Journal of the Conductors Guild

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Conductors Guild
. . . Advancing the Art and Profession

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Commentary

Frequently I will hear someone say, "That performer [conductor] really brought that piece to life." It's a strange thing to say because that is essentially the result of every performance. What they actually mean is that it was a performance that allowed them to understand a composition or some aspect of it that might otherwise remain hidden through countless other hearings. The ability of regularly presenting works in a way that is revelatory to even the most experienced listeners is what distinguishes the great performing artists.

Great performers are great teachers, not necessarily of their instruments, but of the repertoire they present. Making material meaningful and clarifying ideas is what great teaching is all about. Conductors have the doubled challenge of revealing musical ideas not only to their audiences, but also to the ensembles that eventually become the medium of transmission to these listeners. As Bruno Walter once stated, "All conducting is teaching." It is providing access to the composer's world.

In this issue of the *Journal of the Conductors Guild* we have what may seem to be a disparate collection of articles that upon closer examination reveal a variety of themes all connected to accessibility:

- Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* has been the first point of access to the orchestra for three generations of concertgoers, and Clinton F. Nieweg and Jennifer A. Johnson have provided us with a valuable "Score and Parts" to help us get to an accurate performance.
- Legendary conducting pedagogue, Ilya Musin, led a generation of Russian conductors to access a level of raw emotional energy in their performances that became the hallmark of their performance style, and Brenda Leach has made his teaching available to our readers.
- Pierre Monteux gave the world access to a remarkable repertoire of twentieth-century masterpieces through the famous premieres he led, and we are able to witness the execution of his art through the film legacy that Charles Barber has catalogued for us.
- Joan Tower has been praised for her uncompromising but accessible compositional style, and Tom Erdmann helps us to better know this great American composer.
- Henry Bloch provides two insightful reviews of texts that help their readers get to the heart of opera as an historical and living art form.

Jacques Voois recently reminded me that Max Rudolf frequently bemoaned that most conductors spent too little time researching the works they performed. It is that prefatory study that allows us to get to the heart of the music that we present, and it is through well-informed performances that we are able to give our audiences access to a world of great music.

Happy reading!

Jonathan Green

An Interview with Joan Tower

By Thomas Erdmann

Composer and pianist Joan Tower is described by *American Record Guide* as, "One of America's most honored and performed composers." The *Louisville Courier-Journal*, a newspaper not unfamiliar with the importance of contemporary classical music in today's society, wrote, "[Tower's] works have helped define American art music over the last 20 years." *Fanfare* described the CD of her solo concertos with the Louisville Orchestra as "a dazzling yet well-deliberated release that enlivens the prospects for American music." The *Rocky Mountain News* wrote of the same works, "This is fresh, new music that is gimmick free." You get the picture. This small sampling of critical voices echoes a constant refrain throughout all of Tower's notices: the power and emotional strength of her music are likely to last throughout the ages. Tower is a composer of dazzling vision who intuitively knows the authority of music and can fashion human performance from virtuosic instrumentalists, through her scores, into rare and lasting moments of expressive aural beauty.

Tower was born in 1938 in New Rochelle, New York. Raised in South America, she attended Bennington College in Vermont before earning her Master's and Doctorate degrees from Columbia University in New York. While in New York she taught piano at the Greenwich House School of Music and established what became known as the Da Capo Chamber Players in 1969. As founder and pianist of the group she created an opportunity to compose extensively for the virtuoso ensemble and its members before she left in 1984. Among the many compositional awards she won during her tenure with that ensemble is the Naumburg Award for Chamber Music.

Noted critic Susan Feder wrote, "The turning point in Tower's career came with her first orchestral commission, *Seqouia*." Tower chose the powerful and towering tree of the same name as her point of inspiration written in 1981. The piece was later programmed by Leonard Slatkin during the 1984 subscription series of the St. Louis Symphony and eventually led to her acceptance of a position as Composer-In-Residence with that orchestra starting in 1985, replacing Joseph Schwantner. Tower remained there until 1987 and helped set up a chamber series of 20th-century music in that city. Among the many honors included in her continuing compositional life are a Guggenheim, a Koussevitzky Foundation Grant, several NEA Fellowships, the Grawemeyer Award, the Delaware Symphony's Alfred I. DuPont Award for Distinguished American Composers, and induction into the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Among her other compositions are concertos for violin, piano, flute, and clarinet, *Music for Cello and Orchestra*, *Fanfare For The Uncommon Woman*, and her *Concerto For Orchestra*.

Tower's music has been performed by countless orchestras, including those of New York, San Francisco, Chicago, Minnesota, Cincinnati, Tokyo, Toronto, the National Symphony, and the London Philharmonia. *Sequoia* was choreographed by The Royal Winnipeg Ballet during a tour throughout Canada, Europe and Russia, and Helgi Tomasson and the San Francisco Ballet choreographed Tower's award-winning *Silver Ladders*. Her many commissions include those from the New York Philharmonic and renowned

clarinetist Richard Stolzman with the Emerson Quartet. Tower is currently the Asher Edelman Professor of Music at Bard College, a position she has held since 1972, and Composer-In-Residence with St. Luke's Orchestra. Her music is published exclusively through Associated Music Publishers.

The following interview took place during the summer of 2003:

I know you grew up in South America where your father was a mining engineer, but I was wondering if you come from a musical family?

My grandmother was a semi-professional pianist, but I never knew her. My father was very musical and grew up with a lot of music around him. When I started growing up we had a lot of musicales in the house of mostly popular music. My mother would play the piano, my father would sing, and I would play some percussion instrument along with them. As I got better at the piano, I replaced her at the piano (laughing). Those were very happy times. We would sing all of the old songs. It was a lot of fun.

Photograph by Steve J. Sherman

How did you originally come to learn and study the piano?

My father knew I was talented from very early on and got me a very good piano teacher in Larchmont at the age of six. Actually, if I had stayed with her I would probably be a professional pianist today (laughing). I was started very fast and quite strong from an early age. Then we moved to South America when I was nine and there my father found me another teacher in La Paz, Bolivia. He kept finding me other piano teachers as time went on. He was very determined for me to continue with music.

Did you have the composition "bug" from an early age?

No. I didn't have it all. I didn't know about composing. I had music books, was playing a lot of music, loved to play the piano and was really into the music of Chopin and Beethoven, as well as into dancing. But composing, no, I wasn't doing that. I wasn't around composers. It wasn't an environment that was conducive to composing. I fooled around on the piano, but I don't remember composing too much. I didn't start composing until I was 18 and in college.

You mentioned you love to dance, and I read where you said that when you listen to pop music you have a strong urge to dance. You also call yourself a choreographer of sound. Could you talk about your early experiences with dance?

When I was growing up in Larchmont, I was taking dance lessons along with piano lessons. I remember always being very excited about them. I was in all the ballets. But then I started to gain weight (laughing), not a lot, but some, which is not a good thing for a dancer. When I went to South America they didn't, where I was, have ballet. They did, however, have social dancing. They celebrated all of the Saints' Days, which is practically every other day. This was always an excuse for a party. It was so much fun and exciting,

because there was such a Latin passion for music, dance, and fun. I really locked into that with percussion. At the time I was a little too young to dance myself because I was just one of the kids running around, so they would give me a percussion instrument. Then as I got older I got more and more into the dancing.

Jazz pianist Chick Corea has credited his study of percussion with helping him develop as a pianist. With your strong background in percussion and your being an excellent pianist, I was wondering if you felt a similar tie-in between the two performance media?

I think there are several types of musicians. Some are visceral/physical and some are more mental. I think I'm more of the visceral/physical type. Percussion is a rhythmically based visceral musical expression, which I continue to this day. I've written a lot for percussion. I think there are composers who are more rhythmic, those who are more melodic and those who are harmonic-contrapuntal. You can do a laser across different DNAs, I call them, of composers, and I'm on the rhythmic side. I'm definitely in that camp along with Stravinsky. Percussion is dear to my heart; I just love it. I just wrote a percussion piece entitled *DNA* that was recently premiered and will be performed next week [this interview occurred in June of 2003] at Tanglewood.

How did you come to choose Bennington College for collegiate study?

I was in Boston at the time and wanted to go to Radcliffe, because I had a boyfriend who was at Harvard. I met with an admissions counselor at Radcliffe, and was assigned a very smart woman. This is an example of how one person can change your life. She interviewed me for two hours, a long time. She said, "You know, I think I can get you into Radcliffe, but here's the deal. I want you to go up and check out Bennington College in Vermont." I had never heard of it. She said, "If you don't like Bennington I'll try to get you into Radcliffe." I said that's great. Well I ran up to Bennington and fell in love with it. First impressions for a prospective college student are very important, and one of the first things I saw was a professor coming out of class in blue jeans. I thought that was really cool. You have to remember the time period and all. The administration was housed in a barn, and the music building is all stone. The whole thing just got to me, and the whole curriculum was tailor-made for me. So I went to Bennington.

Bennington is known as having as a big composer enclave. Is that how you were drawn to being a composer?

In class they started us off by having us compose and hearing our own music right away. The first week I was there, the assignment was to write a piece, something I had never been asked to do before. I wrote a piece and heard it performed. I was so critical of it, everything was wrong with it. That was the beginning of what I call a trap (laughing). I had to get it better and right. They didn't have a cookie-cutter recipe track music program, which I think I would have died in. They allowed me to develop my own voice, which was extremely important because I was a real strong rebel. I owe a lot to Bennington.

As a composition teacher today, do you find yourself teaching in the same mode as they taught there?

Yes.

Is there a single overriding point you try to pass along to your students?

I always start out my composition class with a statement that says, "This is not an assignment and I never want you to view this as an assignment, but I want you to write a piece that you care deeply about." I continue that mantra all semester long. You see, in school, for the students, their assignments are the mantra of the day, and it's like they have to take their Milk of Magnesia. If they do, then teachers give them an A. I keep telling them that this is not what my classes are about. I keep circling around the idea of caring, because if they can intimately care about what they're doing they'll learn a lot. The other way they'll only learn facts and not produce anything they can say is theirs.

After graduation you went to Columbia. How did you come to make that choice?

Columbia was in New York and I had gotten a job

at the Greenwich Settlement Music House. I had a friend who was going to Columbia and it just felt like the place to be.

I know it was while you were living in this settlement community that you organized what became the Da Capo Chamber Players. Could you talk about how this significant ensemble came to be formed?

I was teaching at the Greenwich House, and there was a little hall there. I asked the director if I could start a music series and he said, "Sure, we'd be delighted, but you'll have to raise the money for it." (Laughing) This was important to me, so I did it. I brought in the best performers I could find from New York to play on the series, and once in a while I would play with them. The series was all contemporary music and a tremendous education. It was about six years into the series when I noticed it would be better if I had a group that was mobile, instead of just at this one place; in other words, I thought it would be great to establish a group. So I found the players I had worked the most with and who were at my level and those I could work with, and that was how the Da Capo Players was formed. The ensemble got better and better and then got so good I had to leave (laughing).

I read that but didn't want to say it myself.

I couldn't play sixteenth-notes at a certain speed (laughing).

In Hollywood writers and authors are usually advised against attending rehearsals of their material because of the changes that are sometimes made due to the process of production. I know as a composer you work very closely with the musicians who are to play your works, but I was wondering if you like to be at the rehearsals?

It depends on the ensemble. Orchestra rehearsals are much more limiting than ensemble and solo rehearsals. In the solo you have much more latitude, but problems increase exponentially with the increasing size of the group as the amount of time you can actually talk to the artist decreases. The orchestra is the hardest because, first of all, they don't want to do your piece and secondly they don't want you there, especially the conductor, unless he happens to be composer-friendly. It's a difficult situation with the orchestra. Since I grew up with the Da Capo Players and having to learn about instrumental problems as a composer, it was important for me to understand what I did right and what I didn't do right in my compositions. I don't think the composer should be at the first, second, or third rehearsal, if there are 10 rehearsals. The players need to work it out the best they can (laughing). I have a lot of respect for what they do. At some point I love to come to see if I've done it right. I certainly take any feedback they can give me. Whether there are concerns of awkwardness, register problems, etc. I have tremendous respect for players and their instincts. If something is not working, I immediately blame myself, not the players. I think there is a big gap between the way players and composers think, a huge gap.

In relation to that, I read where you said, "Our superstar performers are not living up to their responsibilities when they ignore the music of our own time."

I do believe that.

Is this part of the gap? How can we educate performers to think like composers in order to bring the two closer together? Is this possible?

Having traveled around the string quartet world for the last 12 years, I have to say that string quartets are composers because they hammer everything out as creatively as possible because they're in a very competitive medium with lots of quartets and lots of great literature. They are, to me, among the most creative people in the business. Then you go to the other extreme, the orchestral performer, who is, basically, not supposed to be thinking. That is a very tough situation because of the number of people involved, the economics of the situation, and the time limits imposed. I know quite a bit about this having now been Composer-In-Residence with two orchestras. Maybe it's not fair to penalize the attitudes of orchestra members because of the situation they're in. I know that inside every orchestra there are players who love to play new music, but you have to find them.

Then in every orchestra I also know there are also players who hate to play new music, and you avoid them. It's important to know what world within music you're talking about, and then you look at the structure of that world and you see what relationship it has to composers. In the world of soloists we now have Yo-Yo Ma. God bless him, because he just does what he wants. He has a tremendous curiosity about things and he just goes for his curiosity without regard to what the market will bear. He just goes for it, and the market follows him, which is wonderful. He has credited a whole legacy of pieces from composers and he's always looking for composers. He's opened a significant door for composers because he's so visible. Then there are a few people waddling behind him who are trying to keep up, like Emmanuel Ax, and thinking, "Well, maybe I ought to do something here." They all watch Yo-Yo and there is peer pressure to keep up, but I think that if they had their druthers they would like to keep making $50,000 playing the Mendelssohn concerto over and over because it's so much easier. They would like to go on making the money and doing other things, like Itzhak Perlman. He's basically not moving up anywhere, certainly not into composers. I think he's commissioned maybe two or three works in his life. I don't know what the statistics are, but he's certainly not doing his job. Nor is Pavarotti, and here I'm just picking the most major and visible people I can think of. Then the orchestra world is running scared and the first thing they do is eliminate all new music because they say the audiences leave. That's a myth. I know there is a lot of new music being written today. I know they would love it. They would not leave. There are a lot of composers of my generation whom they would love. There is a myth that is still floating around, and the fear of the economy makes them run as fast as possible from new music. It's a very sad situation.

In thinking back to the days of J.S. Bach, the prevailing mindset was to never do music that was older than 15 years. It was all about doing the newmusic. Today that's certainly not the case. In order to turn this around, what should orchestra conductors know about new music before they begin to investigate it?

There's really a bigger issue here, and that is when a performer or conductor is approached with a new piece there is a fear that sets in. Not one of marketing so much, but of, "Is this going to be a good enough piece?" So right there they stop dead in their tracks because they're not competent enough about their own opinions of new music because they haven't been doing it. It would be like me saying, "Okay, I'm going to start a baroque festival. Who are the interesting and good baroque composers?" This is not a field I'm an expert in. So if I'm in charge of a baroque festival, I'm a bad choice (laughing). Here it's the reverse, conductors are fearful of their own likes and dislikes and they have to be alone with their own decisions. It's not like the world said, "John Smith's *First Symphony* is a great piece." Maybe two or three people have played it, but not everybody has decided on it. So there's a risk factor there that is very large and most conductors and soloists who have big careers based on Beethoven, Brahms, and Mendelssohn are afraid their success is going to be tarnished if they pick the wrong piece. So there is a musical issue here which is very fundamental, which is that musicians have to learn to stand alone on their likes and dislikes of new music. This is something that many of them are very fearful of, except for people like Leonard Slatkin. He will take a piece against all odds, something totally unknown, which is what he did with me. I was known in New York, but that was it. He just happened to like my first orchestra piece.

Sequoia.

Right. Someone like Yo-Yo Ma will take someone he's interested in, who may be someone who isn't all that interesting, but Yo-Yo doesn't care. He's interested and fearless. He'll take that piece and put it out there. The important thing is if they, performers and/or conductors, have one success with one new composition. I've had that experience over and over again with people. People will play one new piece of mine, and while this sounds egotistical of me I have to say I've actually had this happen, and then the doors will fly open for them. Suddenly they're interested in other composers, because they've had one good experience. I think

that happened with Sophie Mutter. I think her first new music was Lutoslawski, I think, I might be wrong. He wrote a piece for her, and she fell in love with it. After that she started to play a lot of new pieces. It's a question of going for one piece and one composer and really believing in it and being willing to stand alone with your opinion and that's what opens the doors for these people.

I read where you said, "Classical music is suffering under the weight of being too much in the past as compared to pop music, which is very much in the present and is a quite healthy art...New stuff is being presented all the time and tossed around and competed with and bought and sold." You've also mentioned that the lines between these two types of music are not blurred enough. How do we do this?

The problem is that we're competing with a whole generation that's been brought up with guitars, drums, and songs with words. They have their own music and audio equipment in their basements, and they start very young having opinions about this and that - things like lyrics, use of the guitar, etc. That's where we have to start, with that young creative input, such as the use of vibrato on violin, that kind of level of input. That's the only way you're going to get the real opinion making that will fuel and fire the passion for our music. The audience has to feel empowered to have an opinion. Look at the reaction that happens at rock concerts - screaming and yelling and thousands and thousands of people and it's really loud. There is a passion there, a real passion. In our field it's like, "I can't have an opinion about Beethoven because he's way too important." So people just sit there, read their program notes, and wither away, and maybe even enjoy it. But to have an opinion about Beethoven? Oh please.

I think the one lesson of the American Idol fad is, given the choice, the American public will pick quality over the superficiality of appearance, because the people that have won truly have ability and are winning without the great looks that some of the other contestants have. This physical image some of the other contestants have, is the image we see marketed by the record companies - people with images like Britney Spears, Christina Aguilera, Mandy Moore, Jessica Simpson, etc. These are people who are judged by our society as being good- looking regardless of whether they have any ability or talent. Given the chance to vote, as in American Idol, the American public does not vote for the pretty face. They vote on what they hear.

That's interesting.

With that in mind, how do we make audiences understand that their opinions are the right opinions?

I was giving a pre-concert talk in St. Louis and this guy came up to me and said, "I don't want to be educated about new music, I just want to enjoy it and be interested in it." I said, "I totally agree with you. I don't need to educate you if you've got good musical instincts. You'll either hate my piece or love it or be bored by it, but I respect your instincts." You see orchestras bring composers in with them under the educational arm, but they don't bring in Beethoven or Ravel under the educational arm (laughing). They just expect you'll enjoy that music. I've given a lot of pre-concert talks and am to the point where I become a person rather than an educator. I'm usually lively and funny, but I tell jokes that have a message. For instance, I introduce myself as a composer who is above ground, and everybody laughs. Then I tell them that that's actually not all that funny. It will go on like this with messages that are twined with jokes so that by the time I'm finished I practically have a standing ovation after my work is performed because I've become a person who is personable and approachable. I went to a folk-rock music concert on the top of a mountain where the Utah Symphony was doing one of my fanfares. There was a country musician who did the whole first half of the concert. When he came out he immediately made the audience feel welcome. He said, "How are you guys? It's a beautiful day today." I was watching him really closely and noticed how he made them feel welcome. It was like he was in their living room. Then in the second half of the concert a classical music guy came out to give a talk about one of the pieces, and it was like he was giving a doctoral lecture at a uni-

versity. You could just see people crouch into the hill and into their hot dogs and the food they were eating because he was intimidating them. It was as if he were saying, "You don't know anything, so I'm going to tell you." I saw this in a nutshell and realized that this is one of the big problems with classical music. We need to assume that the people are listening to the music. The most challenging talk I ever gave was to a group of teenagers at a south Los Angeles high school. It was filled with gangs. In fact, we, the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and I, came in under guard. I watched this one guy talk to them, and he knew how to handle them. They were mostly Hispanic and African-American. To keep the kids from doing anything violent there were armed guards there. It was amazing. When it was my turn, I decided to be vulnerable to them. I started by introducing myself in Spanish; I speak fluent Spanish. Then I asked how many of them had written some music, and about 90 percent of the hands went up. Then I asked how many of them had written the piece down, and about 50 percent of the hands stayed up. Then I asked how many of them have passed the piece over to someone else to play, and only about five hands remained up. I said, "You know what, I wrote this piece down, note for note, and every single one of the musicians have something on their page. I am scared to death of what they think of this piece." Then I talked about that fear. I then explained I didn't have a title for the work yet, but I would really appreciate their input. Well after that concert with Haydn and me was over; there was a line a mile long waiting to talk to me. I was so grateful I was strong enough to be vulnerable to them and to the orchestra. I think kids appreciate vulnerability.

With regard to commissions, you've said you only do commissions for people who are willing to work on the music with you. Is that part of your vulnerability?
Did I say that? No. (Laughing) It doesn't work, unfortunately. Now I'm going to rephrase that. Now I only write pieces for soloists or ensembles who want the piece. The rehearsal time with me is dependent on the organization.

Is that also a function of the fact that you're getting so many commissions now?
Yes.

You've mentioned that you don't like watching the conductor when you listen to your music. I remember Stravinsky once wrote that you can not separate the visual of the conductor and the musicians from the music.
I don't agree with that. Some conductors don't move at all and still create powerful stuff, and some conductors move all over the place and create dry music.

Given that, why do you close your eyes when listening to your music?
I close my eyes with everything because I listen much better when I don't look. The ears and the eyes are very interesting. The Royal Winnipeg Ballet was dancing my orchestral piece *Sequoia*. The conductor was really into my piece and really wanted to do a good job. The choreography was so fascinating on stage that I wasn't really hearing what the orchestra was doing. The conductor kept coming up to me saying, "What did you think about the trumpet solo in measure such and such." I told him I was sorry, but I was so focused on the stage that I'm not hearing what the orchestra is doing. I told him that the next time they ran it I would close my eyes (laughing).

I've read that when a composer on the program is a woman composer, you like to be reminded of this. One would think, well, me being a guy, I would think a woman would just want to be known as a composer, and not the member of any specific gender classification. I was wondering if you could talk about this.
I've been fighting so hard for women that I separate the social problems and the social-cultural problems apart. I also don't think it's important musically if the composer is a man or a woman because people can't tell. Actually, we did a study of that at the NEA, and people couldn't tell any difference between music composed by men or music by women. The music isn't any different and it can't be distinguished or disguised as either

by a man or a woman, but culturally and socially, we need to remind people that they are hearing something unusual, namely that the music is by a woman. For example, when I get up in front of an orchestral audience I'll say, "I'm happy to be a composer who is above ground and a woman." After they've laughed I'll ask, "How many women composers have you heard in the last 10 years?" I just bring up the point that it's a rarity, a scarcity and it needs to be addressed. In that sense, I always make an issue out of it because it needs to be addressed.

Many critics have compared your music to Beethoven. Dave Douglas, the modern forward-thinking jazz trumpeter says that critics have an important role. Then there are others who don't read critics and follow their own muse. So, what is the role of the critic, or do you not read the critics?
Unfortunately, yes, I've read them (laughing). This is a complex area and I sympathize with them, because on the one hand they often don't have enough space; they have to know everything about everything; they have to make sure they're saying the right things by not making any mistakes; they're pretty much alone with their opinions; and the more alone they are the better as this will give them a stamp as not following orders from anyone and that they have their own viewpoint. I sympathize with that and admire that and they need to be given more credit than they get. On the other hand, I wish they wouldn't make their statements as if it is "the word" coming down from on high. I wish they would personalize it more, like Tom Johnson used to do in the *Village Voice*. He always started out with the pronoun, "I," as in, "I went to a concert last night, and I was sitting there…" All of a sudden you're reading this from the standpoint that this is one person who was there and he/she is telling you only their opinion and it's no big deal. It is just their particular reaction to a specific event and that the reviewer is not God. I understand some newspapers have editorial guidelines that do not allow the use of the pronoun, "I." I think there are some critics that have great instincts about music, and I think there are some critics that have lousy instincts and I have to figure out which is which in order not to be hurt by them. I can be hurt, especially if it's a new work on a premiere. That experience is like showing your spleen. It's a very vulnerable and anxiety-provoking experience, so I tell my husband that if the review is bad, I don't want to see it, but if it's a good review, I do want to see it (laughing).

How does the process of composition work for you?
For me, it's four or five hours of work a day, and I always start at 1 p.m. and go until 5:30 or 6. It is an absolutely religious habit of mine. If I am buying peanut butter at 12:45 in the afternoon, I will tell the store clerk to hurry up because I have to get home. It's like office hours. I'm very very very persistent about those hours and will give up talking to the President in order to be composing at my allotted time. I've gotten more and more demanding with this as time goes on. If my sister comes to visit, I tell her I can't see her between those hours. It's very important to me. Composing is my life and makes me feel useful, and therefore it's the thing I should do.

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Thomas Erdmann is currently Director of the Elon University Symphony Orchestra and Professor of Music at Elon University in Elon, North Carolina. Erdmann has had four books and over 50 articles published, serves as Jazz Editor of the International Trumpet Guild Journal *and is a staff reviewer at* Jazzreview.com. *He is a pianist and trumpeter who has performed throughout the East and Midwest regions of the United States.*

Scores & Parts

Benjamin Britten's
Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra
Variations and Fugue on a theme of Purcell Op. 34 (1946)

Prepared by Clinton F. Nieweg and Jennifer A. Johnson

ORIGINAL PUBLISHER: Hawkes & Son (London) Ltd. ©1947

SCORES USED: Britten Orchestral Anthology, Volume I (Boosey & Hawkes Music Publishers Ltd. ©1997), Hawkes Full Score ©1947, Hawkes Pocket Score HPS.606 ©1947

The complete title listed above is given when programming the piece using the conductor or a narrator for the narration (in British usage, the "commentary"). When played, with the option given by Britten with orchestra alone, the sub-title only is normally used: **Variations and Fugue on a theme of Henry Purcell Op. 34 (1946).**

Edward Benjamin Britten, Baron Britten (b. Nov. 22, 1913; Lowestoft, Suffolk– d. Dec. 4, 1976; Aldeburgh, Suffolk, England) wrote this piece in 1946, and it has become one of the most performed compositions with narration. While there are a few changes in the Anthology score, there is no evidence of corrections in the current rental parts.

The score and parts have different endings for the theme and each variation so that either version may be played and should be carefully marked for the players. It is sometimes difficult to see the "vide", i.e. the beginning and finish of each ending. A clear explanation of the versions is given by Malcolm MacDonald in the current score, Britten *Orchestra Anthology*, Volume 1.

SCORING:
2 + picc, 2, 2(Bb & A), 2-4.2.3.1-timp. perc. (gong, xylo, cyms a2, susp. cym, tgl, cast., Chinese blocks, whip, BD, SD, tambourine)-harp-strings. Optional speaker's part by Eric Crozier. The duration is c.19 minutes with narration and c.17 minutes without.

REPERTOIRE NOTE:
This familiar standard hardly needs explanation, having become, along with Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*, one of the classic introductions to the sound of the orchestra for young people. In addition to its instructive function, *The Young Person's Guide* is an effervescent and superbly crafted work, one of Britten's most significant tributes to Purcell. It is a showpiece that puts each section of the orchestra through its paces, and the crowning reappearance of the Purcell theme (taken from the incidental music to *Abdelazar*) at the height of the fugue is surely one of the great moments in 20th-century music.

The full score, published in the Boosey and Hawkes Masterworks Library, is available for sale. Britten*: Orchestral Anthology* No.1 ISMN:M060106064; ISBN:0851621929.

Four of Britten's most popular works, including *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* are now published in *The Masterworks Library* - landmark 20th-century works from the Boosey & Hawkes catalogue available for the first time in

full-score format at pocket-score prices with introductory notes, illustrations, and photographs. Ideal for students, conductors, performers, libraries, CD collectors, and general music enthusiasts, it contains: *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, Matinees Musicales, Soirees Musicales, & The Courtly Dances* from *Gloriana.*[1]

A large score, *M060015625*, had been available. The Study Score, HPS.606, ISMN:M060015632, was available for sale but is Temporarily Out of Print. Contact your music retailer for the current status of these two scores.

The orchestra parts are now on rental only from The Boosey & Hawkes rental library, for which the contact in North America is:

Boosey & Hawkes
35 East 21st Street
New York, NY 10010-6212 USA
Telephone 212-358-5300, Fax 212-358-5307

The Percussion Layout:
In the percussion section, besides the timpani player, the composer has scored for 11 instruments and five to six players are needed to cover all parts. The three standard guides on the use of percussion players have recommended different number of players:

The Cotton guide[2] has 5 players (preferably 6) listed:
B.D., Cyms., Sus.Cym., S.D., Tri., Tamb, W.Blk., Casts., Whip, Gong, Xylo.

The Holmstrand guide[3] has two ways to assign the percussion players:
No. 1 "The 5 player version"
1. Xylophone, triangle (Theme E; Var. A + M: 45- 51), gong [tam] med. (Var. I, + M + Fugue), susp. cymbal (roll 3 before ending)
2. Tambourine (Theme E; Var. H + M, Fugue: M), castanets (M), whip (M)
3. Snare drum
4. Cymbals a2, susp. cymbal, Chinese block (Var. M)
5. Bass drum, triangle (Var. M: 18 - 20 + 54- 62)

No. 2 "The 4 player version"
1. Xylophone, triangle (Theme E; Var. A), castanets, whip, susp. cymbal (roll + tri: before Theme F; roll 3 before end), gong (con slancio - end)
2. Snare drum, gong, Chinese block, gong (Var. I)
3. Cymbals a2, susp. cymbal, tambourine, gong (Var. M: 18- 20 + 50- 62)
4. Bass drum, triangle (Var. M: 18- 20 + 50 - 62)
   If 5 perc. players: Everything can be played.
   If 4 perc. players: Triangle & Gong must be omitted (Var.M: bar 45- 50).
   Sometimes cymbals a2 replaced by susp. cymbal.

The de Vlieger guide[4] lists 6 players arranged as:
1. Xylo, Tri
2. SD, Tri
3. Cyms
4. BD
5. Tambourine, Gong
6. Chinese block, Whip, Cast.

Britten requests in the score "at least 3 percussion players. (A temporary or emergency situation)" In that case many orchestras leave out some percussion instruments in the tutti sections.

Film:
The information about the film containing this music can be found at www.sdlmusic.com, and the narration can also be accessed at this site. Their blurb is as follows:

Two classic education films of the forties from the Crown Film Unit. Instruments of the Orchestra features Sir Malcolm Sargent and the London Symphony Orchestra. The film centers around specially composed music by Benjamin Britten, later to be known worldwide as *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*. This is the first performance. [sic.]

> One of the most well-known orchestral works written especially for the young listener is English composer Benjamin Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*. Based on a theme from Purcell's *Abdelazar (The Moor's Revenge)*, it begins and ends with an overview of the whole orchestra, interspersed with demonstrations of the capabilities of each instrument.

It was originally written for a documentary in 1946, entitled 'The Instruments of the Orchestra', in which the narrator described the roles and characteristics of each orchestral section with the aid of the variations composed by Britten. Although the composer had no children of his own, due to reasons which are now known, he was fond of them and wrote this piece with them in mind. In fact, the *Young Person's Guide* is 'affectionately inscribed to the children of John and Jean Maud- Humphrey, Pamela, Caroline and Virginia- for their edification and entertainment.'

The *Young Person's Guide* was written so that each instrument could be verbally presented. However, Britten also foresaw the possibility that the piece would be performed with no narration, and he made allowances for this in his written score. Nevertheless, the *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* remains a piece enjoyed by both young and the young at heart.[5]

The Catalog of Britten's works gives 'First [public] performance:15 October 1946, Liverpool, Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent.'[6]

ENDNOTES

1. www.boosey.com accessed 8/1/04.
2. Maggie Cotton, *Percussion Workbook*, (Birmingham, UK, Maggie Cotton, 3rd edition, 1993), [not paged].
3. Bo Holmstrand, *Percussion Instrumentation Guide for Symphony Orchestras*, (Gothenberg, Sweden, Edition Escobar, 2004), 23.
4. Henk De Vlieger, *Handbook for the orchestral percussion section* (The Hague, The Netherlands, Albertson Verhuur, 2003), 38.
5. www.sdlmusic.com accessed 8/1/04.
6. Rosamund Strode, Editor, *Benjamin Britten*, *A Complete Catalogue of his Published Works*, (London, Boosey & Hawkes, and Faber, 1973).

Status codes: * = is critical; would stop rehearsal
? = questionable correction; conductor's decision
X = is necessary; should be done prior to performing the piece
s/r = should read
A blank cell indicates that in the best of all worlds, this correction would be in place.

CORRECTIONS FOR THE SCORE

Status	Page number	Measure number on page	Rehearsal Section	Measure number	Beat	Instrument: Correction
	ix					Add Cymbal a2 and Suspended Cymbal to instrumentation page.
	6	5	Theme A	9 & 10	1,2,3	Hp Both Hands: add tenuto lines for all chords.
?	7	5	Theme A	14	2	Timp: (2nd ending) add roll to A like measure 8 i.e. add tr~~~~ like Ist ending.
	7	7	Theme A	16	3	Hn III: (2nd ending) Last note, add tenuto line to E.
	7	7	Theme A	16	3	Perc III: BD (2nd ending) last note, add editorial [*pp*].
	14	7	Theme E	7	1	Perc III: BD add *fp*.
	15	3 & 4	Theme F	3 & 4	1	Bsns: add tenuto lines.
	16	1 & 2	Theme F	5 & 6	3	Tpt I: add accent.
	16	3	Theme F	7	2	Vlc: add tenuto line on Bb.
	16	3	Theme F	7	2	Cl I and Tpts: add marcato.
?	19	4	Variation A	16		Vln I/II: dim. sign s/r cresc. sign like meas. 14 (per Sawallisch and Ormandy).
	20	1 to 7	Variation A	24 to 30		Vln I: div. should be played by inside players (per Sawallisch).
*	20	10	Variation B	3	3	Bass: Lower division: Part has *p* for the pizz Eb, add to score.
?	20	11	Variation B	4		Viola and Upper Cello: add same dynamics as measure 3?
?	25	10 & 11	Variation B	3 & 4	3	Lower Cello and Upper Bass: Add p like lower bass part?
?	25	13	Variation D	2nd end.	1	Bsn II: add *ppp*.
	26	1	Variation E	1	1+	Hns, Tpts, Tbns: add accent, like in measures 4,6,7,8.
	29	11,12,13	Variation F	18,19,20		**Timp: 3 measures of F# roll are missing in the part.**
	33	20	Variation H	41		Perc I, Tamb: add wedge accent.
	34	9 & 10	Variation I	1	2,3,4	Hp LH: add accents; also in measure 2, beat 1.
X	36	4	Variation J	4	5	Vla & Vlc: add *post. nat.* to cancel *pont.*
X	37	5	Variation J	13	5	Vla & Vlc: add *post. nat.* to cancel *pont.*
?	39	15	Variation K	36	1	Vla: (1 measure before repeat measure.) E s/r D like other passages with this harmony. (Conductor's decision)
	42	4	Variation L	15	1	Hn III, IV: add staccato to both notes.
?	43	4	Variation L	20	1	Tuba: part has a tenuto line; add wedge accent, like tbns.

Status	Page number	Measure number on page	Rehearsal Section	Measure number	Beat	Instrument: Correction
	45	1	Variation M	12	2	Bass: In the Anthology score the ink did not print on the F#.
?	45	7	Variation M	18	2	Vln II: Part slurs into beat 4; score slurs beats 2-3. (Conductor's decision.)
?	45	9	Variation M	20	2 to 4	Vln I: Part slurs beats 2-4; score slurs beats 2-3. (Conductor's decision.)
	48	4	Variation M	46 & 47	4 to 6	Perc I: Triangle add tie to beat 1 of measure 5.
	50	3 & 6	Fugue	3 & 6	2	Picc: add staccato.
	50	10	Fugue A	3	2	Fl I: add staccato.
X	51	11	Fugue D	6	2+	Bsn I: add wedge accent to C#.
	52	3	Fugue E	5	2+	Fl I, II, Picc: add wedge accent to G.
	53	3	Fugue G	1	1,2	Vla: add dim. sign, as in part.
	56	7	Fugue I	11	2+	Bsn I: add staccato to C#.
	57	3	Fugue J	-3	1+	Bsn II: add wedge accent to E.
	57	6	Fugue J	1	1+	Hn I, II, IV: add staccato to E.
X	58	4	Fugue J	6	1	Ob II; grace note E-natural s/r Eb.
	58	6	Fugue K	1	2	Hn III, IV: add wedge accent.
?	60	2	Fugue L	-2	1	Hn I, III: the notes are not slurred; should the two 16th and 8th be slurred? (Conductor's decision.)
	61	1	Fugue L	4	1	Hn III, IV: slur from measure 3.
?	61	6	Fugue M	2		Timp: *Molto cresc.* added to Anthology score, not in Full score, Study score or part.
	62	3	Fugue M	6	1 to 2	Perc I: Xylophone add slur.
	61 & 62	7 & 3	Fugue M	3 & 6	1	Perc III: Cymbal add wedge accent.
	62	2,4,6	Fugue M	5,7,9	1,2	Perc III: BD add accents.
	63	3	Fugue M	13	1	Tpt I: add "3" to triplet bracket.
	64	3	Fugue M	19	3	Vln I/II; add accent on F#, like woodwinds & vla.
X	66	3	Fugue M	29	1+	Hp LH: notes s/r F#,G, A.
	66	4	Fugue M	30	2,3	Hp Both Hands: add accents on D.
	68	2	Fugue M	38	1	Vla: slur into A from previous measure, like previous pattern.
	68	2	Fugue M	38	1	Hp RH: add an "up" glissando line.
	68	5	Fugue M	*Animato*, m. 2	1	Tbn III & Tuba: add accent to half note.

CORRECTIONS FOR THE PARTS:

The corrections for the parts are in the following order: Theme, Variations, and Fugue.

Status	Instrument	Rehearsal Section	Measure number	Beat	Correction
	Violin 1		5	1	*sim.* not needed; remove.
x		Theme B	1	1	Add *pp.*
		Theme F	5	1	*sim.* not needed; remove.
x		Variation A	8,10	1	Beat 1 s/r *mf pp.*
x		Variation A	20	1 to 2	Add cresc. sign.
x		Variation C	7	1	Add *a tempo.*
		Variation F	-1	1,2,3	Add 3 accents to repeat measure.
		Variation F	1	1	Add 1 accent.
		Variation M	40	2	Add tie under 3 E's.
x		Variation M	55	1	Add "arco".
		Variation M	56		Four measures before the Fugue, the "vi-de" would be better if notated in measures 6 & 7; then the dynamic would match the score.
		Variation M	57		*Poco a poco dim.* starts in this measure for "no commentary" version. (See score for clarification.)
	Vln II	Theme F	4	1	add tenuto line.
		Variation C	14	4	Move *dim.* back to beat 4.
		Variation D	14	1	Tenuto line s/r accent.
		Variation E	21	2	Dim. sign should start on beat 2 (not 3).
x		Variation M	5	1	Add 8^{th} rest.
		Fugue J	-1		Slur only the measure (not into J).
		Fugue M	9	1	Remove dirt dot on some copies.
		Fugue M	24	3	Slur to measure 25, beat 1 (to A).
		Fugue M	27	2+	Add wedge accent to A.
		Fugue M	38	1	Cresc. sign only on beat 1.
		Fugue M	39	2,3	Slur only in the measure (beats 2 & 3).
x	Vla		10	3	Add tie on A for "no commentary" version.
		Variation C	14	4	Move *dim.* back to beat 4.
		Variation G	4		Remove long dim. sign between the staves.
x		Variation J	4 & 13	5	Add "*post. nat.*" to cancel "*pont.*".
?		Variation K	36	1	(1 measure before repeat measure.) E s/r D like other passages with this harmony. (Conductor's decision)
x		Fugue G	2	1+	Add *p.*
		Fugue J	-1		Slur only this measure (not into J).

Status	Instrument	Rehearsal Section	Measure number	Beat	Correction
		Fugue M	39		1 measure before *Animato*, slur only beat 3 – not into the *Animato*.
x	Cello		14	2	2nd ending: add bass clef before D.
?		Variation B	3 & 4	3	Lower: Add p like basses?
?		Variation B	4		Upper: add same dynamics as measure 3?
		Variation D	13	3	Quarter rest s/r dotted eighth rest
x		Variation M	10	6	Add *p* (at arco).
*		Variation M	33	1	Cello part has arco; bass part has pizz. Cello should match bass pizz, the score is correct (per Sawallisch). Arco s/r pizz.
x		Variation J	4 & 13	3	Add "*post. nat.*" to cancel "*pont.*"
*		Fugue K			Move Letter K forward one measure (the notes at Letter K are B nat.)
	Bass	Variation B	3		
		Variation D	1	1	Reiterate arco
		Variation D	2	1	Add accent
		Variation H	6	2+	Add tenuto line to D#.
		Variation H	8	2	Add tenuto line to Eb
x		Variation I	-4	1	Add *pp*.
*		Variation M	1	1	E# s/r E (natural)
		Fugue M	17	1	Add tenuto line to B
		Fugue M	18	1	Add tenuto line to G
		Fugue M	25		Add accent to F#.
		Fugue M	43		Add accent to G.
	Fl. I	Theme B	1	1,2,3	Add tenuto lines.
		Theme E	4	6	Cue is timp.
		Fugue E	5	2+	Add wedge accent.
		Fugue J	4	2+	Add wedge accent.
		Fugue K	6	2	Slur to Bb.
		Fugue M	29	3	Stacc. dot s/r wedge accent for **all woodwinds** (fix all parts).
	Fl. II	Fugue E	5 & 6	2+	Add wedge accent.
		Fugue F	3	1	Add wedge accent.
		Fugue I	13 & 14	1+	Add wedge accent.
	Picc.		4	3	Clarify half note A.
		Variation A	3	1+	Add slur to E# grace.
		Variation L	5	4	Add tenuto line to note F.
		Fugue	3 & 6	2	Add stacc.

Status	Instrument	Rehearsal Section	Measure number	Beat	Correction
		Fugue E	5	2+	Add wedge accent.
	Ob. I	Variation H	33 & 34	1	Add wedge accent on E, F#.
		Variation L	7	1	Add accent.
	Ob. II	Fugue C	12	2+	Add wedge accent.
		Fugue E	5	2+	Add wedge accent.
		Fugue H	1	1	Add wedge accent.
*		Fugue J	6	1	E-natural s/r Eb.
	Cl. I	Theme A	2nd ending	5	Add accent to E.
		Theme F	3 & 7	2	Add marc.
		Variation C	6	6	Add *a tempo*.
		Variation C	10	1	Add tenuto line.
		Variation C	11	4 to 6	Add "*20*" to run.
x		Variation K	38		Move "Cl. to A" back to Variation H.
		Variation L	3	1	Add accent.
		Variation M			"CH to Bb" [sic] s/r "Cl. to Bb".
		Fugue D	11	2	Add wedge accent to E.
		Fugue K	5	1	Remove stacc.
x		Fugue M	13		Add cresc. sign.
		Fugue M	15	1	Add wedge accent.
		Animato	-1		Slur ends in the measure before the *Animato*.
x	Cl. II	Variation H			Add "Change to A".
		Variation L	12	3, 4	Add stacc.
		Fugue F	1	1	Add *p*.
		Fugue K	5	1	Remove stacc.
		Fugue M	13		Add cresc. sign.
	Bsn I	Variation E	18	1	Add accent on D.
		Variation H	10	2	Add slur to Bb grace note.
		Fugue D	6	2+	Add wedge accent to C.
		Fugue M	38		Cresc. sign starts on E.
	Bsn II	Variation L	5	2, 4	Add tenuto line.
		Variation L	19	4	Add wedge accent.
		Fugue D	6	2+	Add wedge accent.
		Fugue J	-3	1+	Add wedge accent.

Status	Instrument	Rehearsal Section	Measure number	Beat	Correction
		Fugue J	5	1	Add accent to Eb.
	Hn I	Variation E	-1	1	Add slur to E.
		Fugue J	3	1+	Add accent to F-natural.
	Hn II	Variation L	4 & 5	2, 4	Add tenuto line.
		Fugue L	1	1	Add wedge accent.
		Fugue M	35	1, 4	Add tenuto line.
		Fugue J	1	1+	Add staccato.
		Variation E	1	1+	Add accent, like measures 4, 6, 7, 8.
	Hn II	Fugue J	1	1+	Add staccato.
		Variation E	1	1+	Add accent, like measures 4, 6, 7, 8.
	Hn III	Theme A	16	3	Last note: add tenuto line to E.
		Variation E	-1	1	Add slur to E.
		Variation E	1	1+	Add accent, like measures 4, 6, 7, 8.
		Variation E	18	1+	Add accent.
		Variation L	15	1	Add 2 staccatos.
		Fugue J	6	2+	Add wedge accent.
		Fugue K	1	2	Add wedge accent.
		Fugue K	6	2+	Add tenuto line.
		Fugue M	22	1	Add accent.
	Hn IV	Theme A	2	3, 4	Add staccatos.
		Theme A	2	5	Remove extra tenuto line.
		Theme F	2	3,4	Add staccatos.
		Variation E	1	1+	Add accent.
x		Variation F	16	1	Add *p*.
		Variation L	15	1	Add staccatos.
		Fugue J	1	1+	Add staccato.
	Tpt I	Theme F	3 to 6	1	*fp* should be placed below the staff.
		Theme F	5 & 6	3	Add accent.
		Variation E	1	1+	Add accent, like measures 4, 6, 7,8.
x		Variation K	29	1	Add *pp*.
?		Variation L	14		?: Remove *cresc. molto*.
		Fugue K	5	2, 2+	Add wedge accent.
		Fugue L	6	2+	Add tenuto line.
		Fugue M	13	1	Add "*3*" to triplet bracket.

Status	Instrument	Rehearsal Section	Measure number	Beat	Correction
		Fugue M	37	1, 3	Add tenuto lines.
	Tpt II	Theme F	5, 6, & 8	3	Add accent.
		Variation E	1	1+	Add accent, like measures 4, 6, 7, 8.
?		Variation L	14		?: Remove *cresc. molto*
		Fugue M	4	1	Add tenuto line.
	Tbn I	Variation E	1	1+	Add accent.
		Fugue M	19	1	Add tenuto line.
	Tbn II	Theme A	2	3	Add tenuto line.
		Theme A	4	1	Add tenuto line.
		Theme A	6	3	Add tenuto line.
		Variation E	1	1+	Add accent, like measures 4, 6, 7, 8.
		Variations E	9	1, 2, 3	Add wedge accent.
		Variation F	8	1	Add tenuto line.
		Fugue M	29 & 31	1	Remove tenuto line.
	Tbn III	Theme A	4	1	Add tenuto line.
		Theme A	14	1	2nd ending: add tenuto line.
		Theme F	4	1	Add tenuto line.
		Variation E	1	1+	Add accent, like measures 4, 6, 7, 8.
		Variation F	18	1	Add tenuto line.
		Fugue M	5	1	Add tenuto line.
		Fugue M	25	1	Add accent.
	Tuba	Theme C	10	3	2nd ending: add tenuto line.
		Variation C	9	3	Add cresc. sign.
		Variation C	10	4	Add wedge accent.
		Variation E	20	1	Add wedge accent.
x		Variation F	8	1	F# s/r F-natural.
		Variation F	18	1	Add tenuto line.
		Fugue L	3	2+	Add wedge accent.
		Fugue M	18 & 19	1	Add tenuto line.
?	Timp	Theme A	14	2	Should the A have a roll like measure 8? (conductors decision.)
		Theme F	5	3	Tenuto line s/r accent.
		Variation J	3 & 4		Tie from measure 2.
XX		Variation F	17		**19 measures rest s/r 17; then add 3 measures of F# roll (see score).**

Status	Instrument	Rehearsal Section	Measure number	Beat	Correction
?		Fugue M	2		*Molto cresc.* in Anthology score, not in full score or study score.
	Perc I	Variation A	3	2+	Slur grace note.
		Variation A	6	1	Slur grace note.
		Variation H	7, 9 & 10		Add wedge accent.
x		Variation M	50	6	Triangle: add *pp*.
		Variation M	51	2	Gong: add wedge accent.
x	Perc II	Variation K	17	1	SD: *pp* s/r *ppp*.
		Fugue M	1	1	Tamb. (ad lib).
	Perc III	Theme A	7	1	SD:the two grace notes s/r three grace notes
x		Theme E	1	1	BD: add *p*.
x		Theme E	4		BD: add *poco a poco cresc.*
		Fugue M	3	1	Cym: add wedge accent.
		Fugue M	5, 7 & 9		BD: add accents.
x		Fugue M	*Animato*	1	SD: add *ff*.
x		Fugue M	*Animato*	4	BD: half note s/r dotted half note.
	Harp	Theme A	9	2, 3	All chords should have tenuto lines.
		Theme A	10	1, 2, 3	All chords should have tenuto lines.
		Theme A	11	1	Remove ( ) on *pp*.
		Theme A	14 to 15	3, 1	Add tie to low D's.
x		Theme B	1	1	Add *pp*.
xx		Theme D	9		Add "vi-de" to this measure.
x		Variation B	-1	1	Add whole rest to ossia line.
		Variation I	3 to 6		Add triplet "*3*".
		Variation I	8		Cresc. sign starts on 11th chord.
		Fugue I	7	2+	LH: add staccato on F-natural.
		Fugue I	9	2	LH: add wedge accent.
		Fugue I	10	1	LH: add wedge accent.
		Fugue M	6, 7 & 9	1	Add wedge accent.
		Fugue M	16	3	RH: add accent.
x		Fugue M	29	1+	LH: notes s/r F#, G, A.
		Fugue M	30	2, 3	Add accents.

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Ilya Musin: A Life in Music

By Brenda L. Leach

We know his former pupils – Yuri Temirkanov, Principal Conductor of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, the St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra, and Principal Guest Conductor of the Royal Philharmonic; Valery Gergiev, Principal Guest Conductor of the Metropolitan Opera, Music Director of the Mariinsky (Kirov) Theater in St. Petersburg, and Principal Guest Conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra; Semyon Bychkov, Music Director of the WDR Symphony Orchestra; Sian Edwards, Yakov Kreizberg, and Arnold Katz. The list goes on to include many of the twentieth century's finest conductors. We also know the work of the contemporaries with whom he was associated including composer, Dmitri Shostakovich, and conductors, Nikolai Malko and Evgeny Mravinsky. So, who was this legendary conductor, pedagogue, and mentor who was revered in Russia, yet hardly known in the West until after the fall of communism?

Early Years

Ilya Alexandrovich Musin was born on December 24, 1903 (according to the old Russian calendar) or January 7, 1904 (Western calendar) in Kostroma, a provincial town on the Volga River. His mother died when he was six years old, but his father, a watchmaker and lover of music, encouraged his creative interests. As a child, Musin loved to draw, but his father insisted that he also study piano – even sitting by his side while he practiced. The small village of Kostroma was a great distance from Russia's major cultural centers; therefore, as a young man, Musin's musical education comprised piano study and listening to the local women singing traditional Russian folksongs. His family did not own a radio, so he had no opportunity to hear concert music. One day, Musin heard someone playing a piano reduction of Tchaikovsky's great opera, *Eugene Onegin*. Hearing this music was a turning point for the young musician, and he informed his father that he wanted to pursue a career as a pianist.

In 1919, shortly after the Bolshevik Revolution, Musin moved to St. Petersburg (later Petrograd and Leningrad – now St. Petersburg once again). He enrolled as a piano student at the prestigious St. Petersburg Conservatory of Music with which many of Russia's most distinguished musicians have been affiliated – Anton Rubinstein, founding director of the conservatory and outstanding pianist and composer; Peter Ilyitch Tchaikovsky, one of the conservatory's first graduates; and the legendary composers, Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov, Dmitri Shostakovich, and Sergei Prokofiev.

As a student and throughout his career, Musin worked with many of the twentieth century's towering musical figures. Musin said, "The first person I met at the conservatory was Mitya Shostakovich and we became friends." (*The Sun*, p. 4E). "Mitya" was of course the thirteen-year-old Dmitri Shostakovich who had enrolled in the conservatory on the same day and in the same class as Musin. As classmates, they exchanged ideas about music. Musin would often play through sketches of the composer's latest works on the piano. In fact, he was one of the first people to hear Shostakovich's First Symphony, play-

ing through the first and second movements of this work (four-hand piano) with the composer himself. Musin later conducted the second performance of Shostakovich's Symphony 7 *"Leningrad."*

The winter of 1919 was the second hard winter after the Great October Revolution. Many institutions shut down completely during those bleak years because of general chaos and a severe lack of basic supplies and fuel. It was largely due to the efforts of the conservatory's director, Alexander Glazunov, that the school remained open at all. Although the conservatory continued to function, food and fuel were in extremely short supply. Students were fed cabbage soup and watered-down porridge, and the conservatory itself was completely without heat. Musin recalled "There was a small iron stove in the classroom, and every student was required to bring something for the fire." (*The Sun*, p. 4E)

Despite the brutal living conditions, music always sang out from the conservatory's icy practice rooms, and the city itself maintained an intense artistic life. The newly formed "Petrograd State Philharmonic," (now the St. Petersburg Philharmonic), gave ninety-six concerts in this, its second year, while a civil war raged across Russia. During these years, Musin attended many rehearsals, operas, and concerts and observed many of the world's finest conductors. He saw Fyodor Shalyapin in *Boris Godounov,* as well as early performances of Stravinsky's *Firebird* and Prokofiev's *The Love of Three Oranges*. He reflected on this period of his life saying, "All the negative factors were like a stimulus for my development. The conservatory was so cold. So everyday I went to the Philharmonic building to listen to rehearsals. The fighting was going on all around the city, but we still had lessons. And going to the Philharmonic gave me a chance to get acquainted with all the great musical literature." (*The Sun*, p. 4E). "I became absorbed in new impressions. I went to the theater, to concerts, and to rehearsals so often that I had no room for politics, and I endured the hunger and cold of these years." (*St. Petersburg Times*, p. 11)

Musin the man endured, but Musin the pianist did not. After several winters of practicing in unheated practice rooms, bundled up and exposing only his fingers to the frigid air, he developed a severe case of tendonitis. This caused so much permanent damage that he was forced to abandon any hope of a career as a pianist; however, this did not end his career as a musician. He transferred to the Department of Theory and Composition for a short time, but was clearly headed for a career in conducting. Musin had spent hours in orchestra rehearsals, studying scores, and observing the work of numerous distinguished conductors, often accompanied by this classmate, Dmitri Shostakovich. He had also participated in musical salons – informal meetings of musicians and intelligentsia in private homes. Frequently those who gathered played orchestral repertoire on the piano, and on one impromptu occasion, Musin was asked to conduct.

In 1924, Nikolai Malko (who had been a pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov), Principal Conductor of the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, endowed a professional chair of opera and symphonic conducting at the conservatory into which Musin enrolled in 1925. Prior to this, conducting had only been offered to composition students as a secondary area of study. Under Malko's leadership, it became a major school for training professional conductors, and his book, *The Conductor and His Baton,* became an important treatise on the education of conductors. Here Musin began the complex study of gesture and its impact on

orchestral color and sound, which would become the basis of his work for the next seventy years. Musin became one of Malko's star pupils and his assistant. He graduated in 1930 and began teaching shortly thereafter.

Meanwhile, Malko emigrated to the West in 1929 and was succeeded by Fritz Stiedri, a great conductor and musician, who had escaped from Fascist Germany and settled in Leningrad. Musin served as his assistant as well from 1934 to 1937, at which point Stiedri left Russia. Musical politics determined that Musin would leave Leningrad as well in order to pave the way for Evgeny Mravinsky (1903-1988), who had been a classmate of Musin's at the conservatory, to succeed Steidri as Chief Conductor of the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra in 1938. Mravinsky had recently won the All-Union Conducting Competition in Moscow and had appeared as a guest conductor with the orchestra conducting the first performance of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 5 in 1937.

In 1937 Musin was "invited" to the conduct the Minsk Philharmonic Orchestra in Byelorussia in preparation for a tour in Moscow. He was subsequently offered the position of Chief Conductor of this orchestra and Professor of Music at the music conservatory there. Minsk is near the border of Poland and far away from the intense cultural activity of cities like Leningrad and Moscow. World War II began while Musin was working in Minsk, and he and his wife and son were forced to flee when the city started being bombed. They traveled by foot to Voronezh, dodging German attacks. Musin's colleagues at the Leningrad conservatory managed to track him down by telegram and requested that he resume his duties at the conservatory, which had been evacuated to Tashkent, the capital of one of the Asian Republics of the USSR. Musin joined his colleagues there until the end of the war. Once the war was over and Musin had finally returned to Leningrad, he realized, "I decided that I would have to live without the Great Hall of the Philharmonic and concentrate on my teaching." (*Lessons of Life)* Musin served on the faculty at the conservatory until his death in 1999 at the age of 95.

In addition to teaching, Musin guest conducted many orchestras of the former Soviet Union and conducted occasional concerts of the Leningrad Philharmonic, sometimes on very short notice; however, he was never appointed to a major Russian orchestra. Many people have speculated about why he never held such a position. Some suggest that it was because of anti-Semitism; others suggest it was due to rivalry with Mravinsky and perhaps other conductors; still others point out that he was a humble, gentle man by nature and simply did not participate in the sometimes-brutal politics that often accompany a major career on the podium. That Musin turned his energies to the art of teaching was indeed a great gift to many of the twentieth century's most gifted conductors.

Musin's Career as a Pedagogue

Musin played a major role in the development of conducting as a true profession with a thorough method and system for learning. He wrote two treatises on the art of conducting – *The Technique of Conducting* (1967) and *The Education of a Conductor* (1987). His writings, which to date appear only in the original Russian, include exercises, diagrams, symphonic and operatic extracts, and in-depth analyses of the conductor's movements and gestures. His focus was always on non-verbal communication – how to **show**, not tell, the orchestra what and how to play. His ideas on technique teach the conductor how to create different kinds of articulations, phrasing, dynamics, tempi, color, musical character, left and right hand independence, etc.; however, he was steadfast in his belief that technique is always at the service of the music.

Musin said that the art of conducting lay in "making music visible with your hands." (*New York Times*, B7). His approach requires a physical relationship with the music as though one were sculpting sound. He often told his students to create an event, evoke an emotional state of mind. Over the years, Musin drew upon some of the ideas of the legendary founder of the "Method Acting" technique, Constantin Stanislavski, whose artistic ideas emphasized emotional truth and inner motivation. In his classic book, *An Actor*

Prepares, Stanislavsky wrote "An actor is under the obligation to live his part inwardly, and then to give his experience an external embodiment…That is why an actor…is obliged to work…both on his inner equipment, which created the life of the part, and also on his outer physical apparatus, which should reproduce the results of the creative work of his emotions with precision." (7) (Stanislavski, pp. 15, 16).

Similarly, Musin taught his students to develop gestures that emerge from the emotional nature of the music. "You have to feel the music, you have to express its character and its emotion," he said, "People say, 'if you want to know about technique, go to Musin, he teaches technique.' I do not. I teach the technique within the music." (*St. Petersburg Times*, p. 12) According to Musin, conducting requires one to "pick up" the sound and lead the sound from the first note to the last in a piece of music, similar to Stanislavsky's concept of the "unbroken line." It's about line, shape, phrasing, and defining the inherent architecture of the music. His students worked with and without a baton in order to create a broad range of nuance and expressiveness. His concepts are direct and seemingly simple, yet as with any art form, it takes years of dedication to develop the skills necessary to realize his ideas.

In an interview with Evans Mirages, Semyon Bychkov described Musin's approach.

> He paid attention to everything, from your posture to the way your arms moved and how your eyes looked. But the primary concern was the expression itself. First he would challenge someone's musical idea. Often, the way he saw it, there would be no musical idea. So it would have to be formed. For example, where does this phrase go? What is its central point? Then he would demonstrate it. There was a constant juxtaposition, as Musin always encourages his students to search for comparisons. For example, what happens if you do it this way, and what happens if you do it another way? Which is more convincing? He would consider several different ways of expressing things. The method of comparison was the most vivid one, because the problem that every conductor faces is: how do you actually develop if you have no one to conduct? Essentially you are alone with your score. To commit it to heart, to send it through your mind, isn't actually enough. So, how does one do it? Musin would demonstrate various physical possibilities, explaining what each one would give in terms of expression itself. So the two dimensions were always connected: the expression and the way to achieve it…It was fascinating for everybody to observe how Musin dealt with (these) two subjects: firstly, the music itself – its expression; secondly, how to translate this expression through physical application of a conductor's arms, body, eyes, and mind. This is of course something that transcends the purely physical aspect of conducting. (Bychkov Interview)

Musin held most of his classes in Room 27 on the third floor of the conservatory. A typical class would begin with Musin greeting each of his students with a handshake. The tradition at the St. Petersburg Conservatory is that of a masterclass in which all of his students, as well as interested visitors, would be present at all lessons. Pianists would be seated at the two baby-grand pianos in the room and the class would begin as the first student took the podium. The exceptional pianists were trained to respond strictly to what and how the students were conducting. The students also had regular lessons and rehearsals with the St. Petersburg Conservatory Orchestra, which was established specifically for the training of young conductors. This tradition of teaching continues at the conservatory today, and several of his former students are on the faculty there.

Although Musin always clearly articulated his ideas, he never taught in a dogmatic fashion. He demanded that students make music in their own ways. This is clearly evident in the work of some of his best-known former pupils. Musin said, "Temirkanov and Gergiev are both very good conductors, and they are completely different. I should tell you that my students are all different, but all of them carry my stamp because I teach them to deeply understand the emotional content of the music they conduct and be able to express it with their hands. This is done by each one in accordance with his individuality…both are wonderful conductors and very typical of the great Russian conductors who bring temperament and imagination to music." (*The Sun*, p. 4E).

The acclaimed music journalist, John Ardoin, recently published the book, *Valery Gergiev and the Kirov: A Story of Survival,* which takes an intimate look at the Mariinsky (Kirov) Theater and the great artists who work there. In an interview with Gergiev regarding his musical training, Gergiev, said that Musin "was one of the greatest teachers of the century." All his obituaries said this when he died in 1999. He made the Leningrad Conservatory one of the world's centers of music. Although Shostakovich taught there, and it had many important piano and string teachers, none of them so consistently produced fine students, as did Musin, from the late 1920s until his death.

> He had great wisdom. He was a living history, a brilliant narrator of important events in Russian music and in the musical life of Leningrad. He described for us, for example, the premiere of *The Love of Three Oranges* at the Kirov, and he told us why Prokofiev made changes in the orchestration of *Romeo and Juliet* when it was first played at the Kirov. Musin could speak of these things with authority because he was there. I never saw Otto Klemperer or Bruno Walter conduct, but Musin did. He attended their rehearsals with the Leningrad Philharmonic and heard Walter do *Queen of Spades* at the Kirov and Klemperer [do] *Carmen.* And he talked to them about tempos, rehearsal techniques, the German traditions of conducting, and he passed all of this along to us. He made me feel as if I had heard and talked with them as well.
>
> Musin's career as a conductor was never a big one like Mravinsky's because he had no interest in communist politics and wouldn't play the game. He also openly criticized the way Mravinsky made music. They didn't like each other, and Mvarinsky kept him from conducting the Leningrad Philharmonic. But then Mravinsky did not like many other conductors. He was a great musician, but he was a dictator, a man of implacable will. It was the same with all strong men in the Stalin era. (Ardoin, pp. 21, 22).

Alexander Polishchuk, who was a student of Musin in the 1980s and is now a Professor of Conducting at the St. Petersburg Conservatory of Music, Chief Conductor or the Novosibirsk Chamber Orchestra, and Principal Guest Conductor of the Novosibirsk Philharmonic Orchestra, recalled his first experience with the great mentor. Musin had been invited to conduct the Kiev Philharmonic at the invitation of its Artistic Director, Fedov Glushchenkom, one of his former students. Polishchuk remembers observing Musin as he rehearsed the second movement of Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4. He recalled how Musin's gestures and expression had such a powerful impact on the music. Polishchuk was struck by Musin's uncanny ability to evoke from the orchestra the subtlest nuances of articulation, color, and shading, communicating with the orchestra so clearly through his gestures. "It was like hearing this music for the first time," he said. (Polishchuk Interview)

Musin could teach any music, any composer. His former students describe both his teaching and his conducting as clear, intimate, sincere, and emotionally powerful. Musin was specific about what he sought in prospective students. "I look for someone who is truly a musician inside, who is able to transfer inner feelings and tensions to an orchestra through art and hands. It's simple." (*European Magazine*, p. 13) In speaking about some of his former pupils, Musin said, "What impresses you now with these conductors is what we have been continuing in Russia throughout this century. Basically it is emotion. The music is very deep in performance; there is…heart in it. That is the essence of music." (*European Magazine*, p. 13)

When I visited Musin's apartment to interview his son, Edward Musin, shortly after his death in 1999, I noticed many original paintings hanging on the walls. When I asked about the paintings, Musin's son told me that his father was always engaged in creative process whether it was jotting down ideas that would help one of his students or painting, which is something he continued to do throughout his life. He was always seeking new ideas, developing analogies to real life, and learning from other art forms. He loved music and he brought his whole life to music. (Interview with E. Musin)

By nature, Musin was a gentle, reserved man of great humor, who was very helpful and accessible to his students, even providing quiet financial sup-

port to some particularly gifted young conductors. However, he had only the highest expectations of those who studied with him. Robert Trory, a former violinist with the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House in London and former Musin student, said "He knows how and why conducting works, and teaches it with such humanity and humor and forcefulness. The better the talent you have, the harder he is on you. He won't let you get away with anything. He makes the best of the best and does it with such integrity for the music." (*European Magazine*, p. 13) Musin had the same high expectations when he was standing on the podium. As a conductor, he was uncompromising and demanding, always working with a great sense of responsibility to the composer – to the music.

Later Years

Although Musin had guest conducted in many cities of the former Soviet Union, years went by before he conducted in his own city of St. Petersburg once again. In 1994, Temirkanov invited Musin to conduct the St. Petersburg Philharmonic to honor the great pedagogue and mentor on the occasion of his ninetieth birthday. Both the orchestra members and audience were familiar with his exceptional students; however, it had been forty-two years since Musin, himself, stood on the podium before this orchestra. People who were present at this concert describe the response of the orchestra and audience as nothing short of ecstatic!

Musin's first engagement as a guest conductor in the West came in February of 1996 when, at the age of ninety-two, he conducted the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in London. Polishchuk traveled to London with Musin and described the experience as "thrilling." At this concert, Musin conducted Mozart's *Symphony No. 40,* Prokofiev's *Symphony No. 1,* and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio Espanol.* He also conducted several encores as demanded by the audience, which gave him a fifteen-minute standing ovation. During the final years of his life, Musin continued to travel in Europe, Japan, and Israel giving masterclasses and conducting concerts to critical acclaim.

Even in his later years, Musin's approach to life and to music was like that of a young man. His most recent students remember the powerful demonstrations he would give on the classroom podium through the last lessons he gave just days before his death. These young conductors described these demonstrations as combining the wisdom and experience of a ninety-five-year-old with the exuberant vigor and strength of a twenty-five-year-old. One student spoke of the incredible energy he gave his students. He said that when Musin was walking to the conservatory, he seemed to carry himself like an elderly man; however, after a day of teaching, he would take on a youthful, spirited step on his way home! Musin loved young people. He loved his students.

Musin lived near the conservatory in an apartment complex that had been designed specifically to house artists from the Mariinsky (Kirov) Theater and the Music Conservatory. The study in his apartment clearly reflected his extraordinary life in music. It was filled with scores, books, and photos of his students, as well as many of his own paintings. It was the place where he spent time with his family as well as his students whom he treated like family.

In addition to his two treatises on the art of conducting, Musin also wrote a book of memoirs, *Lessons of Life.* Music was his life. He continued to teach at the conservatory until just three days before he died, and his students revered him. In his memoir, he wrote, "I conduct at the Kirov through the hands of my pupils." (*The Sun*, p. 13). In 1997 he said, "I feel some sort of satisfaction that I've made some contribution to the art of conducting, especially in classroom education. I've been working and thinking about it all the time." (*The Sun*, 4E).

Musin's influence is still profoundly felt by those with whom he worked. The knowledge and wisdom that he imparted to his students during his long lifetime of teaching continues to have an impact on music making around the world.

Although he was brilliant at articulating his depth of musical understanding and his clear ideas regarding technical issues, his work went far beyond words, as does the art of conducting. Polishchuk sums this up saying, "Musin taught a style of understanding…and he made music from his soul." (Polishchuk Interview) The music does, indeed, continue through the hands of his students.

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Pierre Monteux On Film

By Charles Barber

It is astounding that so little was preserved.

Across a ten-year search, we have uncovered no film of Monteux (1875-1964) in rehearsal, save for a brief — and silent — sequence at the Hollywood Bowl from 1933. Although fascinating, and by far the earliest-known film of him at work, it is barely a minute and a half long. What has become of his many first performances? This is, after all, the conductor who gave the world such works as Messiaen's *Le tombeau resplendissant*; Prokofiev's Symphony No. 3 (as drawn from *The Fiery Angel*); Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloé* and *Valses nobles et sentimentales*; Sessions's Symphony No. 2; Stravinsky's *Petroushka*, *Le sacre du printemps*, and *Le rossignol*; and Debussy's *Jeux*; among many others.

The only one of them preserved on film is *Petroushka*, in its original 1911 version. Monteux was 83 at the time it was made. There is nothing yet discovered of him in any other Diaghilev repertoire, nor with Ansermet, nor anywhere in Paris.

Indeed, we have found only nine filmed works in all: one symphony, two Wagner preludes, two overtures, two ballets, a tone poem, and a piano concerto. Although rumors persist of films hidden in Europe or Japan, nothing of substance has materialized save for those described herein.

In San Francisco, his musical home for nearly thirty years, no local source survives. We have examined every municipal and state archive and have corresponded with every television station in the Bay Area, all this in the hope that something may have been filmed at the opening of a symphony season, or as a promotion for a particular concert, or simply of Maître and Doris walking in Golden Gate Park. If ever such films were made, no documentation has been located to suggest it, nor has a frame of them been discovered. The San Francisco Symphony and Opera have nothing, nor does the Performing Arts Library and Museum. A similar search in Boston produced the same results.

The family, unerringly generous in all matters, possesses no home movies. Only in the collection of Monteux's friend (and brother-in-law) Meyer Davis has anything of that sort been preserved. Davis (1893-1976) was a renowned bandleader, and millionaire entrepreneur, whose ensembles flourished for 40 years. He performed at the White House for eight presidents. His wife Hilda Hodgkins Davis (1895-1995) was the younger sister of Monteux's wife Doris, and herself an accomplished pianist. These silent films, described below, were made in the period 1927–1938, and show Monteux at home and in Europe travelling with Doris, Meyer, Hilda, and their many friends. They include two filmed comedies in which Monteux plays a leading role, and sequences in which he jokes and dances with more friends, kisses multiple ladies, gives an impromptu conducting lesson, boxes with Davis, and is (briefly) seen conducting the San Francisco Symphony. Doris also takes an active role in these filmed comedies, and seems in them to be a very different character from what the public imagined.

All told, we are left with barely 155 minutes in which to observe and analyze how Monteux actual-

ly led from the podium. As memories decline, contemporaries pass, and clippings yellow, it is all that we have that offers indisputable proof of his work.

Conducting is, of course, a kind of semaphore. If the art cannot actually be witnessed, it cannot wholly be understood. In the Monteux film record, we find proof of his legendarily consistent approach: "One is down!" always was. We see as well that his eyes caught and registered and flashed every nuance. The audience saw a simple and clean stick, eloquent in its purposes, but they could not see what his players saw: those glancing eyes, even at the end of his long working life, were in total control of his arena.

Monteux was no ballet dancer, intent on making the crowd swoon at meaningless pirouettes. He was a remarkably efficient conductor, his work on the podium dedicated to a purity of expression, directness, an agency of explicit purpose. Cueing was almost invariably a left-hand matter, and a kind of minimalism intended simply to support his players. In the right lived strong pulse, often mirrored in the left, and all of it unimpaired by fake glamour and self-display. Beyond technique, in every one of these films the viewer is struck by Monteux's concentration, his good humor, his modesty.

Unlike Reiner and Abbado and Ançerl, whose batons diminished with age and illness, Monteux's yielded to no infirmity until the very end. The energy and clarity he offered in London and Tokyo in the 60s was not so far from that he gave to Los Angeles and San Francisco thirty years earlier. But more amazingly, even as Monteux neared 90, the film record demonstrates an utter mastery of material. Whatever other price age may have exacted, his eyes missed nothing, the ears turned to every phrase, and that remarkable face shone everywhere.

The film and video materials described below are owned by the copyright holders of each, and no suggestion is made that any of them is commercially available save as noted; however, these documents are held in the Conductors on Film Collection, Archive of Recorded Sound, at Stanford University in California. Application for scholarly study of them is welcome and, if granted, will be made available on-site without charge. Because of the formidable complications of international copyright law, duplication is not possible.

Pierre Monteux on Film

1927 – 1938
Meyer Davis Collection (1:53:00)
16mm silent home movies made by Monteux friend Meyer Davis in Hancock, Maine and environs, and on vacation in Europe and America. Monteux also appears as a lead character in two comedies:
"All is Not Gold That Glitters," c. 1930 (18:00)
"Miss Olympics," a.k.a. "No Mother to Guide Her, or A Rolling Stone is Worth Two in the Bush," c. 1930 (21:00)
Source: Meyer Davis Collection, Northeast Historic Films, Bucksport, Maine
Note: The only known film of Monteux in San Francisco was taken by Davis in 1938. Like the rest, it is silent. This film includes a brief sequence of Monteux leading the San Francisco Symphony in concert, and addressing the audience from the podium. "San Francisco 1938" (3:00)

1933
Los Angeles Philharmonic, Hollywood Bowl, August 1931 (1:47)
Repertoire unknown, rehearsal, silent
Source: UCLA Film and Television Archive
Note: In brief sequences, Monteux is seen rehearsing with contralto Kathryn Meisle of the Chicago Opera Company. Monteux appeared at the Hollywood Bowl 27 times between 1927 and 1960. This film was made onstage by then principal viola, Philip Kahgan.

1955
Newsreel footage, kissing woman, silent (00:30)
During sessions with Concertgebouw Orchestra, Amsterdam
Source: Private

1959
Brahms, *Tragic Overture* (12:25)

Hindemith, *Nobilissima visione* (20:56)
Stravinsky, *Petroushka* (1911 version; Bernard Zighera, piano) (34:06)
Boston Symphony Orchestra, Sanders Theatre, Harvard University, WGBH-TV, 20 January 1959
Source: Private
Note: The Boston Symphony Orchestra contemporaneously released the Stravinsky on LP, a performance available at this writing on RCA/BMG 63303, in monaural sound.

1961
Beethoven, Symphony No. 8 (26:30)
Berlioz, *Roman Carnival Overture* (9:14)
Wagner, Prelude to Act III, *Die Meistersinger* (6:07)
Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra Hall, 1 January 1961
Source: WGN-TV and Chicago Symphony Orchestra Archives
Note: This kinescope is now commercially available as Volume IV in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Historic Telecasts series produced by Video Artists International, VAI 69604

Beethoven, Piano Concerto No. 3 (34:00)
Rudolph Firkusny, piano
Dukas, *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* (12:00)
London Symphony Orchestra, London, 24 October 1961
Source: BBC-TV

1963
Wagner, Prelude, *Die Meistersinger* (1:00)
London Symphony Orchestra, Japan 1963
Source: Private

1964
In Memoriam: Pierre Monteux (11:00)
BBC documentary, with Francis Coleman and Ernest Fleischman, 2 July 1964
Source: BBC-TV
Note: This documentary includes Wagner sequences from Monteux' last tour in Japan, with the London Symphony Orchestra, as cited above.

1965
Monteux Remembered (60:00)
Interview by Dick Bronson with Doris Monteux in grounds, gardens, and home of Monteux in Hancock, Maine. The conductor appears in still photographs only.
Source: Hildreth Television Network, WABI-TV, 1965

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Charles Barber is a conductor active in concert, opera, and recordings. He wrote several dozen entries for New Grove 2000, and co-authored its article on Conducting Technique. His essay on Rehearsal Technique was published in the Cambridge Companion to Conducting *series in October 2003. He also founded the Conductors on Film Collection at Stanford in 1990. His latest book,* Lost in the Stars: The Forgotten Musical Life of Alexander Siloti *(ISBN 0810841088) has just been published by Rowman and Littlefield.*

John Canarina's biography of Pierre Monteux was published in 2003 by Amadeus Press.

Books in Review

Myer Fredman. **From Idomeneo to Die Zauberflöte**. (Portland, OR: Sussex Academic Press, 2002); 205 pp.; ISBN 1-903900-10-7.

Reviewed by Henry Bloch

In this book, the British conductor, Myer Fredman writes about Mozart's mature operas not only for a musical audience but also particularly for his professional colleagues. He writes "from the conductor's perspective" and "intends to be helpful to the conductors (p. IX)" with ample suggestions for performance style and technique.

For each scene of an opera the dramatic situation is briefly explained. Then, the character of the music is discussed within the dramatic context. Sometimes, Mozart's tempo designations, rhythms, and their implications for the conductor's beat are studied. Some of Fredman's recommendations for time beating are useful, but others do not seem practical.

Mozart also associated certain keys with individual characters and particular emotions. Similarly, the recently improved clarinet was associated with the "new democratic tendencies (p. 14)" but, before the Revolution, the "aristocratic oboe" prevailed (ibid). Generally, it seems odd that Fredman concentrates his comments on direction of the orchestra. Yet, the solo singers and the chorus, who have to perform from memory and in coordination with each other and the musicians in the orchestra, need a great deal of support from the conductor.

Fredman's interpretation of time signatures is practical, but to do justice to Mozart's subtle distinctions in regard to tempo one should follow Fredman's advice and consult the brilliant study by Jean-Pierre Marty (*The Tempo Indications of Mozart,* Yale University Press, 1988). Also, the articles by Max Rudolf, "Pamina's Aria: A Tragic Heroine's Lament or an Impulsive Teenager's Complaint?" (*Journal of the Conductors Guild*, vol. II/2, pp. 23/24), and "A Broadcast of Le Nozze di Figaro," (ibid, vol. XI/3 – 4) offer interesting insights.

Another topic for discussion refers us to the ornaments. A brief discussion of appoggiaturas is persuasive, but a more extensive exploration of Mozart's embellishments is offered by Frederick Newman in his *Ornamentation and Improvisation in Mozart* (Princeton University Press, 1986). Newman will help to resolve many knotty problems concerning ornaments.

The main part of the book is devoted to the study of the individual operas from *Idomeneo* to *Die Zauberflöte.* Attention is paid to many details. Above all, the magnificent musical characterizations of the individuals that distinguished Mozart's music from most of his contemporaries, is amply demonstrated. Numerous examples from all the operas are cited.

Perhaps the most famous example is the finale of Act II of *Figaro*, which receives an excellent presentation from both the dramatic and the musical point of view. Fredman points out many of Mozart's ingenious details underlining the action and individual characterizations. His comments should be an inspiration to any conscientious conductor. Concerning *Don Giovanni*, one may have reservations as to recommendations for conducting of the overture, but instructions for the famous recitative and duet of Donna Anna and Don Ottavio in Act I as well as other similarly challenging numbers are acceptable. Elsewhere, the music of peasant girl, Zerlina, and the spurned wife, Donna Elvira, as well as Don Giovanni's

Champagne aria, and many more, bring these people to life. Of course, Mozart's masterful musical characterizations are in evidence in his other operas as well.

In *Die Zauberflöte* one can compare the mood of each of the arias and the solo passages within the ensembles. The finale of Act I which is examined in considerable detail, contains, among other sections, the recitative of Tamino and the priest of Sarastro's Temple of the Sun. This scene offers one of the great challenges for an opera conductor and deserves the detailed treatment it receives in the book. Despite the seriousness of the approach, however, the practicality of some of Fredman's recommendations is debatable. For example, some subdivisions of the basic beat in moderate or slow tempos might be more advisable for greater precision than adherence to the basic meter. This would achieve better ensemble in a performance without mishaps. Also, it would be helpful to discuss coordination of the stage and orchestra pit. There is no indication how to lead both, nor does he discuss how to accompany the singers on the stage with the orchestra. Elsewhere in the book, the passages dealing with the famous accompanied recitatives in *Figaro* and *Don Giovanni* lack instructions how to transmit cues to the orchestra with the baton.

Generally, this is a useful introduction to the performance of Mozart's operas. It covers a lot of rich material, but it also omits a great deal. It would require several volumes to do justice to the Mozart

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Piero Weiss. **Opera, A History in Documents**. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2002); 338 pp.; $32.00; ISBN: 0-19-511637-2.

Reviewed by Henry Bloch

Reflecting on this interesting collection of documents, it appears that the history of opera can be perceived as a succession of lively trials and debates. It makes good sense, therefore, to present the view of champions, adversaries, and critics at various stages of the ever-evolving theatrical entertainment. In the late sixteenth century, the Florentine Count Pietro Bardi and his *camerata* who sought to revive Greek drama with proper declamation gave rise to a *stile rappresentativo*, which has remained a part of opera ever since. But it was Monteverdi who recognized – only a few years later – that lyrical song was best suited to express the emotional aspects of the drama. Thus he alternated aria and recitative and, in effect, invented opera. With the growing popularity of the new genre, a variety of styles developed, and the debate of the relationship between text and music began. The documents in this anthology illustrate the struggles of poets, composers, and singers to achieve the best relationship between text and music for the ideal music drama.

Various arguments of writers since the eighteenth century are represented here. Also, Wagner's general ideas of his music drama in the nineteenth century are included in two famous essays. Perhaps the most interesting chapters are those that reveal the collaboration of librettist and composer. For example, Mozart expected his partner not only to provide a fully "theatrical" work, but also the rhythmic patterns and the amount of lines to allow him to maintain melodic and formal balances of his music. The correspondence of Mozart and da Ponte (not included in this collection) contains similar exchanges of ideas. On the other hand, Verdi, working on his operas, had strong notions of the way the entire work should unfold. His discussions of textual details with Arrigo Boito, librettist of *Otello* and *Falstaff*, are fascinating. Verdi even consulted the painter Domenico Morelli regarding the reflection of Iago's character in the "sinister colors" of his costume (p. 239).

The brief snippets of correspondence between Stravinsky and W. H. Auden relating to *The Rake's Progress* are as illuminating as the famous letters exchanged by Richard Strauss and Hugo von Hofmannsthal during the creation of *Der Rosenkavalier* and other masterpieces. There are also discussions of the works of more recent composers. For example, Debussy, Bartok, Berg, and even Richard Strauss (*Salome)* turned to plays in their original form as libretti. Thereby, they created what the German musicologist Carl Dahlhaus

called the "literature opera" (p. 272). Bertolt Brecht developed the "epic opera" for the pre-Broadway Kurt Weill and others. Among the path-breaking American works are Philip Glass's *Einstein on the Beach* and John Adams's *Nixon in China.*

Not every chapter offers commentary by specialists in the world of opera. The eminent literary critic, Edmund Wilson, shares with us his spontaneous and thoughtful response to Benjamin Britten's *Peter Grimes* as a theatrical experience.

Many of the documents in this collection were previously published, but some appear here in excellent new translations. The distinctive features are the informative commentaries by Mr. Weiss. Although this book was conceived as a textbook, it offers stimulating reading for anyone involved in opera production or who genuinely loves opera.

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Henry Bloch is a member of the Board of Directors and Archivist for the Conductors Guild.

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Conductors Guild

. . . Advancing the Art and Profession

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The Conductors Guild is dedicated to encouraging and promoting the highest standards in the art and profession of conducting.

The Conductors Guild is the only music service organization devoted exclusively to the advancement of the art of conducting and to serving the artistic and professional needs of conductors. The Guild is international in scope, with a membership of nearly 2,000 individual and institutional members representing all fifty states and more than forty countries, including conductors of major stature and international renown. Membership is open to all conductors and institutions involved with instrumental and/or vocal music, including symphony and chamber orchestra, opera, ballet/dance, chorus, musical theater, wind ensemble and band.

History of the Conductors Guild

The Conductors Guild was founded in 1975 at the San Diego Conference of the American Symphony Orchestra League, and it continued for a decade as a subsidiary of that organization. In 1985 the Guild became independent. Since then, it has expanded its services and solidified its role as a collective voice for conductors' interests everywhere. It is supported by membership dues, grants, donations and program fees and is registered with the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c) 3 not-for-profit corporation.

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1. To share and exchange relevant musical and professional information about the art of conducting orchestras, bands, choruses, opera, ballet, musical theater and other instrumental and vocal ensembles;

2. To support the development and training of conductors through workshops, seminars and symposia on the art of conducting, including, but not limited to, its history, development and current practice;

3. To publish periodicals, newsletters and other writings on the art, history and practice of the profession of conducting;

4. To enhance the professionalism of conductors by serving as a clearing house for knowledge and information regarding the art and practice of conducting;

5. To serve as an advocate for conductors throughout the world;

6. To support the artistic growth of orchestras, bands, choruses and other conducted ensembles; and

7. To communicate to the music community the views and opinions of the Guild.