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## Editorial

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### A Short History of *Tempo* (II): 1946–1962

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*Tempo* appeared in a new guise, with the name of Boosey & Hawkes banished except as an advertiser, with the issue of September 1946, which in the old numerical ordering should have been No. 16 but instead called itself No. 1 of the New Series; the December 1946 issue showed less courage of its convictions, proclaiming itself 'No. 17 (No. 2 New Series)', but afterwards the New Series numbering prevailed. These were a remarkable pair of issues, not least for their attempt at a comprehensive redesign of the magazine: they abandoned double columns for a single-column format, daringly rendered easy on the eye in No. 1 by non-central placing on the page, cartoons and colophons, eccentrically wide margins and even more eccentric marginal sub-heads; 'No. 17' dropped these in favour of the solid wide column that was to be the bane of readers' eyesight for the next 42 years. They also featured textured cover-paper, for a pair of variously evocative cover-paintings by Bernard Greenbaum: a severe Stravinskian

abstract for No. 1 and a touching study of a typical composer toiling in his garret for 'No. 17'. With No. 3 (March 1974) such visual delights were banished and a new standard cover made its appearance, to persist unchanged (save that it began in various two-colour combinations; after a few issues the second colour was always black) until No. 60 (Winter 1961–62). A back cover announcement in No. 1 indicates that it was not a settled intention that the magazine should remain a quarterly: it was hoped that it would 'appear more frequently as paper restrictions are relaxed' – but there never seems to have been any serious attempt to change the arrangement.

Ernest Chapman remained Editor until No. 14 (Winter 1949–50). After a few issues of highly miscellaneous contents (Caryl Brahms on ballet, Hans Keller on Britten's Quartet No. 2, Ralph Wood on *Sprechgesang*, Andrzej Panufnik – writing from Poland – on Polish composers, W. H. Haddon Squire on the Indian dancer Ram Gopal) he produced a succession of single-composer issues which remain required reading in their subjects. The first of *Tempo's* several Stravinsky numbers was No. 8 (Summer 1948), and this was followed by Copland (No. 9), Prokofiev (No. 11), Richard Strauss (No. 12) and two successive Bartók issues (Nos. 13 and 14).

Anthony Gishford took over as Editor with No. 15 (though Chapman long remained an occasional contributor); he used the single-composer theme more sparingly, though the Rachmaninoff issue (No. 22, Winter 1951–2) and Delius issue (No. 28, Winter 1952–3) remain important achievements, as well as perhaps reflecting Gishford's rather more conservative stance. Another strand was the production of numbers which devoted maybe half their space to a major opera of the day; for example No. 20 on *The Rake's Progress* (including W. H. Auden's 'Some Reflections on Opera as a Medium'), No. 21 on *Billy Budd* (with Eric Crozier's essay on 'The British Navy in 1797'), and No. 28 on *Gloriana*. Erwin Stein remained a regular contributor (on Berg, Schoenberg, Britten and Stravinsky); John S. Weissmann was frequently

to be found as an authoritative commentator on Bartók, Kodály and more recent Hungarian music; distinguished composers who wrote included Aaron Copland (on Latin-American Music), Arthur Bliss (on Finzi), Franz Reizenstein (on Walton's *Troilus and Cressida*), and Matyas Seiber (on Arthur Benjamin). Two frequent writers were the leading *enfants terribles* of the 1950s UK musico-critical landscape and erstwhile editors of *Music Survey*, Hans Keller and Donald Mitchell. If one is forced to pick a single plum from their many and varied contributions, it should probably go to 'Strict Serial Technique in Classical Music' (*Tempo* 37, Autumn 1955), Hans Keller's most nearly definitive statement of the historicity of the 12-note method. For two issues (Nos.47 and 48, Spring and Summer 1958) Donald Mitchell's name joined that of Antony Gishford at the mast-head, as Assistant Editor; with No.49 (notable for its obituary of Erwin Stein by Lord Harewood), he became Editor in turn.

Mitchell's editorship lasted until No.61-62, a double issue (Spring-Summer 1962) and a Stravinsky 80th birthday number, the only single-composer number he put together. But the pursuit of (especially) Britten's and Stravinsky's still-unfolding *oeuvres* was a more or less

constant theme, interspersed with several unorthodox and illuminating side-lights on other topics: Bernard Gavoty's famous interview 'Who are You, Olivier Messiaen?'; Norman Del Mar on co-conducting Stockhausen's *Gruppen*; and (also Stockhausen-related, and perhaps most unexpected of all), Cornelius Cardew's classic 'Notation - Interpretation, Etc.' (No.58, Summer 1961).

*Tempo* No.60 - not the least interesting of whose items was an article on Delius's stylistic development by a new contributor, Anthony Payne - and No.61-62 both had Robert Henderson as Assistant Editor; but when Donald Mitchell laid down the Editorship it was not he but Colin Mason, a contributor since New Series No.1, who came forward to steer the magazine through the turbulent 1960s.

(To be continued. Of the period described above, we retain back numbers for sale of Nos.44, 47, 53/54, 59, 60, and 61-62, all of which retail at £1.80 per copy plus postage. We can also supply photocopies of any issue no longer in stock, or any article from these issues, at a charge of 10p per page plus postage and VAT. A detailed listing of the principal contents of all issues since 1939 is available from our editorial address on request.)

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performance to which I have been witness, in a spell of deep silence. It is an extension, intellectually and choreographically, of the manner of his charming *Jardin aux Lilas*, an impression of an Edwardian *maison de campagne* to the music of Chausson in a tender and nostalgic setting by Hugh Stevens, which Ballet Theatre has staged more richly but less poetically than the Ballet Rambert, for whom the work was created.

Charged with Atmosphere

More spectacular, less successful, but charged with atmosphere - to my mind illegitimately achieved - is his *Roses and Jesters*. Unlike Helpmann in his fantasy on *Hamlet*, Tudor has taken the outline of Shakespeare's play and has set to work to transcribe it literally and conscientiously. The result is over-pictorial and a little tedious. Whereas Helpmann used a kind of dream-sporadic with brilliant and most exciting results.

Moreover, while wild ballerinas' Mamoushkas would not persuade me to utter upon the subject of music in these pages (my highest academic qualification for any such rashness being a pass degree in the annual Elements Of Music examination at the Royal Academy of Music - cheated - how else?) I would suggest that the music of Delius in general, and more particularly the rhapsodic variations of *Ugge Vær*, are forever and quite eradically England.

Not for one moment do they convey the sounds, sights, and smells of Verona, nor the sun-baked pinks, the broiling blues and the gently swelling contours of Botticelli - as transcribed by Eugene Berman. I maintain that to borrow so rich a musical element, torn out of its context, to lend a patina by sound to a tawdry stage-treatment of a tale that even Lamb left a little bald in his retelling of it, is artistically indefensible.

Obstetric and Obscure

Tudor's least successful work is *Understar*, which is obstetric, obscure and sordid.

Three dancers have lately been born in full view of the audiences at the Garden - Robert Helpmann in *Adam Zera*, André Eglevsky in *Apollon*, and now, in *Understar*, Hugh Laing. Eglevsky was, on the whole, the most fortunate, being of a sunny and musical disposition, if a trifle hag-ridden - all those Muses! But the infants Helpmann and Laing were in for a terrible time.

Take little Laing, growing from adolescence to manhood on a rooftop, after having been most grossly born. He sees a man embracing a little girl in a pinallure. He watches a prostitute plying her trade. He is surrounded by rosy old women, drunken and drooling about the place. He ends by strangling his girl-friend because she reminds him of his mother. After which he spends the Epilogue feeling guilty.

Compare this ballet with Helpmann's slum-study, *Miracle In The Gorbals*, in which, though a terrible event occurs, it springs inevitably from the narrative and is therefore artistically true. Nothing here is grossly or flagranty staged. Nothing is put in solely to shock. The best thing in *Understar* is William Schuman's effective music, which I thought both purposeful and dramatic. And Breinin's smoky city, seen from the roof-tops, has a sullen beauty. Indeed, his cloudy backcloth to the epilogue was the only moving thing about it - it progressed upwards - on a roller.

*Sole Performance*, Tudor's protracted joke about the temperaments of Edwardian ballerinas, through the full tannin to me, was much to the taste of the Garden audiences.

Strictly American

The most enduring gossily that Ballet Theatre unpacked from

those great and generous trunks was *Fancy Free*, Jerome Robbins's ballet about three strictly American sailors on shore leave - a strictly American shore, caught in a moment of authentic magic by Oliver Smith's stream-lined bar and light-chinked, chunky skyscrapers and animated to the witty, evocative and infinitely balleric music of Leonard Bernstein.

This work is less abstract than *Les Ballets* - Massine's miracle of understatement. It is cram-full of amused and friendly observation. How well we know the Little Tough Guy, the Romantic, the Frontist and those three gay girl-friends they nick themselves. The fakes don't make much progress, but so what?

Miracle of Understatement

The ballet, though modern in feeling, is built on a classical line, so that the ballet-goer's pleasure is not diminished, but rather fed and increased by repetition. Here is a small-genre classic of an important new school.

Robbins's other work, *Interplay*, is a long lean, spare, stangy affair of movement swinging between dance and game, classical *par* and jazz, casually caught, and set swinging again. Compare this with Ashton's recent ballet to the music of Cesar Franck's Symphonic Variations, with its literal obedience to the beat and its absence of the long slow melancholy of the music's initial mood - its frequent freezing into self-conscious groups. Note how unpretentious - indeed, at times colloquial - is the American work - how academic, the English ballet.

The American choreographer was content to use some unpretentious music by Morton Gould ("found on the disc-rack of a music-store") for his experiment. Ashton parloined a romantic and, I should have thought, self-sufficient pianoforte concerto.

Found on the Disc-rack

I have sometimes longed to take every choreographer I know on

