
Letters to the Editor

From Robin Maconie

Nigel Osborne's amiable review (*Tempo* 171) attributes the authorship of *Stockhausen on Music* to me. This is naturally a mistake. The author is Stockhausen, and the English is the author's.

I am delighted the lectures of 1971 awakened pleasant memories for your reviewer, but my intention in editing them for publication in 1989 was that a younger, more technically literate generation might find Stockhausen's ideas of more than sentimental value.

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From David C.F. Wright

Paul Chipchase's review of Michael Kennedy's book *Portrait of Walton* in the December issue is interesting and prompts me to write with other observations which will endorse Mr Chipchase's comment that this biographer has been very lax in his research and may reveal prejudices. For example, Kennedy does not acknowledge Lady Susanna Walton's marvellous support; he promulgates the absurd notion that the only other worthy British composers of this century are Britten and Elgar. In fact, this book seems to continue the writer's personal crusade for Elgar. He quotes Walton's alleged love for Elgar's work, yet had he been thorough in his research he would have discovered that Walton only said he had a regard for Elgar at times of painful self-doubt which he felt might be removed if he acceded to public opinion, which at that time venerated Elgar. Apart from *Falstaff* which he liked for 'non-musical' reasons Willie hated Elgar's music and he loathed the implied suggestion that he was Elgar's successor. Although, of course, he would welcome such acclaim as afforded to Elgar. Walton told students, including myself, that the greatest composer of the 20th century was Shostakovich and at the very other end of the spectrum was

Elgar. Sir Adrian Boult, in agreeing with Walton, is on record as saying that 'if Elgar's music is played badly you can blame the orchestra, if it is played well you can only blame Elgar'. Walton had grave doubts about Elgar's Cello Concerto and it is remarkable that Kennedy seems to disparage Walton's Cello Concerto.

Walton wrote an orchestral work on an Impromptu of Britten, not because he had admiration for this composer or his work, but, again, at a period of painful self-doubt, when he joined the current bandwagon which adulated Britten.

But the most glaring omission in Kennedy's book is the total absence of any reference to Walton having extensive music lessons with Humphrey Searle after the war. Both composers told me this and I have letters from many other musicians confirming Walton's two-year period of study with Humphrey. As a result, Walton's musical texture became clearer and more original, as is seen in the *Johannesburg Festival Overture* and the Second Symphony. Of all the musicians Walton could have chosen, he chose Searle, whom he described as 'Britain's most gifted and original composer' and 'the only man that has the qualifications and fundamentally good character that I can truly respect'. When I last saw Walton he said to me: 'I owe a very great deal to Humphrey', and lowering his tearful eyes he repeated 'a very great deal indeed'.

Why does Kennedy ignore this? Surely it is essential information for a biography. Sadly, some readers will believe what he says and what he does not say and musical integrity will not be properly served.

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From Janet Snowman, Research Officer, R.A.M.

A year ago you were kind enough to help us with our efforts in tracing former students through your news columns. We had a wonderful

response, resulting amongst other things in the Academy's first-ever student reunion last November. At that time we were looking specifically for students who left before 1965. Partly because of the success of this venture, and also because we are interested in the part our former students are playing in the music profession, we were wondering if we could insert

another request for contacts, this time aimed at those who left the Academy after the mid-1960s to last year?

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News Section

Composers

SIMON BAINBRIDGE. *Marimolin Variations* (première)—21 April/Boston, USA/Marimolin violin & marimba duo.

RICHARD BARRETT. *Illuminer de Temps* (première)—4 March/Maastricht/Nieuw Ensemble c. Ed Spanjaard. *Another Heavenly Day* (première)—22 April/Melbourne University/Elison c. Daryl Buckley.

GEORGE BENJAMIN. *Cascade* (première)—24 January/Hull/LPO c. George Benjamin.

WILLIAM BOLCOM is writing an opera for the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

BENJAMIN BRITTEN (d. 1976). Clarinet Concerto (première)—7 March/London, Barbican/Britten-Pears Orchestra c. Tamas Vasary.

ELLIOTT CARTER. *Anniversary* (US première)—12 January/St. Louis, Missouri/St. Louis SO c. Leonard Slatkin. Violin Concerto (première)—3 May/San Francisco/Ole Böhn (vln), San Francisco SO c. Herbert Blomstedt; (German première)—17 June/Saarbrücken/Ole Böhn (vln), Saarbrücken Radio SO c. Heinz Holliger. *In Sleep, in Thunder* (Australian première)—10 May/Brisbane/Gerald English (ten), Queensland PO c. Richard Mills.

ANTAL DORATI (d. 1988). *Trittico* (UK première)—2 February/London, Purcell Room/Andrew Knights (ob), Opus 20 c. Scott Stroman.

JACOB DRUCKMAN. *That Quickening Pulse* (Polish première)—12 January/Cracow/Cracow Philharmonic. *Chiarosauro* (UK première)—15 March/London, Royal Academy of Music/RAM Symphony Orchestra c. Nicholas Cleobury.

MICHAEL FINNISSY. *Strauss Waltzes* (première)—10 January/London, Purcell Room/Jonathan Powell (pno). Finnissey is working on a piece to commemorate the Battle of Maldon.

CHRISTOPHER FOX. *stone.wind.rain.sun* (première)—1 February/London, Purcell Room/London New Music.

JOHN GARDNER. Symphony No. 3 (première)—6 March/Southward Cathedral/Morley Symphony Orchestra c. Lawrence Leonard.

ANTHONY GILBERT. *Tree of Singing Names* (première)—26 January/Nantwich/Manchester Camerata c. Nicholas Braithwaite.

HENRYK MIKOLAJ GORECKI. Symphony No. 3 (Australian première)—21 April/Sydney/Sydney SO c. Richard Mills.

MICHAEL GRAUBART. *Elegy* (première)—6 March/Southward Cathedral/Morley Symphony Orchestra c. composer.

IAIN HAMILTON. Sextet (première)—12 February/London, Purcell Room/Park Lane Sextet.

KARL AMADEUS HARTMANN (d. 1963). Scherzo for percussion ensemble (première)—May/Munich Biennale/Munich PO c. Paul Daniel.

HANS-JOACHIM HESPOS. *esquisses itineraires* (UK première)—25 February/London, Almeida Theatre/Music Projects London c. Richard Bernas.

YORK HÖLLER has been appointed Director of the Electronic Music Studio at WDR in Cologne. He is composing a work for two pianos, orchestra and electronics for performance at Donaueschingen in 1991.

ROBIN HOLLOWAY. *Wagner Nights* (première)—23 April/Bristol/Orchestra of the Royal Opera House c. Bernard Haitink. *Clarissa* (première)—18 May/London, Coliseum/English National Opera c. Oliver Knussen.

VIC HOYLAND. *La Madre* (première)—1 February/London, Sadler's Wells/Linda Hirst (mezzo), Lontano c. Odaline de la Martinez. Hoyland is writing a Piano Quintet for the Almeida Festival.

OLIVER KNUSSSEN. Variations (première)—11 November 1989/New York/Peter Serkin (pno). (German première)—14 May/Munich/Penelope Roskell.

COLIN MATTHEWS. Oboe Quartet No. 2 (première)—9 February/London, Purcell Room/Berlin Oboe Quartet.

DAVID MATTHEWS. String Trio (première)—9 December 1989/London, Wigmore Hall/Nash Ensemble. Piano Sonata (première)—23 February/Wigmore Hall/William Howard. Matthews is composing his Fourth Symphony for the English Chamber Orchestra.