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Constant Lambert: Beyond The Rio Grande **A Research Report and Some Afterthoughts**

The challenges – or more precisely the responsibilities – of writing a musical biography are many. Besides the obvious requirements for honesty and accuracy, with musical biographies there is the question of balance between the amount of space given to the life and that allowed for an examination of the music. One is also aware that with lesser-known figures another book on the same subject is unlikely to appear for some while, making it important that a new biography has something of significance to contribute.

In the case of Constant Lambert there have been two previous books. The first, *Constant Lambert – his life, his music and his friends* by Richard Shead (Simon Publications, 1973), was an excellent study, able to draw on a number of persons still living who knew Lambert well, but on the other hand having to skirt carefully around some more personal matters so as not to offend living people. The most obvious case is that of Lambert's long-lasting affair with Margot Fonteyn who was referred to merely as 'a dancer' with whom he had 'a deep and passionate affair'. Thirteen years later



From *Balletomane's Sketch-Book* by Kay Ambrose (A & C Black, 1941); by kind permission of Charles Draught.

appeared Andrew Motion's absorbing study of three generations in *The Lamberts: George, Constant and Kit* (Chatto & Windus, 1986) which examined Constant Lambert from a different and original perspective. Anyone researching Lambert is primarily indebted to two people who knew him well and had planned books on him shortly after his death: Hubert Foss and Angus Morrison. Sadly neither book appeared, but a considerable amount of research and planning was done for both. All this, together with correspondence from friends of Lambert and people who responded to requests in the press, is available, and supply that essential personal detail on

which biographies thrive and which would be almost impossible to obtain otherwise today. Lambert kept no diaries, and neither did he preserve any correspondence, but fortunately a number of his friends kept some of the letters and post-cards sent by him which illustrate his humour, his range of interests, even his frustrations and the problems with which he had to contend in the course of a busy life. Two or three surviving radio and television documentaries also

provide evidence of the importance that Lambert attached to certain friendships with people in different walks of life.

One of the problems facing anyone writing on Lambert is the diversity of his interests and talents, and one of the main aims in this book was to examine each of these in rather greater detail than had been done before. Lambert is still known, thanks to a historic recording, as the reciter par excellence of Walton's *Façade*, though there are few living today who will remember his unique delivery of the Sitwell verses. But there is Lambert the composer and arranger, Lambert the conductor of ballet and one of the chief architects of British Ballet, Lambert the conductor in the concert hall, on the radio and in the recording studio, where his fairly extensive recording legacy has been rather overlooked, Lambert the broadcaster, Lambert the journalist (and not just the author of *Music Ho!*), Lambert the jazz enthusiast, Lambert as represented by the character of Hugh Moreland in Anthony Powell's *A Dance to the Music of Time*, Lambert the writer of bawdy limericks, Lambert the *bon vivant*, and, as already mentioned, the Lambert who had a long-lasting but little publicised affair with Margot Fonteyn.

It may be helpful to detail how these various aspects of the man have been dealt with in the thirteen appendices that form a substantial part of my recent book. The first deals with Lambert's compositions and arrangements, the latter being chiefly the ballets he devised or arranged for the Vic-Wells or Sadler's Wells Ballet Companies. Next is a brief synopsis of his last ballet, *Tiresias*, whose failure was to add a tragic element to his last year in which overwork, excessive drinking and undiagnosed diabetes brought about his early death two days before his 46th birthday. The third appendix, a very detailed discography, lists all Lambert's commercial recordings, arranged into sessions with matrix numbers, release details and any relevant correspondence, followed by a list of commercial recordings of Lambert's own works conducted by others, and details of archive recordings and those known to exist in private hands. It is hoped that even now recordings of Lambert's last recitation of *Façade* for the Third Programme and of him conducting *Summer's Last Will and Testament* (or at least the *King Pest* movement), both of which are known to have existed, may yet turn up through the revival of interest in Lambert that this book may arouse.

The fourth appendix is an attempt to cover an important aspect of Lambert's career hitherto little investigated – his journalism, a challenging task depending much on the accessibility of certain publications. One paper to which Lambert made frequent contributions was *The Nation and Athenaeum* (becoming *The New Statesman and Nation*), and bound volumes were fortunately readily accessible on the shelves of the London University library. Bound

volumes of the *Radio Times* and *The Listener* are similarly available at the British Library. In other cases it was more difficult. His most substantial writing was for the *Sunday Referee*, and with no index it was necessary to trawl through eight years of large bound volumes of that paper held in the newspaper library at Colindale. After initially listing the date of issue of the articles together with their main headings, it was felt to be important to illustrate the unique style of Lambert's journalism by including extracts. The acquisition of a laptop at an early stage would have saved the author from the labour of typing out at home the pencil notes made at Colindale, their haste sometimes resulting in problems of deciphering! Much time would of course have been saved had the use of a digital camera been permitted, but for various reasons, including copyright, this could not be allowed. Although the majority of the articles were eventually summarised, most annoyingly because of the deteriorating condition of these bound volumes, the Library ceased allowing their access, and even photocopies could not be ordered. Since then, the *Sunday Referee* volumes have been moved to Boston Spa, West Yorkshire, and unless this paper is digitised, any collected edition of Lambert's journalism will prove a very difficult task.

Another problem at Colindale was searching on microfilm for articles written by Lambert for *Le Figaro*, made harder not only because he was writing in French but, it seems, also because he was using a pseudonym, something that only revealed itself by chance. Lambert's writing was almost exclusively on music, but towards the end of his life he contributed a handful of articles on non-musical matters to the *Lilliput* magazine (somewhat similar in size and general content to the *Reader's Digest* magazine), suggesting that, had he lived longer, he might well have expanded his writing most successfully in other spheres beyond that just on music. Fortunately, copies of *Lilliput* with his articles were fairly easily traceable – and purchasable – online, and many traders were most helpful by kindly searching the issues they were selling to see if they contained articles by Lambert. Another magazine to which he contributed was the short-lived *Night and Day*, which was terminated when Twentieth Century Fox threatened libel action following remarks made by its literary editor and film critic, Graham Greene, about their young star, Shirley Temple. As the magazine's music critic, Lambert only made two contributions.

Appendix 5 details Lambert's talks for the BBC, from his first in 1931 until his last in 1951. Many of the original scripts survive in the BBC Written Archives Centre at Caversham and audio copies of a few of them also survive. The most interesting of the talks are probably the ones on Vaughan Williams as a teacher, and the personal memoirs of Lord Berners and Bernard van Dieren. The most curious script is of the short account Lambert gave of the Sadler's Wells Company's

narrow escape in 1940 from Holland when they were caught in the German invasion. An audio recording of that talk differs significantly from the script at Caversham, which is far more horrific – a fine example of the best of Lambert’s first-hand journalism – and it may be that the radio producer suggested at the last minute that Lambert softened the content for the war-time listeners. **Lambert’s two talks in 1936 on jazz (or modern dance music as the BBC preferred to name it, the subject of jazz then causing some controversy in the press) – that Malcolm Arnold remembered so vividly – are included as evidence of Lambert’s enthusiasm, a topic he was to return to and defend many times.**

Lambert was an important contributor to the new Third Programme that started in 1946, largely due to his friendship with Humphrey Searle who was one of the producers in its early years, and the list of his involvement (an expanded version of the one Richard Shead appended to his book) shows Lambert’s extraordinary range of interests. He was just the right person to arrange or conduct a programme on van Dieren, Liszt (an enthusiasm he shared with Searle), Satie, Warlock, Sibelius, Russian music, Purcell, Handel, Vivaldi, and so the list goes on. When he came to be appointed assistant conductor at the Proms in 1945 and 1946 (appendix 8) it was to Lambert that the Prom planners often turned for such composers as Liszt and Sibelius. The Prom programmes were generally shared with another conductor, such as Cameron or Boult, and it was Lambert’s misfortune that his share was often the second half of the concert, which was not broadcast and so he had to go forego the much-needed broadcasting fees.

Lambert’s friendship with the novelist Anthony Powell is well known, as is the fact that the character of Hugh Moreland in Powell’s sequence of novels *A Dance to the Music of Time* was in part drawn from Lambert. But the connections between Lambert and Moreland do not seem to have been examined in great detail before, and this is done in appendix 9. The fifth novel, *Casanova’s Chinese Restaurant*, can be seen, as Lady Viola Powell has written, as ‘an infinitely touching memorial’ to a very close friend who left ‘an unfillable gap’.

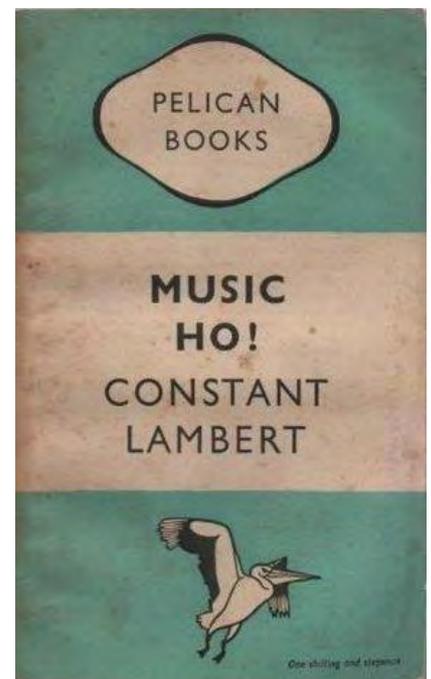
The appendix of paintings, drawings and cartoons of Lambert that form appendix 11 is something new. It is extraordinary that three of his father George Lambert’s ‘family’ portraits should include his fellow Australian artist Thea Proctor, with Thea perhaps adding that touch of style and elegance that his wife Amy could not provide. It was annoying for the author to find another of George’s family pictures just as the book was going to the press, but it is mentioned in the appendix and readers can if they wish find it online.

When a book is finished there are often afterthoughts of things that might have been different.

One regret is not having included a sample of Lambert’s handwriting, and although CDs attached to the inside of the back cover of a book are more often forgotten or mislaid than played, one that included several surviving broadcast talks together with some of Lambert’s own recordings – even the historical extracts from *Façade* which, although they have been issued, would have found a useful home here – might have been included. But this would no doubt have added to the cost of the book. An illustration of Joan Miró’s designs for Lambert’s first ballet, *Romeo and Juliet*, still in copyright, which caused the famous riot at the Paris premiere, was one of a number of items that proved too expensive, especially when they are costs that the author has to bear. But the illustrations showing Florence Mills, Anna May Wong, Florence Lambert and Margot Fontes (as she was) and, on another page, Epstein’s bronze of Isabel Lambert, give particular pleasure, showing how all five women with whom Lambert was fascinated had something of that Eastern look that he was attracted to.

Lambert’s affair with Fonteyn was always likely to be a difficult aspect to research, although a hopeful line of approach was through Fonteyn’s close dancing friend Pamela May who agreed to be interviewed in her London flat. Opening conversation seemed to augur well until it touched on the affair. There came an immediate reply: ‘I think that anything that Margot would have wanted to say she would have done so in her autobiography’ (where Lambert is virtually ignored – perhaps understandably as her politician/bandit husband Tito was still alive at the time she penned her autobiography). It was like friends closing ranks. Fortunately there were other sources, and May was later slightly more open on the subject to Fonteyn’s biographer Meredith Daneman, realising perhaps that the truth is often preferable to rumour and speculation.

The dancer Leo Kersley, who saw quite a lot of Fonteyn’s private interaction with Lambert, especially the fondness she showed for his son Kit, was a wonderful source of memories of those Sadler’s Wells days, and even in his late eighties he willingly drove over to the author’s house to share his memories. Another helpful source was a lady who acted as



housekeeper for Patrick Hadley when he lived at Heacham, near Cambridge. She remembered Constant and Margot staying with Paddy, and she had a trunkful of letters – having a digital camera at hand was a godsend. Another instance when a camera proved **invaluable was on a visit to Gavin Gordon's son. In** addition to his musical talents, Gavin Gordon was a skilled artist and his son produced a little scrapbook of sketches and caricatures, two of which are invaluable additions to the Lambert iconography that forms appendix 11.

One criticism that could perhaps be levelled against this book is that it contains too much detail. But for many, it is hoped, it is this detail that is of interest. **Lambert's life was busy and complicated, and it is** hoped that this book has done justice to one of the most remarkable musicians of his time.

Stephen Lloyd

News and Events

Conference

The Music of War: 1914-1918

A conference at the British Library on 29-31 August will commemorate the centenary of the First World War by giving a forum to scholars of music of the era, including musicologists, cultural historians, and literary scholars. There will be two keynote addresses during this interdisciplinary conference: Rachel Cowgill (Cardiff University) will speak on 'Song and the Soldier', and Kate McLoughlin (Birkbeck, University of London) will speak on 'The Soundscapes of First World War Literature'.

The conference is by no means restricted to British music or music in Britain. While two panels will focus on British composers, including Butterworth, Parry, Holst, Stanford and Bridge, the focus is truly international. The programme includes speakers on topics from Korea (on the use of folksong during the First World War), America (on Wagner at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York), Germany and Austria (including soldier songs from the German Empire and psychoanalytical elements in Berg, Schreker and Zemlinsky), Tanzania (on the re-use of a World War One song), and France (including a panel on the Parisian avant-garde). Other panels will focus on the uses of music in propaganda during the First World War, on music publishing and

sheet music, on cabaret, and on commemoration. There will be events running in tandem with the conference, including an evening dramatic representation of a Lena Ashwell concert party, and a screening of a 1917 Danish silent film, with piano accompaniment from an original Austrian score. The full programme may be found on the conference website: <http://www.themusicofwar.org>

The British Library is hosting the conference alongside a recently opened exhibition (<http://www.bl.uk/whatson/exhibitions/enduring-war/>). Exhibits include musical artefacts such as a collection of music manuscripts written by German prisoners of war in England. The conference is generously supported by the Royal Musical Association and Music & Letters. Enquiries may be directed to the organisers Dr Rachel Moore and Dr Jane Angell via themusicofwar@gmail.com

Musica Britannica Critical Music Editing Study Day Methodology, Sources, Repertoire, 1600-1900

This study day on 4 October at the University of Leeds, sponsored by Musica Britannica and LUCEM (Leeds University Centre for English Music), investigates the critical editing of British music from 1600-1900.

Musica Britannica, formed in 1951, has been at the forefront of the critical editing of important and often times overlooked British music. Even as it approaches its 100th volume, many areas of the repertoire remain unexplored. This day will consider areas still in need of exploration through scholarly editions, and the sources and methodologies available. The study day is aimed at current and potential research students, as well as existing editors wishing to improve their skills, and performers just wishing to get the most out of their MB volumes.

The morning session will feature talks on Musica Britannica (Julian Rushton, Chair of Musica Britannica Editorial Committee), methodology (H. Diack Johnstone, General Editor), sources (Nicolas Bell, member of the editorial committee and Curator of the music collections at the British Library), and the history of the editing of British music (Peter Holman, member of the editorial committee), and will conclude with a Round Table on repertoire.

The afternoon will be devoted to practical sessions on music from 1600-1750 (led by Rebecca Herissone, Peter Holman, H. Diack Johnstone, and Bryan White) and music from 1750-1900 (led by Nicholas Bell, Peter Horton, Valerie Langfield and Julian Rushton).

Research Reports

The Hidden Years Music Archive Project, South Africa

Lizabé Lambrechts

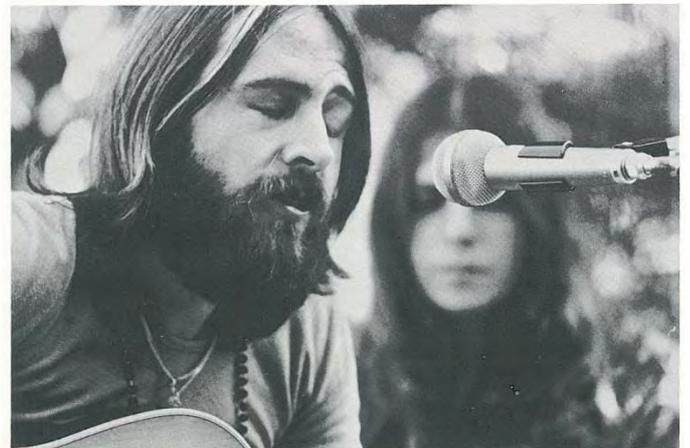
In November 2013 the Documentation Centre for Music (DOMUS), situated at Stellenbosch University, South Africa, received a collection of over 800 boxes of material donated by David Marks, owner of the 3rd Ear Music Company. The collection contains irreplaceable sound recordings, photographs, posters, concert tickets, diaries and notebooks, letters, postcards, books, magazines and newspaper clippings, documenting the South African popular music scene from 1960 to 2005. The collection, first kept on the south coast of KwaZulu-Natal, lacked proper storage and the material rapidly deteriorated due to the salt air and a lack of temperature control which placed the records at risk of damage from tropical weather, especially humidity. The South African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO) intervened in 2008, and part of the collection was moved to their archival vault in Johannesburg. However, in 2012 SAMRO requested that the collection be re-housed since they required their storage space, and the archive was in danger of being sold or split up. DOMUS decided to intervene, and a postdoctoral research fellowship was initiated by Stephanus Muller (Director of DOMUS). I was appointed in 2013 on the project entitled 'Making accessible South Africa's unknown music history: Sorting, cataloguing and curating the Hidden Years Music Archive'. The project involved recovering and collecting the material pertaining to the Hidden Years Music Archive (HYMA) from Johannesburg and Durban, coordinating the various stakeholders in the collection, negotiating donation contracts, publications and basic processing of the collection, namely unpacking, assessing the level of deterioration, and drawing up a rough inventory.

During my doctoral research I did extensive ethnographic work on this collection as well as four other music archives in South Africa, investigating these archives as sites where embedded notions of power and politics become visible. This work was an attempt to situate music archives within the recent discourse on archives and processes of archive making, a discourse wherein the music archive was strangely absent. My ethnographic approach allowed me a wonderful sense of creativity and freedom in writing about these archives, and allowed for a wide range of

theoretical exploration of notions of community, crises, storytelling, apparatus of capture, loss and being lost in the archive. However, nothing could have prepared me for the realities of dealing with a tremendous collection such as HYMA, where issues around unpacking, preservation and management of this collection are constantly negotiated. In spite of the daily struggles with copious amounts of dust, insects, and a lack of infrastructure, working on this archive has been rewarding and to date I have been privileged to uncover many out-of-print records, magazines and original master tapes.

The core of the Hidden Years Music Archive has been collected through the 3rd Ear Music Company, established in 1967 by Ben Segal and Audrey Smith. It functioned as an independent record label, mostly operating in Johannesburg and Durban with the aim of producing live-music performances that were not heard within the mainstream record and broadcast industries due to the political or non-commercial nature of the material. David Marks joined the company in 1970 as a sound engineer and one year later took over the ownership, production and management of the company. Marks remained an active participant in the South African music landscape for most of his life, working as a performer, composer (some of his hit songs include 'Master Jack', 'Hey Nico' and 'Mountains of Men'), and sound engineer.

In 1968 Marks travelled to America, where he worked as a sound engineer for the Bill Hanley sound company. A year later he did his first live sound mix for **John Lennon's Plastic Ono Band at the legendary Woodstock festival of 1969**. Upon his return to South Africa, Hanley donated his sound system, used at the Woodstock festival, to Marks and it subsequently became known as the 'Woodstock Bins'. This sound system allowed Marks to work at various music festivals in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique, Malawi, Lesotho and Botswana. All of these festivals and concerts were photographed and recorded by



From the archive:
Mike Dickman, 1971 (Johannesburg)
(Photograph by Tony Campbell, (c) 3rd Ear/David Marks)

Marks, including musicians such as Shiyani Ngcobo, Madosini, rare early performances of Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu (who later formed the group Juluka), folk singer Phil Ochs, the Malombo Jazz Makers, Allen Kwela, Kippie Moeketsi, Jeremy Taylor, Roger Lucey, Colin Shamley, Mike Dickman, Cornelia Blundell, Carlo Mombeli, Laurika Rauch, Hawk, live recordings of Hugh Masekela playing in Lesotho and performances of Lefifi Tladi, to name but a few. The sound recordings also include various plays and musicals performed at the Market Theatre, Dorkay House and the **Bantu Men's Social Club** in Johannesburg, and recordings of various union meetings and political speeches. In addition, Marks received donations of material, including recordings documenting the folk scene in Zimbabwe, the collection of Ben Segal, material from John Gregg (who ran a recording studio in Port Elizabeth under the Bootleg label), and donations from ethnomusicologists such as Dave Dargie and David Rycroft.

This archive contains a significant collection of music material documenting a turbulent time in **South Africa's history**. It is a history that remains largely unknown and under-explored due to the lack of archival institutions that seek to preserve music collections in private ownership. This project has tremendous scope for future studies and situates DOMUS as one of the foremost archives in South Africa for popular music studies. As such, DOMUS is launching a five year project that will focus on sorting and cataloguing the collection, an oral history project with the surviving musicians, concerts, exhibitions and a study to determine the feasibility of digitising the material. This will not only make the collection accessible to national as well as international scholars, but broaden the possibilities of creative outputs. For more information on this project please visit www.domus.ac.za and www.facebook.com/hiddenyearsmusicarchiveproject

Editing Gurney's Music

Richard Carder

Editing Gurney's music manuscripts has occupied much of my time since 1984, when I was awarded a grant by the Worshipful Company of Musicians, on the recommendation of my uncle, the late Frank Holland, MBE, curator of the National Musical Museum in Brentford until his death in 1989, who was a member. I **had recently read Michael Hurd's** excellent biography of Gurney, and he kindly agreed to support my application by acting as referee.

The majority of problems in editing Gurney's music result from the fact that most of his compositions were



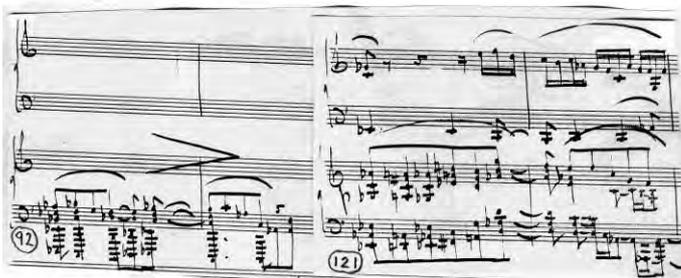
Example 1

unrevised first drafts, as can be seen in Philip Lancaster's comprehensive catalogue of 2006.¹ Gurney was fortunate in having Marion Scott as the guardian of his manuscripts, as she often made fair copies of songs she liked in her very clear handwriting, such as that of 'Star Talk', first performed in her home by Clive Carey in January 1922. The published version of this song was regrettably revised by Gurney in 1925 on a day when **he must have been subject to the 'electrical disturbances'** which so tortured him, producing some very strange and inappropriate harmonies on its final page. **This was reprinted under Michael Hurd's** editorship by Thames in 1998, which can have done **Gurney's reputation no good, and the earlier version** should replace it as soon as possible.

A more recent venture has been editing Gurney's two Piano Trios, which raise further examples of editing problems.² The handwriting in the first movement is rather more wild and scruffy, with several alterations and scubbings out, but serious dilemmas occur in bar 53 (Ex. 1), where Gurney has confused his sharp and natural signs (which happens elsewhere in his mss), most obviously in the 2nd half of the bar where the piano and violin are playing the same phrase in octaves; the violin has an F natural, but the piano has F sharp. A similar problem occurs in bar 116 (Ex. 1), where the cello part has been severely altered in the previous bar, and the violin phrase finishes on a D natural, which does not fit the harmony, and was probably meant to be a D sharp; quite frequently Gurney mixes up his writing so that one part is written in a sharp key, while another simultaneous part is in a flat key. My final task was to finish the movement by returning to the tonic key from the place where he abandoned it on a chord of E flat in bar 127, using the principal themes (Ex. 2).



Examples 2 & 3



Gurney's second trio, *A London Meditation* (Ex. 3) was written in the asylum in 1924, and is closely modelled on the slow movement of his first trio, but employs a more modern harmonic language, such as the chords of stacked fourths (also occurring in other asylum pieces, for instance the song 'For the Lands'),³ examples of which can be found here in bars 39, 41, 92, & 121.

Again there are several instances of missing or incorrect accidentals. A different puzzle is encountered at bar 61, which contains seven quavers in the bar for the piano, calling for a triplet sign to be added somewhere to make the line fit the time signature. With these anomalies resolved, I believe we have a fine piece, which reinforces the case for Gurney's continuing creative musical ability in the earlier asylum years.

1. Philip Lancaster, 'Ivor Gurney: Catalogue of Musical Works', *Gurnal* [the Journal of the Ivor Gurney Society] vol. 12 (2006).
2. See also *CHOMBEC News* vol. 11 (Summer 2011), 13. The Trios were performed by the English Piano Trio at the Victoria Rooms, University of Bristol, on 22 January 2014.
3. See Richard Carder, 'The "Mad" Songs of Ivor Gurney', *British Music Society Journal* vol. 30 (2008), 84.

Reviews

Marek Korczynski, Michael Pickering and Emma Robertson, *Rhythms of Labour: music at work in Britain* (Cambridge University Press, 2013)

Stephen Banfield

'When you was working filling up the barrels, you were singing. When it was quiet, there was something wrong.' This testimony of a former Scottish fish-gutter, Jeannie Gay, among the 5500 women who were taken to Yarmouth to assist in processing herrings at the industry's peak in the 1920s, exemplifies both the fact that singing at work has been immemorially natural and widespread, and the nature of the rich, direct evidence presented by the authors in this wide-ranging study. They explore three broad areas: singing in pre-industrial labour, the silencing of workers' singing, and their resistance to this, in the industrial revolution, and the re-emergence of music at work in the radio

broadcasts that began on a national scale with the BBC's *Music While You Work*. This last was inaugurated in 1940 as part of the war effort because research had shown that carefully timed and selected music programmes (no languorous waltzes or hard-to-catch vocals) increased production throughout the day. The authors speculate that **Eric Coates's march 'Calling all workers', *Music While You Work's* signature tune, 'was the single most frequently heard piece of music in the British Isles' during the quarter-century of the programme's existence (it lasted until 1967).**

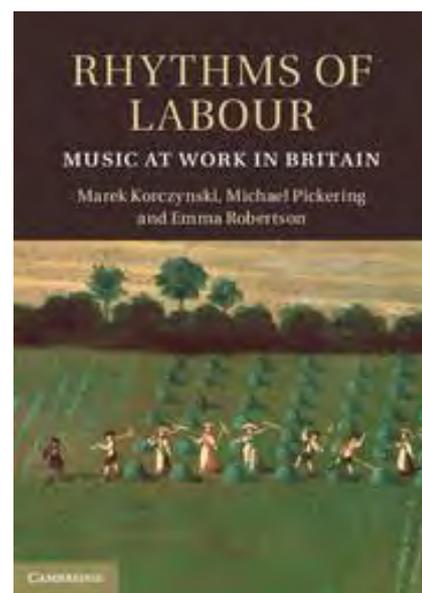
Durable concepts materialise out of this unexpected trajectory of topics, and they are solidified around four keywords: fancy and function, community and voice. **'Fancy and function' signals the fact that 'work songs' have not necessarily been about work,** have not necessarily been performed in synchronisation with some rhythmic task, and convey a variety of subject matter telling us much about the relationship between *homo faber* and *homo ludens*. Contrasts and ironies abound, all in the end concerning freedom and servitude. Community strengthens endurance (sometimes resistance) or indeed enjoyment (which can be enjoyment of the actual work, though the authors scarcely admit this), **and 'voice' expresses reaction – a rather restricted use of the term since in this account it generally comes down to 'raising voice',** through words or through the mere fact of singing, against oppressing employer or conditions in general.

This all makes the book sound much more Marxist than it is, whereas real and unconstrained strength lies in its masterly coverage and presentation of the primary sources, its understanding and exploitation of previous scholarship, and its excellent bibliography. Nor is it in fact driven by theory and argument, for concrete topics are carefully identified, clearly expounded, and comprehensively covered with immaculate presentation **and assessment of the evidence, be they 'shantying', 'hop-picking and berry-picking', 'fragments of singing in the factory', or 'voice on the shopfloor'. It will serve as a fine work of historical reference, fully up to the standards of production and coverage one has come to expect from Cambridge.**

One regrets all the more, therefore, *Rhythms of Labour's* academic encumbrances. The account still smells strongly of the collaborative research grant, and for all the neat connections that emerge between, say, singing knitters in the Dent valley and listening ammunitions workers on the night shift, there are too **many areas of 'work' left entirely unaddressed or even recognised.** Soldiers singing in the First World War trenches (there is nothing on the military) would have **furnished a useful link between industrial 'silence' and the more organised mass musical soundscapes of the Second World War.** And where listening to the radio while working is concerned, what about truck drivers and delivery men and women; domestic servants;

housewives? The legacy of left-wing social history seems to drive an ongoing assumption that work since the industrial revolution has meant factories. There would have been plenty of space for some of these broader concerns had not so much of the prose been devoted to that further academic bugbear, repetition at great length of what is going to be done and what has been done in a chapter rather than simply doing it. **Each chapter's 'Conclusion' is nothing of the sort.** Musicians know the difference between a recapitulation and a coda: too many academic writers do not.

But then it is hardly a book about music and sound (and the sister CD from Harbourtown Records seems not yet to be available). Soundscapes emerge from the evidence, particularly the industrial evidence, as highly important, and it is not going too far to say that machines made their own music, deafening and drowning out any possibility of singing or complementing and stimulating it as the case may have been. Nor is it a book about musicians, and one of the areas where the stark sociologies of labour might have been nuanced more thoughtfully is when a hint is given that singers at work were singing *as musicians*, amateur or otherwise. Singing factory girls had other musical existences, for many of them sang in church too, and some of the men who seemed increasingly reluctant to raise their voices – here, literally – at work, so efficient had been the masculinising agendas of the Victorians, will have been members of bands. Such people were working at their music as well as musicking at work.



Gary West, *Voicing Scotland: Folk, Culture, Nation* (Luath Press, 2012)

Per Ahlander (corresponding member)

The state of Scotland's particular richness in the traditional arts in today's globalised world is at the core of Gary West's new publication, *Voicing Scotland: Folk, Culture, Nation*; traditional arts here referring to Scotland's songs, stories and music – what UNESCO describes as 'intangible cultural heritage'. It is a both informative and refreshing journey through the cultural history of the Scottish nation, reflecting upon how the past has led to and inspired the present. West has set himself the rather daunting task of weaving together a scholarly overview of Scottish Studies with an autobiographical narrative, including personal encounters with several of the icons of Scottish traditional culture, but deeply steeped in Scottish culture himself, as a musician, lecturer and broadcaster, he most certainly has the knowledge, experience and overview for such an endeavour. By combining more academic material with cameos, anecdotes and personal reflections in an accessible manner, there is surely something for everyone, and *Voicing Scotland* should thus appeal to a wide circle of readers.

Somewhat provocatively, West begins by stating that we now live in a 'post-traditional' world, at least according to many leading voices, including that of sociologist Zygmunt Bauman. But what happens to the traditional arts then, what is their role in forging a nation in this world of 'modernity'? West's answer to that question is that 'tradition is not the antithesis of change' but instead, quoting Hamish Henderson, a 'carrying stream' that both picks up and leaves behind flotsam along its way through time and tide. Without change, it is a 'convention', and '[a] convention is a dead tradition' (11-13). The introduction continues to draw attention to noticeable changes over the past decades in the Scottish cultural landscape, where existing national cultural institutions have been revitalised, new entities have been created, and the quality of Scottish creativity has been recognised internationally, both in literature and in music. The concept of nation is problematic though, bearing in mind that the Scottish nation is not a sovereign state, but part of the United Kingdom. With the forthcoming referendum on Scottish independence in September 2014, these issues are widely debated at present, and although not taking any political stance, West's argumentation is clearly both timely and food for thought for both sides in the campaign.

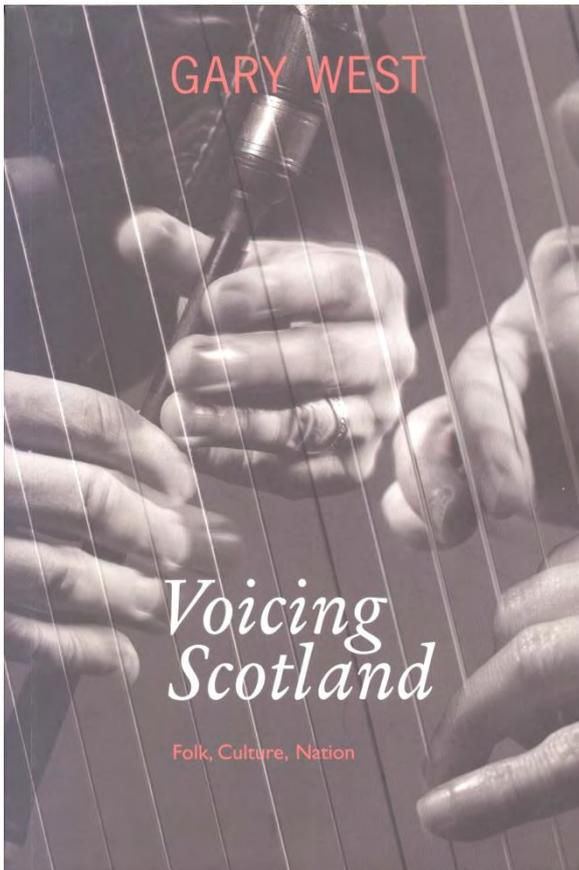
The first chapter, 'Understanding Tradition', provides a brief scholarly overview of the history of ethnology, the study of tradition or folklore, both in Scotland and elsewhere. The antiquarian movement in England of the 18th century, Swiss scholar Alexandre-André-César de Chavannes and German brothers Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm are all discussed as precursors of the academic study of ethnology as we know it today. In Scotland, West draws attention both to the importance of Robert Burns, James Macpherson and Sir Walter Scott and to that of John Francis Campbell of Islay, Alexander Carmichael and Lady Evelyn Stewart Murray. Marjory Kennedy-Fraser and John Lorne Campbell, furthermore, 'moved the study of tradition firmly into its "nation-centred" phase' (46), which led to the creation of various official institutions. Since the foundation of the School of Scottish Studies in 1951, many more recent scholars have been recording and transcribing both Gaelic and Scots traditional material from throughout Scotland.

The second chapter, 'Music and Custom at Home', highlights the importance of music and traditions in

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people's daily lives: 'There have been very few households within Scotland, whatever their positioning in respect of time, place or social hierarchy, which have not been enriched by music.' As elsewhere, the social elite supported professional musicians, but throughout society, there was music in many forms and for many purposes. The chapter gives a brief overview of all these different aspects of music making, like the functional music to accompany merry dancing or tedious work, or to rock an infant to sleep – 'both the Gaelic and the Scots traditions abound with cradle songs and lullabies' (54). Equally, the various stages of the life cycle were events of particular significance in the community, and consequently marked in special customary ways, which more often than not included music.

In the third chapter, 'Voicing Place', West turns to discussing the importance of place, arguing that although the debate tends to focus on 'what it means to be Scottish or living in Scotland' generally, the more specific voicings of place are often the more powerful ones. 'And it is also at its finest', he continues, 'when there is a willingness to link the local with the global' (76). One individual can most certainly belong to several places, as did the late Martyn Bennett, who also moved freely between traditional, classical and many other styles of music making. The similarly late Gordon Duncan (both he and Martyn Bennett belonged to Gary West's own generation) was a brilliant piper who, from

an early age, developed his own style of playing, but still, West argues, 'saw himself as a part of that tradition [the conservative establishment of piping], he just had very different ideas from them as to how it should be allowed to develop and grow' (86). East Lothian songwriter and singer Davy Steele was another musician with a strong sense of place, 'fiercely proud that he was a miner's boy from Prestonpans' (90). Concluding the section, West hopes to have made 'the point that within the traditional sphere, not everything is articulated at the level of the nation' (103).

The fourth chapter, 'Voicing War', turns to Sorley MacLean and Hamish Henderson, from both of whom 'we have creative responses from those who lived through it, art fashioned from experience' (117). Although it may seem inevitable to pair war with death, it can also be the source of inspiration for both visual art and music, and there is a plethora of regimental pipe marches, tunes and songs named after heroes, places, campaigns and gallant deeds. 'Scotland as a nation has a highly ambiguous relationship with war', West notes, 'for while we may protest our taking part and mourn our losses, we also pride ourselves in being rather good at it' (121). Wars and conflicts continue to inspire creative minds; a recent, hugely successful artistic creation based on the theme of war was the National Theatre of Scotland's *Black Watch*, based on interviews with soldiers who had served in Iraq. Interspersed with well-known soldiers' songs, there was also a poignant reminder of loss when Margaret Bennett sang the Gaelic lament, 'A Thearlaich Òig' ('Young Charles Stewart'), after three of the characters had been killed in a fatal blast.

'Lands and Lyrics', the fifth chapter, deals with the relationship between man and the land, a complex relationship, according to West, as 'the landscape has been friend and foe, embraced and shunned, celebrated and cursed' (132). Attention is drawn to Robert Burns's eloquent capturing of this multiplicity of meaning in 'Now Westlin Winds'. *Sunset Song* by Lewis Grassie Gibbon is another work of particular personal importance to the author. West then moves on to reflect upon the relationship between instrumental music and the land, wondering to what extent the marked geographical differences within Scotland lie behind the nation's disparate musical idioms.

In the concluding chapter, 'Cultural Contexts', Gary West sums up his impressions of how the Scottish folk scene has developed in more recent years, pointing out that 'one factor which unifies all the songwriters and singers I have discussed here is that they each sing in their own voice' (158). Several heated cultural debates have taken place over the years, often highlighting 'the poisoning influence of two toxic phenomena, tartantry and kailyardism' (161). Things have moved on, however, and there are now several well-established institutions teaching and promoting traditional culture,

among them the BA in Scottish Music degree course at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in Glasgow. A new generation of artists has emerged, and they seem to feel free to follow their own preferred routes, being inspired rather than inhibited by the traditions of the past. **'We live in most interesting times', West notes at the end of his journey, 'and whatever constitutional outcome emerges in the years ahead, as individuals and as a nation we will continue to contemplate our place in the world. [...] Folk is cool, yet we must guard against it simply becoming another brand, a musical style worn lightly, floating casually on this liquid society so depressingly outlined by Zygmunt Bauman' (173).** *Voicing Scotland* thus ends on a positive note, with a confident anticipation that the intangible cultural heritage of the Scottish nation will continue to thrive, in one form or another.

Phillip A. Cooke and David Maw (eds),
The Music of Herbert Howells
(Boydell Press, 2013)

David Bednall

Herbert Howells (1892-1983) suffers from something of the same fate as Parry, Fauré, and, to a lesser extent, Vaughan Williams: their public reputations are all based on a very small percentage of their output. Fauré grew increasingly annoyed in later life that people would play only a handful of pieces; Parry is known for a trio of peerless ceremonial choral works. In Vaughan Williams's case matters are certainly changing, as the recent Proms programming of Symphonies 4, 5, and 6 in a single evening attested, but even amongst music lovers, full awareness of this finest of composers often seems to halt with *The Lark Ascending* (1914) and *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis* (1910). This latter work, incidentally, was to have an astonishing effect on the young Howells who was present at its premiere in Gloucester Cathedral; he would often relate the tale of how he and Ivor Gurney walked the streets after the performance, unable to sleep.

In Howells's case, his current reputation rests upon his choral music, and his place as one of the most important composers in this field of the twentieth century is secure. For a composer following him, his presence is such that one almost needs to make the decision to embrace or reject traces of his style; whichever way is taken, one must respond to it. Even here, however, immense adoration is heaped upon only a handful of admittedly superb works: with the exception of *Take him, earth, for cherishing* (1964), a masterpiece which stands with the Bach motets and would guarantee his reputation on its own, the window

of performance includes the early carol anthems, and then spans the period from the early 1940s to the mid-1950s. These works are rightly celebrated as some of the finest examples in the genre, but the reasons for the continuing neglect of other parts of his oeuvre remain intriguing, and sometimes mystifying.

The superb and highly welcome addition to the literature on Howells reviewed here goes a very considerable way towards demonstrating that this neglect is indeed highly unjust. In particular, this book provides the clearest evidence yet that Howells is underrated in his lesser known output, and his early chamber music contains some of the finest examples in the repertoire. Likewise, it helps to put the lie to Kenneth Long's assertion that the late style is a 'cul-de-sac full of lovely things'.

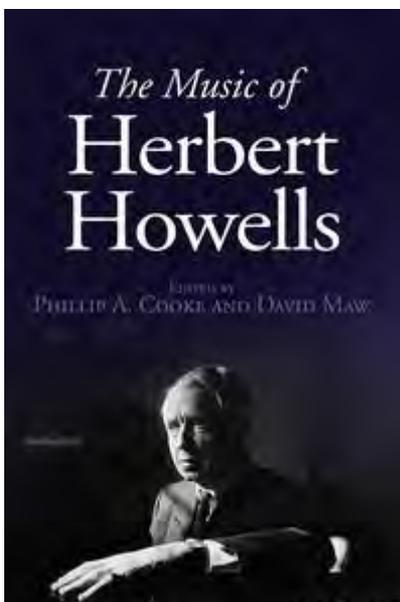
If the *Tallis Fantasia* represents an early bombshell, the death in WWI of his dear friend Francis Purcell Warren ('Bunny') was to be another (commemorated in the *Elegy for Solo Viola, String Quartet and String Orchestra*), and the biggest of all was the death of his son Michael, aged 9, in 1935. This event was to affect Howells for the rest of his life. His explicit memorial to Michael was the masterpiece *Hymnus Paradisi*, which was finally canonised by its Proms premiere in 2012. It is much to be hoped that it maintains its rightful place, for it is one of the most remarkable pieces in the repertoire: by turns consoling, wrenching, pagan, personal, and universal. Michael was to infuse many other works, sometimes explicitly (*A Sequence for St Michael*, 1961), at other times more subtly. *Take him, earth*, was a 1964 commission to commemorate JFK, but Howells's connection with the text runs back to the composition of *Hymnus*, and is the subtitle of that work. Howells seemed to associate the deaths of other friends and colleagues with Michael's as the years went on, and Kennedy, a young man shot down in his prime, resonated powerfully. The last chapter of the book explores this aspect of Howells's life in some psychological depth.

The final section of the book is entitled 'Howells in Mourning', and ties together many of these strands. The tome as a whole consists of fifteen chapters across five sections, the others being 'Howells the Stylist', 'Howells the Vocal Composer', 'Howells the Instrumental Composer', and 'Howells the Modern'. An overall narrative is thus provided, but this book is essentially a series of self-contained essays, ranging from the general, to, at times, exceedingly detailed.

It is often forgotten that Howells's early career was a firework across the musical scene: a series of orchestral and chamber works of extraordinary accomplishment. These included the glorious Piano Quartet ('To the Hill at Chosen and to Ivor Gurney who knows it'), the Fantasy String Quartet (which was awarded second place in the 1917 Cobbett Competition), and the Rhapsodic Quintet. The

orchestral works of the period included the *The B's*, *Three Dances* for Violin and Orchestra, *Paradise Rondel*, and two Piano Concertos. The second of these (1925) was, it has often been said, to cause his derailment as a frontline composer. Its modernity was certainly a potential reason for its lack of public and critical appreciation, **although the 'rent-a-mob' tactics of the time (and a particularly vocal critic) led to the hyper-sensitive Howells withdrawing the work as it neared publication; it is fascinating to conjecture what might have been had he not. He was genuinely thought to be the successor to Vaughan Williams, and it was sometimes thought that he did not 'deliver' on his early promise.**

This period is discussed in considerable detail in **the central section of the book.** Lewis Foreman's chapter serves to remind us just how much in the vanguard Howells was in the early part of the twentieth century, with commissions for the Proms and the Russian Ballet; he even made very brief sketches for a symphony. The extraordinary and still uncategorisable *Sine nomine* is a prominent feature of these years, and how good to know that a new recording is on its way. Foreman suggests that one of the reasons that Howells was reticent about promoting some of these works was that he felt they sailed too close to the wind of Vaughan Williams; now, they sound strikingly individual, the pungent aromas of Ravel and Stravinsky making a deep impression. Jonathan Clinch looks further at these **'modern' elements, particularly with regard to the two Piano Concertos, looking both at the influence of the old and new, and reasons for the second's perceived failure.** This was, as has been mentioned, probably at least partly political: the critic who shouted 'Thank goodness that's over!' was Robert Lorenz, a firm occupant of the Peter Warlock camp. Howells despised Warlock the man, not least for his ruination of Ernest Moeran. **Howells famously said that Warlock's single act of kindness was to put the cat out before gassing**



himself. Another reason was expectation: Howells repeatedly said that the work was **'tunes all the way'** as the premiere approached; the coruscating, hard, brilliant, and condensed work which followed (which was also monumentally difficult for the pianist) was bound to confuse. Foreman muses that it might have fared better had the title been **'Scenes from Gloucestershire'**.

The influence of his teacher Stanford is much clearer in the earlier and more successful First Piano Concerto – a remarkably accomplished work from a first-year student (1913) – and this is the theme of Jonathan White's chapter. **Stanford regarded Howells as his 'son in music', and it is apparent how much Howells took on board from his notoriously demanding master.** Taste, craftsmanship, and musical material determining the form rather than vice versa are much in evidence, **even if Howells's language rapidly advanced beyond what Stanford could stomach.** Form is looked at in considerable detail by David Maw and Fabian Huss, with regard to the early and late chamber music, **respectively.** Maw's examination of the 'Fantasy' helps to tie together Howells's interest in the Tudor period (he always felt he was, in Vaughan Williams's phrase 'a reincarnation of some lesser Tudor luminary') with modern considerations of form, whilst Huss looks at **Howells's structuring methods** in the (relatively) late Oboe (1942) and Clarinet (1946) Sonatas. Paul Andrews's research on the genesis and various extant versions of *In Gloucestershire* (String Quartet No. 3) makes fascinating reading; he convincingly makes the case for there being two valid versions, with the latter being a very considerable compositional achievement. **It is wonderful that Andrews's meticulously detailed catalogue of the works of Howells is included as an appendix; there is the inevitable pang when the words 'non-surviving' appear.**

What these chapters reveal is something of the intricate, hidden depths which form the foundation of pieces that seem, on the surface, to flow naturally, free from artifice or device. This is the theme of Jeremy Dibble's chapter 'Hidden Artifice: Howells as Song-Writer'. Whilst possibly not a natural writer of songs in the manner say of Finzi or Vaughan Williams, Howells produced the beautiful and charming *In Green Ways* (in both piano and glittering orchestral garb), the ecstatic *Come Sing and Dance*, and the crowning glory, *King David*, one of the finest of all songs. This hidden artifice is linked to Howells's adoration of Tudor polyphony in Lionel Pike's exhaustive analysis of *Take him, earth, for cherishing*.

The difficulty with much analysis of this music is discussed by Diane Nolan Cooke in her chapter on the *Six Pieces* for organ. The full effect of this music is often apparent only in performance, and indeed, performance in the right space. Much commentary on Howells has dwelt on the ecstasy of his music, with the

shattering climactic waves built up in 'a manner which can only be described as orgasmic' (Christopher Palmer). Equally, I have read analyses of works by Howells which, whilst being totally accurate, are so cold as to make the pieces unrecognisable. Howells was renowned for his extremely high sex-drive, and his daughter was to comment that he was 'ruled by sex'. His attractiveness (oft reciprocated) to beautiful women was also well-known, and he maintained his looks and magnetic charm even as an old man. To ignore these personal and highly sexually charged elements in his music seems to me to miss the point in its entirety (the importance of Howells the man in the interpretation of his works is discussed by Clinch in a later chapter), yet there is also much to be learnt from a 'cold' approach. Cooke steers an admirable course through these two extremes, looking closely at the mechanisms, whilst acknowledging that something 'extra' applies to Howells's impressionistic (as in leaving some kind of 'impression') style.

One of Howells's fingerprints was the ecstatic melisma, and Paul Spicer studies his use of this device in the songs and choral music. How tantalising to read that the Howells 'motif' of a falling third and a rising fourth (which launches the 'Gloria' of the *Collegium Regale* service into the stratosphere and is contained in many of his works at moments of elation) elicited only reticence from Howells when asked about it: 'as if the figure held a personal significance for him that he was not prepared to discuss'.

Phillip Cooke's two chapters concentrate on the choral music, firstly in 'A wholly new chapter in Service Music' on Howells's rebirth as the doyen of Anglican music following the 1944 *Te Deum* for King's College, Cambridge; this set grew to include the *Evening Canticles* and the *Holy Communion Service* and is lovingly referred to by singers as 'Coll. Reg.'. An analysis of settings of the Evening Services for King's College and for Gloucester Cathedral helps serve as a reminder about quite what was so new: without breaking the mould he was to bring his sensuousness, and yes, sexually-charged, language to church music at a time when it desperately needed it. As has been said, where Stanford had renewed the repertoire with works that marked an age of certainty, Howells was to do the same for an age of doubt.

Howells was to make nearly thirty settings of these canticles, many of which languish in neglect. Cooke's second chapter 'Austerity, Difficulty and Introspection' looks at some of the root causes of this. The *Stabat Mater* (1965) is his summa: a searing, exhausting masterpiece in which a composer who truly understands this terrible text of loss and the horror of watching a child die is combined with one who was a master of large-scale form (in this case created through mood alone), learnt from *Hymnus Paradisi* (1935) and *Missa Sabriensis* (1954). The late works are

sometimes, and in my view quite unfairly, regarded as a quiet coda: how good to see them reappraised. Part of this reluctance to perform them stems from their immense difficulty, both for performers and listeners, and much of this music is astonishingly dark and strikingly 'modern'. A practical explanation is of course that choirs will struggle to put in the time on the 'Chichester' service, say, when 'Coll. Reg.' is in the repertoire: the perils of writing superb music early in life! The late-period language is astringent, atmospheric, haunting and shadowy, yet still ecstatic and luminous, even if that luminosity is that of coal embers rather than the blaze of noonday. His earlier, more harmonically directional style now often seems to become a succession of mystical harmonies which simply dissolve in the ether. There is also an increasing sense of Howells coming to terms with his own mortality, not least in his choice of texts, as Cooke points out: 'You know the way to heaven's door' coming from *Sweetest of Sweets* (1975-1976).

Howells's religious views are worthy of consideration: he was a non-believer by his own account, yet deeply moved by cathedrals, texts, and for want of a better word, the spiritual or 'other'. 'Christian agnostic' possibly comes pretty close, although this seems to have tended towards atheism at the end of his life; his daughter recalled being surprised only that he had actually said he thought there was nothing, rather than that he thought it.

The final section, 'Howells in Mourning', looks back across his life post-Michael. Graham Barber examines the continuous appearance of the 'Sarabande' in his music, both explicit in pieces such as 'Sarabande for the Morning of Easter' (one of the Six Pieces for Organ, where it is used as a positive force), and hidden as a structural force, for instance in sections of the *Stabat Mater*, and the particular meaning this antique form seems to have had for Howells. Clinch's second chapter is on interpretation, and here focuses on the Cello Concerto. The first two movements are the *Fantasia for Cello and Orchestra*, and the *Threnody for Cello and Orchestra*. The former was submitted as part of his Oxford DMus, and the latter was named and orchestrated by Christopher Palmer from a well-labelled short-score and premiered at the Howells Centenary Concert in Westminster Abbey in 1992. It is an intriguing question as to why Howells seemed reluctant to finish, or in the case of the 2nd movement even acknowledge, the work: 'a kind of lobby movement' was made to get him to complete it for the Proms in the late 1970s, with his godson Julian Lloyd Webber among the protagonists. Maybe there was something too personal in it: it certainly has a strong 'Michael' connection. Clinch has completed the final movement from Howells's sketches, and the prospect of finally hearing this work as a unit is mouth-watering.

The final chapter, by Byron Adams, looks at the shadow of death across Howells's life, in particular those of 'Bunny' and Michael. Increasingly, deaths of friends and colleagues also seemed to become more and more closely associated with that of Michael's in his mind. Howells himself was diagnosed with Grave's Disease in 1915 and was given six months to live. He undertook a pioneering course of radium treatment and was to live to be 90; he thus saw many close figures pass on, and he was always highly attuned to anniversaries. It is tempting to regard all work post-1935 as related to Michael. This is not true, and equally not all 'elegaic' works date from this period; the Requiem which provides much of the foundation of *Hymnus Paradisi* is known to predate Michael's death by some years. Nevertheless, these feelings were never to leave Howells and they re-emerged strongly in the 1960s: raw grief screams through the opening of *Sequence for St Michael* (was there ever a more chilling and agonising statement in music than those cries of 'Michael?'), and the agony and desolation of loss is expressed by no other composer as powerfully as in the *Stabat Mater*. One feels it was only in *Take him, earth* that Howells achieved some kind of peace. By comparison, *Hymnus Paradisi* glows with light: Adams is keen to stress the universal and communal aspect of this music which provides a universal comfort, irrespective of religion. This chapter cannot fail to leave the reader deeply moved.

In a book of this kind there are the inevitable 'gear changes' caused by the different writing styles between chapters, and in some cases it really is necessary to have the scores of works to hand for the detailed analysis to be understandable. However, this book should go a long way to adding thoroughly deserved gravitas and seriousness to Howells's entire output and highlighting his – yes – genius, across a number of genres. It is possibly not the best introduction for a non-specialist newcomer to this composer (Christopher Palmer's and Paul Spicer's books admirably fulfil this role and much else), but it provides an unprecedented insight into both known and unfairly neglected corners of his oeuvre and should be keenly sought by anyone with an interest in his work and English music in the twentieth century.

Sarah Collins, *The Aesthetic Life of Cyril Scott* (Boydell Press, 2013)

Fabian Huss

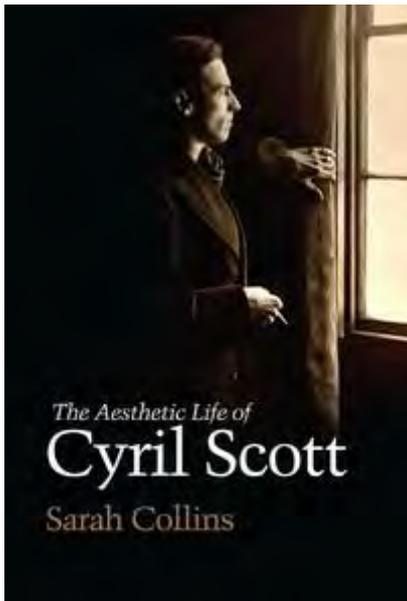
Cyril Scott is an intriguing and rather elusive figure in British music. He is often mentioned as a pioneer of British modernism, and is routinely name-checked as a

member of the so-called 'Frankfurt Gang' in discussions of early 20th-century British music. His early works achieved notable success, and some notoriety, but his reputation failed to grow, and his music is experiencing the beginning of a revival only now. Sarah Collins's book is thus timely, and her examination of Scott's milieu and the intellectual and aesthetic trends he was affected by fit into a style of cultural history that has informed much excellent scholarship in the last few years.

Collins deals with the development of Scott's intellectual identity and aesthetic proclivities in rich detail. The introduction and early chapters provide an excellent discussion of several of the major aesthetic and philosophical contexts relevant to Scott, notably occultism and theosophy. Collins's account of this area, and its relation to Symbolism, is detailed, and is an extremely welcome addition to the literature on early 20th-century British music. The connections to Schopenhauerian thought are interesting, reminding us how prominent this philosopher's influence was during the period.

The interaction of and relation between western and eastern (and 'eastern') influences is carefully handled, leading to an impressive discussion of mysticism in Britain and in Scott's aesthetic philosophy in particular. Collins then traces the intimate relationship between Scott's philosophical outlook and his music. It becomes clear that the careful examination of Scott's voluminous writings is essential not only to an adequate understanding of the man, but also to an adequate understanding of his music. This careful examination includes a detailed consideration of the unpublished writings, including several works of autobiographical fiction that complement the official autobiographies to set up 'two parallel streams of autobiographical material – one official, authored and pseudo-factual, the other unofficial, anonymous and pseudo-fictional' (12).

Central to the anonymous writings is Scott's attempt to 'allegorise his own experience as a universal archetype of human experience – his own spiritual evolution as a microcosm of the spiritual evolution of humankind' (13). Apart from indicating an impressive level of self-absorbed egoism, it also relates to Scott's idea of the 'artist-prophet, where the spiritual power of an artwork is determined by the extent to which the artist has been able to enact material disengagement at the moment of inspiration' (14). While it would be easy to poke fun at the superficial self-contradictory irony of this view, Scott's concept of realism in art, and its dependence on subjective experience, is closely linked to contemporary ideas in modernist art, notably the striving for subjective realism in both impressionism and expressionism, and several strands in Scott's aesthetic thinking reveal him to be in tune with some of the more daring trends in modernist aesthetics. Later in



the book, Collins further relates these impulses to **Scott's sympathy for Symbolism and Aestheticism**, which sought to overcome the (perceived) vulgar aspects of nature (45). This in turn has parallels with the view of illusory reality found in mysticism, suggesting a complex interconnection of subjective experience and artistic expression.

Some of his ideas also make for colourful reading, particularly his views on sex, which he probed and expounded at length. His *Autobiography of a Child*, which 'purports to be a study of human nature via self-psychoanalysis for the purpose of enhancing parental understanding of childhood sexual proclivities and torments' (13), was banned, with copies being seized and destroyed soon after publication. Given that the book apparently seeks to explore Scott's own childhood neuroses, it is perhaps fitting that, at the trial, an expert for the defence described the author as a 'highly-strung, neurotic, and abnormal person' (15). Scott's neuroses are discussed at some length, and it is interesting to note that the actual details of his behaviour and experience are much less striking than his compulsion to study them and invest them with maximum significance.

A discussion of Scott's 'early spiritual experiences' follows, detailing his first encounters with religion and religious music. His idea of Christianity appears to have been ambiguous, as several of his early impressions were unfavourable, and he eventually attempted to absorb it into an occult context, and Collins again draws on Scott's writings to detail some of the finer points in this process. His encounter with the music of Bach, Handel and Mendelssohn, meanwhile, was an important positive experience, and the experience of a Paderewski concert in Liverpool appears to have been greatly inspiring, convincing him that music was his calling.

Scott's two periods of study at the Hoch Conservatoire in Frankfurt are discussed at length, but

accounts of his musical education are extremely limited; rather, his intellectual development and the influence of important figures in his life at this time (notably Percy Grainger and Stefan George) are detailed at considerable length, reminding the reader that this is a book about Scott's 'aesthetic life', rather than simply his activities as a composer. Throughout the book, significant figures with whom Scott came into contact, and important intellectual influences, are discussed in rewarding detail, enriching the portrait of Scott's own personality considerably. His music is examined in detail only in the last chapter, however, where his theories on music and art are related to his compositional practice. His compositions are often mentioned only in passing in the earlier parts of the book, and a more thorough examination of the formation of his musical style, through direct influences and the various musical climates he experienced in his formative years is curiously lacking amid the expansive detail afforded to other areas. This is a pity, and a missed opportunity to relate developments in music to some of the wider artistic and intellectual trends examined in such depth. Furthermore, this is surely a gap in the consideration of his 'aesthetic life'. Scott's major works from the turn of the century onwards are discussed in terms of his aesthetic approach, performances and reception, but closer examination of the works themselves, and how they fit into wider musical and aesthetic contexts, would have made this discussion more meaningful.

This is only partly remedied in the final chapter, and I would have preferred more of the discussion of the music to be integrated chronologically into the rest of the book, alongside a consideration of the foundations of Scott's musical language, technical preferences, and their aesthetic foundations. Collins's scruples in separating these strands of her study are perhaps understandable, as a fully integrated discussion could easily become rambling and cumbersome, but I couldn't help thinking that something has been missed in this approach. The analytical discussion in this last chapter gives rise to some interesting points, and provides a basic outline of his development, but I found it rather superficial in places; I did not feel that I had gained a sufficient understanding of Scott's musical language, or indeed its aesthetic foundations, at crucial stages, and a small number of more detailed analyses would have added considerable depth. Scott the man is revealed to be a fascinating figure, but the music remains something of a mystery.

This barely impacted on my enjoyment of the quality of Collins's scholarship throughout the rest of the book, however. Her accounts of figures such as George and the finer points of Scott's position within occultism are thoroughly absorbing. The influence of George was profound, informing Scott's idea of 'the

artist' fundamentally, and indeed the artistic climate in Germany appears to have suited Scott rather well. On his return to England he fell in with a mildly Bohemian, intellectual circle including Augustus John and the socialist Charles Bonnier, with whom he shared living quarters for several years, and who acted as something of an antidote to George's influence.

His increasing interest in Vedanta and theosophy was a new development, apparently providing a type of spirituality that Scott had craved but had not been able to find previously. He continued to travel much, cultivated a large social circle and was interested in a wide range of areas, including alternative diets and cures, on which he later published extensively. He came into contact, and appears to have been on good terms, with many notable figures, including Debussy, Ravel, George Bernard Shaw, and Alma Mahler. His music was being promoted in England and on the continent, and his future seemed bright.

He did not capitalise on this early promise, however, pursuing various paths, producing mystical fiction along with a range of other writings, and continuing his passionate interest in occultism. Collins's discussion of these activities make for fascinating reading, revealing how profoundly occultism influenced every aspect of his life. Scott's compositional productivity dwindled noticeably during the Second World War, and for a time he intended to retire from composition, but he did subsequently continue to

compose a significant output of music. Yet this did not achieve the sort of exposure that his early career might have appeared to promise.

The second half of the book deals with Scott's aesthetic theory of music, which is heavily influenced by occultism, and on which he wrote at length. Collins uses this discussion to provide insights into Scott's philosophy of composition, leading to the final 'theory and practice' chapter, which gives examples of this process. The elucidation of the differences in approach to Debussian impressionism (especially pertinent due to the 'English Debussy' label that was on occasion attached to Scott) is interesting, but again stops short of a technical discussion of musical material and process, and their aesthetic underpinnings.

The penultimate chapter, meanwhile, tackles Scott's view on the 'immortal artist', including his view of the function of art and artist, and his understanding of history. Central to this is the idea of the great artist being a prophet who is controlled by 'forces infinitely greater than himself' (156), and a focus on novelty, originality and artistic freedom. These latter chapters demonstrate how Collins's book reflects Scott himself, in the balance between an intense focus on Scott's own personal world and a branching out into the hugely varied, esoteric ideas that preoccupied him. Collins's study is beautifully written, and is worthwhile reading in what it reveals both about Cyril Scott and about his time and milieu.

Forthcoming events relating to music in Britain, the Empire and the Commonwealth

31 July – 3 August 2014 North American British Music Studies Association Biennial Conference 2014, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
<http://nabmsa.org>

29-31 August 2014 The Music of War: 1914-1918, The British Library
<http://www.themusicofwar.org>

4-6 September 2014 Royal Musical Association annual conference, University of Leeds
<http://music.leeds.ac.uk/research/rma-50th-annual-conference-in-leeds>

8 September 2014 Voices and Books, Strathclyde University, Glasgow
<http://research.ncl.ac.uk/voicesandbooks/workshop/workshop2>

4 October 2014 Musica Britannica Critical Music Editing Study Day Methodology, Sources, Repertoire, 1600-1900, University of Leeds
<http://music.leeds.ac.uk/events/mb-lucem-editing-study-day>

25 October 2014 Musical Life Outside of London, 1500-1800: Networks, Circulation, Sources, Newcastle Black Gate
<http://goldenpages.jpehs.co.uk/2014/05/09/musical-life-outside-of-london-1500-1800-networks-circulation-sources/>

28-29 November 2014 Charles Dibdin and his World, University of Notre Dame London Centre
<http://goldenpages.jpehs.co.uk/2014/03/20/charles-dibdin-and-his-world/>