

News of the Day

Forthcoming Events

The Cheltenham Music Festival is to be held this year from June 30th to July 4th. The orchestra will be the Hallé, under John Barbirolli, and contemporary English music is again prominently featured in the programmes. These include a new Concerto for oboe and strings by Alan Rawsthorne (first performance) to be played by Evelyn Rothwell, the first public performance of Ian Whyte's Symphony, and E. J. Moeran's violin Concerto (Laurance Turner), Benjamin Britten's violin Concerto (Theo Olos, the Dutch musician) and Michael Tippett's Fantasy on a theme of Handel for piano and orchestra (Noel Mewton Wood). A chamber concert by the Laurance Turner Quartet will include a string quartet movement by Richard Hall, a young Manchester composer. Details from the Spa Manager, Town Hall, Cheltenham.

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An international festival of music and drama will be held in Edinburgh, August 24th to September 13th. The Glyndebourne Opera will present *The Marriage of Figaro* and Verdi's *Macbeth*. Orchestral programmes will be given by Bruno Walter and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra (including two performances of Mahler's *Song of the Earth*), Paul Paray and the Orchestre Colonne, and several British Orchestras. Schnabel, Primrose, Szigeti and Fournier will be heard in chamber music, in addition to other outstanding artists. Programmes obtainable from the Festival Office, The Music Hall, George Street, Edinburgh, 2.

Alfredo Casella

The death of the well known Italian composer has been announced in Rome. It is hoped to include an article on his work in the next issue of *Tempo*.

With the Composers

Arthur Benjamin has finished a set of ten *Etudes improvisées* for piano—a work of concert dimensions—and has written the score for the forthcoming film *The Master of Bankdam*. This incorporates a waltz composed by Benjamin's grandfather, and illustrates a wedding-party scene in the 1870's.

Benjamin's recently completed Symphony is to be given several performances next season by John Barbirolli. His viola Sonata (Elegy, Waltz and Toccata), has been recorded in America by Primrose and Sokoloff, and orchestral works by him were given by 29 leading American orchestras this season. Another recent work, the Prelude, Arioso and Finale for piano, has been introduced by Irene Kohler and a London performance is expected soon.

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Ernest Bloch is writing a work for orchestra and piano. It is on a very large scale, in three movements, and, like his other recent works, is non-programmatic. He is also planning a pedagogical work based on the great mass of material he has used in his lectures and teaching courses during the past 40 years. It includes studies of Bach chorales and fugues, Beethoven's *Eroica*, and over a thousand counterpoint examples.

In America, the Griller Quartet have introduced Bloch's 2nd string Quartet with great success, and are including it in most of their concerts there. Olin Downes described it in the *New York Times* as "self communion, in the subtlest and most intimate terms which involve the manipulation of the most concentrated and purified musical materials."

Benjamin Britten has returned to England after a concert tour on the Continent. In Switzerland he conducted his *Serenade* and *Young Persons' Guide to the Orchestra* in Zürich, and Peter Pears also sang the *Serenade* under Scherchen in Winterthur. Recitals with Mr. Pears in Switzerland, Holland, Brussels, Copenhagen, Stockholm and Oslo met with outstanding success.

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Peter Grimes is scheduled for performance in London (Covent Garden), Hamburg, Copenhagen, Berlin, Mannheim, Graz and Brno this year. *The Rape of Lucretia* will be given in Basle, Brussels and Chicago.

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Howard Ferguson, free from his work with the National Gallery Concerts, has written a new Sonata (No. 2) for violin and piano. The first performances were given by Yfrah Neaman and the composer in The Hague and Amsterdam in January. Myra Hess gave Ferguson's piano Sonata at her New York recital in December. He is now writing a set of six brief "interval pieces" for piano, for the BBC.

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Gerald Finzi's latest work is a setting for mixed chorus and organ of Richard Crashaw's "Lo, the full, final sacrifice." It was specially written for the 53rd anniversary of the consecration of St. Matthew's, Northampton, and will be heard again at the Three Choirs Gloucester festival this autumn. His cantata *Dies Natalis*, on poems and prose passages from Thomas Traherne, has been recorded by Joan Cross and the Boyd Neel String Orchestra, and will appear later this year.

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Armstrong Gibbs has completed an opera based on *Twelfth Night*. It is a full length work, in three acts, with a libretto by Sir Mordaunt Currie.

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Hindemith's works are being re-introduced in Germany with much enthusiasm, and his opera *Matbis der Maler* is to be given in several opera houses there. His new text-book, "Elementary Training for Musicians," has been published in America.

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Prokofiev has completed his sixth Symphony.

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Shostakovich has been awarded the Order of Lenin, the highest civil award of the U.S.S.R. Only recently the Soviet composer was officially criticized for "ideological impurities and deviations" in his ninth Symphony. He is now working on an opera, based on the story of partisan activities during the war.

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Stravinsky is expected in Europe this summer for a concert tour, including conducting engagements in England.

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William Walton's string Quartet is scheduled for its first performance, by the Philharmonia Quartet, at the International Festival in Prague in May.

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Miscellaneous

Plans are afoot for a big series of concerts at the Harringay (North London) Stadium. The present arrangements are for nightly orchestral concerts (including Sundays) throughout June and July, with a new orchestra each week. The series will probably be opened by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra under Sir Thomas Beecham. The Stadium is roofed and holds 12,000 people.

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Arthur Rodzinsky has resigned the conductorship of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra in consequence of the decision of the executive committee not to allow him to choose his own soloists. He has since accepted the conductorship of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

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A new Philharmonic Orchestra of 70 players has been founded in Amsterdam with Karel Mengelberg as conductor.

The Boyd Neel String Orchestra is touring Australia and New Zealand this summer.

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Modern Music, the quarterly paper published by the American League of Composers, has ceased publication. *Melos*, the German paper devoted to contemporary music, has reappeared after a long ban under the Nazi régime.

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An "Association of Friends of Romain Rolland" has been founded in Paris, under the presidency of Paul Claudel.

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Massine's latest ballet, *Les Arabesques*, is based on Beethoven's *Archduke* Trio. It was recently produced in America.

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An opera based on *The Comedy of Errors*, by the young Czechoslovakian composer, Isa Křejčí, has been given its première at the National Theatre in Prague.

Three Cornered Hat

The revival of *The Three Cornered Hat* is a fresh victory for the Sadler's Wells Company in their conquest of Covent Garden. With Massine in command—a brilliant general—the Company's morale rose still higher, and it was heartening to see the way in which young dancers found new inspiration in the presence of a great artist.

Massine seems to have discovered the secret of perpetual youth, while Margot Fonteyne, as the Miller's wife, has added another major role to her repertory. She needs only that little extra degree of peasant-like abandon that the part demands, and this will surely come with experience. Picasso's original setting, bare and sun drenched, and Falla's music, exactly the right weight and never at a loss to point an effect, combine with Massine's strong and subtle choreography to produce one of the most highly integrated of all ballets.

The lack of leading male dancers has been a constant thorn in the side of English ballet. If Massine could be persuaded to stay here, with adequate opportunities for the employment of his gifts as choreographer, dancer and trainer, it would constitute a landmark in the history of British ballet.

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TEMPO is published in mid-March, June, September and December. The annual subscription is 4s. 8d., including postage. Single copies, 1s. each, plus 2d. postage. Articles for consideration and other matter should be addressed to the Editor of *TEMPO*, 295, Regent Street, London, W.1. Although the publishers, Messrs. Boosey & Hawkes, Ltd., accept responsibility for opinions expressed by contributors, such opinions are not necessarily shared by them.