

## A Short History of *Tempo* (III): 1962–1971

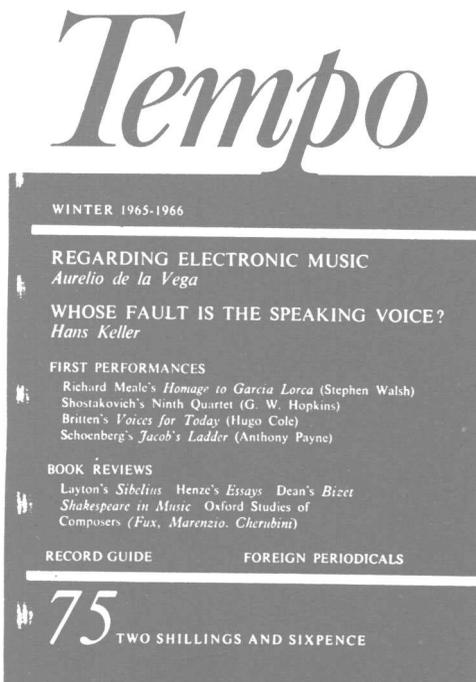
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Colin Mason was most widely known as an authority on Hungarian music, but it was probably coincidence that his first issue as Editor of *Tempo* (No.63, Winter 1962–3) was an 80th birthday number for Zoltán Kodály. The next year or so saw a succession of ‘single-topic’ issues which remain collectors’ items for their fields: American music (No.64, Spring 1963), ‘Bartók and the Piano’ (No.65, Summer 1963), a double issue for Britten’s 50th birthday (No.66/7, Autumn/Winter 1963–4), and a Richard Strauss centenary number (No.69, Summer 1964). Thereafter the contents were more varied for quite some time.

Mason made no changes to the general appearance of the magazine, which retained the standard cover introduced at the end of Donald Mitchell’s editorship; but he encouraged some

proceeded to reflect a particularly turbulent decade in British and indeed Western music. Among younger composers the careers of Peter Maxwell Davies (who himself contributed his impressions of America to No.72) and Nicholas Maw were followed with especial attention, almost every new work being treated to a detailed review or article; as the decade wore on Iannis Xenakis also became a feature of attention, and himself contributed classic articles on Stochasticism (*Tempo* No.78) and ‘Towards a Metamusic’ (No.93, Summer 1970). Other ground-breaking articles of the period included John Warrack’s ‘A Note on Frank Bridge’ (in No.66/67), John Waterhouse’s ‘Maxwell Davies: Towards an Opera’ (in No.69), Stephen Pruslin on the *Second Taverner Fantasia* (No.73, Summer 1965), David Wooldridge on ‘Performance Problems in Contemporary Music’ (No.79, Winter 1966–7), Benjamin Suchoff on the use of computers in folksong research (No.80, Spring 1967), Michael Chanan on ‘Dialectics in Maxwell Davies’ (No.90, Autumn 1969), Roger Smalley’s searching analysis of the then newly-published sketchbook of *Le Sacre* (No.91, Winter 1969–70), Stephen Walsh on Maw’s *The Rising of the Moon* (No.92, Spring 1970), and Hans Keller on Shostakovich’s Twelfth Quartet (No.94, Autumn 1970).

Probably the most memorable issue in Mason’s entire tenure, however, was No.81 (Summer 1967), the 85th Birthday number for Igor Stravinsky. At 72 pages the most voluminous *Tempo* that had yet appeared, and clearly designed to last, this employed heavier-than-usual paper for a specially-designed cover (the design featured a large ‘85’ and no issue-number at all, creating perennial bibliographical problems for later years). In addition to tributes and articles from Ernst Roth, Pierre Souvtchinsky, John Warrack, Alexander Goehr, Wilfrid Mellers, Alberto Ginastera, John Ogdon and others, it featured a fat supplement of musical compositions specially written for the occasion - by Bennett, Birtwistle, Crosse, Maxwell Davies, Brian Dennis, Michael Finnissy (his untitled flute piece must surely



notable young writing/composing talent. Anthony Payne, Roger Smalley, Stephen Pruslin, Bill Hopkins and Tim Souster were among the chief pillars who came to support issue after issue - and through them *Tempo*

have been one of his earliest published works), Maw, Ogdon, Smalley, Souster, Tavener and Williamson. These were premièred at a special concert in the 1967 Cheltenham Festival.

In No.82 (Autumn 1967), Hans Keller began a regular column characteristically entitled 'The Contemporary Problem'. The contemporary problem, broadly defined, appeared to be that few contemporary composers thought in quite the same manner as Hans Keller, but several important topics were explored in inimitable fashion (and provoked some spirited replies) before the column closed down with *Tempo* No.89. Tim Souster contributed an article on pop music to No.87 (Winter 1968-9), but in spite of a desire to have regular features on more popular genres, the innovation did not take.

Eastern European music was, of course, well treated during the 1960s, with a largely Czech issue (No.80, Spring 1967) including George Whitman on Alois Hába, and a Bartók-Kodály issue (in fact, if not in name) for No.83 (Winter 1967-8). But especially near to Colin Mason's heart must have been the weighty No.88 (Spring

1969) which, under the rubric 'Hungarian Composers Today', virtually introduced the names of Szervánsky, Szokolay, Veress, Ligeti, Bozay, Durkó and Kurtág to British readers.

The last issue of Colin Mason's editorship was No.95 (Winter 1970-71), a Copland 70th Birthday number. He had only partially prepared No.96 before his sudden and unexpected death at the age of 47. No Editor's name was appended to No.96 when it finally appeared; David Drew was induced to take the helm for No.97, and a new era began.

*(To be concluded. From the period described above, we retain back numbers for sale of Nos.66-73, 76, 77, 81, 83, 84 and 87-96, all of which retail at £1.80 plus postage with the exception of the Stravinsky 85th Birthday issue, No.81, which costs £6.00 plus postage. We can also supply photocopies of any issue no longer in stock, or any article from such issues, at a charge of 10p plus postage and VAT. A detailed listing of the principal contents of all issues since 1939 is available free from our editorial address by request.)*

Canon for Piano  
in homage to Stravinsky on his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Part of 'Canon for Piano' by the late John Ogdon, published from his manuscript in *Tempo* 81.