



# CHOMBEC

## News

Issue no 18

Editor: Fabian Huss

Winter 2014/15

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/music/chombec>

Centre for the History of Music in Britain, the Empire and the Commonwealth

CHOMBEC is based at the Department of Music, University of Bristol

## A Message from the New CHOMBEC Directors

We are honoured to welcome you, as new co-directors of CHOMBEC, and thank you for your continued support. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank our predecessor, John Pickard, for his wonderful work and commitment to CHOMBEC over the last years.

Under John's helm, CHOMBEC has supported a range of activities over the last years, and can boast a number of impressive achievements. The Centre supported several Research Seminars at Bristol University's Department of Music in 2013-14, including talks given by John Pickard, David Hunter, Catherine Tackley, Ruth Dockwray, Rhiannon Mathias, Flora Wilson and J Griffith Rollefson. Concerts, too, happened under the CHOMBEC banner, with 12 concerts during the 2013-14 season focusing on British music, including works by Bristol University staff and former or current research students. Volumes 13, 14, 15, 21 and 28 of the *Elgar Complete Edition* are now published, 2012 saw the acquisition of the Havergal Brian Archive, and in March 2013 the Centre hosted a wonderful conference on Frank Bridge, organised by CHOMBEC administrator Fabian Huss.

Following in John Pickard's footsteps is no easy task, but we are determined to continue the work of CHOMBEC. The *Elgar Complete Edition* will of course continue under John's leadership, and CHOMBEC continues to support events in the Music Department.



In January, CHOMBEC supported several sessions on British music at the Royal Musical Association Research Students Conference, and plans for two study days to take place later in 2015 are developing. We want to use them to introduce our own research interests to the CHOMBEC remit, and so are planning study days on 'Music in British Film Comedy' and

'Immigrants in British Music'.

Beyond this ongoing work, we are planning to explore the Centre's untapped potential. We are envisaging a thematically wider and more international outlook, aiming to make CHOMBEC a hub for research into the musical connections between Britain and the world – that of the British Empire and Commonwealth, which have been within the CHOMBEC horizon from the start, but also the wider world that shaped and was shaped by British politics and culture. Our vision is of CHOMBEC as an international and cross-disciplinary platform for scholars researching multiple facets of music and the history of Britain's dealings with the world (including the history of colonialism, empire and slavery) in the widest sense. We also endeavour to go beyond the focus on art music to include historical and contemporary popular musics in CHOMBEC activities.

Plans are underway for an international conference in 2016 on music and the British slave trade, for example. This will be of interest to scholars beyond

musicology, and include research in sociology, literature studies, geography, politics, etc. Given its history, Bristol is the right place for such a conference, and CHOMBEC will seek links with ongoing projects regarding Bristol's history of slavery and its black communities, in order to foster closer collaboration between the Centre and Bristol's wider communities.

We hope you will join us on what will be an exciting journey for CHOMBEC.

Guido Heldt and Florian Scheduling

## News and Events

Call for papers: Study Day  
(Bath Spa University and Holburne  
Museum)

A celebration of the Loder family of Bath  
Music and culture in provincial Britain in  
the long nineteenth century

Bath Spa University's Centre for Musical Research and The Holburne Museum are pleased to invite papers for this study day on Friday 16 October 2015, on subjects relating to the Loders of Bath and more widely to aspects of music and culture in provincial Britain in the long nineteenth-century.

The Loders were the leading family of musicians in Bath from the 1790s, a position they maintained until 1850. We welcome papers associated with the activities of the Loders, and also papers associated with the wider social aspects of history and culture in provincial Britain in the period 1790-1900. In particular we invite topics that touch upon the Gothic in English opera and literature, provincial musical families, the music trade, and the wider aspects of leisure culture in the early nineteenth century. The study day coincides with the launch of a new book, *The Loder Family: Musicians in Nineteenth-Century Bath*, edited by Nicholas Temperley and published by Boydell and Brewer. It will be an opportunity to inform a wider public of the achievements of this important but little known musical family.

Members of the Loder family were active not only in Bath, but also in Bristol, London and elsewhere. Prominent among them was John David Loder (1788-1846), a professor at the Royal Academy of Music and

one of the foremost violinists of his day, as a teacher and orchestral leader in Bath, London and at festivals around the country. One of John David's musical sons, Edward J. Loder, became a leading composer of English opera from the mid-1830s to the mid-



Edward J. Loder

1850s. Such was the influence of this multi-branched Loder

family that the 1833 Bath Directory lists eight members of the family active in Bath as professors of music or music business owners. Some of the Loders left Britain altogether, travelling to North America and Australia. One branch of the family produced George Loder (c1794-1829), a Bath flautist and pianist. By his first marriage he was the father of Edward's cousin George Loder (1816-68), who was active in both the USA, where he conducted the first American performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, and Australia, where he died. By his second marriage George Loder senior was also father of Kate Fanny Loder (1825-1904), another first cousin of Edward. She studied at the Royal Academy of Music and was a professional pianist (notable for performances of music by Weber, Mendelssohn and Brahms) and also a composer – most particularly of orchestral and chamber music. While the family was firmly based in Bath until the mid-century, thereafter they took their skills and talents across the English-speaking world.

The day will be hosted by The Holburne Museum in Bath. Originally the Sydney Gardens Hotel, the Holburne is situated at the entrance to the Sydney Gardens, the only extant Georgian pleasure garden in Britain – though much changed since its heyday in the early nineteenth century. It was here that John David Loder and later John Fawcett Loder led the orchestra that played for garden gala events. The day will include a concert of the music of the Loders and their associates. The conference will coincide with an exhibition at the Museum of Bath at Work, where there will be a display on Bath musicians at work.

Keynote Address, Emeritus Professor Stephen Banfield: 'Earning a musical living in provincial England in the age of the general practitioner'

Guest Speaker, Professor Rachel Cowgill: 'The Project for English Opera in early nineteenth-century Britain: some perspectives from provincial archives'

### Abstract submission

Papers are limited to 20 minutes in length allowing time for question and discussion. Please submit an abstract of no more than 200 words and one page of biography. All proposals should be submitted by 1 May 2015 to

m.spring@bathspa.ac.uk. Please include your name, contact details – postal, e-mail and telephone number, and affiliation (if applicable). The committee will make a decision by the end of May 2015. Further information about the programme, concert, registration, travel and accommodation will be announced after that date. The costs for delegates will be £35 for the day. This will include tea and coffee, but not lunch, which is available from the Holburne café or nearby in Bath.

Conference: The State We're In –  
Directions in Researching post-1900  
British Music  
(University of Surrey, 16-17 April 2015)

The last thirty years have witnessed a surge of interest in the study of British music since 1900 and a number of landmark publications. Among a diverse body of work, the concept of 'British modernism'; the role of theory and analysis versus cultural and reception history; the question of the cultural value of indigenous music; and issues of national musical identities in the face of radical change internationally, a declining Empire, an increasingly multicultural society, and strengthening nationalisms within the constituent British nations, have proved to be major – and contested – themes.

In recognition both of the diversity of work already embarked upon, and the topicality of issues of national identity and cultural value in Britain today, we believe the time is ripe for a dedicated forum to enable the exchange and development of new ideas. This initial, exploratory conference is intended as the first step in the establishment of a new research network. It will incorporate keynote and panel 'perspectives' on the state of research in post-1900 British Music, and conclude with an open meeting to discuss the goals of the proposed network.

Further details of the conference, including the provisional programme and links to the registration website, are available at <http://tinyurl.com/ocb4p6o>

The conference will include a recital of twentieth-century British song on the evening of the 16th, performed by Justin Vickers (tenor) and Lucy Walker (piano).

Enquiries should be directed to Chris Mark at [c.mark@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:c.mark@surrey.ac.uk)

## Research Reports

### Celebrating Georgian Music – The West Gallery

Yvette Staelens

In 1985, I was invited by Gordon Ashman to dust off my cello and join a small group of singers and instrumentalists that he was gathering together to play music from a manuscript he had discovered in the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, the personal collection of John Moore, a nurseryman and seedsman from Wellington, Shropshire. I was, at the time, the Curator of Much Wenlock Museum, and we met to rehearse there. This was my first experience of West Gallery music, the psalmody and hymnody that was performed from the west galleries of parish churches and in chapels during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Much of this material can be found in manuscript books that also include the jigs, reels and quadrilles, etc., performed and enjoyed on less sacred occasions!

Over time the interest in this music has grown and there is now a wealth of performers and researchers active in the field in the United Kingdom and abroad. Many are members of the West Gallery Music Association, who state on their website:

Although our interests mainly centre on this period and form of music in the United Kingdom, we are also interested in many aspects of the history and popular culture of the English-speaking world which have influenced or been influenced by our musical and singing traditions. Abroad, we have active members in Australia and the United States.

The West Gallery Music Association, formed in 1990, has over 400 members who engage in multiple activities including excellent research, performing as quires in authentic settings and costumes and delivering workshops. They also use period instruments when possible, including the wonderful serpent; although I do recall with some unease when I played an iron cello on loan from Stoke on Trent museum that had been used in a village band. I was very reluctant to tune it up to concert pitch for fear of all the pot rivets pinging out as I did so.

I feel certain that many CHOMBEC members will be interested in the research undertaken by WGMA

members and you can find details in their excellent newsletter.

If you want to experience the music and wish to participate there is a day event coming up: Saturday 7th March 2015, South-West Quires' Day, at Ruishton Village Hall, near Taunton. Doors open 10am, music from 10.30-5.00pm, cost £8.00 (£10.00 for music sent in advance). Enquiries or to book – contact Jacqueline Patten: email [patten@kerlistz.freereserve.co.uk](mailto:patten@kerlistz.freereserve.co.uk) / tel. 01363 877503. The WGMA website is [www.wgma.org.uk](http://www.wgma.org.uk)

## Waiting for the Genius: an Outside View on the *English Musical Renaissance*

Peter Malisse

In June 2014 I received my PhD in musicology at the KU Leuven (Belgium) with a dissertation, entitled 'Waiting for the Genius: The English Musical Renaissance (1880-1925): History, memory, identity'. The title's three-part structure certainly reflects the ambition of the work, which took about seven years (whilst teaching full time) and several trips to the UK, Bristol in particular. There were many reasons to choose Bristol as the main base of my research in Britain: the partnership of the universities, the relatively short distance from my home (25 miles from Lille, with London & British Library on the route), its comparably extensive musicological library and the expertise on British music of the 19th and early 20th century. The most crucial factor, however, was the presence of Guido Heldt, whose doctoral dissertation I had already traced when writing my Master's thesis on the same subject.<sup>1</sup> Being both of German (i.e. continental) origin and specialised in the matter, he was the best advisor I could imagine to achieve my two initial objectives: (1) to explain the nature, rise and decline of the English Musical Renaissance (hereafter: EMR) as a National School of Composition to a continental (i.e. non-British) audience; and (2) to provide an exhaustive critical survey of the literature on this subject.

The three-part structure of the title also suggests that, throughout its creative process, the scope of my dissertation has been substantially broadened: from a merely descriptive music history towards a history of mentality and, eventually, a meta-history and narratology. In formal terms – I have to admit – this resulted in a rather hypertrophic 'old school' PhD. Why didn't I narrow the focus and deepen one single aspect, as is common practice in a doctoral process? My age (I was 48 at the start), my background as a classical philologist, and the fact that I was working as an

independent scholar gave me the opportunity to go for a hermeneutical concept that wasn't hampered by restrictions in size or methodology. Consequently I allowed myself to tackle every obstacle on my way to a clear understanding of Victorian and Edwardian ethics and aesthetics. It all started with the



Parry, German, Godfrey, Mackenzie and Stanford

observation that there is a substantial difference between the continental and the British interpretation of, on the one hand, the 'multi-national' nature of the island (as noted by K. Kumar)<sup>2</sup> and, on the other, such notions as 'nationalism', 'patriotism' and 'imperialism'. Further, we are all aware of the widespread social-cultural, ethical and aesthetical biases against the Victorian and Edwardian eras. In this respect a music history of a National school of composition soon became unthinkable without a broader history of mentality, embracing 19th- and 20th-century culture and society.

During the several years of reading up on all of this, I also realised that almost all my sources were fundamentally 'auto-historiographical', i.e. written by British authors for a British readership. So I decided not to write in Dutch, in order to create a natural buffer against the self-questioning, self-defining and self-designating discourse of my English sources. (When writing in English, one is easily carried away by the British viewpoints of ones sources.) Moreover, to dig up the roots of this 'apologetic' discourse (as it is described by Bennett Zon),<sup>3</sup> I resorted to close reading strategies, based on French post-structuralism (discourse analysis and hermeneutical narratology). This approach opened up the way to one of the main theses, namely the indissoluble psychological intertwining of the notions 'English musical renaissance' and 'Land Without Music'. Take for instance occasional cries for world peace: the louder and more frequently they resound, the stronger they emphasise the prevailing fear of war, and vice versa. Comparably, EMR-historiography on the whole presents itself as a quasi-endless reconciliation with the 'Land ohne Musik' sobriquet.

To explain this multi-layered design of my dissertation for non-British readers, I produced the following abstract for the university website:

One hundred years ago the German bohemian essayist Oscar A.H. Schmitz wrote a book on (post-) Edwardian society. Only few have read it, yet many know the title: *Das Land ohne Musik* (1914). Though it was certainly not an innocent publication, the title was not as provocative as it seems. The author rightly claimed it echoed a recurring topos in Victorian self-designation: 'We are not a musical people'.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, after the death of Purcell (1695), British composition and music education went into decline, musical life became dominated by foreigners and two-thirds of the average concert programme was dedicated to Handel. This self-image, cherished at first as a proof of manliness and fostered by Puritanism, missionary imperialism and colonial mercantilism, had turned into self-criticism during the last decades of the nineteenth century. Hence the name 'Renaissance of English Music' / 'the English Musical Renaissance' for the contemporary movement which aimed to institutionalise music education, to emancipate musical taste and to formalise music as a profession. 'Renaissance' definitely did not refer to the Elizabethan Golden Age of Tallis and Byrd, though favourising historians and critics impatiently watched out for a native Genius to put Britain back on the map of European art music. This dissertation is the first systematic treatment of the EMR from a continental point of view. Its research questions are as follows: (1) How did British art music evolve socially and artistically after the death of both Purcell and Handel, and what was its ethical-aesthetical orientation during the Late-Victorian and Edwardian eras? (2) What does 'English Musical Renaissance' stand for in the history of British national music and in what way are fact and representation related within major as well as minor sources? (3) What does a continental scholar learn from the Post-Victorian EMR-historiography and reception history concerning the way the British dealt with the nation's chequered musical past?

The major pitfalls of cross-channel musicology are, on one hand, the biases of an ill-acquainted Continent towards British art music, and, on the other, the self-designating and often ideologised discourse of the auto-historiographical sources. In consequence, each research question requires a specific methodical treatment. First, social and music historical contextualisation made it clear that, among other things, the EMR was not a National School led by Edward Elgar, but a two-generation movement centred around the Royal College of Music and Oxbridge. The respective figureheads were C.H. Parry and R. Vaughan Williams. Secondly, discourse analysis and narrative hermeneutics helped to deconstruct the 'Möbius Band' formed by a historical EMR (1880-1825) and a historiographical EMR intertwining seamlessly and

endlessly. Close reading was needed partly due to the revivalists being their own commentators, partly because the major EMR-narratives represent quite different historical constructions of the same phenomenon. Finally, the cause of this can only be traced from a third, ethical-aesthetical angle. Throughout the twentieth century a persistent association can be traced between the 'Land without music' trope and the perception of the historical EMR as a failure or, at best, unfinished business. Rightly or wrongly, the arguments for this association were generally based on the assumption that this pre-war and essentially German-oriented revival movement didn't achieve its aim to articulate (multi)national identity (ethos) into a distinctively British/English musical idiom (aesthesis). Thus the notion of 'renaissance' underwent semantic entropy and started a music historical career as the meliorative part of a dichotomy with the Land without Music-sobriquet.

The first and last elements of the title refer to the conservative, almost reactionary vein of the revival movement, which loathed imperialist vulgarity and fought the current wave of Utilitarianism. Convinced of the Teutonic kinship between the English and German races, and influenced by Spencerian evolutionism, the revivalists believed that the best of English musical heritage (including art music as well as folk music), enriched by the *Verinnerlichung* of German romantic classicism, would produce a compositional language which suited Britain's multi-ethnic and multinational ethos. Instead of looking forward to a 'Promethean, groundbreaking' Leader, they waited for an 'Epimethean, re-thinking' Genius, springing from a 'Teutonised' native soil.

Apart from the mere descriptive and explicative parts, the approach taken towards EMR-related issues is closest to that observed in the scholarship of Bennett Zon. With the benefit of hindsight and reflecting on the evaluation of my PhD by the board of examiners, I would personally situate its major relevance in warning about the dangers of cross-channel misunderstanding as regards the orientation of British music culture and history. Firstly, one should be cautious when consulting British assessments on *in casu* Victorian and Edwardian music. Take, for instance, the EMR-narrative by Meirion Hughes and Robert Stradling. Today, after much controversy over its at times inappropriate style and subversive tone, the work is valued in Britain for having challenged what the authors call the 'mainstream history' of the EMR, supported and imposed by the London-based music establishment. Being the most recent (after those of Frank Howes, Peter Pirie and Michael Dent), it is the only EMR-monography – if any – that circulates on the continent. In consequence, the first acquaintance of the non-British musicologist with the matter is through a deliberately subversive work, depicting the English Musical Renaissance as a carefully

considered lie. The result is that it only enhances the prevailing continental prejudice of British music being by definition inferior and of doubtful historical relevance. Secondly, and closely related to the latter issue, is the view, on both sides of the channel, that British scholarship on native musical history should transcend its insular isolation and operate within a broader Pan-European context. At first glance, this seems fair. Yet, based on the continental discourse on music in 19th-century Britain, I'm afraid such an angle systematically leads towards an unequal and unfair comparisons between the (assumedly) 'first-rate' continental model and the 'second-rate' British copy.

There is, however, ample evidence that the so-called figureheads of the EMR had a clear idea of the purpose of imitation as a means to revive an art which they considered neglected at all levels of education since the death of Henry Purcell. To use a metaphor, frequently used at the time, they saw the conservatories as a *seminarium*, a place where the promising seeds of English music were sown in native soil, fertilised by the mastery of Great (*in casu*) German composers. In my opinion, the initial approach of such time-, nation- and culture-bound processes should be from the rather microscopic perspective of a history of mentality, before submitting it to the broader, macroscopic and inevitably comparative approach of a Pan-European music history.

1. Guido Heldt, *Das Nationale als Problem in der englischen Musik des frühen 20. Jahrhunderts. Tondichtungen von Granville Bantock, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Edward Elgar, George Butterworth, Gerald Finzi and Gustav Holst, Schriften zur Musikwissenschaft aus Münster*, 19 (Hamburg: Verlag Karl Dieter Wagner, 2007).
2. Krishan Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003/2006), 217.
3. Bennett Zon, 'Histories of British Music and the Land Without Music: National Identity and the Idea of the Hero', in Hornby & Maw (eds), *Essays on the History of English Music in Honour of John Caldwell: Sources, Style, Performance, Historiography* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2010).
4. H.R. Haweis, *Music and Morals* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1871), 409.

## The Bicentenary of the Birth of William Sterndale Bennett

Barry Sterndale Bennett

2016 marks the bicentenary of the birth of the composer, pianist, conductor and influential music educator William Sterndale Bennett. At the time of his death in 1875 he was widely regarded as the head of English music and in Grove's Dictionary he is described

as the most distinguished English composer of the Romantic school. The educational reformer and musicologist William Henry Hadow wrote 'Bennett held a most honourable place on the mid slopes. He found English music a barren land, enriched its soil and developed its cultivation'. Yet, like many artists of the Victorian era, he soon became largely relegated to the footnotes of history for nearly a century thereafter, until eminent musicologists such as Nicholas Temperley, Geoffrey Bush, and later others such as Rosemary Williamson and Peter Horton, began a reappraisal. Given our propensity for marking anniversaries, 2016 provides an opportunity to examine Bennett's contribution to the English musical landscape and ask whether he was a beacon of hope, a misunderstood prodigy or a rather tragic figure.

It is already clear that there is growing interest. For example the RAM and RCM are planning performances, workshops and displays. BBC Radio 3 has indicated it will mark the occasion, as will the Three Choirs Festival, the English Music Festival, Oxford, Cambridge, Sheffield, Leipzig plus several groups and soloists. Work is also in hand to create a dedicated website to include advice on events and it is hoped there will be contributions in the various learned musical journals.

### The early years

Born on 13 April 1816 in Sheffield, where his father was organist of the parish church (now the Cathedral), Bennett was orphaned at the age of three, then moved to Cambridge into the care of his musical paternal grandfather. At the age of seven Bennett was accepted as a chorister into the Chapel Choir of King's College. Three years later he won a scholarship to enter the newly formed Royal Academy of Music and studied the violin under Antonio Ouvry, and later Pietro Spagnoletti, piano under the young William Henry Holmes, and composition under the principal William Crotch, who was to rebuke him for limited progress. When Crotch was succeeded by Cipriani Potter, great improvements soon became evident.

Thanks to Potter, who had personally known Beethoven and had been taught by Mozart's student Thomas Attwood, Bennett gained a thorough grounding in the music of Bach, Scarlatti, Clementi, and above all Mozart, who was to be his true mentor (not



Mendelssohn as is so often assumed, nor indeed was he a pupil of his). As a student he also occasionally sang in the choir of St Paul's Cathedral and was appointed organist for a year at St Ann's Chapel-at-Ease in the parish of Wandsworth.

Among his student compositions were a Symphony in G minor (WO31), the overture *Parisina*, op. 3, based on Byron's poem, a Quartet in G (WO17) and most notably his First Piano Concerto in D minor, op. 1, which was full of energetic tutti contrasting with lyrical melodies, with economic scoring and a technically brilliant solo piano part. Writing in the *Harmonicon* on 30 March 1833, the critic William Ayrton observed 'it would have conferred honour on any master'. Such was its success that the Academy had the work published at its own expense and Bennett was twice summoned to perform it in the presence of the King William IV and Queen Adelaide at Windsor Castle. It was on hearing this work that Mendelssohn invited Bennett to Germany, 'not as my pupil but as my friend', an offer which he did not actually take up for another three years, when he set out for Leipzig via the Lower Rhine Music Festival in Düsseldorf to attend the premiere of Mendelssohn's oratorio *St Paul*. Before departing, he produced his Second Piano Concerto in E flat major, which was noted for its effervescent finale whilst anticipating Sullivan at his wittiest. Mendelssohn, in a letter to his friend the composer Thomas Attwood, wrote 'I think Bennett is the most promising young musician I know, not only in your country but here, and I am convinced if he does not become a very great musician, it is not God's will, but his own'.

### Leipzig

His arrival in Leipzig in 1836 was to be the first of three extended sponsored visits in the succeeding six years. Warmly welcomed by Mendelssohn into his musical circle he soon became friends with Robert Schumann, the pianist and later critic James William Davison, the publisher Julius Kistner, the violinist Ferdinand David and the diplomat and translator Carl Klingemann.

Making his debut at the Leipzig Gewandhaus he chose to be soloist in his Third Piano Concerto in C minor, op. 9, conducted by Mendelssohn. The impact was to astound the highly critical Leipzig audience. Ernest Walker referred to the concerto as having earnestness and a fine structural finish. This was followed with equal delight when he conducted his overture *The Naiades*, op. 15.

He wrote a spontaneous, intimate, often very amusing and self-deprecating set of diaries throughout this period. With some disarming candour, he described his many musical activities and somewhat Bohemian social lifestyle as well as journeys across Europe, including in steam trains, which had only been in existence as a public service for about twenty years.

Bennett's time in Leipzig was unquestionably his most prolific as a composer. Schumann wrote 'were there many artists like Sterndale Bennett, all fears for the future progress of our art would be silenced'. Of his piano concertos, the Fourth in F minor, op. 19, is probably his masterpiece. This work and the *Caprice*, op. 22, were of great significance and acknowledged as being among the finest embodiments of the classical spirit between Beethoven and Brahms.

Some fine solo piano pieces fall into this period, notably *Three Musical Sketches*, op. 10, a set of graceful watercolour sketches; the First Piano Sonata, op. 13, dedicated to Mendelssohn, is grandly proportioned and conveys an ardent and unchecked romantic longing. The *Three Romances*, op. 14, with their tapered sentimentalism caused Schumann to observe a great step forward with some deep and strange harmonic combinations and a bold broad structure. The *Suite de Pieces*, op. 24, is possibly his finest work for the solo piano, juxtaposing restraint and emotional freedom. Then there are some shorter and more placid pieces with the student in mind. His *Diversions*, op. 17, were played at soirees as a duet with Mendelssohn. Schumann, whose works were considered very modern in those days, dedicated his *Etudes Symphoniques*, op. 13, to Bennett who reciprocated with his *Fantasia in A*, op. 16, a most demanding work which Geoffrey Bush described as being as perfectly controlled in form as it is passionate in feeling, crowned by splendid outbursts of sustained lyricism.

The success of his Quartet in G (WO31) and Sextet, op. 8, written whilst still a student led Bennett to write a Chamber Trio, op. 26, which remains popular to this day and contains an unusual second movement with violin and cello playing pizzicato against the percussive sounds of the piano.

At their best, the successful works are characterised by youthful vitality, a strong sense of style, timing and economy, first rate craftsmanship and structural finish, an individual gift of melody, an accurate and pure sense of tone-colours. Like Chopin, he was a pianist's musician with mastery of the instrument's natural potential. But above all he was inwardly poetic by nature, a miniaturist with watercolours rather than a conceiver of a grandiose canvas, as he chose to adhere to what became known as the London Pianoforte School founded by Muzio Clementi to embrace works written for the London market.

### Return to work based in London

On his return to England in 1842 at the age of twenty six, he found himself struggling with the transition from his natural spontaneous artistic expression and relative financial freedom in Germany to the atmosphere of prevailing xenophobia among the musical elite – once



described by John Betjeman as a stagnant swamp – which provided little room for his natural talent. With an almost suicidal urge towards self-criticism, leading eventually to procrastination, late submissions to his publishers and a loss of nerve, it is perhaps no surprise that his fecundity as a composer began to

fade. Fortunately he recognised his shortcomings, and so began to divert his energies to other musical endeavours, a decision that was not to prove in vain, despite overwork and the demands of high profile administrative duties placed upon him in later life.

Apart from his teaching commitments, he set about organising a series of Classical Chamber Concerts between 1843 to 1855 to explore chamber music with piano and serious piano solos, originally at his home, then at the Hanover Square Rooms. Not only did he perform works of the great masters and occasionally his own, but he introduced such important artists as Jenny Lind, Joseph Joachim and Clara Schumann to the London stage.

In 1851 Bennett was appointed a Metropolitan Local Commissioner and musical juror for the Great Exhibition, and the music for the opening procession was formally placed under his superintendence. For the opening of the International Exhibition of 1862 Bennett was commissioned to write an *Ode*, his op. 40. This proved to be an emotionally difficult task, as it coincided with the terminal illness of his wife, and the composition (for the 50th anniversary of the Philharmonic Society) of his overture *Paradise and the Peri*, op. 42, based on the poem by Thomas More. Despite these pressures, a contemporary critic suggested the overture was one of his most original and imaginative works.

#### The Philharmonic Society

Bennett was associated with the Philharmonic Society for most of his working life. It provided a forum for him to demonstrate his skills as a solo pianist and occasionally to introduce some of his own works. He made his debut there as soloist in his Second Piano Concerto on 11 May 1835, to critical acclaim as a pianist and composer. On becoming a director in 1841, at the age of twenty-five, he was able to persuade both Mendelssohn and Spohr to appear, thus attracting full houses and much needed income. However, in the background he had to contend with turbulent internal

politics and poor management, but he finally emerged having sustained its fortunes and reputation against formidable rivalry and deliberate hostility.

In 1854 Michael Costa, whose relationship with Bennett was problematic, resigned the conductorship. His successor, an unhappy Wagner, lasted for only one year, after which Bennett took the helm as principal conductor despite not being the player's first choice. His effective handling of the orchestra in the first season ensured his position for the succeeding eleven years, and consolidated his reputation as a leading conductor in England, having turned down a similar post in Leipzig, which would have been an unprecedented honour for a foreigner. However, it must be said that some regarded him as uninspiring, whilst others valued what they saw as the more important virtues of impeccable musicianship and good judgement. As Joseph Dando, the leader, commented: 'my ideal would be to have Costa beat the time and Bennett to tell him what to do'. For his efforts Bennett was among the first group to be awarded the Society's prestigious Gold medal in 1871.

#### The English Bach revival and Bennett as editor

Bennett's interest in Bach's music can be traced back to his friendship with Mendelssohn, who had championed the *St Matthew Passion* in 1829. As a measure of Bennett's good standing in Germany, he was able to obtain a copy of some of the unpublished vocal parts from Berlin, and in 1849 founded the Bach Society with a view to introducing the work to the English public, at a time when Bach's music was largely unknown.

Recognising the challenge that lay ahead with the German text, and in deference to the Prince Consort, Bennett entrusted the translation into English to Helen Johnson, an eighteen-year-old student of his at Queen's College London. It soon became clear that the society's choir found the work very difficult, so students from the nearby Royal Academy of Music and choristers from St Paul's Cathedral (which included a certain thirteen year old named John Stainer) were drafted in to help. The groundbreaking performance of an abridged version duly took place at the Hanover Square Rooms in London on 6 April 1854, conducted by Bennett.

This was followed by another performance seven months later, and one in 1858, the cost of which Bennett personally underwrote despite his very limited financial resources. In 1862 Novello published the first English edition (edited by Bennett), which then set in train a long and distinguished history of performances of this monumental work. He then went on to produce *Classical Practice*, editions of works by several 18th- and 19th-century keyboard masters, and in 1863, in collaboration with Otto Goldschmidt, husband of the singer Jenny Lind, he co-edited *The Chorale Book for England*, based on translations from the German by Catherine Winkworth.

Later compositions

Of the works not mentioned thus far, a Sixth Piano Concerto in A minor (WO48), first conceived in Germany and originally entitled 'Concert-Stuke' [sic], was performed at the Philharmonic Society in 1843, conducted by Sir Henry Bishop with Bennett as soloist. The critics wrote that it was a joyous work with a finale displaying untameable spirits and untiring energy, greatly relished by the orchestra, but went on to observe that the orchestra was under-rehearsed. Although broadly classical and more compressed in style, Bennett later made several alterations, ending with a last-known performance five years later. It remains unpublished and continues to be in private hands.

Bennett wrote best for his own instrument, the piano, and cannot be regarded as a symphonist. However he wrote seven symphonies as a student, only one of which (in G minor) survives as WO31. Much later in life, and in a rather sombre and reflective mood, an eighth (in the same key, op. 43, dated 1864 and revised in 1867) was popular in its day and has been recorded twice in recent years.

A brief return to chamber music in 1852 produced his Sonata Duo for cello and piano, op. 32, a work of large-scale design, indebted to Mendelssohn, whose death deeply affected him and about whom he wrote 'I have lost the dearest and kindest friend I ever had'.

Many people think of Bennett as a church musician, but in reality he had no particular aptitude for choral music, and most of his choral output was composed by request. Having been appointed conductor of the first Leeds Music Festival to commemorate the Queen's opening of the Leeds Town Hall in 1858, he was also commissioned to write a piece for the occasion and offered his lighthearted pastoral *The May Queen*, op. 39, a work which anticipates some of the stylistic features of his pupil Arthur Sullivan, but suffers from the silliest of librettos by Henry F. Chorley. His other large-scale choral work was a sacred cantata *The Woman of Samaria*, op. 44, written for the Birmingham Triennial Music Festival of 1867. The popularity of both these works has faded as tastes have changed, but selections from both would be worth airing with first-rate performers under a truly inspiring conductor.

Several of the anthems are embedded in church and cathedral repertoires, albeit only occasionally performed, including 'God is a Spirit' from *The Woman of Samaria*; 'Remember now thy Creator' (op. 30/WO54); 'Great is our Lord' (WO59); 'The fool hath said in his heart' (WO61); 'O that I knew where I might find Him' (WO58); and 'In Thee O Lord do I put my trust' (WO84). On the other hand, the two secular part-songs 'Sweet Stream' (WO78) and 'Come Live with me' (WO47), with its delicate and happy  $\frac{9}{8}$  rhythms, are often performed.

Two sets of six songs, op. 23 (1842) and op. 35 (1856), both published simultaneously in English and German using translations by Mendelssohn's friend Klingemann, show Bennett trying to raise the standard of contemporary popular songs, which he thought were often poorly constructed and devoid of artistic merit, as well as poorly performed. Unashamedly not intended as a vehicle for virtuoso vocal display, these polished and sensitive art songs with an easy style are regarded as a model for the English Lied, with carefully-chosen poets, notably Robert Burns, Barry Cornwall and John Clare.

Then right at the end of his life an unexpected gem appeared – the programmatic Second Piano Sonata, op.46, entitled *The Maid of Orleans* and inspired by Schiller's play, which was quickly taken into the repertoire of several leading pianists.

As Educator

Bennett had a strong desire to help improve musical education and a particular interest in helping female students, whom he regarded as being socially marginalised. Apart from being a professor at the Royal Academy of Music, where he had started teaching from the age of twenty two, in 1848 he became a co-founder and first professor of harmony at Queen's College, London, to whom he dedicated his *Preludes and Lessons*, op. 33, covering all the major and minor keys. This work became widely used by teachers well into the 20th century.

The following year he took on a similar role at Bedford College (now part of Royal Holloway, University of London), but it did not stop there. In 1872, through a public subscription, he inaugurated an annual student scholarship in his name at the Academy alongside a prize specifically for female students. Both continue to be awarded to this day, regardless of gender. Some notable early winners include Joseph Holbrooke and York Bowen, Betty Humble and Harriet Cohen.

Following the death of Thomas Attwood Walmisley in 1856, Bennett was elected by an overwhelming majority to succeed him as professor of music at Cambridge University, and in the same year he was awarded a doctorate, partly on submission of his impressive anthem for double choir, 'Lord, who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle' (WO57). Although originally an unpaid appointment it proved to be no sinecure, as he set about trying to raise standards by insisting candidates for a doctorate first had to pass the bachelor's degree in music, and undergo a viva voce. In 1867 he received an honorary MA and three years later was the first musician to receive an honorary DCL from Oxford.

Whilst at Cambridge in 1862 he composed an *Ode*, op. 41, for the installation of the Duke of Devonshire as Chancellor, and in 1868 an anthem 'Now my God, let, I beseech thee' (WO72), to mark the consecration of the

new chapel at St Johns College, after which he was elected a Life Fellow of that College.

Between 1858 and 1871 he gave public lectures at Cambridge University, The London Institute and Sheffield, providing some astute comments on several composers and the state of music in England at that time.

#### Recalled to his Alma mater

Bennett's association with his alma mater is etched in the annals of the Royal Academy of Music. As with the Philharmonic, his greatest contribution came at a time when the institution was in a perilous state. Criticised for low standards and financial problems, the directors approached Costa to revive its fortunes. Being unable to afford him they, then turned to Otto Goldschmidt, who declined but strongly recommended Bennett. After an eight years absence from the Academy he somewhat reluctantly accepted.

His appointment in 1866 (the 150th anniversary also being in 2016) could not have come at a worse time, as it also coincided with the withdrawal of its government grant and with the directors voting to close the institution. Bennett, by now acting as both principal and temporary chairman, would have none of it. With steely determination he successfully resisted, agreed with his colleagues to join him in receiving no remuneration for several weeks, then helped to persuade the new Prime Minister, William Gladstone, to reinstate the grant. By 1870 the Academy had become solvent again, student numbers began to rise and today that institution holds a most enviable position in the world.

His many students included: Sir Arthur Sullivan, Francis Edward Bache, Sir William Cusins, who later became Master of the Queen's Music, Arthur O'Leary, Tobias Matthay, who founded his own pianoforte school, Joseph Parry, William Rockstro, Alice Mary Smith, Charles Steggall, Bettina Walker, and Thomas Wingham. He was also an early teacher of Sir Hubert Parry.

#### Death and aftermath

Following a short illness, Bennett died on 1 February 1875 in his home at 66 St Johns Wood, London (since demolished). His son and biographer wrote 'death laid a gentle hand upon him'. He was just short of his fifty-ninth birthday and was laid to rest in the North Choir Aisle of Westminster Abbey, in close proximity to the graves of Purcell, Handel and Croft.

As a character, Bennett was of slender build and stood only five foot seven inches tall. Retiring and sensitive by nature, he fastidiously avoided taking centre stage or being associated with anything he judged to be remotely pretentious or ostentatious,

regardless of the consequences. He showed genuine gentle kindness and a fatherly concern for the welfare of his students, who in turn were impressed with his phenomenal memory. He was relaxed talking to anyone, but was most at ease within small intimate groups. He had a strong sense of humour and tended towards liberal politics.

Much has been written about an English musical renaissance, naming such luminaries as Elgar, Delius and Holst. Coincidentally all three died in 1934, each of their obituaries claiming them to be the rightful successor to Purcell. However, Bennett played an early and significant role in helping to bridge that yawning gap, for example by nurturing a Bach revival originally initiated by such figures as Samuel Wesley, and generously encouraging the work of some of his contemporaries and students. The trouble was that credit is so often given to the reaper rather than the sower.

Several of his descendants chose to pursue careers in the world of music and the theatre. He left a substantial and well-documented music library, most of which is now housed at the Bodleian, the British Library, RAM and RCM, all of whom continue to make it available for research purposes. The key reference works on Bennett are *The Life of William Sterndale Bennett*, by his son J.R. Sterndale Bennett (Cambridge University Press, 1907), and *William Sterndale Bennett: A Descriptive Thematic Catalogue*, by Rosemary Williamson (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1996). The latter describes in detail and contextualises all of Bennett's 122 compositions. About a quarter of his published works have now been recorded.

## Research Students

Frank Bridge, *Gradual Appeal*, and  
*Listening Perspectives 1913-23*

David Weber (University of West London)

'How many of those who have listened to Bridge's chamber music will say that they really know it? He is difficult for the mere listener to get to know.'

Times Literary Supplement (10.03.1921)

'To sum up, the real essence of this Times Lit[erary] Sup[plement] notice, is to prove that Vaughan Williams is a better composer than I am.'

I am sure I can't help it.

Frank Bridge to Edward Speyer (12.03.1921)

## Introduction

The composer, performer, and conductor Frank Bridge (1879-1941) has seen a flurry of recent interest which shows no signs of decreasing. Bridge was a British contemporary of Vaughan Williams, Bax, Boughton, and others, whose most lasting success has been for his chamber works and salon music. His entire output, however, is rather more diverse.

The exchange quoted above illustrates the difficulties and frustration surrounding critical reception during Bridge's lifetime. Reviewers were sceptical not only of his later modernist idiom, but of a wider variety of works and styles. A major theme in Bridge's critical reception, epitomised by the above review, is of technical proficiency but under-effectiveness, characterised variously as: 'little to say', 'not memorable', and lacking 'personality' (as described in *The Times* in the 1920s). Whilst doubtless prejudiced by Bridge's background as a performer (a point discussed at length in Mark Amos's 2010 doctoral thesis on Bridge, 'A Modernist in the Making?: Frank Bridge and the Cultural Practice of Music in Britain, 1900-1941'), the frequency and independence with which this theme occurs suggest that stylistic features played a role in its inception.

Conversely, posthumous reception has increasingly recognised a wide range of personality in Bridge's music. In a perceptive comment, Payne's stylistic survey describes Bridge's music as a characterised by 'discretion and privacy' that 'did not fully reveal itself immediately'.<sup>1</sup> In other words, the personality expressed in Bridge's music is often only gradually appreciable.

My research project explores the reasons for the initial failure of Bridge's music to convince critics in a way comparable to his later reception. Taking my cue from the comments of Payne and others, I focus on the relationship between gradually appreciable stylistic features and press criticism, exploring the ways in which Bridge's music breached the terms of a widespread listening perspective in his lifetime, which favoured immediate appeal over more the more gradual.

For the purposes of this article, I shall limit discussion to two works: the Sextet for Strings (1906-12) and the String Quartet No. 2 (1915). These have been selected to demonstrate the ways in which even earlier works are defined by a gradually appreciable aesthetic, and also point forward to innovations in later works which would further this preoccupation.

## Background

The years preceding Bridge's career saw long-lasting critical debates over musical immediacy and gradual appeal. Profound appeal was often seen as something

inherently distinct from effective craftsmanship, and treated as mysterious, transcendent, and subjective.

An early example of this can be seen in the writings of Roger North and Charles Avison, who warned against obscuring melody with excessive ornamentation, and prioritised the appeal of music to the passions. Similar sentiments can be seen in 19th-century debates over the music of Johannes Brahms. To his detractors, Brahms' craftsmanship was at the expense of immediate emotional power. To his admirers, this was a welcome rebalancing away from the 'blasé overstimulation of direct musical sensation'.<sup>2</sup>

Around this time, British audiences were becoming increasingly polarised on the subject of ideal listening, as can be seen from the growth of exclusive chamber music societies. This is reflected by numerous early 20th-century articles on the subject, most of which bemoan the lack of wider adoption of the principles they champion. The increasing separation of this 'elite' suggests an irreconcilability of purpose with the listening population as a whole, with concentrated and intellectual approaches not sufficiently prized by a majority of listeners.

That this issue was still live during Bridge's lifetime can be seen in the debate surrounding broadcasts of 'ultra-modern' chamber music. Both BBC and listeners considered chamber music to be more gradually appreciable, partly due to its association with modernism. However, wireless listeners 'began to have serious doubts about [their] interest in learning about this type of music'.<sup>3</sup>

Thus both prior to and during Bridge's career, many listeners were notably sceptical of less immediate music. Conversely, in more recent years classical music has been re-understood as a canon of comparatively gradual appeal, compared to more popular genres. It is in the context of this shift in critical perspectives that the initial unpopularity of Bridge's aesthetic choices can be better understood.

## Analysis

These analyses focus on Bridge's treatment of Sonata form. Widely used in classical and romantic styles, the form was associated with drama, contrast, and sectional purpose and identity. According to Rosen, a fundamental of the form's nature, from early in its use, is its clearly defined 'equivalent for dramatic action ... analogous to the denouement of eighteenth-century drama, in which everything is resolved'.<sup>4</sup>

Similarly, the techniques identified by Hepokoski and Darcy suit this wider view of the Sonata. According to Grove, in early 20th century use, 'except for the increasingly dissonant harmonic style and widely ranging tonality ... outward features of form ... do not differ significantly from 19th-century ones'.<sup>5</sup>

The Sextet and Second Quartet will be compared to the generic expectations of the form outlined here. They will be seen to deviate significantly, redefining the form according to subtler distinctions, whilst keeping its basic structure recognisable.

Sextet for Strings (1906-12)

The Sextet's opening provides the first example of a personal stylistic choice that could easily have been lost on its reviewer. Thematic and tonal development during the first subject area, transitional theme, and into the second subject goes against the grain of clear-cut Sonata structure, and puts a stamp of individuality on the work similar to those carried by Bridge's future creations. This approach blurs the contrasts between first and second subjects, which are difficult to grasp upon first hearing.

The initial development is thematically simple, but motivically rich – featuring a call and response structure, **A** and **B**. Unlike **A**, **B** is developed to the point of exhaustion, through upwards sequencing in its final measures. Bridge chooses to interrupt using a new sub-theme, **C**, only subtly related to the preceding material, which leads to further new material (**D**). It is in these latter stages that the first subject area goes beyond clear thematic unity, before its eventual return to the opening sub-theme (**A**).



Example 1.1: Sub-thematic proliferation, first subject area

The effect of these choices on the work's formal clarity is exacerbated by the following transitional theme. In normal usage, the second subject that follows the transition brings in a pronounced contrast in tonality and lyricism; indeed, this is one of sonata form's most consistent features from the Romantic era

onwards. However, the transitional theme provides a stronger tonal and gestural contrast than the second subject that follows, causing the latter to sound as much a return to the first subject aesthetic as a point of substantial contrast within the work.

The impression of small-scale contrast between the two subject areas is reinforced by the tonicised chord of the second subject. Whilst in the dominant key, this 5-note set also includes the original tonic. This, coupled with an opening melodic anchor of E flat, forges a further, tonal, connection between the two subjects.



Example 1.2: second subject area, theme, 5-note tonic, and connection with first subject tonic

The two subjects are therefore only subtly distinguished, but are still conceived in identifiably sonata-form terms. Bridge does not seek to escape these conventions altogether, merely to define them in more nuanced and individual colours. These techniques foreshadow stronger examples in later works. The opening thematic proliferation is taken further in the Cello Sonata second movement. The 5-note tonic of the second subject looks ahead to subtler sonority contrasts in later works, particularly the Piano Sonata and Second Piano Trio. The searching harmonic cycle of this theme, with its refusal to return to the opening tonic chord, is another preoccupation Bridge would exploit more fully later.

String Quartet No. 2

Similar critical responses to that given to the Sextet can be seen in a number of reviews of the Second Quartet.<sup>6</sup> This suggests that it, too, is a work that showcases Bridge's gradually appreciable aesthetic. This work both reflects and contrasts with the Sextet in its effects, in particular utilising a more wide-ranging tonal ambiguity, and employing further subject complication and diffuseness. In outer movements, the transitions from development to recapitulation particularly diminish the potential for large-scale contrasts. These movements nonetheless retain sonata-form organising principles.

The opening movement's first two themes are spread over a larger timeframe than their equivalents in the Sextet. Both motivic and tonal development undermine clear definition of these sections (see Ex. 2.1: 1.4-2.9), and the resulting limitations to the character of the first subject and transition are exacerbated by the lack of simple recapitulation later.

In the exposition, however, this is offset by clearer structural markers compared to the Sextet – the theme which begins the transition is dynamically emphasised, and the second subject is clearly distinguished from the preceding material.

 G minor	 F minor
 Eb major	 Eb minor
 D minor	 C minor
 B major	
 Tonally ambiguous	
 Implied but weak key	
 Bitoriality	

Rehearsal/bar no.	0.1	0.3	0.5
Tonal/theme development	Th-1 (Gm)		
	0.7	0.9	1.2
	Gm	(Gb M) Tonally Ambi- guous Gm	T.A. Dm
	1.4	1.6	2.3
	Cm	Ebm/M	EbM Fm BM
	2.5	2.7	2.9
	Ebm	E <sup>b7</sup> +Gm. (Gm) Cm <sup>6+11</sup> +D <sup>7-3</sup>	D <sup>7b9</sup> Th-2 (Gm)

Example 2.1: Exposition tonal structure, opening movement, first subject area

The greatest structural nuance in the Quartet is the pattern of subject recapitulation in outer movements. In the first, the recapitulation of the main theme is short, transitory, significantly altered, and followed by modulations and new material. This results in the more complex aesthetic of the development section intruding into the opening of the recapitulation, limiting the contrast between the two.

This effect is repeated and heightened in the concluding movement of the Quartet, where the distinction between development and recapitulation is yet more nuanced. The preponderance of fast, staccato, quaver-based movement unites formal sections, and themes are short and alternate rapidly. Both choices limit the impact of the thematic contrasts. In the recapitulation, second and first subject areas are more tonally complex, and G major is only strongly established towards the close of the movement. Material also alternates more rapidly, the second subject being divided into two by the re-entrance of the first subject, with the second restatement in counterpoint.

 G major	 F major
 C major	 Db major

Rehearsal/bar no.	17.1	17.5	17.9
Tonal/theme development	S2 (FM)		
	17.13	17.17	18.7
	T.A.	GM	
	18.11	18.15	19.3
			F-rooted Cm
	19.7	20.3	20.11
	S1	T.A.	DbM T.A.
	20.15	20.19	21.5
	21.9	22.1	22.9
	Fm		F#-rooted
	22.13	23.3	23.11
	BM CM (/A m)	S2+S1	
	23.15	24.1	24.9
	GM		
	25.3	25.7	25.11

Example 2.1: Recapitulation tonal structure, third movement

Thus the Second Quartet moves further away (with the exception of the ternary slow movement) from the structural gravity and contrast associated with Sonata form, defining its episodes in yet more nuanced terms. These innovations foreshadow Bridge's increasingly varied and individual approaches to the use of Sonata and other formal structures: chamber works from the Cello Sonata onwards all deviate further from established norms than these two examples. In particular Bridge becomes bolder in his transformation of central sections, which are more conventional here than in many later works (the blurring with recapitulation notwithstanding). However, it is clear from these works that Bridge's journey towards a personal and gradually appreciable aesthetic finds its roots early in his career, and is a long-term stylistic feature that precedes his better-known development towards modernism.

1. Payne, *Frank Bridge – radical and conservative* (London: Thames, 1999), 8.
2. Notley, 'Brahms as Liberal: Genre, Style, and Politics in Late Nineteenth-Century Vienna', *19th Century Music*, XVII/2 (Fall 1993), 116.
3. Doctor, *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music, 1922-1936: Shaping a Nation's Tastes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 118-119.
4. Rosen, *Sonata Forms*, (New York: Norton, 1988), 9-10.
5. Webster, *Grove Music Online*, 'Sonata Form'.
6. See *The Times* 1/10/27, 06/11/15, and others.

## Reviews

Michael V. Pisani, *Music for the Melodramatic Theatre in Nineteenth-Century London & New York* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2014)

Stephen Banfield

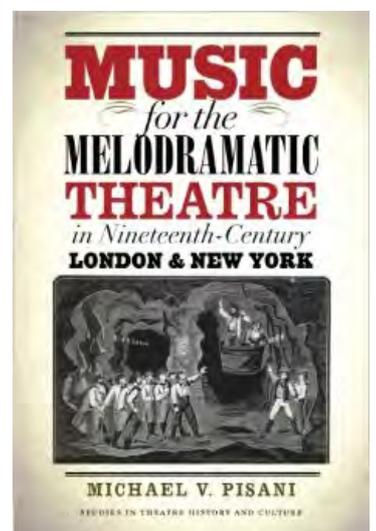
One of the most gratifying musicological projects of recent decades has been the reclamation of the music of everyday life. I am thinking not so much of the sociological and anthropological frameworks of scholars such as Ruth Finnegan and Tia DeNora, though these have opened our ears and challenged our minds in immeasurable ways, but of the historical documentation of genres and repertoires that were central to the experience of the lay person but carried no authority: those vast terrains of music that remained invisible to cultural arbitration or were marginalised by it. Nicholas Temperley began the project with his magnificent *The Music of the English Parish Church* of 1979. Trevor Herbert and Helen Barlow recently filled in an equally large and significant portion of the uncharted national map with *The Music of the British Military in the Long Nineteenth Century* of 2013, reviewed in CN 16. And now here is another vital and pervasive area of ordinary, 'normal' musical sound as it reached the ears of millions, at last given the treatment it has long deserved. I predict that Pisani's book and name will soon carry as much weight as Temperley's, Herbert's and Barlow's.

They certainly deserve to, for he proves himself a magnificent researcher and a natural communicator. His topic is easily grasped if one considers music for today's media (film, television, radio) as understood and experienced by all and simply projects it back to the shows of the 19th century, enjoyed by a mass public in metropolitan and suburban theatres but in the earlier decades also at fairgrounds and circuses. Instrumental music was always required and was an integral part of how an 'action' play (his 'melodramatic theatre'), good or bad, high or low in appeal, was mounted and achieved its effect. But as with film today, top billing of a musical director or composer was an exception. It is between these two poles of ubiquity and (as it were) invisibility that the book operates.

Pisani's great strength as a musicologist is his profound understanding of Anglophone—and indeed French—theatre history, evidenced in his authoritative way with the repertoires and leading figures (actors,

managers, playwrights) of the spoken and pantomimic stage and a rare command of its primary sources. This allows him to reconstruct and convey the essence of theatre's musical performance practice beyond the use of singing and dancing (which are not his concern), in that vast hinterland of melos, hurries, agits, 'characteristics', talking tunes, 'chords of reversal' and incidentals that made up the background music without which, by and large, actors could not act and sensations could not climax. He lays out the conceptual, technical and chronological ground with exemplary clarity, and seems to have consulted every surviving score, set of parts, promptbook, memoir and press review. The texture of this study is accordingly rich, one of the richest I have seen for years. Equally important, Pisani possesses the skills for passing on that richness as the reader's experience. He analyses a generous selection of scenes, acts and effects from some of the most popular or impressive plays of the century by taking us to the heart of the written and visual evidence to see exactly how such a scene was played, why the music was created or used in the way it was, and how it worked, right down to the timing of individual notes, chords, pauses, words, exclamations and actions (such as the firing of a pistol or the recognition of a body).

Pisani has a genius for simple description and the right phrase to convey his interest and engagement in the artefacts at hand. He draws us into a plot or a character motivation like few others can, and of course this does something of the same job that the music itself did. We also enter into the life of the musicians, and several of his excellently reproduced illustrations demonstrate how closely the instrumentalists observed and followed the actors in the days when they were facing them in front of the stage. Some unsung musical heroes emerge, such as Oscar Barrett, whose music examples for the Flying Dutchman melodrama *Schriften* (London, Grecian Theatre, 1877) look to have the quality of Tchaikovsky, and Edward German (of all people) when experimenting with aleatoric orchestral modules for a storm scene in Henry Arthur Jones's *The Tempter* at the Haymarket in 1893. But equally important is how Pisani deepens our understanding of, say, Boucicault by conveying with minute care the exactness of effect in a key moment such as the rescue of Eily in *The Colleen Bawn*, a moment some critics found 'too really horrible' (199) not least



because of the acute degree to which the music drew the spectator emotionally into it.

Pisani's materials are so well displayed and so meticulously engaged with that this would make an excellent textbook for Music and Drama students, if at last they can be got together to appreciate how their histories are far more shared than separate across large swathes of the western tradition. To research and recreate what melodrama at its best has been capable of would hone all manner of skills, from verbal inflection to composition, from mime to Foley techniques, and from iconographic to musical source study investigation.

Felix Meyer, Carol J. Oja, Wolfgang Rathert, and Anne C. Shreffler (eds), *Crosscurrents: American and European Music in Interaction, 1900-2000* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2014)

Peter Dickinson

A symposium like this is bound to be a very mixed bag, especially as it appears five years after the conference papers were delivered, but it comes in a luxuriously produced series which has previously included *Edgard Varèse: Composer, Sound Sculptor, Visionary* (2006). The papers come from two conferences: one at Harvard on October 30 – November 1, 2008, and the other at Munich at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität on May 7-9 2009. The first half of the twentieth century was the focus for the American conference and the second half for the conference in Munich. The editors state that: 'throughout the twentieth century exchanges between North America and Europe were vital to the development of musical life on both sides of the Atlantic, shifting from a post-colonial imbalance of cultural power at the opening of the century to an increasing sense of encounters between equals'. And 'whereas European culture dominated the relationship in the nineteenth century, the United States gained increasing respect on the international stage over the course of the twentieth century, a process that witnessed Europeans actively coming to terms with American influences to a greater extent than ever before'. That is unarguable but it seems strange to consider cross-Atlantic influences without reference to connections with the United Kingdom, which leaves the whole subject incomplete.

The presence of the French-American composer Betsy Jolas symbolised the conferences' main cross-current theme – there was a commissioned work, *Teletalks* for two pianos, played at both venues (where

there were three concerts), and she gave an interview to Vivian Perlis, whose *Oral History* at Yale University has preserved untold riches for posterity. In another interview, Steve Reich spoke to Paul Hillier, who edited Reich's *Writings on Music 1965-2000* (2002). In discussing his *Different Trains*, which contrasts train journeys to concentration camps with Reich's own train journeys in the US at the same time, he mentions the ending of the work. This refers to Nazi soldiers admiring the singing of a Dutch girl and Reich sadly concludes: 'What we correctly appreciate as aesthetic excellence has absolutely nothing to do with good moral and ethical behaviour'. There was also a world premiere of an arrangement of Varèse's *Amériques* for two pianos eight hands apparently made by the composer.

In a keynote address Michael Denning discusses the mechanical reproduction of music. He sees print music as the first stage of a mass culture; recording broke down divisions between vernacular and cultivated traditions; and now he thinks 'the rupture of the spatial and temporal union of musical performer and audience' leads to new forms of globalisation. Berndt Ostendorf considers jazz the crucial instrument of American ideological penetration in post-war Germany. Like other contributors, he identified the radio broadcasts by Willis Conover on *The Voice of America* as a major influence. His jazz programmes were regarded as the voice of freedom – until it was realised that the great black jazzmen were still subjected to Jim Crow laws in their own country. David Schiff, using *Oklahoma* as a case study that was launched just as America entered the war, even finds confirmation of Hitler's racial doctrines in race prejudice at home.

Celia Applegate brings alive the world of the musical fairs that were a feature in the life of the larger American cities. They brought celebrities from Europe. The now forgotten English organist, Edwin Lemare, was one and the Los Angeles Times reported him in 1917 as saying 'The public is the final court of appeal as to what constitutes good music, and if it says a composition is good, that composition is good'. That was prophetic but he wrecked his case by saying 'I never play down to my audience, nor do I play so-called popular and ragtime compositions'.

Dörte Schmidt quotes Kurt Weill as claiming Berlin as the most American city in Europe before World War II, where the drama between high art and popular culture was being played out. Christopher Moore's fascinating study of Charles Koechlin's *America* delineates the eccentric French composer's connections, which included a close relationship with a young American student. He visited the US four times between 1918 and 1937; he criticised 'the tyranny of the majority' that he found there; and hated jazz but admired film stars, the inspiration of his *Seven Stars Symphony* (1933).

James Deaville reports on the songs of African-American entertainers in turn-of-the-century Vienna. Thanks to censorship laws requiring song-texts to be approved, he has traced what was performed and provides some interesting programmes. Tobias Bleck explores the significant connection between jazz and European composers. This goes back to Dvořák extolling indigenous American music and being ostracised, but in the 1920s Milhaud and Ravel did the same. It becomes increasingly obvious that once serious composers on both sides of the Atlantic had responded to jazz, the course of Western music was changed. Nicolas Slonimsky, the Russian-American lexicographer of genius, is represented by some fascinating letters to his wife, sent from his travels abroad, and now collected in *Dear Dorothy: Letters from Nicolas Slonimsky to Dorothy Adlow* (Rochester, 2012), edited by his daughter along with several other volumes of his writings.

Nadia Boulanger figures in two contributions, as well she might in view of her considerable influence on more than one generation of American composers, and her ability to demolish barriers, such as when she became the first woman to conduct the Boston Symphony in 1938. She operated with an almost self-defeating intensity; drove herself to death with a manic teaching schedule; but inspired extraordinary loyalty from composers such as Copland and Lennox Berkeley. The two chapters, by Sarah Adams and Elizabeth Titrington Craft, and by Janice Brooks (see also her *The Musical Work of Nadia Boulanger*, 2013), uncover new material from US archives that enlarges the picture of her indomitable personality.

Another teacher in America – again thanks to Hitler, whose regime attacked him early on – was Hindemith, who taught at Yale and Tanglewood. He appreciated his second career in America but could not come to terms with post-war Germany, as Giseler Schubert relates. There are further chapters on immigrants as case studies – Stephan Wolpe, with two thousand pages of diaries and letters consulted by Brigid Cohen (see also her *Stefan Wolpe and the Avant-Garde Diaspora*, 2012); Joseph Schillinger, who admired jazz, by Eckhard John; William Brooks is characteristically lucid in exploring the changed identity of Hanns Eisler when he crossed the Atlantic; and Jonathan Hiam looks at the contribution of German immigrants at Black Mountain College, famous as the location of Cage's first happenings.

A particularly revealing aspect of these papers relates to the use of American culture as Cold War propaganda. Emily Abrams Ansari details the use of American orchestral tours for propaganda purposes and notes that Hanson, Schuman and Thomson, acting as advisers to the State Department, insisted – quite

reasonably – that such programmes should include American music or get no grant. It worked. The role of black music in American cultural propaganda is a theme in several studies and Martin Brody uncovers the influence of the American Academy in Rome. Here the composer diplomat Nicolas Nabokov was in a position to influence the careers of American composers, notably Elliott Carter who was at a turning point with his First String Quartet, premiered in 1953. It was through the Rome Festival performance the following year that William Glock, who reviewed it for the CIA funded *Encounter*, became one of Carter's most influential supporters – especially at the BBC in London later on.

Steve Swayne covers William Schuman and the Lincoln Center Festivals of the 1960s – see also his monumental study *Orpheus in Manhattan: William Schuman and the Shaping of America's Musical Life* (2011). Then there are studies which explore the interactions between Europe and the US through various twentieth-century composers – Nono and the difficulties not only with the American premiere of his opera *Intolleranza* but with the FBI thanks to his political allegiances (Claudia Vincis); Berio and the interaction between voice and studio as well as his American years (Nicola Scaldaferrri and Claudia di Luzio); Babbitt and the important role of Patricia Carpenter in Schönberg studies (Felix Wörner); and, at the other extreme, Terry Riley's formative years in Paris, 1962-63 (Veniero Rizzardi). Max Noubel looks at Boulez and IRCAM, showing how he needed American expertise in setting things up and his virtual brain-washing of the young musicians he took on. David Nicholls considers the neglected subject of musical borrowing, specifically through rock musicians helping themselves to bits of classical music, and Amy Beale shows how Europe was a liberating haven for the improvising groups Art Ensemble of Chicago and Music Elettronica Viva in the 1970s. Finally J. Griffith Rollefson claims that 'minority identity in Europe today is increasingly heard to be a matter of African-American music' in terms of local aspirations rather than imported groups which had made such an impact.

This substantial anthology is often fascinating, although uneven, it is well produced, with a useful index, and is reasonably priced.

