



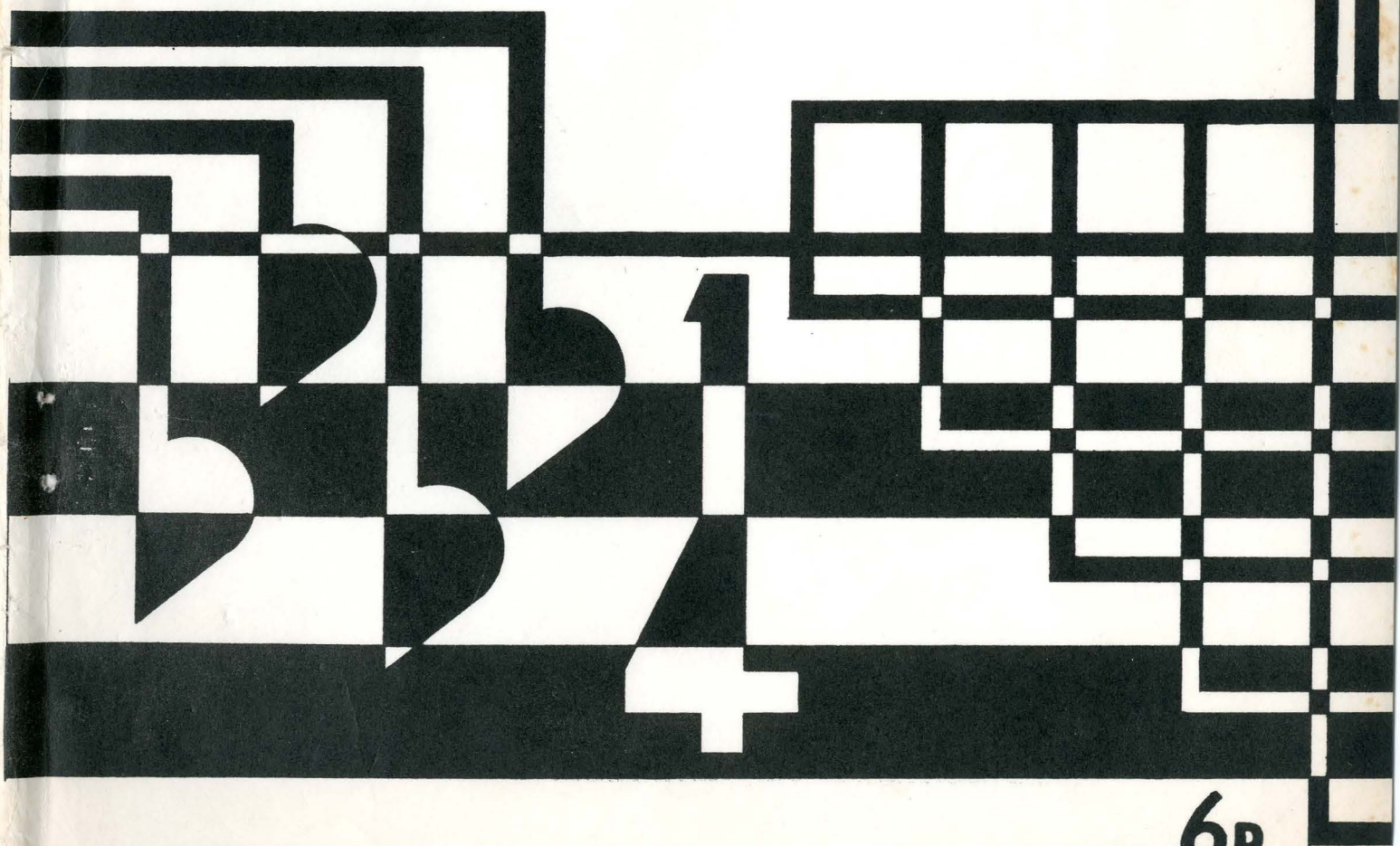
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CONTACT No2 SUMMER 1971

E D I T O R I A L

Herein the second issue of our magazine devoted to twentieth century music and, in particular, to the most recent developments.

Our policy remains unaltered:- to produce a journal devoted to the discussion of twentieth century music of all kinds; pop, jazz and folk as well as "serious" music (see the first issue for the full statement) But we feel bound to apologise on this occasion for the ways in which we have fallen short of our aims in this issue. We have nothing to offer on jazz or folk music and only one article on pop; although the reader may see a considerable advance into recent "serious" developments and quite a lot of discussion concerning the avant-garde and experimental music of various kinds.

We are sorry that these omissions have occurred, but nothing was forthcoming from any of those asked, and we can only try! It would be very easy to narrow our definition of contemporary music and concentrate solely on so-called "serious" developments and the recent history of "serious" music. In fact, we have been unable to include in the present issue some "serious" articles which we received, and we apologise to those concerned. But, at the moment, we are keeping an open view and a wide-ranging policy in the hope that the much-needed articles will come forward. It is up to the readers to help us here. So if you could write something yourself or know anybody who might, please send us something - an article, a review of a concert or a record or a preview of some coming event.

We are particularly sorry to have been unable, for reasons of time, to include an interview with the composer Christopher Hobbs (member of AMM and editor of the Experimental Music Catalogue) This is now scheduled for inclusion in the next issue.

We should like to extend our thanks to all those who have helped to bring out this issue in a relatively short space of time; especially David Woodgates who designed our new cover, and Jeanette Laycock and Basil Richmond who helped with typing.

In particular, we extend our grateful thanks to Birmingham University Musical Society for their financial assistance and sponsorship of this issue and, we trust, subsequent ones. This is a privilege which we hope the standard of our magazine will justify.

KEITH POTTER

CHRIS VILLARS

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OLIVIER MESSIAEN

Earlier this year, the C.B.S.O., with a choir from the Birmingham School of Music, under the inspired baton of Louis Fremaux, gave enchanting performances of the 'Trois Petites Liturgies de la Presence Divine', composed in 1943 by Olivier Messiaen, both in Birmingham and in the Royal Festival Hall, London. Though Messiaen's organ works have been known and played in Britain for a good many years, his choral and orchestral compositions have not enjoyed such fame, although his wartime 'Quatuor Pour La Fin Du Temps' for violin, clarinet, 'cello' and piano is fairly well-known outside France.

Olivier Messiaen, who has retained his post as organist at the Church of Saint-Trinite in Paris for forty years, during which time he has developed his unique musical style as well as his stature as a highly influential teacher, can claim both to occupy a commanding position in the musical development of his own country, and to have made a distinctive and important contribution to the many-sided and complex elements which constitute the wide spectrum of contemporary European culture. His fame is not perhaps as great as that of his younger fellow-composer and pupil Boulez, whilst it has even been said by some that his music is little more than the simplistic product of a sentimentally mystic and erotic imagination. Yet he perhaps occupies a unique position in the field of contemporary music, and has by his inspiration as a teacher alone, helped to mould the future of music in Europe.

Born in Avignon in 1908, Messiaen must owe much of his powerful 'romantic' intellect and poetic imagination to his mother, the poetess Cecile Sauvage, as well as to his father Pierre Messiaen, who was also a figure of some literary importance. It is probably Messiaen's essentially personal and original outlook on the universe in general, as much as his technique, which places him at the forefront of French composers of this century. It is indeed a great over-simplification to say that he lies somewhere between Debussy and Boulez in thought and technique, yet one can sense in his music elements reminiscent of both the fin-de-siecle experimentalism of Debussy and his followers, and the uncompromising boldness of Boulez, Stockhausen, or Barraque. France, it may be said, has always been not only a nation of individualists, but also the most musically insular and self-supporting of all countries. The universality or cosmopolitanism of Messiaen therefore, is somewhat remarkable, and constitutes one of the main reasons why his music is often heard in preference to that of many of his lesser-known contemporaries.

Messiaen combines a highly individualistic vision of the purpose of his compositions with a burning sincerity & a musical curiosity extending far beyond his immediate environment. In addition he possesses a technique which represents a more complete synthesis of the many-sided tendencies of present-day music than that of many of his contemporaries. In 1936, Messiaen was one of a group which,

calling themselves 'La Jeune France', issued a manifesto in which they expressed their combined intention to 're-humanise' music, which they felt was in many cases being stifled by theories and abstract systems. The human content of a composition must be restored to a position of permanent importance.

At this time, two main styles of composition were in vogue: on the one hand, an adherence to one of the central-european systems, such as dodecaphony, and on the other, a reversion to classical principles. One either 'grew forward' to Schoenberg, or 'back' to Bach. 'La Jeune France' however, showed a middle way. To the members of this group, the basic problem lay not so much in evolving a musical language, as in defining the human element in music from which such a language would spring. This 'humanism' did not however mean exactly the same thing to each member of the group.

To Messiaen and Jolivet (who were at odds here with Baudrier and Lesur, other members of the group), man is part of something beyond himself: eternal, universal and spiritual, and art is therefore not limited to the expression merely of a personal experience; it must not be limited to the technical problems of a particular age, and even less to the arbitrary solution of any one particular composer. For Messiaen, the way to discover this universal human music was to reach out to the beginnings of human consciousness - to primitive and oriental civilisations, exotic modes and rhythms, the world of nature, and recognition of the role of the divine in the visible universe.

In comparison with a composer such as Stravinsky (to select a figure of paramount importance in the development of twentieth century music), it may be said that Messiaen's music, like that of the more monumental Russian's, is a creative synthesis of many different elements - including oriental modes and rhythms and bird song, but that strangely enough the Frenchman shows a lesser degree of sophistication and a greater freedom of instinct than the Russian.

Among Messiaen's teachers at the Paris Conservatoire were Marcel Dupre, Maurice Emmanuel and Paul Dukas. Returning later to the Conservatoire as a professor, he has exerted as much influence as a teacher as he has as a composer, by his instruction of musicians such as Boulez and Barraque, to mention only two. His teaching method, including his highly significant classes in 'Aesthetics, Analysis and Rhythm' also involves open discussion about unknown regions of music, such as Eastern music, Hindu rhythms and African music.

Meanwhile, he has enabled the general listener to grasp the purpose and structure of his music by the completion in 1944 of his book 'The Technique Of My Musical Language'. He is also a frequent performer of his own music, especially at the organ of Saint-Trinite. Perhaps his works can only be understood, however, by means of a dual assessment - involving a review of the many-sided aspects of his personality, and a glance at the more fundamental elements of his technique.

It is probably Messiaen's originality of thought and expression which gives his musical language such richness. Though his music has an apparently mystical feeling and

significance, he himself describes his thought as being 'theological' rather than 'mystical'. If one were to endeavour to define these two vague and somewhat over-used terms, one might reach the conclusion that mysticism is a state of mind in which, by contemplation, a man may reach outside himself and experience contact with the Divine. Theology, on the other hand, is the science of religion and is very much concerned with man's human condition. Its function is to reconcile the imperfections of the world, (when practised in conjunction with some system of religious observance) with Divine glory; and this is surely Messiaen's purpose, too. His poetic catholicism is, indeed at the root of his creative thought, and he uses theology as a means to interpret the themes of his works in thought and music. The commonest of these themes are love, death, bird-song and the chief festivals of the Christian Church, such as Christmas, Ascension and Pentecost. For his songs and song-cycles, he himself writes the poems.

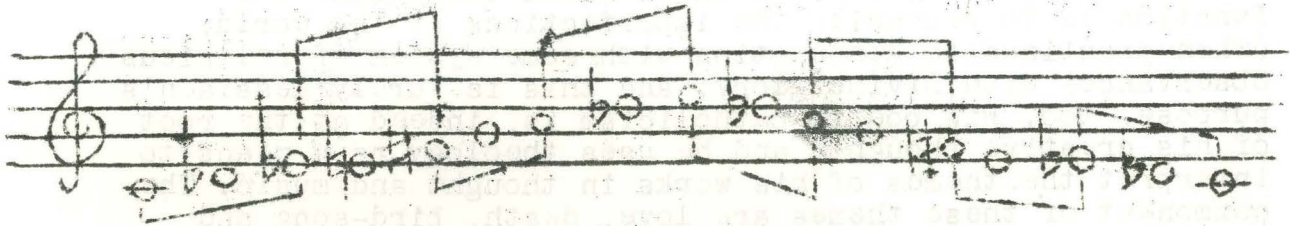
To emphasise how the above-mentioned themes dominate much of Messiaen's work, it may suffice to glance at the music which he wrote between 1944 and 1948, from which it will be apparent that the theme of love occurs again and again. In 1944, Messiaen explored the language of mystical love (as he says in his preface) in 'Vingt regards sur l'Enfant Jesus'. The romance of a Peruvian Tristan and Isolde forms the subject of 'Harawi' (which contains some very effective passages of bird-song, such as those in 'Bonjour toi, colombe verte' which was composed in the following year, whilst the 'Turangalila' symphony (1946 - 1948) depicts, on one level, the violent contrast between passionate physical love, and an ideal, tender mystical love. The 'Cinq Rechants' of 1948 return once again to Peruvian folk-song and express the physical union of two lovers.

It must be remembered that throughout Messiaen's entire corpus of work, irrespective of whether its theme is love or bird-song, there is an underlying act of faith. This is nowhere more apparent than in the work with which Messiaen first came before the public - the 'Banquet Celeste' (1928), a work in which a highly spiritual interpretation of one of the most emotive and mystical scenes of the Christian epic, 'The Last Supper', is supported by a technically successful style of composition which one might call a 'repetition technique', i.e. repetition of phrases of an original stanza, which are re-stated and modified in subsequent stanzas, powerful cadential phrases being used as 'couplets' to round off individual stanzas.

As far as the development of Messiaen's technique is concerned, it may be said that the highly personal use of tonality employed in 'Le Banquet Celeste' was gradually abandoned, (for example, in the 'Liturgies' of 1943 and the 'Vingt Regards' of 1944), until total chromaticism was adopted in works composed after 1950. The central and critical period of his creative life, which we may say ends with the 'Turangalila' symphony (1948), was marked by many technical discoveries, which he has summarised in 'The Technique of my Musical Language'.

What gives Messiaen's music its particularly personal melodic and harmonic character, are the so-called 'modes

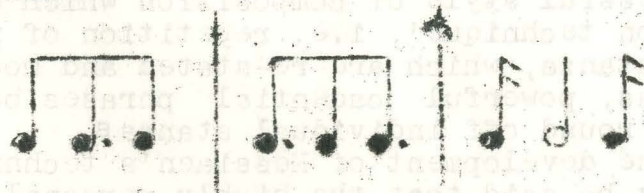
of limited transposition'. There are seven of these, the second and third being most often used, and each mode being formed of several symmetrical groups, the last note of each group always being the same as the first note of the following group. For example, the second mode, which is transposable three times, and is perhaps one of the most easily recognisable, is divided into four symmetrical groups of three notes each. Each group contains a semitone and a tone, as shown in the following:-



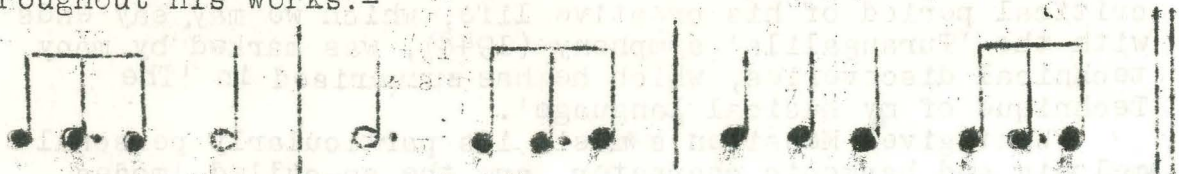
Messiaen's modalism is a coherent system based on vigorous and logical harmonic thought, and in the resulting chord system all the notes appear which belong to the mode used. Each mode therefore has its own harmony, and is not harmonised by chords made up of notes foreign to it. Because of their polytonal flavour, Messiaen's modes can be combined with a tonality, or with one of the traditional ecclesiastical modes. Their use led inevitably to the abandonment of tonality.

Messiaen's contrapuntal treatment of rhythm in a system which recalls Bach or the earlier madrigal composers, embodies a three-fold canon of rhythmic principles. Firstly, rhythm is entirely free from the domination of the bar-line. His music is without regular metre, but very precisely notated. He will add to any rhythm a small pulse-unit, in the form of a dot, a note or a rest, which will transform its balance. The resulting rhythm is subtle and refined. Secondly, rhythm can be augmented or diminished by fractional amounts. Whereas Bach only halved or doubled note values, Messiaen achieves similar results by augmenting notes by a quarter, a third, a half, or twice, three or four times their value, and in diminution by reducing them by inverse proportion of the system used in augmentation.

Lastly, Messiaen's use of non-retrogradable rhythms produces a certain unity of rhythmic movement, just as a certain ubiquity of tonality results from the use of the 'modes of limited transposition'. Thus:-



These three principles are contained in the Hindu rhythm 'Raga-vardhana', and it comes as no surprise, therefore, that Messiaen employs oriental or non-European rhythms and melodic devices throughout his works:-



All these elements combine to produce a very remarkable and interesting musical language which in turn is employed in the composition of equally dynamic yet highly sincere and profound music, such as the 'Ascension' - a group of four inter-related 'meditations' on that Christian festival, which is sublime in its interpretation of the mysterious dynamism of Christianity. Messiaen himself says that he prefers music which is 'refined, glistening and even voluptuous.... music that sings.... a music in stained-glass, a swirling round of complementary colours. A music that expresses the end of time, ubiquity, the blessed saints, the divine and supernatural mysteries.....'

J. CHRISTOPHER GATISS

EMBARKATION EN ROUTE

'Telemusik was a further attempt to write not my music, but music of the whole earth, of all men and races.'

It is hardly unknown for composers, especially German ones, to have grandiose visions. A very few other composers active today can be said to have accepted the 'tradition of the world' - notably the Americans John Cage and La Monte Young. Yet it would be a mistake to confuse Stockhausen's aims with the work of these two radical extremists; Stockhausen, for all his acceptance, is still firmly rooted in the European tradition. At the moment, Stockhausen's stylistic spectrum is his most impressive European feature, demonstrating a stylistic change from Kontra-Punkte to 'Aus Den Sieben Tagen', or, as one commentator recently noted, 'out of the Webernian frying-pan into the Cagean fire'.

If 'Aus Den Sieben Tagen' comes closest of all Stockhausen's works to a Cageian aesthetic, it does so in a spirit of compromise. Strongly influenced through the work maybe by Cage, Cardew et al., it does not represent pastiche in its purest form. Tim Souster believes that in the piece 'the hippy and the Teuton are fundamentally at odds'. The element of control that Stockhausen exerts over his improvising group in 'Aus Den Sieben Tagen' is indicative yet again of his Europeanism.

'Aus Den Sieben Tagen' has received a number of performances in Birmingham recently from 'Embarkation', a group of improvising players centred on the University. For them, the fifteen pieces that constitute this entirely verbal score seem to represent a manifesto for their activities. 'Arrival' begins with an exhortation to re-think the artist's position in much the same way as the composer has done:

"Give up everything, we were on the track.

Begin with yourself:

You are a musician.

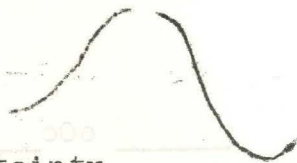
You can transform all the vibrations of the world
into sounds.

If you firmly believe this and from now on never
doubt it,

begin with the simplest exercises".

Such a revolutionary aesthetic is by no means easy to adopt wholeheartedly, and the individual members of 'Embarkation' display different degrees of commitment in their performances. Some of the 'fringe' members of the group are unable as yet to rid themselves of the nineteenth century backlash, others unable to produce the spiritual concentration that such music requires;

UNLIMITED



play a sound
with the certainty
that you have an infinite amount of time and
space.

These limitations, a function of the group's varying composition, is evident in other pieces that have been 'embarked' on. Two recent performances have been especially distinguished; 'Triple Concerts' by Keith Potter in the Arts Lab. Concert (May 29), and a setting of Apollinaire's 'The Windows' by the group's flautist, Chris Villars, (St. Francis Hall, Birmingham University, June 22). The score for this latter piece consisted of the poem which was used as a basis for free interpretation by the players, one of whom declaimed the poem in an impressively sensitive mixture of Sprechstimme, Song and normal speaking. The identity of the group changed utterly (as it had earlier in John Casken's 'Visu') as a result of working with a visual as well as an aural medium: the slow, painstaking advances towards sustained climax were replaced by a series of all-eventful episodes, strung on the evocative thread of the poetry. Each episode assumed its own character, the instruments seeming to colour each other's sound; the crux came in the penultimate section, 'where the train white with snow and nocturnal lights escapes from winter'; here the speaker led the players into a nostalgic moment of extraordinary beauty.

The hard core of 'Embarkation's more dedicated players are immensely competent; their work is not for those with an impatient ear, they are able to suspend time, to magnify, hold and examine the sounds which use it up relentlessly, with patience and sympathy. The audience must be prepared for near disaster or some kind of unmeasurable success. They constantly reappraise the activity to which they devote themselves and we are privileged to hear its developments. As the Barber Institute prepares to preserve its gentility with another round of indifferent chamber music concerts, others around the campus may wish to take advantage of 'Embarkation's exciting potential.

IAIN FENLON.

BEYOND THE THRESHOLD OF HEARING

Humanist culture insists on relating all things to the proportions of man. The Greeks used the "golden mean", or ratio based on an analysis of the proportions of the human figure. For practical purposes everyday objects must be man-sized. The seat of a chair must be the height of a man's calf-length. A door must be higher than 6 feet. Music is confined within the pitch range audible and playable by human beings. Its rhythmic pulse is related to the rate of the human heart, to the rate of breathing, walking or running, its phrase structure to that of human speech and its phrase duration to the amount of breath available for singing or playing a wind instrument.

Consider a piece of music. It consists of a succession of different sounds following one another in time. Consider a single instant in this succession, such as the final chord. It consists of a juxtaposition of different notes, sounding together simultaneously. Consider one single note of medium pitch separated out from this chord. It consists of a number of different related components which make up its harmonic spectrum, or wave form. Consider this wave form by observing it on an oscilloscope. It consists of a succession of identically shaped single waves or cycles which represent a pattern of rising and falling air pressure.

These waves radiate in all directions from the sound source like ripples in a pond. The waves move at a constant and uniform speed regardless of their size. The air itself does not move, just as a leaf floating on a pond does not move along, but merely rises up and down on the ripples. The waves reaching the ear take the form of a uniform rise and fall of air pressure upon the ear drum. The speed or frequency of this oscillation is measured in cycles per second. The frequency of middle C on the piano is about 260 c.p.s. Let the length of the waves be decreased. If the waves move at a constant speed regardless of size, then more of them will strike the ear every second. The frequency will be more and the note will sound higher. Let the length of the waves be increased. If the waves move at a constant speed regardless of size, then fewer of them will strike the ear every second. The frequency will be less and the note will sound lower. The three factors governing pitch are related by the formula -

$$\text{Frequency} = \frac{\text{velocity}}{\text{wavelength}}$$

Sound waves move at a speed of 880 feet per second in air. An organ pipe with an effective length of 2 feet will produce a note of 440 c.p.s.

$$\frac{880 \text{ feet per second}}{2 \text{ feet}} = 440 \text{ c.p.s.}$$

This is the frequency of orchestral tuning.A. Let the frequency of the single note be increased gradually.

As the note rises in pitch it appears to become quieter until it becomes inaudible above 20,000 c.p.s. Let the loudness or amplitude of the note at 20,000 c.p.s. be increased. It remains inaudible no matter how loud it becomes. Let the frequency of the single note be decreased again to its original pitch. Let the amplitude be increased. At a certain level of loudness, the sound becomes physically painful to the ear. Let the frequency be decreased gradually. As the note falls in pitch it appears to become quieter until it becomes inaudible below 20 c.p.s. Let the amplitude be increased. At a certain level of loudness, the note becomes perceptible as vibrations of objects in the room, and of the walls and floor of the room itself. There is no sensation of audible itch. Let the frequency of the single note be decreased further. The vibration is transformed into a series of single pressure waves. If the wave form is of a particular type described as a square wave these waves will be heard as a series of rapid clicks. If the frequency falls to about 2 c.p.s. it will be transformed into a rhythmic pulse. If a frequency of 2 c.p.s. is fed into the secondary input of a ring modulator, while a complex noise is fed into the primary input, the 2 c.p.s. will be heard as a rise and fall or modulation in the amplitude of the complex noise.

We experience very low sounds almost every day in city street, railway stations, or factories. This threshold region is almost completely untapped as a source of musical material, yet it is not difficult to devise apparatus which could operate at such frequencies.

Sound can be transmitted in almost any medium, though every medium deforms the waveband in its own characteristic way. Loud music heard through the walls of a room has all its high frequencies reduced or attenuated. Our ears are adapted to the particular attenuations produced by the medium of air. Sounds are completely transformed when they are heard under water. Only the very lowest vibrations of the sound of an underground train are transmitted to street level. The low frequency vibrations of explosions, earthquakes and eruptions are transmitted through the ground over a far greater distance than they can be in air. When low frequency vibrations are transmitted through the sea they take the form of rollers, breakers, ground swell and tidal flow.

Sound can be transferred from one medium to another. A microphone converts air waves into fluctuations in an electric current. A transmitter converts these fluctuations into variations in the amplitude of high frequency radio waves. A radio receiver and a loudspeaker reverses the process.

Consider a stretched steel string with a length of 4 feet which vibrates at a frequency of 130 c.p.s. When the string is plucked, the pitch C is heard. The outline of the string appears blurred, and a touch with the fingers shows that it is vibrating very rapidly.

If the string is shortened or tightened, the frequency of this vibration increases, but its amplitude decreases.

If the string is lengthened or loosened, the frequency of this vibration decreases, but its amplitude increases.

Apply the formula:- $\text{frequency} = \frac{\text{velocity}}{\text{wavelength}}$

The wavelength is represented by the length of the string.

The velocity is the actual speed at which the string moves when it is in vibration. Its ability to move is affected by its tightness. Thus, the maximum possible amplitude of its vibration is smaller, the tighter the string becomes.

Consider a stretched steel string with a length of 32 feet which vibrates at a frequency of 16 c.p.s. When the string is plucked, no sound is heard. The amplitude of vibration is very large, and the shape of the string's movement is clearly visible as a rotating movement about the point of rest.

If one end of the string is detached and has a weight hung on it, the string is turned into a pendulum.

Consider a pendulum which swings at a frequency of 2 c.p.s. If the string is shortened, the frequency of swing is increased. If the string is lengthened, the frequency of swing is decreased.

Apply the formula:- $\text{frequency} = \frac{\text{velocity}}{\text{wavelength}}$

The wavelength is represented by the length of the string.

The velocity is the speed at which the weight of the pendulum moves when it is in motion. This speed is governed by the force of gravity and is therefore a constant factor.

If the pendulum swings along a straight line, it describes an arc, moving back and forth through the midpoint.

If the amplitude is increased it reaches a maximum when the arc becomes a semicircle. The swinging pendulum embodies the principles of all oscillating movement; the movement of arms and legs, the swaying of trees in the wind, the mechanism of clocks.

If the pendulum is given an oscillation at right angles to the first movement, its movement will describe an ellipse when viewed from above.

If the oscillation in both directions is of equal amplitude, the movement will form a circle. When viewed from the side it will always describe an arc. If the oscillation in both directions attains a maximum amplitude, the circle will have a radius equal to the length of

the pendulum's string. Viewed from the side it no longer forms an arc. The weight of the pendulum appears to move backward and forward along a horizontal line. At this point the pendulum is poised between two states. It ceases to be an oscillating device and begins to rotate.

It can no longer increase its amplitude, but its frequency and velocity can be increased to almost any extent. It is no longer affected by the force of gravity which is replaced by centrifugal force. Amplitude can only be changed by altering the length of the string.

Apply the formula:- frequency = $\frac{\text{velocity}}{\text{wavelength}}$

Frequency is represented as revolutions per second. Wavelength is the length of the string. Velocity is the speed of the weight moving round its circle.

The rotating centrifuge embodies the principles of all rotating systems in which an orbiting body is held in a circular or elliptical path around another, central body by the opposing gravitational and centrifugal forces: the movement of all stars, planets and satellites. This is the true music of the spheres; the universe is a great vibrating system of resonant chords clashing and resounding against one another.

If the circle described by the rotating centrifuge is given the form of a rim, joined to the centre by a series of wire spokes, it is transformed into a wheel. Consider a wheel with a radius of 2 feet. The frequency and velocity of its revolutions can be increased or decreased to almost any extent. Unlike the centrifuge it retains its shape even when at rest.

Apply the formula:- frequency = $\frac{\text{velocity}}{\text{wavelength}}$

Frequency is represented as revolutions per second. Wavelength is the radius of the wheel. Velocity is the speed of a point on the rim of the wheel.

A wheel is used as a means of transport. Its job is to convert rotating movement into linear movement, or vice versa. Consider the wheel moving along a level road. Consider a point on the rim of the wheel. The frequency with which this point meets the road is the same as the frequency of revolution of the wheel. The distance moved along the road by one revolution will be equal to the circumference of the wheel.

As the wheel moves along, it measures equal distances along the road.

The frequency in time is converted into frequency in space.

The legs of an animal convert oscillation into linear movement.

The needle of a gramophone converts the linear fluctuations in the surface of a gramophone record into fluctuations in an electric current.

The magnetic head of a tape recorder converts linear fluctuations in the magnetic recording tape into fluctuations in an electric current. The vanes of an electric fan convert rotating movement into the linear movement of a draft of air.

The sails of a windmill convert the linear movements of the wind into the rotating movement of the mill wheels, or the oscillating movement of the water pump.

Consider linear movement; it consists of a continuous change of position. Consider rotatory movement; it consists of a circular change of position.

Consider oscillatory movement; it consists of an alternating change of position.

Consider vibration; it consists of a change in the position of molecules.

Consider sound in air; it consists of changes in air pressure.

Consider the tides rising and falling; it consists of changes in the pressure and volume of water in one place.

Consider the rhythm of breathing, the rhythm of sleeping and waking, the rhythm of sexual tension in love making; they consist of changes in the rate of body metabolism.

Consider the cycle of the lunar month, the cycle of the seasons, the cycle of birth, growth, regular pattern of change in various factors, which in time evoke resonant changes in other factors; just as sound in air sets up resonant vibrations in neighbouring solid objects, just as the movements of the moon set up a resonant rise and fall in the level of the sea.

The only barrier standing in the way of accepting the notion that sound vibrations emanate from all things is our insistence upon the idea that sound is only that narrow part of the spectrum of vibrations which can be detected by the ear. An objective examination of physical phenomena shows that this barrier is illusory and that with a certain amount of ingenuity and imagination, it can be overcome.

Technology is the tool which we can use to extend the range of our own senses. The electron microscope and the radio telescope enable us to "see" and "hear" things which are respectively very small or very large and far away. The acoustic microphone, the contact microphone, the ring modulator, the filter are extensions of our ears enabling us to hear sounds on the threshold of our normal sense of hearing. The radio, the telescope, the television are extensions of our senses of hearing and sight across long distances. The tape recorder, gramophone and film camera are extensions of our memories enabling us to experience events in the past. It is now possible to bring together events, phenomena, sounds, images from a limitless number of sources. All that is needed is the imagination to see that these relationships do exist between many different things and to make use of the available tools to realise the vision. This must be the role of the artist in the present day. Technology has brought a limitless field of new experiences within the awareness of our normal senses. It is the job of the artist to write them into a common aesthetic experience.

JOLYON LAYCOCK.

FRANK ZAPPA

On Monday, 8th February, Frank Zappa had planned a concert with the London Philharmonic Orchestra. The Albert Hall Authorities saw fit to cancel the concert on the grounds that the lyrics in "200 Motels" were obscene. It would be a pity if this decision were taken seriously, and Zappa judged to be merely a swearing, loud-mouthed freak. Since 1966 Francis Vincent Zappa has played a large part in broadening the scope of pop music.

With his group "The Mothers of Invention", Zappa has produced music of new depth and complexity. His main influences are Edgar Varese, the French avante garde composer, Igor Stravinsky and 1950's rock and roll - strange combinations. His music is close to jazz, full of improvisation and protracted solos, yet is akin to classical music. It is often played from sheet music and Zappa often conducts, using his index finger, right hand, classical fashion. Perhaps it is his outlandish style that, whilst endearing him to the progressive pop audience, has denied him recognition elsewhere.

The original "Mother's of Invention", which he formed in 1966, consisted of Zappa, guitar and vocals, Jimmy Carl Black, drums, Roy Estrada, bass and vocals, James Sherwood, saxes, Bunk Gardener, saxes, horns and flute, Ray Collins, vocals and Billy Mundi, drums. They released a double album - "Freak Out", which featured many session men playing obscure

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instruments as well as the group itself. The record was social comment on the United States of America. Some of the comment must have been too strong, for Zappa was jailed by the Californian Authorities for making an obscene record. The first of many brushes with the powers that be!

The next album "Absolutely Free" was again a satire of life styles in the States (high school etc.) It also contains snatches of contemporary classical music - (something previously unheard of in pop. His next effort "Lumpy Gravy" features an electronic symphony orchestra made up of Los Angeles session musicians. It consists of musical interludes between humorous monologues relating to life in Los Angeles. During this period Mundt and Collins quit the group and were replaced by Ian Underwood - a Mozart influenced pianist and multi-instrumentalist. Also Arthur Tripp joined on drums and xylophone. Tripp is an ex-member of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra.

In September, 1967, Zappa paid his first visit to England and played a concert at the Royal Albert Hall. He dismayed critics who considered the show a huge joke. The group displayed many innovations: the use of the Fuzz Wah pedal on the guitar, which Zappa originated and which has since been used to great effect by many rock artists, notably Jimi Hendrix, and the use of amplified saxophones, flutes and horns, double drummers and electronic sound effects. Perhaps the "Mothers" were too advanced for the audience at that time.

Meanwhile they recorded "We're only in it for the money", a parody of hippies and flower power, and "Ruben and Jets", a satirical and nostalgic collection of 1950's type rock and roll. Don Preston, piano and electronic effects was added to the group.

In January, 1968, Zappa completed his most ambitious project yet - a double album entitled "Uncle Meat" which was intended as the sound track to a film of the same name. Both albums featured many novel electronic recording effects: the use of multi-track recording techniques e.g. forty track build up and the use of sound filters to amplify sections of the instrumentation. They also used Melchor Compressors and Lang Equalizers; these enhanced the group's sound and marked the beginning of an evolution towards more complex and improved modes of recording.

Between March 1968 and July 1969, Zappa's "Mothers' of Invention" recorded at least twelve albums, none of which (to my knowledge) have ever been released. These albums feature studio cuts and live cuts from concerts. I believe the album "Weasels Ripped My Flesh" released September, 1970, is a sample of these.

In the summer of 1968, "Mothers' of Invention" paid their second visit to England. Their sole concert was at the Royal Festival Hall. It was a multi media event featuring clowns, acrobats and dancers. Respected violinist Don "Sugar Cane" Harris came along with the group. The whole show was filmed and recorded. The product was some superbly recorded music, perhaps the finest Zappa has ever produced. The critics

in England again did not seem to comprehend the show. Zappa and the "Mothers!" returned to America leaving people still a little unsure if they were serious musicians or comedians.

Some of the music from the show was later released in February, 1970, on the album "Burnt Weary Sandwich". The track on side two, "The Little House I used to Live in", is 21' 52" of free flowing music, brilliantly recorded. For those new to Zappa's music there is no better introduction than this track in full stereo. It features a shrilling electric violin solo from Sugar Cane Harris. Also an exhilarating rolling organ solo from Frank himself.

Most of the next year in America saw the group's fortunes increase only slightly. They were earning nowhere near the amount big British rock bands, e.g. "Cream", were grossing.

The next British tour in May, 1969, was very successful and for the first time the "Mothers" appeared outside London. On Friday, 30th May, they gave a concert at the Birmingham Town Hall. This was the best music concert I have ever had the pleasure of witnessing. Supplemented by Buzz Gardener (brother of Bunk) on horns, flugelhorn and bassoon, they played what Zappa calls contemporary American music and electronic chamber music. The sheer intensity and beauty of the music astonished the audience. I myself spoke to Zappa after the show and can reveal that he is intelligent, and considerate towards his fans. During this tour Frank and his "Mothers!" won many admirers. It is ironic that shortly afterwards he disbanded the group. He gave lack of audience appreciation as the main reason. The disbandment of "Mothers" was the tragedy for progressive music.

Zappa, Ian Underwood and several Los Angeles musicians recorded "Hot Rats" in August and September, 1969. Jean Luc Ponty, a friend of Zappa, also appeared on the album. The French violinist's presence perhaps showed how much respect Zappa commands in music circles. The album was a great success selling particularly well in Europe. It did more than anything to bring attention to Frank Zappa's music. Rolling Stone magazine called it "A significant piece of Jazz, as influential as any this decade."

Zappa began to get some of the praise he so justly deserves. He won the Pop Musician Award from Downbeat (1970). He played a concert with Zubin Mehta and the Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra. He re-formed "The Mothers of Invention" though unfortunately with certain brilliant musicians from his previous line missing. His main project at the moment seems to be "200 Motels" which has just been filmed and brings us back full circle to the Albert Hall, 1971.

APPENDIX

The following is a list of players who appeared with Zappa in 1966-69 as original members of the "Mothers of Invention".

Frank Zappa,	Guitar, percussion.
Jimmy Carl Black,	Drums.
Roy Estrada,	Electric bass, vocals.
Don Preston,	Organ, piano.
Billy Mundi,	Drums (Quit early 1968).
Bunk Gardener,	Flute, saxes, bassoon.
Ian Underwood,	Organ, piano, saxes.
Arthur Tripp,	Drums, xylophone, vibes.
Roy Collins,	Vocals (Quit late 1968).
James Sherwood,	Tenor sax, tambourine.
Buzz Gardener,	Horns, sax (from 1969).
Don Harris,	Electric violin (1968 only).

ALBUMS RELEASED

- (1) "Freak Out" double (U.S. only) 1966
- (2) "Absolutely Free" 1967
- (3) "Lumpy Gravy" 1967
- (4) "We're only in it for the money" 1967
- (5) "Ruben and the Jets" 1968
- (6) "Uncle Meat" double 1968 (TRA 197)
- (7) "Hot Rats" (RSLP) 6356 1970
- (8) "Burnt Weeny Sandwich" (RS 6370) 1970
- (9) "Weasels Ripped my Flesh" (RS 2028) 1970

New Group 1970

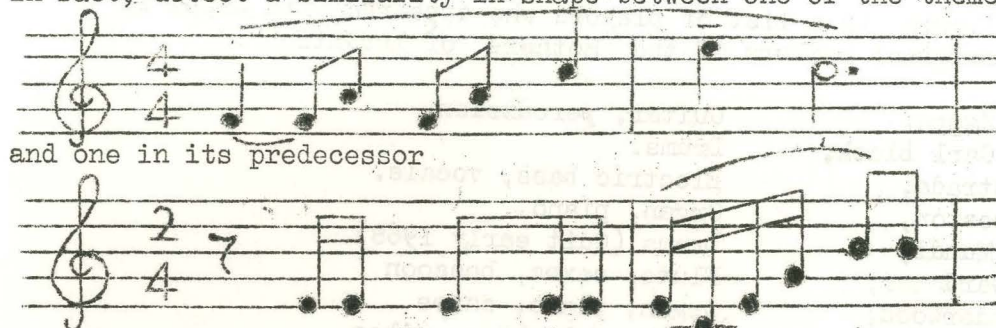
- (10) "Chunga's Revenge" 1970

All except the latter strongly recommended. The first five albums are M.G.M. label and in the process of being deleted.

PHILIP J. CREMIN

NARCISSUS AND TONALITY

Narcissus is my first major work since my one-act opera "The Hawkeyed Sentinel", first performed in November, 1969. The more alert listener may, in fact, detect a similarity in shape between one of the themes in Narcissus



This does not mean that the works are programmatically linked in any way; rather, it is part of a compositional problem that has occupied me for some time.

The problem is by no means exclusively my own; indeed it is central to a great deal of modern music, particularly opera, as I discover increasingly in research into 20th century opera. Stated quite simply, the problem is that of how to structure music that portrays a developing dramatic situation. All of us, whether composers or analysts or both, cannot help but be aware of the amazing variety of structural methods that sixty years of experimentation has brought forth. The conventional explanation for such compositional bewilderment is contained in the phrase "the downfall of tonality".

Tonality "fell down" because of the immense expansion in its language that took place during the latter part of the 19th century. The effect was devastating because tonality was, and is, not merely a structural convenience, but a complete language in itself; i.e. not merely a grammar, but a vocabulary. This means that it could/can be used to express often quite specific emotional areas by dint of the associations and traditions that surrounded it. Its aim was/is "comprehensibility", to paraphrase Schoenberg on serialism; the tragedy of post-tonal developments is that there has, as yet, been no substitute found which completely integrates vocabulary and grammar to the same degree of comprehensibility.

My own compositional style therefore, favours tonal methods for two reasons. Firstly, like most other young musicians, my musical experiences have been largely experiences derived from hearing and performing tonal music. However much avant-garde composers may assure me that contemporary man is best addressed in contemporary (i.e. avant-garde) terms, my own experience tells me that the music of long-dead composers can still speak powerfully to my own condition, and to the condition of twentieth century men in general. Is it too naive to say that human beings haven't

changed all that much in the last two hundred and fifty years? My second reason is more intellectual, in the sense that my analytical awareness of form leads me to tonality as being the most perfectly developed method yet devised for musicians to organise sound in a way that can both detail developments in dramatic situations and at the same time be immediately understandable to a listener.

Two features of tonality may be cited to make the point. The first is that conventionally used tonality establishes a context; this creates the possibility of movement away from that initial position (i.e. modulation), or of variation of that initial position (e.g. distortion of a tonal theme) which creates instantly recognisable effects. Because the context is so firm, the scope of the freedom in tonality is almost infinite in its expressive possibilities. The second feature is the moment of return to the tonal context in a particular piece of music; such moments of return are almost inevitably recognisable, usually on the upper rather than the lower levels of consciousness, and therefore allow, despite the avant-garde, a listener to be aware of both context and departure from context.

In this matter, tonality to my point of view offers such scope to the composer that until the same features can be provided by some other linguistic device, integrating vocabulary and grammar in an equal manner, I can personally see no reason for abandoning the tonal system. Indeed, at times of great prejudice, I can see no reason why any composer should wish to abandon the technical and expressive opportunities that tonality can offer. Perhaps only the true Impressionist, or his weaker brother, the composer interested only in superficial effects, would choose to write non-tonally.

This brings me back to my first point - the similarity in material between one theme in Narcissus and one in Sentinel. Freely acknowledging that the simplest explanation is the paucity of my inspiration, I would nevertheless maintain that such a similarity has its predecessors in the most tonal of tonal music. The three most simple methods for announcing a tonal thematic context are (a) by diatonic scale movement (b) by triadic movement, (c) by a combination of the two. That much is obvious from the most superficial examination of works by Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. The similarity in my own works is in category (b).

In using such a method in my own tonal music, I see no reason for apology, although our musical environment is such that the tonal composer quite properly is often forced to defend his style. The major accusation he faces is that he lacks "originality" - that much misused word whose stable-mate "innovation" was discussed in the last issue of Contact and will surely be discussed ad absurdum in future ones.

With the editor's permission I will take up the issue of "originality" on behalf of we small band of contemporary tonal composers in the next issue.

JOHN DRUMMOND.

LORD BERNERS

(1883 - 1950)

"Lord Berners!" they said, "who the hell's he!?" Thirty years ago, such a question would not have needed asking; for anyone in the slightest way involved in the artistic world, would have been acquainted with his work, or, at the very least, been aware of his existence. The amused response to the idea that he ought to be 'resurrected' is rather unfortunate. Such a response would be labelled near sacrilege if the composed in question were an obscure Renaissance monkish figure, the producer of polyphonic masses by the scrolls, plainchant and "parody" in base. There seems to be a great unspoken maxim among many music scholars in this field that implies that, in some mystical way, there is respectability in antiquity; originality in contemporary context be damned! The boldest reactionary, who today grovels beneath the 'jackbooted avant-garde giants', if 400 years old (or hopefully more!) can 'react' to his own self-glorifying content, so long as the manuscript, wherein his hidden masterpieces lay, proves hard enough to 'translate' that a Ph.D. is deemed the only possible reward. Still, that is another hobbyhorse, and another article!

It is quite impossible to go into every facet of Berners' creative work here, for it stretched, not only across the many musical genres, but across the whole spectrum of artistic endeavour. Novels, (including a two-part autobiography), paintings, set & costume designs all, however fine, are overshadowed by his music, which he himself took most interest and pride in - and probably spent the greatest part of his recreation time engrossed in perfecting. I say 'recreation time', since Berners (his name, before succeeding to the barony in 1918, was Gerald Hugh Tyrwhitt) was by profession, a diplomat. He was, and still is labelled an amateur and a dilettante; but there is little amateurishness in his music. Despite his groundings in musical technique acquired at Leipzig, he still had doubts about his own technical capabilities as a musician, and so went to Oxford for a month to master classical harmony and counterpoint; and 'master it' he did. His tutor reported that it took Berners a month to grasp what took many students six months or more.

He stands in a line of great English eccentrics, and amateurs -Beecham springs to mind most easily in the musical field. And 'English eccentrics' reminds one of Edith Sitwell. The whole Sitwell clan was passionately fond of publicity and kept a large bowl in the house full of press cuttings, featuring some member of the family or other. After noticing this at a dinner party, Berners, on repayment of the invitation, boldly displayed an even larger receptacle with a minute cutting, dwarfed against the bowl, to the effect that Lord Berners had now returned to 1, Chesham Place. More exciting events took place at the lord's country seat at weekend parties. When everyone (but Berners) had retired to their respective rooms, for the night, and he had gauged them to be in a state of sparse attire, the host would let off one of his many shot-guns into the garden, thus drawing everyone, immediately, out of their room. While quietly enjoying the resultant spectacle, he would calmly announce that he was not too sure whether the weapon in question was still in working order, and to avoid waking his guests in the morning, thought that he should test it now. Much emphasis

(probably too much for the narrow-minded musician's taste) has been put upon his talents as a showman and practical joker; yet, because much of it is so well reflected in his music, it becomes all the more inseparable from the man, and all the more part of his endearment - to me, at least. Any foreigner would have had his most distorted view of the English upper classes of the period quietly confirmed on entering Berner's London home, adorned as it was with portraits of generals and statesmen, suitably juxtaposed with pantomime masks of negroes and cats. Then again, he could as well be found sobbing over the state of the stock market (despite the fact that he had a cool half-million to his credit) as dyeing his pigeons in more exotic colours to the presumed dual pleasure of birds and 'artist'. His fascination with masks extended beyond those adorning the walls of his entrance hall; the wearing of certain 'examples' resulted in some frightening experiences for Italian peasants, ill-fated enough to catch sight of the peer 'en vacances'. He would be seen in his Rolls, playing a miniature piano (specially fitted in the back of the vehicle) and peering out of a window - all while donning a hideous mask of some idiot-boy or grinning child.

But, despite these bizarre qualities, peculiar to that hearty breed of English eccentrics (of which he was a true member) he found just enough time to wear his three distinct artistic 'hats' - author, painter and composer. He took a keen interest in everything new in the Arts, - for example, on his piano at home might well be the latest work of Stravinsky with the dedication by the composer; Walton, also, was moved to dedicate his 'Belshazzar' to Berners in 1931. His complete works, including an opera, songs (to German and French as well as English texts) and piano music, are conveniently listed in Grove, so I need not catalogue them here. He is best remembered today as the composer of five important ballets for the Vic-Wells (now Royal) Ballet, among them "The Triumph of Neptune" and "A Wedding Bouquet," (to words of Gertrude Stein) for which he also wrote the scenario and designed costumes and sets. Stravinsky, a personal friend of the composer's, comes in for some parody in the ballet, with its obvious digs at "Les Noces" - although any attempt at thematic correlation between the two is doomed to failure. The ballet, not inappropriately in view of the title, is fully choral, as in "Les Noces". Stein's libretto comprises chattering inconsequential repetitions (e.g. punctuated outbursts of "Act One! Act One!" in the last act) in which sound counts for more than intelligibility. The following may act as a sample:-

Arthur Julia Arthur Julia Arthur
this would make a dog uneasy dog uneasy
Guy would it be possible to believe it of three
Guy would it be possible
Guy would it be possible
All of them having come to the door
this is now scene four
this is now scene four

Berners sets these word patterns with masterly confidence. Some may agree with Jack Westrup that the "persistent brightness and sophisticated simplicity is as wearisome as smart conversation" - I, not surprisingly, do not; and that, after seventy or more hearings (of a tape, not separate public performances, alas!)

Among smaller instrumental pieces, the "Valse bourgeoise", for piano duet, first published in 1919, (and performed at the Salzburg Festival of 1923) are fine examples of the sharp wit coupled with a sound technique that is Lord Berners, the composer. The work is full of what the ordinary listener would call "wrong notes"; Berners had a habit in his earlier works of decorating his melodies and harmonies with great chromaticism. But there is not the slightest hint of atonality in the music. On a less purely musical note, at the entry of the Viennese subject in the third waltz, for example, Berners has written above the stave - "mais je connais ça" - showing himself, then a true francophile, even when tackling "le style viennois". But surely not simply a dilettante, the most frequent label attached to his name. It is easy to see why, as Constant Lambert, his life-long friend and champion, has recorded. But if every such labelled individual left to posterity what he produced, then "Vive les dilettantes" - for there are not so many such people that one can afford to let them be dismissed so lightly with a wave of the hand from some musical snob.

Berners has been called the English Satie, and as a label for quick characterisation it is misleading. However, in some ways, they can be regarded in the same light, if only because they shared a love for the eccentric in art, and for what seemed to all others trivial. But opinions are divided, as ever, Satie is regarded by many as a precursor of Debussy, by others as a trifling imitator. But while Satie studied music seriously at the Schola Cantorum in Paris, and is proceeded to live in comparative squalor, Berners wrote music initially as a pastime, with only the most basic of musical groundings, but lived a life of enviable affluence. The nature of his musical background is hinted at in much of his earlier work with its strong element of improvisation; but there is no suggestion of any 'bungling'. His musical gestures are made boldly and without pointless addition.

Throughout his varied artistic career he was true to the French he so admired (most of his titles are in French) and to the French themselves, who make a habit of never keeping their arts in watertight compartments. The fact that he did spread his net wide has probably accounted for his neglect in a country where such practice is unfashionable and shunned upon. But why is he not performed more often than he is, particularly in these days of revival upon revival? He certainly cannot be dismissed as just another post-Stanford wallower. The only British composer to whom he bears any resemblance is Constant Lambert - and that was more likely a reversal of influence. It is disappointing that in the amateur field - where such a

revival must, it seems, come before the professional box office try it - the "powers that be" are rooted in musical ignorance. And this also applies to youthful organisations, run by the young. Their repertoire is restricted to 'what they did for "A" level', 'what their teachers thought they ought to perform' and 'what they happened to hear by accident on Radio 3 the other week'. It is also a pity that those with some idea for innovation - and that does not mean 'new' music, or me as an individual - are always the ones least poised to act effectively.

I close with a sentence from Arnold Haskell's book "Balletomania" (an ailment I suffer from gladly) - "Thank God for Lord Berners the great exception to everything written about the narrow views of English artists; his role has already been a great one".

PHILIP LANE

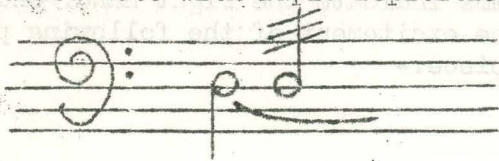
CONTEMPORARY STRING TECHNIQUE

We have a certain concept of what we think a string player is. He should play in tune, using vibrato with the left hand to produce good tone; and this should be perfectly co-ordinated with a good bowing technique involving smooth bow changes at first and staccato, slurred and spiccato bowings later. This sound but limited concept is as widely held today as it was seventy years ago, and there has been little real innovation.

Yet the percussive possibilities of his instrument are enormous. As soon as the many effects caused by plucking, tapping and rapping the instrument are examined seriously, not treated as effects, but on an equal basis with normal technique, a whole new philosophy emerges.

PLUCKING: The great achievements and popularity of the guitar, sitar and jazz double bass indicate that plucking, known as pizzicato, is a very rich field to study and emulate. From the jazz bass we find velocity can be acquired by rapid alternations of the third and second fingers of the right hand, while holding the bow, or by all the fingers, putting the bow down.

The pizzicato tremolo is a most exciting oriental sound, produced by a backward and forward movement of one finger on the string, so that the string is always vibrating while plucked (quasi mandolin). Stated differently, it is a sustained note with rapid repetitions of that note over it:



From the same eastern influence the pizzicato -glissando has great possibilities. As with pizzicato-tremolo only the stopping finger of the left hand must touch the string, the glissando beginning a micro-second after the pluck.

From the guitar we find the thumb-pizzicato gives a ripe and dark, round and deep colour, of great lyrical power. But most impressive is to see a player using a pizzicato-tremolo with the right hand, on an open string, to accompany a left hand pizzicato melody. The following example is from the American composer Whittenberg's "Conversations for solo bass": (1968).

Brisk $\text{♩} = 116$ *l.h. pizz*

pizz trem *mf* *sfz* *mf* *mf* *f* *p*

mp

The indication over a note means we should lift the string up and let it crash against the fingerboard. This sounds like a pistol shot, and when used unexpectedly is very good for frightening audiences.

TAPPING: It is difficult for string players to think of a violin as a potential drum and discretion should be important here. If we use the knuckle, palm, fingertip, fingernail and cupped hand on the ribs, neck, back, bridge, scroll, tailpiece and fingerboard, we have five different generators on eight different sounding parts of the body. Many permutations are clearly available, especially using both hands, and purely percussive sounds of great rhythmic beauty and subtlety are possible.

In his "Improvisations for solo bass" (1969) the American Eugene Kurtz uses a precise notation —

means to slap the strings against the fingerboard.

is the clef for percussive effects.

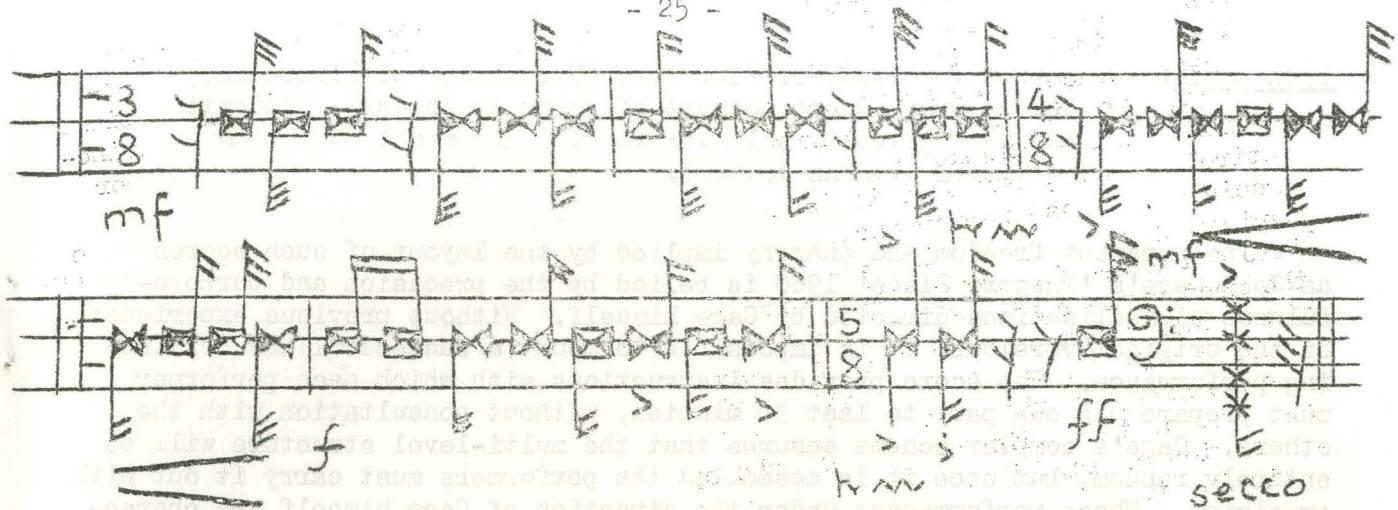


means slap the body.



means rap the body with knuckles.

means to trill with the flat of the fingers on the body. Upward stems indicate the right hand, and downward stems the left. Now consider the excitement of the following passage from Bars 83 to 87 of this following piece:-



PLAYER'S VOICE: As a piece of music is written for a player as well as his instrument, and not the instrument by itself, there is no reason why the player should not add an additional vocal part. Articulations and interjections like HEY! and BAAR! can help to bring sudden focus on the music. He can sing or hum along with the instrument, or in counterpoint with it, especially near or into the f-holes, with great effect. A short speech part can be anything from comic to dramatic, as can various movements or gestures, whether related to the instrument or not.

To return to bowing, it is necessary to promote the scratchy sul ponticello (near the bridge) and the velvety sul tasto (near the fingerboard) to an equal status with normal bowing. Similarly the hard and brittle col legno (with the stick part of the bow), in both battuto and tratto (struck and drawn) forms, should be of similar status. Lastly, the amazing sound of bowing on the tailpiece, and strings behind the bridge, is too weird to be overlooked in this article.

None of this is really madness. With the Polish composer Penderecki's "Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima" (1960) and his string Quartet (1964), pioneer work has started in Europe. Although all this is being done in the United States at present, our own composers will easily catch up. There is a great future in string playing, but not in the way that string players think. The way forward lies in sonic, extra-musical and neo-electronic sounds, giving freshness and extra dimensions to normal technique.

LERROY B. COWIE.

REVIEWS

19th March: Barber Institute of Fine Arts (University of Birmingham)
Contemporary Music Concert of Works by Debussy, Hindemith,
and Cage given by soloists and the University Motet Choir
conducted by John Joubert.

The apparent freedom and anarchy implied by the layout of such scores as John Cage's 'Theatre Piece' 1960 is belied by the precision and purposefulness of realisations directed by Cage himself. Without previous experience of the original versions, it is impossible to mount a successful and convincing performance. The score provides instructions with which each performer must prepare his own part to last 30 minutes, without consultation with the others. Cage's complex scheme ensures that the multi-level structure will be entirely random, but once it is assembled the performers must carry it out with precision. Those performances under the direction of Cage himself are characterised by a sense of timeless awe; as if time stood still and one is lulled into a trance-like state which renders the most absurd events acceptable, and the most unpleasant and loud noises sweet and harmonious. Only performers whose dedication to what they are performing is complete and sincere can hope to impart this intangible spirit to their audience. They must be capable of overwhelming, by the sheer weight of their own concentration, any tendency on the part of the audience to break the spell by restlessness, laughter, or relaxation of any kind. In short, the performance must be spell-binding from beginning to end.

The performance of the 'Theatre Piece' on 19th March in the concert hall of the Barber Institute benefitted from the experience of people who had first hand experience of the original version directed by John Cage. Added to this, the group of seven performers, directed by Jocelyn Powell, had an obvious enthusiasm and commitment for the work, and these two features ensured that the performance had the essential qualities at least some of the time.

Of course, the unknown factor in any such performance is the audience, and even the most experienced and expert group will fall short of its mark if the audience is not prepared to meet it half-way and give as much as they are offered in terms of concentration and listening. There was unfortunately a good deal of laughter from the audience, and I found it difficult to avoid the conclusion that some of the performers were making deliberate attempts to make the audience laugh. This kind of self assertion leads to fragmentation and lack of cohesion, and is definitely not in the spirit of John Cage.

Parts had been composed for a keyboard player (piano off-stage and harpsichord on stage), a cellist who included fragments of a Bach 'cello suite in his version, a percussion player, a singer, a dancer, an actor and a painter who produced an action painting on a mishapen piece of sheet metal at the back of the stage. Full use was made of the auditorium and stage of the concert hall, and advantage was taken of the resonant qualities of the corridors outside.

The performance was well structured and precisely executed (several performers made a deliberate display of consulting their wrist watches) but lacked magic of feeling, except for a few moments near the end. The result was entertaining and enjoyable rather than memorable, but did tend to become tedious in the middle when the initial impact of the succession of extraordinary events had worn off.

This work formed the second half of a complete concert whose first half was devoted to music of a more traditional style. This included performances of three works by Debussy. Ivor Keys and Peter Dickinson played the group of three pieces for two pianos 'En Blanc et Noir'. This was mostly vigorous and exciting, but some of the most dramatically crucial moments were spoilt by what I felt to be a lack of spiritual accord between the two performers. Brian Wicker, accompanied by Mary Joubert, played the Rhapsody for clarinet and piano. The University of Birmingham Motet Choir ended the first half with a performance of the 'Trois Chansons de Charles D'Orleans'. This choir is obviously well drilled by its conductor John Joubert and gave a very sensitive rendering of these three songs, although the effect was spoilt by some weak solo singing. They preceded the Debussy songs by a performance of Hindemith's Six French Chansons. In both works the pronunciation of the French vowels was not accurate, and since this is often crucial to the colour of the music, more care should have been taken.

The first half was entertaining and undemanding, but this led to a feeling that the concert as a whole was badly planned, and perhaps even misled in its intention. If the Musical Society wish to perform music by Cage, I feel they should have courage enough to include it in programmes devoted entirely to works conceived in a similar spirit. I found it difficult to avoid the conclusion that there was an attempt to trick the audience into submitting to an experience which was felt to be good for them by putting sugar on the pill.

JOLYON LAYCOCK

20th March: St. Paul's Church, Hockley. Concert of works by John Casken, Vaughan Williams and 15th Century English Composers given by students of Birmingham University under the direction of Nicholas Sandon and John Casken.

The second of this series of concerts, given by members of the University in St. Paul's Church on 20th March, comprised an interesting juxtaposition of English music from the Fifteenth Century, directed by Nicholas Sandon, and the Twentieth Century, directed by John Casken. The latter directed Vaughan Williams' 'Serenade to Music', and the first performance (or rather two performances) of his own 'Music for Organ and Percussion'.

The 'Music' is scored for organ, with a large assortment of non-pitched and pitched percussion, including piano. It clearly belongs to that class of music which delights in the sheer beauty of sounds. There was in fact much to admire in the instrumental writing, the various timbres sometimes blending, more often setting one another into relief, in a performance which carried

great conviction. Particularly evocative were the home-made metal chimes, and effective if somewhat cautious use was made of the inside of the piano. The role of the organ seemed something of an anomaly. It was the only sustaining instrument, yet rather than being the "odd man out" of the composer's programme note it seemed to provide a kind of 'background continuum', except in its relatively few percussive passages. It thus held together an otherwise rather fragmented, quasi-improvisatory texture.

It was the improvisatory texture which was the core of the piece's problem; though there were impressive climaxes, notably towards the beginning and towards the end, a large part of the central portion was taken up with rather colourless held organ chords, and the composer did not seem to have drawn a cogent formal structure with his material. Yet, since very little of the piece was not specified in the score we did not experience either the drama which can issue from free or controlled improvisation by an experienced group. This kind of problem is in my opinion responsible for much of the boredom induced by a good deal of contemporary music.

TONY CARVER

CONTACT NEEDS CONTRIBUTORS

WE PARTICULARLY NEED ARTICLES AND REVIEWS

ON POP, JAZZ AND FOLK MUSIC.

Contributions should be sent to:-

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c/o Barber Institute of Fine Arts
University of Birmingham
Edgbaston
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25th March : Birmingham and Midland Institute,

Margaret Street, Birmingham.

Lunchtime concert of works by Laurence Williamson, Peter Bullock (first performances) Poulenc, Horowitz and Holborne, given by students from Birmingham University.

I have unfortunately mislaid my original draft for the review of this concert and so I shall confine myself to a few remarks of a general nature.

The concert was devised and arranged by Peter Fairhurst and consisted largely of brass music played by the Lusingando Brass Consort. They began with a suite by the 16th century English composer Antony Holborne and ended with a 20th century suite, Joseph Horowitz's "Music Hall Suite" (an amiable enough romp through music hall clichés which are curiously underplayed by the composer - the result is therefore generally less than comic) Three members of the consort gave a rather ill-prepared performance of two movements from Poulenc's Sonata for trumpet, horn and trombone.

The most interesting part of the programme consisted of first performances of works by two third-year students in the music department at Birmingham University. The brass consort played Laurence Williamson's Brass Sextet - a work which I leave a later reviewer to tackle since it obviously suffered from its performance on this occasion - in the third movement in particular where the composer's intentions were not at all clear. At points, however, the piece struck me as original and well-managed; its overall structure was obviously secure - an impression which I am assured the second performance did much to substantiate.

Peter Bullock's setting of T.S.Eliot's "The Journey of the Magi" for countertenor, flute and string quartet seemed, by contrast, to have received an excellent performance from Andrew Giles, Laurence Joyce and a string quartet from the university. It is a work that I look forward with much pleasure to hearing again and I am sorry that I cannot do it justice here. As with the Williamson piece, "The Journey of the Magi" is (so I am informed) strictly serial; this did not prevent Peter Bullock from indulging in some beautiful lyrical writing for voice and flute (treated as equals) and some fine and sensitive string writing. Nor did it prevent him from including a spoken central section - a particularly moving and effective idea. If Mr. Bullock can write serial pieces of this quality let us hope that he will not carry out his intention of abandoning the technique altogether.

KEITH POTTER

24th April : City Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham.

Concert given by the Halcyon Consort
including four 20th century works.

Alan Davis's enterprising group decided that this concert was to be "experimental". This was a rather vague attempt to justify a hotch-potch concert in which several unrelated pieces must have sprung to mind or appeared attractive. We had a flute sonata by Handel, a sacred aria by Purcell, Jacobean consort music, pieces by Henry VIII and modern contributions by Alban Berg, Luciano Berio and two world premieres by Philip Wilby and Paul Venn. I would have preferred the attention to be more focused, as the eventual effect was that the consort was not altogether settled in any of the styles or periods. All the same, the standard of performance throughout was high, especially in the more familiar works. The only true weak-spot was Mr. Davis's performance of Berg's Four Pieces for clarinet and piano. It is quite obvious that his recorder technique is causing his clarinet technique to suffer. Whether it was a slack embouchure or lack of acquaintance with this piece (which rather sounded from our point of view like the gestures of Expressionism without sincerity - it could be the lack of Berg's orchestral vivacity) it certainly seemed an ill-chosen concert item for him. The two premieres appeared quite favourably in the context of the very small group. Wilby's Four Songs from Anna Akhmatova were settings for soprano solo, recorder and cello - poems dealing with intense and deeply-felt love situations, relying on a "mood-setting". Unfortunately Mr. Wilby did not match the colours of the words in his part-writing, in particular the vocal line which was crotchety-infested and uninteresting. Virginia Miskin, the soprano, also seemed incapable of dramatic ability, whilst masking the words in the upper register by an exaggerated throat-voice, so to speak. Paul Venn's Three Piano Pieces, played excellently by the composer, were rather surprisingly traditional English piano writing of a post-Ireland variety - ie. "thoughtful", "gay" etc., rather more similar to John McCabe in language.

The concert's undoubted centre-piece (by accident, I daresay) was Alan Davis's solo recorder performance of Berio's "Gesti". Mr. Davis took the trouble of explaining the piece beforehand as being in three sections; the first specifies fingering and mouthing to be quite independent and these two effects gradually move together through the work. The instrument was not only blown in the obvious manner, but much use was made of flutter-tonguing, overblowing, Varesian "speaking" into the instrument, speaking noises outside the instrument and a particularly endearing idea - the performer applying his right knee to the end of the instrument so as to obtain a top F# not otherwise available. It was a splendid piece, more a feat of courage than virtuosity, it would seem, but we would have benefitted on this occasion from a repeat performance,

despite some rather bewildered laughter from the audience; and also from a more unified concert - perhaps exclusively instrumental (even Berio) but not another glorified (and rather expensive)"school concert" employing whatever seemed reasonable.

HOWARD C. FRIEND

7th May : Elgar Concert Room

(University of Birmingham)

Some Thoughts on the Lunchtime Concert given by the
University Improvisation Group

"What is important for the lucid ordering of the work - for its crystallisation - is that all the Dionysian elements which set the imagination of the artist in motion and make the life-sap-rise must be properly subjugated before they intoxicate us, and must finally be made to submit to the law: Apollo demands it." (Stravinsky)

Poor old Stravinsky! How old-fashioned! But in what precise ways, I wonder, does his view of the creative process differ from the rationale of a performance like this? I mean, is it that "order" is no longer a valid category? Or has it simply changed its appearance? Has "lucidity" been abandoned? Or is it simply that all - however complex it sounds - will be made clear eventually? Is "law" to be escaped altogether at all costs? Or are we in the presence of a new law?

I'm not sure of the answers. Consequently I'm not sure how to judge music like this. Sincerity? But most bad music, as well as most good, is sincere. Interesting sounds? But how many sounds can you imagine which are uninteresting? Meaningful relationships within the group? Is this activity, then, no more than group therapy? Certainly it seems clear that the composer's name is no guarantee of obvious excellence. The piece by Stockhausen ("Meeting Point" from "Aus den sieben Tagen") did not appear to be in a different class from those by Terry Loane, Keith Potter and Chris Villars. But should we judge at all? The distinction here is surely between intuitive ordering, which necessitates value-judgement, and emancipation from order, which renders value-judgement impossible. It's the difference between the American radicalism of Cage et al. and the tradition-bound conservatism of the European avant-garde, who, almost in spite of themselves, cannot help but reintroduce "musical" considerations into the random or improvisatory situation. There are values in both radicalism and compromise. There are disadvantages too: with compromise the disadvantage is that it's

usually uneasy. I take it the Improvisation Group tends towards compromise.

Stockhausen asks for "collective intuitive creation". It has always seemed difficult to me to be intuitive, particularly for culture-bound Europeans; and to aim to be intuitive is self-contradictory. Compromise again, especially if one regards the musical results as important. And this, I think, is why so many "spontaneous" moments sound familiar. I would be interested to know whether the Group sympathise with Stockhausen's picture of himself as a medium transmitting divine vibrations. I doubt the divinity is the Christian one, for He has usually communicated, at least as far as art is concerned, via men's (conscious) minds (Stravinsky, the pre-eminent example in our century) - except, of course, for the saints, mystics, lunatics and all others "moved by the spirit", who have bumbled direct and incomprehensibly from the unconscious. Do we see a re-emergence of this Dionysian subculture, as formless and aimless as the new theology of the young is doctrinally vacuous? How then Apollo? Can we believe that you will be silent for very long?

RICHARD MIDDLETON

14th May : Elgar Concert Room

(University of Birmingham)

Lunchtime Concert of works by students
in the University music department.

This concert was the first this academic year to be entirely devoted to student compositions and the quality and variety of works performed bodes well for future concerts. It is important that music students should be encouraged to compose and also to perform their works, be it informally or in a concert like this. There were three composers represented, one from each year of the undergraduate course.

The first work was a setting by Elizabeth MacNamara of three metaphysical poems - "Virtue" by George Herbert, "Quickness" by Henry Vaughan and "A Contemplation upon flowers" by Henry King - for tenor and flute. Each setting was very successful and the effect of the whole group even more so. The difficulties of writing for two solo lines were largely overcome and the two lines blended well. Much of the writing, especially for the voice, was in a very "English" style, reminding one strongly of Holst's wonderful songs. The careful and very effective use of melisma (Britten?) was certainly one of the most attractive features of this very successful work.

Alison Rushby's "The Owl and the Pussycat" for reciter and instrumental ensemble proved to be a thoroughly enjoyable romp. The instrumental characterisations of the figures in the poem were most effective and added a great deal to what is a rather boring piece of nonsense verse.

The parody of the "Wedding March" near the end was a marvellous idea and brought this delightfully light-hearted piece to a successful conclusion.

The final work in this concert was Laurance Williamson's Brass Sextet. This performance was far better rehearsed than the first, which I attended, at the B.M.I. in March. This three-movement serial composition is cast in a fairly traditional mode and showed clearly the dangers, as well as the opportunities offered by an instrumental combination of this kind. The danger of the timbral monotony of six brass instruments was avoided on the whole, although there were moments when one felt that a greater variety of colour was called for. The strength of the work lay in its powerful rhythmic impetus and closely structured form. The ostinati and pedal points and a good deal of melodic and rhythmic vitality carried the day for this rather exciting piece.

IAN LLOYD

14th May : Students' Union, University
of Birmingham.

Yes/Lancaster Dance.

Everything went wrong for the Yes/Lancaster dance. For a start, Yes's van crashed on its way to the Union, and although none of the group was hurt, the van was a write-off and they were unable to make it. Secondly, Hardin and York were booked instead and they arrived, (late) having spent the day recording - but their equipment didn't. Peter York explained that it was scattered at various points throughout the country. So Lancaster had to perform two sets. This is the group formed by ex-Blodwyn Pig multi-instrumentalist Jack Lancaster. The first few numbers they played were efficient, but they only really came to life with "A Hatful of Arseholes" in which Jack performed his tenor sax solo with "magic box" - a piece of equipment which made the one sax sound like two, with some weird harmonies resulting.

In the second half the group jammed with Peter York on drums, beginning with "Walk on gilded Splinters" with a superb drum solo. The freedom of this kind of playing suited the group well, and in spite of everything, some really creative sounds were produced, without the restriction of playing formal "numbers".

GRAHAM BUCK

28th May : Barber Institute of Fine Arts

(University of Birmingham)

Lunchtime Concert of works of the late 19th
and 20th Centuries given by members of the
Osiris Music Group.

This concert provided Birmingham with its first opportunity of hearing this enterprising young group from Cheltenham in concert together. Their aims were laid out by their director, Philip Lane, in the last issue of 'Contact', and include: "to promote contemporary music...together with works of neglected composers and unfamiliar works of major composers." These aims were admirably illustrated in their choice of programme which included lesser-known, and perhaps underperformed pieces by Messiaen and Stravinsky, as well as songs by Fauré and Duparc, Debussy's "Syrinx", and works by the two composers in the group, Philip Lane and Peter Lawson. The programme opened with "Valse Bourgeoise" by Lord Berners, a neglected composer if ever there was one, and a figure whom the group has been attempting to revive, particularly through a special concert of his works at West Malvern on the 25th of April, unfortunately not reviewed here. (See also Philip Lane's article in this issue.)

At least two members of the group struck me as possessing remarkable talent. Felicity Lott (soprano) gave what appeared to be an admirable and accurate performance of four songs from Peter Lawson's cycle "Sitting in Farmyard Mud", and proved herself to be a really sensitive and musical singer in performances of three French songs which included Duparc's beautiful "L'invitation au voyage". She has a fine voice with a warm lower register, good intonation, and a precise diction which enables one to hear almost every word. Her voice and manner have a confidence and even a maturity that is rare in such a young singer.

Peter Lawson is obviously a musician of exceptional talent, not only as a composer but as a pianist and accompanist. He was a single-minded but sympathetic accompanist to both Felicity Lott and Simon Desorgher (who played Messiaen's "Le merle noir"), and proved himself well able to tackle more soloistic parts in the duets by Berners and Stravinsky (Three Easy Pieces) that he played with Philip Lane. The four songs from his cycle "Sitting in Farmyard Mud" (which won the Royal Philharmonic Society prize for composition last year) are among the finest pieces I have heard by anyone under thirty. The solo line is beautifully phrased and structured, eminently vocal, and with a touch of Ives about it. The underlying piano part was equally true to the character of the instrument, (serially?) complex but never too dense, and employing many effective textures which not only brought out and enhanced the meaning of the vocal line, but which were musically satisfying as piano writing - never "mere effects" !

I was less satisfied with Simon Desorgher's flute playing. He gave accurate performances of "Syrinx" and Messiaen's "Le Merle Noir", although other flautists were heard to disagree with his tempi in the Debussy, and the

Messiaen was somewhat sectional and not really held together as I believe it can be made to. He also gave the third Birmingham performance of Philip Lane's "Soliloquy I" for solo flute in place of Lane's new piece for flute and piano which was scheduled. This piece has struck me on all three hearings as being too sectional and lacking in any audible cohesion (difficult to achieve in a single melodic line) even though I know that the piece is compactly organised along serial lines and ends with the twelve-note row with which it began retrograded but retaining the same rhythmic order as the beginning. Philip Lane's melodic gift, however, becomes more fully apparent with repeated hearings.

KEITH POTTER

25th and 26th June : Arts Laboratory
Newtown, Birmingham

"The Super Spectacular Symmetry Show" presented by
Birmingham Arts Laboratory Sound Workshop with
Embarkation

From 7.30. to 10.0. on two rather bleak evenings in Newtown, down near the canal, an interesting and successful event took place. This was the staging and performance of a programme of highly diversified visual and audio effects by the combined forces of the Arts Lab. Sound Workshop and Birmingham University's Improvisation Group, Embarkation. There was certainly a departure from the character of the music produced even by Embarkation's previous exploits within the university, whilst the Sound Workshop's contribution to the evening's programme was as provocative as it was startling. Perhaps the atmosphere of the Arts Lab. and its austere homeliness constituted one of the main reasons why the audience, as well as the performers, felt so keen a sense of involvement in what was, in any case, primarily a communal experience.

There were three items in what was, however, a continuous and interwoven pattern of sound and vision. The performance of "Night Music" from Stockhausen's collection of fifteen verbal pieces called "Aus den sieben Tagen" was followed by the central spectacle of the programme - the "Super Spectacular Symmetry Show". Finally, the evening drew to a peaceful, almost soporific close with a hearing of "Locations" in the version for tape alone by Jolyon Laycock, a music graduate of Nottingham University and director of the workshop. While seven members of Embarkation were joined halfway through their performance of "Night Music" by performers from the Sound Workshop, who gradually trickled in with the beginnings of the second item, the "Super Spectacular Symmetry Show", presented by the Arts Lab. performers, was supported by five members of Embarkation. The use of tape recorder alone in "Locations" was foreshadowed, meanwhile, by the role it

played as a broadcaster of intermittent snatches of vocal and orchestral music during the central item.

The "score" of the Stockhausen piece consists merely of a few sentences of instructions to the performers as a whole, yet the improvisations were interesting and varied, and there was a feeling of purpose and overall unity which was communicated quite spontaneously to the audience. Passages of great intensity seemed to alternate with moments of tranquillity. Already, in this first piece, the theme of the passing of time seemed to loom large, but it was not until the "Super Spectacular Symmetry Show" had got well under way that this really caught the attention of the listener and emphasise the elusive nature of time and its relentless, usually unobserved, march onwards. The arrangement of the visual effects in the evening's performance was highly original and certainly as important as the musical element. Two dustbin-like cylinders were suspended from the ceiling, while the focal point of the "set" was a large unit in black and gold, displaying two enormous clock-faces. These two clock-faces, together with a pendulum which swung from side to side in the middle of the performing area, constituted the main devices which so emphasised the passing of time. Further "ground-bass" elements were provided by human symbols.

In the centre of the performing area a girl sat with her back to the audience and rose at regular intervals to greet us with the words "A cup of tea, vicar?". Then there was the man on her left who recited, at intervals, the incomprehensible ingredients of some recipe or other. A pulpit-like scaffolding to her right, meanwhile, supported a character who uttered in various accents, languages and tones of voice Churchill's "Never in the field of human conflict....." There was also a cat. The purely musical, as opposed to verbal, element in the event was provided by two members of the Sound Workshop playing amplified electric harps, by Embarkation's Keith Potter on amplified piano and by other members of the group, playing more conventional instruments.

Perhaps some of the most intriguing, and occasionally moving, passages occurred when the live performance clashed with recordings of Sibelius or "My eyes have seen the glory" as they issued from the tape recorder - which eventually triumphed over the other sounds and visual effects, and was accompanied in "Locations" by nothing but the moving hands of the clock-faces. The whole performance, as I have described it, may sound self-conscious and contrived, yet, on the whole, it was spontaneous, gripping and thought-provoking and not "mannered" in any way. If I may be allowed a comparison with another piece in which visual and atmospheric "effects" play an equally vital role - the "Theatre Piece" by John Cage - I would say that, insofar as such a comparison is valid, the performance under consideration was far more effective, atmospherically and as a unified whole, and that it augurs great success in the future, both for the Sound Workshop and for Embarkation.

COMING MUSICAL EVENTS IN BIRMINGHAM AND THE NORTH -

A SURVEY OF PROGRESSIVE TRENDS

by Hans Killer (Reprinted, with permission,
from "Private Spy")

Oh Mein Gott! Vot fantastiches rink-a-dink dink goinks on von der Barber Institute for millions of fens. Not sinz ze days ven ze valls von Jericho ave come tumblink down to ze strains of Eddie Calvert und his amazink Trumpet Voluntary are such amazink art-object comink alive for us as ze work of ze vunderful fliegende Holländer Drumann von Northfield mit ze Viva la Spaghetti Zingers und Otto Klumphurst.

Vot is zis ve are seeink? - not only ze music, to be certain, but also ze dansink. In ze spirit von ze comic strip und ze horror movie ve see ze fantastiches send-op von ze Middleages. Here for all to see mit irony und vit unparallelled zinz ze String Trio von Schoenberg is vall-to-vall Cyril Lord of ze Flies panoramisches all-systems-go parodies von ze gut olt dayz. Not sinz Claudio Monteverdi und his amazink steam-powered trombone are hammerink on ze door in ze middle of ze night is such excrutiakink soundz comink out of ze stratosphere.

Not for nozzink iz zis exhibizinz comink to Birmingham; over £8,000,000,000 is costink ze artz konzil und ze men in ze strasse, a hefty blow to ze pocket und yours truly.

(cont. p.94)

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

— Sir,

I always find great amusement in reading articles "intellectualizing" about popular music. Richard Middleton's "The Musical Significance of Pop" is a good example of this type. In this article Mr. Middleton talks of "basic cultural perspective", "basic world view" etc.; he does not talk about music in musical terms. Of course, I do appreciate his difficulty: popular music has no musical significance, it is bad, low quality music. Those who write articles on popular music are faced with a dilemma. Popular music is low quality music because in order to appeal to a mass audience it must lie at the lowest common denominator of the public intellect. Realising this, writers try to argue that popular music has some value, but being unable to talk in musical terms they then talk about anything but the music. Thus the articles that Mr. Middleton and others who write about popular music in your magazine contain nothing about the music itself. No end of "intellectualization" will ever elevate popular music, it is simply inferior music.

LAURENCE WILLIAMSON

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

J.Christopher Gatiss : Is a second year undergraduate at Birmingham University reading Italian Renaissance Studies. His essay on Messiaen in this issue won an Inter-Faculty Prize at the University this year and appears here in a slightly revised form.

Iain Fenlon : Is a music graduate of Reading University (B.A.) At present engaged in post-graduate work at Birmingham. His field of research is the Italian madrigal in the 16th century, but he also has an especial interest in contemporary music and the most recent developments, and has played in concerts with Cornelius Cardew. Also a conductor - formerly of the LSO Chamber Choir.

Jolyon Laycock : Composer. Graduate of Nottingham University (B.Mus.) and recently gained his M.Phil. in composition from that university. (One of the works submitted for this was "Locations", reviewed in this issue.) At present lecturer in music at Birmingham College of Art and director of the Sound Workshop at Birmingham Arts Laboratory. Especially interested in electronic music and music-theatre and multi-media presentations.

Philip J. Cremin : Laboratory assistant at Renold Chains Ltd.. Interested mainly in rock music, also modern jazz and the avant-garde. Favourite instruments: organ, harpsichord, sitar.

John Drummond : Musicologist, pianist and composer. Graduate of Leeds University (B.A. B.Mus.) and at present Haywood Fellow in music at Birmingham University and writing a Ph.D. thesis entitled "The Aftermath of Wagner" - research into post-Wagnerian operatic developments. Appointed lecturer in music at Birmingham from October 1971. Especially interested in opera, particularly Wagner and Strauss. His comic opera "The Hawkeyed Sentinel" was produced at Birmingham University in 1969 and "Narcissus" received its first performance at the Barber Institute on 30th June 1971.

Philip Lane : Is a second year undergraduate in the Music department at Birmingham. Composer - has had performances in London and abroad as well as in the provinces and has an orchestral piece scheduled for broadcast by the B.B.C. shortly.

Leroy B. Cowie : Principal double bass, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Studied at the Royal Academy of Music and held positions in the BBC Scottish and Oslo Philharmonic Orchestras before coming to Birmingham in 1966. Solo recitalist of modern double bass music.

The Editors : Are undergraduate students at Birmingham University, Keith Potter reading music and Chris Villars, philosophy.

