



Fabulously Tidal – Issue 117, 1 January 2018

SPONSORED FEATURE – PHILIP SAWYERS' THIRD SYMPHONY

Alice McVeigh: 'This is a fabulously tidal symphony, with wild expanses of differing moods, but it begins with a ripple of unease. We in the cello section were told to play the opening with as much stillness as possible, allowing the first theme to grow as it weaves into violins and violas, into threads of flute and oboe, and — from there — into a tempestuous section of interweaving themes. The argument descends into a woodwind quarrel, resolved by flute and oboe, decorated by horns — while the strings continue to niggle and churn away at any sense of calm.

'Then solo bassoon ignites a new, still tenser, section. The violins take over, lightly but resolutely, answered by middle strings conveying a sense of tenderness — but with a bitter aftertaste. (This is incidentally one of Sawyers' most characteristic strengths: a tenderness, never saccharine, often undermined by subtle discontent.) From the brass comes the first glimpse of escape: the powerful broken octave theme over which the other themes furiously contend.

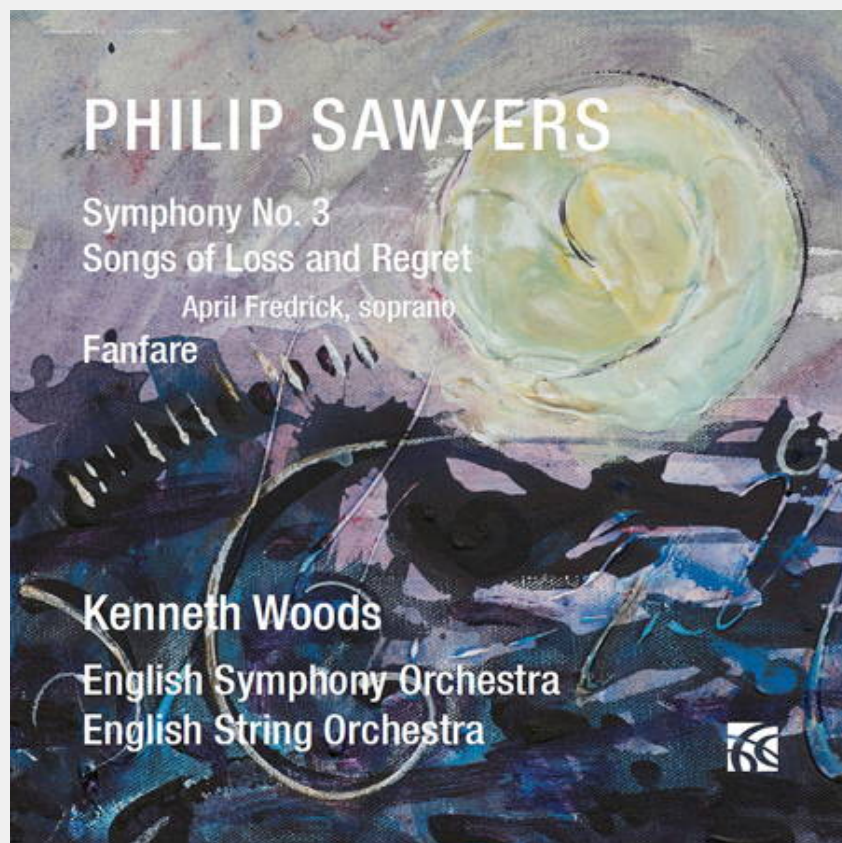
'The cellos at the recapitulation, now deepened and enriched, are twisted by Sawyers into something passionate and grounded in lower brass, reinforced by timpani. The movement ends with the heavy brass seemingly triumphant over the strings' stubborn reiteration of the theme. Still, the lower strings' pessimism prevails.

'*Tutti* violins kick-start the second movement with a dramatic leap from their richest register, only yielding to keening solo oboe.

'The sobered strings leave the solo winds to mourn, yet, with characteristic Sawyers intensity, something is brewing at subterranean depths: eventually, the violas' chuntering is answered by full insistent brass, in a stormily ecstatic tantrum. Above rippling middle strings, uncertainty in the winds and answering horns unnerve us again. The electricity

descends into glowering lower strings, uncertain winds are whipped towards the horizon.

'The opening is then recalled, but with a bleak hollowness at its centre, horns — full of bravado — going unanswered, before descending strings and lower horns unite in an exquisite section as intimate as anything in late Elgar, the intense first theme finally quietened instead of questing, capable not only of compassion but — despite lingering doubts — perhaps even of forgiveness. Solo winds frame an aural halo over softening waves at the close.



'I've had Sawyers' third movement here in my head for months, so I must insist upon here submitting my official complaint — except that — well, how can I? This delicate little throw-back is basically a stroke of genius. From the opening, very droll, bassoon, not to mention the quirky violins undercut by elegant sloping winds, Sawyers is leaning back and taking a cigarette break. (Kenneth Woods is lighting it for him. They are both attired in late Victorian dress.)

'Light little runs toy with expectations, the rhythmic emphasis is played with, disputed (two, three? Who's counting?) The turbulent sea has disappeared. Instead, languorous,

we are punting down a river in flickering summer sunshine, light trickling through the trees, to the sounds of distant cricket applause and dipping oars, birds soaring above. A few, faux-angry, interruptions cannot disturb anything so poised, sunlit and perfect. A mini-masterpiece.' **Read more ...**

SPONSORED FEATURES

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SIGNIFICANT ANNIVERSARIES IN 2018

To mark the start of the New Year, we present details of many of 2018's significant classical music anniversaries. If you know of others, please let us know.

Although not mentioned here this month, we continue our daily publication of various reviews and features, and invite you to **explore our website** to read the latest concert, opera and CD reviews.

Marc-Antoine Charpentier was born 375 years ago, in or near Paris, in 1643

The prolific and versatile French Baroque composer Marc-Antoine Charpentier was born in or near Paris in 1643. He studied in Rome with Giacomo Carissimi. Charpentier worked as a house composer for Marie de Lorraine, duchesse de Guise, and then later for the Jesuits, was especially praised for his sacred vocal music.

He wrote oratorios, masses, operas and many smaller pieces, and is possibly best known for the prelude to his *Te Deum*, his *Messe de minuit pour Noël* of approximately 1690, and for the mass *Assumpta Est Maria*.

Charpentier also analysed other composers' harmony, and wrote a manual for musical training. His own music is fascinating as he was writing at a time of transition near the start of the Baroque period.

Marc-Antoine Charpentier died at Sainte-Chapelle, Paris, on 24 February 1704.

Tyzen Hsiao was born 80 years ago, on 1 January 1938

Taiwanese neo-Romantic composer Tyzen Hsiao was born in Kaohsiung on 1 January 1938 and began to learn the piano from his mother, a church pianist, when he was very young. He studied music at the Taiwan Provincial Normal Institute then moved to Japan and studied composition and piano at Musashino Music University. He returned to Taiwan and worked at various schools and colleges. In 1973 he became a professor at the National Taiwan Normal University. In Taipei in 1975, the first Tyzen Hsiao Night, showcasing performances of his music, was organised.

In 1977 he moved to the USA, following difficulties from the failure of his wife's business. After an initial fallow period of depression, he became involved in the California Taiwanese community and began composing again. His March of Democracy displeased the Kuomintang Taiwan government — his music was banned in Taiwan and he was forbidden from returning to the country.

He continued to study, and received a masters in composition from California State University, Los Angeles. Much of his music centred on the subject of Taiwan.

In 1992 the Taiwanese government, moving towards democracy, lifted the ban on his returning, and in 1995 he returned home, settled in Tamsui, continued to compose and

began to receive recognition for his music.

He suffered a stroke in 2002 and returned to Los Angeles to enable better recovery, stopping most of his composition work. Hsiao died in Los Angeles on 24 February 2015, aged seventy-seven.

Viktor Ullmann was born 120 years ago, on 1 January 1898

The Czech composer Viktor Ullmann was born on 1 January 1898 near Prague, the son of an army officer. After fighting in World War I he studied in Vienna with Arnold Schoenberg and Alois Hába, a fellow Czech, and then taught, lectured, wrote, and worked for Czech radio.

During World War II, Ullmann was sent to Terezin (Theresienstadt) in 1942, where he was very prolific, writing sixteen works in less than two years, including the one act opera *Der Kaiser von Atlantis, oder Die Tod-Verweigerung* ('The Emperor of Atlantis, or Death Abdicates', 1943). The libretto, also written in Terezin, was by Petr Kien. Although not a Jew, Ullmann's music of this period was inspired by Jewish themes, quoting, for example, Josef Suk's *Asrael* in the opera. Sadly, he was killed in Auschwitz on 17 October 1944.

Ullmann's music includes a piano concerto, three string quartets and many songs. His seventh piano sonata (which includes variations on *The Song from Palestine*) was used as the basis for a reconstruction, in 1989, of a second symphony.

H K Gruber's 75th birthday, born on 3 January 1943

Austrian composer H K Gruber was born in Vienna on 3 January 1943, singing in the famous Boys' Choir and studying with Gottfried von Einem and Hanns Jelinek at the Hochschule für Musik. One of his most known works, *Frankenstein!!*, exhibits the surreal tonality for which his recent music has come to be known.

Max Bruch was born 180 years ago, on 6 January 1838

Famous for his works for solo instruments and orchestra — the *Scottish Fantasy*, *Kol Nidrei* and the Violin Concerto, Max Bruch was born in Köln, Germany on 6 January 1838 and died near Berlin on 2 October 1920. Taught by Hiller and Reinecke, his working life consisted of various conducting posts, and from 1891 he was principal teacher of composition at the Berlin Hochschule für Musik.

Michael Tippett died 20 years ago, on 8 January 1998

Twentieth century English composer Michael Tippett was born in Eastcote, west of London, on 2 January 1905, and grew up at Wetherden in Suffolk. He studied at the Royal College of Music — composition with Charles Wood and C H Kitson, and conducting with Malcolm Sargent and Adrian Boult.

Tippett was rebellious, gay, left-wing, a pacifist and briefly a member of the British Communist Party. He was influenced by Trotskyism and Jungian analysis. Early in his career he supported himself by working as a teacher, and later as a conductor and administrator.

His talents developed slowly, and he began to be recognised as a composer in 1935, when his first string quartet was performed in London by the Brosa Quartet. As war broke

out in 1939, Tippett began composing his best-known work, the oratorio *A Child of Our Time*, based on the events leading to *Kristallnacht*.

In 1940 he became director of music at Morley College, which had just been completely destroyed by a bomb. He found temporary premises, revived the college's orchestra and choir, and brought in European refugees Walter Bergmann, Walter Goehr and Matyas Seiber to augment the teaching staff. He continued at Morley until 1951, with highlights including the first British performances of Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610* and Orff's *Carmina Burana*.

In 1943 he served two months in Wormwood Scrubbs prison, for failing to comply with the terms of his registration as a conscientious objector.

In 1944 he staged the first performance of *A Child of Our Time*, which was well-received and led to regular work with the BBC.

During the 1960s he expanded his horizons, working as composer-in-residence at Aspen, and becoming better and more internationally known, and increasingly honoured. His health deteriorated and he continued working, albeit at a slower pace, and continued to travel. His last overseas trip was to a festival of his music in Stockholm in November 1997, where he had a stroke, was taken home, and died on 8 January 1998, aged ninety-three.

During the first years of the 21st century, Tippett's music has fallen out of fashion, with fewer performances, especially of music from his later period.

William Duckworth was born 75 years ago, on 13 January 1943

American composer, author, teacher and internet pioneer William Duckworth was born in North Carolina on 13 January 1943. He studied at East Carolina University and the University of Illinois at Urbana. He studied composition with Ben Johnston.

Duckworth is credited with composing the first postminimal work — *The Time Curve Preludes* — and he was also a professor of music at Bucknell University.

In collaboration with his wife, Nora Farrell, Duckworth created the *Cathedral* web site, at which he published many of his compositions. The *Cathedral* site features an instrument called *PitchWeb*, which allows listeners to play along with the music. The site was also used to distribute Duckworth's *iPod Opera 2.0* as a series of podcasts.

Duckworth, who spent the last months of his life writing a piano concerto for Bruce Brubaker, died of pancreatic cancer on 13 September 2012.

Mariss Jansons' 75th birthday, born on 14 January 1943

Latvian conductor Mariss Jansons was born in Riga on 14 January 1943, where his Jewish singer mother, Iraida Jansons, was in hiding from the Nazis. He studied violin with his father, conductor Arvīds Jansons, who became assistant to Yevgeny Mravinsky at the Leningrad Philharmonic.

Mariss Jansons studied piano and conducting at the Leningrad Conservatory, then studied in Vienna with Hans Swarowsky and in Salzburg with Herbert von Karajan.

He was associate conductor of the Leningrad Philharmonic from 1973, and music director of the Oslo Philharmonic from 1979 until 2000. From 1992 he was principal guest conductor of the London Philharmonic, and also worked as a guest conductor with the London Symphony Orchestra. From 1997 until 2004 he was music director of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. From 2002 until 2015 he was chief conductor of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra.

Since 2003 he has been chief conductor of the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra.

Ivor Novello was born 125 years ago, on 15 January 1893

Composer, playwright and actor Ivor Novello was born 15 January in Cardiff, Wales in 1893 and died in London on 6 March 1951. His rising success came from a string of musical comedies written, composed, and acted in during the 30s and through the war years, culminating in *Perchance to Dream* in 1945.

Rutland Boughton was born 140 years ago, on 23 January 1878

Composer of *The Immortal Hour*, Rutland Boughton was born on 23 January 1878 in Aylesbury, England, and is remembered for, amongst other things, an attempt to create an English Bayreuth at Glastonbury. His long life ended in London on 24 January 1960.

Gottfried von Einem was born 100 years ago, on 24 January 1918

Gottfried von Einem, the Austrian composer born 24 January 1918 in Bern, Switzerland, studied composition with Boris Blacher and eventually taught composition in the Vienna Academy. He is best known for six operas written between 1947 and 1980. Accessibility and melodic gifts are their strong points. He died in Vienna on 12 July 1996.

Éric Tanguy's 50th birthday, born on 27 January 1968

French composer Éric Tanguy was born in Caen on 27 January 1968. He studied composition with Horatiu Radulescu, then with Ivo Malec, Gérard Grisey and Betsy Jolas at the Conservatoire national supérieur de musique de Paris.

In November 2012 he received the Grand prix de la SACEM, and in April 2014 the Composers' Grand prix des Lycéens. In October 2017 he was appointed Resident Composer at Besançon Music Festival.

His output comprises more than 100 works, and they have been included in the repertoire of some of the major performers of our time.

Elly Ameling's 80th birthday, born on 8 February 1938

Elly Ameling from Holland was born 8 February 1938. Her career as a soprano led to specialisation in Bach and lieder.

Mariela Cingo's 40th birthday, born on 14 February 1978

Mariela Cingo was born in Korçë, Albania on 14 February 1978. She began learning music from the age of six, and gave her first concert aged seven. By the time she was twelve, she had played the Haydn Piano Concerto in D with the Korçë Philharmonic Orchestra.

When she was seventeen she moved to London to continue her studies with Raphael Terroni at the London College of Music and Media. There she won many prizes, including the Piano Concerto Prize for her performance of Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No 2.

Healey Willan died 50 years ago, on 16 February 1968

'English by birth ... Canadian by adoption ... Irish by extraction and Scotch by absorption.'

Organist and composer Healey Willan was born at Balham in London, UK, on 12 October 1880, and emigrated to Canada in 1913 to work in Toronto as head of the music theory department at the Canadian Conservatory of Music.

As president (in 1923) of the Arts and Letters Club of Toronto, he mischievously set the club's constitution to music.

He wrote much music for use in church services at St Mary Magdalene's church in Toronto, and wrote an anthem, *O Lord, Our Governour*, for the coronation of Elizabeth II in 1953.

Willan died in Toronto on 16 February 1968.

Luigi Boccherini was born 275 years ago, on 19 February 1743

Italian composer Luigi Rodolfo Boccherini was born in Lucca on 19 February 1743. His father, a cellist and double bass player, sent him to Rome to study. He worked in Vienna with his father, and then (from 1761) in Madrid, employed by Luis Antonio, brother of Charles III, spending the rest of his life in Spain and dying in Madrid on 28 May 1805. His charming, light and optimistic Rococo music is frequently influenced by the Spanish guitar tradition.

Adelina Patti was born 175 years ago, on 19 February 1843

Adelina Patti was born in Madrid on 19 February 1843. With a remarkable coloratura voice she rapidly became one of the great operatic sopranos of her day and travelled the leading opera houses. She died in Craig-y-Nos, Wales on 27 September 1919.

Girolamo Frescobaldi died 375 years ago, on 1 March 1643

Girolamo Frescobaldi, the Italian organist and composer, held sway at St Peter's Rome for twenty years. He was born at Ferrara on 9 September 1583 and died in Rome on 1 March 1643. Much of his music was for keyboard and helped in its development.

Nicola Porpora died 250 years ago, on 3 March 1768

Nicola Porpora composed about fifty operas, some to libretti by his pupil Metastasio. He also taught Haydn whilst living in Vienna, was a rival of Handel for work in London and, as a successful singing teacher, he taught the Electoral Princess in Dresden. He began (17 August 1686) and ended (3 March 1768) his life in Naples.

Antonio Vivaldi was born 340 years ago, on 4 March 1678

Antonio Vivaldi was born in Venice on 4 March 1678 and died in Vienna on 28 July 1741. Son of a violinist, his prodigious output of attractive music made him a celebrity

throughout Europe. Reputed to have written 94 operas, it is perhaps not a tragedy that we know less than fifty.

Petr Skoumal was born 80 years ago, on 7 March 1938

Czech musician and film composer Petr Skoumal was born on 7 March 1938. He produced several stage performances with Jan Vodňanský at the Prague Drama Club, a series of albums echoing communist times, and a series of albums for children based on stories by Emanuel Frynta, Pavel Šrut and Jan Vodňanský. He also wrote the music for the animated shorts Pat & Mat and Maxipes Fík. He died on 28 September 2014, aged seventy-seven.

David Matthews' 75th birthday, born on 9 March 1943

English composer David Matthews was born in Walthamstow, London on 9 March 1943. His younger brother Colin Matthews is also a composer.

He read Classics at Nottingham University then studied composition with Anthony Milner, and was also encouraged by Nicholas Maw. He worked as a part-time assistant to Benjamin Britten, wrote a short book about Michael Tippett (who influenced Matthews' own music considerably), and has undertaken editorial work, orchestration of film music and also contributed articles and reviews for various music journals.

From 1989 until 2003 he was Artistic Director of the Deal Festival.

His output consists of mainly orchestral, chamber, vocal and piano music.

Zbigniew Karkowski was born 60 years ago, on 14 March 1958

Polish-born composer and experimental musician Zbigniew Karkowski was born in Krakow on 14 March 1958 and studied composition in Sweden at Gothenburg State College of Music. He also studied aesthetics of modern music and computer music. There were further studies in sonology at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Den Haag, and also summer masterclasses in composition, where he was able to study with Iannis Xenakis, Olivier Messiaen, Pierre Boulez and Georges Aperghis.

His music includes acoustic and electroacoustic pieces, and he he was commissioned by the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra to write several pieces for large orchestra. He also wrote various items of chamber music and an opera.

He founded Sensorband, an electroacoustic performance trio, with Edwin van der Heide and Atau Tanaka, in which he played an instrument by moving his arms around in space, cutting beams of infrared light to produce sound.

At the end of his life, the much-travelled Karkowski lived and worked in Tokyo, taking an active part in that city's underground noise scene.

He died of pancreatic cancer on 12 December 2013, aged only fifty-five.

Lili Boulanger was born 125 years ago, on 21 August 1893 and died 100 years ago, on 15 March 1918

French composer Lili Boulanger, whose full name was Marie-Juliette Olga Boulanger, was

born in Paris on 21 August 1893 into a family of musicians — her mother was a Russian princess and her father taught at the Conservatoire de Paris. Gabriel Fauré, a family friend, discovered when Boulanger was two years old that she had perfect pitch. Before she was five, she attended classes at the Conservatoire with her ten-year-old sister Nadia Boulanger.

Lili studied organ with Louis Vierne, sang and played cello, harp, piano and violin.

She competed twice for the Prix de Rome. In 1912 she collapsed during her performance due to illness, but in 1913 she became the first female composer to win the composition prize (for the cantata *Faust et Hélène*).

She studied composition with her sister, then with Paul Vidal, Georges Caussade and Fauré, who was very impressed with Lili.

Lili Boulanger was plagued with chronic illness, from the age of two, and although she travelled to Rome and completed many compositions, she died at only twenty-four, on 15 March 1918 in Mézy-sur-Seine.

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco died 50 years ago, on 16 March 1968

Italian composer Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco was born in Florence on 3 April 1895. He was introduced to playing piano by his mother, and wrote his first pieces when he was nine. He studied piano with Edgardo Del Valle de Paz and then composition with Ildebrando Pizzetti.

He came to the attention of Alfredo Casella, who ensured that Castelnuovo-Tedesco's works were heard, by playing them and getting them included in the repertoire of the Società Nazionale di Musica.

His music was inspired by literature, and by his Jewish heritage. His opera *La Mandragola* was first performed in 1926.

Another important contact was the guitarist Andrés Segovia, who he met in 1932. Castelnuovo-Tedesco was inspired to write nearly a hundred works for guitar, including his well-known Guitar Concerto No 1 of 1939.

In 1939 he left Italy for the USA, shortly before the start of World War II, and settled in Hollywood, writing film music for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and influencing other film composers.

He remained in the USA but kept up his ties with Italy, visiting frequently. He won the 1958 Concorso Campari for his opera *The Merchant of Venice*, which was first performed in 1961 at the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino.

Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco died in Beverly Hills, California on 16 March 1968. aged seventy-two.

Jean-Claude Risset was born 80 years ago, on 18 March 1938

French composer Jean-Claude Risset was born in Le Puy-en-Velay on 18 March 1938. He studied with André Jolivet. He was best known as a computer music pioneer, initially working at Bell Labs in New Jersey, USA, where he recreated the sounds of brass

instruments, digitally, and experimented with FM synthesis and waveshaping. He created the *Continuous Risset scale* (also known as the *Shepard-Risset glissando*) which appears to increase or decrease in pitch continuously, and a similar rhythmic effect where the tempo seems to increase or decrease endlessly.

He also composed vocal, choral, orchestral and chamber music, plus music for solo instruments (usually with some tape or computer interaction) and music for solo tape.

Jean-Claude Risset died in Marseille on 21 November 2016.

Cyril Rootham died 80 years ago, on 18 March 1938

The English composer Cyril Rootham, born 5 October 1875 in Bristol, spent his professional life in Cambridge as lecturer, and organist of St John's College for some years. He died on 18 March 1938.

Francesco Gasparini was born 350 years ago, on 19 March 1668

Italian baroque composer and teacher Francesco Gasparini was born at Camaiore near Lucca on 19 March 1668. He studied in Rome with Corelli and Pasquini and wrote his first important opera, *Roderico*, there.

Moving to Venice in 1702 he established himself as one of the city's leading composers. Significant works are the opera *Ambieto* and the *Missa Canonica* (both of 1705).

He taught Benedetto Marcello, Johann Joachim Quantz and Domenico Scarlatti, and was musical director of the Ospedale della Pietà, where Vivaldi worked as a violin master.

Gasparini returned to Rome in 1720 for *Tigrane* (1724), his last important work, and died there on 22 March 1727, aged fifty-nine, leaving over sixty operas.

Bernd Alois Zimmermann was born 100 years ago, on 20 March 1918

German composer Bernd Alois Zimmermann was born in Bliesheim, near Cologne, on 20 March 1918, into a rural Catholic community. He studied at the University for Music in Cologne and was then drafted into the German army in 1940, but released two years later due to a skin illness.

Zimmermann and his music were strongly affected by war and its trauma. His best known work is *Die Soldaten*, regarded as one of the twentieth century's most important operas.

Health problems — depressive tendencies and a worsening eye problem — led to his suicide on 10 August 1970.

Hamish MacCunn was born 150 years ago, on 22 March 1868

Scottish composer Hamish MacCunn was born in Greenock on 22 March 1868. He studied with Hubert Parry and Charles Stanford at the Royal College of Music in London.

His first successful piece remains his best-known work, the overture *The Land of the Mountain and the Flood*, first performed at Crystal Palace on 5 November 1887. There are a handful of other orchestral pieces, several operas and various choral cantatas, mostly on Scottish themes.

He taught at the Royal College of Music from 1888 until 1894 and also worked as a conductor at the Carl Rosa Opera Company.

MacCunn died in London on 2 August 1916, aged forty-eight.

Franz Schreker was born 140 years ago, on 23 March 1878

The Austrian opera composer Franz Schreker was born in Monaco on 23 March 1878 and studied at the Vienna Conservatory from 1892 — initially violin, and then composition with Robert Fuchs, graduating in 1900. During his time as a student he created the Verein der Musikfreunde Döbling and began conducting. In 1907 he formed the Philharmonic Chorus, and conducted first performances of works by Zemlinsky and Schoenberg.

He was first noticed as a composer by the dance work *Der Geburtstag der Infantin* of 1908, and its success prompted three further works. The performance at Frankfurt in 1912 of his first opera *Der ferne Klang* put him firmly on the map as a composer, and brought him an appointment as professor at Vienna's Music Academy. A second opera, the weird and Freudian *Das Spielwerk und die Prinzessin*, was his only operatic failure, but the outrage caused in Vienna made his name even better known.

He went on to become director of the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin, and became second only to Richard Strauss in the German speaking operatic world, with his operas *Die Gezeichneten* and *Der Schatzgräber*.

The rise of anti-semitism brought obscurity and failure for Schreker, however — his father had been a Jewish photographer at the Bohemian court. He lost his job in Berlin, the scheduled première of his penultimate opera *Christophorus* was cancelled, and his music became to be seen as irrelevant. He died in Berlin on 21 March 1934, aged 55, after having a heart attack.

Claude Debussy died 100 years ago, on 25 March 1918

Claude Debussy, born 22 August 1862 at St Germain-en-Laye, is recognised as the creator of what is termed impressionism in music. His musical language was an innovative blend of modality and the whole-tone scale with fascinating textural experiments. Twentieth-century composers have found his music a challenge to their own exploration of pastures new. He died in Paris on 25 March 1918.

Sergei Rachmaninov died 75 years ago, on 28 March 1943

Russian composer, pianist and conductor Sergei Rachmaninov was born on 1 April 1873 at Semyonovo near Great Novgorod, into an old aristocratic family. At the age of four, he received casual piano lessons from his mother, and then studied privately with Anna Ornatskaya from St Petersburg, who later arranged for Sergei to study at the St Petersburg Conservatory. He transferred to the Moscow Conservatory to complete his studies.

His final composition at Moscow Conservatory, the one-act opera *Aleko*, based on Pushkin, was very successful, and the Bolshoi Theatre agreed to produce it.

He was greatly influenced by Tchaikovsky, whose unexpected death in 1893 was a great blow to Rachmaninov.

Rachmaninov's first symphony, first performed in 1897, was slated by critic César Cui. The performance, conducted by Alexander Glazunov, had not been a good one — possible reasons were poor use of rehearsal time and the possibility that Glazunov had been drunk. The bad reception caused a three-year depression, during which Rachmaninov was unable to write. In 1900, Dr Nikolai Vladimirovich Dahl, a competent amateur viola player, gave Rachmaninov a course of autosuggestive therapy, and the composer's confidence gradually returned. The following year he completed his second piano concerto, which became an immediate success.

He left Russia with his family at the end of 1917, his way of life threatened by the series of revolutions that year. After a year playing concerts in Scandinavia, he decided to emigrate to the USA at the end of 1918, and supported his family by touring as a pianist. Pressure of work and homesickness slowed his composition work, and he only completed six works between arriving in the USA and his death from melanoma on 28 March 1943, aged sixty-nine, in Beverly Hills, California.

Helen Kemp was born 100 years ago, on 31 March 1918

American voice teacher, choral conductor and composer Helen Kemp was born Helen Hubbert in Perkasio, PA on 31 March 1918. She studied at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey.

She was involved in the early days of the Choristers Guild, composed thirty-five best-selling anthems, and ran the Kemp Symposium, an annual educational event. She wrote several books about children's choirs, including *Of Primary Importance*.

Helen Kemp died peacefully on 23 August 2015 at her home in Jamison, PA, aged ninety-seven.

Sixten Ehrling was born 100 years ago, on 3 April 1918

The Swedish conductor Sixten Ehrling, born in Malmö on 3 April 1918, studied piano and violin at Stockholm's Royal Academy of Music, and was awarded the Jenny Lind Scholarship in 1939. He worked as a répétiteur at Royal Swedish Opera, and was an assistant to Karl Böhm at Dresden State Opera.

Following some criticism, Ehrling left his job as principal conductor at Royal Swedish Opera, and worked in the USA, conducting the Detroit Symphony Orchestra for 10 years from 1963. He later taught conducting at Juilliard, and worked with the Denver Symphony and the San Antonio Symphony. Known for his focus, clarity and perfectionism, he also had a notoriously short fuse, which sometimes lost him contracts. Ehrling died in New York City on 13 February 2005, aged 86.

Franz Berwald died 150 years ago, on 3 April 1868

The Swedish composer Franz Berwald was born (23 July 1796) and died (3 April 1868) in Stockholm. His training was mostly in Europe where his early operas were performed without success, a situation he found also on his return to Sweden. Today we remember him for chamber music and several symphonies.

Paul Robeson was born 120 years ago, on 9 April 1898

Known internationally for a powerful and rich bass voice, the American Paul Robeson was

immortalised for his singing of negro spirituals, and his role in Jerome Kern's *Show Boat*. He was born in Princeton on 9 April 1898 and died in Philadelphia on 23 January 1976. Alleged Communist sympathies halted his career during the witch hunts of the 1950s.

Kurt Moll was born 80 years ago, on 11 April 1938

German bass Kurt Moll was born in Buir, near Cologne, on 11 April 1938. He played cello and sang as a schoolboy, then studied voice at Musikhochschule Köln and with Emily Müller. He had a very unusual voice, and could reach very low notes with good resonance and relaxed vibrato.

He made his professional debut in Aachen in 1961, and began his career with Cologne Opera, then Mainz Opera and Wuppertal Opera. By the end of the 1960s he was performing in major European opera houses, and he first appeared in the USA in 1974, at San Francisco Opera, and first sang at Covent Garden and at New York Metropolitan Opera in 1977.

He also made many recordings of opera, sacred music and lieder, and received several awards for his recordings. As Baron Ochs in *Der Rosenkavalier* he appeared on seven different recordings.

Kurt Moll retired from performing in 2006, gave a masterclass at Carnegie Hall in 2011 and died in Cologne on 5 March 2017, aged seventy-eight.

Fyodor Chaliapin died 80 years ago, on 12 April 1938

Fyodor Chaliapin was born in Kazan in Russia on 13 February 1873. His superb bass voice brought him to the world's leading opera houses. He was known especially for his role as *Boris Godunov*. He died in Paris on 12 April 1938.

Lily Pons was born 120 years ago, on 12 April 1898

Lily Pons, the French soprano, was born Alice Josephine Pons at Draguignan, near Cannes, on 12 April 1898. After operatic successes in Europe she was invited to sing at the New York Met in 1931, and became an American citizen in 1940. She also appeared in several films. She died on 13 February 1976.

Stella Doufexis was born 50 years ago, on 15 April 1968

German mezzo-soprano Stella Doufexis was born in Frankfurt on 15 April 1968 to Greek director Stavros Doufexis and a German mother. She studied with Ingrid Figur and Anna Reynolds, but also took part in masterclasses given by Aribert Reimann and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau.

She sang as an ensemble member with Heidelberg Theatre, and later at the Komische Opera in Berlin. She made various guest appearances, including in Aldeburgh, Antwerp, Barcelona, Bonn, Brussels, Frankfurt, Geneva, Glasgow, Halle, Jerusalem, London, Lucerne, Moscow, Munich, Paris, Salzburg, Schleswig-Holstein, Stuttgart and Washington DC.

She lived in Berlin and was married to conductor Christian Jost. She died in Berlin on 15 December 2015, aged forty-seven, following a long illness.

Federico Mompou was born 125 years ago, on 16 April 1893

The enigmatic Catalan composer Federico Mompou was born in Barcelona on 16 April 1893. He studied piano at the Conservatori Superior de Musica del Liceu, first performing in public at the age of fifteen, and then in Paris from 1911 with Ferdinand Motte-Lacroix.

Shying away from a career as a pianist, he turned to composition, and the results include *Scènes d'enfants* (1915-18) and the four books of *Música Callada* ('The voice of silence') based on the mystic poetry of St John of the Cross. He was 'a man of few words, and a musician of few notes'.

Wilfrid Mellers thought that Mompou's folk-like melodies and unpretentious style indicated a nostalgia for childlike simplicity. His miniaturist output consists of mostly piano music and songs, plus a few choral works and pieces for guitar. Mompou died in Barcelona, aged 94, on 30 June 1987.

John Eliot Gardiner's 75th birthday, born on 20 April 1943

English conductor John Eliot Gardiner was born in Dorset on 20 April 1943. His research and authority in presenting performances of early music is known, especially from recordings, worldwide.

Louis Théodore Gouvy died 120 years ago, on 21 April 1898

French composer Louis Théodore Gouvy was born on 3 July 1819 in Goffontaine on the Franco-Prussian border, and became divided between the two cultures of France and Germany. He studied music privately, as an adult, in Paris (where he made friends with Adolphe Adam) and Berlin.

Gouvy was the author of more than two hundred compositions, including nine symphonies, and his ambition was to become known as a French symphonist. Berlioz, Brahms, Carl Reinecke and Joseph Joachim thought highly of Gouvy's music. He became reasonably well-known during his lifetime (except in France, where they were more interested in opera), but became largely forgotten after his death on 21 April 1898, until being rediscovered at the end of the twentieth century.

Ethel Smyth was born 160 years ago, on 22 April 1858

English composer Ethel Smyth, noted for militancy and imprisoned in 1911 for her part in the suffragette movement, was born on 22 April 1858 and died on 9 May 1944. She had studied music in Leipzig and Berlin, leaving two good operas for posterity.

Astrid Varnay was born 100 years ago, on 25 April 1918

The Swedish born American soprano Astrid Varnay was born in Stockholm on 25 April 1918 and died in Munich on 4 September 2006. Her operatic prowess in works by Richard Wagner and Richard Strauss took her to Bayreuth, Covent Garden and the Met in the years following the War.

Jeffrey Tate was born 75 years ago, on 28 April 1943

English conductor and pianist Jeffrey Philip Tate was born in Salisbury on 28 April 1943 with the birth defect *spina bifida*. He also had *kyphosis*. He studied medicine at

Cambridge, where he directed theatre productions, and worked at St St Thomas' Hospital in London before switching to study music at the former London Opera Centre. He trained with Georg Solti as a répétiteur and coach at Covent Garden.

Following performances with Gothenburg Opera in Sweden in 1978 with New York Metropolitan Opera in 1979, he became first principal conductor of the English Chamber Orchestra and, later, the first principal conductor of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Other appointments were as principal conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, music director of Teatro di San Carlo in Naples, chief conductor of the Hamburg Symphony Orchestra and principal guest conductor and artistic advisor of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra.

Conducting from a tall stool because of his disability, and known for his friendly and empathetic style, Tate's recordings include a series of Mozart Piano Concertos with Mitsuko Uchida. He received a British knighthood in 2017 for services to British music overseas.

Jeffrey Tate died suddenly in Bergamo, Italy from a heart attack on 2 June 2017, aged seventy-four, whilst rehearsing the Accademia Carrara. His last two concerts (with the Haydn Orchestra) were on 30 and 31 May in Bolzano and Trento.

Aram Khachaturian died 40 years ago, on 1 May 1978

Aram Khachaturian, the Armenian composer, was born on 6 June 1903 in Tiflis (now Tbilisi) and died in Moscow on 1 May 1978. Famed for the *Sabre Dance*, his accomplishments as a composer outstrip a single piece and his music is now much better represented on record.

Leopold Kozeluh died 200 years ago, on 7 May 1818

On 26 June 1747 the Czech composer, pianist, publisher and teacher Leopold Kozeluh was born in Velvary. Following lessons with Dussek and success in theatre music, Kozeluh moved to Vienna and started his own publishing business. Following the death of Mozart, Kozeluh was appointed *Kammer Kapellmeister* and *Hofmusik Compositor*, and these positions occupied him until his death on 17 May 1818.

Leipzig Opera's 325th birthday, born on 8 May 1693

Leipzig Opera is a German opera company and opera house established in 1693, when the first opera house was dedicated on 8 May. Telemann was director of many of the company's early productions. In 1766 the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra began its relationship as Leipzig Opera's opera orchestra. The current opera house dates from 1960. General music directors have included Arthur Nikisch, Gustav Mahler, Lothar Zagrosek, Michael Jurowski and Riccardo Chailly.

William Steinberg died 40 years ago, on 16 May 1978

William Steinberg, born in Cologne on 1 August 1899, was assistant to Klemperer at the Cologne Opera for several years. He conducted in Europe and Palestine before conductorship of several leading American orchestras from 1938. He also directed the London Philharmonic in the late sixties. He died in New York on 16 May 1978.

Aubrey Bowman was born 100 years ago, on 16 May 1918

English composer, conductor and pianist Aubrey Bowman was born in Bournemouth on 16 May 1918 into a working class family. and won a scholarship to study at the Royal Academy of Music in London with Alan Bush. A founding member of the Workers' Music Association, he retained his connections with the organisation for the rest of his life, teaching, conducting and helping with administration. He also conducted ballet, and was involved with Sadler's Wells, London Festival Ballet and the National Ballet of Canada. He died in London on 13 December 2009, aged 91, from wounds sustained after being knocked down by a car the previous day.

Andrew Nethsingha's 50th birthday, born on 16 May 1968

English choral conductor and organist Andrew Nethsingha was born on 16 May 1968, the son of Lucian Nethsingha who was organist at Exeter Cathedral for more than 25 years.

Andrew was a chorister at Exeter and studied at the Royal College of Music and St John's College Cambridge, winning various prizes and scholarships. He began his career as assistant organist at Wells Cathedral, then worked at Truro Cathedral for eight years as master of the choristers and organist, where he became the country's youngest cathedral organist. From there he became organist at Gloucester Cathedral, conductor of the Gloucester Choral Society and artistic director of the Gloucester Three Choirs Festival, and, from 2007, Director of Music at St John's College Cambridge.

He has worked with the Philharmonia Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the London Mozart Players, the Britten Sinfonia and the BBC Concert Orchestra, and has also conducted Handel's Messiah in Beijing.

Ernst Bacon was born 120 years ago, on 26 May 1898

An American composer whose name and work never travelled outside his own country was Ernst Bacon, born 26 May 1898 and died 16 March 1990. The writer of this note [Basil Ramsey] had experience of both his music and his noble prose, which breathes the spirit of Walt Whitman. He was especially prolific in solo settings of Emily Dickinson.

Mathis der Maler: 80th anniversary of the first performance, on 28 May 1938

Mathis der Maler, banned by the Nazis, is an opera in seven scenes which was first performed in Zurich on 28 May 1938. Both the music and libretto are by German composer Paul Hindemith.

The title figure is the German Renaissance painter Matthias Grünewald (c1470-1528), whose *Isenheim Altarpiece* inspired much creative twentieth century work. During the early stages of the opera, Hindemith also wrote a symphony by the same name, which became one of his best known works.

Hindemith was interested in the Protestant Reformation, his opera depicts the struggle for artistic freedom — both Grünewald's, in Renaissance times, and his own, during the rise of the Nazis.

Idris Sardi was born 80 years ago, on 7 June 1938

Indonesian violinist and composer Idris Sardi was born in Jakarta on 7 June 1938, learning violin from the age of six, first performing in public aged ten and becoming

proficient in playing in various different genres. At sixteen, when his father died, Idris took his father's position as leader of an orchestra.

He won awards for his music for several films.

Sardi died in Cibubur on 28 April 2014, aged seventy-five.

Arrigo Boito died 100 years ago, on 10 June 1918

Arrigo Boito was born in Padua on 24 February 1842 and died in Milan on 10 June 1918. Poet, librettist and composer, Boito is remembered especially for his libretti to Verdi's last two operas, *Otello* and *Falstaff*. He held strong views on music reform and other contentious subjects.

Heinrich von Herzogenberg was born 175 years ago, on 10 June 1843

Austrian composer and conductor Heinrich von Herzogenberg was born in Graz on 10 June 1843, the descendent of an aristocratic French family. He attended a Jesuit school in Feldkirch, also studying in Dresden, Graz and Munich, and studied law, philosophy and political science at university in Vienna, before studying music with Felix Otto Dessoff.

He co-founded the Leipzig Bach-Verein, and was its artistic director for ten years. During this period, Ethel Smyth was one of his composition pupils.

From 1885 he was professor of composition at Berlin's Hochschule für Musik.

Herzogenberg died suddenly in Wiesbaden on 9 October 1900, aged fifty-seven.

Karl-Birger Blomdahl died 50 years ago, on 14 June 1968

Born at Växjö in Sweden on 19 October 1916 was the composer Karl-Birger Blomdahl, who progressed to serialism and latterly electronics. He was Director of Music for Swedish Radio, and particularly remembered for his opera *Aniara* set in a spaceship. He lived until 14 June 1968.

Edvard Grieg was born 175 years ago, on 15 June 1843

Edvard Grieg was born in Bergen on 15 June 1843 and lived until 4 September 1907. The Norwegian composer we know best, probably for his Piano Concerto and the many *Lyric Pieces* for piano, which were so popular when first issued, book by book, in the 1860s and 70s.

Robert Gutter was born 80 years ago, on 16 June 1938

American conductor and teacher Robert Harold Gutter was born in New York City on 16 June 1938, the son of Jerome Sidney and Matilda Gutter. He studied at New York's High School of Music and Art and then at Yale University's School of Music. He also studied with Franco Ferrara at the Chighiana Academy in Siena.

During his long career, he directed various symphony orchestras and opera companies internationally, including in Buenos Aires, Florence, London, Madrid, Milan, New York, Paris, Stuttgart, Tienjin, Vienna and Washington. He guest conducted productions at Connecticut Grand Opera, Kazakhstan State Opera in Astana, Linz Stadtheater, New

Orleans Opera, Teatro Lirico d'Europa, Teatro Massimo Bellini and at Vienna Volksoper.

From 1970 until 1986 he was music director and conductor of the Springfield Symphony (MA), the largest professional orchestra in Massachusetts outside of Boston, building the orchestra into one of the USA's most accomplished regional orchestras and commissioning new works by Ned Rorem, Michael Colgrass and Gunthur Schuller. In 1986 Robert Gutter became the orchestra's conductor emeritus.

From 1993 until 2003 he was conductor and music director of the Fayetteville Symphony, and was later music director of the Greensboro Philharmonic.

He was principal guest conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra of the Ukraine in Kiev (1996-2000) and was also a principal guest conductor of the Philharmonic Orchestra 'Mihail Jora' in Bacau, Romania, and principal tour conductor of the Eastern European Philharmonic.

He was founder (in 1996) and artistic director of the International Institute for Conductors, an international training programme for professional conductors based in Romania, Greece and Bulgaria.

He also taught at a series of American universities — he was assistant professor at the University of Wisconsin (1964-67), associate professor at Drake University (1988) and associate professor at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (1988-95), then promoted to professor in 1995, where he was director of orchestral activities for twenty years. He also lectured at Wittenberg University (1969-70) and was a member of the jury at the Silvestri International Instrumental Competition at Tirgu-Mures in Romania (1993).

His students have won numerous awards and hold music directorships with various European and American orchestras and universities.

Robert Gutter died unexpectedly in Moldova on 8 May 2017, aged seventy-eight, whilst travelling abroad teaching and preparing for summer concerts scheduled in Romania and Greece.

Charles Gounod was born 200 years ago, on 17 June 1818

The French composer Charles Gounod was born in Paris on 17 June 1818 and died at St Cloud on 17 October 1893. His earlier years gave no real clue to his subsequent development. He was then involved with church music, organ playing, and even studying for the priesthood. But his commitment to composition became paramount, and for the rest of his days he followed this anxious pursuit. Perhaps he will be best remembered for the opera *Faust*, although his sojourn in England encouraged some oratorios for the big city choirs.

Mark Isaacs' 60th birthday, born on 22 June 1958

Australian-based composer and pianist Mark Isaacs was born in London on 22 June 1958, into a musical family that had representatives in both the classical and jazz worlds. His family emigrated to Australia when he was four, and he began to study piano at age five, began improvising at nine and composing classically from the age of twelve. At fourteen he played the solo part in his own piano concerto on Australian National TV.

Whilst already recognised as a major emerging jazz player in Australia, he began

university studies in classical piano and composition, initially in Sydney.

He continues to have parallel careers in jazz and classical music, and has achieved widespread recognition in both genres, as both composer and pianist. His first symphony received its first performance from the Queensland Symphony Orchestra in October 2013.

Sidney Mear was born 100 years ago, on 23 June 1918

American trumpet player and teacher Sidney Mear was born on 23 June 1918. While still a child, he studied with Herbert L Clarke and Bohumir Kryl, and at nineteen, with Pattee Evenson (Rochester Philharmonic's first trumpet) at the Eastman School of Music.

Sid played with the Rochester Philharmonic (1940-68), becoming the orchestra's principal trumpet in 1947, and playing for some of the world's most prominent conductors. His performances are featured on the orchestra's recordings on the Mercury Living Presence label.

He also taught at the Eastman School of Music from 1940 until retiring in 1980.

Sidney Mear died in Pittsford on 13 March 2016, aged ninety-seven.

Boris Christoff died 25 years ago, on 28 June 1993

The Bulgarian bass, Boris Christoff, was born in Plovdiv on 18 May 1914. He studied singing in Italy where he first appeared professionally on the stage. His popularity in roles such as *Boris Godunov* became widespread in Europe and America. He died in Rome on 28 June 1993.

Esa-Pekka Salonen's 60th birthday, born on 30 June 1958

Finnish orchestral conductor and composer Esa-Pekka Salonen was born in Helsinki on 30 June 1958, and grew up listening to the music of Beethoven and Bruckner. Hearing Messiaen's *Turangalila* Symphony whilst in his early teens kindled his interest in composition. He studied horn and composition at the Sibelius Academy, and conducting with Jorma Panula. With fellow composer Magnus Lindberg he formed the new music appreciation group *Korvat auki* ('Ears open') and the experimental music ensemble *Toimii* ('It works'). He continued his composition studies with Franco Donatoni, Niccolò Castiglioni and Einouhane Rautavaara.

His conducting début was with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra in 1979, conducting his own compositions. His conducting career was launched in 1983 when he took over a performance in London of Mahler's Symphony No 3 from Michael Tilson-Thomas at short notice.

In 1992 he became the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra's tenth music director, and during a seventeen year tenure, he has launched festivals of music and collaborated with the orchestra to record music by Stravinsky, Lutoslawsky and Kaija Saariaho — Salonen's colleague from the Sibelius Academy.

Larry Lake was born 75 years ago, on 2 July 1943

American-born Canadian composer, trumpeter, writer, broadcaster and record producer Larry Ellsworth Lake was born in Pennsylvania, USA on 2 July 1943 and grew up in

Florida and Georgia. He studied trumpet at the University of Miami with Harry Glantz, and maintained a career as a concert trumpeter alongside his broadcasting and other work, appearing many times on CBC Radio and Television as a chamber musician and soloist.

He went on to study electronic music at the University of Southern Illinois with Will Gay Bottje, Lejaren Hiller, Hubert S Howe Jr and Robert Moog, then moved to Canada in 1970 to continue electronic music studies at the University of Toronto with Gustav Ciamaga, but his studies came to an end two years later when he became a music producer for CBC Radio, contributing to programmes such as *MusicScope*, *Themes and Variations*, *Music Alive* and *Symphony Hall*.

From 1978 until 2007 he was host and music consultant for the CBC Radio programme *Two New Hours*.

In 1971 he was one of the co-founders of the Canadian Electronic Ensemble, and was the group's artistic director from 1985 until his death on 17 September 2013, aged seventy.

Alberto Colla's 50th birthday, born on 2 July 1968

Italian composer Alberto Colla was born in Alessandria on 2 July 1968. He studied composition with Carlo Mosso, also studying piano, choral music and choral conducting, then specialised in composition, studying in Parma with Azio Corghi and in Rome at the Accademia Internazionale Santa Cecilia.

He has written more than 120 works, and made his name in Italy with his prize-winning opera *Il processo* (Kafka's 'The Trial') in 2001.

He is particularly committed to realising large orchestral works, and has won many composition prizes for his writing.

Paul Daniel's 60th birthday, born on 5 July 1958

English conductor Paul Daniel was born in Birmingham on 5 July 1958. He was a chorister at Coventry Cathedral and studied music at King's College, Cambridge, then conducting with Adrian Boult and Edward Downes at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London.

His positions have included music director of Opera Factory (1987-1990), musical director of Opera North and Principal Conductor of the English Northern Philharmonia (1990-1997), Music Director of English National Opera (1997-2005), Principal Conductor of the West Australian Symphony Orchestra (from 2009) and principal conductor and artistic advisor of the Real Filharmonica de Galicia (in Santiago de Compostela) from January 2013.

Honours include an Olivier Award in 1998, a Gramophone Award in 1999 for his Naxos recordings of English music, and a CBE in 2000.

Leo Sowerby died 50 years ago, on 7 July 1968

The prolific American composer, organist and choirmaster Leo Sowerby, the 'Dean of American church music', was born in Grand Rapids on 1 May 1895. Primarily self-taught, he started composing when he was ten. His early Violin Concerto was premiered by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. He studied at the American Conservatory in Chicago and

became friendly with Percy Grainger.

During World War I, Sowerby was a clarinet player and bandmaster in the US Army, serving in England and France. He subsequently remained in Europe for several years, studying in Rome. After returning to the USA, he began a long-term appointment as organist-choirmaster at St James' Episcopal Church in Chicago. He retired from this post and became the founding director of the College of Church Musicians at Washington National Cathedral.

His more than five hundred compositions include *Canticle of the Sun*, which received the 1946 Pulitzer Prize, many anthems, and five symphonies. There are many recordings of his works.

As a teacher, his students included Ned Rorem and William Ferris.

Sowerby died in Port Clinton on 7 July 1968.

Ronald Settle died 20 years ago, on 11 July 1998

British composer, pianist, teacher, writer and examiner Ronald Coulter Settle, born in Merseyside on 21 June 1909, was active in the middle of the twentieth century in Liverpool UK. Settle's book *Music in the theatre* was published in 1957 by Herbert Jenkins in London. He was musical director at the Liverpool Playhouse for twenty-six years before being dismissed in 1971, and his own *I Remember, I Remember* was staged there in 1960. In 1991 he returned to the Playhouse to perform in a concert to help prevent the theatre from closing.

He wrote the song *Shadows* for Joan Hammond (performed by Cheryl Barker on Melba Recordings' CD *Pure Diva* released in 2011). The British composer Ian Venables studied piano with Settle at the Bluecoat Chambers in Liverpool between 1971 and 1977.

Ronald Settle died on 11 July 1998, aged eighty-nine.

Eugène Ysaÿe was born 160 years ago, on 16 July 1858

'The most outstanding and individual violinist I have ever heard in my life.' — Carl Flesch

Belgian violinist, composer and conductor Eugène Ysaÿe was born in Liège on 16 July 1858 and from the age of five, studied the violin with his father. From age seven, he studied with Désiré Heynberg at the Liège Conservatoire for four years, but had to leave because of lack of progress, due to full-time work playing in local orchestras. Henri Vieuxtemps arranged for Ysaÿe to be readmitted, and this time he studied with Henryk Wieniawski, and later with Vieuxtemps.

He began his career as principal violin with the Benjamin Bilse beer-hall orchestra, then began working as a concert soloist and teacher. New works were dedicated to him, including high profile pieces by Chausson, Franck and Saint-Saëns.

He founded the Ysaÿe Quartet in 1886, and this group gave the first performance of his friend Claude Debussy's String Quartet.

Ysaÿe was diabetic, and as his health deteriorated, he turned to composition, conducting

and teaching. His works include music for solo violin, violin and piano, chamber music, orchestral music and concertos, and an opera *Peter the Miner*, set to a text in the Walloon language. His six Sonatas for Solo Violin, Op 27, incorporate unusual *pizzicato* and chordal effects. For four years he was conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. His pupils included Nathan Milstein, Louis Persinger and William Primrose.

Eugène Ysaÿe died in Brussels on 12 May 1931, aged seventy-two.

Ruggiero Ricci was born 100 years ago, on 24 July 1918

American violinist Ruggiero Ricci was born in California to Italian immigrants on 24 July 1918. His first violin lessons were with his father, and from the age of seven he studied with Elizabeth Lackey and Louis Persinger. He first played in public at ten, and at eleven played the Mendelssohn concerto. He studied in Berlin in the 1930s, learning in the tradition of Adolf Busch with Georg Kulenkampff.

Ricci became the first violinist to record Paganini's 24 Caprices Op 1 in their original form, and gave many premieres, including of violin concertos by Gerard Schurmann, Alberto Ginastera and Gottfried von Einem.

His solo career lasted seventy years, he made more than five hundred recordings and taught at Indiana University, Juilliard, the University of Michigan and at Universität Mozarteum Salzburg.

Ruggiero Ricci died on 6 August 2012, aged ninety-four.

Roger Smalley was born 75 years ago, on 26 July 1943

British-born Australian composer, pianist and conductor Roger Smalley was born in Lancashire, England on 26 July 1943. He studied at London's Royal College of Music — piano with Antony Hopkins, and composition with Peter Racine Fricker and John White. He also studied composition with Alexander Goehr at Morley College and with Karlheinz Stockhausen in Cologne and Pierre Boulez in Darmstadt.

His early orchestral work *Gloria Tibi Trinitas* won the Royal Philharmonic Society Prize, and his first Piano Concerto, commissioned by the BBC, took first place in the 1987 UNESCO International Rostrum of Composers. He was commissioned by a wide range of organisations, and his music is performed, broadcast and recorded widely.

With Tim Souster, he formed the live electronics group Intermodulation, and toured internationally for six years.

In 1968 he became the first artist in residence at King's College, Cambridge.

Following a successful three-month residency, Smalley took a permanent position at the University of Western Australia's music school in 1976.

As a pianist, he recorded Schumann song cycles and a CD of piano music by Australian composers.

Roger Smalley died in Sydney on 18 August 2015, aged seventy-two, after a long battle with Parkinson's disease.

Hans Rott was born 160 years ago, on 1 August 1858

In the late 1980s musicologist Paul Banks discovered, in the Austrian National Library archives, a symphony in E major by twenty-year-old Hans Rott. The discovery attracted some considerable attention.

Born on 1 August 1858 in Vienna, the son of a singer and an actress, Rott studied at the Vienna Conservatory. Anton Bruckner was his organ teacher, and Gustav Mahler was a fellow student. Hans Rott had a highly successful early career, but things soon began to go wrong in his life — his mother died, his father suffered a bad accident, and Brahms rejected his Symphony. Following an incident on a train in which Rott drew a gun and threatened a fellow passenger, he was judged insane, and taken to hospital. After a suicide attempt, he was transferred to a Viennese insane asylum, where he 'survived' for more than three years until his death there on 25 June 1884, aged just 25.

Alfred Schnittke died 20 years ago, on 3 August 1998

The American première on 24 March 1988 of Russian-born composer Alfred Schnittke's first symphony was held during the physically frail Schnittke's first visit to the USA. He had suffered the first of several serious strokes three years earlier, but was to live for another ten years until 3 August 1998, where he died in Hamburg, his home since 1990.

Many of the audience voted with their feet, leaving before the Boston Symphony Orchestra's performance had ended, but those listening to the end gave the work a standing ovation, and the orchestra also sided with the composer. From the 1980s onwards, Schnittke, with his easily identifiable polystylistic music, his notable courage and his mischievous sense of humour, had become one of the most important post-Soviet names in Russian music.

Born at Engels in the former Soviet Union on 24 November 1934, his roots (and his citizenship) were both Russian and German — his father was a Russian Jew born in Frankfurt, and his mother was a German born in Russia. He studied in Vienna, then at the Moscow Conservatory, joined the Union of Composers, and was encouraged by Phillip Herschkowitz, a disciple of Anton Webern. Working for the Conservatory for ten years, as 'instructor of instrumentation', he was from then on able to support himself by writing more than sixty film scores. He was prolific with his serious music, too, which includes nine symphonies, four violin concertos, two cello concertos and the operas *Life with an Idiot*, *Gesualdo* and *Historia von D Johann Fausten*.

Olga Neuwirth's 50th birthday, born on 4 August 1968

Austrian composer Olga Neuwirth was born in Graz on 4 August 1968, and studied trumpet from the age of seven. She studied composition in San Francisco, then with Erich Urbanner at the Vienna Academy of Music and Performing Arts. Later she studied with Tristan Murail and worked at IRCAM. Adriana Hölszky and Luigi Nono were also important influences on her life and music.

Neuwirth's compositions, which exhibit a variety of sound patterns, constantly metamorphosing, have been featured at the Salzburg Festival, and she has been composer in residence at the Lucerne Festival. In 2008 she was awarded the Heidelberg Prize for Female Artists.

Henry Charles Litolff was born 200 years ago, on 7 August 1818

Henry Charles Litolff was born 7 August 1818 in London. Of Alsatian descent, Litolff was known as a travelling virtuoso pianist (following studies with Moscheles in London), a successful music publisher (of piano music and teaching material) and composer (e.g. of the *Concerto symphonique*) for piano and orchestra. He died at Bois-Colombes on 5 August 1891.

Alfredo Catalani died 125 years ago, on 7 August 1893

Alfredo Catalani, an Italian composer, was born in Lucca on 19 June 1854. His operatic output was considerable, with *La Wally* from 1892 proving a work highly regarded by Toscanini. He died in Milan on 7 August 1893.

Granville Bantock was born 150 years ago, on 7 August 1868

British composer and conductor Granville Bantock was born in London on 7 August 1868. He studied with Gordon Saunders at Trinity College of Music and with Frederick Corder at the Royal Academy of Music. He became a champion of other composers' music, including Jean Sibelius, Joseph Holbrooke, Edward German, Hubert Parry, Charles Stanford and his friend Havergal Brian.

He conducted concerts, sometimes dedicating a whole concert to the music of one composer, and he founded the short-lived music magazine *The New Quarterly Music Review*.

He died in London, on 16 October 1946.

Luis Gianneo died 50 years ago, on 15 August 1968

Composer, conductor, teacher, pianist and organist Luis Gianneo began (9 January 1897) and ended (15 August 1968) his life in Buenos Aires, and, apart from three brief periods in Europe, spent his life in his native Argentina. He founded two orchestras — the Argentinian Youth Orchestra in 1945 (for Radio El Mundo) and the Youth Symphony Orchestra of Radio Nacional. He was director of the National Conservatory, a member of both the Cultural Commission and the Academy of Fine Arts, and he won many awards for his music. His work can be divided into four periods — early development with much French and German influence (1913-23), a transition period, creating a national style from his European training and local folk music (1923-32), a period of maturity in folk music and neoclassicism, resulting in simple, economical music (1933-53) and a gradual move towards the use of twelve note music (1953-68).

Florent Schmitt died 60 years ago, on 17 August 1958

The French composer Florent Schmitt was born at Blamont, Meurthe-et-Moselle, on 28 September 1870. He studied under Fauré and Massenet, eventually becoming a prolific composer of highly evocative music, including several operas. He died at Neuilly-sur-Seine on 17 August 1958.

Miriam Pirazzini was born 100 years ago, on 21 August 1918

Italian mezzo Miriam Pirazzini was born at Castelfranco Veneto on 21 August 1918. She was one of Italy's top mezzos for about twenty years from the mid-1940s. Her roles

included Amneris in *Aida*, Azucena in *Il trovatore*, Adalgisa in *Norma* and the Princesse de Bouillon in *Adriana Lecouvreur*.

She died in Rome on 25 December 2016, aged ninety-eight.

Lili Boulanger was born 125 years ago, on 21 August 1893 and died 100 years ago, on 15 March 1918 (see above)

Leonard Bernstein was born 100 years ago, on 25 August 1918

On 25 August 1918 at Lawrence, USA, was born Leonard Bernstein, a musician of many parts and many brilliant achievements. His influence in giving serious music a more comfortable image for people in general counterbalanced his successes as a composer and conductor. He died in New York on 14 October 1990.

Ralph Vaughan Williams died 60 years ago, on 26 August 1958

The English composer Ralph Vaughan Williams was born at Down Ampney, Gloucestershire, on 12 October 1872 and died in London on 26 August 1958. Like many musicians, his earlier life included a spell as a church organist. Besides his notable English teachers of composition, he spent periods with Max Bruch and Maurice Ravel. From all this stemmed a flow of music which has included several masterpieces of 20th century English music.

David Maslanka was born 75 years ago, on 30 August 1943

'Music is one of the expressions of the soul ... If a person is prepared artistically, then a sudden eruption of soul force might appear as a composition or a powerful performance. The person may have no idea where the force came from.' — David Maslanka

American composer David Maslanka was born in New Bedford, Massachusetts on 30 August 1943. He spent his childhood in New England, and some of his compositions are influenced by a close relationship with the ocean. He studied at Oberlin Conservatory (including a year at the Mozarteum in Salzburg) and at Michigan State University, where he studied composition with H Owen Reed.

As a freelance composer he was best known for his works for wind ensemble. His melodic, tonal and complex music has an Americana feel, and has been performed in Australia, Canada, Europe, Japan and the USA. There are more than 150 pieces, including fifteen concertos, seven symphonies for concert wind band, a mass for soprano and baritone solos, choir and symphonic band, chamber music and music for symphony orchestra. Many of his compositions for wind and percussion have become established band repertory.

His music has appeared on several record labels, but has mostly been recorded and produced by Albany Records.

David Maslanka died at his home in Montana on 6 August 2017 from colon cancer, aged seventy-three.

Adriano Banchieri was born 450 years ago, on 3 September 1568

Italian composer, music theorist, organist and poet Adriano Banchieri was born Tommaso

Banchieri in Bologna on 3 September 1568. He became a Benedictine monk. One of his monastic teachers, Gioseffo Guami, had a big influence on his musical style. He spent much of his life at the monastery of San Michele in Bosco, near Bologna, eventually becoming the monastery's abbot.

Banchieri was one of the developers of 'Madrigal comedy' form, writing several madrigal comedies with plot and character development, and he was an important composer of canzonettas. He also published a series of organ works, *l'Organo suonarino*.

He died in Bologna in 1634.

George Enescu Festival: 60th anniversary, running since 4 September 1958

The George Enescu Festival is Romania's largest classical music festival, one of the largest in Eastern Europe, and it has a high profile internationally. It honours the memory of Romania's best-known composer, George Enescu.

The festival has been running since 4 September 1958, the official opening day of the first festival, three years after Enescu's death. The festival is staged in September, every two years, in the odd-numbered years, and features an average of twenty works by the Romanian composer. A linked competition takes place in the even-numbered years.

Although centred in the Romanian capital, Bucharest, events also take place in many other cities.

Nigel Westlake's 60th birthday, born on 6 September 1958

Award-winning Australian composer Nigel Westlake, born in Sydney on 6 September 1958, studied clarinet with his father, Donald Westlake, who was principal clarinettist with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra from 1961 until 1979. Nigel left school early to pursue a music performance career, touring the world with ballet companies, a circus troupe, chamber music groups and fusion bands.

In the late 1970s he formed a classical / jazz-rock / world-music fusion band to play original music, and his interest in composition dates from this time, when he also started to receive offers to write music for radio and circus. Commissions for TV and film followed.

In 1983 he studied contemporary music in The Netherlands, and from 1987 until 1992 he played clarinet with the Australia Ensemble, resident at the University of New South Wales. In 1992 he joined guitarist John Williams' group 'Attacca' as performer and composer, for tours in Australia and the United Kingdom. Since then he has concentrated primarily on composition.

In 1997 he made his conducting début with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra.

Film credits include *Miss Potter*, *Babe*, *Babe — Pig in the City*, *Children of the Revolution*, *A Little Bit of Soul*, *The Nugget* and Imax films *Antarctica*, *Imagine*, *The Edge* and *Solarmax*. *Babe* and *Miss Potter* were international hits, and his score for *Miss Potter* won several awards.

Omphalo Centric Lecture (1984) for percussion quartet has become one of the most frequently performed and recorded works in the percussion repertoire.

Jacopo Foroni died 160 years ago, on 8 September 1858

Italian opera composer and conductor Jacopo Foroni was born in the Province of Verona on 28 July 1824. His father Domenico Foroni was also a composer and conductor, and his sister was the operatic soprano Antonietta Foroni-Conti.

Jacopo Foroni studied in Milan with composer Alberto Mazzucato and began his career conducting in Belgium, France and the Netherlands.

He spent most of his short working life in Sweden, arriving in 1849 and dying in Stockholm on 8 September 1858, during a cholera epidemic.

Jacopo Foroni wrote the operas *Margherita* (1848), *Cristina, regina di Svezia* (1849), *I gladiatori* (1852) and *Advokathen Panthelin* (1858).

Georg Johann Schinn was born 250 years ago, on 14 September 1768

German composer, flautist and viola player Georg Johann Schinn was born in Sinzing near Regensburg on 14 September 1768. His initial musical training was with his schoolteacher father, Johann Baptist Schinn.

He was active in Dillingen (where he studied philosophy and law at the university), Eichstädt (where he played flute at the chapel of the Prince Bishop), Salzburg (where he undertook further studies with and befriended Michael Haydn) and Munich, where he played viola in the local court orchestra and died on 18 February 1833.

His music included a German Requiem for four voices and two books of songs. With Joseph Otter and Pater Werigand Rettensteiner he wrote the *Biographische Skizze von Michael Haydn*.

Hildegard von Bingen was born 920 years ago, on 16 September 1098

The German abbess, mystic, visionary, monastic leader, healer, teacher and composer Hildegard von Bingen was born in Bernersheim on 16 September 1098. Born as a sickly tenth child to a noble family, she was dedicated at birth to the church, and sent away aged eight to receive a religious education.

Her music, mostly liturgical plainchant, and created to be performed by the nuns in her convent, was very important to her — she saw it as the means to recapture the beauty and joy of paradise. About eighty works survive, including the well-known *Ordo Virtutum*, a kind of early oratorio on the subject of the struggle of a human soul between sixteen virtues and one male voice part, representing the devil.

Hildegard was a surprisingly powerful lady for her time, travelling, speaking in public and communicating with emperors, popes and statesmen. She died in Rupertsberg on 17 September 1179, aged 81.

Jane Manning's 80th birthday, born on 20 September 1938

Jane Manning, a distinctive English soprano and enthusiastic advocate of modern song, was born on 20 September 1938. Her support and performance of contemporary music has assisted many composers, in live performance, broadcast, and on record.

Archibald James Potter was born 100 years ago, on 22 September 1918

Irish composer A J Potter was born on 22 September 1918, son of a blind Belfast piano tuner, and died on 5 July 1980. Brought up by relatives in Kent, he won a scholarship to the Royal College of Music in London and studied with Vaughan Williams. A significant figure in Irish music, Potter is known for his arrangement of the Dublin ballad *Finnegan's Wake*. He was also active as a broadcaster, examiner, teacher and writer.

George Gershwin was born 120 years ago, on 26 September 1898

Born into a Russian Jewish migrant family in Brooklyn, New York on 26 September 1898, was George Gershwin. His extraordinary talent in music gave a decisive edge to his career and drew forth immortal 'classics' such as the *Rhapsody in Blue* and, even more remarkable, the opera *Porgy and Bess*. He died in Hollywood on 11 July 1937.

Mihaela Ursuleasa was born 40 years ago, on 27 September 1978

Romanian pianist Mihaela Ursuleasa was born in Brasov on 27 September 1978. She studied at the Vienna Conservatory with Heinz Medjimorec and won the Clara Haskil Competition in 1995, aged sixteen.

Her first solo album *Piano & Forte* won the ECHO Klassik solo recording of the year award in 2010, and her second solo album *Romanian Rhapsody* was released in March 2011.

Ursuleasa died suddenly in Vienna, aged only thirty-three, probably from a brain haemorrhage. Her body was found in her apartment there on the morning of 2 August 2012.

Peter Aston was born 80 years ago, on 5 October 1938

English composer, conductor and academic Peter Aston was born in Birmingham on 5 October 1938 and studied at the Birmingham School of Music and at York University, where he later lectured in music from 1964 in Wilfrid Mellers' newly established music department. He was professor of music at the University of East Anglia for a quarter of a century from 1974, and later became Emeritus Professor of composition. Whilst in Norwich he was a Lay Canon at the cathedral and founded the Norwich Festival of Contemporary Church Music. He was invited by Britten to conduct the Aldeburgh Festival Singers. In the 1990s he became principal conductor of the Sacramento Bach Festival Choir and Orchestra.

He is best known for his Communion service, the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in F and other church music, but he also wrote vocal and instrumental chamber music, choral and instrumental works and a 1969 opera for children, *Sacrapant the Sorcerer*. Of particular note are his early *Five Songs of Crazy Jane* (setting W B Yeats for solo soprano) and the cantata *My Dancing Day* of 1966.

Peter Aston wrote extensively about music and worked as an editor of Baroque music.

He died on 13 September 2013, aged seventy-four. As part of a tribute, Sharon Choa, director of music at the University of East Anglia, commented: 'his love of teaching earned him much affection from all students. He founded the Friends of UEA Music scheme, rounding up a host of supporters to contribute towards creating scholarships for

Performance students, ensuring that such teaching could be kept at a high level despite government cuts. These scholarships are still benefitting our students.'

As a mark of respect, the UEA's flag was lowered on 1 October 2013, when Peter Aston's funeral took place at noon in Norwich Cathedral.

Henry Carey died 275 years ago, on 5 October 1743

Known principally for *Sally in our Alley*, Henry Carey was both an English poet and composer, born possibly on 4 October 1690 (or in 1687?). His burlesques on Italian opera were popular. He committed suicide (by hanging himself) in London on 5 October 1743.

Charles Hubert Hastings Parry died 100 years ago, on 7 October 1918

English composer Hubert Parry was born in Bournemouth on 27 February 1848. His interest in music developed at Eton, where he was taught music by George Job Elvey, organist of St George's Chapel, Windsor. At Oxford he studied law and modern history, destined for a career in insurance, but he continued with music alongside his work, taking lessons from William Sterndale Bennett and Edward Dannreuther.

Later, George Grove took an interest in Parry, who was Grove's assistant editor at the new Dictionary of Music and Musicians (writing 123 articles), and then professor of composition and music history at the newly formed Royal College of Music, when Grove became the first director there. Parry's students included Ralph Vaughan Williams, Gustav Holst, Frank Bridge and John Ireland. When Grove retired, Parry became the RCM's director from 1895 until his death at Rustington, West Sussex on 7 October 1918.

Parry's choral music was taken more seriously than his orchestral works, during his lifetime, although Shaw dismissed the 1892 oratorio *Job* as 'the most utter failure ever achieved by a thoroughly respectable musician'. The diatonic Parry style with influences of Bach and Brahms, itself influenced later composers including Elgar and Vaughan Williams.

Enzo Dara was born 80 years ago, on 13 October 1938

Italian basso buffo ('funny bass') Enzo Dara was born in Mantua on 13 October 1938. His first role was in *La bohème* in Fano in 1960, and from there he went on to sing at Reggio Emilia, Spoleto, La Scala and Covent Garden.

His best known roles were Don Bartolo (*The Barber of Seville*), Don Magnifico (*La Cenerentola*), the title role in *Don Pasquale*, Dulcamara (*L'Elisir d'Amore*) and Taddeo in *The Italian Girl in Algiers*.

In 1994 he published a collection of memories, anecdotes and observations, entitled *Anche il buffo nel suo piccolo*.

Enzo Dara died in Mantua on 25 August 2017, aged seventy-eight.

Franz Reizenstein died 50 years ago, on 15 October 1968

British composer Franz Theodor Reizenstein was born in Germany on 7 June 1911 and grew up in Nuremberg, beginning to compose from the age of five. Later he studied with Paul Hindemith at the Berliner Hochschule für Musik. He was one of nearly seventy

Jewish composers who emigrated to England to escape Hitler and the Third Reich. In London, he studied with Ralph Vaughan Williams at the Royal College of Music.

Reizenstein wrote two operas, *Men Against the Sea* and *Anna Kraus*, but is best remembered for his 1949 Piano Quintet and the notorious *Concerto Popolare* at the Hoffnung Music Festivals.

He died on 15 October 1968.

Géori Boué was born 100 years ago, on 16 October 1918

French soprano Géori Boué was born on 16 October 1918 in Toulouse, where she studied solfège, piano, harp and voice at the Conservatory.

Aged only sixteen she made her debut at the Capitole de Toulouse in 1934, in various small roles, but by 1939 she was singing Mimi in *La bohème* at the Opéra-Comique in Paris, and from 1949 she was appearing internationally, in Barcelona, Chicago, Mexico, Milan and Moscow.

She retired from the stage in 1970, leaving many recordings, and died on 5 January 2017, aged ninety-eight.

Charles Gounod died 125 years ago, on 17 October 1893

The French composer Charles Gounod was born in Paris on 17 June 1818 and died at St Cloud on 17 October 1893. His earlier years gave no real clue to his subsequent development. He was then involved with church music, organ playing, and even studying for the priesthood. But his commitment to composition became paramount, and for the rest of his days he followed this anxious pursuit. Perhaps he will be best remembered for the opera *Faust*, although his sojourn in England encouraged some oratorios for the big city choirs.

Paul Zukofsky was born 75 years ago, on 22 October 1943

American violinist and conductor Paul Zukofsky was born in Brooklyn, New York on 22 October 1943. His mother was musician and composer Celia Thaew and his father was the American objectivist poet Louis Zukovsky. Paul Zukofsky first played in public at the age of nine, playing the first movement of Mozart's Violin Concerto No 3, and when he was thirteen gave a recital at Carnegie Hall. He studied at Juilliard with Ivan Galamian.

During his long career, specialising in contemporary music, he made more than sixty recordings, working with, performing and recording the music of many twentieth century composers. He also created his own record label, Musical Observations Inc.

He was executor, guardian and copyright contact for his parents' works, and was also head of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute at the University of Southern California at Los Angeles from 1992 until 1996. He was also involved in the relocation of Arnold Schoenberg's archive from Los Angeles to Vienna in 1998.

Zukofsky gave the first performance of Philip Glass' Violin Concerto in 1987, and also took the title role in the 1976 recording of the same composer's opera *Einstein on the Beach*.

He wrote *On Violin Harmonics* in *Perspectives of New Music*, reprinted in *Perspectives on Notation and Performance*, edited by Benjamin Boretz and Edward T Cone.

Paul Zukofsky died in Hong Kong on 6 June 2017 from non-Hodgkin lymphoma, aged seventy-three.

Georges Bizet was born 180 years ago, on 25 October 1838

Possibly the title *Carmen* is better known than the name of its composer, Georges Bizet. Born 25 October 1838, he was to write several operas of little success before the work that eventually became so popular. His output was varied and during his lifetime works such as *Jeux d'enfants* brought him more acclaim than anything else. He lived until 3 June 1875.

Dmitri Kogan was born 40 years ago, on 27 October 1978

High profile Russian violinist Dmitri Pavlovich Kogan was born in Moscow on 27 October 1978 into a well-known musical family. He began to play the violin when six years old, then studied at the Moscow Conservatory and at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki.

He performed regularly at top concert halls in many countries. Besides a series of violin concertos, Kogan's repertoire included Paganini's 24 Caprices.

He became the first violinist to play for explorers at the North Pole, on 19 April 2009. In 2010 he became an Honoured Artist of the Russian Federation.

He put a lot of effort into charity work, particularly supporting children and young people, set up a fund to support cultural projects and created and ran several music festivals.

He recorded ten CDs on various labels.

Dmitri Kogan died on 29 August 2017, aged thirty-eight, following a long battle with cancer.

Elliot del Borgo was born 80 years ago, on 27 October 1938

American composer and conductor Elliot del Borgo was born in Port Chester, New York, on 27 October 1938. He studied at the State University of New York, Temple University and Philadelphia Conservatory.

His first instrument was the trumpet, but his love of percussion shows through in his music.

His several hundred compositions, generally eclectic and vigorous in their harmonic and rhythmic style, include music for the 1980 Winter Olympics in Lake Placid, and he was professor of music at the Crane School of Music.

Del Borgo died on 30 May 2013, aged seventy-four.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky died 125 years ago, on 6 November 1893

Russian composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky was born in Votkinsk on 7 May 1840. At the age of four he began piano lessons, and showed great talent, but his parents decided to have him trained for a career as a civil servant, and sent him away at the age of ten to

study.

In 1854 his mother died from cholera, and a few weeks after this, Tchaikovsky wrote a waltz in her memory — his first serious attempt at composition.

He graduated from school in 1859 and spent three years in the civil service. In his spare time he took music theory classes from Nikolai Zarembo, and followed Zarembo to the St Petersburg Conservatory. When his father agreed to support him, Tchaikovsky gave up his job and from 1862 he studied harmony, counterpoint and fugue with Zarembo and instrumentation and composition with the conservatory's director and founder, Anton Rubinstein, who was impressed by the young man's talent.

On graduation he was given a teaching job at the Moscow Conservatory by Nikolai Rubinstein, Anton's younger brother. He steered an independent path, away from Mily Balakirev's nationalistic ideas and the conservative faction at the conservatories, although his first major achievement — the fantasy overture *Romeo and Juliet*, was the result of a working relationship with Balakirev.

He was married briefly to a former student, Antonina Millukova, but most scholars believe that he was gay.

From 1877 until 1890 he received financial support from Nadezhda von Meck, a wealthy widow and patron of the arts, and they wrote more than 1,200 letters to each other.

Tchaikovsky became well-known outside of Russia, but was classed as something of a renegade within his own country, until 1880, when the prevailing wind changed, and things began to go well for him.

His music is generally cosmopolitan, but often includes Russian traditional tunes and dance forms.

Tchaikovsky died in St Petersburg on 6 November 1893, just a few days after the first performance of his Symphony No 6, the *Pathétique*. The cause of his death is usually attributed to cholera, possibly from drinking contaminated drinking water, but some believe that he killed himself.

François Couperin was born 350 years ago, on 10 November 1668

The most gifted of the Couperin family, François, was born (10 November 1668) and died (11 September 1733) in Paris. He contributed much to music in the court of Louis XIV, both with composition and performance. His published collections left a strong impression of mastery, especially to Bach.

Gioacchino Rossini died 150 years ago, on 13 November 1868

Gioacchino Rossini (29 February 1792 — 13 November 1868), the most influential Italian composer of the time, spent much of his long life writing operas for performance in Venice, Milan, Naples, Rome and Paris, and raised *opera buffa* to new heights. He mastered rhythm and comedy in music, and described himself as 'the last of the classicists'.

Andris Nelsons's 40th birthday, born on 18 November 1978

Latvian conductor Andris Nelsons was born in Riga on 18 November 1978 into a family of musicians. He studied piano as a boy, and sang in his mother's early music ensemble. He took up the trumpet when he was twelve, and worked as a trumpeter for Latvian National Opera.

He studied conducting in St Petersburg with Alexander Titov and also took part in masterclasses run by Neeme Järvi and Jorma Panula.

He was principal conductor of Latvian National Opera from 2003-7, and chief conductor of Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonie (Herford, Germany) from 2006-9. In 2009 he first appeared at New York Metropolitan Opera, conducting *Turandot*, and at Bayreuth in 2010 conducting *Lohengrin*. In 2011 he made his debut with the Boston Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall.

Giovanni Maria Bononcini died 340 years ago, on 18 November 1678

The Italian composer, violinist and proponent of modal theory Giovanni Maria Bononcini was born on 23 September 1642 at Modena, where, from 1671, he was a court musician. In 1673 he published an influential treatise on music called *Musico Prattico*. He died in Modena on 18 November 1678. His two sons, Giovanni Battista Bononcini and Antonio Maria Bononcini, were also composers.

Johan Helmich Roman died 260 years ago, on 20 November 1758

The Swedish composer Johan Helmich Roman (born 26 October 1694; died 20 November 1758) was the son of a violinist in the Royal Opera Orchestra in Stockholm. Roman the son, who played his violin at the Royal Court from the age of seven, was employed there from the age of sixteen in the same capacity as his father. After a year or so, he was allowed to travel to complete his studies.

He played in Handel's opera orchestra in London, earning the nickname 'the Swedish virtuoso' and worked for the Duke of Newcastle, before being summoned back to Stockholm, where he was swiftly promoted to vice concertmaster and later, in 1727, to concertmaster.

In the late 1730s Roman travelled again, to England, France and Italy, meeting many of Europe's finest musicians (including, probably, Tartini). His most famous piece, the *Drottningholm Music* (1744) was written for the wedding of King Adolf Fredrik and Queen Lovisa Ulrika, and it was something of a swan song, written before he retired from the Swedish Royal Court.

Roman's four decades of labour laid the foundations of modern Swedish musical life.

Pietro Alessandro Yon died 75 years ago, on 22 November 1943

The Italian-American composer and organist Pietro Alessandro Yon was born 8 August 1886 at Settimo Vittone, Italy. Following studies in Milan, Turin and Rome, he was appointed organist of St Peter's in Rome, St Francis-Xavier's in New York and then St Patrick's in New York. He composed mostly church music and numerous organ works. He died on 22 November 1943 in Huntington, Long Island, New York, USA.

André Caplet was born 140 years ago, on 23 November 1878

French composer and conductor André Caplet was born on a boat sailing between Le Havre and Honfleur, on 23 November 1878. He won first prize in the 1901 Prix de Rome, with Maurice Ravel winning second prize.

Caplet became a close friend and collaborator of Claude Debussy, and is these days better known for his Debussy orchestrations than for his own compositions.

His own innovative works include *Le Masque de la mort rouge* (1908), *Septuor à cordes vocales et instrumentales* (1909), *Le Miroir de Jésus* (1923) and *Conte Fantastique* (published 1924).

Caplet's conducting activities included working with Boston Opera (1910-14).

André Caplet died on 22 April 1925, aged forty-six, as a result of being gassed whilst serving in World War I.

Gerard Mortier was born 75 years ago, on 25 November 1943

Belgian opera director and administrator Gerard Mortier was born in Ghent on 25 November 1943. He was general director of La Monnaie in Brussels from 1981 until 1991 and of the Salzburg Festival from 1990 until 2001. He was also a founding director of Germany's Ruhr Triennale arts festival and was general director of l'Opéra National de Paris from 2004 until 2009.

In 2007 New York City Opera named Mortier as their next general director, but the contract was terminated in 2008 due to various financial and other problems, and Mortier didn't take up the post. From 2010 until 2013 he was artistic director of Teatro Real in Madrid, becoming artistic advisor from 2014.

He died in Brussels on 8 March 2014, aged seventy.

Claudio Monteverdi died 375 years ago, on 29 November 1643

On 15 May in 1567 was born Claudio Monteverdi in Cremona, a singularly gifted musician in virtually all aspects of the art. He became crucial to musical life in Italy and was of enormous influence with his innovative development of most musical forms. Monteverdi died in Venice on 29 November 1643.

Frank Zappa died 25 years ago, on 4 December 1993

Self-taught American composer, electric guitarist, singer and songwriter Frank Zappa was born in Maryland on 21 December 1940 to parents of Italian and French descent. Whilst at school he became interested in the experimental percussion-based music of Edgard Varèse and also in 1950s rhythm and blues, and began writing classical music. This developed into an eclectic style which became difficult to categorize.

In the 1960s he was guitarist in the band The Mothers of Invention.

Zappa wrote his own lyrics to his songs, and these reflected his criticism of education, religion, the establishment and censorship.

He died in Los Angeles on 4 December 1993, aged 52, leaving a reputation as one of the most original composers and guitarists of his time, but remains as a strong influence on

many contemporary composers and other musicians.

Jórunn Viðar was born 100 years ago, on 7 December 1918

Icelandic pianist and composer Jórunn Viðar was born in Reykjavik on 7 December 1918, where she grew up. She studied for two years at the Music Academy in Berlin, and later at the Juilliard School of Music in New York.

She worked as a pianist and accompanist in Iceland.

Her music is based on Icelandic folk songs.

Jórunn Viðar died on 27 February 2017, aged ninety-eight.

Joan Cross died 25 years ago, on 12 December 1993

The English soprano and later administrator, Joan Cross, was born on 7 September 1900. She was also a founder member of the English Opera Group, and later founder of the National School of Opera. Her earlier career on the stage gave her leading roles in several of the Britten operas, and when she died on 12 December 1993 she was buried in the same Aldeburgh churchyard as Benjamin Britten, Peter Pears and Imogen Holst.

Mary Jarred died 25 years ago, on 12 December 1993

English mezzo/contralto Mary Jarred was born in Brotton on 9 October 1899. She studied at the Royal College of Music in London and began singing minor roles at Covent Garden.

She sang Margret in the first British broadcast of Berg's *Wozzeck* conducted by Boult, was Mother Goose in the first British stage performance of Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* and was one of the original sixteen singers in Vaughan Williams' *Serenade to Music*.

On retirement, Mary Jarred was a professor at London's Royal Academy of Music. She died on 12 December 1993, aged ninety-four.

Dvorák's 'New World' Symphony: first performed 125 years ago, on 15 December 1893

Dvorák's three-year sojourn in America in the 1880s drew forth one of the world's most popular symphonies, *From the New World*, which was premièred in New York on 15 December 1893. Dvorák's fondness for the Negro music he heard in America was the progenitor of the slow movement, so reminiscent of a spiritual.

Giacomo Puccini was born 160 years ago, on 22 December 1858

Italian composer Giacomo Puccini was born on 22 December 1858 in Lucca, where he later became church organist and choirmaster. He studied initially with his uncle, and a performance of Verdi's *Aida* inspired him to write his own operas. From 1880 he studied composition with Amilcare Ponchielli and Antonio Bazzini at the Conservatory in Milan. Whilst there he wrote the one act opera *La Villi* for a competition. It didn't win, but it was later noticed by Giulio Ricordi, who commissioned him to write a second opera *Edgar* (1889).

From 1891 he lived mostly at Torre del Lago, near Lucca, and after a few years (and the

notable success of his third opera, *Manon Lescaut*, of 1893) he acquired some land and built the villa now known as the Villa Museo Puccini. *Manon Lescaut* was his first collaboration with librettists Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa. They all went on to produce *La bohème* (1896), *Tosca* (1900) and *Madama Butterfly* (1904), Puccini's most popular operas.

After this, his rate of completing operas decreased, following a car accident, some domestic scandal and the death of his publisher Giulio Ricordi. *La Fanciulla del West* was completed in 1910, *La Rondine* in 1917 and *Il Trittico* (three one-act operas) was premièred in New York in 1918.

The end came quite quickly for Puccini in the guise of throat cancer, probably caused by his chain smoking of cigars. He went to Brussels for radiation therapy, where he died on 29 November 1924 from complications caused by the treatment. *Turandot*, his final opera, hadn't been finished, but it was completed from sketches by Franco Alfano. (Toscanini, who conducted the première, made a second version, based on Alfano's, and a new ending was made by Luciano Berio in 2002, after going back to the original sketches, but Toscanini's version is normally used in performance).

There are contradictions — concerning both the man and his music. Mussolini claimed that Puccini had applied to join the National Fascist Party, although the composer didn't appear to be active in politics. Was he secretive to avoid losing his friendship with the anti-fascist Toscanini?

Puccini's popular style, emphasising melody and influenced strongly by Verdi and to some extent Wagner, uses orchestral colour to create atmosphere, yet there is a common perception that this style lacks depth.

Hansel and Gretel was first heard 125 years ago, on 23 December 1893

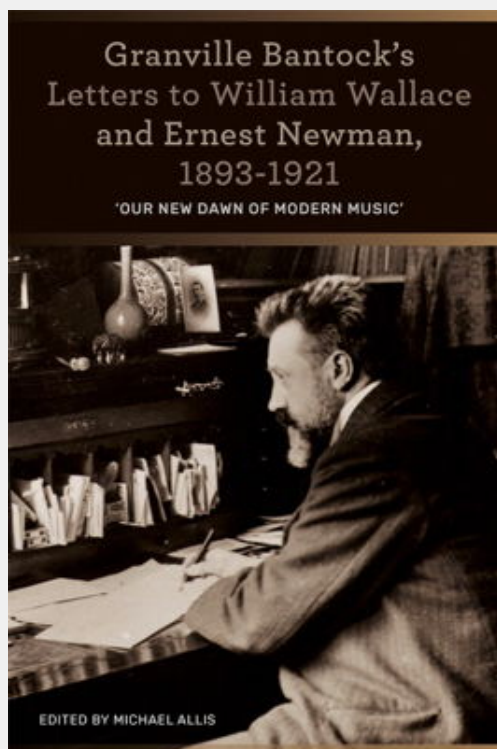
One of the world's most endearing operas is *Hansel & Gretel*, appealing to children — and the child within us. Engelbert Humperdinck's conception and the Wagnerian language so brilliantly recycled into a rich musical embroidery for one of the brothers Grimm tales was first heard at Weimar on 23 December 1893. It has held a permanent place in the repertory ever since.

Kirill Karabits' 40th birthday, born on 26 December 1978

Ukrainian conductor Kirill Karabits was born in Kiev on 26 December 1978. His father was composer and conductor Ivan Fedorovych Karabyts. He studied at the Lysenko Music School and the National Tchaikovsky Music Academy in Kiev, at the Vienna Musikhochschule and the Internationale Bachakademie Stuttgart.

From 1998 until 2000 he was assistant conductor of the Budapest Festival Orchestra, and was associate conductor of the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France from 2002 until 2005. Since 2009, he has been principal conductor of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, and was the first Ukrainian to be principal conductor of a professional UK orchestra.

CLASSICAL MUSIC NEWS – BANTOCK'S LETTERS



ISBN: 978-1-78327-233-4

Granville Bantock's letters to the Scottish composer William Wallace and the music critic Ernest Newman provide a fascinating window into British music and musical life in the early twentieth century and the 'dawn' of musical modernism.

British music and musical life before the Great War have been relatively neglected in discussions of the idea of the 'modern' in the early twentieth century. This collection of almost three hundred letters, written by Granville Bantock (1868-1946) to the Scottish composer William Wallace (1860-1940) and the music critic Ernest Newman (1868-1959) places Bantock and his circle at the heart of this debate. The letters highlight Bantock's and Wallace's development of the modern British symphonic poem, their contribution (with Newman) to music criticism and journalism, and their attempts to promote a young generation of British composers — revealing an early frustration with the musical establishment.

Confirming the impact of visits to Britain by Richard Strauss and Sibelius, Bantock offers opinions on a range of composers active around the turn of the twentieth century, identifying Elgar and Delius as the future for English music. Along with references to conductors, entertainers and contemporary writers (Maeterlinck, Conrad), there are fascinating details of the musical culture of London, Liverpool and Birmingham — including programming strategies at the Tower, New Brighton, and abortive plans to relaunch the New Quarterly Musical Review. Fully annotated, the letters provide a fascinating window into British music and musical life in the early twentieth century and the 'dawn' of musical modernism.

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