

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

from COLIN MATTHEWS

I WOULD like, if I may, to apologise to Bernard Benoiel for doubting his sincerity in what I agree was too violent a reaction to his article on Mike Oldfield. But his letter in no way reassures me about his critical standards.

My intention was not to decry Brian, Pettersson, Gerhard *et al.*, nor to defend any 'orthodox critical consensus'—my own views on contemporary music are largely unprintable. What I was questioning was Mr Benoiel's linking of his group of admirably serious composers with the, to me, lightweight sentimentality of Oldfield. However hard I try, I can't see any connection between the two, except for the fact that Mr Benoiel happens to like them both.

If I were to justify my admiration for Chuck Berry by saying that I consider Bruckner to be a great composer, I would not expect to be taken seriously. It is because Mr Benoiel's ideals, as expressed both in his article and in his letter, need to be taken very seriously indeed, that I find his presentation of them so disturbing.

66 Myddelton Square,
London EC1

from ANTHONY FRIESE-GREENE

It is certainly excellent that TEMPO opens its pages to such knowledgeable writers on music as Hugh Wood. His article on 'Frank Bridge and The Land without Music' in your June issue is indeed praiseworthy not only for the germane points he makes about Bridge and other composers of the inter-war years, but also for the tardy way in which certain composers, Bridge especially, have come to be recognised in this country for their true worth. Nevertheless, I am surprised that Hugh Wood, not ungenerous in his handout of bouquets to people who have helped to bring Bridge's name to the fore in recent years, should have completely omitted what the BBC has done in this field. I refer to such works as the Overture *Rebus*, the Concerto Elégaico re-named *Oration* for cello and orchestra, and the work for piano and orchestra called *Phantasm*. All these have been broadcast on Radio 3 within the last three years in specially-arranged concerts. Indeed two of the works have recently been broadcast for the second time. The same can be said for certain of the Chamber works very rarely heard, as the *Three Idylls*, the First String Quartet, the *Trio (Rhapsody)*.

BBC
Yalding House
156 Great Portland Street
London W1.

from LESLIE THOMPSON

CHRISTOPHER BARNES' interesting study of Boris Pasternak's early preoccupation with music (TEMPO 121), prompts me to relate the following:

Near the beginning of 1965, Pasternak's sister, Lydia, showed me a photostat copy of a piano piece by her brother which she had just brought back from Russia. She wanted to hear it. As far as she knew, there was no other Pasternak music extant.

I prepared a performing copy and asked Edmund Rubbra, whose sensitivity to Scriabin fitted him for the task, if he would play the piece. Lydia, her sister Josephine and her husband, were greatly moved and said repeatedly that they were reminded of Boris improvising.

This was the other version of the piece found in the Neigauz (Neuhaus) archive, dubbed one-movement Sonata in B minor by Mr. Barnes. I have read only the final bars of this version. The alternative ends more elaborately and in F sharp major.

23 Thorncliffe Road,
Oxford OX2 7BA.