabbins
The Passing-Measures Mahan Esfahani (harpichord)
Févin: Missa Ave Maria & Missa Salve sancta parens The Brabant Ensemble, Stephen Rice (conductor)



Iain Farrington's chamber version of this monumental work is a perfect match for these young voices.

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Brahms:
Ein deutsches Requiem
YALE SCHOLA CANTORUM
DAVID HILL conductor



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The editor acknowledges the assistance of Sue Parker (Barnsley and Huddersfield RMSs) in the production of this magazine.

For more information about the FRMS please go to
www.thefrms.co.uk

Forthcoming Events

Y&NRG Music Day, October 20th 2018 (Page 8)
FRMS AGM 2018, Saturday November 3rd (Page 7)
Torbay Musical Weekend, November 16th-19th 2018 (Page 17)
Y&NRG Spring Music Weekend, April 5th-8th 2019 (Page 13)

EDITORIAL Paul Astell

AS PREVIOUSLY ALLUDED TO, this is the 15th and final *Bulletin* under my tenure as editor. The fact that this edition is something of a 'special' is purely coincidental and not meant to indicate any kind of final flourish! We thought a commemorative issue to mark the centenary of the end of World War I might be appropriate and asked a number of distinguished authors if they would be willing to consider writing an article relevant to that theme. Apart from one who loved the idea but was regrettably too busy they all agreed, for which we are very grateful.

Editing this magazine has been a very enjoyable and interesting experience and there is much I will miss. Dealing with some of the most respected names within the music industry has been a particular pleasure. I'm reluctant to single out individuals, but I will long remember meeting the eminent biographer and music critic Michael Kennedy at the 2014 Daventry Weekend. It was fairly obvious then that Michael was not in the best of health and we were saddened to learn of his death at the very end of that year. I was also pleased to be able to play a part in bringing Master of the Queen's Music Judith Weir to the last Daventry Weekend in 2017, this following an article she had kindly written for this magazine.

Throughout my editorship I've had the good fortune to have been assisted by Sue Parker, where her proofreading skills have proved invaluable. Sue is perfectly suited to that role, given her extensive knowledge of the world of music, along with her mastery of the English language. Sue chose not to be a member of the FRMS committee, but she is a committed supporter of the recorded music movement through her active roles at Huddersfield and Barnsley, not to mention the Yorkshire and Northwest Group. We are indebted to her for playing a crucial role in the magazine's production these past seven years.

At the time of writing, there have been no firm offers received to take on the editor's post, but I hope there is somebody out there willing to consider it. In the previous issue (168, Spring 2018) we featured an item on the history of the magazine, including a recreation of the front page of *Bulletin* No. 1. The magazine has undergone many changes over 71 years, but it would be a great pity if after 169* editions it all came to an end. Here's hoping.

As chairman of my own Society at Oswestry, I will not be losing touch with the Federation. We are celebrating our 60th anniversary this coming season and like RMS officers and committees across the country, I'll be doing my best to keep us in business for as long as possible, despite the downturn in support that so many are experiencing.

Finally, I'd like to express my appreciation to everyone who has contributed to this magazine in any way, including our wonderfully supportive advertisers. In a similar vein, I should add that during my time, none of the authors of those impressive and interesting articles we have featured has ever asked for, or received, a fee.

*Technically, the true number is 168. To learn why, you'll have to return to the aforementioned article from last time! ●

Ilkley Music Weekend

SHIVERING HEIGHTS: Geoff Bateman reports on the Yorkshire and Northwest Regional Group's spring event. Photos: George Steele

Dedicated delegates arriving for our annual extravaganza at Ilkley's Craiglands Hotel were greeted by the second Siberian blast of the year, which arrived with precision timing, threatening to sabotage the weekend's schedule. Fortunately, just one guest speaker was unable to make the long journey from the south and the event proceeded relatively untroubled.

Opening our musical feast was virtuoso recorder player, distinguished baritone and FRMS chairman **Allan Child**. In his programme, **How Did I Get Here?**, Allan documented his rise from infancy to the top job at the FRMS. With his British Rail background, Allan gave the signal for his first track – Billy Strayhorn's *Take the 'A' Train*, in Duke Ellington's 1945 recording. He then linked significant moments in his music development with appropriate recordings, including *The Wrexham Pipers meet the Machynlleth Marchers* by Ian Parrott, with John Turner (recorder), Chopin's Etude Op. 25, No. 1, played by John Ogdon whom he had met at a Society programme, and Johann Lorenz Bach's Prelude & Fugue in D major with Wilhelm Krumbach at the Organ of the Schlosskirche, Lahm, Upper Franconia.

On a topical note, we also heard Michael Flanders and Donald Swann with their whimsical 'Song of Reproduction' from *At the Drop of a Hat*, recorded by Parlophone, a label that would feature prominently later in the weekend.

With a return to the Golden Age of Steam, Allan played Villa-Lobos's *Little Train of the Caipira* in a slightly jazzed-up version by The Winter Consort on the A&M label, before concluding with the third movement of Haydn's Symphony No. 104 under the baton of Mariss Jansons.

This was a splendid programme to kick off our festival which, in the true tradition of British Rail, Allan finished bang on time!

(NB Allan had paid tribute to FRMS Vice-President Roderick Shaw, who had sadly passed away the previous week, and he dedicated the programme in his memory.)

In **Kathleen Ferrier Remembered**, *Mastermind* contestant, writer and lecturer **Paul Champion** spoke



about the life of the Lancashire-born contralto and focused on a CD of previously unreleased recordings.

An accomplished pianist, golfer and painter with a delightful sense of humour (she signed her paintings KK – an abbreviation for Klever Kaff), Ferrier moved to

London in 1942 on the advice of Sir Malcolm Sargent. The CD was sourced from BBC recordings only

recently given to the British Library. Technical genius Ted Kendall worked his magic to restore these to a listenable quality and we heard both the original and restored recordings of some of the selections, including the opening of 'Psalm 23' from Rubbra's *Three Psalms*, and Brahms's 'Nachtigall'.

Paul had opened with Schubert's *Der Musensohn* from a BBC broadcast in 1948. The CD *Kathleen Ferrier Remembered* is available on SOMM (CD 264), and the 26 tracks also include works by Wolf, Mahler, Stanford and Parry.

The programme ended with a lively encore from the 1948 Edinburgh Festival, but only after a few words from Ferrier's accompanist Gerald Moore about how he remembered her, a fitting tribute to a remarkable artist for whom Britten wrote the role of *Lucretia*, but who was taken from us so young.

Putting the Record Straight is the title of John Culshaw's autobiography and also **John Futter's** (Olton RMS) programme about Decca's famed record producer. Southport-born Culshaw was largely self-educated musically, and worked for Decca from the age of 22, first writing album liner notes and then becoming



a producer. By 1947 he had been given the chance to produce classical sessions for Decca's rapidly expanding catalogue and musicians, including Ida Haendel, Eileen Joyce, Kathleen Ferrier and Clifford Curzon.

The coming of stereo and the extension of artistic responsibility more and more embraced the recording managers (as well as the engineers). In the event, it was John Culshaw who proved himself best equipped to span the different fields, most eager to exploit the new possibilities and who in fact stamped the whole decade with his ideas. He was responsible more than anyone for developing the artistic potential of stereo.

In opera recordings, Culshaw put into practice his belief that a properly made sound recording should create what he called 'a theatre of the mind'. He disliked live recordings such as those attempted at Bayreuth; to him they were technically flawed and, crucially, were merely sound recordings of a theatrical performance. He sought to make recordings that compensated for the lack of the visual element by subtle production techniques, impossible in live recordings, that conjured up the action in the listener's head. Culshaw is perhaps best remembered for his Wagner *Ring* cycle under Solti on Decca, and John opened his programme with the introduction from *Die Walküre*.

Culshaw produced Karajan's Vienna Phil recordings for Decca, and we had a real hi-fi

spectacular with Bergonzi singing the opening aria from *Aida*, a recording that set new sonic standards. We also had 'Saturn' from *The Planets* suite – the strange sounding tubular bells doubtless a Karajan touch.

We had the third movement from Tchaikovsky's Fourth symphony with George Szell and the LSO, a recording that had a strange life. Szell was not satisfied with the performance and would not allow Decca to release it. His widow did subsequently allow it and the disc soared to rosette status in the *Penguin Guide* despite being on a 99p bargain label!

The final scene from *Götterdämmerung* concluded an all too brief appreciation of a legend for all of us who cherish the Golden Age of Recording.

Sandra Parr has been with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra for 37 years and is currently their Artistic Planning Director. In **Backstage at the Phil**, she focused on the Orchestra's recent history,



from the days of Sir Charles Groves – the first conductor to give a complete Mahler cycle in the UK – to the present. To illustrate how the orchestra's sound had changed, she first played Sir Charles's recording of Elgar's *Imperial March* (EMI 1970) then went to Oskar Nedbal's *Valse Triste* under Libor Pešek (Virgin Classics) and the opening of Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony from the recent award-winning recording under current Chief Conductor Vasily Petrenko.

Sandra's review emphasised the significant impact several conductors had on the orchestra. In 1977, Groves stood down after 14 years, and then followed three conductors with short tenures – Weller, Atherton and Janowski. Libor Pešek then took over the reins for ten years, and during that time he improved both the Orchestra's standards and its popularity. (Under his stewardship, the RLPO become known as the best Czech orchestra outside of Prague!) He particularly promoted the music of Josef Suk and recorded some of his works. On a tour to North America, he programmed Suk's *Asrael Symphony*, much to the discomfort of the concert promoter. 'Can't you just play the *New World Symphony*?' they pleaded. Pešek would not relent and the work was performed to much acclaim. We heard part of the *vivace* from their recording on Virgin Classics.

Gerard Schwarz, the long-standing conductor of the Seattle Symphony Orchestra, took over the Phil after a brief encampment by Petr Altrichter. He introduced new repertoire and Sandra challenged us to identify the next item – Webern's *Langsamer Satz*, arranged by Schwarz but recorded with his Seattle orchestra on Delos, now reissued on Naxos. Forward to 2006 and enter Vasily Petrenko, who first conducted the orchestra in 2004, and at 29 became the youngest

Principal Conductor. The impact of this dynamic conductor is well documented and we heard part of Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No. 2 from the recording with Simon Trpčeski who performs regularly with Petrenko.

Sandra's passion and love for the Phil was evident throughout this fascinating behind-the-scenes look at our longest-surviving professional symphony orchestra*.

**Editor's note: Perhaps I'm not the only one under the impression that the Hallé could claim this title. However, following a complaint in 2012, the Advertising Standards Authority ruled that the RLPO had provided sufficient evidence to prove its case.*

With a devout passion for the Czech music scene, our own **Mr Saturday Night, Nigel Simeone**, delved into the career of Moravian-born conductor Václav Talich (1883-1961) who studied violin and became leader of the Berlin Philharmonic at the age of 19, playing under Nikisch. He was so fascinated by him that he decided to become a conductor and studied under him. He himself became a teacher where one of his students was Charles Mackerras.

Nigel opened with the first movement of Dvořák's Seventh Symphony, recorded in 1938. Then we had an excerpt from Josef Suk's tone poem *Zrání* (Ripening) from 1954. (Talich had conducted the premiere in 1931 with the Czech Philharmonic.)

A brisk lightness of touch was clearly evident in the Overture to Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* from the 1954 recording, and from 1929 we had 'Blaník' from Smetana's *Má Vlast*, a favourite work of Nigel's. Back to Suk, and *Towards a New Life*, recorded at Abbey Road in 1938, before concluding with the final movement of the *Asrael Symphony*. It's not often we have works by Suk in two consecutive presentations! With his usual boisterous enthusiasm, Nigel gave us an intriguing insight into this sadly neglected conductor.

Following his two surveys of the much-lamented Kingsway Hall, **Gordon Drury** took the Jubilee Line up to St John's Wood to reflect on the history of the Abbey Road Studios (but known as EMI Studios until the success of the Beatles album of the same name), in his programme **NW8**.



Originally a nine-bedroom townhouse built in 1831 on the footpath leading to Kilburn Abbey, it was acquired by the Gramophone Company exactly one hundred years later, and converted into studios. The property had a large rear garden, which permitted a much larger building to be constructed. The Georgian façade belies the true dimensions of the building.

The neighbouring house is also owned by the studio and used to house musicians. The studio was extensively used by leading British conductor Sir Malcolm Sargent, whose house was just around the

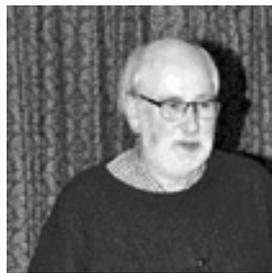
corner from the studio building. Pathé filmed the opening of the studios when Edward Elgar conducted the London Symphony Orchestra in recording sessions of his music, from which we heard *Land of Hope and Glory*. In 1934, stereophonic sound inventor Alan Blumlein recorded part of Mozart's *Jupiter* Symphony, in stereo, with Beecham and the LPO, of which we heard an excerpt.

Gordon played a mixed bag of recordings, resisting the often heard 'famous' classics penned there. We heard Stanley Holloway with his 'Lion and Albert', and Peter Sellers's 'Any Old Iron'. Classical highlights included Karajan and the Philharmonia in Britten's *Variations on a theme of Frank Bridge*, Gui and the RPO in Bizet's *Jeux d'enfants*, Bernstein playing the Gershwin Concerto (with the Philharmonia), and a splendid Elgar Violin Concerto from Hilary Hahn on DG. Vocal contributions came from tenor Wilfred Brown in Finzi's cantata *Dies Natalis*, and Robert Tear and Benjamin Luxon in the 'Gendarmes' Duet' from Offenbach's operetta *Geneviève de Brabant*. To tease those socialists among us, we had Copland's *Lincoln Portrait* narrated by Margaret Thatcher. It is believed she was recorded in a separate room at the request of the Orchestra!

Towards the end of 2009, the studio came under threat of sale to property developers, but the British government protected the site, granting it English Heritage Grade II listed status in 2010, thereby preserving the building.

Once again, Gordon's extensive research and expertise proffered an absorbing Sunday afternoon's entertainment for us.

Writer and lecturer on many things musical, **James Murray** has also written over 600 sleeve notes for major recording labels including Decca and DG. His programme **A Fine Romance with Jerome Kern** featured several of his earlier songs as well as classics from *Showboat*. One of the most important American theatre composers of the early 20th century, Kern wrote over 700 songs for more than 100 stage works.



Born in 1885 into a Jewish family, Kern had early musical training in Heidelberg. His first full

score was for *The Red Petticoat* (1912) and in 1924 he met Oscar Hammerstein II and their productive partnership lasted until Kern's death in 1945. At the premiere of *Showboat* (1927) audiences knew they were watching something special – an American operetta with serious content, spectacle, comic moments and dance. We heard 'Make believe', 'Can't help lovin' dat man', 'You are love' and 'Ol' Man River', this sung by Paul Robeson. Among the many excerpts of songs played, we had 'They didn't believe me', 'Rolled into one', and 'I'm so busy', all carrying the unmistakable Kern DNA.

James concluded his programme with *Harlem Boogie-Woogie* played by the London Sinfonietta, a

lively choice with which to close the curtains on our Sunday evening's listening.

Regular presenter **David Patmore** guided us through some **Great Nights at La Scala**, which included several off-radio takes, all of which were of Italian opera. We heard excerpts from *Nabucco* under Toscanini (1946), *Andrea Chénier* with Mario Del Monaco under Victor de Sabata (1949), and Maria Callas, who had made her La Scala debut in 1951, in *Lucia di Lammermoor* under Karajan (1955). We also heard the legendary Greek-American soprano in both *La Traviata* under Giulini (1956) and *Un ballo in maschera* under Gavazzeni (1957).

The sound quality of more recent vintage continued to improve. We heard Abbado and Carlos Kleiber at the podium in *Don Carlos* and *Otello* respectively, both from 1976. The Act 2 finale from Verdi's *Ernani* under Muti encored David's scrapbook of treasures – a fine main course of generally unavailable recordings.

Our one casualty was record producer Andrew Keener, who was unable to travel due to the severe weather conditions. Secretary Jim Bostwick was on hand with a DVD of Gustavo Dudamel and the Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra in an open rehearsal of Mahler's Symphony No. 1, and a live concert performance of Beethoven's Triple Concerto, with Martha Argerich, and Renaud and Gautier Capuçon.

This weekend event continued the overwhelming success of previous years and the organisers were flattered to receive many plaudits, both verbal and written:

Thank you for inviting me to meet your group this weekend. It is good that you keep these groups going because they are such keen audience members and were a delight to talk to and answer questions. (Guest speaker)

Just a line to say thanks for yet another splendid weekend at Ilkley - count me in again for next year!! (Guest speaker and delegate)

Many thanks for giving us the opportunity to join the Ilkley Weekend – we really enjoyed our time with you all. Apart from the good content of the talks and the efficiency of the whole organisation, I was particularly struck by the friendliness of your members to three 'foreigners'. Congratulations to you and your colleagues for producing such an enjoyable weekend. Please do keep me on your mailing list and I look forward to any future meetings. (Delegate, former frequent attendee at Daventry)

Plans for the 2019 Weekend are already in motion and it will take place from April 5th-8th at the same venue. There will be regular updates on the FRMS website. The event is open to all affiliated members, families and friends, and as this is now the only remaining residential event in the FRMS calendar, its future relies on YOUR support. We look forward to seeing you next year! ●

WEST SURREY REGION

ON SATURDAY APRIL 7TH 2018, the four societies of the West Surrey Region held its 54th Annual Reunion at St Catherine's Village Hall in Guildford. It was attended by 35 members from the remaining music societies in West Surrey (Bookham RMC, Godalming Music Listening Group, Guildford RMS and Haslemere RMS). Although our gathering of music lovers was much smaller than even 10 years ago, attendance has remained in the mid-30s for the past 5 years, in spite of the falling membership of our societies. In the past, individual societies organised the complete event themselves. This was found impractical due to the increasing average age of members, so in 2011, it was decided to share the event's responsibilities between all four societies rather than bringing everything to a halt, and this has proved very successful.

This year's Annual Reunion was a little different from the norm, in that, instead of a particular society presenting a programme of music themselves, we decided to invite a guest presenter to provide a more professional standard of music presentation, so I invited Lynne Plummer, a frequent presenter at the Torbay Musical Weekend, to come along for the afternoon. She gave us a very thoroughly researched and expertly presented programme entitled **Gardens in Music**, which she had specially prepared for us. It contained a vast range of music associated with flowers, birds, nature and gardening and included interviews with gardener supreme, Bob Flowerdew, and Digby Fairweather, the jazz cornetist/trumpeter, who is a keen amateur gardener.

After an hour of music featuring Falla, Rimsky-Korsakov, Debussy, Bridge, Grainger, Quilter and Takemitsu among others, we paused for tea and cakes. Lynne continued with music by Bax, Mussorgsky, Tchaikovsky, Dankworth and Fauré before the event ended at 4.30 pm, following a closing speech of thanks by the Regional Secretary. Many expressions of appreciation were given by those attending and we shall continue this format at next year's Reunion in April 2019.

Roger Saunders, Regional Secretary

FRMS VACANCIES

Bulletin Editor

The editor is currently responsible for soliciting news items, articles and advertisements, preparing the layout of the magazine, and liaising with the printers prior to publication.

We are seeking someone to take on the editorship with effect from the 2018 AGM.

We are also considering whether *Bulletin* should continue in its present format and frequency of issue, and would welcome the views of applicants on the topic.

FRMS Treasurer

The treasurer is required to maintain the Federation's accounts and to arrange for their independent examination and timely submission to Companies House.

The task includes collecting affiliation fees, PRS/PPL fees, and insurance payments from societies, making payments to PRS/PPL and our insurance brokers, and managing the Federation's day-to-day expenses. It is envisaged that the new treasurer would 'shadow' the role until taking over in 2019.

For both these posts good computer skills and access to email are essential. For more information about either post please contact the FRMS secretary (contact details are on page 30).

FRMS Annual General Meeting 2018 **Saturday, November 3rd 2018**

Craiglands Hotel, Cowpasture Road, Ilkley, LS29 8RQ

Recorded music presentation:

Women composers by Barbara Satterthwaite (Wharfedale RMS secretary)

Live music recital – details to be announced

Further details will be circulated in early September and will be placed on the FRMS website

Presenters' Panel update

BRITISH MUSIC SOCIETY Chairman Dr Wendy Hiscocks's contact number is 07962 925962

Roderick Shaw – A Life in Music

The funeral and memorial service of FRMS Vice-President Roderick Shaw took place at Wymondham Abbey on April 20th. Roderick's widow Thelma, the previous long-serving editor of this magazine, has requested that, as a tribute, we carry the eulogy given by Roderick's niece Sarah Yules during the service.

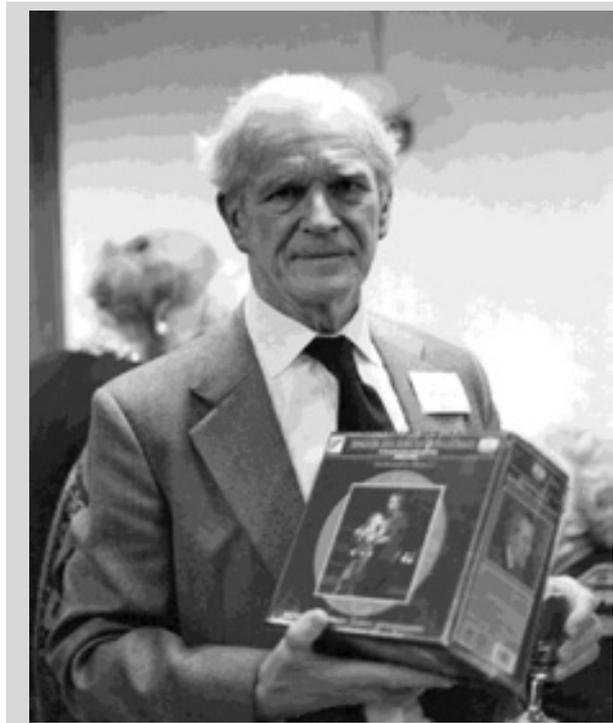
'RODERICK WOULD HAVE NEVER laid claim to any particular music-making abilities himself, but his love, enthusiasm and extensive knowledge of music is perhaps the one thing that defined him most of all. This was not only on a personal level, but demonstrated in the many years he spent promoting and advocating music through the offices he held. This commitment is perhaps exemplified through his long association with the Federation of Recorded Music Societies.

'He was involved with this organisation for over sixty years through active memberships of affiliated societies, firstly in Orpington, West Wickham and latterly the West Country, eventually culminating in his chairmanship of the Federation from 1986-1993 and ultimately as a Vice-President from 1993. We should also reflect on his commitment as a participating member over twenty years or so to the Torbay Musical Weekends and of course for many years the Federation's own annual event. It is much appreciated by the family that the chairman's opening programme at their recent Ilkley Music Weekend was dedicated to Roderick.

'Perhaps it can be said that his 'musical' Damascene moment came in South Africa whilst in service with the RAF. He was offered a chance opportunity to attend a concert, and the interest that may have started there, continued for the whole of his life. Musical evenings with friends at Hillcrest Road, concerts and opera, both in Kent and here in Norfolk, were a regular event. His commitment can be seen in more recent times, both as a patron and benefactor of the Norwich Philharmonic Society and as an enthusiastic supporter of the Britten Sinfonia and in earlier years the Berlioz Society.

'Amongst many highlights too numerous to mention, there is the standout occasion on, it is believed, the first, and possibly the only known occasion, when Roderick broke his golden rule of never attending concerts on a Sunday. However, the opportunity to see and hear Colin Davis conducting the Mahler Eighth Symphony at the Royal Albert Hall finally proved too strong.

'Of course, we may have all been fortunate to benefit in some way over the years from his extensive knowledge and enthusiasm, either personally as members of his family, through close personal



A cropped version of this photo (taken by Ian Bailey) appeared in *Bulletin* 121 (Autumn 1994) to accompany a message of thanks from Roderick:

'I would like to thank all those kind and generous individual people and societies for their contributions to the splendid gifts presented to me by chairman Michael Smith during the Annual weekend at Cambridge in April. The gift consisted of videos of Wagner's *Ring Cycle* at the Metropolitan Opera, New York, production conducted by James Levine, a large cheque and a framed message with the names of the persons and societies that contributed. I was quite overwhelmed by this grand gesture, made all the more pleasurable because I had no inkling of what was to take place. A well-kept secret! Thank you all so very much.'

friendships, or perhaps other associations. Certainly music was a constant refrain at the family homes in Orpington, Wiltshire and of course here in Norfolk.'

To try and reflect his many and varied musical interests, the congregation heard an arrangement of an aria from George Frideric Handel's opera *Rodelinda*, with words taken from a poem by WG Rothery, made famous and performed by a much-loved artist of Roderick's, Kathleen Ferrier.

YORKSHIRE & NORTHWEST REGIONAL GROUP

Our 2018 **Autumn Meeting** takes place on October 20th in Huddersfield from 10.30 to 4.45. There are three presentations and the cost, including an excellent 3-course lunch, is £16.50. Everyone is welcome. For full details and booking form see:

www.thefrms.co.uk/otherevents/otherevents.htm

SOCIETY NEWS

A diamond occasion at Torbay

On April 11th, Torbay Recorded Music Society celebrated John J Davis's 60 years of continuous membership, 58 of them as a committee member in various roles! Can either – or both – of these be a record? John has now retired from service on the committee, having just completed his last stint as chairman. However, the rocking chair and slippers don't beckon yet. Members have invited him to become President, and John will still be offering his annual lively presentation, and, as is his wont, welcoming the members individually as they arrive for the weekly meeting.

No doubt John had expected a good evening, but he had not anticipated the event skilfully and secretly put together by TRMS social secretary Linda Clowes and programme secretary Jutta Fagan. Guests of honour were FRMS Chairman Allan Child and his wife Ruth, along with Janet Abbotts, treasurer of the international Sibelius One society and her husband David. Incidentally, Janet and David are members of the Newcastle-under-Lyme RMS and long-term friends of John.

After an excellent dinner, master of ceremonies Don Cockman, another long-term TRMS member, introduced FRMS Vice-President and former TRMS member Tony Baines who proposed the traditional toast to absent friends. Allan, in his address and appreciation of John, reminded us that when John joined the Torbay Gramophone Society (as it was then called) in 1958, many music-lovers were still listening to 78s on a wind-up gramophone, although the more adventurous were listening to the early 'unbreakable' LPs on an electrically driven Dansette. The LP, by the way, cost all of £2, a mighty chunk out of the average wage.

There followed tributes by Janet Abbotts and other long-term friends and fellow TRMS members, Derek Pering (Vice-President) and Janice Richards (chairman). Between them they built up a picture of the John so many of us know. After joining the TGS committee in 1960, in co-operation with the then chairman George Johns, John, with his familiar infectious, exuberant enthusiasm, enlivened a rather sedentary TGS, and soon lively in-house presentations were supplemented by well-supported visits to top music venues in this country and abroad. Membership of TGS grew from around 30 to over 200.

In the 1970s, John was instrumental in creating the residential Torbay Musical Weekend, with its impressive array of professional speakers. This event was so successful that it eventually became an entity in its own right and is now held each November in the Grand Hotel on Torquay's seafront.

During the evening, we were reminded of John's three great passions: the Philadelphia Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski and, maybe above all, Jean Sibelius. John told us that his passion for Sibelius began when his father gave him a recording of the *Karelia* Suite at the very time that Russia marched into Karelia. John has now visited the Sibelius Festival in Lahti 18 times, and he is an acknowledged and familiar figure there. Indeed,

his remarkable resemblance to the composer has resulted a number of times in him being approached by concert-goers in Lahti's Sibelius Hall and addressed as 'Mr Sibelius.' When the international Sibelius One society was formed in 2014, John was invited to become its President. John's enthusiasm and knowledge of his subject have also resulted in him being welcomed as a guest by the Philadelphia Orchestra, also acknowledged as a friend by Vladimir Ashkenazy, and being consulted by the BBC on Sibelius matters.

As thanks for his Diamond Service, members presented John with three cases of his favourite wine, and, as a lasting reminder of the music he shared with his father, an LP of the piece that had so fired his life-long passion so many years ago: the *Karelia* Suite. He was finally presented with a fantastic cake with his image in coloured icing on the top. The cake was later consumed with coffee. At the end of the evening it was Linda's turn to be taken by surprise when members presented her with a bouquet to thank her for setting up the occasion.

By the way, if you think that Leopold Stokowski changed his name from Leonard Stokes in order to become more famous, see John. He will show you an authentic birth certificate in the name of LEOPOLD STOKOWSKI!

Tony Baines

Raimund Herincx 1927-2018

All of us at Bradford on Avon RMS were saddened by the recent death of our popular member Raimund Herincx. As a bass-baritone singer of international repute he sang over 40 operatic roles ranging from Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* to Tippett's *The Knot Garden*. He was impressive as Wotan in Wagner's *Die Walküre* and did much concert work, notably Mendelssohn's *Elijah*.

Our Society held a special tribute evening when members heard Verdi's Requiem with soloists accompanied by the Hungarian State Opera Chorus and Orchestra, conducted by Pier Giorgio Morandi.

Raimund was a larger than life character, a big man with a big voice and a big personality. Our Society has lost a very special member.

Robin Benton, chairman

Dundee RMS - a final mention, just for the record

To FRMS friends throughout the UK, I would like to add to the notes by Pat Leishman and John Maidment in the Spring *Bulletin*. As Pat mentioned, the decision to close was made in June 2017. However, the Society held its last meeting in September which featured a programme on Carl Nielsen.

I have been involved since 1983 and was one of the six remaining members mentioned and the last chairman. It is unfortunate that someone has to chair during a period of decline and loss of friends, especially in the wake of my old friend Chris Hamilton, who was an excellent, long-standing chairman for over forty years. I chaired the society for the last 6 years.

Graham Young

CARL NIELSEN

The Fourth Symphony and World War I

Terry Barfoot introduces the Fourth Symphony of Carl Nielsen, one of the greatest among the compositions dating from the years of the First World War.

CARL NIELSEN

Born Fünen June 9th 1865

Died Copenhagen October 3rd 1931

'Carl Nielsen, Denmark's great son, was a born composer of symphonies, although his work embraced all forms of music. Through his great intelligence he developed his genius, in order to attain the aims which were clear to him from the beginning. Through his strong personality he founded a school and greatly influenced composers in many countries. One speaks of head and heart; Carl Nielsen had both in the highest degree.'

THE ABOVE TRIBUTE Jean Sibelius sent to the Copenhagen Nielsen Festival of 1953 gives a balanced assessment of Nielsen's achievement. Originating from humble rural surroundings on the island of Fünen, Nielsen rose to become Denmark's greatest composer. He was also a major figure as a performer, though he was not a virtuoso. Initially a member of the second violins of the Royal Danish Orchestra in Copenhagen, he served as conductor there for the six years to 1914, and continued to conduct the city's Musical Society concerts thereafter. Then in 1915 he joined the staff of the Royal Danish Conservatory, becoming Director a year before his death.

Nielsen worked successfully in all the important musical genres, but it was through his six symphonies that he made his most significant contribution to the repertory. Although he died in 1931, it has only been since World War II that his music has achieved truly international status, in which regard the turning point was the performance of the Fifth Symphony at the 1950 Edinburgh Festival.

While starting out from the perspective of classical form and harmony, Nielsen's music later developed into a more extended tonal and even atonal language, born of his highly expressive melodic style. Like his colleague Sibelius, he poured his finest material into his symphonies. From the early Symphony No. 1 (1892), which begins and ends in different keys, to the more modernist Symphony No. 6 (1925), each is a noble testament to this remarkable composer's view of the world around him.

Nielsen composed his Fourth Symphony during 1915 and it was first performed early the following

year, when he conducted the premiere at Copenhagen on February 1st. 1915 was the year when the innocence of 'Berlin by Christmas' gave way to the crushing realities of total war. Chief among the realisations that would have come to Nielsen's attention was that this was the first global war. The attrition of trench warfare became established on the Western Front, including the use of mustard gas amid the costly offensive at the Battle of Loos, where the British suffered 50,000 casualties. The first aerial bombing raids took place, using Zeppelin airships. There was the vast scale of the war on the Eastern Front, with high casualty levels and huge numbers of prisoners taken. The war at sea featured the Battle of Dogger Bank and the initiation of the U-boat campaign, leading to the sinking of the Lusitania. The atrocity of the murder of nurse Edith Cavell was widely publicised, and the Gallipoli campaign sought unsuccessfully to open a new front in order to break the deadlock.

Although the Scandinavian countries were not directly involved as combatants in World War I, as to some extent they were in the 1939-45 War, its unprecedented savagery still came as a tremendous psychological shock to thinking people. Indeed the senseless destruction, the seemingly unending slaughter and suffering haunted Nielsen's imagination. It was evident to him, as it was to others, that life could never be the same again, and that this World War represented a significant turning point in the history of mankind.

Amid these circumstances, Nielsen's Fourth Symphony therefore represents an important point in his artistic development. It can be no surprise that the music he

composed at this time enters upon a new creative phase, even a new style. The symphony is undoubtedly the most important composition in this context, with music whose contours are harder, whose harmonies are more striking, whose textures are altogether darker. The contour of the lines soars in the most powerfully anguished and intense fashion. In the extraordinary slow movement, for example, Nielsen spoke of the music sounding 'like the eagle rising on the wind'. There is a potent awareness of the erosion of conventional tonality and of the awakening of many of those qualities which are readily identified with the post-war musical world.

Like George Bernard Shaw, Nielsen believed in the concept of the life-force. In a preface to the score, he wrote: 'Under this title the composer has endeavoured to indicate in one word what the music alone is capable of expressing to the full: *The elemental Will of Life*. Music is Life and, like it, inextinguishable. The title given by the composer to this musical work might



Nielsen in 1917

therefore seem superfluous. The composer, however, has employed the word in order to underline the strictly musical character of his subject. It is not a programme, but rather a suggestion as to the right approach to the music.'

Symphony No. 4, Op. 29 **'Det Uudslukkelige' (The Inextinguishable)**

1. *Allegro* -
2. *Poco allegretto* -
3. *Poco adagio quasi andante* -
4. *Allegro*

All four movements relate to each other and develop naturally out of each other. The general design requires that the music be played continuously, without pauses between the movements, and the transitions and contrasts become particularly important features. In the opening movement, at tempo *Allegro*, the first group has an elemental explosive power. This material contrasts strongly with a glowing, lyrical theme that surely is intended to characterise the life-enhancing forces which are central to Nielsen's conception. This theme, moreover, will return in order to deliver an expression of complete fulfilment, since in due course it will bring the symphony to its magnificent conclusion.

After a carefully controlled diminuendo, there follows a *Poco allegretto* second movement, a disarming pastoral. Now the emphasis is on charm and naivety, the woodwinds dominating an ensemble in which the strings, when they play, remain pizzicato. When in due course the high violins burst upon the scene at the beginning of the third movement, the intensity generated seems all the stronger. In this *Adagio* Nielsen's expressive language is at its most intense, though relief is brought by a beautiful violin solo, whose music is soon taken up by the orchestral strings. The challenges of loud winds and solemn trombones extend the range still further, until a great climax brings some kind of resolution, but only temporarily, since the music fades towards calm.

Nielsen surely modelled the transition to the finale upon Beethoven's Overture, *Leonore No. 3*. The rhythmic attack of the violins is supported by the lower strings, until the horns and timpani launch the new movement. This is music of astonishing power, possessed of seemingly inexhaustible reserves of energy. Part of the intention is to convey the feeling that the performance is threatening to go over the edge, to explode beyond control. The imaginative masterstroke is the role of the two sets of timpani. Positioned on either side of the orchestra, the two players thunder volleys of electrifying violence at one another, representing the forces of chaos. At length they are pulled into order via an extraordinary glissando, as the main theme triumphs over them. Thus Nielsen brings the symphony to its affirmative conclusion: 'Music is Life and, like it, is inextinguishable'. © Terry Barfoot, 2018

Recommended Recordings:

Herbert Blomstedt
San Francisco Symphony Orchestra
Decca 4609882 (2-CD set of Sym 4-6 and 2 fillers)*

Herbert Blomstedt
Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra
Warner Classics 5008292 (3-CD set of Sym 1-6 and 2 fillers)

Paavo Berglund
Royal Danish Orchestra
RCA Red Seal 88875052182 (3-CD set of Sym 1-6)**

Michael Schönwandt
Danish National Symphony Orchestra / DR
Naxos 8570739 (c/w Sym 5)

Yehudi Menuhin
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
Simax PSC1144 (c/w the Violin Concerto)

Ole Schmidt
London Symphony Orchestra
Alto ALC1236 (c/w Sym 5)

Sakari Oramo
Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra
BIS BIS2028 (c/w Sym 5)

Alan Gilbert
New York Philharmonic Orchestra
Dacapo 6220624 (c/w Sym 1)

Osmo Vänskä
BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra
BIS BISCD1209 (c/w Sym 3)

Sir Colin Davis
London Symphony Orchestra
LSO Live LSO0694 (c/w Sym 5)

Paavo Järvi
Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra
RCA 88875178802 (3-CD set of Sym 1-6)

Thomas Dausgaard
Seattle Symphony Orchestra
Seattle Symphony Media SSM1017 (c/w with Sym 3)

* Originally coupled with Sym 5, Decca 4215242, which can be obtained as a download from Presto Classical, or a CD may be found on the 2nd-hand market

** Originally coupled with Sym 1, RCA Red Seal 7701, which has been reissued by ArkivMusic

Music author, lecturer and educator Terry Barfoot is Director of Arts in Residence, which runs day, weekend and mid-week music events at various venues throughout the UK and Europe. Terry has long been a good friend and supporter of the FRMS and has given presentations at many society meetings. He has also been a loyal supporter of this magazine for which we are very grateful.

Sir Thomas Beecham: the first recordings

David Patmore

BY THE MIDDLE OF 1910 Thomas Beecham was a conductor to watch. Funded and assisted by his wealthy father, Beecham could be heard on the podium for both concerts and opera performances and was about to enter the recording studios for the first time. In 1902 he had secured his first conducting engagement with the Imperial Grand Opera Company, and made his debut directing Balfe's *The Bohemian Girl*. In 1906 he had been invited to become conductor of the New Symphony Orchestra, formed by freelance orchestral players in London, and he remained with this orchestra until 1908. These early concerts were not only successful, but also brought him into contact with Frederick Delius, of whose music Beecham became a passionate advocate. In 1909 he formed the Beecham Symphony Orchestra, which included many of London's finest musicians and was led by Albert Sammons, whom Beecham had heard playing in a restaurant orchestra at the Waldorf Hotel.



Thomas Beecham aged about 30

In 1910 father and son, who had been estranged, were reconciled. Backed by the senior Beecham's financial investment, they jointly presented the first of Thomas Beecham's many seasons of opera in London, with Richard Strauss and Bruno Walter as guest conductors. (Beecham in fact gave the first performances in Britain of five of Strauss's operas during his career.) At the same time, and probably in conjunction with this opera season, Beecham made his first recordings during July 1910, setting down extensive excerpts from *The Tales of Hoffmann* and *Die Fledermaus* for The Gramophone Company, in addition to a short selection from d'Albert's opera *Tiefland*. The conductor is uncredited on this release, although as Beecham was conducting this work, as well as *The Tales of Hoffmann* and *Die Fledermaus*, as part of his opera season around this time, it is likely that he was the conductor for this recording. In addition, he is likely also to have led selections from Verdi's *Nabucco*, in parallel with his interest at this time in conducting symphonic bands.

During the following year, 1911, Diaghilev's Ballets Russes appeared for the first time in London, and on the company's return in 1912 Beecham conducted several performances. Father and son went on to present two further seasons by this great company in 1913 and one in 1914, all in London. These seasons introduced English audiences to the music of Stravinsky and Ravel, as well as that of Borodin, Mussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov. In parallel

Beecham returned to the recording studio in 1912, this time for the Odeon Company, for which he recorded a varied repertoire: the March from Rossini's Overture to *William Tell*, an Entr'acte from Missa's operetta *Muguette*, the Intermezzo from Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana*, and Mendelssohn's 'The Bee's Wedding' from the *Songs without words*. He also recorded the Overture to Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, and an abridgement of Weber's Overture to *Oberon*.

After the outbreak of World War I in 1914, Beecham conducted (and supported with the family fortune) the Hallé Orchestra and the London Symphony Orchestra, as well as the Royal Philharmonic Society. In addition to conducting and promoting concerts he formed the Beecham Opera Company in 1915 and entered into a partnership with the Columbia Gramophone Company which was to be ultimately long lasting. He began to record for Columbia in 1915, with an ambitious repertoire for the acoustic 78 era: the Overture to Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, one of the 'Polovtsian Dances' from Borodin's opera *Prince Igor*, the Minuet from Massenet's *Manon*, and the Act 2 Waltzes from Richard Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier*, the first English performances of which he had conducted in 1913. Later sessions in 1915 yielded a movement from Rimsky-Korsakov's Second Symphony, 'Antar', and two movements from Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony, the 'Pathétique'.



Extract from Odeon's catalogue

1916 saw recordings being made of excerpts from the recent Russian ballet, Stravinsky's *The Firebird*, as well as the Scherzo from Mendelssohn's incidental music to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. There were more overtures: to Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, Berlioz's *Roman Carnival* and another recording of the *Figaro* Overture, as well as the Minuet from Mozart's Divertimento, K. 131. All these recordings were made with Beecham's own orchestra, the Beecham Symphony Orchestra.

Plans to stabilise the Beecham family finances, which had been badly hit by the war, were thrown into disarray when Beecham's father died in 1916 on the eve of completing the necessary reconstruction. The consequences of this misfortune were to be far-reaching. Nonetheless for the present time it was business as usual. Late 1916 and 1917 saw the release of more varied titles from Beecham and his Orchestra: Sibelius's *Valse Triste*, the Overture to Smetana's opera *The Bartered Bride*, one of Grieg's *Symphonic Dances*, the March from Gounod's opera *Roméo et Juliette*, the Overture to Weber's opera *Oberon*, and the 'Hungarian March' from Berlioz's *The Damnation of Faust*. The tide of war could be discerned in the recording of Edward German's song 'Have you news of my boy Jack?' by the distinguished contralto Dame Clara Butt at the same time as its first performance at the Royal Philharmonic Society by Beecham and his Orchestra on February 26th 1917.



Tamara Karsavina as Salome in the Beecham Russian ballet season, 1913

Later sessions during 1917 and 1918 saw recordings of the Overture to Borodin's *Prince Igor* (unpublished) and the Minuet from Bizet's *La Jolie Fille de Perth*. An unusual coupling of the Sarabande from *The Marriage of Figaro* and the Minuet from Lully's *Les Amants Magnifiques* was released in March 1918. The final recordings from this period were rather more ambitious than had been attempted before. The first and last movements of Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique* Symphony were recorded and rejected during August and October 1918. Excerpts from a truncated version of Dvořák's Symphony No. 9, 'From the New World', went unpublished. Rejection was also the fate of several excerpts from Schumann's *Manfred*, which was mounted by the Beecham Opera Company at the end of July 1918. Beecham's final recordings from this period consisted of extracts from Debussy's *Petite Suite* in the Büsser version for orchestra and unpublished accounts

of the Minuet and Gavotte from Bach's secular cantata *Phoebus and Pan*. By 1920 Beecham was obliged to withdraw from professional musical life for three years to sort out the Beecham estate. He was not to recommence recording until March 1925.

Beecham's earliest recordings indicate the pattern which he was to follow later in his recording career, with a selection of varied works, often tied in to contemporaneous public performances. Variety was the key: it was this that kept both Beecham's orchestras and audiences on the edges of their respective seats. And in the relationship with three different record companies, one can foresee the often turbulent if productive relationship which Beecham was later to have with the Columbia division of EMI and the two American labels RCA and Columbia.

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David Patmore read history at Oxford and, among his many activities in a varied career, he studied opera stage management and worked at several opera companies, including Glyndebourne and The Royal Opera. He has been reviewing and writing about recordings for over 35 years for numerous publications including Gramophone, Which CD? and Classic Record Collector. David wrote the 856-page booklet for the Naxos boxed set 'A-Z of Singers', and together with our very own Jim Bostwick, he runs CRQ Editions. Many of the recordings he writes about can be obtained as Symposium downloads from Presto Classical, principally on Symposium 1096-97 'Sir Thomas Beecham, Vol. 1 (1912-1939)'.

The Ilkley Music Weekend

Hosted by Yorkshire & Northwest Region

At the Craiglands Hotel, Ilkley, West Yorkshire

April 5th-8th 2019

Our Guest Presenters are:

Andrew Keener: *Sir Malcolm Sargent*

John Malpass: *Rachmaninoff*

Nigel Simeone: *Josef Suk*

Geoffrey Owen: *Artistic Planning – Hallé Orchestra*

Andrew Cornall: *International Record Production*

Our Member Presenters are:

Ron Cooper: *Vienna – Musical Connections*

Sue Parker: *Feline Groovy*

Peter Smart: *Great Recording Venues*

Tony Haywood: *Final Thoughts*

Further details will be updated on the FRMS website as soon as available. This hugely successful event is open to all FRMS affiliated society members, friends and family. Booking opens mid-October.

For further information, contact the event co-ordinators:

Geoff Bateman (Programmes and Presenters)

Eroica, 1 South Road, Bradford BD9 4SU

Tel: 01274 783285

email: geoffbateman@blueyonder.co.uk

Jim Bostwick (Hotel Bookings and Liaison)

6 Oakroyd Close, Brighouse HD6 4BP

Tel: 01484 717865

email: jamesbostwick@btinternet.com

JANÁČEK: 1914-1918

Nigel Simeone

LEOŠ JANÁČEK (1854-1928) celebrated his 60th birthday on July 3rd 1914, at a time when his name was little known outside his home town of Brno in Moravia. Celebrations were distinctly low-key, with a party at the Brno Organ School (which he headed) and a day off for all the staff. Well-wishers expressed the hope that he would one day achieve the recognition he deserved, but in 1914 this still seemed little more than a distant aspiration. His opera *Jenůfa* had been produced in Brno in 1904 and successfully revived in 1906 and 1911, but the performances in the small, ill-equipped Veverí Theatre were far from ideal, especially as the orchestra was under-sized and over-loud (and, often lacked some of the instruments called for in the score). Janáček had written *Fate (Osud)* straight after *Jenůfa* and it marked a remarkable stylistic advance, but attempts to get it staged merely resulted in years of frustration for Janáček. A few days before Janáček's modest birthday party, world events were taking an ominous turn: Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated by Gavrilo Princip in Sarajevo on June 28th.

In 1914, Brno was still a regional centre in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and Czechs were expected to support the Austrian and German side in the war (while Russia sided with the Serbs). Janáček's well-known enthusiasm for Russia, particularly its literature, meant that he was regarded with suspicion by the authorities, not least because he had founded the Russian Circle in Brno, which fostered Russian language and culture. Perhaps because he was now in his sixties, he was considered 'politically dubious' rather than anything more sinister. The outbreak of war had important implications for Bohemia and Moravia: already in 1914, Czech patriots saw the possibility of the Austro-Hungarian Empire collapsing after the war, thus allowing an independent Czech nation to emerge – a process greatly stimulated by Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk (1850–1937) who was to become the first President of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918.

An idealistic vision of the future was one thing, but day-to-day reality was another. Food shortages in Brno became acute and fuel was rationed. Janáček started to compose his Violin Sonata in 1914, later recalling that

he wrote it 'when we were expecting the Russians to enter Moravia.' Janáček had a particular interest in writing for male-voice choirs, especially the outstanding Moravian Teachers' Choir, but the war inevitably took a dreadful toll on the choir and for a time it even ceased its activities. The conductor, Ferdinand Vach, decided to form a women's choir and as a result Janáček composed a group of works in 1916 for female voices: *The Wolf's Trail* (a kind of miniature drama for voices and piano), *Kašpar Rucký* and the *Hradčany Songs* (evoking specific locations in Prague).

1916 was also the year of Janáček's great breakthrough: Karel Kovařovic, the music director at the Prague National Theatre, was finally persuaded to put on *Jenůfa* – after more than a decade when he refused to do so – but only on condition that his own re-orchestration was used. Wisely, Janáček swallowed his pride and didn't challenge Kovařovic's high-handed decision. The Prague premiere on May 26th 1916 was a triumph and had important consequences. First, it secured Janáček a contract with the great Viennese firm of Universal Edition which went on to publish many of his most important works (including all the later operas and the *Sinfonietta*). Second, and partly as a consequence of having a progressive and well-connected publisher, *Jenůfa* soon became a success far beyond Czech lands. The

Viennese premiere on February 16th 1918, with Maria Jeritza in the title role, soon led to others: Otto Klemperer conducted it in Cologne on November 16th 1918 and its status was secured in 1924 when Erich Kleiber conducted *Jenůfa* in Berlin to great acclaim. On December 6th 1924, Jeritza repeated her portrayal of *Jenůfa* at the Metropolitan Opera in New York.

Just as *Jenůfa* was triumphing in Prague, Janáček was grappling with the opera that gave him more trouble than any other. Originally conceived as *The Excursion of Mr Brouček to the Moon*, based on Svatopluk Čech's satirical novel of the same name (published in 1888), Janáček had been working on it since 1908 but progress was stymied by problems finding a useable libretto. In the end, after several others had fallen by the wayside, the poet and politician Viktor Dyk took on the project and gave Janáček the



Janáček in 1916, portrait photograph by František Drtikol.



Janáček's contribution to *Český památník z velkého roku* (Prague, 1918) quoting the Hussite song 'Ye who are God's warriors' as it appears in *The Excursions of Mr Brouček*.

reworking of the libretto that he needed. Days after finishing his revisions in November 1916, Dyk – an outspoken Czech patriot – was arrested for high treason and spent several months in a Viennese jail.

What Janáček did next was a surprise. Having finally got his first *Brouček* opera into shape, he decided to compose an entirely new companion piece for it: *The Excursion of Mr Brouček to the Fifteenth Century*. Why did he do this after so many years of exasperating experiences on the *Moon Excursion*? The reason may lie in the historical events at the heart of Čech's second *Brouček* novel (published in 1889). It concerned the Hussite rebellion against the Holy Roman Empire in 1420, the Battles of Prague (at Vítkov Hill and Vyšehrad) and the subsequent liberation of the city. Though amusing and satirical in tone, the subject matter of the novel had powerful resonances for a patriotic Czech in 1917. Work with his new librettist František Serafínský Procházka proceeded very smoothly and *The Excursion of Mr Brouček to the Fifteenth Century* was composed in six months, finished by the end of 1917.

During the war, Janáček had seen many of his friends and pupils going off to fight and they kept in contact by letters and postcards. In 1917, Břetislav Bakala wrote from Montenegro to tell his teacher that he was recuperating in a field hospital. When news reached the cellist Antonín Váňa about the great success of *Jenůfa* in Prague he sent congratulations from a barracks in Linz. Janáček's pupil Jaroslav Kvapil (who went on to conduct the premiere of the Glagolitic Mass in 1927) sent a touching note on April 4th 1916 to reassure Janáček that he was still alive: 'I'm writing to you from a new location, namely a trench. I'm doing well, but all I can do is despair, especially as a musician.' This was the common experience of almost every Czech conscript in the Austrian army. (There was an additional complication: Janáček later wrote a remarkable chorus called 'The Czech Legion' which sets a poem about the Czech unit that fought in France against the Germans – established by Masaryk, among others.)

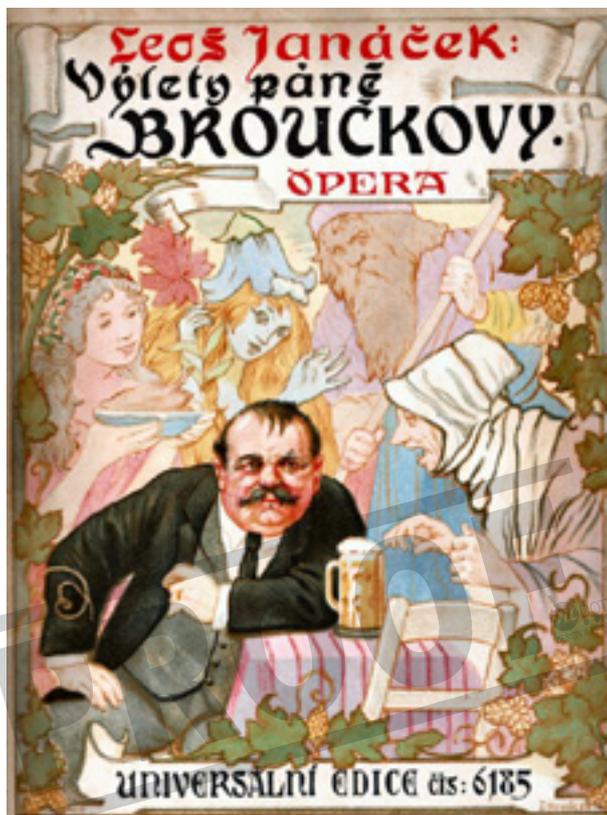
For Czechs, the end of the war marked more than the cessation of hostilities: with the collapse of the Habsburg Empire it saw the birth of the new Czechoslovak Republic, proclaimed on October 28th 1918 with Tomáš Masaryk – born in rural Moravia and a grammar school boy in Brno – as its first president. Janáček greatly admired Masaryk (a hugely cultured

man) and dedicated *The Excursions of Mr Brouček* to him: 'Dedicated to the liberator of the Czech nation Dr TG Masaryk'. Given the strong patriotic thread of the *Fifteenth-century Excursion*, this was entirely appropriate, and when a book was published in Prague to celebrate the 'Great Year' of 1918, Janáček's contribution was a handwritten quotation from the battle scene in the *Fifteenth-century Excursion* where he introduces the Hussite song 'Ye who are God's warriors' which had already been made famous by Smetana in *Má vlast*.

While none of Janáček's other works have the explicit connection to the Great War of 'The Czech Legion' or anything like the stirring liberation scene in Prague's Old Town Square near the end of *Brouček*, one other work from the wartime years expresses the kind of hope for the future that contrasted sharply with the challenges of daily life, in Brno, and in villages such as Janáček's native village of Hukvaldy which suffered famine and privation for much of the war. The first version of the orchestral rhapsody *Taras Bulba* was finished in July 1915, but Janáček then set the work aside for a few years – possibly because it was inspired by Russian literature (a novel by Gogol) and the Habsburg authorities had already made it clear that Janáček's Pan-Slavic inclinations needed to be reined in

during the war years. He returned to it in 1918 and completed a greatly revised version by March 29th that year. While the story was ostensibly Russian, what lay behind it for Janáček was profoundly Czech. The score has no dedication, but in an article published in 1923, Janáček wrote that it was dedicated 'To our troops', adding that 'in this Rhapsody I rejoiced in the vision of our regiments. In 1918, its hymn-like motif [the great theme from the end of the last movement] began to ring out. Although I inscribe this work of mine to the armed forces of our nation, it is because they defend not merely our earthly possessions but also our cultural and intellectual world.' ©Nigel Simeone, 2018

Nigel Simeone published The First Editions of Leoš Janáček in 1990 and was co-author with John Tyrrell and Alena Němcová of Janáček's Works (Oxford, 1997), acclaimed as the definitive catalogue of Janáček's music and writings. For this book Nigel was awarded the Janáček Prize in 2000. He is currently working on the Janáček Compendium, due to be published next year by Boydell Press. ●



Pictorial front cover for the first edition of *The Excursions of Mr Brouček*, a work Janáček dedicated to President Masaryk.

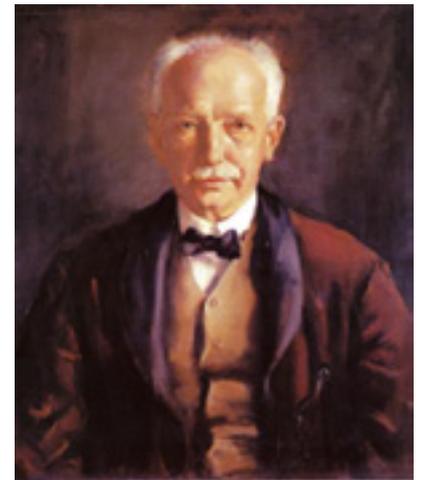
RICHARD STRAUSS

AS MAN AND MUSICIAN

Tuesday 15th -Thursday 17th January 2019
The Ocean Beach Hotel, Bournemouth

**with Terry Barfoot, and a concert by the
Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra**

Richard Strauss (1864-1949) enjoyed a remarkably long creative life of more than sixty years, from the early 1880s to the late 1940s. In addition to his career as an internationally celebrated conductor, he was a prolific composer who worked in all the established forms. Beyond the opera house his music has been most valued in the fields of the orchestral tone poem and the solo song with orchestra or piano. Our event will explore this visionary music, with CD and DVD examples on excellent hi-fi equipment, and a performance of the *Symphonia Domestica* at Lighthouse in Poole, the largest arts centre in the UK outside London.



Tuesday

5.00 Assemble and welcome

7.00 Aperitifs

7.30 Dinner

After dinner: Performing Strauss

**(with Ed Lockwood, horn, and Tim Fisher, violin,
Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra)**

Wednesday

8.15 Breakfast

9.30 Ein Heldenleben

10.45 Coffee

11.15 Strauss: A Life in Music (including archive film)

12.30 Lunch

Free afternoon

4.30 Tea

**5.30 Departure for Lighthouse, Poole (transport will be
provided)**

**6.30 Pre-concert lecture, Strauss: Symphonia
Domestica**

7.30 Concert (tickets are included):

**Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra
conducted by Kirill Karabits**

Beethoven: Violin Concerto

(Augustin Hadelich, violin)

Strauss: Symphonia Domestica

Post-concert supper at the hotel

Thursday

8.15 Breakfast

**9.30 Strauss under the Nazis, to include the Drei
Männerchöre and the opera Friedenstag**

10.30 Coffee

**11.00 Parergon on the Symphonia Domestica, for left-
hand piano and orchestra**

Daphne (Part One)

12.30 Lunch

2.00 Daphne (Part Two)

3.15 Departure

**The Ocean Beach Hotel is located close to the town
centre and directly on the seafront, atop the
prestigious East Cliff of Bournemouth with its
spectacular sea views.**

**Arts in Residence and the Ocean Beach Hotel offer an
excellent cuisine including wine with dinner and
supper. The event will conclude on Thursday
afternoon.**

Terry Barfoot writes widely on music for Britain's
leading journals, orchestras, festivals and record
companies. He lectures at venues throughout the
country, is Publications Consultant to the
Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and the Director of
Arts in Residence.

The **Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra** is a world class orchestra with a proud history stretching back 125 years. Based at Bournemouth and Poole, they perform regularly throughout the South and West of England, while their foreign tours have included concerts in Carnegie Hall New York, the Vienna Musikverein, the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, the Prague Rudolfinum and the Berlin Philharmonie. They have performed Strauss's music with many distinguished conductors, including for example Simon Rattle and Kirill Karabits.

Price: £295.00 per person (twin/double rooms), £320.00 (single rooms) to include all meals, wine, course fees and accommodation.

Booking: Arts in Residence, 25 Mulberry Lane, Cosham, Portsmouth, PO6 2QU
£50.00 per person deposit with booking. (Cheques payable to Arts in Residence)

Enquiries: 02392 383356 **Email:** info@artsinresidence.co.uk www.artsinresidence.co.uk



Torbay Musical Weekend

Friday 16th - Monday 19th November 2018

at The Grand Hotel Torquay

Enjoy a weekend of music and talks on a range of topics at the historic 4 star, Grand Hotel. The Grand Hotel occupies pride of place on the Torbay seafront, commanding majestic views over the bay and out to sea. Whatever the weather, the comfort and luxury of the Grand has something to offer everyone.



Prices

Friends of Torbay subscription fee £50

Residents' Hotel Tariffs per person inclusive of VAT:

Option A @ £295 from Friday Dinner to Monday Breakfast inclusive

Option B @ £225 from Friday Dinner to Sunday Tea inclusive

The Hotel requires a £50 per head deposit on booking

Session tickets available from Kevin Ryland on **01803 406754** or email kevinryland45@gmail.com

Day visitors very welcome

For more information please contact **John Isaac (Chairman)** on 07768 790693 or email gillianbabbs@waitrose.com or visit www.fo.t.org.uk where you will find the booking form for this event

www.grandtorquay.co.uk

The Grand Hotel, Sea Front, Torbay Road, Torquay TQ2 6NT



JOHN GEORGIADIS

With a musical life so internationally acclaimed, varied and rich, ninety minutes will surely not be long enough for John Georgiadis to tell us about conducting, performing, arranging and acting - we are in for a treat!



JOHN ISAAC

Torbay Musical Weekend Chairman, John Isaac, hosts a late night presentation asserting that perhaps he is not the only Phillistine when it comes to appreciating classical music - whatever that is!



PROF. GEORGE CAIRD

An oboist himself, Prof. George Caird looks at the influence that Leon Goossens brought to the oboe and to the music written for it throughout the 20th century to the present day.



MIKE PRICE

The late night Saturday presentation will feature our technical wizard Mike Price who will play some opera and ballet extracts from recent productions possibly including works by Prokofiev, Ravel, Verdi and Puccini.



TED PEZARRO

Torbay Weekend regular Ted Pezarro loves to share his passion for jazz and this time Louis Armstrong will have centre stage. Ted will show how influential Louis Armstrong was in the development of jazz from its infancy in New Orleans through to the time he died in 1971.



MARILYN HILL SMITH

Operetta, opera, oratorio, musicals, Leeds City Varieties, the Proms etc, etc, soprano Marilyn Hill Smith can draw on her very wide musical experience to demonstrate that 'Variety is the spice of life'



DAVID WHERRELL

We all experience moments of saying 'Where have I heard that before?' David Wherrell will help us solve some of these questions showing that musical plagiarism has been, and continues to be, rife!



DR CHRISTOPHER FIFIELD

What did happen to the German symphony after Beethoven's ninth and before Brahms came to the rescue? Another Torbay regular Dr Christopher Fifield will explain what happened in-between these two great symphonic composers.



CRAIG OGDEN and GARY RYAN

The second of the Weekend's recitals will feature two of the world's most well-known guitarists - Craig Ogden and Gary Ryan. They will, with solo and duo performances, play a varied programme of music ranging from the baroque to the present day revealing the guitar's full potential.



ANDREW BORKOWSKI

Making a welcome return visit to the Weekend, Andrew Borkowski, will demonstrate the beautiful voice of Gundula Janowitz in recordings including music by Mozart, Schubert and Richard Strauss.



CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

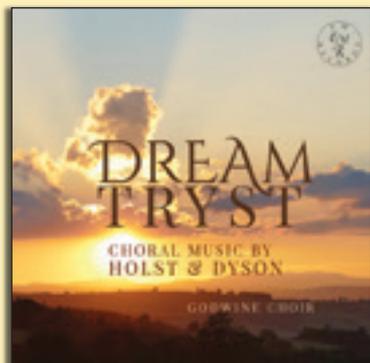
Not many Western music critics get the opportunity to visit Japan and assess the quality of Japanese orchestras. Christopher Morley did just that and he will reveal what he found!



MILOŠ MILIVOJEVIĆ

The Saturday night Torbay Recital will be given by the exciting and award-winning and award-winning young accordionist Miloš Milivojević. His programme will include works by Bach, Scarlatti, Sarasate and Piazzolla.

EMR CD049

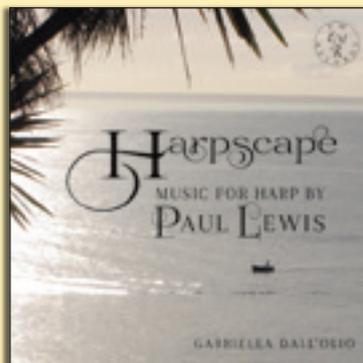


DREAM TRYST

Choral Music
by Holst
and Dyson

Godwine Choir
Alex Davan Wetton (conductor)
Edward Hughes (conductor)

EMR CD048



HARPSCAPE

Music for
Harp by
Paul Lewis

Gabriella Dall'Olio (harp)

EMR CD047



OF SUCH ECSTATIC SOUND

Sherwood: Concerto
for Violin, Cello and
Orchestra; Cowen:
Symphony No. 5 in F minor
BBC Concert Orchestra
John Andrews (conductor)
Rupert Marshall-Luck (violin)
Joseph Spooner (cello)

EMR CD039



HERITAGE AND LANDSCAPE

Orchestral works
by Paul Lewis

Belgian Studio Symphony
Orchestra; Midland
Philharmonic Orchestra; Paris
Studio Symphony Orchestra;
Philharmonia Orchestra; and
Studio G Chamber Ensemble
Paul Lewis (conductor)

EMR CD037-38

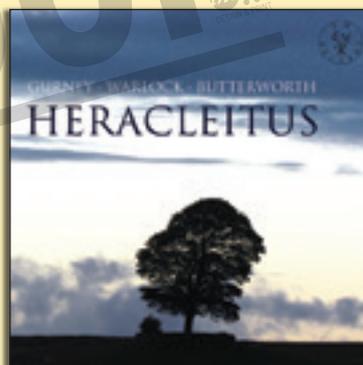


NOW COMES BEAUTY

commissions from
The English Music Festival

BBC Concert Orchestra
Gavin Sutherland (conductor)
David Owen Norris (piano)
Roderick Williams (baritone)
Rupert Marshall-Luck (violin)

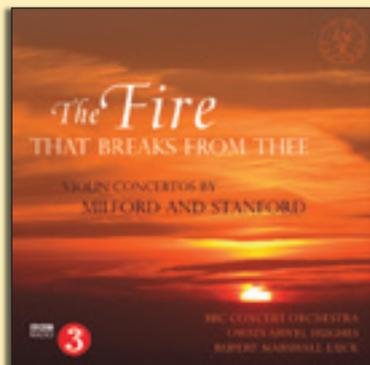
EMR CD036



HERACLEITUS GURNEY, WARLOCK and BUTTERWORTH

The Bridge Quartet
Michael Dussek (piano)
Charles Daniels (tenor)

EMR CD023

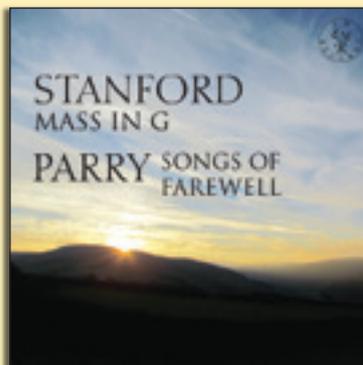


THE FIRE THAT BREAKS FROM THEE:

Stanford and Milford
Violin Concertos

BBC Concert Orchestra
Rupert Marshall-Luck (violin)
Owain Arwel Hughes
(conductor)

EMR CD021



STANFORD: Mass in G; PARRY: *Songs of Farewell*

The Choir of Exeter
College, Oxford
The Stapeldon Sinfonia
Tim Mugeridge (organ)
George De Voil (director)

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ELGAR IN WORLD WAR I Andrew Neill

WHEN BRITAIN DECLARED WAR on Germany on August 4th 1914 Elgar was holidaying on the north-west coast of Scotland with his wife and daughter. Most of the local transport was commandeered for the transportation of troops to Glasgow so they struggled to return to their home in London. For Elgar the war created a weight of expectation that he struggled to meet. He was the leading composer in the country and wartime audiences, at least initially, demanded patriotic, confident music. On Elgar's shoulders there was the added weight of 'Land of Hope and Glory' the most patriotic of tunes with words to match. Although it is arguable that, during the 51 months of the war, Elgar failed to match these expectations, conversely the war ended with him having produced a body of varied and deeply satisfying music.

It turned out that Elgar would write four overtly patriotic works during the war. However, these were not for Britain: three were for Belgium and one was for Poland! In November 1914 he was asked to set a poem by the Belgian émigré poet Emile Cammaerts, *Après Anvers*, which lamented the destruction of much of Belgium and its bell towers. For reciter and orchestra and renamed *Carillon*, this proved to be extremely popular and was performed frequently throughout the war in many parts of Britain. Elgar would set two other pieces by Cammaerts, including the miniature masterpiece for reciter and soprano *Une Voix dans le Désert*, first performed in January 1916.

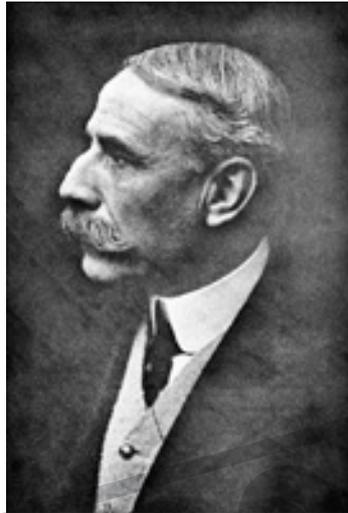
This reflection on the devastation of the Low Countries and how hope and beauty can be found in the midst of devastation has more than stood the test of time. In 1917 there was the far less satisfying 'tub-thumping' *Le Drapeau Belge*. Another pattern had emerged. Until the last months of 1918 Elgar composed only to commission or at the suggestion of others. This is not to say he did not compose with enthusiasm, as can be seen in his response to most commissions, but the stalemate on the Western Front, the increasing food shortages and the feeling that the conflict would never end affected Elgar, as it did most of his fellow countrymen. At last, after it was clear the German spring offensive of 1918 had failed, Elgar began composing once again. The result was three chamber works and his Cello Concerto.

Early in 1915 Elgar was approached to set some of the poems of Laurence Binyon, who had published a slim volume of verse written in the first months after the outbreak of the conflict. In these poems Binyon mourned the death of a friend in Louvain and its destruction. He imagined an appeal to Goethe's reason and looked back to the time of Roman armies where the German Uhlans now advanced. Elgar chose three poems: 'The Fourth of August', 'To Women' and 'For

the Fallen'. The latter poem is worthy of more attention than just its most famous verse:

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn
At the going down of the sun
And in the morning
We will remember them.*

Binyon, who worked in the British Museum, was delighted that Elgar was to set his poems and, at the latter's request, wrote an additional verse for 'For the Fallen'. Furthermore, Binyon had no objection when



Elgar in 1917

Elgar changed the order of words to 'They shall not grow old'. In 1915 Binyon's verses were known only to a few and had not achieved their 'iconic' status. Unfortunately Elgar became involved in controversy when it was established that the composer Cyril Rootham was also setting 'For the Fallen'. Although Elgar withdrew his composition he was eventually persuaded to continue, to the understandable distress of the lesser-known Rootham. The listener is the beneficiary however, as we have two (of many) settings of 'For the Fallen' which are very different. Elgar's setting became a great requiem for the generation of young men who were to lose their lives in the mud of France,

the deserts of Arabia and the cold North Sea. 'To Women' and 'For the Fallen' were completed quickly and were performed together before being joined by 'The Fourth of August' many months later. In setting this poem Elgar struggled with the verse which contained these words:

*She fights the fraud that feeds desire on
Lies, in a lust to enslave or kill,
The barren creed of blood and iron,
Vampire of Europe's wasted will.*

Eventually he set the words to the 'Demons' Chorus' from *The Dream of Gerontius* and the three stanzas were performed under the title *The Spirit of England*, written for soloist (tenor or soprano), chorus and orchestra. Although of their time, the settings are also for all time, most typically 'For the Fallen', a masterpiece admired by many including Britten who wrote: '[It] has always seemed to me to have in its opening bars a personal tenderness and grief, in the grotesque march, an agony of distortion, and in the final sequences a ring of genuine splendour.'

Elgar's largest work of the war was his music for the children's play *The Starlight Express*. This was a version of the novel by Algernon Blackwood, *A Prisoner in Fairyland*. Hampered by a complex and, at times, confusing story and a production that upset author and composer, the play had a short run in the Kingsway Theatre from Christmas 1915 to the end of January 1916. Although the complex story and play have not stood the test of time, Elgar's enchanting music remains as fresh, tuneful and delightful as when

heard in 1915. Approached on November 9th by the music critic Robin Legge to compose the music for the play, which was to open on December 29th, Elgar set to work immediately, his imagination fired. Eventually he produced a full score for orchestra, baritone and soprano. Space does not permit a full description of this complicated story here, but the Chandos recording and the book *Oh, My Horses!* (see below) give the listener the background to the composition, the production and the music. Blackwood and Elgar became firm friends, the author often visiting the Elgars at their home in Hampstead and, later, when they rented a cottage in the Sussex countryside. In October 1916 Elgar bought a toad from a couple of boys he met in the street. He named it Algernon, after Blackwood, and gave the toad its freedom in his garden at his home in Hampstead. The local press latched on to the story under the headline 'Toad und Verklärung'!

Commissioned by the composer and conductor Emil Młynarski *Polonia* was composed in aid of a Polish wartime charity. Elgar dedicated it to Paderewski and mixed Polish patriotic themes with music by Chopin, Paderewski and his own original material. For a large orchestra, it is a work of superior quality lasting about fifteen minutes. Over a century later it has lost neither its freshness nor its subtle patriotism. In its own way Elgar's *Fringes of the Fleet* are also studies in patriotism: a quiet British patriotism. In the autumn of 1915 Rudyard Kipling travelled around southern England studying the coastal forces and parts of the Royal Navy that were neither particularly glamorous nor well known at the time. He produced a series of articles for *The Daily Telegraph* and accompanied these with a number of poems which were then published under the general title of *The Fringes of the Fleet*. Elgar threw himself into composing settings of four of the poems which formed part of a review at London's Coliseum. Sadly, Kipling, whose son John had been posted missing at the end of September 1915, eventually withdrew his consent for the performances (which Elgar conducted and took on tour) but not before a recording had been made with an additional song, 'Inside the Bar', written by Sir Gilbert Parker. The songs range from the jovial ('The Lowestoft Boat') to the deeply serious ('Submarines'). They are tuneful and show Elgar's serious and lighter side in equal measure, as well as his genius at orchestration. He even asked for two pieces of sandpaper to be rubbed together to simulate the sound of water passing over the hull of a submarine.

High Society also came to call when Elgar was persuaded by a Chelsea-based charity to contribute to a ballet based on a design by the artist Charles Conder (1868-1909). This, drawn in sanguine on a fan, represents a part 18th Century, part classical, scene with an image of Pan and Echo to the right. The dancer Ina Lowther used the image to design a short ballet for which Elgar would write the music. *The Sanguine Fan* is music of some substance and it is difficult to justify its subsequent neglect. It was the gramophone that rescued the music when Sir Adrian Boult recorded the score in 1973. It lasts approximately eighteen minutes. It is charming and tuneful and, as with *The Starlight Express*, the music has more than stood the test of time.

When the bombing of London began, the Elgars became fascinated by the experience, often travelling substantial distances to observe the result of this new form of warfare. By 1917 the novelty had worn off and by the end of the year Elgar was unwell. In March 1918 he was operated on for the removal of his tonsils. Recovery was slow, not helped by the increasingly worrying war news. The previous year Alice Elgar had found a country cottage in the woods above the Arun Valley near Fittleworth in Sussex where she and Edward could retreat when possible. A southerly wind would bring the occasional sound of guns from the Western Front but otherwise all was peaceful as Elgar revelled in country pursuits.

It was to the cottage, Brinkwells, that the Elgars retreated on May 2nd 1918. They remained there for much of the remainder of the war, Elgar making occasional trips to London. He was in London on November 11th, but did not stay to celebrate the Armistice, catching a train back to Sussex that morning. Brinkwells was the crucible for the last works of the war: the chamber music and, later, the Cello Concerto. After the death of Alice Elgar in 1920, Elgar continued to rent Brinkwells whenever he could before this no longer became possible. With Alice's death much of his desire to compose diminished. Elgar then became a star of the gramophone, putting much of his music on disc for HMV, even supervising a recording by land line from his death bed in Worcester in early 1934.

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Andrew Neill is a Vice-President, and was chairman, of the Elgar Society (1992-2008). He has written books, articles and CD notes on Elgar and his music and that of other composers. He is chairman of the Richard Strauss Society, a Trustee of the Kennedy Award for the Singing of Strauss and vice-chairman of Putney Music.

Recommended recordings

Recommendations in italics are deleted but might be found on the second-hand market. For any listener new to this music or who wishes to have a 'snapshot' of Elgar's work during the war then they should have (at least) in their collection recordings of *The Spirit of England*, *The Starlight Express* and *The Fringes of the Fleet*.

The 'Longed-for Light': Carillon, Op. 75; Polonia, Op. 76; Une Voix dans le Désert, Op. 77; Le Drapeau Belge, Op. 79; The Sanguine Fan, Op. 81 and other works

Simon Callow, narrator; Susan Gritton, soprano; BBCCO/John Wilson (SOMM 247)

War Music: Carillon; Polonia; Une Voix dans le Désert; Le Drapeau Belge; Fringes of the Fleet

Richard Pasco, narrator; Teresa Cahill, soprano; Rutland Sinfonia/Barry Collett (Pearl SHE 9602)

For the Fallen: The Spirit of England, Op. 80; Une Voix dans le Désert and other works

Rachel Nicholls, soprano; Jennifer France, soprano; Joshua Ellicott, narrator; Hallé/Sir Mark Elder (Hallé CDHLL7544)

Carillon

Henry Ainley, narrator; Orchestra/Elgar (recorded 1915) (Music & Arts MACD1257 – four CDs of all Elgar's acoustic recordings)*

...continued on page 21

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

Two items of news came to my attention recently. The first was a report that the New York Philharmonic Orchestra is considering allowing women in the orchestra to wear trousers at all concerts. Currently they are only allowed at 'downmarket' events, dresses being *de rigueur* at formal concerts. The second was that it is now 70 years since the release, in June 1948, of the first commercial LP record – Mendelssohn's violin concerto performed by Nathan Milstein with Bruno Walter conducting the New York Philharmonic.



Apart from the orchestra, what connection can there be between the two, and how do they relate to the Recorded Music Society movement? The second item clearly has some relevance but what of the first? When listening to a recording it cannot matter at all what the performers were wearing during the recording session. But in her final paragraph the report's author notes from a quick survey of a few UK orchestras, including the CBSO, that all allow their female musicians to wear trousers. Indeed, of the CBSO she states that music director Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla often conducts in trousers and 'she looks professional, in control and, *most importantly, the sound is fantastic*' (my italics).

Back in 1948 – although it was 1950 before the LP arrived on these shores – the sound from that first LP would have been fantastic, too, compared to the 78s that preceded it, not to mention the extended playing time. One of the advantages of a gramophone society (as most were then called) was that the pooled resources of members enabled those members to enjoy much better sound than was possible with most domestic equipment. For home listening a reasonable quality player such as the Pye Black Box sold in 1954 for £40 to £75 depending on model – at least four times the average weekly wage before deductions. The LPs themselves were expensive at around £2 – at least a day's pay for many people.

Today the average annual income, according to the Office for National Statistics, is £26,500 or just over £500 per week. A reasonable audio system for general domestic use (rather than for the hi-fi enthusiast) can be had for £150, and a CD to play on it, even at full price, costs only about twice the national minimum hourly wage. So is the potential for better sound quality a sufficient *raison d'être* for a recorded music society in the 21st century? Can a recorded music society in fact offer better sound quality in an age when rapid technical development means that today's state of the art equipment can be obsolete, or at least obsolescent, by tomorrow?

To answer those questions we perhaps need to consider what else we have to offer members and potential members. An important factor is the social aspect. In my visits to societies I have found that the societies that are thriving, even with few members, are those where there is more to the meeting than simply sitting and listening. The format of most societies' meetings includes a refreshment interval which gives an opportunity for conversation, but there are other ideas worth exploring – even activities beyond the regular meetings, such as concert visits or perhaps something involving shared interests other than music. But in the end it's the music that matters.

To end on a different note, however, this could be my last Chairman's Chat. Not that I am planning to stand down immediately – although my tenure is of course dependent on re-election at the AGM – but this could conceivably be the last issue of *Bulletin*, at least in its current format. Paul Astell, who is relinquishing the post of editor, has done an excellent job, maintaining the standard set by his predecessors and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Paul, both personally and on behalf of the Federation, for his hard work over the past seven years. At the time of writing, however, no-one has come forward to fill the vacancy. It may be that some changes are needed in the format or frequency of *Bulletin* but it would be a pity if it were to cease publication altogether.

Footnote: Nathan Milstein's recording of the Mendelssohn concerto is available on CD in the Naxos Historical series - catalogue number 8.110977.

Polonia

RSNO/Sir Andrew Davis (Chandos CHSA 5083)

The Starlight Express, Op. 78

- Agnes Nicholls, soprano; Charles Mott, baritone; Orchestra/Elgar (recorded 1918) (Music & Arts MACD1257, see above)
- Elin Manahan Thomas, soprano; Roderick Williams, baritone; SCO/Sir Andrew Davis (Chandos CHSA 5111)

The Spirit of England

- Teresa Cahill, soprano; SNO/Sir Alexander Gibson (Chandos Collect CHAN 6574)
- A recording with tenor solo (Andrew Staples with the BBCSO and Sir Andrew Davis) will be issued in the autumn of 2018 (Chandos)

The Fringes of the Fleet

- Charles Mott, baritone + 3 baritones; Orchestra/Elgar (recorded 1917) (Music & Arts MACD1257, see above) (This recording is also available on the Dutton label [CDBP 9777, low stock] and is included in the recommended book, see below)
- Roderick Williams, baritone + 3 baritones; GPO/Tom Higgins (SOMM 243)

The Sanguine Fan

- Sir Adrian Boult/LPO (LPO0016-0020; 5-CD set of Elgar's music recorded by the LPO)
- David Lloyd-Jones/ENP (Naxos 8.553879)

Violin Sonata, Op. 82

- Albert Sammons/William Murdoch (recorded 1935) (Naxos 8.110957)
- Tasmin Little/Martin Roscoe (Dal Segno DSPRCD047)

String Quartet, Op. 83; Piano Quintet, Op. 84

- Piers Lane/Goldner Quartet (Hyperion CDA67857)
- Piers Lane/Vellinger Quartet (CFP 5 75980)

Cello Concerto, Op. 85

Alisa Weilerstein; Daniel Barenboim/Berlin Staatskapelle (Decca 478 2735)

* These are the only recordings Elgar made of this music and, notwithstanding their age, sound remarkable in this remastering.

Recommended Book

Oh, My Horses! Elgar and the Great War; ed. Lewis Foreman (Elgar Enterprises). The volume includes a CD of relevant recordings of Elgar's and other composers' music.

Music of Cyril Rootham

How it was changed by World War I

Dan Rootham

Dan Rootham is a retired software engineer and amateur musician, and is the grandson of the composer Cyril Bradley Rootham (1875-1938). Starting in 2013, Dan created and developed a website to promote the music of Cyril Rootham. Dan is gradually transcribing his grandfather's manuscripts so that these unpublished works can be heard, even if only in a synthesised recording. Currently, Dan is also working as a reviewer of transcribed scores for the OpenScore project. OpenScore aims to digitise public domain music scores, using the MuseScore open source software.

Background

Many music-lovers today are barely aware of CBR: Cyril Bradley Rootham (1875-1938), a contemporary and friend of RVW – Ralph Vaughan Williams. But in his day CBR was a major influence on music-making in Cambridge, and mentored future composers such as Arthur Bliss, Armstrong Gibbs and Patrick Hadley. Apart from his main position as Director of Music at St John's College, Cambridge, CBR also lectured in composition at the university and directed the orchestra and chorus of the Cambridge University Music Society (CUMS) as well as the Cambridge Operatic Society.

So what was CBR's background? He was born and grew up in Bristol where his father Daniel Wilberforce Rootham was an organist, singing coach and musical director of the Bristol Madrigal Society (for an amazing 50 years). Daniel's singing pupils included Clara Butt and Eva Turner, and Clara Butt must have become a family friend. CBR dedicated several of his early songs to her, and played the organ at her wedding (standing in for Sir Arthur Sullivan who was indisposed). Later on CBR also dedicated a song to Clara's husband, the recitalist R Kennerley Rumford.

1894-1914

CBR's early musical education must have revolved around church choirs and the Bristol Madrigal Society, and this is most clearly seen in his Op. 16 *'A Shepherd in a Glade'* (1904) which is a charming part-song about a hard-hearted lass who leaves the poor shepherd heart-broken. Innocent stuff, which simply could not have been written after 1914.

Another staple for CBR in his early days seems to have been bloodthirsty ballads: Op. 11 *'It was an English Ladye bright'* (1904) and Op. 19 *'The Ballad of Kingslea Mere'* (1905), which conclude with three deaths and two deaths respectively.

Part-songs were not CBR's only musical output: by 1914 he had already written two large-scale dramatic choral works, Op. 18 *'Andromeda'* (1905) and Op. 33 *'The Lady of Shalott'* (1909). And although his chamber works were never recorded until the 21st century, by 1914 CBR had also written four string quartets.

Outbreak of War: 1914

The impact of World War I on British society was devastating. Over the period 1914-1919, St John's College alone lost over 160 members of the college who are commemorated on their memorial in the College Chapel. Musical life at the University (and indeed throughout the country) slowed down because choirs and orchestras had been so depleted by the military call-up. Yet throughout the war poets and composers continued to express themselves in the face of this unprecedented violence. One of these was the poet Laurence Binyon, whose famous poem *'For the Fallen'* appeared in *The Times* very early in the conflict - in September 1914.



Cyril Rootham in Cambridge about 1920

Rootham spotted the poem and immediately wrote to Laurence Binyon, asking his permission to set the words to music. Binyon agreed, and all seemed well. Rootham started composing, and Novello were prepared to publish the piece (set for full chorus and orchestra).

1915

Early in 1915 CBR's *For the Fallen* was completed. And then the misunderstandings started... At the suggestion of Sir Sidney Colvin (Binyon's one-time boss at the British Museum), Elgar also decided to set Binyon's poems to music: this work was to become Elgar's *The Spirit of England*. Neither composer was aware of the other's project until they met at a concert in March 1915. Novello only wanted to publish one

version and obviously would prefer Elgar as a better-known composer. So Elgar generously offered to withdraw, for which CBR was very grateful (while expressing his hope that Novello might yet publish both versions). But then Elgar's friends began to put pressure on him to proceed, and Richard Streatfeild (a colleague of Binyon's at the British Museum) did persuade Novello to publish both versions. So Elgar allowed himself to be swayed and recommenced work. By June 1915 his vocal score for *For the Fallen* was completed. In November 1915 CBR's *For the Fallen* was published by Novello, and was favourably reviewed in *The Musical Times*. All was then quiet for some months.

1916

In March an article in *The Times* gave a very positive review of CBR's setting of 'For the Fallen'. But in the same paragraph of the review came the fateful words:

'We understand that Sir Edward Elgar has chosen the same words for a forthcoming work, but that should not blind us to the merits of this one, published last year by Novello.'

This was a shock to CBR, who wrote to Elgar immediately in the hope that this was a mere misunderstanding. Unfortunately both composers (and their friends) now began to dig into defensive positions, and both Rootham and Elgar conveniently 'forgot' certain more flexible statements which they had made in earlier letters! Nevertheless both works received their first performance in due course: Elgar's version in May 1916, and Rootham's version in March 1919.

As the war ground on, CBR turned his attention to creating a large-scale work: his three-act opera *The Two Sisters*, Op. 55, which took him four years to complete. The enormous hard-cover manuscript of the full score is held at the British Library where it may be viewed (under the eagle eye of a librarian). The opera is based on a Scots ballad 'The Twa Sisters o' Binnorie', which CBR also turned into a short part-song (Op. 68, 1922). It is not a happy tale, involving as it does sibling rivalry, sexual jealousy, murder by drowning – and eventually miraculous revelation and retribution.

1917-18

Apart from ongoing work on his opera, Rootham only completed a single work in 1917. His Op. 56 *The King of China's Daughter* is for voice and piano, and is notable for being the only light-hearted piece which he composed for the entire duration of the war. The words are by Edith Sitwell (a family friend) and are frankly frivolous. Maybe everyone needed some respite by 1917?

In 1918 only two works emerged from CBR's pen. The first was another song (also part of Op. 56 above), this time of a more serious nature. The composer used a poem by Richard Harris Barham (1788-1845) titled 'As I laye a-thynkyng', which was in fact the poet's last work. In it, the poet tells the tale of a knight and of the maiden whose lover's life is cut short on the battlefield. She dies of a broken heart – rejoining him only in her death; surely emblematic for the tens of thousands of

women who had lost husbands or lovers during the 1914-18 conflict?

The other work in 1918 was a concert overture *The Two Sisters* Op. 57, which drew on the as-yet unfinished opera of the same name. The work lasts only about 10 minutes and was first performed at Prom 35 in the Queen's Hall in September 1918, conducted by the composer.

1919-20

The end of the war in November 1918 saw a gradual revival of musical life, though inevitably much of the music was of a sombre nature. Rootham's Op. 51 *For the Fallen* finally received its first performance at the Guildhall in Cambridge on March 14th 1919 – nearly four years after its composition. The performance by the Cambridge University Music Society was conducted by Cyril Rootham.

Composed in October 1919, Rootham's Op. 59 *Weep not, beloved friends* was written for a memorial service held in the Chapel of St John's College, Cambridge. It is a short but intense work for unaccompanied SATB voices, which uses the first six lines of a poem by Gabriello Chiabrera (1552-1638) in a translation from the Italian by William Wordsworth:

*Weep not, beloved Friends! nor let the air
For me with sighs be troubled. Not from life
Have I been taken; this is genuine life
And this alone - the life which now I live
In peace eternal; where desire and joy
Together move in fellowship without end.*

The eagle-eyed will notice from the manuscript below that CBR misspells the poet's name as 'Cambrera' instead of 'Chiabrera'. And at the top right corner, the manuscript pages are frugally joined together with a strip of gummed paper torn from the edge of a sheet of perforated postage stamps.



Op. 59 'Weep not...' original manuscript: Cambridge University Library - shelfmark MS.Add.9192.28(1)

The last effect of the war was the meeting and subsequent friendship which occurred between Cyril Rootham and the soldier poet Siegfried Sassoon (1886-1967). During the war Sassoon was decorated for bravery on the Western Front, but he became thoroughly disillusioned by the conduct of the conflict and by the jingoist attitude of many non-combatants. He was one of the outstanding war poets and thus became a focal point for dissent within the armed forces when he made a lone protest against the continuation of the war. Instead of returning to active duty in 1917, he sent a letter to his commanding officer

titled 'Finished with the War: a Soldier's Declaration'. The letter was forwarded to the press (and read out in the House of Commons by a sympathetic MP). Faced with such apparently treasonous behaviour, the under-secretary for war Ian Macpherson avoided embarrassing the Establishment: rather than court-martial a well-known, popular and decorated officer, he declared Sassoon unfit for service. As a result Sassoon was sent to Craiglockhart War Hospital near Edinburgh, to be treated for shell-shock.

This was the background to co-operation between poet and composer which stretched through 1919-20. In all, Rootham set to music 11 poems by Sassoon. Three songs are included in the Op. 58 collection ('Butterflies', 'Everyone Sang', 'Idyll') and four songs form Op. 62 ('A Child's Prayer', 'A Poplar and the Moon', 'Morning Glory', 'South Wind'). Here's a puzzle: in 1926 Rootham returned to Sassoon's poems to set another four ('Before Day', 'Morning Land', 'Noah', 'Tree and Sky'). But for some reason this set never received an opus number, the songs were never published and so are often overlooked. Were music publishers beginning to desert traditional works for voice and piano in the heady 1920s, with the arrival of ragtime, jazz and electrical recording? Or was Rootham dissatisfied in some subtle way with the quality of these four songs? Only when these songs are typeset and performed will we be able to form a judgement.

So what happened to Cyril Rootham's musical development in the years from 1920 until his early death in 1938? That's a subject for a different article, but he certainly didn't stand still. The works still to

come included a piano trio, a most unusual septet, a violin sonata, a suite for pianoforte, a noisy and unconventional setting of Psalm 130 for choir and orchestra, a monumental setting of Milton's poem 'On the Morning of Christ's Nativity', and two symphonies.

Sources:

1. Article by Martin Bird 'A confusion of ideas' – Rootham, Elgar and 'For the Fallen'. The Elgar Society Journal Vol.19 No.5 August 2016
2. Talk by Philip Petchey 'Music in the midst of desolation: Reflections on Elgar and the Great War'. Meeting of the Elgar Society, in May 2015
3. Talk by Philip Petchey 'Elgar, Binyon and Rootham'. Meeting of the Elgar Society at Trinity College, Oxford, in June 2018
4. Wikipedia article 'Siegfried Sassoon'

For the Fallen, Op. 51, with other works by Rootham, can be obtained as a download from Presto Classical (catalogue no. 5059232). Recordings of more of his music, including 'Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity' and the two symphonies, can also be found there, as CDs and/or downloads.

The public domain OpenScore Lieder Corpus website: musescore.com/openscore-lieder-corpus

Cyril Rootham website: <http://rootham.org/works.html>

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Weekend Music Courses 2018

Over the past ten years I have been holding Weekend Music Courses on a wide variety of subjects, including English Music, English Song, Grand Opera, 'The Impressionists and Music', 'A Panorama of Russian Culture', 'The Beauties of Russian Opera', and many others. Those wishing to attend meet at the chosen venue at about 5.00 p.m. on the Friday, followed by an evening meal before the first session which takes the form of an introduction often including a DVD. The whole of the Saturday is devoted to an examination of the subject in question accompanied by discussion, with ample breaks being provided between the sessions and the meals. The course concludes after lunch on the Sunday at about 2.15 p.m. I hope, therefore, that you will be interested in the two courses remaining for the rest of this year. A course on **The Russian Piano Concerto** will be held at Sarum College, Salisbury, October 26th-28th. Sarum College occupies what must be a unique location situated directly opposite Salisbury's elegant Cathedral. The accommodation is very comfortable and the cuisine of a high standard, one of the most striking features being the element of tranquillity, which is often so hard to find. The last course is from December 7th-9th at the very comfortable Cedars Hotel in Loughborough. Entitled **Music and the State**, it will show how instrumental music has been used as a means of propaganda for many centuries. Do come along and have a unique weekend.



Friday 26th to Sunday 28th October: Sarum College, Salisbury: **The Russian Piano Concerto**. This unusual course will examine the development of the piano concerto in Russia, including the concertos of Anton Rubinstein, Balakirev, Rimsky-Korsakov, Tchaikovsky, Arensky and Rachmaninov, through to those of Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Khachaturian, Schnittke and Stravinsky. The course is illustrated by CDs and DVDs. Fee: £280.00 full board and accommodation.

Friday 7th to Sunday 9th December: The Cedars Hotel, Loughborough: **Music and the State**. A stimulating course describing how time and time again throughout history music has been subjected to edicts implemented by the State, including Ancient China, Ancient Greece, the Reformation, Louis XIV, the French Revolution, Soviet Russia, the Third Reich, Mao Tse-tung, the USA, Great Britain, all of which should provide food for thought especially as it embraces history, politics and social aspects. There should be some interesting discussions. Illustrated with CDs and DVDs. Fee: £280.00 full board and accommodation.



For further information please contact Professor Gerald Seaman, email: gerald.seaman@outlook.com; Tel: 01865 515114

DELIUS AND THE SHADOWS OF WAR

Paul Guinery

AMONG ENGLISH COMPOSERS, Frederick Delius surely found himself in a uniquely strange and deeply troubling position during World War I. The offspring of émigré German parents, he was born in Bradford, so technically of English nationality, and was married to Jelka Rosen, a German national of Danish extraction who herself was born in Belgrade. In 1914 the couple were living in France at Grez-sur-Loing, about thirty miles from Paris, and had been since the 1890s. (Delius loathed the land of his birth and avoided going there if he possibly could.)



Pre-war Delius, 1907

Like so many English composers of his generation – Elgar being the most notable example – he had found that it was Germany, rather than England, which offered the greatest opportunities for his music to be performed and appreciated. (The French ignored him and hardly ever played a note of his music, despite the fact he was domiciled in France for over forty years.) Several important premieres of his major compositions took place in Germany, for example his operatic masterpiece *A Village Romeo and Juliet* (Berlin, 1907); his great choral work *Sea Drift* (Essen, 1906); and even a piece we now find quintessentially English, *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* (Leipzig, 1913). Delius was championed by some of the greatest German conductors of his day, men such as Hans Haym, Fritz Cassirer and Artur Nikisch.

When war erupted in 1914 the potential German market for Delius's works simply vanished and was

Paul Guinery is a pianist and broadcaster. A former vice-chairman of the Delius Society, he is now chairman of the Delius Trust. With Martin Lee-Browne he has published *Delius and his Music* [The Boydell Press, 2014] in which he provided the first comprehensive musical analysis of Delius's complete works. He was formerly a staff announcer for BBC Radio 3 where he was a familiar voice, presenting many programmes and concerts as well as long-running series such as *Your Concert Choice*, *Sacred and Profane* and *Choirworks*. As a pianist he has recorded a CD of music by Delius and his composer friends and acquaintances: Delius and his Circle [Stone Records, 2011]. He performs regularly with the wind quintet Harmoniemusik and together they run the annual chamber-music festival in St Columb, Cornwall.

never really to regain its former position after the war since, by then, modern German music had moved on to an altogether more brittle and fractured style, a world away from the sumptuousness of Strauss and Delius with their expansive scores written for vast orchestral forces. On a practical level, Delius was unable to maintain contact with his publishers in Germany and Austria and of course he lost all revenue from royalties. This shift in Delius's fortunes, and why 1914 marked a watershed in his career, are made strikingly clear by considering the plans he was making during the first half of 1914. In the winter of that year he and his wife were in Germany where his monumental *Mass of Life* was given at Wiesbaden and Frankfurt to great acclaim. (The German text drawn from Nietzsche no doubt contributed to this.) His opera *A Village Romeo and Juliet* was due to be staged in Frankfurt as well as in Freiburg; yet another opera, *Fennimore and Gerda*, was planned for the autumn season in Cologne. Needless to say, none of these performances ever came about.

The Deliuses went through anxious times during the war, especially at the start of hostilities when it looked as if the advancing German army might reach Paris, only thirty miles away. On August 30th 1914 the composer Percy Grainger, a great friend and a frequent visitor to the house at Grez-sur-Loing, urged them on no account to stay. His advice was followed but not before the best silver and hundreds of bottles of wine (Delius was a great *bon viveur*) had been buried in the garden. The couple aimed to reach England via boat from Nantes but in the end never got further than Orléans, travelling by an over-packed train, firstly in a luggage-van, then a horse box. They were deposited on the platform in the small hours and spent the rest of the night on a bench before finding a room at the Grand Hotel.

However, the Battle of the Marne, which concluded on September 10th, stemmed the German advance and the Deliuses felt it was safe to return to Grez. Even so, it was tricky for them both. Had Mrs Delius not been

married to a British subject, she might well have been put in a concentration camp, whilst Delius's German parentage, his frequent trips to Germany before the war, his correspondence with German conductors and publishers, gave rise locally to much ill-feeling. It was rumoured that he was a spy, which resulted in a visit from the village gendarmerie. In fact there was never any question of where the Deliuses' allegiance lay. Delius once wrote, 'I hate and loathe this German militarism and autocracy and hope it may be crushed for ever.'

Despite being back at home, Delius didn't settle for long: he was finding the proximity of the war a tremendous distraction from composition and was only too glad of the opportunity to leave for London in November 1914 and attend the premiere there of his *North Country Sketches*. In the event the performance was delayed until the following May but its conductor, Thomas Beecham, by now a personal friend, offered to find the couple accommodation as they were clearly reluctant to return to France. The solution he came up with was a charming rural property with a mill-wheel, just north of Watford, then a market town. There they stayed for over a year, only returning to Grez, via Norway and Denmark (countries very dear to Delius's heart) in November 1915. In their absence the house had been looked after by two Austrian servants who had let the garden run riot; the wine however was safely excavated. There at Grez-sur-Loing Delius found relative peace and quiet in his garden by the river, with only the distant sound of air raids on Paris to remind him of how close he was to hostilities.

He and Jelka stayed until June 1918 when they left again in order for Delius to undergo a health cure in Biarritz. There they received bad news: in their absence the house at Grez had been requisitioned and occupied by a group of French officers. When they were finally able to return in August, the Deliuses were appalled at the damage done to the property and what had been stolen (even though all the valuables had been locked away and the wine cellar, surprisingly, was untouched). There was to be one more evacuation from France in September 1918 when Delius came over to London where Henry Wood had programmed two of his works at Promenade Concerts. He was still there when the Armistice was signed in November and didn't return to Grez until the autumn of 1919. What is remarkable, given the post-war mood, is that he immediately went over to Germany to attend rehearsals for a production of his opera *Fennimore and Gerda*. Later that year he wrote to Philip Heseltine (whose *nom de plume* as a composer was Peter Warlock) that 'there is absolutely no feeling against the English in Germany or Austria ... Universal Edition (based in Vienna) are going to publish my new works'. Though Delius doubtless exaggerated the situation, it is true that he continued to get performances in Germany during the early 'twenties, though to nothing like the extent he had done before the war.

Looking back over this wartime period one finds a striking contrast to Elgar whose music, during the same period, virtually dried up apart from a series of patriotic works (the sort of piece Delius would never have

written) and whose post-war composing life was all but over, with the exception of that miraculous Indian summer which saw the creation of the Cello Concerto and the three chamber works written during 1919. Delius, by contrast, never stopped writing, despite all the upheavals, anxieties and distractions he went through. Indeed he produced some of his very finest works at the height of the war.

Nearly every note of Delius has now been recorded and I would urge readers wishing to explore his wartime output to do so by trusting to conductors such as Thomas Beecham, Charles Mackerras, David Lloyd-Jones, Charles Groves, Bo Holten, Mark Elder, Andrew Davies and so on. There is a comprehensive Delius discography on the Delius Society website: www.delius.org.uk. My own book, *Delius and his Music*, mentioned above, can offer the first-time listener a road map and 'a way through the woods' for scores which can seem complex on first encounter. Delius is one of those composers who benefits from repeated listening and I do believe that the more patient listener will get his or her reward in the end.

To conclude, here is a list of major works which Delius completed during World War I with a brief commentary on each:

1914

Violin Sonata No. 1: As a young man, Delius played and taught the violin. Later he wrote four very fine sonatas for the instrument. This first sonata is in one continuous movement and is generally of a lyrical nature, though the shadow of war certainly falls across the final section which has a distinctly sinister feel to it, a result of the likelihood of the work being completed when Delius was staying near Watford in the early months of the war.

1915

Air and Dance: Delius's only work for string orchestra, this is a most attractive miniature with, for him, a rather unusual Celtic or even modal flavour to it.

Double Concerto: Delius wrote four concertos, three of them for stringed instruments, and this is one of the finest. The soloists, as in Brahms's Double Concerto, are violin and cello and Delius was inspired by a performance of the Brahms work he heard in Manchester, where it was played by the renowned sisters May and Beatrice Harrison. There were hardly any other modern examples of dual concertos so Delius was really breaking new ground. This is a work that really comes across best in a recording where the crucial balance between soloists and orchestra can be perfected. It is a compact work in one continuous movement with some of the most beautifully lyrical and heart-breaking music Delius ever wrote.

1916

Cello Sonata: Delius wrote this for Beatrice Harrison and it is a typically lyrical piece though by no means easy for either performer. The cello must weave its way along a path that is very often full of chromatic twists and turns whilst the pianist has pages of thickly spaced

chords to negotiate. The dreamy central section is quintessential Delius.

Dance Rhapsody No. 2: This, and its earlier companion, is the nearest Delius ever got to writing a ballet. Indeed, there was talk at one time of Nijinsky choreographing one or other of the Rhapsodies.

Requiem: Begun in 1913, this was revised during the war; later still, Delius added the dedication 'To the memory of all young Artists fallen in the War'. Audiences at the first performance in 1922 might have expected a patriotic work, full of consolation for those left grieving for loved ones, but that was not at all what Delius had intended. A forthright atheist, he had set out to write what he called 'a pagan requiem', with a text by Nietzsche, denouncing man-made religions of all sorts and proclaiming his lifelong creed that nothing comes before or after life, the only consolation being that Nature alone endures in an endless cycle of re-birth. The work is musically uneven but certainly the last two-thirds of it, the sections dealing with the renewal of Nature, are glorious, containing some of Delius's most eloquent and ecstatic music. A controversial work, even today, but well worth exploring.

String Quartet: The untroubled nature of much of this shows just how much Delius had been able to retreat from the wartime world and find solace in rural France.

The slow movement is often played on its own under Delius's title *Late Swallows*, a reference to seeing the birds swooping around the garden at Grez.

Violin Concerto: One of Delius's greatest works and one which sums up so much of what his music represents: a totally original approach to harmonising his ideas, a gift for lyrical melody, and a haunting poignancy of mood.

1917

Eventyr: In his early days, Delius received great encouragement from Grieg and he later travelled widely in Norway. The title means 'once upon a time' and the piece is a fairy story based on Norwegian legends and folk-tales, the nearest Delius got to writing a Straussian or Sibelian tone-poem. It's an extremely effective work though not often played.

To be sung of a Summer Night on the Water: A choral gem for wordless, unaccompanied voices, utterly magical in its effect.

1918

A Song Before Sunrise: A short, tuneful work for small orchestra that is typical of Delius the exquisite miniaturist.

© Paul Guinery, June 2018

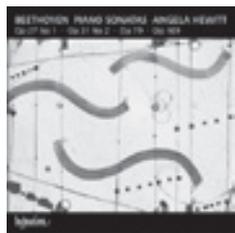
REVIEWS

CDs reviewed by Tony Haywood (Huddersfield RMS)

BEETHOVEN Piano Sonatas, Op. 27, No. 1; Op. 31, No. 2, 'Tempest'; Op. 79; Op. 109

Angela Hewitt (piano)

Hyperion CDA68199 (70:22)



Angela Hewitt continues her 'mix and match' approach to the Beethoven sonata cycle with lively and engaging performances of three middle period and one late sonata. I have to confess to a more 'linear' approach, not necessarily fully chronological

but at least grouping sonatas within their opus numbers or relative time frames. Hewitt's way makes one listen in a subtly different way, and perhaps marvel even more at Beethoven's range of inspiration when sonatas from different periods are juxtaposed this way.

I like her voicing of the opening arpeggiated chord of the famous so-called 'Tempest' sonata, and her favoured Fazioli grand is beautifully caught in the warm acoustic of the famous Jesus-Christus-Kirche in Berlin. She is steady in the finale, or at least steady compared to Stephen Kovacevich, but it is only marked *allegretto* so she is offering a perfectly valid view on this movement.

I did find her phrasing in the opening of Op. 27 to be too fussy for my taste, especially the clipped ending of the first subject, which on repeated listening sounds too mannered.

The little G major sonata Op. 79 is delightfully dispatched, but the great Op. 109 sonata comes off best to my ears and seems to suit Hewitt's style perfectly. There's an almost improvisatory feeling to the short first movement, a suitably turbulent scherzo and a marvellously paced finale, the variations growing organically but never mechanically. There really is a great deal to enjoy in Hewitt's Beethoven, as I found when going back to an earlier volume, and fans of hers will not be disappointed with this latest set. Her own liner notes are exceptionally illuminating.

BERLIOZ Harold in Italy; WEBER Andante und Rondo Ungarese; Invitation to the Dance (orch. Berlioz)

Lawrence Power (viola); Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, Andrew Manze (conductor)

Hyperion CDA68193 (71:06)



I like what I've heard in the past from Andrew Manze's Bergen discs and this new *Harold in Italy* has a lot going for it. Top of the list is the solo work from Lawrence Power. His tone and phrasing are quite superb and he wrings every last drop of emotion

from the many gorgeous phrases that Berlioz gives the soloist. What an odd but compellingly original work this

is in so many ways – part Viola Symphony (think Britten), part symphony-concerto (think Prokofiev) and perhaps part monumental symphonic suite (think lots of composers), but Manze's generally fleet tempos ensure that the overall structure remains cohesive and any of that 'wildness' typical of Berlioz is kept in check whilst remaining suitably exciting. I had just been listening to Colin Davis's classic Philips recording with Nobuko Imai and the LSO and the timings are remarkably similar. I generally prefer faster speeds in this sort of piece. Davis and Manze see it this way and there is in reality not that much to choose between them. Davis tends to get a bit more bite from his brass in some sections but Manze's Bergen players are also on very good form.

The 'Pilgrims' March' flows like a real processional rather than a trudge, and I think perhaps Davis does give us a slightly more frenzied 'Brigands' Orgy' in the last movement, but Manze isn't far behind in the excitement stakes, and in Power he has a soloist who really does give us the full panoply of romantic yearning. The Hyperion recording is predictably good but the 40-year-old Davis disc is by no means outclassed. Indeed, brass ring out resplendently and strings are beautifully caught by those Philips engineers.

Hyperion offers substantial fillers in the Weber arrangements but, in all honesty, they're makeweights that are not of enough musical value to sway things too much, though it is quite interesting to hear Berlioz's orchestration of the famous *Invitation to the Dance*. Best to try and sample this as there are good things on offer but there's very stiff competition.

HANDEL Finest Arias for Bass Voice, Vol. 2

Christopher Purves (bass); Arcangelo, Jonathan Cohen (conductor)

Hyperion CDA68152 (77:01)



I well remember the critical praise heaped on the first volume of Handel arias from Christopher Purves and Arcangelo back in 2013. What astonished most people – including me – was one particular track, Polifemo's aria 'Fra l'ombre e gl'orrori' from *Acis and Galatea*, with its two-and-a-half octave span and almost insanely low notes. Aside from that virtuosic vocal display, the superbly alert accompaniments from period instrument group Arcangelo and their charismatic music director Jonathan Cohen were a constant delight. Well, this new volume is in exactly the same vein, with an even more generous selection of 22 tracks, four of which make up the F major Concerto Grosso Op. 3, No. 4, a nice idea as these concertos were often originally performed between sections of the operas and oratorios.

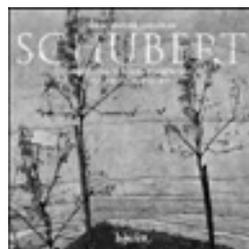
So, 18 arias displaying an incredible range of invention from Handel and musicianship from Purves. I still think it's the sort of disc to dip into rather than play straight through, and some admittedly have quibbled that Purves is a bass-baritone rather than a true 'basso profundo', but surely that is being really ungenerous and curmudgeonly when artistry at this level is on offer.

In any case, his voice has actually taken on a rather darker hue in the ensuing years, so an aria such as 'Opprest with never-ceasing grief' from *Belshazzar* does suitably plunge the subterranean depths. The many technical demands that Handel makes are brushed aside, with the ornamented runs in 'When storms the proud' from *Athalia*, displaying an almost superhuman breath control. Cohen's accompaniments are a pleasure in their own right, and I would love to hear them do a full set of the glorious Concerti Grossi in future. Handel expert David Vickers provides notes that are a model of readable scholarship and St Jude-on-the-Hill provides the ideal acoustic. Strongly recommended.

SCHUBERT Piano Sonata in B flat, D. 960; Four Impromptus D. 935

Marc-André Hamelin (piano)

Hyperion CDA68213 (81:48)



The thing I was looking forward to most with this new Schubert disc from Hyperion was how super virtuoso Marc-André Hamelin sounds in the central classical repertoire, especially something relatively technically simple, at least by his standards.

Hyperion already has a very fine account of the great last sonata in their catalogue from the indefatigable Stephen Hough, but at nearly 82 minutes the new disc is exceptionally generous. Part of that timing is to do with the length of the sonata's first movement. In Hamelin's hands it comes in at 22:37, which is only a few seconds shy of Sviatoslav Richter's notorious 23:13. Of course, timings only tell part of the story, and that Richter performance certainly has a legion of fans who talk about 'time standing still', 'heavenly lengths', etc.

Well, Hamelin seems to start in the same vein, though he does speed things up for the second subject and inject some variety of phrasing and tone colour to contrast that very steady main theme. It does grow on you, but generally I prefer flowing speeds, so coming from pianists like Murray Perahia or Krystian Zimerman, Hamelin appears a touch indulgent on first hearing. As I say, repeated listening does reveal a bigger picture, and he certainly keeps things moving in subsequent movements, especially a rather mercurial scherzo, which ironically seems a touch breathless at the side of Perahia. Overall it's a thoughtful and interesting view of this timeless masterpiece.

Schumann viewed the four D. 935 Impromptus as almost having the outline of a hybrid piano sonata, and Hamelin's performance of them gives this view some validation. He certainly plays them as an organic whole and very effective it is. His slight tempo modifications in the opening F minor give real life and vigour to Schubert's line, and Hamelin's technical finesse ensures the finale, also in F minor, has suitable scherzando energy and drive. Competition is predictably fierce in this music, and you may want your Schubert served up in a particular way, but Hamelin's innate artistry always demands attention, especially with the well-balanced Wyastone recording and generous playing time. ●

A VIEW FROM YORKSHIRE - *finale* Jim Bostwick, FRMS Secretary

IT ALL STARTED WITH A FLATTERING REMARK by former FRMS chairman John Davies, I think back in 2007, when I was on the Huddersfield RMS sub-committee helping to organise that year's AGM to be held in the University of Huddersfield. 'Jim, you're just the sort of guy we need on the FRMS Committee'. Think of Alan Bennett now: 'Ooh, that'll be tip-top', I thought. Of course I joined. Looking back through my diaries it was Bristol that hosted the AGM in 2008, but Derby in 2009 clashed with a late October holiday so I sent my apologies. (I remember passing through another Barnsley to attend Cirencester in 2010 – Barnsley with thatched roofs!)



After shadowing Tony Baines for a year, I took over as secretary at the Rochdale AGM of 2011, very conscious that Tony would be a hard act to follow. Colin Dancer took over from John Davies at the same event, which coincided with Rochdale Gramophone Society's 80th anniversary where President Lyndon Jenkins presented certificates to those nominated by affiliated societies for long-serving membership.

My first Daventry Weekend was in 2006 when David Lloyd-Jones's talk was the high spot for me. Richard Baker was the big draw for 2007 with, I think, well over 100 attenders. In subsequent years following Edward Greenfield's retirement, the anchorman was Lyndon Jenkins. His interviews and bar-stool presentations – reminiscent of Dave Allen, but perhaps with water rather than whiskey – were always something to look forward to and he never disappointed. Lyndon is sadly missed but remembered with great affection. Helping out with the disc-jockeying was sometimes pretty hectic when putting a playlist together. (They know who they are – I couldn't possibly comment!) Personal favourites, aside from Lyndon, were Michael Kennedy, Evelyn Barbirolli, David Owen Norris and Master of the Queen's Music, Judith Weir – the last, unfortunately, speaking only to an unsustainably small audience. But for many of those with a much longer history of FRMS Music Weekends than me, there were many legends before my time.

I am delighted that Adele Wills has joined the FRMS Committee, specifically to shadow and then to replace me as secretary at this year's AGM. And I must pay tribute to all my fellow committee members for their friendship, support and fun. The Federation committee meetings in my time have been well-steered by John Davies, Colin Dancer and Allan Child. Allan, who took up the role following Colin's untimely death, has taken us through testing times with wisdom. I will miss the banter and the journeys down to the Brunswick Inn, Derby, with George Steele, and the humorous email exchanges with Paul Astell*. I hope to maintain contact with the movement through our Yorkshire and Northwest Regional Group activities for the foreseeable future. And finally, my thanks to all those people who have supported the Federation and its endeavours over the years and hopefully for years to come.

**Editor's comment: Tommy Cooper jokes, mostly!*

Letters and emails

Thanks from Orpington

On behalf of the committee and all the members of Orpington RMS, many thanks for your splendid spread on our 80th birthday in the last *Bulletin* (Spring 2018) including, not least, the cover photograph, as well as the interior print and kind words in your editorial. It was very much appreciated by all. What with the photo credits and the piece you did on Torbay, I began to feel my name would crop up on every page... although thankfully it didn't!

Ian Bailey, vice-chairman

Bournemouth's sad loss

It is with great sadness that I report the death of our secretary, Philip Giddens, who had held that post for 50 years or so. During this time he has made friends with a number of FRMS officers and members, including Allan Child and Jim Bostwick. Meanwhile, thank you for the work that you continue to undertake on behalf of the Federation. Phil was always grateful for the existence of the Federation and the support it provided to him.

Alan Dyer, chairman Bournemouth GS

Hutch

I picked up a copy of your magazine at a branch meeting of the Elgar Society and read with interest the fascinating story of Leslie Hutchinson ('Hutch') in the article by Paul Astell (*Bulletin* 168, page 24).

The first and almost only context in which I heard his name, many years ago now, was not mentioned by Mr Astell in his article and perhaps, as it is linked to the art of recorded music, it is worth mentioning. It occurs in Flanders and Swann's 'Song of Reproduction' which, as many of your readers will recall, gently satirised the 1950s vogue for 'high fiddle-i-tee'. The final stanza is this:

*I've a tone control at a single touch
I can make Caruso sound like Hutch
Then I never did care for music much
It's the high fidelity*

Ian Lawson

Editor's comment: Harsh, very harsh!

Federation of Recorded Music Societies Ltd



Registered Office: 6 Oakroyd Close, Brighouse, West Yorkshire HD6 4BP

Registered in England: No. 700106

Website: www.thefrms.co.uk

President Julian Lloyd Webber

Vice-Presidents Roderick Shaw
John Davies
Tony Baines

OFFICERS

Chairman Allan Child *Presenters' Panel List*
12 Highfield Road, Derby DE22 1GZ
01332 332649 allan.child@thefrms.co.uk

Vice-Chairman Ron Beech
96, Kenilworth Road, Coventry CV4 7AH
02476 418789 ron.beech@thefrms.co.uk

Secretary Jim Bostwick
6 Oakroyd Close, Brighouse, West Yorkshire HD6 4BP
01484 717865 secretary@thefrms.co.uk

Treasurer Paul Corfield Godfrey
9 Heol y Mynach, Old Ynysyawl, Pontypridd, Mid Glam CF37 3PE
Tel: 01443 791117 paul.godfrey@thefrms.co.uk

Bulletin Editor Paul Astell
17 Boot Street, Whittington, Oswestry SY11 4DG
01691 662460 editor@thefrms.co.uk

Technical Officer Philip Ashton
27 Dunsby Road, Luton LU3 2UA
01582 651632 technical@thefrms.co.uk

COMMITTEE

Mick Birchall *Minutes secretary*
2 Burley Close, Desford, Leicester LE9 9HX
01455 823494

George Steele *Website manager*
The Cottage, 51 Pegasus Court, Rochdale OL11 4EA
01706 525630 webmaster@thefrms.co.uk

Denise Beech
96, Kenilworth Road, Coventry CV4 7AH
02476 418789 denise.beech@thefrms.co.uk

Adele Wills
The Leaze, Little Leaze Lane, Catcott, Somerset, TA7 9HJ
07980 070198 adele.wills@thefrms.co.uk

Ron Mitchell
45 Lichfield Road, Coventry CV3 5FF
02476 503237 ron.mitchell@thefrms.co.uk

David Wherrell
9 Orchard View, Ashwell, Baldock, Herts, SG7 5JN
01462 743417 david.wherrell@thefrms.co.uk

REGIONAL SECRETARIES

Scotland John Maidment
St Magnus, 61 Queen Street, Carnoustie, Angus DD7 7BA
01241 853017 johncaidment@msn.com

Central Mick Birchall
2 Burley Close, Desford, Leicester LE9 9HX
01455 823494

West Surrey Roger Saunders
Westbury, 52 Waggoners Way, Grayshott, Surrey GU26 6JX
01428 605002

Yorkshire & Northwest Jim Bostwick
6 Oakroyd Close, Brighouse, West Yorkshire HD6
01484 717865 james.bostwick@thefrms.co.uk

BULLETIN

Editor Paul Astell

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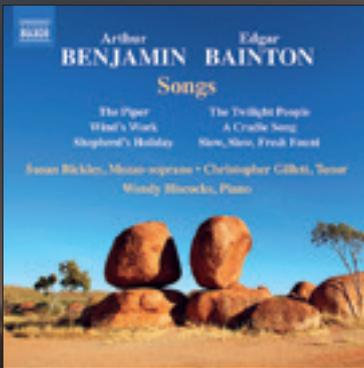
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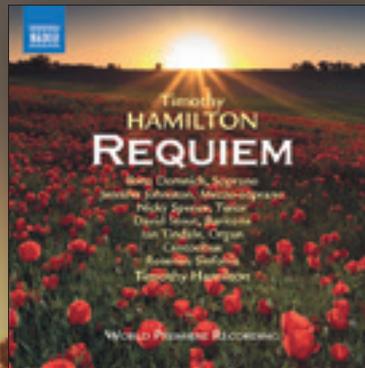
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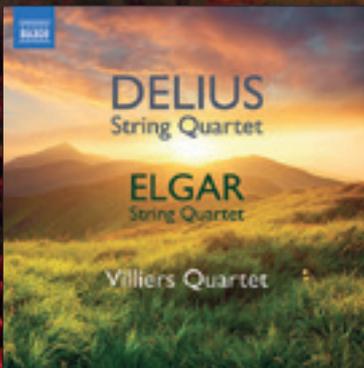
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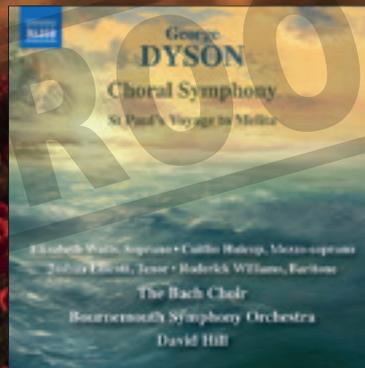
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