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Visit the FRMS Website:  
[www.musicweb.uk.net/frms/index.htm](http://www.musicweb.uk.net/frms/index.htm)

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Spring issue - 31st December

Autumn issue - 30th June

*Marketing Manager:*Cathy Connolly (see back  
page). Advertisements areavailable from £35.00, details  
from the Marketing Manager.

Copies are distributed to all  
Federation affiliates with  
additional copies through  
society secretaries. Estimated  
readership is well over 10,000.  
Individual Subscriptions are  
available at £6.80 for four  
issues. Direct orders and  
subscriptions for the Bulletin  
should be sent to the FRMS  
Treasurer (see back page).

The cover picture is of the  
millennium Stadium, Cardiff,  
permission of the Wales Tour-  
ist Board.

Typeset by the editor using  
Corel Ventura.

Please Note: No material con-  
tent of this magazine may be  
reproduced elsewhere without  
permission from the publish-  
ers, Federation of Recorded  
Music Societies Ltd.

*Printed by Maxiprint, designers  
and colour printers,*

*Kettlestring Lane, Clifton  
Moor, York YO30 4XF*

**ISSN 09628150**

# Editorial

## Respighi

I well remember my considerable misgivings when I bought my first disc of a piece by Respighi (Pines of Rome-what else?).

From the critical reviews I had read about the music of Respighi I had expected the music to be trite and vulgar. Instead I heard wonderfully evocative music, well written and orchestrated which ended in an exciting and dramatic mode. Even the infamous recording of a real nightingale singing failed to shock my insensitive ears - instead it added just a little atmosphere at the right place.

Since then, I have heard a lot of Respighi's music, all of which I have enjoyed, although as with many composers some of his works only reveal their secrets after several listenings. His music keeps appearing at programmes presented at my Recorded Music Society and is invariably well received.

I remain puzzled that so many critics seem to be antagonistic or condescending to his music. I am particularly annoyed at such comments as Toscanini wasting his talents on such music and excusing it as only being due to his personal friendship to the composer. This type of thing comes from critics who applaud to the sky music of a formless or wishy washy nature which will never be attractive to the average music lover.

In this edition of the Bulletin we feature a series of articles which hopefully will facilitate the understanding and appreciation of this often underestimated composer. We are grateful to Anthony Barker who is on the FRMS list of presenters (and whose subjects include Respighi) and to Charlie Niven who is secretary of the Respighi Society for their articles. I hope they will help to increase the enjoyment of this skilled, tuneful and interesting composer.

## Society Membership

Probably the saddest thing about attending Committee meetings of the FRMS is that at nearly every meeting it is announced that another society has folded. The explanation is nearly always the same. Younger people are not joining and older ones are becoming decrepit or dying; then membership gets smaller until the number is too small to be viable. In several cases the Society has built up not inconsiderable funds, so shortage of money is not the problem.

However at the same time other Societies are prospering and a few even have waiting lists.

My own Society (Bramhall) has had a membership of around 35 members for many years and although we had from time to time tried to increase numbers we had not felt too bad when we failed to increase the membership provided

that at least we managed to recruit sufficiently to maintain the size of the society. However a few months ago the Committee faced up to the fact that we had lost several members and that some others were too ill to attend - unless we did something we would have a real crisis.

The treasurer calculated the financial loss of each member lost (annual fee, attendance fee & profit from refreshments); this

was quite substantial and jointly with the secretary proposed that we should spend money and effort in an attempt to increase membership. This was agreed and we undertook a series of actions — we placed advertisements in two local Parish magazines and in the Borough Council events magazine, we placed posters in local libraries etc. We also increased the number of social events in an attempt to make the Society more attractive.

Up to now we have recruited six new members and are back to strength. However we shall continue to try to recruit and aim if possible to increase our membership.

Not only R. M. Societies but almost every type of society are complaining about the difficulty of recruiting members — especially young ones. There is no doubt that many younger people have more stress at work and more distractions than ever before. However, the fastest growing part of the population is that of retired people. These are often the people with most time on their hands and are looking for interesting ways of passing their time.

I appeal to all Societies to consider their own membership position — and if it is not good don't just resign yourself to it but do something! In many Societies this should be the most important thing to do this year. I would welcome letters for the Bulletin recounting their experiences and suggesting ways to increase membership.

*Arthur Baker.*



# The Federation Public Liability Policy

## — Some Questions and Answers.

In these litigation days, it has become essential for Societies to protect themselves in case they should be sued for large sums in the event of any accident occurring at any of their meetings or events. Some Affiliates have been seeking information about the Federation's Public Liability Policy. John Heyes, a solicitor who is a member of the FRMS Board has prepared the following notes, written in question and answer format which are intended to give some general guidance as to the scope of the policy:

Who are the Insurers? Norwich Union.

What is the cover? £5,000,000.

Who is covered? The Federation and its member societies, details of which have been lodged with the Insurers. The Federation will not include details of any member society which chooses not to pay its contribution.

What is Covered? Legal liability in respect of claims (including costs) arising out of (a) accidental injury to any person (this would include death); (b) accidental loss of or damage to material property and (c) accidental obstruction trespass or nuisance. Anything done with the intention of causing injury etc would not be included.

What is "material" property? In general other people's property. Property owned or hired by a society or one of its members or in general in its or his/her custody or control is not included. Societies should make their own arrangements to insure their equipment etc if they so wish.

Are individual members of societies covered?

Yes, cover is extended to officials, members, leaders, instructors and visitors. This is, of course, in respect of their legal liability — injury to themselves is not directly covered but any injured person can pursue a claim against those he/she believes responsible.

Are there specific exclusions? Yes. Liability for (a) property deposited in cloakrooms and (b) arising in connection with sponsored events, firework displays, bonfires, barbecues and fetes. A society wishing to hold, for example, a summer barbecue should take out its own occasional cover.

What about motor vehicles? Liability arising from the use of motor vehicles is in general excluded.

Where, for example, societies arrange for members to be given lifts by other members liability will be covered by normal car insurance provisions.

Are there responsibilities? Yes. If anything happens which is or may be the subject of a claim no-

lice must be given without unreasonable delay.

The police must be informed where appropriate.

The usual conditions as to minimising losses and co-operating with the insurers and suchlike apply. If a claim or possible claim arises seek guidance from the Federation.

What if there is a requirement to produce evidence of cover? This may sometimes arise. For example if meetings are held on premises owned by a Local Authority it may request such evidence. In this event contact the Federation Treasurer who can make a copy of the policy available for inspection and return.

Please note that these comments are for general information and guidance based on the writer's understanding of the policy and do not purport to be an exhaustive or authoritative interpretation of the policy which should be inspected for its full terms and effect.

### Fungus that eats CDs

It has been reported that compact disc users should be aware that their prized music or data could be under attack. A fungus has been discovered, which, under the right conditions, will literally eat the plastic in compact discs. This will render the information on them completely useless, scientists have discovered.

This was discovered when a scientist was shown a CD which had a strange discolouration that left it almost transparent, and unplayable. The CD came from the Central American country of Belize.

Intrigued, he examined it under an electron mi-



roscope. He found that a fungus had burrowed into the disc from its outer edge, and eaten up the thin aluminium reflecting layer and the polycarbonate resin that comprises the CD.

CDs contain an aluminium layer, which is held in a resin layer under the label. Electronic information is stored on by a pattern of "pits" in the aluminium. The aluminium film is covered in a transparent lacquer. When the CD is played, the disc is rotated at high speed. A laser light is shone from underneath, passes through the plastic on to the aluminium; the presence or absence of a pit is then detected and the pattern read as music or electronic data. If the pits cannot be located, the CD is unreadable.

The particular fungus which caused the problem has not been seen from any other source. It is thought to be a freak incident caused by extreme tropical condition. It is almost certain that fungus poses no threat to the billions of discs used around the world.

### Music played without a licence

A Norfolk club proprietor was recently ordered by a judge to acquire a Phonographic Performance Limited (PPL) licence by law. He has been forbidden to play any further music at any premises he runs until he is licenced. If he disobeys or plays any music until he has a licence, he will be in contempt of court and could, in addition to prison, face a fine of up to £10,000. The proprietor also must pay the legal bill of £1,100 within 14 days.

The court case was initiated by PPL when they called at the premises and discovered that recordings



were being played when there was no licence in force. The judge also ordered that there would be an enquiry to assess damages the proprietor must also pay PPL in regard to music played prior to the case.

### Digital Tuner offer

One of the best kept secrets in the UK has been the steady development over the past two years of a digital radio system, designed ultimately to replace the familiar VHF/FM service. It is part of a European effort to free parts of the radio spectrum and is known as the Eureka 147 project.

The UK is more advanced than the rest of Europe with approximately two transmitters being installed each month. Most of the country is now covered with the inevitable black spots in the North and Scotland, Wales, East Anglia and parts of the South coast.

The major deterrent to taking up this source of good quality radio, with sound close to that from a CD, has been the availability of tuners at an acceptable price. Now a British company, Videologic is trying to break through this obstacle with an excellent tuner currently selling in stores like Dixons for £299 plus VAT, i.e. £350.

A special deal has been negotiated for members of Societies affiliated to FRMS, supplied direct from the company for £199 inclusive of VAT and car-

Federation of Recorded Music Societies

### Annual General Meeting

Commences 2.15p.m.

on Saturday 27th October 2001 at

Aberdare Hall, Cathays Park,

Cardiff CF10 3UP

Following the meeting, tea or coffee  
will be available.

Hosted by Cardiff Recorded Music Society  
Buffet Meal (bar available) from 6.00 p.m

At 7.30 p.m.

### An Evening with Stuart Burrows

*Wynne Lloyd reminisces with the widely admired  
Singer and Musician*

Tickets (£17.50 each) for the evening's supper and entertainment should be obtained from FRMS Secretary, Peter Lerew, The Old School, Flatts Lane, Wombledon YORK YO62 7RU

Please enclose a DL size stamped addressed envelope with your application. All cheques to be payable to the Federation of Recorded Music Societies Ltd. Proceeds from entertainment go to the Save the Children Fund.



riage. It is for a limited period only, until 31st October 2001. Orders must be placed through the FRMS.

To find out more and to see if you are in a service area, contact Reg Williamson on 01782 782 419. In many cases an indoor aerial (supplied) will suffice.

*Note: The previous edition in an article on Mini-Discs incorrectly stated that they cannot record digital radio. This was due to a misunderstanding of editor and not due to the author. The editor apologises for this error.*

## Death Of Jim Grantham,

On Wednesday 23 May 2001, only a month after his 78th birthday, Jim Grantham, who had been the long-serving Hon. Secretary of the Cirencester Gramophone and Music Club died suddenly whilst at home working in his garden. His death came only six months after the death in hospital of Ray Brown, the former chairman.

Born in Sumatra on St George's Day (23 April) 1923, Jim did not come back to the UK until he was eight. After studies at Stoneyhurst he went up to St Catharine's College, Cambridge, to read Classics but with the start of WW2 he joined the Royal Artillery and served in North Africa and Sicily. On returning to St Catharine's he switched to Economics and, in the intervals from flying with the Cambridge Univer-

sity Gliding Club, was awarded his degree and joined the Board of Trade as an economic researcher. His work took him to Leeds, Cambridge where he renewed gliding, London, and Newcastle-on-Tyne where he met his future wife, Flo. They married and he was posted to Glasgow. He left the Civil Service after ten years, becoming Assistant Secretary of the British Ship Research Association, working in London and then on Tyneside at Wallsend.

Interest in music had developed at Cambridge where he learnt to play the clarinet and started a record collection. He attended concerts in the Albert Hall with flying bombs falling and meeting his wife was because of a common interest in classical music. After taking early retirement in 1981 and moving to Preston, near Cirencester, in the Cotswolds he pursued this interest by joining the Cirencester Gramophone and Music Club, founded in 1976, of which he quite soon became Hon. Secretary, and saw it grow to more than 100 members. As the Club secretary, Jim had a strong interest in the Federation and always ensured that the committee and members in general were kept well informed of its activities and latterly of its problems. With Ray Brown he was instrumental in making the local arrangements for the holding of the FRMS AGM in Cirencester in 1997.

Two passions have been mentioned - gliding and music - but he also took great pride in his family. He and his wife brought up six children who between them have presented them with 12 grandchildren.

## Searching for Music etc on the web.

Most users of the Web use "Search Engines" as the route for information. This can be very effective when searching for a very specialised subject. However it can be very frustrating when trying to get a handle on a broad subject when you are dismayed to find perhaps 21,713 'relevant' websites on your chosen subject.

UK250 is a new breed of search tool which has reviewed and selected the most relevant websites on each of 250 subjects and displays only the most important ones in the UK on your selected subject. For example to see the selected sites on CDs enter

[www.cdwebsites.co.uk](http://www.cdwebsites.co.uk)

and get two pages of information. This is a classic case where less is really more. Similarly enter

[www.musicwebsites.co.uk](http://www.musicwebsites.co.uk)

and you will find information on music. Either of these websites will provide a full list of the subjects covered by UK250. Almost by definition it may not give you exactly what you want, but this approach is well worth using as the start when searching on a new topic.

Something for nothing?

Yes, there is such a thing!

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## L E T T E R S

## Societies and Programming

It is with interest that I have followed the correspondence regarding 'Societies and Programming' in the Bulletin and cannot help feeling that there is a lack of understanding concerning the make up of the membership of Record Listening Groups.

I have a personal knowledge of at least half a dozen such groups and I firmly believe that most of the members attend to listen to music and not to be 'talked at'.

For variety, it is enjoyable for them to have a guest presenter from time to time, who has a special knowledge or passion, but for the most part members enjoy music presented by fellow members whom they regard as friends.

Themed programmes can be interesting but I am sure many of your readers will have attended presentations where the music has been sacrificed at the altar of a theme.

Frankly, I am shocked that presenters should be criticised for playing music that they enjoy. Heaven defend me from the arrogance of people who play music that they do not particularly like but that fits neatly into a chosen theme.

There are organisations that exist to satisfy the needs of those who have a more academic interest in music but recorded music societies, in my experience, fulfil an altogether different purpose.

*Brian Ward. Guildford.*

*Editor: I regret that due to lack of space this letter had to be withheld from the last issue.*

## Railways in Music

It was a strange coincidence that our copy of the Bulletin No.134, arrived just before our programmed presentation by Brian Somerville of Chichester, entitled 'The Rhythm of the Rails'. Philip Scowcroft's feature of 'Railways in Music' gave a most interesting account, not only of the musical life of the staff of the old LNER, but an exhaustive list of 'railway' music as well. Brian Somerville played some of these items, including *Honky Tonk Train Blues* and *Chatanooga Choo Choo*, and also *Riding Down to Bangor*, Honneger's *Pacific 231*, Britten's *Night Mail* and Mabel Constanduros' rendering of *A Day Trip to Brighton* to name but a few items. Altogether a splendid evening which brought back many memories to the older generation amongst us. Not only did Brian bring visual aids in the form of railway posters, he also brought two old wind-up gramophones and

## L E T T E R S

played a recording of the voice of Edison on one of these

One wonders whether the staff of the old LMS, GWR and SR also had flourishing musical societies, and whether they produced any other illustrious figures such as Leslie Woodgate of the LNER Music Society. Perhaps we shall hear more from Philip Scowcroft?

*Enid Wenban, Secretary,  
Bognor Regis Recorded Music Club*

Reading the article "Railways in Music" in the Spring Bulletin, I realised that I had played the *Copenhagen Steam Railway Galop* in a recent programme of CDs at the Bexhill Recorded Music Society. The composer was Hans Christian Lumbye, also known as the "Waltz King of the North" (1810-1874).

One can imagine the scene as this was danced to, quite an exhausting effort. My audience at our Society didn't dance but were highly amused at the depiction in the music of a train journey with bells, whistles, steam and a shout from the ground. The

ALASTAIR MITCHELL LCSM

FRMS Panel Lecturer for over 25 years and former instructor/tutor for Musical Appreciation Holidays covering the Bath and Cheltenham Festivals. Co-editor, with Alan Poulton of *A Chronicle of First Musical Performances Broadcast in the United Kingdom, 1923-1996* (Published by Ashgate Publishing Ltd), and contributor on the orchestral music of Lt. Col. Sir Vivian Dunn KCVO OBE Royal Marines in a biography by Derek Oakley MBE) Published by the Royal Marines Historical Society).

Lectures on *Life and music of William Boyce; the Symphonies of Sibelius, Elgar and Ralph Vaughan Williams; a genealogy of genius* (a history of the Bach family); *orchestral colour: an every day study of orchestration; highlights of First Musical Performances Broadcast in the United Kingdom* (gauges trends in twentieth-century British musical life, and the role of the BBC in their promotion); *a Musical journey throughout the United Kingdom* (showing where first performances were given - a lecture version of the forthcoming *Chronicle of First Musical Performances in the United Kingdom. London venues and Chronicle of first performances in UK Regions*).

## SPECIAL OFFER

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item I played was on the Chandos Label.

*H. Stendford, Hon. Sec. Bexhill RMS*

### Moeran and Railways

I have briefly read through Philip Scowcroft's fascinating article but couldn't find any reference to E J Moeran. He was a life long railway enthusiast and photographer and shared a cottage at Eynsford in Kent with Philip Heseltine during the 1920's when they indulged their common interests in railways, motorbikes and beer.

I remember reading somewhere that Jack Moeran told a friend that a passage in his *Symphony in G* was inspired by "the sound of lovely blue Claud Hamilton locomotives of the Great Eastern Railway pounding up Brentwood Bank". Although I have searched through all my information on the composer including sleeve notes from my record collection I have not been able to find this information again. I would love to have confirmation of this.

On another subject, I am trying to trace E J Moeran's missing photographic collection. When he died his collection was bequeathed to his long time friend, Dr. Dick Jobson. Sometime during the 1970s the photographs were borrowed for research purposes but never returned. Dr. Jobson's widow was

subsequently told by a friend that a photo credited to Ernest Moeran had appeared in a railway journal. No other details are available. Can anyone help me?

*George Jones*

### VideoLogic DRX-601E Digital Tuner

I am absolutely delighted with the VideoLogic DRX-601E Digital Tuner [*FRMS Special Offer see page 4*]. All I had to do was to connect the phono lead to my amplifier, connect the aerial and plug in.

Using the automatic tuner I quickly tuned into about 20 stations including Radios 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 live, the World service and Classic FM. The reception is first class, no hiss, no atmospherics and the amazing thing is that it works very well with the supplied bit of plastic otherwise known as the aerial. The signal from my roof aerial was weaker and I suspect that this aerial is the wrong type and points the wrong way.

I had made recordings from Radio 3 onto Mini Disc and these are excellent. All in all a wonderful acquisition for any music lover or anyone who wants near perfect radio reception. A bargain at £199

*John Davies*

*Editor: See pages 4-5.*

## Arts in residence

# OTTORINO RESPIGHI: His Life

Ottorino Respighi was born in Bologna on 8th July 1879. His paternal grandfather had been organist at Fidenza cathedral and a childhood friend of Verdi. His maternal great grandfather was the renowned sculptor Giovanni Putti. Only at the age of eight did he show marked interest in music, beginning to learn the violin and piano. A sincere, reserved child, he was independent, with sudden changes of mood. Fiorini's violin-making workshop fascinated him, exploring the techniques, designs, woods and varnishes. Throughout his life he abhorred violence. He began composing and while thinking through a work would appear aloof, moving to vigour once he began to commit to paper. Working for hours on end led to bouts of rheumatic fever, resulting in a slight heart murmur.

## Martucci and Rimsky-Korsakov

From the age of 12 to 20 he attended the Bologna Liceo Musicale, studying composition under Torchi and Martucci. Martucci warned him against the vogue of veristic opera, thus awakening his interest in instrumental music.

He continued to study philosophy and languages, having an ability to master a variety of instruments. By 19 his talent as a violinist was praised by Bologna critics and his final examination piece was recognised as exceptional. While playing in the Bologna Teatro Comunale orchestra, he went to St Petersburg, playing viola at the Imperial Theatre in two seasons of Italian opera, in the second also he played at the Bolshoi. While in St Petersburg, he studied for five months with Rimsky-Korsakov, developing a phenomenal facility in weaving richly coloured orchestral tapestries. Back in Bologna, he graduated in 1901, also becoming the viola of the Mugellini Quintet.

## The Professor And Elsa

In 1908 he went to Berlin, meeting distinguished musicians and absorbing the rich musical environment. He attended some lectures of Max Bruch. While there he was accompanist at a singing school. Increasingly his works were being played in Italy and beyond. The growing list of his pieces being performed enhanced his growing reputation, leading to a professorship in composition in 1913 at what

became the Conservatorio di St. Cecilia. Six years later he married a pupil, Elsa Olivieri-Sangiaco, a fine musician and mezzo-soprano. For her he wrote songs, which they performed internationally, with him at the piano. She managed his affairs, suspending her work as a composer and nursing his uncertain health through repeated bouts of neurasthenia. Seamlessly, Elsa completed the orchestration of his posthumous opera *Lucrezia* and adapted his *Ancient Airs and Dances* and other works as ballets.



## Liberating Opera

In 1922 Mussolini came to power and Respighi kept a discreet distance politically. He refused a summons by the Duce to the Palazzo Venezia. From

1924, for two years, he was Director of St Cecilia, thereafter concentrating on composing and performing. With Elsa, he was now able to travel freely, touring Europe, North and South America. In 1930 they bought a villa at Monte Mario, overlooking Rome, renaming it 'The Pines'. There he continued to work to restore opera to its origins, liberating it from the influence of Wagnerian music drama and seeking to return to fluent, expressive recitative. This sometimes robbed him of the joy of free expression. Elsa was his inspiration, champion and spur, providing frank, informed comment to him and his interpreters.

## Last Song Of The Nightingale

In 1936, while completing the orchestration of his opera *Lucrezia* a high temperature led to blood tests and the diagnosis of slow endocarditis, with the presence of the streptococcus viridians, a condition today readily cured by antibiotics. On 18th April 1936, at 56, he died. His librettist Guastalla recalled: "Outside there was a heavy shower of rain, thunder and lightning, then a nightingale burst into song. At daybreak, just before 6 o'clock, it was all over."

His final resting place was the Carthusian Monastery, Bologna. The City of Rome donated a section of ancient street paving, to encircle laurels from the Palatine planted around the tomb. This was a fitting tribute to one who had captured Rome's grandeur musically and whose interest in ancient Italian music had coloured many of his later works.

©Anthony Barker



# OTTORINO RESPIGHI: His Works

Respighi's recreation of a symphonic tradition in Italy and his international success were initially based on his symphonic works. But he saw himself above all as a writer of songs and his 52 songs are properly compared with those of Duparc. His nine operas ally this skill with masterful orchestral colour. Then there is his chamber and instrumental output, an overall total over 200 works.

## Early Works

*Symphonic Variations* is neo-classical in form, with overtones of romanticism. *Prelude, Chorale and Fugue* develops symphonically, with a touch of Saint-Saëns. Virtually a symphony, *Suite in E's* second movement excitingly foreshadows the love duet of his opera *Semirama*. *The Suite in G for strings and organ* is a homage to Bach. Romantic in character, the *Piano concerto in A* is at times florid, idiomatic and demanding. Piano works and songs predominate in his early years. At 26 his song *Nebbie* struck gold for the publisher. Having bought it for 20 lire, it sold 300,000 copies. International exposure came when *Notturmo* was played in New York. While the violist of the Mugellini Quintet, he wrote the *String Quartet in D*, with its fine part for the second violin. *Quartetto Dorico* followed 17 years later, with strident changes and sweeping lyrical passages in quick succession.

His only symphony, *Sinfonia Drammatica*, reflects the tensions before World War 1. Its opening fully justifies the title, it deserves to be better known.

## Vocal Success

At 31 a critic praised his second opera *Semirama* for its sweet, pure and masterfully developed melodies, which have oriental melodic vibrations and lyrical rhythms. Fascinated by Shelley's poetry, in three years he wrote three semi-cantatas for mezzo-soprano and orchestra: *Aretusa*, *La Sensitiva* and *Il Tramonto*. He considered *Aretusa* his first distinctive work, with its delicate nuances in words and music.

## Fountains Of Rome

He completed the *Fountains of Rome* in 1916. The four movements are self contained thematically, with a poetic unity, portraying the Valle Giulia, Trevi, Triton and Villa Medici fountains at dawn, morning, noon and sunset. It established him internationally.

## Operatic Success

To the *Ballad of the Gnomes* he brought unbridled

sensuality and obsessive rhythms, orchestrally portraying a quasi-satanic ritual. His interest in the Gregorian mode and skills as a violinist were expressed in *Concerto Gregoriano*, for violin and orchestra. He spurned virtuosity in favour of lyricism allied to deft orchestration. His fourth opera *Sleeping Beauty* reveals his musical sense of humour, ranging from forthright to the most refined parody of contemporary melodrama. It became his most frequently performed opera. His witty and ironic comic opera *Belfagor* was his first with Guestalla, his librettist through six operas. It is influenced by Gregorian chant and Puccini, whom Respighi helped overcome an orchestration problem in *Il Tabarro*.

## Pines Of Rome

Completion of the *Pines of Rome* in 1924 brought international acclaim, four pine groves evoking memories and visions. First, children's morning play beside Villa Borghese. Next, a mournful psalm arises from the depths of a pine fringed Catacomb. Then, the moon shining on the pines of the Janiculum, with the true song of the nightingale. Finally, dawn on the Appian Way, the pines framing

## THE RESPIGHI SOCIETY

Founded in 1993, the Society's President is Adriano and its Patrons are Geoffrey Simon, Richard Hickox and Michael Kennedy.

Dedicated to extending appreciation and performance of Ottorino Respighi's music, the Society is a focus for those who cherish that music and those wishing to gain greater knowledge and understanding of his works.

The Respighi Society News is published three times per year and contains articles, interviews and reviews of recent recordings. The current membership fee is £7.50 per annum. Membership information is available from Charlie Niven 9 Comiston Terrace, Edinburgh EH10 6AJ  
e-mail: niven@clara.net

An informative website which includes a comprehensive and updated discography can be found at:

[www.musicweb.uk.net/respighi/index.htm](http://www.musicweb.uk.net/respighi/index.htm)

a Consular army marching in triumph to the Capitol, with harp, organ, celeste, bells, piano and 6 Buccine (Roman bugles).

### Inspiration From The Past

*Concerto in modo misolidio*, his second piano concerto, has a flavour of plainchant. The second movement is a dialogue between piano and orchestra with Gregorian melody. The last is a passacaglia with 18 variations. *Poema Autunnale*, for violin and orchestra, portrays a poet's sweet melancholy, the rhythm of a Dionysian dance disturbing his reverie, before Pan walks alone under a gentle rain of golden leaves. *Church Windows* conveys the atmosphere of a medieval church in four tone poems: Flight to Egypt, St Michael the Archangel, Matins of St Clare and St Gregory the Great. Again, art inspired the triptych *Botticelli Paintings*: Spring, Adoration of the Magi and Birth of Venus. The simplicity of a smaller performance brings a subtle refinement in harmony and tone colour. For the *Birds* he used keyboard works from Pasquini, Gallot, Rameau and 17th century England, producing refined portraits evoking the songs of the Dove, Chicken, Nightingale and Cuckoo.

### Rich Diversity

A visit to Brazil inspired *Brazilian Impressions*: Tropical Night, with the fragrance of equatorial evening; Butantan, the alarm of a visit to a snake venom farm; Song and Dance, with traditional melodies. The last of the Roman symphonic poems, *Roman Festivals*, spans Christian martyrs in the Circus Maximus, a pilgrimage to the Holy City, the harvest bells of October Festival and modern day Epiphany. *Metamorphoseon*, commissioned by Koussevitsky exploits demandingly the virtuosity of each soloist in 12 sympathetic and taut variations on a medieval theme. The Lauda is radiantly charming, with suggestions of an 18th century madrigal and hints of Monteverdi. *Belkis, Queen of Sheba*, is a full scale, epic ballet, using sitars, wind machines, off stage brass, a chorus and vocal soloists. He used the melodic characteristics of ancient Hebrew songs, together with Arab rhythms and it was a massive success for the Ballets Russes. His seventh opera *Maria Egiziaca*, with its clarity and calm, shows Respighi's music at its best, with varied and simple music conceived in the Gregorian spirit. Next came his post-romantic grand opera, *La Fiamma*, his most successful. It is set amid the Byzantine splendour of 7th century



Ravenna, and is a deliberate melodrama with a poetic layer, in turns menacing and impressionistic, with oriental melody emerging.

### Mastery Of Modest Forces

*Concerto a cinque*, akin to a baroque multiple concerto, is scored for oboe, trumpet, violin, double bass, piano and strings. It demonstrates his mastery of modest forces, with scope for each soloist. La Scala staged his posthumous opera *Lucrezia*. He stripped the music of all inessentials, reducing the orchestra and showing what could be achieved by strict economy of means. Its musical language is simple, powerful and straightforward, representing a return to neo-classical music drama. His arrangements and revisions of earlier composers' works included ballets using French airs, Venetian melodies and Russian sources, plus *La Boutique Fantasque* to Rossini's music.

La Scala staged his transcription of Monteverdi's *Orfeo*. Along with these came *Ancient Airs and Dances*, three orchestral suites of early lute music.

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# RESPIGHI: Recommended Recordings

## Opera & Vocal Works

Most of Respighi's operas and larger choral works have been recorded on two labels a) MARCO POLO has *La Bella dormente nel bosco*, *La Primavera* and *Lucrezia* featuring excellent performances with Adriano conducting the Slovak RSO/Slovak Philharmonic Chorus and b) HUNGAROTON have solid performances of *Semirama*, with Eva Marton, *Belfagor*, *Maria Egiziaca* and *La Fiamma* with Lamberto Gardelli conducting the Hungarian State Orchestra/Hungarian Radio and Television Chorus. A recent performance of *La Fiamma* with Nelly Miricioiu is on AGORA.

CLAVES have released recordings of the cantatas *Christus* and *Orfeo* (after Monteverdi).

*Il Tramonto* is well represented in the discography with twenty CD offerings: Janet Baker is beautiful on COLLINS (nla), Anne Sofie von Otter is wonderfully distinct and touching on VANGUARD with the Brodsky Quartet, Faridah Subrata is very dramatic in Adriano's arrangement on MARCO POLO and Brigitte Balleys is highly convincing with her sweetness of tone on CLAVES.

CHANNEL CLASSICS has produced an excellent two volume set of complete songs with piano featuring Leonardo Lisi and Reinild Mees.

## Orchestral Works Including Stage Works

The orchestral suite from Respighi's original ballet *Belkis Queen of Sheba* is given a marvellous premiere on CHANDOS by Geoffrey Simon conducting the Philharmonia Orchestra. The three pastiche ballets *Le astuzie di Colombina*, *Sevres de la vieille France* and *La Pentola Magica* are given on MARCO POLO in charming premiere recordings with Adriano conducting.

De Sabata's conducting of the Santa Cecilia Orchestra in *Fontane di Roma*, digitally remastered by TESTAMENT from EMI's mono recording is brilliant.

*Pini di Roma*: The composer's friend and champion Toscanini with the NBC SO give probably the most authentic interpretation on a mono recording. Another friend of the composer Fritz Reiner and the Chicago SO produce a wonderful performance and the superb stereo recording really does it justice: both

of these are on RCA VICTOR.

Bernstein and the NYPO (with some players who took part in the US premiere in 1926) on SONY produce a remarkably subtle and graceful rendition of *Pini di Roma* while Maazel and the Cleveland Orchestra give us an exquisite and refined performance on DECCA. Marriner and the ASMF on PHILIPS give a very intelligent reading with some brilliant colour effects.

The Cleveland Orchestra conducted by Maazel on DECCA give a very effective and powerful rendition of *Feste Romane*.

The two *Piano Concertos* (in *A minor* and *in Modo Misolidio*) are performed beautifully by Geoffrey Tozer and the *Sinfonia Drammatica* is given a warm and powerful performance with the BBC Philharmonic under Sir Ed-

ward Downes both on CHANDOS.

Geoffrey Simon and the Philharmonia Orchestra on CHANDOS are again top of the list for *Impressioni Brasiliane* with an enormously atmospheric account, for majestic *Church Windows* and for *Metamorphoseon* which is given a refined and beautifully measured premiere.

Respighi's orchestral interpretations of some of Bach's organ works are magnificently performed by the Seattle Symphony under Gerard Schwarz on DELOS.

Andrea Cappelletti is the sincerely virtuosic violin soloist in *Concerto Gregoriano* and *Concerto all'antica* with the Philharmonia conducted by Matthias Bamert on KOCH SCHWANN.

Rostropovich is masterly in the *Adagio con variazioni* with the Moscow PO conducted by Kondrashin on EMI.

## Works For Chamber Orchestra, Groups and Soloists

Sinfonia 21 under Richard Hickox perform all three suites of the *Ancient Airs and Dances* resulting in vigorous, precise and clear renderings on CHANDOS.

Suites I and III are frequently coupled with *the Birds* and *Trittico Botticelliano* on recordings; thus we have I Solisti Veneti under Claudio Scimone giving an aesthetic performance on ERATO, the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra are superbly smooth on DG and the St. Paul CO under Hugh Wolf on



Respighi with Guasella (librettist)

TELDEC are bright, light and very lively in places.

*The Violin Sonata in B minor* was championed by Jascha Heifetz and his performance with Emanuel Bay on RCA VICTOR is impassioned and graceful. Zimerman and Wha Chung are very refined and smooth on the award-winning DG recording.

Two String Quartets, *D major* and *Quartetto Dorico*, are given an excellent, taut rendition by the Brodskys on VANGUARD. Two early *Quintets*, *G*

*minor for winds* and for *piano and strings in F minor* are performed warmly by the Ex Novo Ensemble di Venezia on DYNAMIC. The scholar and Respighi specialist Massimo Palumbo is the soloist in unpublished piano pieces on NUOVA ERA.

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## Music – Some Amusing Sayings

“The English do not like music but love the noise it makes.”

-Sir Thomas Beecham

“Music is the best means we have of digesting time.”

-W.H. Auden

“There are two instruments worse than a clarinet - two clarinets.”

-Ambrose Bierce

“Brass bands are all very well in their place - outdoors and several miles away.”

-Sir Thomas Beecham

“An oboe is an ill-wind that nobody blows good.”

-Bennet Cerf

“Please write music like Wagner, only louder.”

-Sam Goldwyn, instructing a composer for a movie.

“People who make music together cannot be enemies, at least while the music lasts.”

-Paul Hindemith

“Harpists spend half their life tuning and the other half playing out of tune.”

-Anon

“At the playing of Rossini’s ‘William Tell Overture (at the Albert Hall) an American lady said, ‘Back home this is known as The Lone Ranger.’”

-Peterborough column, *The Daily Telegraph*

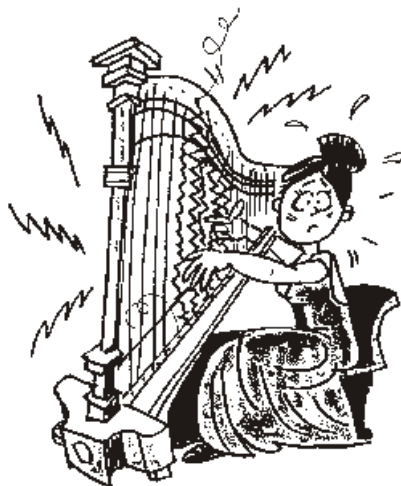
“Richard Wagner wrote music which is better than it sounds.”

-Mark Twain

“How wonderful opera would be if there were no singers.”

-Rossini

John G. Deacon – [j.deacon@ctv.es](mailto:j.deacon@ctv.es)



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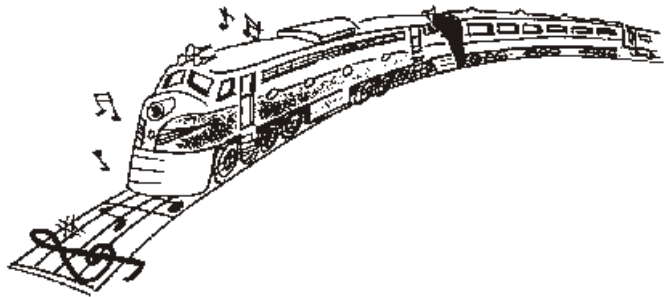
## RAILWAYS IN MUSIC, part 2

Jazz and blues seem well suited to railway music, although, as we shall see, other idioms seem to lie naturally in a railway situation. Blues titles not so far mentioned include *Black Train Blues*, *Narrow Gauge Blues*, *Railroad Police Blues*, associated with Sleepy John Estes, *Railroad Station Blues* (T Bone Walker), *The Brakesman's Blues*, a Jimmy Rogers title, *Train Time Blues* (1947), *11.29 Blues*, *Express Train Blues* (1947), *Panama Limited Blues* (1925), *Mail Train Blues* (1926), *I Hate That Train Called the M&O* (1934), *Mr Brakeman Let me Ride You* (1927), *He Caught the B&O* (1939), and *Cannon Ball* (1942). There are many more! Other titles in the jazz idioms are Budd Powell's *Un Poco Loco* from 1951, Elton Dean's *Trains for Tooting* (1995), Wynton Marsalis's recent jazz suite in twelve movements *Big Train* and — an equally recent British title — *Ribblehead Rattle* by the bassist and bandleader Ben Crosland, who lives in the Yorkshire Dales, which was inspired by the Ribblehead Viaduct on the Settle & Carlisle line.

Many American railroad tunes were revived in the 1950s by Lonnie Donegan as skiffle was likewise suited to railway rhythms: examples are *Rock Island Line* originally from 1934, *Midnight Special* (1926), *Railroad Bill*, *Wabash Cannonball*, *Nancy Whiskey's Freight Train* and *Wreck of the Old '97*. Another favourite skiffle number was *California Zephyr* from around 1956. Pop has also jumped on the railway (or "railroad") bandwagon with numbers like the seminal *Mystery Train* (Elvis Presley, 1957), *The Man Who Waved at Trains* (The Soft Machine, 1975), *Last Train to Clarksville* from the Monkees and *Last Train to London* from the Electric Light Orchestra. Many modern pop titles include the word 'train' or 'express' in them. In the 1980s the Englishman Robert Fripp brought out pieces like *Train* (1984) and *Intergalactic Boogie Express*, presumably a very updated train.

Other British jazz/swing/dance band and pop numbers we may mention are *The Blue Train* aired by many British bands in 1927 among them Debroy Somers, Ronnie Munro and the Kit Band, the Henry

Hall number *Santa Claus Express*, Joe Loss's *When Your Train Has Gone* and *Night Train*, *This is the Way the Puff-Puff Goes* (1928), *There's a Body on the Line* (Jack Payne, 1935), *The 7.15 to Dreamland Morning Train* (1944), *Takin' the Train Out*



(1945), recorded for Regal Zonophone but apparently not issued, played by Teddy Foster and his band with vocals by Betty Kent, also Jack Hylton's *Choo-Choo* based on Trumbauer's (see above), Ted Heath's *Night Train to Scot-*

*land*, *Streamline Street* from the Six Swingers, the 1960s hit *Doing the Loco-Motion* and the well-remembered Beatles' hit *Ticket to Ride* which I also know in a brass band version by Alan Fernie.

The Pasadenas' *Riding On A Train* reached the Top Twenty in September 1988. Doubtless there will be more to come in pop's future years. We pass now to consider railway "folk" music, using the term in its widest sense. The recently deceased (1999) "Boxcar Willie" (Lecil Travis Morton) revived the great days of the American steam railways with many songs of which we can exemplify *Daddy was a Railroad Man* and *I Love the Sound of a Whistle*. From Woody Guthrie (1912-67) comes *This Train is Bound for Glory*, *End of the Line*, *The Little Black Train* and *Walking Down That Railroad*. *Night Train to Memphis* (1946) was a Country and Western number; possibly *Wheels a'Rolling* was also, but all I know of it is that it was the official song of 1948 Chicago Railroad Fair. Other titles we may mention included *Waiting for a Train* (John Denver), *Midnight Train*, *Ghost Train*, *Big Black Train*, *The Golden Rocket*, *Desperados*, *Waiting for a Train*, *Georgia on a Fast Train* (Johnny Cash), *The Great Nashville Railroad Disaster* and *Orange Blossom Special* (also a Johnny Cash title).

Occasionally a classical composer took up a traditional railway title. *Casey Jones* was set again by the American serious composer Roy Harris in his *Railroad Men's Ballad* for male voice chorus and orchestra (Harris's orchestral piece *Accelerations* dating from about the same period may also have had a railway inspiration.)

Then there are Nero spirituals, several of which contain railway imagery such as *Give Me a Ticket to Heaven* (by Denham Harrison), *Movin', The Gospel Train, Zion Train, Hear My Train a'Coming, Funeral Train a'Comin', Black Diamond Express to Hell, Death's Black Train is Coming* and, rather less celebrated, *This Train*, apparently a blues number from about 1939, which was given a new lease of life a few years ago when it was atmospherically arranged for the South Yorkshire Police Choir by its then conductor the late Peter Sumner (1929-2000). "Railroad" at one time meant a figurative escape route for fleeing slaves, as in George Allen's *The Underground Rail Car* (1854) and *Underground Railroad Moved* (1853).

Moody and Sankey's hymn tunes included at least one railway one, *The Ninety and Nine*. Britain, too, has its "railway folk" songs but Dave Goulder's *Green All the Way* is more conveniently discussed later. Now for examples of railway interest from American musical comedy: *Honeymoon Express*, perhaps the earliest train musical, from 1913, *When The Midnight Choo-Choo leaves For Alabam'*, was incorporated by Irving Berlin in *Easter Parade*; *O, the Train is at the Station* comes from George Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*; the opening scene of *The Music Man* by Meredith Wilson, which takes place in a railway carriage; *Whizzin' Away Along the Track* from *Carmen Jones*, the 1950 version of Bizet's *Carmen* and sung by Dorothy Dandridge and *Sitting Pretty* (1924) with music by Jerome Kern and words by P.G. Wodehouse and actually first produced on the London stage, whose overture, entitled *Journey Southward*, represents a New York-Florida train journey complete with train noises and rhythms and, at one point, a representation of a Transatlantic train whistle.

The title song of the Doris Day film musical *Lullaby of Broadway* (1951) alludes to a (presumably New York) "subway train" and we may also include here the song hit *Beyond the Blue Horizon*, as that was used in the 1930 Hollywood film *Monte Carlo* in which it was sung in a railway compartment with train effects added in the orchestra. Scenes in several American musical comedies are set at railway stations; we shall return to these shortly, after listing railway allusions in British and other non-American musical comedies.

On these it is a question where to start. Gilbert

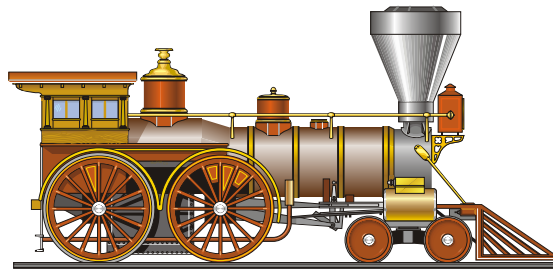
and Sullivan's operettas have several fascinating railway mentions, but as Sullivan was a classical composer we will leave them for the moment and begin our survey mainly in the 20th Century. However there are some early Spanish zarzuelas which are railway flavoured; *El Tren de Escala* (1854), the one act *Un Viaje al Vapor* (1856) and, also one act, *Via Libre* (1893) plus *Los Sobrinos del Capitán Grant* (1887) by Manuel Francis Caballero which includes a train crash. And Jimmy Glover's curtain-raiser of

1882 *Ten Minutes for Refreshment* had a colonel loitering in a railway waiting-room disguised as a porter just to see how his actress former sweetheart is faring.

In 1925 Henri Christiné, the French operetta composer, brought out a tuneful operetta *P-L-M* (standing for the Paris, Lyon and

Mediterranée railway), and in 1929, also French, Maurice Yvain's *Kadubec* included a song *Si J'Etais Chef de la Gare* (If I Were Stationmaster). Robert Stolz wrote the music for *The Blue Train*, a musical produced in England in 1927. Ivor Novello's spectacular effort *The Crest of the Wave* (1937) features a train smash in its story line; Leo Fall's even earlier *The Girl in the Train*, originally entitled *The Divorcee*, from 1908, turns on an incident in a Paris-Nice express. Going back further still, the operetta *Prisoner at the Bar* (1878) with music by Fred Musgrave is again set in a railway refreshment room and is jocularly described as an "opera buffet"!

From more recent times there is *Skimbleshanks the Railway Cat* from Andrew Lloyd Webber's 1981 musical *Cats*, based on T.S. Eliot's '*Practical Cats*' and Lloyd Webber's *Starlight Express* (1984) with roller-skaters representing trains is also a candidate for this paragraph (though not Sir Edward Elgar's much earlier (1915) musical play of the same title as the "express" there is a train of thought). Peter Greenwell's 1955 musical *Twenty Minutes South* is enclosed by the choruses *Eight Twenty-Seven* and *Five Twenty-Seven*, references to commuter trains in opposite directions. Lionel Bart's *Blitz* (1962) includes scenes set in a representation of *Bank Underground* which was pressed into service as an air-raid shelter. Intriguingly there is the solo with chorus *Train to Johannesburg*, from a musical *Lost in the Stars*, set in post Second World War South Africa, a number underlining the differing aspirations and thoughts of segregated whites and blacks travelling



by the same train.

Underground railways are not forgotten. *Merry Merry*, a musical comedy of 1929 with music by the then popular writing and composing duo Jack Waller and Joseph Tunbridge, included an opening scene in a London Tube station. *The Subway Express*, a song written by Jerome Kern for Kerker's musical *Fascinating Flora* (1907) was retitled *Bakerloo* (The Subway Express) when printed in London, to cash in on the then recent opening of the Bakerloo underground line. And other "railway musicals" included: *Meet Me Victoria* (1944, music by Noel Gay) whose hero is a railway porter and which includes a song entitled *You're a Nice Little Baggage* (its substantial London run was interrupted by the V1s); *Swing Along* which had a good run in 1936-37 with music by Martin Brookes and including a scene in the Blue Train; *Happy Holiday* based on Arnold Ridley's celebrated play 'The Ghost Train' (1954, music by George Posford); *The Station Master's Daughter* (1968, music by the Australian-born Charles Zwar); *Bakerloo to Paradise* (1969, music by Geoffrey Martino); *Listen for the Trains, Love* (1970, but set in the 1940s, with music by Alex Glasgow and book by Stan Barstow) which earned a modest success at the Sheffield Playhouse; *Brief Encounter on the Penistone Line* (1998) which had its genesis on Sheffield-Huddersfield trains and *Joan of Kent: The British Railway Musical* (1990) focusing on protest against a Channel Tunnel link, both with music by Henry Lewis and *The Railway Children* (1981, music by David Burn and Peter Durrent) which aimed, not very successfully in the event, to cash in on the success of the outstanding feature film we discuss a little later.

Several scenes in musicals British, American and other, have been set at railway stations. Examples are *Merry Merry* (above), *Oklahoma* (film version, 1956), *The Student Prince* (film version 1954), *Oh What a Lovely War* (1969), *The Good Companions* (1933 version, based on J. B. Priestley's novel of 1929 with music by George Posford), *Robert and Elizabeth* (1964, music by Ron Grainer), *Shipyards Sally* (film version, 1939), Cole Porter's *You'll Never Get Rich* (film version, 1961) and *Fiddler on the Roof* (1964, music by Jerry Bock), but there are, I dare say, others.

British examples of popular railway songs cover a remarkably broad field. Perhaps the most popular of them was George LeBrunn's music-hall ditty *Oh Mr Porter!* from around 1890 and long associated with Marie Lloyd (who also sang the even more suggestive *She'd Never Had Her Ticket Punched Before*) and

given fresh life in recent years with a fresh lyric, as the title music of the BBC TV sit-com *Oh Dr Beeching!* (fragmentary incidental music for some of the episode was derived from the same tune with Ray Moore given the credit for this). Also by LeBrunn was another song very popular in Victorian times entitled *The Railway Guard* (at least two other similarly styled songs were also published, notably Alfred Plumpton's *The Railway Guard, or The Mail Train to the North*, dedicated to the Chairman and Directors of the LNWR and having an especially amusing lyric.

Also popular during the later years of the 19th, or the early years of the 20th, Centuries were R. Copley's *The Railway Porter, Railway Porter Dan*, by one Fox, forename unknown, *The Wheeltapper's Song* (1923, by Charles Wolseley, composer of many music-hall songs), a little ditty called *The Level Crossing* and others entitled *Watching the Trains Go Out* (W.H. Hargreaves), *In the Luggage Van, I've Never Lost My Last Train Yet, There Goes the Train, Riding Down From Bangor* (composers unknown), *The Signalman Waiting for the Train* (F. Albert), *On the Railway, Daddy's on the Engine, Get Upon a Puff Puff, Don't Forget the Porter, Joe the Railway Porter* (again composers unknown), *Pull Down the Blind*, whose music is credited to one C. MacCarthy, *The Tuppenny Tube* (1900, by H. Pether, referring to what is now the Central Line), *A Trip to Blackpool* by Felix Godard also from c.1900, *A Kiss in the Railway Train* by Warwick Williams, *Jessie the Belle at the Bar* (the bar is the station buffet), *Waiting For The Signal* (G.W. Hunt), *Johnny the Engine Driver* (also by G.W. Hunt and dated c.1867), *O Blow the Scenery on the Railway* (1910, F.W. Leigh and G. Arthur), *The Midnight Train* (1895, B. Scott and A.J. Mills), *The Young Man on the Railway* (W.H. Brinkworth), Harry Clifton's *The Royal Belle* and *Railway Guard* of 1923 and William S. Robinson's *The 11.69 Express* described as a monologue (rather than a song) when performed in Doncaster in 1907. Most of these would be music-hall, rather than drawing-room songs. The Great Semaphore Song: *There's Danger on the Line* by G.P. Norman refers, so some have said, to the Great Northern Railway's adoption of "somersault" signals following the Abbots Ripton disaster of 1876, although the song has been dated two decades before that.

As we have seen already, railway songs in the British Isles were at times based on traditional or popular tunes, examples being *Paddy on the Railroad*, from Ireland, and *The Ballad of John Axon*. The latter, in memory of a train driver who died in the



course of duty, dates from as recently as 1957 and we have jumped ahead chronologically. Reverting to 'composed' popular songs, we mention, from the inter-war period and after Sunny South Sam, the tune being a foxtrot by Will Haines and Leo Bliss, the lyric derived from a figure well-known from Southern Railway posters of the time, *He Missed His Train Again*, *My Cutie's Due at Two-to-Two Today*, *Piccadilly Circus*, the Alma Cogan hit *The Middle of the House* and *Ain't it a Shame*, a success for The Commuters. The popular Cockney song *Underneath the Arches* clearly relates to a railway viaduct as it includes the words "I hear the trains rattling above". Mervyn, Lord Horder is normally associated with more classical compositions but his song *British Rail* is of the music-hall type, written long after the music-hall had become history.

Many will remember *Finchley Central* from 1969 and the lament *Dear Old Stalybridge Station* from the 1970s, nostalgic songs both. The Beeching closures of the sixties and seventies provided more nostalgic material, for example the majority of the set of twelve very enjoyable folk-style songs sung and recorded by Brett Stevens, himself a one-time railway employee, and composed by Dave Goulder, which were collectively titled *Green All the Way*; a few of them are amusing, notably *Pinwherry Dip*, but most are tinged with sadness. But surely the most famous song associated with railway closures is *The Slow Train*, lyrics by Michael Flanders, music by Donald Swann:-

No more will I go to Blandford Forum and  
Mortehoe  
On the slow train from Midsomer Norton  
and Munby Road  
No churns, no porter, no cat on a seat  
At Chorlton-cum-Hardy or Chester-  
le-Street  
We won't be meeting you  
On the slow train No.8230;

The list of railway songs seems never ending. There is at least one celebrating the Great Train Robbery in 1963. We have not yet mentioned those numbers associated with Ken Colyer in the mid 1950s, *Down Bound Train* and *Streamline Train*. Nor George Formby's *Wigan Boat Express*. Nor *Harbur's Return*, a hit for the Harbur Brimstone Band in 1957, *Down Home Special* (Bo Diddley), *Box Car*

*Blues* (from the 1950s), *Ride That Train* (Leon Jarvis), *Midnight Train Georgia* (Gladys Knight, 1970) and Junior Parker and Sam Phillips' 1953 hit and only a passing *Mystery Train*, made famous by Elvis Presley slightly later as we have mentioned previously. Many of these titles are American but most earned popularity on this side of the Atlantic. Bob Dylan is worth a special mention for his many railway songs, among them *Train a' Travelling*, *Freight Train Blues*, the very popular *Slow Train* (not of course the same song as Flanders and Swann's), *It Takes a Lot to Laugh, It Takes a Train to Cry* and *Walking Down the Line*. *I'm a Train*, from 1968, by Albert Hammond and Mike Hazlewood, was much later arranged for the King's Singers. Bob Woods, himself a railroad fireman, has written many songs including *The Night We Stole the Last Steam Engine*.

Of many French railway songs we may quote Victor Toutal's *Le CAE du PLM* (1910), Lucien Boyer's *Vive l'Express de Normandie* (1911) and the anonymous *Il est content le chef de gare* dating from 1912. From Ireland there is Percy French's lyric *Are Ye Right There Michael?* Inspired by the West Clare Railway, set to music by one W.H. Collisson and published by Pigott. Mexico can boast a wealth of railway songs. In early days songs were inspired by specific railway events. We have quoted a few, here is another, from 1852, celebrating a temperance excursion from Camborne to Hayle, in Cornwall, which rejoiced in this rather corny refrain:

Happy Camborne, happy Camborne  
Where the railway is so near  
And the engine shows how water  
Can accomplish more than beer.

We must hope that the tune outshone the words. Nowadays railway songs are more backward-looking; during the 1960s a musical documentary about North Staffordshire Railway, which ceased to exist in 1923, entitled (what else?) *The Knotty* was produced in Stoke-on-Trent. The once-popular form of the monologue, with piano accompaniment, throws up apart from the *1169 Express* previously mentioned, at least two titles for us: *How I Drove the Special*, with music by the ballad composer Cuthbert Clarke and *Signalman Sam*, music by Harry Weston.

We will return to songs in connection with art,





rather than popular songs, but for the time being let us look again at instrumental railway imaginations. Among those composed by British 19th Century writers we see, from as early as the 1840s, the *Express Train Galop* (which may possibly be the one of that title by the Austrian composer Kalkbrenner, but I would not rule out there being more than one galop with that title which was certainly a popular one in British ballrooms of the 1860s) and *The Excursion Train Galop* (composer unknown, but it could be Fred Musgrave, of whom more in a moment), the cover of which shows the excursionists packed like sardines into open trucks belonging to the South Eastern Railway with the wind blowing the smoke from the locomotive around them and plucking off at least one passenger's hat!

Rather later, during the 1860s, came two galops by Charles Coote senior, a prolific purveyor of Victorian dance music, *The Mail Train Galop* and, called after Charles Dickens' short story of 1866, *Mugby Junction*, both of them popular in the ballrooms of the day, as were Charles d'Albert's *Express Galop*, *The Railway Whistle Galop* (G. Richardson), *The Railway Quadrilles* by one Hallwood, *The Signal Polka* composed by George Lee and published in Sheffield where Lee held a position as a church organist, the galop *Paris in 10 1/2 Hours* (by H.W. Hall) and the *Cook's Excursion Galop* by Fred Musgrave, whose sheet music cover depicts Cook's tourists enthusiastically climbing Mount Vesuvius heedless of the volcano erupting just above. (Incidentally, the popular song *Funiculi, Funicula* celebrates the opening of the funicular railway up Vesuvius and I have come across a mention in 1881 of a song entitled *Cook's Excursionists* by one J. Hillier). Musgrave, incidentally, ran a travelling theatre company which visited Doncaster in 1879 and composed music for its productions.

A Doncaster Mansion House Ball programme of 1856 included an *Express Galop*, probably Charles d'Albert's, then very new and featuring the rhythm of the steam blast and having an evocative cover showing a train crossing a viaduct, and also a *Dover Express Galop*, whose composer was also not stated and is otherwise not known to me. From a list of dances played at a later Doncaster Mansion House Ball in 1865 I noticed a polka entitled *Great Eastern*, again by the prolific d'Albert, but it is not quite clear whether this title alludes to the railway company, formed by amalgamation in 1862, or to Brunel's great ship which was then still very much afloat: probably the latter, as the laying of the Transatlantic telegraph cable by that ship had caught the public's imagination at that time. And we still have not exhausted the Victorian railway dances: there were *Ex-*

*press Train*, by the Sheffield Military Band, conductor Samuel Suckley junior and, dating from the 1870s, *The Electric Telegraph Polka*, which was popular in a brass band arrangement by Henry Round, and possibly even Coote's galop *No Thoroughfare*. The two latter were both from the 1860s as were *Railway Galop* and *Railroad* (sic) *Quadrilles* the composers of which remain unknown to me, but several titles were probably used several times over, as we have seen happening with songs such as *The Railway Guard* and *The Railway Porter*.

To my knowledge none of these gems are, or ever were, recorded, though they could be, as piano copies, at least, survive of many of these mid-Victorian dances; but a number of similar dance movements from other countries at that period have fared much better in that respect. The earliest of them may well be the *Arrival Waltz* (1829) by the Viennese composer Josef Lanner. Most famous are the various contributions by the Viennese Strausses. Johann Strauss the father, who died in 1849, wrote the *Eisenbahn Lust Walzer* ("Railway Delight Waltz") in 1836, before any railway was ever open in Austria. His later *Carnival Quadrille* of 1847 was composed for a ball organised by the Kaiser Ferdinand Nordbahn (an early Austrian railway company). The next generation of the family were able to use the new railways increasingly to travel on for their concert tours and unsurprisingly all paid tribute to them. Johann Strauss the younger, who had a curiously morbid dislike of train travel but whose first major engagement was by a railway company in Russia, composed *Vergnugungszug* ("Excursion Train Polka") for a ball of the Association of Industrial Societies in Vienna's Redoutensaal Ballroom: his waltz *Reise Abenteuer* ("Travel Adventures") is probably based on an eventful railway journey in Russia; his *Spirals*, another waltz was composed for a ball of the Vienna Railway Engineers in 1858; and the popular *Accelerations Waltz* was surely inspired by a locomotive gathering speed. His brother Josef Strauss's polka française *Greetings to Munich* commemorated the opening of the Vienna-Munich railway in 1860. Eduard Strauss, the youngest brother of that generation, seemed to be particularly keen on railways as he produced the polkas *Bahn Frei!* ("Line Clear"), *Mit Dampf* ("With Steam") and *Tour und Retour* ("Return Ticket") and the waltzes *Glockensignal* ("Bell Signals") and *Lustfahrten* ("Pleasure Journey"), the latter having a locomotive on the front cover of the sheet music copy.

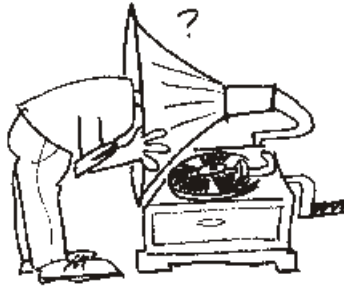
*Philip Scowcroft*

To be continued...

# Descriptive Terms for Musical Performances

As I move further along into reviews of recordings, it increasingly interests me how we find adjectives and other terms to describe what we like and don't like. I thought it might be fun to come with some terms and then apply their relative opposites. If you like, please provide some of your own. Here's my list at the present time:

- Commanding – Overbearing
- Poetic – Syrupy
- Dramatic – Exaggerated
- Vibrant – Choppy
- Energetic – Nervous
- Strong – Loud
- Tender – Whimpy
- Soft – Weak
- Expansive – Not Focussed
- Focussed – One Dimensional
- Hypnotic – Sleepy
- Subtle – Recessed
- Innovative – Sloppy
- Passionate – Indulgent
- Inevitable – Restrictive
- Mainstream – Boring
- Comforting – Insufficiently Accented
- Smooth – Numbing



- Creative – Perverted
- Distinctive – Odd
- Dreamy – Lacking Foundation
- Blended – Indistinct
- Larger Than Life – Unrealistic
- Precise/Ordered – Limiting
- Pristine – Inexperienced
- Bouncy – Irregular
- Well Nuanced – Lacking Direction
- Propulsive – Out of Control
- Youthful – Immature
- Humorous – Silly or Not to be taken seriously
- Serious – Dour
- Bustling – Hyper
- Eclectic – Undecided/Confused
- Original – Wayward
- Spiritual – Sanctimonious
- Deep – Muddy
- Atonal – Lost
- Exquisite – Frigid
- Detailed – Lacking Scope
- Confident – Self Important
- Stimulating – Drug Induced

*Donalf Satz (dsatz@hotmail.com)*

## Vienna — The Waltz Craze

*This article is based upon a presentation given to the Cardiff Recorded Music Society by Rainer Lenk.*

In MOZART's time the Minuet and the early waltz represented completely different social strata. After Napoleon's defeat, the Congress of Vienna, (1814-15) — with its many fêtes and balls — marked the end of this division. Everywhere — outside the ballrooms of the aristocracy in Vienna's Inner City — in taverns, wine-bars and beer-halls of the suburbs, small bands of musicians entertained guests with traditional Austrian dances, the popular music of the lower classes.

It was around 1820, that Joseph LANNER (1801-1843) and Johann STRAUSS Senior (1804-1849) took the 'Ländler' and 'German Dances' of the re-

gions bordering on the River Danube, west of Vienna, and created the "Viennese Dance", the WALTZ. To this were added — for variety — folk dances such as the Bohemian Polka and the Polish Mazurka; from Paris they imported the stylish Quadrille. As for the Waltz, Lanner and Strauss Senior laid the foundations, upon which others - notably Strauss's son Johann II and his brothers Josef and Eduard, as well as C.M. Ziehrer and others would build.



The Viennese dance craze was at its most frenetic between the 1820's and 1840's, which coincided with a period of social change, culminating in the Revolution of 1848. Up to then, the retrograde Austrian government — wishing to divert the populace from the seditious topic of politics

— actively encouraged what it considered these harmless activities.

Our illustrations show the development of the ‘civilised’ craze of 1817 to what can be described as ‘crazy waltzing’ of 1846.

Two years later, the guns of Field Marshal



Radetzky put an end to popular revolt. Strauss Senior composed his famous march in support of Radetzky; but his son Johann II supported the insurgents.

The table below gives an idea of the volume and types of dances written by the most famous of the dance kings.



Lanner was a contemporary and friend of Strauss (father); Carl Michael Ziehrer was the logical successor to the Strauss family; he was born in 1843 and died in 1922.

There were, of course, others as well. These include Franz Lehár, who is famous mainly for his operettas; Oscar Strauss (no relation to the famous Strauss family) is also known mainly for his operettas.

The famous Richard Strauss also was not related to the waltz king family, but his operatic masterpiece *Der Rosenkavalier* contains magnificent waltz sequences which act as a clear tribute to the traditional Viennese waltz.

Type	Lanner	Strauss I (father)	Strauss II (son)	Josef (brother)	Eduard (brother)	Ziehrer
Cotillon	6	3				
Ländler	25	1				
Tänze (Dances)	23	20				
French/ Polka	3	24	129	69	75	100
Polka Mazurka	5	31	33	46	42	39
Fast Polka/Galop	43	33	33	31	45	55
Quadrille	14		79	35	32	27
Marches	20	20	51	19	8	68
WALTZES	84	124	180	82	78	126
Diversa	19	12	6	1		14
TOTAL	242	268	511	283	280	429

NB. Johann Strauss II also composed 16 operettas; Ziehrer wrote 24 - including songs for plays.

## Dance Halls

One of the earliest was the APOLLO-SAAL, opened in 1808; it was to boast 5 ballrooms — each with its own architecture and decor. Illuminated by 5000 wax candles, it featured artificial pools, grottoes and waterfalls - and even flying eagles: It declined around 1830, becoming a candle factory. The most popular of all Viennese ballrooms was the SPERL in the Leopoldstadt district; it had its heyday during 6 years from 1829, when Johann Strauss Senior was its resident conductor. His ‘Sperl Galop’, Op.42 was first heard there in January 1831. Opened in 1845,

the ODEON-SAAL dwarfed the Sperl. Its immense ball arena could accommodate 8,000 people and had an orchestra of 80 players. Burnt down in the ‘48 Revolution, it was never rebuilt.

## Dance Music Publishing (In Vienna)

Begun during Mozart’s final years in Vienna, music printing and publishing gained impetus after the Napoleonic Wars. The Dance Music explosion represented a heaven-sent opportunity for the city’s music publishers, helping them to finance the printing of more serious music. Dance Music was needed



everywhere, and publishing it involved little risk. Principal printers and publishers of dance music in Vienna included Anton Diabelli, of the famed 'Diabelli Variations' (he died in 1858), Pietro Mechetti (died in 1850), but above all Tobias Haslinger (died in 1842) and his son Carl died in 1868). Perhaps we should also mention Diabelli's successors in this field, C.A. Spina and August Cranz. Haslinger and his son were the principal publishers of Joseph Ianner and Johann Strauss father and son.

Haslinger Senior greatly encouraged the leading dance composers, publishing the elder Strauss's works in up to 10 different arrangements (solo piano, violin and piano, flute solo, orchestra etc.) The firm's outstanding copper-plate engravers lavished all their skill on the graphic design of the title pages. Publishers advertised their latest releases in the "Wiener Zeitung" (Vienna Newspaper). Each composition bore the composer's opus number and dedicatee, but also (in the bottom left-hand corner) the publisher's copper-plate number.

With Viennese publisher's lists (re-printed since World War II) it is possible to ascertain dates of publication for every work month by month, year by year. A fascinating exercise, if you have the patience! The only thing we do not know, is an idea of the numbers of individual publications sold. Needless to say, many issues have now become collector's items. Get your wallets out if you can find sources.

Carl Haslinger was a close friend of Johann Strauss Son and his brothers Josef and Eduard, publishing virtually all their works until the summer of 1863, when they parted company over a dispute regarding a St.Petersburg publisher, A. Butner. From then on Haslinger promoted Carl Michael Ziphrrer. C.A. Spina. contracting the Strauss brothers. Lest we forget, this Vienna period produced not only beautiful Waltzes, but also magnificent Marches. Military bands were important ingredients of Viennese musical life.

*Rainer Lenk*

## Historical Concepts –part 3

The critic and artist interviewer Bill Newman concludes his personal recommendations relating to musicians who apply faith and truth beyond the printed score.

Video — The Art of Piano.

Pianist buffs never hesitate in nominating their personal favourites heard at precious live events over the years, but older b & w TV viewers may remember the beloved Solomon performing Beethoven's *Appassionata Sonata* back in the 1950s. Solomon was represented in last year's Great Pianists Series of historic films shown at London's Barbican Film Theatre. I was very remiss: booking at the final moment I only obtained tickets for 2 of the 12 showings, but I understand that select cinemas can choose whether to re-show them. Great Pianists of the 20th Century represents NVC Arts latest instalment in a survey of distinguished music makers — following on from 'Great Conductors' and 'Great Singers' — distributed by Warner Music Vision on 3984-29199-3, 108m. Arrau, Backhaus, Cortot, Cziffra, Annie and Edwin Fischer, Gould, Gilels, Hess, Hofmann, Horowitz, Michelangeli, Moiseiwitsch, Paderewski, Plant, Rachmaninov, Richter, Rubinstein and Solomon perform music associated with them; a film exploring techniques and 'singing' styles that imparted an extraordinary, compelling attraction to audiences of the time. A minority of purists might dismiss some as typical of a vanished era, but to real music lovers their

charisma endures through to the present. The educational value of Labrande and Sturrock's text, with narration by John Tusa, is enormous, and no less than 12 contributors to today's Music Business provide thought-provoking assessments, linked — in certain instances — with comments by the performer.

The musical public is the final arbiter of works they like, performances they prefer, and collectors like to air their opinions at large at GRAMEX, 25 Lower Marsh (adjacent to Waterloo Road/Station) London SE1, 020 7401 3830, Tues. - Sat. only, the popular venue for second-hand seekers of the rare and unusual — CDs, LPs, 78s, selective books & videos at attractive prices. The consumer speaks out, the staff waves the magic wand, Roger Hewland half seriously dubbing his regular clientele: 'record nutters'. Warning: grab what you want, then sit down in one of his four leather armchairs to be 'entertained'. Although there are other similar locations in the heart of London, this one has become my second home, and a Day Return is still reasonably priced. Books — biographies on composers and performers, especially — can and do provide that essential background to opinion.

Musical biographies.

With so much to choose from, I shall concern myself with three published by Amadeus Press, an American firm (UK address: 2, Station Road, Swavesey, Cambridge CB4 5QJ. 01954 232 959.



Nicolai Gedda, still singing beautifully in his 70s tells his own story — dictated to his wife Aino — a compendium of revelations in every sense, with early days where sexual thoughts hampered school studies (how many admit to that!), and a long period of discovering who his true parents were. First a pianist, he discovered he was the possessor of a natural pure voice with perfect pitch. Essentially a private person, he has never shirked the opportunities of helping others, tour commitments notwithstanding, but with musical colleagues he is full of praise. Sometimes he differentiates between the world-famous musician and the man: 'His Highness von Karajan'..came over.. congratulated me nicely on my success. Then he threw out a recommendation that I should sing Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder*...I replied that I had never sung Schoenberg. 'Take a look at it anyway'. The whole encounter lasted at most two minutes, after which the god rushed off to all the others who were awaiting an audience with him.. He was the star, not I. Karl Bohm was friendly but authoritarian and demanding. He knew exactly how he wanted things. He approved of my voice and seemed to like me personally because I had twice saved his productions of *Der Rosenkavalier* at the Met. There are candid stories about Beecham and Boult, too, but *'My Life & Art'* is about the beauty of the world and its people. A natural linguist, his recording legacy is enormous. A 1973 live Vienna Festival event is especially memorable: Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore*, partnered by Reri Grist, Silvio Varviso conducting (Myto C MCD 992.204).

Lily Pons - a Centennial Tribute, edit. Drake and Ludecke, is about a celebrated colaratura who made fame overnight in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, but this book is as much about music studies — successes as well as failures — that eternal hard graft to perfect her art in the face of a critics like W.J.Henderson and jealous colleagues, i.e. Charles O'Connell. Long-time husband Andre Kostalanetz also finds himself in the firing line, but apart from the contributions — in-

cluding a fine piece by Lauri-Volpi — there is a fantastic array of b & w photos, including two with President Eisenhower - an adoring fan. If you didn't see and hear Lily in the reshowing of 'Carnegie Hall' on TV, Great Opera Performances G.O.P.791- 2 CDs (a 'so-called' limited edition) includes her famous roles as well as song successes. The complete Delibes *'Lakme,'* with Tokatyan, Pinza and Petina, Pelletier, dir. is on Walhall WHL 17-2 CDs, distr. Parsifal, and her enticing Donizetti *La Fille du Regiment* with Baccaloni, Jobin, Petina, Papi, dir. on budget line Naxos 8.110018-2, 2 CDs.

Finally a composer biography: Arthur Honegger by Harry Halbreich, trans. Roger Nichols. Those who are haunted by the genius of *Le Roi David, Jeanne d'Arc au Bucher, Pastorale d'Ete, Pacific 231, Rugby* and the *Five Symphonies*, will demand to explore this. I recently read that Honegger's life was uneventful - this is completely disputed by Halbreich's colourful story-life, analysis

“musicians who apply faith and truth beyond the printed score”

of the entire music output and personality examination. 'Les Six', Cocteau, Satie, Stravinsky, Milhaud, Poulenc, Ansermet, Munch and Sacher are just a few of the colleague-personalities who crop up in this fascinating year-by-year documentary. Current

recordings of all famous works are plentiful, but there is still no reissue of *King David* under the composer's direction (Ducretit-Thomson LP). Sir Richard Attenborough gave a memorable performance in English, Sargent conducting, years back. His masterwork is *Joan of Arc at the Stake* — performed recently at the Proms. Following the 1942 first production under Paul Sacher, HMV decided to make the first recording in Belgium under the great choral conductor Louis de Vocht the following year, despite the absence of parts. Only two microphones were used due to the impossibility of finding 30 extra metres of cable, yet the atmosphere in the Palais des Beaux-Arts is electric. This landmark recording, originally on nine 78 rpm discs, has been carefully retransferred by Dante Lys (LYS 340).

## Rival Muses — by Arthur Butterworth

Quite frequently I get into conversation with musical friends, many of them enthusiastic amateurs, who, because they are not professionals to whom the art is a serious business and means of earning a living, can enjoy the pursuit of it impartially, purely for their own pleasure and enjoyment, taking from it what appeals and ignoring

that which does not. One of the most absorbing of interests nowadays is the acquisition of CD recordings. There was a time, perhaps sixty years ago or more, when collecting records might not have been all that popular. The technical state of scratchy 78's with limited duration was not universally attractive.

However, since the early 1950's and the arrival of the LP record, the appeal is practically universal; everyone who has an interest in music of whatever kind, now possesses his or her own cherished collection. So many of my friends will tell me with great excitement about the latest recording they have just bought; asking if I have yet got hold of my own pristine copy.

However, my own collection is frankly not all that large. I have no 78's now, one of the few I did possess, Moeran's G minor symphony, has long since worn out, though I have a fair number of LPs, and a growing number of cassettes and now, of course, CDs. The reason is not on account of the quality of present-day recording technology but because of the music itself. Amateur musicians are fortunate in having no personal axe to grind, they can listen to every kind of music with absolute impartiality, they do not have to account for their choice. It is often quite remarkable how eclectic the taste of the majority of music lovers can be. Those of us in the profession can have wide tastes as well, but this is not invariably the case. Performing musicians: singers, chamber musicians, concert soloists, and conductors can more or less choose the repertoire they perform. But orchestral players (who are paid to play a repertoire whether they like it or not) have virtually no personal choice, and all-too-often have to slave away at things they positively detest. But, despite this, perhaps it is reasonable to assume that performers in general like the music they sing or play, otherwise they would not get involved in the performing business at all.

Composers are different. They are not primarily executant musicians, interpreting in their own way, what others have created. The composer individualist who strives most of all to persuade the world at large to listen to what he has to say rather than to pay attention to the creations of others. So, when someone says to me with unbounded enthusiasm that they have just bought a CD of XYZ's latest symphony, concerto, or whatever, or been to hear it in a live performance, I do not necessarily share their enthusiasm. Nor am I invariably pleased to know of the latest craze for XYZ's music. No matter that he might even be a composer of the same cultural persuasion as myself, in the last resort I feel an intuitive sense that XYZ is my rival; I have an instinctive desire to promote and perpetuate my creative genes over those of

other composers, just in the same way that in nature all living creatures strive for a supremacy in order to ensure the best conditions for the survival of their own genes in preference to those others of their kind, (much more so the genes of other species). Plants strive for the best position in the sun, for the best source of nutrients in the soil; animals, especially males, challenge each other for supremacy for the same purpose. Often the outcome is a fearsome confrontation until the strongest asserts his superiority. No one thinks it odd that there is rivalry in politics or business. At a trade fair each exhibitor suspiciously takes stock of his competitors, and were you by chance, to have a conversation with salesman ABC and wax enthusiastic about the goods on offer from his rival DEF on the next stand, you could hardly expect ABC to



*Arthur Butterworth*

be quite so impressed by DEF as you, in your impartial enthusiasm appear to be. It is often the same situation when people tell me about recent records they have bought; my natural instinct is to feel at least some twinge of envy that it is someone else's record my friend is so excited about; the natural response is to wish it had been mine he had bought instead!

Of course this must sound awfully churlish, and it must be said that composers, like people in other walks of life, can appreciate the creative inspirations and achievements of others. Because we too are musicians we can, and do indeed like a vast amount of other music; much of it from the past has, after all, been a source of inspiration to our own creative urge. However, if composers were to be honest, I think that probably they do have rather more marked likes and dislikes regarding the work of composers, more so than performers, who do not feel their 'own position — as performers — is in any way challenged by composers. However, when it comes to conductors' or any other performing artists' interpretations of this or that, they are naturally as jealous of their rivals in their own field as composers - or lions in the pride, bulls in the herd, or any other living creature striving to assert dominance. The rivalries of prima donnas in the late nineteenth century was legendary, and the disparaging comments of some jet-setting maestros about others who presume to wield the baton can be as derisive as those of rival politicians at election time.

*Arthur Butterworth*

# Musical Weekend – Stratford on Avon

This was the second Musical Weekend held at Stratford upon Avon. Unlike last year, the weather was fine (except when leaving) and with a new manager, the arrangements at The Moat House Hotel were if anything even better than last year. With the benefit of an exceptionally good programme all enjoyed the weekend. There was even some time for shopping and sight seeing in this most interesting historic town

Unlike last year, we had met our target for attendees which was important from a budget point of view. This was the swan song of our new Vice President, Marjorie Williamson, as this was the last weekend she organised and she was warmly thanked by attendees for her success in facilitating such a successful event.

## The Penguin Guide

After an excellent reception and dinner, the opening presentation was given by the three authors of the famous Penguin Guide to CDs: Ivan March, Robert Layton and The Federation President Edward Greenfield (or 'The Penguins' as they are sometimes humourously described!). This was a notable first, as never before had all three appeared together to



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make a presentation.

The first Stereo Guide was published in 1960 by Edward Greenfield and Ivan March, with Denis Stevens (who subsequently left the team); Robert Layton joining later. Originally stereo recordings had been viewed with suspicion by many critics (largely influenced by using poor equipment) but the authors had been enthusiastic from the beginning because of the feeling of depth and the clarity resulting from the placing of instruments. The 1960s were seen as being a particularly good era for recording as the (few) microphones were very carefully positioned, often giving a very exceptional natural sound.

It was interesting to learn that at one time, around 50% of the three star recordings were from the Decca Company; also we learned that in the UK in the 1960s and 70s the most successful recording artist was Marriner and the ASMF.

The authors considered that



*Robert Leyton, Edward Greenfield and Ivan March*

some records have something special that keeps them at the top of the list. This led to the adoption of the famous 'Penguin Rosettes'. We were given an entrancing selection of such records, presented by each author in turn, with a commentary which outlined the special features. It was interesting to note that despite the very different styles of the three authors and the occasional disagreements, they

worked very well together. This was a truly wonderful summary of best records of the last 40 years.

### William Alwyn

Alan Thomas (who is the secretary of the William Alwyn Society and of the Sussex Regional Group of the FRMS) gave a fasci-



*Len Mullenger (left) with Alan Thomas*

nating talk about this exceptionally talented man who was a painter and poet as well as musical composer (1905–85). He was born in Northampton and was flautist in several ensembles.

Alwyn composed over 200 film scores—several being for major films such as "Fallen Idol". However very many were low budget productions and he learnt to write very quickly and sparingly to get the best results from a limited number of players. He often worked with the conductor Muir Matheson.

In addition to his film music, he wrote two operas and a cycle of four linked symphonies together with much other music including some very popular light music. The music played was very impressive and reinforced the view that Alwyn was a much under-appreciated composer.

### "Life in the Orchestra"

A few people (who had not attended any of the FRMS' Musical Weekends) had commented that the programme for this year ap-

peared a little too earnest and "heavy" for their taste. If only they had come along to hear Eric Jennings, their fears would have instantly vanished! Within moments of starting to tell us of his life as former first trombonist with the Royal Liverpool Orchestra. He had found working in an orchestra surrounded by musicians a marvellous experience. Typically there would be about nine hours rehearsal for a two hour concert. In the early 1960s there had been about 15 supporting staff for the Orchestra — now there were 66.

He had us laughing about his efforts to ensure that he got his key entries absolutely right. Ravel's "Bolero" was given as an example of where, having nothing to play for a long time, the entry of trombonists at exactly the right moment, sounding the right note with the right emphasis was absolutely vital to the successful end of the piece. A serious point made with great good humour. There were many stories of auditions, orchestra musician's life and, of course, conductors interspersed with music. It



*Eric Jennings*

wasn't just the stories he told — it was the way Eric told them that gave so much enjoyment. All too soon Eric's talk ended to



enthusiastic applause from a very happy, appreciative audience.

### Amazing Scope and Variety

Ray Crick as Marketing Manager of the ASV Record Company, played a fascinating series of excerpts from recent recordings. ASV is a small company which concentrates on recordings of relatively little known works, often played by lesser known but up and coming artists. In general they have a policy of leaving the well known repertoire to the major companies; an exception however is with their recent set of Beetho-



*Ray Crick*

ven String Quartets with the Lindsay Quartet. Ray played extracts from an impressive array of recordings from the Company. New recordings of music by Grétry and by Ippolitov-Ivanov were particularly well received.

Besides their records of serious music, ASV is well established in excellent CD versions of vintage jazz and nostalgia — mainly from 78s, known as the Living Era series. These feature artists such as Paul Robeson, Charles Trenet and Bing Crosby. Again these sounded very well. During the interval, we had the opportunity to purchase records at reduced prices.

### Dame Janet Baker

It is perhaps invidious to single out one particular highlight of the Week-end; but one could be for-

given for doing so. From the warmth of her greeting by a packed audience, it was obvious the affection in which a greatly loved artist as Dame Janet Baker is held and that her visit was always going to be something special. Her 'double act' with President Edward Greenfield was a delight. It was evident from the start that in Dame Janet, we had an artist devoted to her profession, prepared to endure hours of painstaking rehearsal and practice in order for it to be 'right on the night', paying as much attention to diction as to the music. It also became evident that her role model was a singer of former times, Rosa Ponselle. The star of the Metropolitan Opera in New York for almost twenty years at the start of the last century, she also appeared at Covent Garden. Retiring at the height of her powers, she became a distinguished teacher in Baltimore. This reflects Dame Janet's own career.

Given the age of the recordings played, it was very clear that Dame Janet's admiration was more than justified. Time after time, with Edward's skilful promptings, she played for us many recordings of other singers with frequently, very pertinent comments on both tone and technique. It made for an afternoon of unadulterated pleasure and we might just have been eavesdropping on their conversation over a cup of tea in her drawing room. In spite of the fact that Dame Janet doesn't like to listen to her own recordings, Edward was successful in persuading her to let us hear just a little of one of her own. We were also delighted to welcome Keith, Dame Janet's husband and indeed her former Manager, to whom our President paid generous tribute as playing an important role in shaping and guiding her successful career. After a presentation of a basket of flowers by Cathy Connolly, Dame Janet

spent sometime chatting to delegates and signing autographs. For Vice-President Marjorie



*Dame Janet Baker*

Williamson, who gave the vote of thanks, Dame Janet's inscription in the copy of her autobiography "Full Circle" will forever be a treasured memory of a great artist.

### The Coull Quartet

The portrait of Schubert on the front of this year's programme was an acknowledgment of the opening work performed by the Coull Quartet in their Saturday evening recital. Though the quartet in E has an Opus number of 125, it is a relatively early work, composed when Schubert was 16 and, like much of his early work, intended for performance in the family circle. Introducing the work, Roger Coull, the Quartet's leader referred to the influence of Haydn's quartet writing on the young Schubert, and it was not difficult to find Haydnesque passages in the music. Yet there was a hint too of the mature Schubert one associates with the *Death and the Maiden quartet* or the *String Quintet*. The Coull Quartet took this in their stride in a performance to delight any Schubert lover.

From the teenage Schubert to Mendelssohn in his late twen-



*Coull Quartet*

ties. To one who must confess to knowing Mendelssohn mainly from his symphonies, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the *Songs without Words*, his chamber music came as something of a revelation. The Quartet in E minor, Opus 44 No 2 made an admirable companion piece to the Schubert for the first half of the recital.

The final work was drawn from Tchaikowsky's modest contribution (in numerical terms) to the string quartet repertoire. The F major quartet, the second of Tchaikowsky's three string quartets stands in considerable contrast to both the Mendelssohn and the Schubert, but again the Quartet opened up the music for an attentive and appreciative audience.

A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country. There must, though, be exceptions to every rule, and the Coull Quartet, playing on home territory (they are the quartet in residence at Warwick University), did us proud, and the applause at the end of their programme was well-deserved.

**"Rival Muses"**

There was a warm welcome for the composer Arthur Butterworth. Before concentrating on composition, he had played the trumpet in the Hallé and in the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. He has written four symphonies in addition to

music in many other forms. He talked with great honesty and not a little quiet humour about his life in music and the difficulties of gaining acceptance as a composer.

He gave a most interesting talk about rivalry between composers (a subject which is seldom discussed by composers themselves). A shortened version of this talk is included on page 22. This really was an exceptionally interesting presentation which covered many aspects of musical life which are seldom or never discussed.



*Arthur Butterworth*

**"A Dutch Miscellany"**

Our Vice-Chairman, John Phillips, gave us an introduction to the Dutch Conductor Eduard van Beinum, who had made a series of outstanding records for Decca and Philips.

Van Beinum was born in Arnhem, his father was a musician; he learned to play the violin and viola and joined the Arnhem Orchestra. He studied at Amsterdam Conservatoire and at the age of 27 became chief conductor of the Harlem Orchestra where he specialised in conducting French music.

Later he became second conductor of the Concertgebouw Orchestra under Mengelberg who was the principal. Eventually he succeeded Mengelberg and became prin-



*John Phillips*

ciple conductor. Whereas Mengelberg was a martinet, van Beinum believed in teamwork and mainly as a result of this the Concertgebouw Orchestra was very happy as well as successful under his baton.

John played several records of van Beinum's conducting which demonstrated not only extreme musical ability; and despite their age the sound quality was remarkably good. Van Beinum died in 1959 preparing for an English Tour; unfortunately most of his records are no longer available in the UK.

**DON'T FORGET!!**

The Yorkshire Regional Group's next Spring Weekend is at the Crown Hotel, Scarborough

Saturday 27th to Monday 29th April 2002

General booking will open on 5th November and close on 31st December 2001

The food is very good;  
You'll be beside the seaside;  
We've got some interesting speakers;  
It's fantastic value at £98 for the Weekend!!

There is also a very preferential rate for those arriving on the Friday

**COME AND JOIN US!!**

For details contact the YRG Secretary:  
Dennis Clark, 227 Tinsill Road  
Leeds, LS16 7BU

# LORD BERNERS: the last eccentric

*LORD BERNERS: the last eccentric,*  
by Mark Amory. Chatto & Windus, 1998. Xiv,  
274pp, £20.00 Amazon UK paperback £10

Lord Berners was long a fascinating maverick in the history of British music, yet a composer without whom we would be very much the poorer, as the Marco Polo series of orchestral CDs has made clear. Although the one British composer with a technique directly touched by Stravinsky and Casella during the First World War (Berners - or Tyrwhitt as he was then - spent the war in the British Embassy in Rome), and had contacts with the Diaghilev circle, yet he remains a composer with a wholly English sense of the ridiculous.

I only ever saw one Berners ballet on the stage - *A Wedding Bouquet* - which survived at Covent Garden until remarkably recently (my last programme is for 1 November 1984) which tells us it was the 48th performance since it was first given there by the Royal Ballet in 1956. This was a brilliant confection, thought daring in its day because of the words by Gertrude Stein and their insistent presentation by the chorus. It was very much our last link with that vivid 1930s world of British ballet, which saw the emergence of the ballets of Lambert and Bliss. One commentator remarked: "at times it feels rather like Stravinsky's *Les Noces* translated to the home counties".

Berners died in 1950, remembered, particularly by Constant Lambert in a broadcast tribute, for his eccentricity. Lambert loved telling ridiculous stories and in his friend he had the perfect subject. Berners dyed the pigeons at Faringdon with multi-coloured dyes; with an absolutely straight face Lambert noted "after being dyed the pigeons ... mated only with pigeons of the same colour". Mark Amory's book is for all who delight in a slightly zany society scene, and his account of Berners' humorous novels allows them to be drawn on and woven into the texture of his book, with great success. For all Berners' wit and irony, and his outrageous behaviour, he had a warmth and humanity which shines through.

This biography has had a rave reception from the Sunday papers. A splendid and entertaining read, it will be the source for endless funny stories when other books on the period begin to flag; a brilliant portrait of an age, caught when it was almost too late,

as the main characters on the scene passed on.

Amory, the literary editor of *The Spectator*, admits in his introduction his Achilles heel is writing about music, and he thanks Philip Lane, Gavin Bryars and Peter Dickinson for assistance. All of these attempted the job twenty-five years ago, and I particularly remember Philip Lane's radio talk in December 1973 which seemed set fair to lead to greater things, ultimately a thesis which I have not seen. The musical discussion is not as full as some might wish, but on the other hand it does not get in the way of the fun. Incidentally Sir Thomas Armstrong was, of course, the Principal of the Royal Academy not the "other place", (p.191), though hidden from the index entry for Armstrong.

The history of the music and its productions are entertainingly told. However, it is less good on the music itself, particularly its context and the wider scene; for example the opera *Le Carrosse du Saint-Sacrement* is discussed in its due place, but the author gives us no feeling for having heard it, despite the BBC production in English in 1986, which should have allowed him some first-hand account during the discussion of the Paris 1924 production, its only other hearing.

Amory briefly touches on *L'uomo dai baffi* ("The Man with the Moustache"), but it would have been nice to have more. Ever since the Sonorities Northern Ireland Festival of 20th century music revived this piece in 1985, I have wondered about it, particularly as it provides our only opportunity to hear Berners' aborted Portsmouth Point, here, orchestrated by Casella from Berners' piano pieces and the Portsmouth Point short score.

The discography is prefaced by a note to explain its brevity: "some works were previously available on LP or 78 disc, but will be found by only the most perseverant of browsers". This is not helpful in a pioneering biography of a composer. One item is listed without identifying the label or number, and the most elusive of available CDs is also not listed, a pity. (*L'uomo dai baffi* played by the Harmonia Ensemble conducted by Giuseppe Grazioli (on AS disc AS 5003).).

A hugely entertaining book with just a few spots on the sun which need to be attended to.

Lewis Foreman





## Ottorino Respighi — Metamorphoseon etc

Ottorino *RESPIGHI* (1879-1936)

*Metamorphoseon; Rossiniana;*

*Burlesca; Passacaglia in C Minor* by J.S.Bach

Wuppertal Symphony Orch. /George Hanson)

MDG 335 1030-2 [16,23] DDD

This disc offers four less well known examples of Respighi's Orchestral music which illustrate very different aspects of the composer's works.

*Rossiniana* of 1925 is similar in sources and style to the famous *Boutique Fantastique* ballet written seven years later. It is brilliantly orchestrated and very tuneful but unlike the ballet, is composed as an orchestral suite and the development is in some ways more interesting than that of the ballet. Possibly the main reason for its lack of popularity is the rather low key opening. It is very well played here and the piece deserves to be better known.

*Metamorphoseon modi XII* was commissioned by Serge Koussevitzky for the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. It is strongly influenced by Gregorian Chant and consists of a solemn tune followed by 12 variations in the 12 church modes and a stirring finale. It is a work of great sonority and or-



chestral virtuosity, which reveals its secrets only after repeated hearings. The performance is good overall, but rather let down by a less than exciting final movement and rather receded brass playing.

*Burlesca* of 1906 is a short work with Scherzo-like character with iridescent orchestration and impressionistic tonality, with hints of the later Fountains of Rome. This is well played and recorded. Despite the claims on the sleeve, this is not a first recording (Adriano recorded it for Marco Polo).

The Respighi orchestral version of Bach's *Passacaglia in C minor* was first played by Arturo Toscanini in New York in 1930. It is a work of great orchestral brilliance which remains true to the spirit of the original piece by Bach; thus it is similar in general approach to the homage to Vivaldi in Malipiero's *Vivaldiana*.

George Hanson, who is musical director of the Wuppertal Symphony Orchestra (whose history goes back for more than 130 years) conducts these often difficult works well. The recording produces a very natural rounded sound. Overall this is a very interesting disc which forms a good introduction to some of Respighi's less familiar works.

AB

## Franz Schubert — Piano Masterworks

Franz *SCHUBERT* (1797 - 1828)

*The Piano Masterworks Vol.1*

*Allegretto in C minor, D.915; Four Impromptus, D.935; Sonata in B flat, D.960; Sonata in A, D.664; Fantasie in C, D.760 ("Wonderer"); Sonata in G, D.894*

Anthony Goldstone piano

*The divine art 2-1202 -2CDs [77.28] & [73.36]*

Tel 0191 456 1837 Fax: 0191 455 2954

Anthony Goldstone is one of Britain's leading pianists and is a sixth-generation pupil of Beethoven who has always felt a special affinity to the music of Schubert. He has recently finished a seven CD cycle of all of Schubert's four-hand piano works with his wife Caroline Clemmon. Having now been playing for more than fifty years he decided to record his views of Schubert's great solo works to disc.

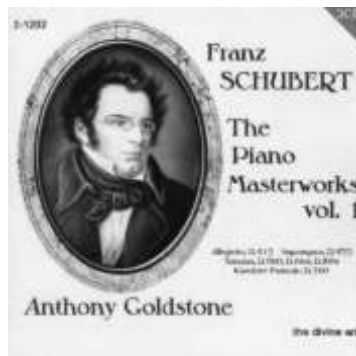
This is a field which has been very well served

with pianists like Wilhelm Kempff, Alfred Brendel, Clifford Curzon and Mitsuko Uchida all having made excellent recordings of this repertoire. It says much for Anthony Goldstone that his stands up very well to this competition. Like all very good players he has his own style which is not identical to others. For my taste he has a lot to offer and I believe most would be delighted with these new recordings.

The *Allegretto in C minor* is a short and relatively less well known work which offers a fascinating mix, so common with Schubert of intensity and tenderness. The second set of *Four Impromptus*, although not quite so well known as the first set is a wonderful composition which as played here could almost be a single sonata. Listeners by now will have grasped the main characteristics of Goldstone's playing. Tempi are slightly on the fast side (probably historically correct) with plenty of dynamic range (but not to extremes). His technique is very good but

unlike some pianists you end up by thinking “...what wonderful music Schubert has written” not “...what a marvellous technique this pianist has” — praise indeed! Even in very slow passages he does not use the modern gimmick of gaining tension by playing so slowly that you wonder if and when the next note will arrive.

The astonishing *Sonata D.960*, completed two months before he died is probably Schubert’s greatest piano work and receives an appropriately intense and stimulating performance by Goldstone. Incidentally Goldstone has written his own (very good) notes for the set and he gives the very good advice that listeners may well wish to take an interval before the main sonata which concludes each disc.



The second disc starts with the earlier *Sonata D.664* which with its delightful melodies and fast waltz-like finale shows Schubert at his happiest. The famous “Wanderer” *Fantasia* (which apparently defeated Schubert the pianist) is given an extraordinarily brilliant performance by Goldstone (who describes the work as a “musical super-organism”).

The last work is the *D.894 Sonata* which is rather special with its mellow cantabile first movement and serene slow movement which give great joy to the listener.

Altogether this is an excellent set which is well recorded and presented which can be fully recommended.

AB

## Marshall-Hall — Symphony in E flat

George MARSHALL-HALL (1862-1915)

*Symphony in E flat/Adagio from Symphony in C minor*  
Queensland Theatre Orchestra/Warren Bebbington  
MOVE MD 3081 [46.36]

Distributor: Divine Art Record Company, 31 Beach Road, South Shields, NE33 2QX, UK

Tel 0191 456 1837 Fax: 0191 455 2954

web: [www.divine-art.com](http://www.divine-art.com)

George Marshall-Hall must have been a very interesting character. He was born in London to a family of scientists and inventors. He started education with his father’s aim that he join the Colonial Civil Service. However he chose music instead, studying with Stanford and Parry at the Royal College of Music. Sir Charles Grove who was head of the College secured an Australian post for him as the first Professor of Music at the Melbourne University. He founded the Melbourne Orchestra and became famous as conductor of a series of concerts in the city; under his tutelage the orchestra soon rose to the best of European standards.

He was a marvellous lecturer, never the dry-as-dust academic. Also he was very eccentric; unfortunately his unorthodox beliefs, attitudes and tastes made him enemies. He was also a controversial poet, which soon cost him his Chair in 1900 when a publication was judged as blasphemous and lewd. For the next twelve years he depended upon his compositions and

his teaching work at the Conservatoire. In 1912, the Orchestra was disbanded after he returned to England to promote himself as a composer. This was not successful and in 1915 he returned, to Melbourne disillusioned by various setbacks. As his successor had died, he was restored to his former professorship; however he died from peritonitis after an appendix operation in the same year.

His compositions included operas, chamber music, songs, and orchestral works. After his death, Percy Grainger gathered all of Marshall-Hall’s scores and papers, and they are now part of the Grainger Museum at the University of Melbourne. The *Symphony in E flat* was composed in 1903 and dedicated to ‘My friends and comrades under the Southern Cross’. It received several performances in Melbourne, but also was played in England (where Wood conducted it at a Promenade Concert in London in 1907), and Nikisch conducted it in Berlin. Marshall-Hall’s wide-ranging tastes as a conductor give a clue to his style; he programmed Beethoven, Brahms, Wagner, Rimsky-Korsakov, Debussy and Richard Strauss although as with Parry and Stanford, he was probably most influenced by Brahms.

The symphony starts with stirring vitality and then the main theme is introduced in the wind. A more tranquil second subject appears to be followed by a whole succession of ideas — all with clear orchestration and expressive harmonies. The second



movement starts with wistful dreamy feeling developed later with delicate pizzicato arpeggios. The finale is in rondo form, brimming over with ideas and finishing on a strong note of optimism. The Adagio of the *C minor Symphony* (composed in 1892) makes no apology for its indebtedness to Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*. It is based on a poignant theme which one critic described as, 'the sadness of unutterable regret'.

The music is attractive and enjoyable and it is inexplicable that it had to wait for 80 years before it was revived. The Queensland Theatre Orchestra plays well and the disc is well recorded. Overall, an enjoyable recording which can be recommended to people who like music from the turn of the century. It is regrettable that more music from this interesting composer wasn't included on this not very well filled disc. AB

## Harold Craxton — The Plaint of Love

Harold CRAXTON (1885-1971)

*Compositions and Arrangements.*

*Soprano: Caroline Goodwin*

*Baritone: James McOran Campbell*

*Violoncello: Alison Moncrieff Kelly*

*Piano: Christopher Howell. [64.31]*

HAROLD CRAXTON TRUST HCRA XI

If the end result is anything to go by considerable thought went into the selection and sequencing of these short pieces. The music itself is variable from the not so desperately interesting (e.g. the arrangement of a cello sonata by Arne and the Two Almans) to the title track *Plaint of Love* which is given a very romantic overlay almost as if transcribed by Rachmaninov. The *Meditation* is similarly inclined though not as intense. The *Two Mazurkas* are serious little pieces — neatly turned. The freshly executed *Bourrée Humoresque* is delightfully rapped out while *A Shepherdess In Porcelain* suggests all the fragile gentility associated with its Ketèlbeyan title. The sentimental *Siciliano and Rigadon* bring memories of sixties French film music while *Woodland Lullaby* is redolent of Macdowell's woodland blooms. I liked the mesmeric *Tahitian Dance* which, avowedly, is founded on native rhythms. It has the air of Norman Peterkin's elusive oriental suites (now there's a recording project for Mr Howell!) crossed with the Godowsky *Java Suite*. The *Farnaby Maske* boast greater interest than the other arrangements of 'antiquitie'. The *Two Pastoral Preludes* for solo piano offer an impressionistic *Heather Bells* with the lightest skirling tartan touches and *Bird Song* which is lovely pictorial piece with deftly challenging harmonies — think Finzi in the Grand Fantasia.

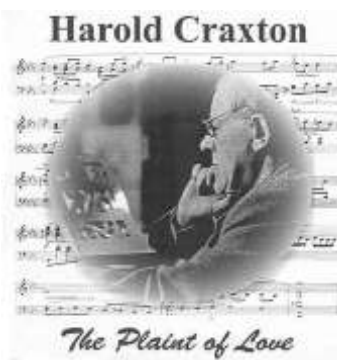
*Beloved I Am Lonely* is excellent with well thought out word definition and a sentimental but never cloying approach. The song deserves to have wider currency. *O Mistress Mine* shows off the baritone's sturdy qualities and darkly virile colouring — a John

Shirley-Quirk in the making. Caroline Goodwin sings *It Was A Lover And His Lass*, it is a very characteristic setting in an edition by Chris Howell. Certainly the material is less twee than *Oh To See The Cabin Smoke* which is to my ears rather limp salon material — a step down from MacDowell. The same can be said of *The Snowdrop* with its twee bells and of Mavis—all very 'piano stool'. In *A Requiem*, by Stevenson, we are again into strong word setting though the singer's mournful tone is rather overdone. He does however have a very nicely judged line in variegated gradation of dynamics—not following the obvious line. The setting of Edward Oxenford's *Hearts In Love* is distinguished by skilled word-setting and challenging and intriguing tonality in the repeated bell motif.

The piano is sympathetically played by Chris Howell but the instrument does not evince a very generous tone. Mr Howell to whom this project owes a great deal is a welcome and constant presence throughout each of these pieces.

The notes are very full with the sung texts and full track-listings and timings are provided.

Rob Barnett



### Note

Harold Craxton was an English pianist and composer who was also noted as a teacher and editor. He spent some time as an accompanist, notably to Clara Butt. There is now a Craxton website which can be found on the following address: ([www.craxtonmemorialtrust.org.uk](http://www.craxtonmemorialtrust.org.uk)).

Apart from information about the Trust, Chris Howell's notes for the CD, catalogue of musical works, the Website also has extracts from Craxton's unfinished, unpublished autobiography and a memoir of Janet Craxton by Denis Matthews.

Orders for the CD can be placed with Michael Craxton, 26 Park Road, Hayes, UB4 8JN for £12.00 per CD. The price includes post/packing (profits go to the Trust).



## FROM THE REGIONS... FROM THE REGIONS...

## East Midlands

To a chemist the expression "pH3" denotes something of considerable acidity. But there was nothing acidic about the "PH3" line-up for the East Midlands Music Day held in Derby on 10th March. Organised by Derby RMS as a forum to launch a revived FRMS East Midlands Regional Group, it attracted almost as much attention nationwide as in the East Midlands. Local delegates were joined by others from as far afield as London, South Wales and even Scotland! Above all, it was a great pleasure to have FRMS Vice-President John Bulman with us as guest of honour.

"PH3" was the organiser's shorthand for the line-up of presenters for the day; not only did all three have the initials PH but all three had the same first name — Peter. First in the field was Peter Herbert, a member of the Dvorák Society, introducing us to the music of Zdenek Fibich (1850-1900), the 150th anniversary of whose birth and the centenary of whose death were virtually ignored by broadcasters and record producers in 2000. Fibich is clearly appreciated in his homeland; we heard his melodrama *Št edrý den*, a firm favourite every Christmas on Czech radio. He was, though, no narrow nationalist; one of his songs is a translation into Czech of Burns' "My love is like a red, red rose".

After an excellent buffet lunch the second presenter was Peter Holman, best known perhaps as the director of the Parley of Instruments. Peter is also series director of Hyperion's English Orpheus series, which now numbers nearly 50 CDs. He was with us to introduce some highlights of the wealth of English music by familiar composers such as Purcell and Arne, and more importantly by many composers whose names would still be forgotten but for this series. A Hyperion stand did some brisk business during the following break for refreshments.

To end the day Peter Helps, Chief Executive of Sinfonia ViVA, told us something of what a regional orchestra does. Formerly the East of England Orchestra, it changed its name, partly to lose a rather narrow and misleading regional association, but also to reflect a much wider scope than being merely a touring orchestra. In performance it can be anything from a quartet to a chamber orchestra, but Sinfonia ViVA is also very much engaged in music education.

Peter illustrated his talk with recordings of Sinfonia ViVA in action, including a concert in which the orchestra played alongside a group of youngsters in a new work incorporating many of the youngsters' own ideas; there were also some of his own favourite recordings, including the classic Flanders & Swann arrangement of Mozart's *Horn Concerto*, "Köchel rating 495".

The day may not have entirely succeeded in establishing a new East Midlands Group, but it was a very worthwhile and enjoyable experience. There was some interest in running similar events in the future, and indeed in forming a Regional Group. Mick Birchall of Hinckley GS has kindly offered to co-ordinate any offers of help in this direction. He can be contacted on 01455 823494.

AC



Allen Child opening the meeting

## Sussex Regional Group

Sussex opera fans could not let 2001 go by without paying tribute to Verdi, whose stature as one of the two or three greatest opera composers is unchallenged. Affiliates met at Pyke House, Battle to celebrate the life of Verdi with a session on Prokofiev thrown in as a bonus.

Saturday March 24th and Eileen Taylor gave the first talk opening with the chorus 'Va Pensiero' from *Nabucco*. Eileen spoke of the difficulties Verdi had with his various librettists. Extracts from *Rigoletto* next followed by the somewhat tangled plot of *Il Trovatore*. We had two overtures by way of an interlude, *Sicilian Vespers* and *Forza del Destino*.

Eileen commented on Verdi's amazing gift for melody that never seemed to desert him. *Don Carlo* was her next choice. To end we had a selection from *Aida*. Eileen then bade us farewell as on the following day she was off to visit China!

Jonathan Parris took the next session, with the difficult task of avoiding opera altogether, he rose to the challenge and gave us a splendid selection of sacred music, songs and chamber music. *A Romance for Piano and bass* Two songs *Scena*, *L'esule* and *Romance* *Lo spazzaciamo*. Jonathan played the *Andantino* and *Scherzo* from Verdi's one *String Quartet*. The *Dies Irae* and *Sanctus* from the *Requiem mass* followed by *Ave Maria sulla Enigmatica* a sel-

dom heard choral piece. The sacred song *Pieta signor* beautifully sung by Renata Scotto; then the *Stabat Mater* a very late work (1897) followed.

From a new CD by Riccardo Chailly, Jonathan played the previously unrecorded *Pater Noster* for choir and orchestra. Finally another first recording — *Cum Santo Spiritu* from *Messa Soleririe* composed jointly, in 1833 by Verdi and his teacher Ferdinando Provesi.

After a splendid dinner guests settled down to watch the video of the complete *La Traviata* with Placido Domingo and Teresa Stratas sumptuously filmed by Franco Zeffirelli. The clocks went on this weekend so we lost an hour's sleep but enjoyed the rich variety of Verdi's music. Sunday and Alan Thomas presented the Overture to *Oberto*, the prelude to *Macbeth* and the witches ballet from *Macbeth*, once described as a "Witches Knees-up!"

The character of Iago in *Otello* got an 'in depth' look with extracts from most of the scenes featuring this odious man sung mainly by Sherril Milnes but with a repeat of the *Credo* by Tito Gobbi, who avoids the unwritten laugh at the end. The Prelude and ballet music from *Don Carlo*; who can spot the link between them and Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor?

As a contrast in musical styles, Alan Thomas presented a selection of works of Sergei Prokofiev, starting with the early ballet *Chout* with its typically Russian folk story. Next an X certificate perhaps for *The Fiery Angel* a tale of sexual obsession and black magic? For those normally averse to Prokofiev's sonatas try the lovely *Sonata for Solo Violin*. *Overture on Hebrew Themes* was written for musicians in New York almost 'klezmer' in its style and mood. Finally part of the *Alexander Nevsky* cantata based on the famous Eisenstein film with its memorable depiction of the *Battle on the ice*.

For our last session, in the 'after lunch slot' Alan Gilby presented a 'Spring' collection", in spite of the weather outside! There was the *Promise of Spring* by Armstrong Gibbs, *Enter spring* by Frank Bridge, a 'Sussex' composer, and *Voices of Spring* by Johann Strauss II.

Then we had *La Primavera* by Tedesco played by Segovia, followed by two contrasting interpretations of *Fruhlingstraum* from Schubert's *Winterreise* by Bridget Fassbenider and Hans Hotter. Just before the break a *Spring Waltz* by Shostakovitch. Carl Orff's *Carminia Burana* supplied the next item *Primo Vere*. And so the theme continued with works by William Lloyd Webber, Copland, Beethoven, Richard Strauss, Raff, Gottschalk and Waldteufel.

Following our look at 20th Century music in October 2000 and in response to requests we are plan-

ning a 'History of Jazz' weekend at Pyke House on 6th/7th October, 2001 followed by our usual classical weekend on 27th/28th October, further details from Alan Thomas, Sussex Regional Group.

## Yorkshire Regional Group Scarborough Weekend

Have heard superb music  
And seen our friends once more  
At the Crown Hotel  
In agreeable Scarborough.

Thank you to presenters  
For fascinating facts  
From Mozart, Webber Senior  
With plenty more besides.

Manhattan trip we've taken  
Then sounds of the past were heard  
The genius of Mike Dutton  
Restored recordings played.

Music from the Northlands  
On the Monday morn  
Lesser known composers heard  
Svendsen, Lumbye, Alfvèn.

Many thanks to all concerned  
For the music weekend  
Event is over all too soon  
Time to make farewells.

Ian Hammerton

### F.R.M.S. WEST MIDLANDS REGION CONFERENCE SATURDAY 10TH NOVEMBER 2001

VENUE : Birmingham and Midland Institute,  
Margaret Street, Birmingham.

BOOKINGS: Gordon Wainwright, 3  
West Street, St George's, Telford. TF2 9HS.

Tel: 01952 614268.

ENQUIRES: As above or to Graham Kiteley

Tel: 01527 870549.

COST: £19.00 including buffet lunch

*Speakers will include :*

PHILIP HEAD: Former 1st violinist in the  
CBSO will reflect on the 40 years he spent with  
the orchestra until retirement last year.

MIKE CRUMP: A member of the Dvorak  
Society and a founder member of the Bohuslav  
Martinu Society will speak on Martinu's choral  
ballet *Spalicek*, which is a real gem of Czech folk  
music.

## From the Societies...

### The Bognor Regis RM Club

The Bognor Regis Recorded Music Club continues to flourish with currently 84 members. We have had a splendid season, thanks to our Programme Secretary Jean Jarvis, including a presentation by Tony Lindsey, the International Secretary of the Delius Society, whom we discovered lives locally. A bonus for Bognor Regis!

We look forward to our new season starting in October, and in the meantime have organised a coach to take us to Portsmouth Guildhall at the end of April to hear a programme by the BSO playing works by Elgar, Mendelssohn and Saint-Saëns.

Our At Home programmes continue throughout the summer, thanks to members who open their homes and produce an evening of music.

After serving for twelve years as Administrative Secretary of the Club I am about to resign from this post. Long live the FRMS!

Enid Wenban, Secretary

### Cardiff Recorded Music Society

On a bright sunny day in February 65 people gathered in Aberdare Hall in Cathays Park, Cardiff for a most enjoyable social event. Aberdare Hall, an imposing red brick building, was built in 1897 as accommodation for the female students of the University and still retains that function. The imposing and spacious rooms provided an ideal setting for the day. As well as members and friends from Cardiff there were members from other societies present from Bristol, Swansea, Tavistock, Wolverhampton and the chairman of the Federation, Mr Allan Child.

We started with a sherry reception and then had a delicious lunch in the panelled dining room. After coffee we were then ready to enjoy the afternoon's entertainment. The speaker was Lyndon Jenkins, the Special Projects Manager from Symphony Hall in Birmingham. His talk was exactly what his audiences have come to expect, informative and entertaining, and spiced throughout with amusing anecdotes and asides. He could have regaled us for hours with his tales of encounters with such artists as Myra Hess, Kirsten Flagstad, Paul Tortelier, Sir John Barbirolli and Sir Thomas Beecham. Nor was the Welsh dimension overlooked (after all, he was born in Swansea). He told of the occasion when as a young man he heard Dr John Morgan Nicholas of Aberystwyth playing a piece on the piano in which he thought he recognised the imprint of the great J S Bach. Dr Morgan modestly informed him that it was

## From the Societies...

only a piece for oboe and piano he had written himself. Since then *Melody* has been taken up by such artists as Leon Goossens and Evelyn Rothwell (Lady Barbirolli). The recordings ranged from *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*, Purcell played by Barbirolli, Rachmaninov's *Cello Concerto* and *Alla Marcia* by Sibelius. He ended with a recording of *Evening Prayer* from an evocative musical setting of *Under Milk Wood* rendered with great feeling by Geraint Evans and accompanying male voice choir.

Finally it was time to have a cup of tea and out into the late afternoon sunshine. Everyone agreed that the day had been most successful — a lovely setting, people with an interest in music getting together to listen to an excellent speaker.

*E Ann Davies (Cardiff)*

### Cirencester Gramophone and Music Club

The last Club event attended by Jim Grantham, Hon. Secretary of the Cirencester Gramophone and Music Club whose obituary appears elsewhere in this issue, was the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Club. The planning of this event was started many months ago by Jim with Ray Brown, a co-founder and the Club's first Secretary, who was its Chairman when he died unexpectedly, although he had been in poor health for some time, in November last. His colleagues in the venture, who would not be remembered by many members today, were Bryan Ratcliffe, the first Chairman, and Bert Reeves, the first Treasurer. Although not a founder-member, Jim's connection had been long and he and Ray were keen to match the success of the 25th Anniversary. After Ray's death, it was Jim's enthusiasm that carried the project forward and he bore the brunt of dealing with the inevitable emergencies, such as the illness 48 hours before the cellist in the string quartet booked to play.

When Saturday 12 May arrived, over 60 Club members and their guests were in the Masonic Hall in Cirencester to hear the Club's Chairman, Lady Jill Charnley, introduce the opening speaker, Dr William Boughton, Music Director of the English Symphony Orchestra and Artistic Director of the Nimbus Foundation, who spoke about the last 25 years of British music with recorded illustrations. Then followed tea to wash down some of that 'tough fare' before the Club's President, Jill White, Music Director of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, and Vice-President Sue Stephens, the TV journalist, entertained the audience to Castaway's Discs during which Jill revealed fascinating



(and unsuspected?) aspects of her life and let us hear some favourite recordings. Three members of the Gloucestershire Youth Orchestra — Nicholas Hunt (keyboard), Alison Gott and Kevin Weaver (violinists) - then entertained us to a varied programme, concluding with the Bach *Double Violin Concerto*. The two violinists are members of the NYO of GB and Jill White had occasion for satisfaction as the trio finished their programme to great applause.

The celebration, truly an event to remember, finished with a sit-down buffet supper and, although he must have been exhausted, Jim Grantham would have felt great satisfaction that he had provided a 'benchmark' in the life of the Club to match the 10th Anniversary. The local newspaper, the Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Standard, printed a report illustrated with a photograph taken by a Club member of the birthday cake being cut by Lady Charney, with Jill White, Sue Stephens and William Boughton.

### The Eastbourne RMS

We have just completed an enjoyable 54th Season finishing with our AGM and a selection of 'Songs from the Shows' ably presented by Alan Gilby.

There are many highlights, too many to cover in detail. Each presenter had his own unique style of presentation and content was as wide as it was varied. Adrian Falks, Peter Katin, Sheila Southwell, Ted Perry and David Edwards were our visiting speakers. From the Society, Robert Milnes presented a programme on 'Sir Adrian Boult; David Rhodes on 'Finding the Right Key; Helene Timlett on "Saint-Saëns and his Circle"; Robin Gregory on "Operettas"; Alan Thomas on "Great recordings of the Century"; Christine Woodard on "Matchless and Admirable" - Haydn in England; and Clive Wilkes on "Aspects of Opera in the Twentieth Century". Colin Tarn, our patron, dealt with Shostakovich in his own inimitable way, winning, I suspect, some conversions to his music. Alan Gilby, busy as ever, compiled a "Quiz Night" and presented "Members Requests". Alan also operated the equipment for all our speakers, thank you Alan.

I must pay tribute to Secretary Eileen Howell and all the Officers and committee members, our Chairman Meryl Cohen even hobbling on Zimmers, crutches, and a three a three wheeled gadget following a fall — dedication indeed! Thanks to all of them and to many not on the committee for their work in creating such a stimulating and friendly society and a season in which our membership reached 91, going against the trend of people not turning out on cold dark evenings. We have an excellent venue which

helps but most importantly it is the friendship, the good atmosphere that creates and 'word of mouth' recommendation which is the best of all advertising.

Under our newly elected Chairman, Norma Manton we look forward to the next season with eager anticipation.

*Alan Thomas, President.*

### The King's Lynn Musical Society

The Lynn Musical Society was established in 1831 "for Playing of Overtures &c. Singing Songs, Duetts and Glee's". It was re-formed in 1891 as the King's Lynn Musical Society (KLMS), a choral group that performed at regular intervals until its demise in 1995. The following year an open meeting of interested people again resurrected it, this time as a society aimed at improving the appreciation and understanding of classical music.

We started with a core of about 47 members and with the residual assets of the old Society purchased a CD/tape player, amplifier and speakers. We discovered the FRMS and joined initially to take advantage of their arrangements for Performing Rights. We booked the fine, Georgian Assembly Room in the King's Lynn Town Hall where Peter Donohoe gave the inaugural talk on 26th February 1996. He subsequently agreed to become our patron. There were two more meetings in the spring of 1997 and we sponsored a talk by Lady Walton during the 47th annual King's Lynn Festival; we have since sponsored a suitable event at each Festival.

Each of the subsequent four seasons has followed a similar pattern. An illustrated lecture or lecture recital takes place, usually in the Town Hall, every eight weeks from September to June. We have had excellent talks by Antony Hopkins, John Rutter, Stephen Cleobury, Arthur Wills and Martin Neary and several splendid recitals including two from the locally-based Bingham String Quartet. Amongst several distinguished instrumentalists have been Crispian Steele-Perkins, Rodney Slatford and Peter Pople. Joy Puritz talked informatively about her grandmother Elizabeth Schumann. Local musicians have also contributed to our programme.

Membership presently costs £20 a year and guests pay £6 a meeting (free to other FRMS-affiliated society members). We now have 100 members. Schools are regularly invited to attend at no charge. We attract a small grant from the local council. We are in the process of revising our constitution for the second time to satisfy the Charity Commissioners, so that we be registered and thus able to reclaim tax paid by subscribing members — but that's another story.

Our current programme is on the FRMS website and the 2001-2 programme is ready for the printers. The 2002-3 programme is well advanced; several excellent speakers were approached at the recent FRMS weekend meeting in Stratford-upon-Avon (itself a splendid event!). Do come and visit us.

*Muriel Brindle, Hon Secretary*

## Loughborough RMS

The Loughborough RMS have just completed a very successful 40th Anniversary season (see below). Of the eighteen meetings, no less than twelve were given by guest presenters including among them, the President of the FRMS, Edward Greenfield O.B.E. M.A. Although only a small society, we have had an average of around 35 members and visitors to all of our meetings, hoping this will continue in our new season, beginning in September.

*Ray Wainwright, Hon secretary*

From Hein Kropholler, Hon. Life Member:

Particularly at the time of a major anniversary one's thoughts turn to the highlights of the past 40 years. Although not actually founder members, my late wife Margaret and I joined the society in 1962/3. I have many memories of the early days when Barry Thomas was the secretary and Alan MacDonald, Head of music at Loughborough College was our president. Like so many societies the surge of technical progress with recordings and equipment that followed the war made first class classical music very much more accessible. Fancy a cartridge mass of only 5 grams and being able to drop records without breaking them!! At that time we met in a church hall with our chairman flying in at the last moment from a nearby village. Barry Thomas and his fiancée arranged a musical evening in a field where they had done horse riding. We all sat in our cars which surrounded the speakers. Soon after Barry married and moved away from Loughborough. The society dropped in membership and we had one meeting in a chartered surveyors office — all four of us.

But soon membership increased when Leslie joined and he arranged for the reports of our meetings to appear in the local paper, The Loughborough Echo. Soon we had a big influx of new members and moved to the smaller of two meeting rooms in the Loughborough Library. One particular annual presentation in the programme was of recent recordings. In those days there were very many pieces that had not yet been recorded.

Our next president was Eric Jordan the Loughborough carillonneur. He had built himself an international reputation playing this splendid instru-

ment, a first world war memorial. He used to give a programme most years and also gave us a special tour and performance of the carillon. In addition regular trips to the De Montfort Hall easily filled a coach as we had regular visits from the Halle Orchestra. Many of us had a chance to hear Sir John Barbirolli's gift of lifting the level of performance of the Hallé orchestra to such a high level.

We were then joined by another active music critic Tony Foord and membership increased by leaps and bounds. At this point Margaret and I moved to Manchester. Margaret had served for many years on the committee of the society. At that time we had some 46 members. We were made honorary life members of the LRMS. But we kept in contact and about every second year we would come to Loughborough to present a programme.

When Eric Jordan died, Jack Bates, a staunch member of many years' standing, became the new president. In 1996 the society moved to the Centre for Deaf People. In May of this year I was able to present the last programme that Margaret and I had planned for the LRMS, "Great Partnerships" at the splendid new venue. A good opportunity to renew many friendships in Loughborough

*Hein Kropholler*

## Worcester RMS — 60 Years Old

We were thrilled and feel greatly honoured to receive the congratulations of the FRMS on reaching our 60th Anniversary and the magnificent historical record you have sent us which we shall treasure and display to all our members at our meetings when we start our 61st season in September.

I think only two of us can date our membership back to the 1940s and even then not right to the beginning. I think I joined in 1947, was a committee member by the following year and have been ever since, including being Hon Secretary since 1964. So most of our failings can be laid at my door.

We are fortunate that we have been able to hold our meetings for the last 35 years in the Old Palace, Worcester. The building is only second in age to Worcester Cathedral and we meet in the Great Hall with its views of the Severn and Malvern Hills, It is very comfortable and seats 50-60 although our average is nearer 40.

We still have fifteen fortnightly meetings with six guest speakers and our own members presenting programmes. The music usually follows a concert pattern and we are probably unusual in that we publish in advance exactly what is going to be played. We take the chance that it does not put anyone off!

*Walter Cullis, Hon Secretary*

Crossword

(Mainly Music!) By Hein Kropholler

Nimbus Records have very kindly agreed to continue to sponsor this crossword and will give a prize of any CD from their catalogue to the winner who will be chosen by a draw from all correct answers received by the editor before the 1st January. In the event of a correct answer not being received, the best attempt (at the discretion of the editor) will win the award. If you are nearly there, chance your arm!



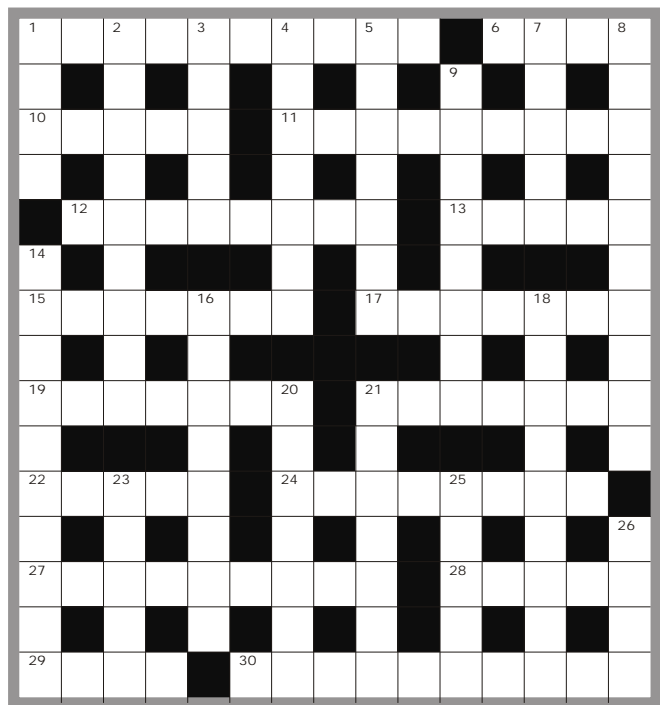
ACROSS

- 1 Very Soft. [10]
- 6 On footwear or clothes but never music. [5]
- 10 A tune in a ring! [5]
- 11 Small portable reed organ. [9]
- 12 Quality of sound when felts wear on piano. [8]
- 13 Where select musical events are held. [5]
- 15 The hero of one of Verdi's operas. [7]
- 17 Move to a note not part of the harmony in the French way. [7]
- 19 Russian-American dancer, choreographer, ballet master etc. [7]
- 21 Felt a thrilling or ringing sensation. [7]
- 22 Where first report of musical performance is read. [5]
- 24 Audience's faces all showing no reaction to performance. [8]
- 27 Musical stories [9]
- 28 Recording of this type of performance can be very exciting. [1,4]
- 29 Sore jumbled becomes love god. [4]
- 30 One of Henry Wood's audience? [10]

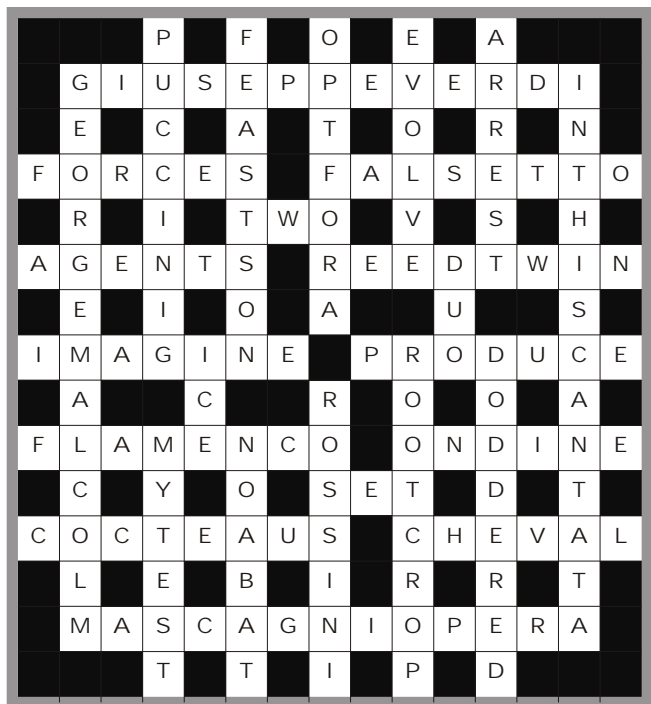
DOWN

- 1 Composer; bit of. [4]
- 2 23 does sums! [1, 4, 4]
- 3 Shankar's country. [5]
- 4 English music critic. [7]
- 5 Haydn number 96? [7]
- 7 Ornament comprising rapid alternation [5]
- 8 Gradually getting quieter. [10]
- 9 Got sheen scrambled and leaves. [4, 4]
- 14 Title of major music magazine. [10]
- 16 How to advertise musical event? [4, 4]
- 18 Colourless water sprite. [4, 5]
- 20 The last seats at the top maybe? [3, 4]
- 21 Small window at top of door. [7]
- 23 Record label; muse. [5]
- 25 This sort of song is church ritual. [5]
- 26 Back of hall. [4]

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Solution to Crossword 134



There were six correct solutions submitted for crossword number 134, and the lucky winner picked at random was Mrs Bryant of Norwich. Others who had correct answers were; Doreen Lampard of Somerton, Brendan Sadler of Glastonbry, Miss E. M. Thompson of York, Geoff Trinick of Cardiff and Les Warner of Godalming.

Mrs Von Stewart of Kidderminster and Derek Stott of Swinton each submitted good entries with only one error each.





## Federation of Recorded Music Societies Ltd.

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