

Editorial

A Short History of *Tempo* (I): 1939–1946

In its 50 years of existence *Tempo* has experienced many changes of design before the one you see now. In a sense, our new 2-column format recalls the magazine's very first incarnation (see opposite). *Tempo* was launched upon the world in January 1939 under the editorship of Ernest Chapman as 'The Boosey & Hawkes News-Letter'; but from its inception it was considerably more than a house journal, and seems to have

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The Boosey & Hawkes News-Letter

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INTRODUCTION

Our purpose in issuing this News-Letter, which is intended for performers and listeners alike, is twofold. Firstly, it will be a source of information for those with an interest in present-day composers and musical activities. We hope to publish periodic news-reports, such as appear in the present issue, concerning composers of established reputation, while younger musicians and others who have not yet attained popular recognition will also receive adequate attention. The News-Letter will also contain articles and information about new works and important older works, and in this connection we hope to obtain the collaboration of composers themselves in shedding light on their compositions, especially where these are of an unusual or problematic nature. Edmund Rubbra has contributed an article on his new *Symphony* in the present number, and our next issue will probably include a note by Ernst Bloch on his recently completed *Viola Concerto*. Articles of a more general nature will also appear from time to time.

By this method, if only in a modest way, we hope to establish a closer contact between composers and the music-loving public, neither of whom can readily progress without assistance from the other. An observer at the "Music and Life" Congress held in London last summer, at which several composers spoke about their own music and personal attitude towards the art, could hardly have failed to note the marked and attentive interest with which the audience

listened to those speeches, and it is felt that a continuation of this rapprochement, so obviously needed at the present time, might well be one of the purposes best served in these columns.

Secondly, this News-Letter will contain a list of new publications issued both by ourselves and the various foreign firms for whom we act as British representatives. A publisher may perhaps be allowed a legitimate pride in the goods he offers the public, and we should therefore like to draw attention, in the first number of this News-Letter, to the unusually large and varied list of composers whose names will be found in our catalogues. Among living English composers whose works are at present published by Boosey & Hawkes Ltd. are Arthur Benjamin, Lennox Berkeley, Arthur Bliss, Benjamin Britten, Alan Bush, Howard Ferguson, Armstrong Gibbs, Herbert Howells, John Ireland, E. J. Moeran, Roger Quilter and Edmund Rubbra.

Of the foreign firms for whom we act as English distributors, Universal Edition of Vienna, with its remarkable list of modern composers from practically every European country, will need little introduction: Bartók, Berg, Casella, Janáček, Kodály, Křenek, Mahler, Milhaud, Schoenberg, Szymanowski and Webern are only a few of the contemporary composers whom they championed. In the field of Russian music we represent three firms, Belaieff, Bessel and Edition Russe de Musique, who between

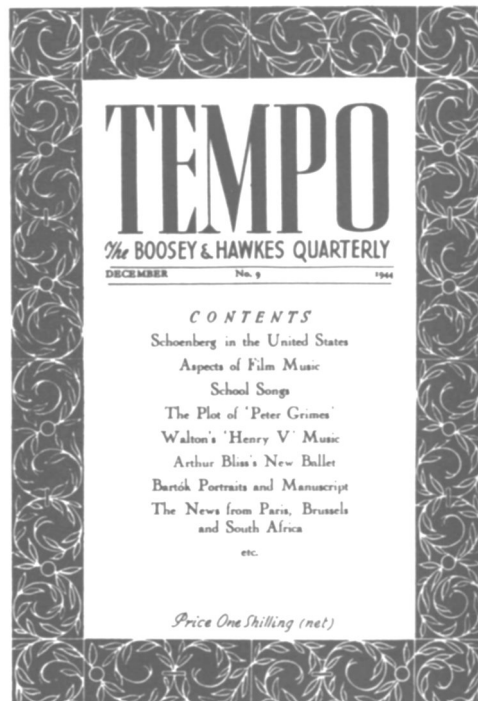
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arisen in the aftermath of the ISCM Festival held in London in Summer 1938, during which B&H had held a kind of 'mini-festival' with recitals by its own composers, notably the recently-acquired Béla Bartók. The necessarily strong ties formed in the immediate pre-war period with the Universal Edition catalogue under Alfred Kalmus, and the interest of Schoenberg's pupil Erwin Stein (a frequent and distinguished contributor in the early days) ensured that *Tempo's* remit was the reverse of parochial. The very first issue carried news of Webern, an article by Edmund Rubbra on his Second Symphony, and a supplement by Sir

Donald Tovey on previously-unknown Haydn symphonies recently discovered by Hans Gál.

The journal was to be 'issued every other month'; in fact it ran thus until No.4, July 1939 (Copland on *El Salón México*, Stein on Webern's op.28), after which the War closed it down until February 1944, with the solitary exception of No.5, which appeared in August 1941. Meanwhile Boosey & Hawkes's recently-established New York office set up a separate American edition of *Tempo* with assistance from Minna Lederman's doughty *Modern Music*, a senior sister in the 20th-century field. This ran six issues in 1940–42 (it was for the fifth, Vol.2 no.2, that Britten wrote his famous article 'On behalf of Gustav Mahler'), and a further 'wartime' edition in February 1944, the month in which the London-based *Tempo* resumed publication.

With the British version's No.7 (June 1944) came a new cover design, redesignation as a quarterly, and the first publication of an article on 'Musical Culture Today' by W.H. Mellers:



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the near future is not only well deserved but would also enable listeners to apprehend more thoroughly the special qualities of this Symphony. Meanwhile, Mr. Rubbra has written an article (reproduced on another page) explaining his ideas concerning symphonic form and the particular methods he has employed in his new Symphony.

Rubbra does most of his composition in a studio set apart from his cottage-home in Buckinghamshire. He works intensively and has already begun several new compositions, including a Sinfonietta for small orchestra, of a considerably lighter nature than his Second Symphony, and a ballet entitled *Prism*, the idea for which was suggested to him by Peter Goffin, of the Westminster Theatre. The scenario of the ballet is concerned with the primary colours, but the music has no connection with Scriabin's theory of the relation between music and colour, and is intended only to heighten the dramatic effect.

Anton Webern

Webern is at present writing a work for full orchestra which will probably become his second symphony. It is planned on more extended lines than his previous compositions, and will include vocal sections for solo voice and mixed chorus. In the first half of last year Webern completed a *String Quartet*, Op. 28, commissioned by Mrs. Elizabeth Sprague-Coolidge, and shortly to be published by us. The first performance was given by the Kolisch Quartet at the

Coolidge Festival at Pittsburgh, U.S.A., on September 22nd and was sympathetically received. The Kolisch players immediately decided to include the work in their repertoire and gave a further performance in New York on November 1st. An article on the Quartet will be published in a later number of *Tempo*.

One of the most interesting items heard at the I.S.C.M. Festival last June was Webern's *Das Augenlicht*, a setting for mixed chorus and orchestra of a poem by Hildegard Jone. It scored an unexpected popular success, and the peculiarly luminous quality of the music was widely commented upon. The same composer's *Five Pieces for String Orchestra* (after his *String Quartet*, Op. 5) are to be performed by the Philadelphia String Sinfonietta, under their conductor Fabien Sevitzky.

Several of Webern's works have appeared recently in London concert programmes. His *Six Songs*, Op. 14, for soprano and four instruments were given at Aeolian Hall on December 8th, and the *String Trio*, Op. 20, was given its first performance in England on December 14th, at the second of this season's Hallis concerts. After the latter performance we were glad to note an article in the Saturday music column of *The Times*, in which the writer suggested that this music was worthy of serious study. Finally, Peter Stadlen, who has made a special study of the music of Schoenberg and Webern, will give the first English performance of the recent *Piano Variations*, Op. 27, at his recital at Aeolian Hall on January 27th.

Avant Garde

The London Contemporary Music Centre and Boosey & Hawkes Ltd. joined forces to give a concert of contemporary music for chamber orchestra at Aeolian Hall on December 8th. The programme consisted of: Schoenberg, *Suite for Seven Instruments*, Op. 29 (first performance in England); Webern, *Six Songs*, Op. 14, after poems by Georg Trakl (first performance in England); Darius Milhaud, *Machines Agricoles*, for soprano and seven instruments; and Benjamin Britten's *Sinfonietta*, Op. 1, for ten instruments. May Blyth sang the Webern

songs and Sophie Wyss the Milhaud cycle. Peter Stadlen was solo pianist in the Schoenberg Suite and Britten's *Sinfonietta* was conducted by the composer.

Karol Rathaus

Karol Rathaus, the well-known Polish composer, is at present visiting the United States. He has been engaged to write incidental music for Friedrich Hebbel's *Herodes and Marianne*, shortly to be produced in New York, and has recently completed his 2nd Violin Sonata, Op. 43.

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Above: A page of news of 'Music in the Making', from the very first issue of 'Tempo', January 1939.

45 years later, we are delighted to publish the author's latest contribution on p.22. Musical facsimiles were also introduced; photographs and drawings followed in No.8 (but did not become a regular feature until the post-war years). This new format ran until June 1946. Contributors included Bartók, Henry Cowell, Roberto Gerhard, Willi Reich, Matyas Seiber, Egon Wellesz; Roger Sessions wrote on Schoenberg; Cedric Thorpe Davie on the Sibelius Piano Sonatinas; Wilfrid Mellers on Rawsthorne; Erwin Stein on Webern and on *Peter Grimes*. As the liberation of Europe ended years of cultural isolation, critics reported new

developments from as far apart as Paris (Felix Apreharian) and Jerusalem (Peter Gradenwitz). Soon after the war it became clear that *Tempo*, still averaging no more than 20 pages an issue, was too small for the vast field it had to cover; it was time for a metamorphosis. No.15 (June 1946) was the last issue of what we now call the Old Series; the next one began afresh at No.1.

(To be continued. We retain no back numbers for sale of the Old Series and American Series of *Tempo*, but can supply photocopies of any issue or article at a cost of 10p per page, plus postage and VAT.)