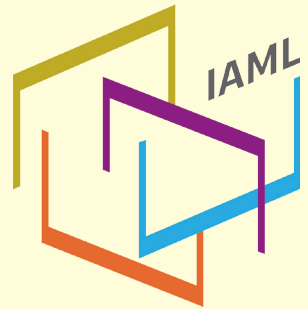


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## **Brio: Journal of IAML(UK & Irl)**

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## EDITORIAL

*Nicholas Clark*

Amid the scenes that have appeared during television news coverage of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in recent months, one image has probably symbolised for many of us the resolve to meet this horror with courage and dignity: the occasional glimpses of Ukrainian musicians performing in cellars or makeshift shelters. Defying the violence going on around them, music has embodied the spirit of their humanity. It is a reminder that the best of civilization always outweighs the tyranny of war.

Ralph Vaughan Williams was said to have voiced a personal response to war in his sixth symphony, written during, and in the immediate aftermath, of World War II. However, when these associations were first made about the work, he famously protested ‘that a man might just want to write a piece of music’. That notwithstanding, the symphony has, since its premiere in 1948, often been linked with the contemplation of conflict and resolution that has long been part of human history. It is fitting that we acknowledge the 150th anniversary of Vaughan Williams’s birth at such a time. In this issue of *Brio* Graham Muncy offers a personal reflection on how and why our awareness of ‘RVW’ and the popularity of his music has increased since the composer’s centenary.

We also look at the life and work of a woman who forged a career in music in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is reasonable to assume that Clarinda Augusta Webster is a name that will probably not be familiar to many readers. Karen McAulay remedies this in an article that brings some of her achievements in the fields of music education, librarianship, performance (as a church organist) and scholarship to light. Webster excelled in each of these areas, making her mark on both sides of the Atlantic amid busy and sometimes difficult domestic circumstances.

An interesting companion piece to Clarinda Webster’s story is that of the Irish composer Ina Boyle. Roy Stanley reminds us of the vital role music libraries play, not only in preserving history but also as keepers of collections to be investigated by researchers and performers. Little of Ina Boyle’s music was published or performed during her lifetime. However, access to her manuscripts, now held at Trinity College Library Dublin, and the ironing out of issues relating to copyright will allow further study and appreciation of her work.

From here we turn to traditions, both established and new. Kenneth Crookston gives a brief history of the brass band in the UK, its social and musical significance, before describing some of the work of Brass Bands England. This organisation fosters some excellent work in education and performance, and it has also taken important steps in ensuring the safe keeping of a major archive. Keith Munro, Perla Innocenti and Ian Ruthven then investigate the creative impulses in the art of DJing. Their research introduces two concepts at the core of the DJ's work: the pursuit of 'serious leisure' and the incorporation of 'higher things'. Insight into the background of DJing as well as analysis of what motivates practitioners and those who enjoy their work offer a new means of exploring and understanding this central role in popular music.

Music brought to life through digital media is the subject of Almut Boehme's essay on the National Library of Scotland's music collections. The assumption that digitisation of material is universal and that everything is available at the touch of a button is becoming more common. To meet the demands of researchers the NLS has initiated a series of recordings of its holdings. Arranging and producing such a programme is, unsurprisingly, a demanding occupation but this article highlights the possibilities available in an age where the computer screen has become the first port of call for the researcher and casual browser alike.

Two reviewers give us their evaluations of four recent books. Andrew Pink examines a study of the rich musical history of the northeast of England as well as a collection of essays written in honour of renowned early music specialist Peter Holman. Peter McMullin looks at a volume that focuses on how pianists of today can learn much from the study of period instruments and those who wrote for them. In contrast, he also reviews a number of writings by twentieth century music specialist Arnold Whittall. The book is timely as one of Whittall's chapters concentrates in part on Sir Harrison Birtwistle, a composer who made a decisive impact on contemporary music and who sadly passed away in April.

**FIFTY YEARS OF EXPLORATION:  
RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS (1872-1958), HIS LEGACY  
AND REPUTATION SINCE HIS CENTENARY  
IN 1972—A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE**

*Graham Muncy*

The year 1972 saw the centenary of Ralph Vaughan Williams (referred to as RVW in this article), composer, conductor, folk song collector, hymn writer, writer on music and perhaps one of Britain's most influential musicians and composers of the twentieth century. The centenary celebration was a reasonably upbeat affair with a number of his major works receiving performances nationwide, usually by a loyal band of conductors and other performers, with 'Vaughan Williams Festivals' in Dorking, and Down Ampney in Gloucestershire (his birthplace) and with his school, Charterhouse in Surrey, staging his opera, ('Morality') *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Three of his works were performed at the Proms.

Among the publications to mark the centenary was a volume emanating from Dorking (where RVW was a former resident & conductor of the Leith Hill Musical Festival) containing articles about, and tributes, to the composer by such figures as Sir Adrian Boult, Michael Kennedy, André Previn and Ursula Vaughan Williams, RVW's widow. With a foreword by Sir Arthur Bliss, the volume also contained a 'Nationwide Diary of Commemorative Events,' a Catalogue of RVW's Published Works, and features on the Leith Hill Musical Festival, Charterhouse School, English Folk Song and the Dorking and Leith Hill District Preservation Society, of which RVW was one-time Chairman and a passionate lifelong supporter. Printed on three-coloured paper and well illustrated, the volume was a wonderful example of a community celebrating its cultural heritage as well as honouring the life and work of a great man who was an integral part of that community for the greater part of his lifetime.<sup>1</sup>

**Recordings and Performance of Symphony Cycles and Opera**

Sir Adrian Boult, at the forefront of RVW recording artists in this centenary year, had already recorded much of the composer's major output and was the

<sup>1</sup> *Ralph Vaughan Williams O.M. 1872 – 1958*, edited by Barbara Yates Rothwell. Ralph Vaughan Williams Centenary Committee. 1971.

driving force in live performance as well, conducting commemorative concerts throughout the UK. To mark this special year, EMI/HMV issued his complete RVW Symphonies cycle and an authoritative recording of the opera, or 'Morality' *The Pilgrim's Progress*. (Interestingly, Boult's recording of RVW's *The Lark Ascending* (with violinist Hugh Bean) was the sole performance of this work listed in a contemporary 'Gramophone Classical Record Catalogue'<sup>2</sup>).

The cultural impact of the 1972 centenary celebration was perhaps not an immediate one. In the previous RVW 'dark age' when there seem to have been fewer performances of the major orchestral, operatic and chamber works by professional forces, the composer's reputation had dipped despite the loyal and continuing support of conductors such as Boult, Barbirolli and David Willcocks. That said, RVW's choral, sacred and vocal music never really suffered from lack of attention, where performance by amateur choral societies, school and church choirs kept RVW's name at the forefront of the repertoire. Many key works, such as *Five Mystical Songs*, *Fantasia on Christmas Carols*, *Dona Nobis Pacem* and *A Sea Symphony* were always regularly performed by amateur choirs throughout the second half of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first with performance materials regularly being supplied by public library networks. The very fact that during this 'dark age' period and beyond, amateurs continued to perform his choral and vocal music would have really delighted the composer.

The discovery of RVW's symphonies by a new generation of conductors makes an interesting area of study, particularly with the concept of 'The Complete Symphonies.' Boult of course blazed the trail with his two 'complete' cycles – the original mono cycle on Decca in the 1950s and his second, stereo set on HMV in the 1960s -1970s. However, subsequent generations of conductors started to turn the tide of RVW's reputation as an important symphonist – and not just a British one.

André Previn had admired RVW's music for a long time and his appointment as Principal Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra in 1968 offered him the chance to indulge his passion for British music, performing it world-wide and on television, where his open personality captured the imagination of audiences. By 1972, Previn was mid-way through recording the RVW symphonies with other works in what was to become a 'landmark' series of recordings which was the first to perhaps give the music an international appeal. By this time, Previn was also living in the Dorking area and happy to write in the local RVW Centenary volume referred to in footnote 1 above.

<sup>2</sup> *The Gramophone Classical Record Catalogue, No. 68*. March 1970. compiled by Stanley Day.



What attracts me – among other things – to VW’s music is the curious blend of naivete and sophistication. If you compare them (the symphonies) with the more ‘glittery’ pieces, they’re not terribly cleverly orchestrated – the orchestra never makes a very glamorous sound. But I find the music so enormously sincerely written: I don’t think there’s a fake bar that ever existed in that man. Even the clumsy moments I find endearing.’

Previn’s RVW symphony cycle on RCA, issued first on LP record (vinyl) subsequently following the development of media technology and appearing on compact cassette and compact disc, became almost the ‘gold standard’ for the next two decades, until a newer generation of conductors stepped up to the podium. The 1990s witnessed a sudden upsurge in RVW awareness and activity in many ways but particularly in recordings of symphony cycles with Andrew Davis, Bryden Thomson, Leonard Slatkin and Vernon Handley all throwing their hats into the RVW ring. This decade was gradually becoming a watershed, shining new light into aspects of RVW’s life and music and firing a broadside into the perception of the composer’s provincial amateurishness that had sometimes been levelled against him. Various other notable conductors, including Matthew Best and Roger Norrington, were also performing and recording RVW’s music at this time, furthering the message to an increasingly musically aware public.

Richard Hickox was a conductor who embraced British music and particularly RVW and was the first conductor to perform a live cycle of the symphonies at the Barbican in 1995 with a repeat at the South Bank in 2008, as well as embarking on a recorded cycle prior to his untimely death later that year. Since then, there have been recorded cycles from Bernard Haitink (2004), Gennady Rozhdestvensky (2014) and more recently, from Andrew Manze and Martyn Brabbins. Had the concept of the ‘RVW Symphony Cycle’ now become a realisation that this body of music, composed across the first five decades of the twentieth century, is a musical narrative of the century itself?

### **The Ralph Vaughan Williams Society**

As in the field of recording, the 1990s proved to be a defining decade for the reputation of the composer in a number of other ways. Perhaps the most significant was the establishment of the Ralph Vaughan Williams Society in 1994, founded as a Registered Charity with Stephen Connock as its first Chairman and with the composer’s widow, Ursula Vaughan Williams as President until her death in 2007.

To quote from the current RVW Society website:

. . . . However, in the early 1990s there remained many gaps in performances and recordings of [RVW's] work. Even the symphonies, surely his most enduring legacy, had never been performed as a complete cycle in London. At the time there was no memorial to the composer's life either at his birthplace [Down Ampney] or anywhere else.<sup>3</sup>

The main mission of the Society was to 'educate and inform' and its thrice-yearly Journal makes an important contribution to information and scholarship and has become a highly regarded publication. On the practical level, the Society established a permanent display at Down Ampney Church with a similar one in the Surrey Performing Arts Library when it was in Dorking and again, in its early years, the Society was able to influence and support many performances and recordings – often of world premieres, including the opera *The Poisoned Kiss* and the cantatas *A Cotswold Romance* and *Willow Wood*. The Society was soon established as a publisher launching Albion Music in 1995 and bringing out publications by Ursula Vaughan Williams among others and in 2007 established its own recording arm, Albion Records, now with an extensive catalogue of mainly world-premiere recordings including *Folk songs of the Four Seasons*, *A Cambridge Mass* and *The Solent*, a notable early orchestral work.

The Society contributes funding to festivals and for performances, particularly for the lesser-known pieces, by amateur and professional performers. It co-operates with the National Trust at RVW's childhood home, Leith Hill Place in Surrey, in organising exhibitions and displays. Together with the Vaughan Williams Charitable Trust (the organisation that oversees the composer's rights and performance income), the RVW Society, now with over 1,000 members in around 25 countries, are key players in the promotion of RVW's continually growing reputation and esteem.

### **Festivals and Conferences**

The 1990s was again a transforming decade in further activities that heightened the composer's profile. One example was a local festival in Surrey in 1996, 'Reigate Summer Music.' With its 'International Youth Orchestra' and 'Choral Summer School,' its director, Leslie Olive built a fine programme of many of RVW's best regarded music, together with several of the lesser-known pieces including the Piano Concerto. Importantly, this festival also included a full day Symposium, curated by Lewis Foreman, with contributions from prominent RVW scholars including Jeremy Dibble, Duncan Hinnells,

<sup>3</sup> There had been a symphony cycle at the Proms in 1952 before the last 3 symphonies had been composed. Copies of the David McFall bronze relief of the composer (1956) had already been placed at Charterhouse School and at St.Martin's Church, Dorking and the Dorking Halls.

Jenny Doctor and Anthony Payne and was later edited and published as *Vaughan Williams in Perspective*.<sup>4</sup>

This successful event seemed to stimulate further symposia and conferences well into the early years of the new century. Together with the Elgar Society, the RVW Society organised two further such events at the British Library. ‘A Special Flame – The Music of Elgar and Vaughan Williams – an International Symposium’ took place in March 2003 and ‘Let Beauty Awake – Elgar, Vaughan Williams and Literature - an International Symposium’ in November 2008. Both of these events were subsequently published as essay collections with their distinguished contributors adding to the scholarship and literature of both major British composers.<sup>5</sup>

Another strand in this area of research and publication was initiated by the Carthusian Trust and based at RVW’s one-time school, Charterhouse in Godalming, Surrey. This involved a fellowship for students, mainly from the USA, to stay at the school and research aspects of the composer’s life and works in London and elsewhere in the UK. This programme resulted in a conference at the school and the publication of an essay collection in 2002.<sup>6</sup>

### **Vaughan Williams Literature**

As far as general RVW literature is concerned, the two original key authors were the composer’s widow, Ursula and his friend, the critic and writer, Michael Kennedy who produced the first authoritative study of RVW’s works, originally published in 1964. This volume is still the major go-to source of information 50 years later! The original edition also contained the comprehensive and indispensable catalogue of the composer’s works subsequently published in its own right.<sup>7</sup> Many notable publications have appeared from the 1990s to date as interest in and knowledge of the composer have increased and with this article not intending to be a bibliography, some of the landmark publications are listed below:

For Biography, two of the key works are the short and punchy, *Vaughan Williams* by Simon Heffer (2008) and the longer but slightly flawed, *Vaughan Williams: Composer, Patriot, Radical* by Keith Aldritt (2015).<sup>8</sup> The first of two excellent pictorial biographies, *Vaughan Williams: A Life in Photographs*

<sup>4</sup> Lewis Foreman, editor, *Vaughan Williams in Perspective*, (Somerset: Albion Music. 1998).

<sup>5</sup> John Norris, Andrew Neill & Michael Kennedy, editors, *A Special Flame*, (Rickmansworth: Elgar Editions. 2004); Julian Rushton, editor, *Let Beauty Awake: Elgar, Vaughan Williams and Literature*, (Rickmansworth: Elgar Editions, 2010).

<sup>6</sup> Byron Adams & Robin Wells, editors, *Vaughan Williams Essays*, (Aldershot: Ashgate. 2003).

<sup>7</sup> Ursula Vaughan Williams, *RVW: A Biography of Ralph Vaughan Williams*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964); Michael Kennedy, *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, (London: Oxford University Press, 1980); Michael Kennedy, *A Catalogue of the Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*. 2<sup>nd</sup>.ed. ((London: Oxford University Press, 1996).

<sup>8</sup> Simon Heffer, *Vaughan Williams*, (London: Faber & Faber. 2008); Keith Aldritt, *Vaughan Williams: Composer, Radical, Patriot – A Biography*. (London: Robert Hale. 2015).

by Jerrold Northrop Moore (1992) is, regretfully, currently out of print. The other, *There Was a Time...Ralph Vaughan Williams – A Pictorial Journey from the Collection of Ursula Vaughan Williams*, edited by Stephen Connock, et al, (2003) contains many rare and unique images.<sup>9</sup>

For studies of RVW's music, two essay collections stand out: *Vaughan Williams Studies* edited by Alain Frogley (1996) and *The Cambridge Companion to Vaughan Williams* edited by Alain Frogley and Aidan J. Thompson (2013), both of which underline the value and worth of recent research. Additionally, a valuable aid to researchers, *Ralph Vaughan Williams – A Research and Information Guide* by Ryan Ross (2016) is a treasure trove of printed and other resources on the composer.<sup>10</sup>

Recently, Stephen Connock has produced two in-depth volumes which focus on personal remembrances of the composer, *Toward the Sun Rising – Ralph Vaughan Williams Remembered...* (2018) and *The Edge of Beyond – Ralph Vaughan Williams in the First World War*. (2021) which also deals with the effect of the war on his later life and works.<sup>11</sup>

### Television and Film

Renowned director, Ken Russell, now best remembered for his groundbreaking television documentary on the life of Elgar, (1962), turned his attention to RVW in 1984. *Vaughan Williams - a Symphonic Portrait*, directed by Russell and co-written with Ursula Vaughan Williams, was produced for ITV's *South Bank Show* in Russell's quirky individual style.

After a 23-year gap, two further films came along within a year of each other – *O Thou Transcendent*, Tony Palmer's full feature-length biographical documentary of 2007 and for the 50<sup>th</sup>. anniversary of RVW's death, *The Passions of Vaughan Williams*, a television documentary broadcast on BBC4 in 2008 and directed by John Bridcut and featuring the composer's relationship with his second wife, Ursula.

### Iconography

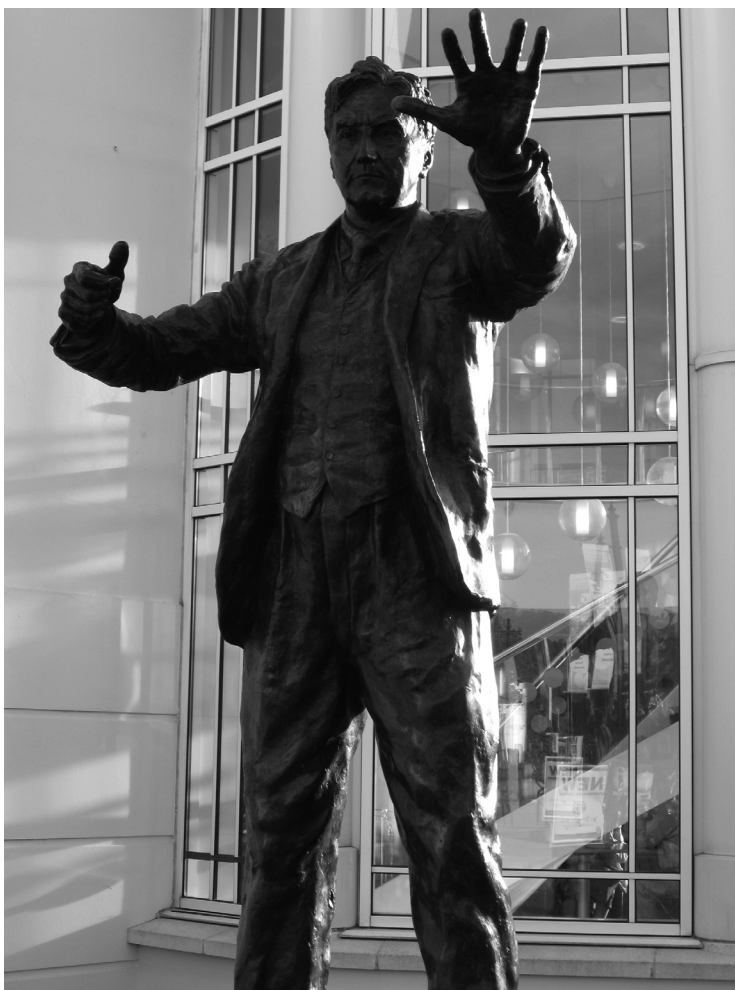
Looking now at representations of the composer, items of significance are the bronze head by Sir Jacob Epstein of 1950, much copied and reproduced,

<sup>9</sup> Jerrold Northrop Moore, *Vaughan Williams: A Life in Photographs*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992). Stephen Connock, Ursula Vaughan Williams & Robin Wells. Robin, editors, *There Was a Time . . . Vaughan Williams – A Pictorial Journey from the Collection of Ursula Vaughan Williams*, (Somerset: Albion Music. 2003).

<sup>10</sup> Alain Frogley, editor, *Vaughan Williams Studies*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Alain Frogley & Aidan J. Thompson, *The Cambridge Companion to Vaughan Williams*, (Cambridge University Press, 2013); Ryan Ross, *Ralph Vaughan Williams: A Research and Information Guide*. (Routledge Music Bibliographies), (Routledge. London: Routledge, 2016).

<sup>11</sup> Stephen Connock. Stephen, *Toward the Sun Rising – Ralph Vaughan Williams Remembered (A collection of reminiscences from people who knew Vaughan Williams)*, (Somerset: Albion Music, 2018); Stephen Connock. Stephen, *The Edge of Beyond – Ralph Vaughan Williams in the First World War*; (Somerset: Albion Music, Albion Music, 2021).

Sir Gerald Kelly's oil painting of 1958-61 and David McFall's relief sculpture of 1956, again reproduced, represented RVW in the final decade of his life. Again, many of the photographic images of him are from this late period when of course, photography became a much more universal and convenient tool tending to dominate the public image of the composer but perhaps displacing the fewer images that we have of him in his earlier years.



*Fig. 1: Statue of RVW by William Falke outside the Dorking Halls, unveiled by Ursula Vaughan Williams in April 2001. Photograph: Graham Muncy*

It took another 50 years before any efforts were made to represent RVW in sculpture again and well into the years of re-evaluation. After a festival in and around Dorking marking the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death in 1998, moves were soon underway to commemorate the town's most famous former resident with a full-size statue. A generous local benefactor came forward and sculptor William Falke was commissioned to produce the statue that is located outside the Dorking Halls. The image of RVW was suggested by his widow, Ursula, showing the composer in his middle years, perhaps engaged in conducting the forces of the local Leith Hill Musical Festival in the adjacent hall. It was unveiled by Ursula during the Festival on 19 April 2001.

Similarly, RVW's link with his one-time London residence in Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, was commemorated in 2012 with a stone bust in the adjoining Embankment Gardens as his former house (No.13) no longer exists. The bust by Marcus Cornish, again represents the composer in his middle years.

### **Leith Hill Place**

With its particularly strong connections to RVW, Leith Hill Place is situated on one of the most elevated positions on the North Downs, about 5 miles south of Dorking in Surrey. In 1944, the house was bequeathed to the National Trust after RVW inherited the property on the death of his brother, Harvey. The country home of the Wedgwood (pottery) Family from the 1840s, the composer spent his early years here after the death of his father, often visiting and staying in the house in later life as it was a very convenient base during his commitments with the Leith Hill Musical Festival before his move to Dorking. This slightly dour building with its commanding views over the Sussex Weald to the South Downs had been sub-let by the NT for use as a school dormitory. With the increasing pressure from the local community and from others with an interest in the composer, the Trust eventually decided to open to the public with the appointment of a property manager, a team of keen volunteers and the assistance of the RVW Society, in 2013.

The Society mounted permanent and changing displays, with other material loaned by the Surrey Performing Arts Library. Small-scale performances were organised and various donations were presented for display as visitor numbers began to increase and other displays on the Wedgwood and Darwin families and their activities and connections were mounted. With the donation of RVW's 'composing' Broadwood piano, there was at last a place where those interested in or ready to learn more about one of Britain's major twentieth century musical figures could visit, as was already the case with Elgar at 'The Firs,' Broadheath, Worcester and Britten at The Red House, Aldeburgh.



*Fig. 2: Leith Hill Place, near Dorking, Surrey. Childhood home of RVW. Photograph: Graham Muncy.*

### **RVW'S early, unknown and unfinished music**

After his death in 1958, the composer's archive was donated to the British Library and has since become a very significant resource for researchers, scholars and performers. It includes manuscripts, sketches, printed editions, letters, photographs and ephemera, among which are many works that had received perhaps a few performances in the early years of the composer's career and were then laid aside, together with unperformed pieces and unfinished works in manuscript.

An article in the first number of the RVW Society Journal by Lewis Foreman<sup>12</sup> gives a listing of some of the early and unknown pieces and poses the question as to why these pieces remained hidden. Apart from being listed in 'Catalogues of Works' in biographies, the canon of RVW's early compositions was a particularly unknown region of the composer's output. Foreman also forcefully suggests:

<sup>12</sup> See Lewis Foreman, 'The unknown RVW – a matter for debate,' *Journal of the Ralph Vaughan Williams Society*. No.1, September 1994, p.10-12..

In fact, what we actually need is a BBC performance of every surviving note RVW ever wrote ... in chronological order. What a great figure would emerge from such an immersion, great for his failures as well as his successes. What a project for the Vaughan Williams Society to aspire to!<sup>13</sup>

Unfortunately, the discovery of the unknown works did not quite happen in the way outlined above – but thankfully, it did happen. Up until the later 1990s, the composer's widow, Ursula, the rights holder of her husband's works, was reluctant to allow any attempt to have the earlier music performed until the years around the turn of the new century when RVW's standing and stature had very much increased. With the new century, some tentative steps were taken to give some of these works a hearing.

Some of the earlier compositions had been performed in the years preceding the First World War and included such items as the orchestral *Serenade*, the *Bucolic Suite*, two further *Norfolk Rhapsodies* and some smaller *Impressions*, including *The Solent* as well as several chamber pieces. In his book, *The Music of RVW*, Michael Kennedy had highlighted the *Piano Quintet in C minor* of 1903 as perhaps the strongest of the earlier unknown pieces. In fact, it was given a semi-formal performance at the Royal College of Music by students in 2000 with Ursula in the audience, where it was convincingly performed and very well received – its only probable outing since 1918! This *Quintet* was performed several times in the following years, eventually seeing publication and commercial recording and has now become a repertoire item.

In the following years, RVW's early catalogue has been brought out of the closet with newly edited performing editions of these scores being produced, followed by publication and recording, notable examples being the Cantata, *Willow Wood*, *The 'Cambridge' Mass* and the *'Impression for Orchestra,' The Solent*. Perhaps not in the composer's later and very distinctive styles, these earlier works very often give hints of what was to come in later years but still represent the work of an establishing and maturing composer writing in his twenties and thirties – the formative compositional years before his first real masterwork – *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* of 1910. The actual experience of hearing this body of work from the pen of an established English 'master' for the first time was an exciting and rewarding experience, providing insight into his musical development, his influences (including that of folk song), his technical competence and capabilities and of course, the actual 'hard graft' in the composition, orchestration and presentation of this substantial body of work.

Added to the above, one must also consider the question of his unfinished and abandoned works that have now come into the light of day, thanks to the

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p.11.



efforts of musical resurrectionists such as the conductor and musicologist, Martin Yates. Yates has created performing editions of works including *The Fat Knight* and the Horn Sonata, both now available in recorded editions.

Again, the case of the ‘original’ 1913 score of *A London Symphony* illustrates what musicians and listeners have gained in their curiosity and exploration regarding the composer’s unknown scores. The 1913 score was last performed in 1918 after which RVW worked on revisions until a final ‘revised’ edition was published in about 1936 from which he had deleted around 20 minutes of music, removing several episodes and passages. The conductor Richard Hickox obtained permission to record this 1913 score and went on to perform the work, most notably at the 2005 Proms. The edited full score and orchestral parts are now available for hire and *A London Symphony* in its expansive and atmospheric pre-First World War guise can now be appreciated.



Fig. 3: RVW’s ‘composing’ Broadwood upright piano on display at Lieth Hill Place. Photograph: Graham Muncy.

### **‘Roam on! The light we sought is shining still’**

The fifty years that have passed since we celebrated the centenary of RVW have witnessed really fundamental changes in our perception of the man and his music, his reputation and standing both in Britain and internationally.

Apart from the phenomenon of the ascent into almost stratospheric popularity of *The Lark Ascending*, RVW’s reputation and position as Britain’s key twentieth century National Composer has been firmly cemented by a tradition of regular performance of his core orchestral, choral and vocal music by our major orchestras, choral societies, professional choirs and singers. RVW’s considerable operatic output, however, has still to find its rightful place in the repertoire. Hopefully, we have now moved on from the days when the composer was regarded as an amateurish folksy pastoralist. We can now regard him as a composer demonstrating the full range of musical expression from the muscularity of works like *Job*, and Symphonies No. 4 and 6 to heartfelt masterworks like the *Tallis Fantasia* and the 5<sup>th</sup> Symphony, to the works of a musical explorer in *A Sea Symphony*, *Sinfonia Antartica* and the 9<sup>th</sup> Symphony. Very few British composers have such a huge range of expression from a simple hymn tune to the complexity of the oratorio, *Sancta Civitas*.

We now have a substantial body of literature and criticism on the man and his music which is continuing to grow. We also have most of his musical output in recorded form with the key works available in multiple interpretations, including his early catalogue, with most scores now available in printed editions. And thanks to the dedication of our committed music publishers, we are seeing new, scholarly critical editions of the major works.

Again, we are fortunate to have the remarkable database of RVW’s letters (*The Letters of Ralph Vaughan Williams*) which is such a vital resource for scholars, researchers and in fact anyone with an interest in the composer.<sup>14</sup> Nothing of this was remotely imaginable in 1972!

The reputation of RVW’s music outside the UK has again increased dramatically since the centenary. RVW’s reception in North America has always been sympathetic, perhaps as a result of the composer’s several visits and the efforts of conductors from Stokowski to Previn. But over the last 50 years or so, RVW’s reputation has spread considerably throughout the rest of the world, particularly in Scandinavia, Germany, Australia and Japan, thanks perhaps to the newer generations of performers, particularly British conductors who have trail-blazed RVW’s music across the globe – the likes of Andrew Davis, Andrew Manze, Roger Norrington, John Wilson and Edward Gardner.

RVW has now taken his place as Britain’s premier symphonist of the twentieth century – a visionary figure who embraced musical tradition as well as new musical developments, who valued and encouraged musical participation by the people, supported musical colleagues and always fought

<sup>14</sup> [www.vaughanwilliams.uk](http://www.vaughanwilliams.uk)

for music as a driving force in the cultural life of the nation. At the same time, he was very much an internationalist who valued and learned from the music of other countries and cultures.

Now taking his rightful place as one of Britain's cultural icons, his cycle of nine symphonies charts our story in the twentieth century. He has connected the people to their musical heritage in his work with folk song and hymnody and provided a sound and appealing repertoire of music for amateur and community performance in his catalogue of original works and arrangements. However, his true worth as a major cultural figure was only properly realised in the years following the 1972 centenary, particularly from the 1990s, when his music started a process of re-evaluation and exploration by academics, critics and of course, the musical public. 'Our scholar travels yet the loved hillside.'<sup>15</sup>

### **Abstract**

Since the 1972 centenary celebrations for Ralph Vaughan Williams, his reputation, status and standing as one of the country's most significant composers and a figure of national importance, has over the intervening years, become well established. The 1990s saw a particularly increased level of interest in RVW and his works, with a surge of new critical writings and recordings, together with the founding of the Ralph Vaughan Williams Society in 1994 which promoted exploration and research, especially of the composer's early, unpublished and lesser-known catalogue.

His works are now a vital part of the international canon of twentieth century concert music, and his important cycle of nine symphonies is regarded by some as a musical narrative of the first half of that century. In the year that marks his 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, this article considers some of the elements, particularly in the field of publication and recording, that have made a contribution to RVW's current esteem.

*Graham Muncy was librarian of the Surrey Performing Arts Library in Dorking until 2008. He is currently a Trustee and Information Officer of the RVW Society and is a long term IAML (UK & Ireland.) member and former chair of the Conference Committee.*

<sup>15</sup> Matthew Arnold, *Thyrsis*, set by RVW in *An Oxford Elegy*, 1947-9.

## **IN A BOYLE: FROM ARCHIVE TO PERFORMANCE**

*Roy Stanley*

‘Music happens in performance’ was the stimulating theme chosen for IAML (UK & Irl)’s Virtual Annual Study Event in April 2021 (VASE21).<sup>1</sup> This prompted me to ask a fundamental question: what is the extent of our role, as custodians of music source materials, in enabling the performance of the musical creations we curate?

Often our role is relatively straightforward (without wishing to minimise the effort involved in these routine tasks): we organise and care for the materials, make them discoverable through appropriate metadata, and facilitate reference access, borrowing where possible, and perhaps copying. But sometimes much more is required, involving (for example) engagement with musicologists, performers, promoters, publishers and copyright holders, and using technological tools such as digital imaging and social media to promote and disseminate the materials under our care.

The Library of Trinity College Dublin holds the manuscript collections of a number of twentieth-century Irish composers, but it is likely that only one of these is widely familiar: Gerald Barry. This is largely because he has gained an international reputation and has had most of his works published (first by Oxford University Press and more recently by Schott), and is performed extensively. Of the others, some (such as Brian Boydell, Frederick May, Gerard Victory, James Wilson, and Colin Mawby) are considered particularly significant figures in musical life within Ireland but have a lesser profile internationally. Still others are little known as composers even within Ireland.

Until recently Ina Boyle would have fallen into the latter category, but in the last ten years or so her reputation as a pioneering Irish composer of the early-to-mid-twentieth century has blossomed. How has this occurred, and why didn’t it happen sooner? The simple answer is that a number of obstacles needed to be overcome, particularly copyright issues, the creation of performing editions, and gradual profile-raising through biographical and musicological research, publication, and promotion in print and other media.

<sup>1</sup> This paper is based on a presentation delivered online at VASE21, 15 April 2021.

**Ina Boyle (1889-1967)**



*Fig. 1: Studio photograph of Ina Boyle (possibly 1931), by permission of the Board of Trinity College Dublin.*

Ina Boyle lived her life largely away from the public eye, and has remained a relatively obscure figure until recent decades. She was born in Enniskerry, Co. Wicklow, in 1889, and lived there all her life, at her mother's rather grand ancestral home, Bushey Park, until her death in 1967. Her father was curate in the local Church of Ireland parish.

Throughout her life Boyle composed in a wide variety of musical forms. She left a total of 140 works, including 66 songs, 37 choral pieces, an opera, 12 pieces for chamber ensemble, and 24 orchestral pieces (including three symphonies, three ballet scores, a violin concerto, and several pieces for cello and orchestra).

She had begun to study music theory and composition in her early teens, through private lessons with some notable musicians: Samuel Myerscough (founder of the Leinster School of Music in Dublin) and Charles Wood (a lecturer in music at Cambridge, who was a relative by marriage). Later she studied with Percy Buck (Professor of Music at Trinity College Dublin (TCD)) and Charles Kitson (Professor of Music at University College Dublin and at the Royal Irish Academy of Music, and later at TCD). Most notably, from 1923 until the outbreak of war in 1939 she made occasional visits to London for private lessons in composition with Ralph Vaughan Williams.<sup>2</sup>

### **Promotion and publication of musical works**

Very few of Boyle's works were published or performed in her lifetime. By all accounts she was a gentle, unassuming person, but she nevertheless made determined efforts to promote her music – with some success early in her career. In 1913 two of her works (*Elegy* for cello and orchestra, and the song *The last invocation*) were awarded first and second prizes in the composers' competition at the Sligo Feis Ceoil. She entered several works in the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust scheme which chose six works by British composers each year for publication. In 1919 her orchestral rhapsody *The magic harp* was successful, and she remained the only female composer to have a work published in this series.

<sup>2</sup> For a detailed account of Ina Boyle's life and career, see Ita Beausang, *Ina Boyle (1889-1967): a composer's life* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2018).

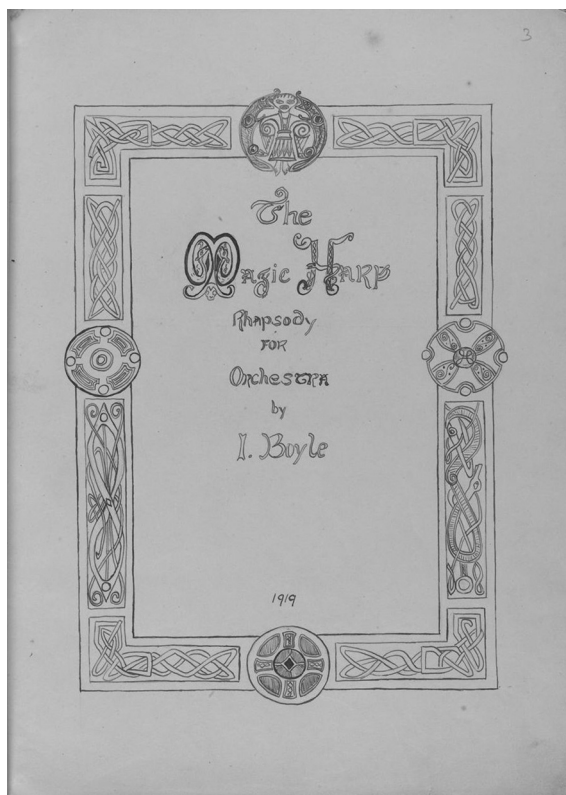


Fig. 2: *The magic harp*, MS decorated title page, TCD MS 4059, by permission of the Board of Trinity College Dublin.

She also had some success in using the Patron's Fund scheme at the Royal College of Music, which offered opportunities to have new works performed by professional musicians. In July 1920 *The magic harp* was performed by the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Adrian Boult; in June 1922 Boult conducted the Queen's Hall Orchestra in a performance of *Colin Clout*; and in December 1925 a movement from the *Glencree symphony* was performed, again by Boult and the LSO.

Some of Boyle's vocal and choral works were also published by major music publishers (sometimes at her own expense in the hope of having them performed): *He will swallow up death in victory* (Stainer & Bell, 1915); *Wilt not thou, O God, go forth with our hosts* (Novello, 1915); *Soldiers at peace* (Novello, 1917); *The transfiguration* (Novello, 1923); *A song of enchantment*

(Stainer & Bell, 1923); *A song of shadows* (Stainer & Bell, 1926); *Gaelic hymns 1-5* (J & W Chester, 1930); *A Spanish pastoral* (Stainer & Bell, 1935); *Thinke then, my soul* (OUP, 1939); *With sick and famished eyes* (OUP, 1943). In the 1920s and 30s Vaughan Williams, as a well-established composer, was able to offer her occasional advice on which of her compositions might be suitable for publication, and on which publishers to approach.

In spite of these efforts, only 25 of Boyle's compositions (out of 140) were performed during her lifetime, and almost all of these received just a single performance. The most notable exception was *The magic harp* which had 11 performances between 1920 and 1955 – a clear demonstration of the importance of publication in raising the profile of a work as well as making it accessible to performers.

(1919) "The Magic Harp" orchestral Rhapsody.

I showed this to Dr Kilmartin & asked if he thought I could send it to the Carnegie competition. He was very doubtful & said he thought it was dull, but to send it if I liked, so in the end I sent one copy there & another to the Patrons fund. It was accepted by both, & was played at the R.C.M. (A. Boult & the L.S.O.) in July 1920. Later it was played by Sir D. Godfrey & Sir H. Wood, & at the B.B.C. National Symphony concerts & broadcast from Belfast.

I dedicated it to Dr Kilmartin as it was the only thing that had had any public recognition. Dr Buck wrote me a most kind letter when the award was announced.

In 1927 I sent it to Col. Brice, who promised to do it on "Celtic Chorus" or both at the Dublin Philharmonic Society's concerts. He played it at the Theatre Royal on March 1928.

Fig. 3: Musical compositions memoranda – entry for *The magic harp* (1919), TCD MS 4172, by permission of the Board of Trinity College Dublin.



Boyle kept a record of all her works in a notebook labelled *Musical compositions memoranda*.<sup>3</sup> Here she noted any performances of each of her works, and also the conductors, musicians and publishers to whom she sent scores for perusal. It reads as a rather dispiriting catalogue of rejection (or at least indifference), as publication and performances were almost always refused, and the scores were sometimes returned unopened. Undeterred, Boyle continued to compose and to approach potential champions of her work. No doubt her relatively isolated existence in Enniskerry hampered her ability to forge personal connections in musical circles which might have generated greater opportunities to have her works published and performed.

### **Donation of manuscripts to Trinity College Dublin**

It is clear from Ina Boyle's will that she was determined that her music should be preserved and promoted after her death, though (unfortunately for us) she did not specifically assign copyright in her works. As this later became an obstacle in our efforts to promote and extend access to her music, it is worth exploring the issues – and their resolution – in some detail as it amounts to a cautionary tale.

First, Boyle nominated her friend and fellow composer Elizabeth Maconchy effectively as her 'musical executor', to be consulted 'as to all matters connected with my music as she is the only person who is intimately acquainted with it and my wishes about it.' Boyle also authorised her Trustee 'to expend a sum not exceeding five hundred pounds on the publication, copying or other necessary work of such of my musical manuscripts as I may leave unpublished.' Apart from various specific legacies, the bulk of her estate was inherited in 1967 by her cousin Doreen Boyle (also a musician).<sup>4</sup>

On Doreen Boyle's behalf, Elizabeth Maconchy arranged for the collection of Ina's music manuscripts to be donated to the Library of Trinity College Dublin. They were catalogued by the music librarian, Síle Ní Thiarnaigh, and in 1974 part of Boyle's £500 legacy was used to publish *Ina Boyle: an appreciation with a select list of her music*, written by Maconchy and widely distributed to research libraries throughout the English-speaking world.<sup>5</sup> The purpose of this handsome pamphlet was explicitly to promote performances of Boyle's works: the compositions selected for inclusion were those deemed 'most suited for performance today. Many are suitable for capable amateurs as well as professionals'.

<sup>3</sup> TCD MS 4172.

<sup>4</sup> Ina Boyle's last will and testament, National Archives of Ireland.

<sup>5</sup> Elizabeth Maconchy, *Ina Boyle: an appreciation with a select list of her music*. Dublin: Dolmen Press for the Library of Trinity College Dublin, 1974.

## Copyright

As Ina's residuary legatee, Doreen Boyle inherited copyright in her musical works, and retained it even after she donated the manuscript collection to the Library of Trinity College Dublin. The rights were easily managed in the first 30 years after Ina's death, but things became more complicated following the deaths of Elizabeth Maconchy in November 1994 and Doreen Boyle eighteen months later, in May 1996. Like Ina before her, Doreen made no specific provision regarding copyright in her will, so following her death the rights were inherited collectively by her eleven residuary legatees: eight nephews and nieces, a grand-niece and two grand-nephews (all descendants of Alexander Boyle, brother to Ina Boyle's father William).

For the following twelve years one of these nephews acted as the point of contact with the Library on behalf of the Boyle family rights-holders. In a telephone conversation with the Keeper of Manuscripts in September 2007, he mentioned that he was talking to his siblings and cousins about assigning the rights to the Library, but unfortunately he died unexpectedly in May 2008, before this planned settlement could be completed and documented. His death, and that of two other rights-holders a few years earlier, resulted in a further dispersal of copyright ownership, now involving 29 members of the extended Boyle family plus two corporate bodies.

## Revival of interest

This growing complexity came at a time of revitalised interest in the life and music of Ina Boyle. In 2006 the musicologist Ita Beausang was commissioned to write a monograph on the composer and, though the publication did not come to fruition until 2018, a steady output of conference papers emerged in the interim, highlighting a range of Boyle's compositions. In June 2011 RTE Lyric fm broadcast a biographical documentary called *From the darkness* (the title of Boyle's third symphony)<sup>6</sup>. And an 'Ina Boyle Development Committee' was formed with the aim of stimulating and promoting performances, recordings and broadcasts of Boyle's music. This led to increasing demand for access to the Boyle manuscript collection at Trinity College Dublin, and a degree of frustration developed over what were perceived to be slow, cumbersome and expensive arrangements for obtaining the scans and copies necessary to facilitate the production of performance materials.

<sup>6</sup> Produced for RTE Lyric fm by Claire Cunningham, Rockfinch Ltd. First broadcast 12 June 2011. RTE is the Irish national public service broadcasting company.

Annie	Baritone	Robin Hood, the Chief Woodman, Master of the Forest	Baritone
Maudlin	Bass	Friar Tuck, his Chaplain and Steward	Bass
Eglamour	Baritone	Little John, Bow-bowyer	Baritone
Karolin	Bass	Skiblock, Huntsman	Bass
Alhen	Baritone	George-a-Green, Huisher of the Bower	Baritone
Lionel	Baritone	Much, Bailiff or Acator	Baritone
		The Guests invited	
		Eglamour, the Sad	Tenor
		Lionel, the Courtous	Baritone
		Alhen, the Sage	Bass
		Karolin, the Kind	Tenor
		Lorel, the Rude, the Witch's son	Bass
		Puck-Hairy or Robin Hood-fellow, their Hind	Tenor
		Marian, Robin Hood's lady	Contralto
		Evarine, the Beautiful, (sister to Karolin)	Soprano
		Melliflour, the Sweet	Mezzo
		Annie, the Gentle, (sister to Lionel)	Soprano
		Maudlin, the Envious, the Witch of Papelewick	Contralto
		Douce, the Proud (her daughter)	Mezzo
		2 Young Woodsmen	
		3 Musicians, Foresters, etc	
		Scene, Sherwood	

Fig. 4: *Dramatis personae* page from the opera *Maudlin of Papelewick* (1964), TCD MS 4114, by permission of the Board of Trinity College Dublin.

Engaging with members of the Boyle family and with the Ina Boyle Development Committee, it became clear that clarifying and documenting copyright ownership and administration would be a necessary first step in streamlining access to the music. Registering Boyle's works with a performing rights society would reassure the rights holders that any royalties due from performance, recording or broadcast of the works would be collected and distributed appropriately, and also reassure performers that they were correctly meeting their legal obligations. The Irish Music Rights Organisation (IMRO) was willing to accept this role, but needed proofs of legal title.

### Legal title

The initial chain of title was established by obtaining the wills and grants of probate of Ina Boyle and Doreen Boyle. As Doreen's residuary legatees were 'such of my nephews and nieces as are living at my death', it was necessary to establish their identities (and, in some cases, those of their successors) through genealogical research. We were fortunately able to secure (pro bono) the services of a professional genealogist specialising in probate research, who drew up a family tree, obtained several subsequent wills, and definitively identified the full list of current rights holders. Each of these then signed an agreement appointing one of their number to act on their behalf. All of this documentation was then submitted to IMRO, together with a list of Ina Boyle's compositions, to complete the registration process.

Subsequent developments have confirmed that this was a very worthwhile and successful exercise, but clearly the whole process would have been much more straightforward had the copyright situation been clarified decades earlier, while the rights were held by a single owner. The moral of the story is that libraries and archives should try to address these issues definitively at the point of deposit or acquisition, to avoid complications later.

### Copyright constraints in published works

The Ina Boyle donation in 1967 came without any accompanying business file, other than the composer's handwritten *Musical compositions memoranda* which did not record the terms of the agreements the composer had made with her publishers.<sup>7</sup> Therefore it was necessary to contact the four publishing houses (Novello, Chester, Stainer & Bell, and Oxford University Press) to establish how the rights were assigned in this small number of works. We discovered that the contract terms varied. In the case of the two works published by OUP copyright was assigned in full, so we could not display images of the manuscripts or the printed editions relating to these works without the publisher's permission.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, for publication of her orchestral rhapsody *The magic harp* Boyle signed an agreement with Stainer & Bell on 30 August 1921 which gave the company 'sole and exclusive licence to make, print, publish and sell throughout the world an edition of one hundred copies of the full score of the work . . .' and also to offer performance materials for sale or hire. But in this case the composer retained copyright in the work.

### Settings of texts

We also had to be mindful of the separate rights in the texts set by Ina Boyle in her songs and other vocal works. Many of these were out of copyright, but those by some of Boyle's near contemporaries – including Walter de la Mare, W.M. Letts, Austin Clarke and Edith Sitwell – remain protected.

<sup>7</sup> TCD MS 4172.

<sup>8</sup> I am grateful to Simon Wright, Head of Music Rights & Contracts at Oxford University Press, for his advice on these copyright issues.

Clearing rights to settings of texts by Edith Sitwell (1887-1964) was particularly important as this affected two of Ina Boyle's most significant works: *Still falls the rain* (1948) – which, according to her friend and neighbour, the poet Sheila Wingfield (Viscountess Powerscourt), she considered ‘the best thing she had ever done’<sup>9</sup> – and her third symphony, *From the darkness* (1946-51). Belatedly, after completing these two compositions, in 1952 Boyle wrote to Sitwell requesting permission to use the words. To Boyle's bitter disappointment Sitwell refused permission, so the works could not be published or performed. The matter was resolved in 1974 when Wingfield approached Sacheverell Sitwell and his son Francis, who administered Edith Sitwell's estate, and persuaded them to lift the embargo. Elizabeth Maconchy subsequently received legal authorisation to publish the works, though to date this has not been acted upon.

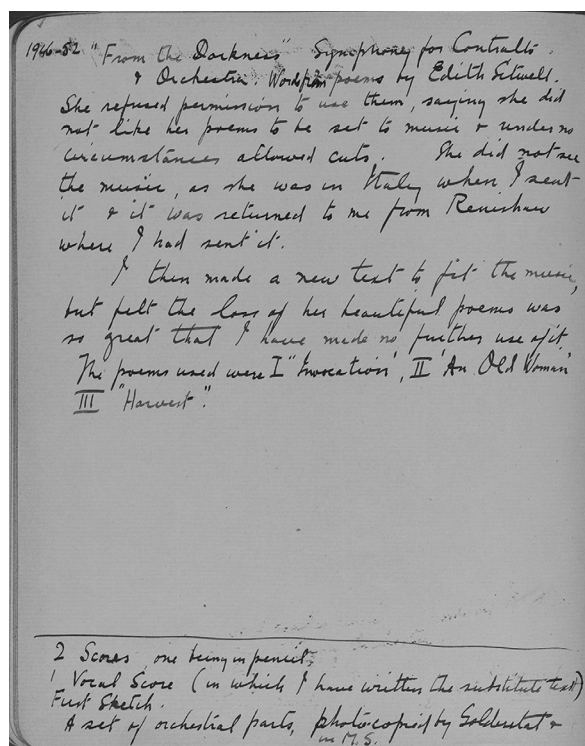


Fig. 5: Musical compositions memoranda – entry for *From the darkness* (1952), TCD MS 4172, by permission of the Board of Trinity College Dublin.

<sup>9</sup> Sheila Powerscourt, *Sun too fast* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1974), p. 210.

## Digitisation

Clarifying the copyright position paved the way for improving access to the manuscripts and encouraging study and performance. As most of Boyle's works remain unpublished, the most basic need was the production of practical, typeset editions; therefore, editors would need easy (or at least straightforward) access to copies of the manuscripts. The Library recognised the potential of its Digital Collections platform as a means of easing access difficulties so, with the agreement of the rights-holders, we began to photograph a selection of the manuscripts and make high-quality images available online.<sup>10</sup> Visitors to the Manuscripts and Archives reading room were also permitted to photograph the manuscripts in person. With the number of requests for copies and performances increasing, the rights-holders agreed to allow the Ina Boyle Development Committee (now formally incorporated as the Ina Boyle Society) to administer permissions, thus speeding up response times.

## Typeset editions and performances

Editorial work has been undertaken sometimes on a professional basis in response to commissions in support of planned performances, but increasingly by postgraduate researchers – in particular, musicology students attached to the two conservatoires in Dublin, the Technological University Dublin Conservatoire (TUD) and the Royal Irish Academy of Music (an Associated College of TCD). The resulting typeset scores have enabled a growing number of public performances, recordings and broadcasts. The first major showcase was the *Composing the Island* festival at the National Concert Hall in Dublin in September 2016 when several Boyle works were featured, including her first symphony, *Glencree*. A chronological list of past performances maintained on the Ina Boyle Society website<sup>11</sup> shows steady growth in the number of concerts and recitals in which Boyle works have been heard – 11 in 2018, 15 in 2019, and even 6 in 2020 and 8 in 2021, despite the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Most performances have taken place in Ireland, but some were in London and other parts of the UK, and others happened as far afield as mainland Europe (Paris, Stuttgart, Munich, San Remo, and Geneva), Reykjavik in Iceland, and the US (St Paul Minnesota, Los Angeles, Seattle, and Virginia Beach).

## Premiere performances and recordings

There is little doubt that scholars and performers have been enticed to explore Ina Boyle's music partly by the fact that almost none of it has been published or performed previously. The opportunity to create an original edition is a

<sup>10</sup> <https://digitalcollections.tcd.ie/> accessed 21 April 2022.

<sup>11</sup> [www.inaboyle.org](http://www.inaboyle.org) accessed 21 April 2022.

strong incentive for academic researchers, and the cachet of a premiere performance or recording is a valuable promotional device for practical musicians. For example, the young Swiss cellist Nadège Rochat, when looking for a short companion piece to add to her recording of the Elgar and Walton concertos, was pleased to have the opportunity to record the first performance of Boyle's *Elegy*.<sup>12</sup> Rochat later participated in a recording of some other orchestral works by Boyle – again, mostly premieres – performed by the BBC Concert Orchestra under Ronald Corp.<sup>13</sup> Boyle's association with Vaughan Williams is also a useful connection when planning concert programmes. In this RVW anniversary year several Boyle first performances will take place in tandem with works by Vaughan Williams, amongst them her *Lament for Bion* (which won an Olympic Art Award in 1948) and the choral piece *Caedmon's Hymn*.

It seems likely that the recording of Ina Boyle's songs made in October 2020 at the Wigmore Hall in London by three Irish singers – Paula Murrihy (mezzo-soprano), Robin Tritschler (tenor), and Ben McAteer (baritone) – will have the greatest impact. This anthology, curated by pianist Iain Burnside, achieved critical success on its release in August 2021.<sup>14</sup> Anticipating further interest from singers, an Ina Boyle songbook is planned for publication by the Conservatoire of Music and Drama at TU Dublin.

## Conclusion

In his essay on Ina Boyle's music appended to Ita Beausang's biography of the composer, musicologist Seamus de Barra wrote: 'While a serious critical re-evaluation of her creative achievement has long been overdue, it is only committed, sympathetic performances of her music that can truly reveal Ina Boyle as a composer of greater range and significance than has hitherto been imagined, and establish her rightful place in the history of Irish music.'<sup>15</sup>

De Barra's observation challenges us as curators of the source materials to enable that critical re-evaluation, by doing everything in our power to release the music from the archive and bring it to life in performance. While there is always more to be done, we hope that we have made a promising start in the steps outlined above.

<sup>12</sup> *Cello Abbey*, Ars Produktion ARS 38 221 (2017).

<sup>13</sup> *Ina Boyle Orchestral Works*, Dutton Epoch CDLX7352 (2018).

<sup>14</sup> *Ina Boyle Songs*, Delphian DCD34264 (2021).

<sup>15</sup> Seamus de Barra, 'The music of Ina Boyle: an essay', in Ita Beausang, *Ina Boyle (1889-1967): a composer's life* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2018), p. 128.

**Abstract**

Few works by the Irish composer Ina Boyle (1889-1967) were published or performed in her lifetime, despite encouragement from friends and mentors such as Ralph Vaughan Williams and Elizabeth Maconchy, as well as Boyle's own efforts to promote her work. After her death her music manuscripts were presented to the Library of Trinity College Dublin, where they remained largely unnoticed. In the past decade or so there has been increasing interest in Boyle's life and work. This has prompted the Library to provide access to some of the manuscripts via its Digital Collections platform, where the images can be freely downloaded. This has facilitated the creation of typeset performing editions which in turn has led to performances and recordings of a range of Boyle's compositions: orchestral works, choral pieces, and songs. Before any of this could be achieved some complex copyright issues had to be untangled, involving genealogical and probate research to identify the current rights-holders, and registration of Boyle's works with the Irish Music Rights Organisation (IMRO).

This article outlines Boyle's life and compositional career, the process of clearing copyright issues to enable online publication of images of her manuscripts, and some of the performances and recordings that have resulted.

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**‘AN EXTENSIVE MUSICAL LIBRARY’:  
MRS CLARINDA WEBSTER, LRAM**

*Karen E. McAulay*

There is a general perception that the lives led by middle-class women in the nineteenth and even early twentieth centuries were severely limited, confined to the drawing-room, or perhaps even to the schoolroom, if they were unfortunate enough to remain single. However, a couple of years ago, I wrote a blogpost about Elizabeth Lambert, the Yorkshire-born young woman who first catalogued the University of St Andrew’s copyright music collection in 1826.<sup>1</sup> Her contribution was far more significant than she could have realised, in terms of making that collection of music accessible to readers both within the university, and extramurally.

I recently came across another English-born woman who made a name for herself in Scotland. Coincidentally, both women were born in years of revolution. Whilst Elizabeth Lambert was born in the year of the French Revolution, Clarinda Augusta Webster (née Thomson) was born during the European Revolutions of 1848. Both moved to London in middle age: Elizabeth to marry, and Clarinda to start the next stage of her career back in her native city. With half a century between them in terms of their birth dates, their paths would not have crossed.

<sup>1</sup> Karen E. McAulay, ‘Mrs Elizabeth Williams’, *Scottish Music Publishers 1880-1950 (and Earlier Stationers’ Hall Research)*, 2019 <<https://claimedfromstationershall.wordpress.com/tag/mrs-elizabeth-williams/>> accessed 1 December 2021. Elizabeth Williams, maiden name Elizabeth Lambert, lived from 1789-1875.



*Fig 1: Clarinda Augusta Webster<sup>2</sup>*

Clarinda successfully forged a great career for herself, aided by her intelligence, abilities and upbringing, seizing opportunities on every side, and all this despite having to escape an abusive marriage, the description of which is harrowing today. She published books and music primers, founded not only a music school but also a school for young ladies in Aberdeen, and gave lectures on music pedagogy and composers – to name but a few of her achievements. Most significantly to the readers of the present journal, she undertook a survey of music provision in public libraries for the Library Association, in 1894, investigating the availability of music that could be freely borrowed by members of the public around the UK.

<sup>2</sup> Illustration from *Northern Figaro*, 14 May, 1887, with thanks to St Andrews University Library Special Collections.

**'A First Class from Queen's College London, the highest certificate in Music that could be secured by a woman'<sup>3</sup>**

Clarinda was born in Woolwich in 1848, the second child and only daughter of a Stirlingshire-born dental surgeon, Robert Thomson, whose own weaver father had moved to Kent when Robert was small.<sup>4</sup> She had the good fortune to attend Queen's College, London, in Harley Street – a school founded in the year of her birth, and the first school to award educational qualifications to women. Clarinda qualified with first class honours.



Fig. 2: *Queen's College Harley Street, Library*

She had music lessons with Joseph McMurdie, an Oxford graduate composer of songs and vocal ensemble music, and author of a primer for juvenile pianists, a guide to music theory and figured bass, and a handbook for vocal classes. Advised by McMurdie to pursue a career in music, Clarinda became a church organist in London.

In 1869, Clarinda married William Webster, an Aberdonian journalist working in London. Living first in Brixton and then Herne Hill, they had three sons between 1872 and 1875, before moving to Aberdeen in about 1877,

<sup>3</sup> Obituary, *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 29 March 1920.

<sup>4</sup> Clarinda's father must have been proud of his Scottish ancestry, calling his sons William Wallace, Robert Burns and Walter Scott, whilst Clarinda would presumably have been named after the woman with whom Burns had a platonic relationship. Only Clarinda's brother Walter lived to adulthood.

where Clarinda was organist at St Clement's Parish Church. Their daughter Adnil was born the following year.<sup>5</sup>

Well-qualified, and well-informed, within two years Clarinda was giving a paper to the Aberdeen Branch of the Educational Institute of Scotland, on 'The Development of Music as a Popular Art during the last Two Centuries,' and arguing very strongly for the value of a musical education.<sup>6</sup> This is the earliest record of this ambitious woman beginning to make a name for herself, and as it turned out, she would soon doubtless be thankful for her abilities.

Her husband William was an alcoholic, and the violent abuse that Clarinda suffered led to her leaving her husband by 1881, taking her four children with her. The census that year shows her living in a household headed by her widowed mother Selina, with Clarinda described as a 'Teacher of Music'.

### **'Unfailing, never-swerving energy and unabated enthusiasm to the teaching of Music'<sup>7</sup>**

By 1883, her teaching practice was named as the 'Aberdeen Music School' at 48 Union Place. She advertised assiduously in the local press. Obviously, it is impossible to tell whether some of the longer announcements were self-composed or written by the press; for example, the *Montrose, Arbroath and Brechin Review* rhapsodised about the energy and care that went into her music teaching. We cannot know if this was self-praise!

Clarinda clearly valued libraries, considering her own music school's 'extensive Musical Library for the use of the Senior Pupils' significant enough to mention in a newspaper advert in 1885, and again the following year, when she placed an advert in the Aberdeen Public Library Lending Department catalogue.<sup>8</sup>

Amidst all this activity, she had qualified with an LRAM from the Royal Academy of Music in 1884. The Aberdeen Post Office Directory informs us that she was also organist at St Paul's Episcopal Church between 1885-7, and 1887 also saw the publication of the first of her pedagogical works.

In 1889, Clarinda sued for judicial separation, alleging cruelty as far back as 1877. William counter-sued for divorce due to desertion; Clarinda's defence was that she had no choice considering his appallingly violent behaviour. The divorce went through, but Clarinda received no more than a sum towards legal costs. There seemed to be a recognition that William's illness – presumably his alcoholism – was the cause of his behaviour. The judge believed that Clarinda clearly could not live with him. However he ruled that she was more than capable of providing for herself, for she had been the

<sup>5</sup> William and Ralph Waldo were born in London, in 1872 and 1876. Alexander was born in Manchester, for reasons unknown, in 1874. (Adnil, born in Aberdeen in 1878, is a palindrome of Linda, as it happens!).

<sup>6</sup> *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 12 January 1880.

<sup>7</sup> *Montrose, Arbroath and Brechin Review; and Forfar and Kincardineshire Advertiser*, 23 December 1887

<sup>8</sup> Aberdeen (Scotland) Public library., 'Catalogue of the Lending Department' (Aberdeen: University Press, 1886) <<http://hdl.handle.net/2027/njp.32101048250235>> accessed 3 December 2021.

Lady Principal of the Ladies College, Aberdeen since 1888, operating from 5 Bon Accord Square. This was the same address used for her music school by this time.

The Ladies College had high aspirations. With a Headmistress, Miss Eleanor G. Rice (of Newnham College, Cambridge), and 'a large staff of teachers and visiting masters', the school aspired to provide 'intellectual, technical and physical training of young ladies'. It continued operation until about 1891/1892, but after that, only Clarinda's music school still seems to have been in existence. She was also at this time the local representative for the London College of Music, her pupils often winning awards in those exams, and as though this wasn't enough, between 1891-5 she was also Professor of Pianoforte for Aberdeen's Free Church Training College.

Fate dealt her another blow with the death from scarlatina of her daughter Adnil in May 1891, a talented violinist aged only thirteen. Clarinda organised a sale and work and a concert to raise money towards a children's hospital bed in her memory. Professionally, she was as busy as ever, but still found time the following year to ensure that, as Adnil's executrix, she claimed what would have been her daughter's share of her paternal grandfather's estate. Clarinda's ex-husband died later in 1892.

Although she remained the Principal of the Aberdeen Music School until 1897/8 (the last listing in Aberdeen's Post Office Directory), Clarinda moved back to London in 1893, where she embarked on a career as performer as well as a music teacher.

Towards the end of that year, Sir John Stainer and Ebenezer Prout nominated her as a member of the Musical Association.<sup>9</sup> She clearly attended meetings, for in 1896-7, she was mentioned in the *Proceedings* as having spoken at some length about women's education and progress in the music profession, after a talk by a Mr Cummings about 'Music During the Queen's Reign'. Clarinda objected that he had barely touched upon mention of ladies in music.

'During the Queen's reign they have made great strides in the musical profession [. . .]. Many [ladies] are exceedingly suitable for this field of work [elementary teaching] . . . In the Edinburgh University I understand that ladies sit side by side with gentlemen in the music classes and that they are working up for degrees [. . .] I hope that some day ladies will rank well as composers.'<sup>10</sup>

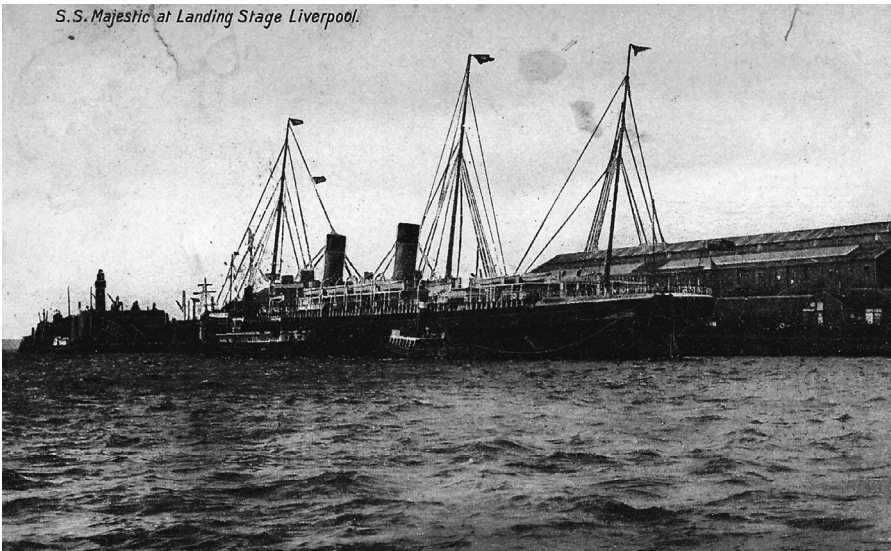
Mr Cummings retorted that he 'only had to deal with facts and could therefore not touch that point.' That year, she also wrote an article (see below) about Clara Schumann's father Friedrich Rieck's renowned teaching method. An English translation had been published by Hugo Krueger, a language teacher

<sup>9</sup> Music librarians will know these names well, for Stainer's *The Crucifixion* and Prout's edition of Handel's *Messiah* were core choral repertoire for many years and are still known today.

<sup>10</sup> *Proceedings*, Musical Association (1896-7).

and school principal active in Aberdeen in the 1870s. Clarinda may have come across Krueger's translation early in her teaching career.<sup>11</sup>

Other aspects of her later life are noteworthy. She had already written a pamphlet for Novello about the operatic composer Lortzing, the funds from which were to support a monument in his memory in Berlin. She lived there between 1891 and at least 1902, researching Continental music and musicians.<sup>12</sup> She was back in England by 1905, for that November, she left aboard the *SS Majestic* from Liverpool to New York.



*Fig. 3: SS Majestic, Liverpool*

There, at the age of 58, she was registered as a summer sessional student at Cornell University in 1906, one of only three ladies from London that year. There were few enough non-American students in general for this to be quite remarkable. Cornell had admitted women to its courses since the 1870s, which may perhaps have made it attractive to Clarinda and her two lady compatriots.

<sup>11</sup> In 1870, Edward Karl Hugo Krueger was rector of the Aberdeen Young Ladies Institution for English and Continental Education at 250 Union Street. His wife Adele had been a pupil of Rieck's.

<sup>12</sup> She ceased to be listed as a member of the Musical Association after 1902, so we briefly lose trace of her from 1902-5.

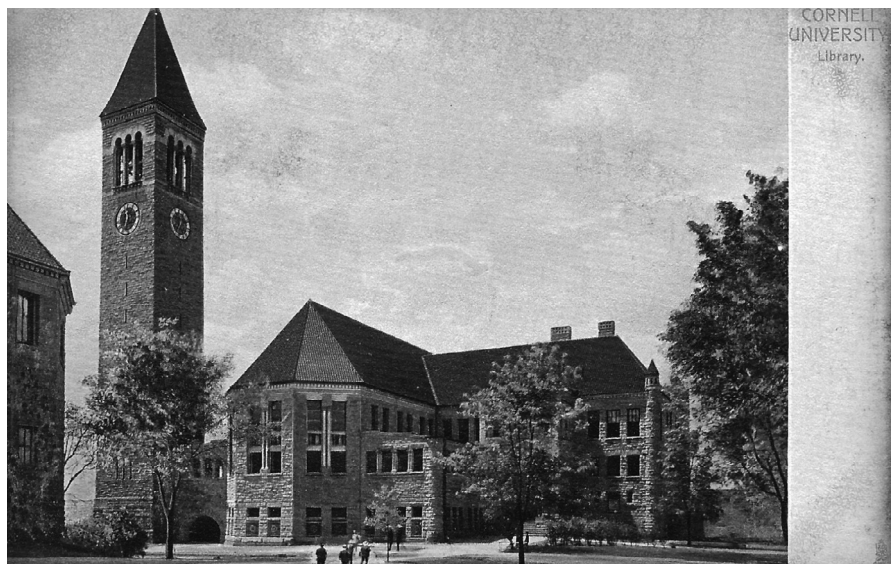


Fig. 4: Cornell University Library

Probably by 1910, at latest by 1911, Clarinda was back in Britain. She published a little poetry book in 1910, and went on lecturing, performing and teaching at least until 1915.<sup>13</sup>

Intriguingly, in 1913, a journal entitled *The Vote: the Organ of the Women's Freedom League*, published an article about the Reform Bill. The page also listed donors to the 'Treasury: National Fund', including a donation by 'Mrs C. A. Webster.' Whilst there's no obvious evidence to link Clarinda to this organisation, what we know about her is consistent with such involvement.

Clarinda died at the age of 72 in Dulwich, on 27 March 1920. All three of her sons appear to have spent their adult lives in London - indeed, the eldest had moved down to Brixton before Clarinda moved south herself - so there would have been no further family left in Scotland. An obituary nevertheless appeared in the *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, reminding readers that her music school had achieved 'more than local fame for its systematic and thorough grounding and general instruction in the elements of theory and practical demonstration in music.'

### Publications and Lecturing

Whilst resident in Scotland, Clarinda produced several pamphlets and educational materials, publishing the first in Aberdeen, and then simultaneously

<sup>13</sup> Stock published a magazine, *The Private Schoolmaster: The Journal of the Association of the Principals of Private Schools* in the 1880s, which was possibly known to Clarinda.

in Edinburgh and London. Once she moved to London, she only used London publishers, with her *Child's Primer* also distributed by the extraordinarily prolific H. W. Gray Company in New York:

*Handel. An outline of his life, and an epitome of his works* (29 p.) (Aberdeen: A & R Milne, 1881), 29 p.

*Webster's Groundwork of Music books 1 & 2* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, and London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Co., 1887). 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 1890, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 1892.

*Webster's Music Copy Book* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1888) [Blank book]

*Webster's Child's Primer of the Theory of Music* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1890.) Subsequently published by Novello in London, and the H. W. Gray Company in New York.

'Friedrich Wieck's Method of Teaching Music to Children', in *The Parents' Review* (1897), published in London by the Parents National Educational Union.

*Albert Lortzing* (London: Novello, 1901), pamphlet.

Rosalea: Poems in Prose (London: Elliot Stock, 1910)

Clarinda gave talks about Handel, Mendelssohn and Lortzing. George Bernard Shaw attended one lecture-recital at the Queen's Hall in Langham Place in London, but was so irritated by the length of her Mendelssohn talk that he left before the music began, declaring later that she had told him nothing that he did not already know. Her speaking engagements also addressed music appreciation, music teaching, the value of a musical education, or the importance of singing in sol-fa. In 1891, she became corresponding secretary to the Aberdeen branch of the Teachers' Guild of Great Britain and Ireland, and spoke of the necessity for this branch, since teachers of the 'upper classes' in Aberdeen had, hitherto, no society to support them in the way teachers of working class national schools were supported. Later, in London, she attended meetings of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, and participated in discussion after a talk by Mrs Curwen, the sol-fa supremo.

On other occasions, she spoke on behalf of the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, also raising funds for a children's hospital in Shoreditch.



### Music in the Free Libraries

Mrs Webster's musical activities are documented in newspapers, not to mention journals like the *Musical Times*, the *Musical News*, and the *Musical Association Proceedings*. Her teaching and publications were also well-advertised, and her lectures, performances or school events were noted in the local press. Whether she had learned about the importance of publicity from her journalist husband, or had an innate sense of its value – or, indeed, whether her second son Alick (Alexander) who also became a journalist, might have helped from time to time - the fact remains that it has been comparatively easy to trace her remarkable career over several decades. It is thanks to the availability of this data, largely via the *British Newspaper Archive* and *JSTOR*, that I have been able to explore the aspect of her work that will be of most interest to readers of *Brio*, namely her investigation into the provision of music in the country's free lending libraries.



Fig. 5: Hanover Square, London

Clarinda's survey of music in free public libraries took place in 1894. The project was entrusted to her by the Library Association, and she reported her findings not only to a London meeting of the Association in Hanover Square, but also to the Incorporated Society of Musicians at the Royal Academy of Music on 28 April 1894. The latter meeting was chaired by Ebenezer Prout. Publications from as far afield as Cork, Aberdeen and Manchester, not to mention the more London-centric sources, picked out differing details of her survey.<sup>14</sup>

'The subject was fraught with difficulty, music being classed among the arts and sciences'<sup>15</sup>

She had set out to survey 300 free libraries, but discovered that it was difficult to obtain statistics, eventually hearing from 36 different librarian correspondents.

'The extent of the circulation of high-class music through this medium [. . .] has caused her much amazement, and, indeed, it is significant of much that Birmingham should last year have issued nearly 10,000 volumes of musical compositions . . .'<sup>16</sup>

The startling figures of nearly 10,000 music loans in Birmingham the previous year (1893), and about 8,000 music loans in Liverpool, were understandably the mostly widely reported. Although no full written report has yet been traced, Clarinda's results can be tabulated as follows:

<sup>14</sup> A couple of shorter reports were identical, plainly from a press-release.

<sup>15</sup> *Musical News*, 28 April 1894, reporting the Incorporated Society of Musicians (London Section) meeting.

<sup>16</sup> *Manchester Evening News*, 13 June 1894.

**Music in Public Libraries 1893/4**

<b>PLACE</b>	<b>ANNUAL MUSIC LOANS</b>	<b>COMPOSERS NAMED</b>	<b>OTHER INFORMATION</b>
Birmingham	9, 619		
Cardiff	60 vols weekly (ie 3120)	Brahms, Dvorak, Greig, Moszkowski, Raff, Schubert & Schumann	'Remarkable collection of Welsh music.' NB Brahms, Dvorak, Grieg and Moszkowski were still living.
Liverpool	8065		Library had music since opening in 1859, amongst other 'pioneering initiatives' eg books for the blind and freewinter lectures.
Sheffield			Library had music since opening. Now has 1500 volumes of music.
London: Camberwell and Minet			Collections said to be particularly good
London: Canning Town branch of West Ham		58 oratorios; 50 operas 98 volumes of instrumental music by Beethoven, Grieg, Mendelssohn, Rubinstein, Schubert and Schumann; 61 volumes of songs by Brahms, Dvorak, Franz and Gounod.	Librarian gave Mrs Webster copy of their catalogue. Again, note that Brahms, Dvorak and Grieg were still living, whilst Franz and Gounod had died only a year or so earlier.
London: Chelsea			Special music readers' tickets. Mrs Webster was given a copy of the music catalogue at the Library Association meeting.
London: Fulham	1283	181 volumes	Music is 'a separate class'
London: Hammersmith	1886	155 volumes	Music is 'a separate class'
London in general			Within the past six years, a total of about twelve London libraries now had music

The Library Association meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> June, reported in *The Library* vol.6 (1894), was an auspicious occasion, for it also marked the election of Andrew Carnegie as an ‘honorary member of the Association in recognition of his munificent benefactions to public libraries both in the United States and in Great Britain’.<sup>17</sup>

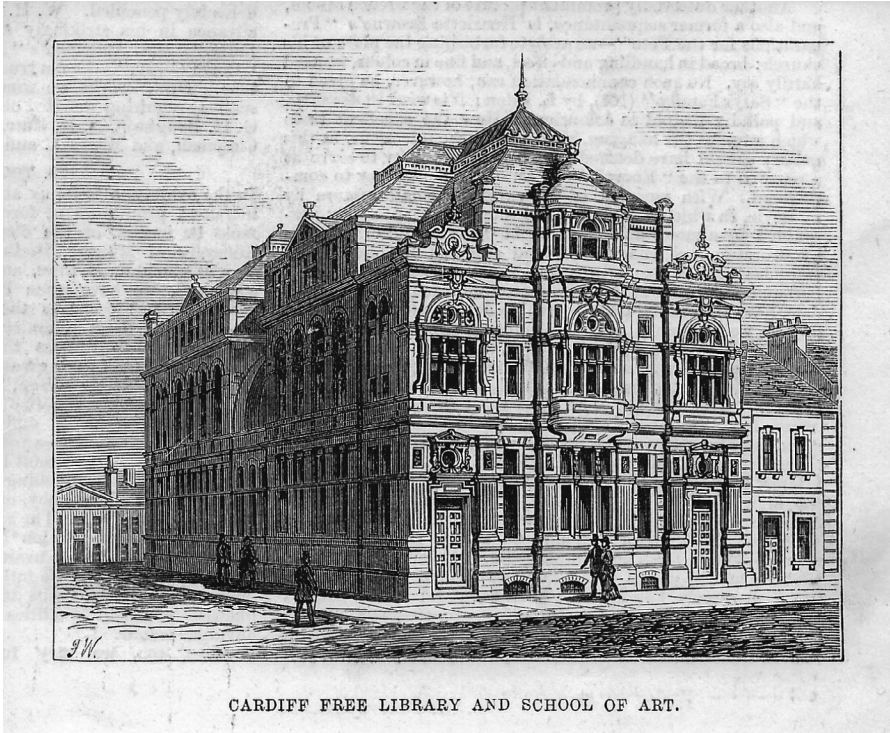


Fig. 6: Cardiff Free Library and School of Art

Clarinda’s own talk noted the particular popularity of music borrowing in the North of England, but also the increasing numbers of London libraries lending music.<sup>18</sup> Highlighting the positive effect that free music borrowing was bound to have upon ‘public taste and culture’, she stressed that libraries needed a musician or group of musicians to advise them about suitable stock,

<sup>17</sup> Andrew Carnegie’s first UK library was Dunfermline Carnegie Library in Scotland, opened 1883. He continued to fund numerous libraries until his death in 1919, and the trust continued some library funding beyond that date.

<sup>18</sup> Library Association, ‘The Library Association Record. Season 1893-4. The Last Monthly Meeting . . . 11 June 1894. [. . .] Mrs Clarinda A. Webster, LRAM, Principal of the Aberdeen Music School, Read a Paper Entitled “Music in the Public Libraries”’, *The Library*, 6 (1894), 229.

rather than leaving selection to a local amateur or music publisher. The above tabulation indicates that both Cardiff and Canning Town itemised a good proportion of contemporary composers in their responses, with Cardiff also commended for its Welsh music provision.

The names of six librarians posing questions or making observations after her talk were recorded. All but one had either published or were about to have library catalogues published. Frank James Burgoyne, Librarian of Lambeth, had catalogued both Norwood and Durning Lending Library, also writing about village libraries, library architecture, and a report on the Brixton and Stockwell Library. Charles J. Courtney, of Lambeth Borough would later publish a catalogue of the collection of works relating to the county of Surrey contained in the Minet Public Library, jointly compiled with William Minet himself. Edward Foskett, Librarian of Camberwell Libraries, had catalogued Livesey Lending Library. Lawrence Inkster, of Battersea Public Libraries, had published a catalogue of the lending library, and would later publish a catalogue of juvenile material, and a readers' guide. John Henry Quinn, from the London Borough of Chelsea, who gave a copy of his music catalogue to Mrs Webster, would in 1895 publish his catalogue of science, technology and art books in the Central Library.<sup>19</sup>

In short, the overall picture is one of optimism, enthusiasm and diligence in establishing public library services which would not only serve, but also uplift their borrowers. As it happens, none of the librarians known to be present were in Carnegie buildings, but it is plain that the general growth of public libraries in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was considerable - a municipal effort for the public good. In compiling her report, Mrs Clarinda Augusta Webster, LRAM, has opened a window allowing us to see that music library provision occupied a significant role in these efforts.

Over and above this, however, an exploration of this remarkable woman's life demonstrates that she made the most of her good education, and seized every opportunity to forge a career which was, in many senses, well ahead of her time.

## REFERENCES

*British Newspaper Archive*: <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>

*JISC Library Hub Discover*: <https://discover.libraryhub.jisc.ac.uk/>

*JSTOR*: <https://www.jstor.org/>

*National Library of Scotland Digital Gallery*: <https://digital.nls.uk/>

<sup>19</sup> Two of the catalogues – those of Brixton and Stockwell, and the Minet collection – were in fact published by Aberdeen University Press, as had been the Aberdeen public library catalogue some years earlier.

**Abstract**

Although there has been the perception that middling-class women's lives were confined to domestic circles, there are plenty of examples that directly challenge this idea. The late Victorian Clarinda Augusta Webster ran a music school and a school for young ladies. She escaped domestic violence, overcame personal tragedy, and created a highly successful career first in Aberdeen and then in London. She published, gave talks, was active in professional circles, and travelled both to Europe and America. She also conducted a ground-breaking survey on music library provision in late nineteenth century Britain, delivering her findings to the Library Association. This article celebrates the sheer determination of a talented woman to make the most of her skills and create opportunities for advancement. It also demonstrates the perceived importance of music in wider late Victorian life.

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## **BRASS BANDS AND THEIR MUSIC**

*Kenneth Crookston*

This article summarises a presentation delivered during IAML UK and Ireland's 2021 Virtual Study Weekend, an event that was brought about by the Covid-enforced lockdown. My aim here is to provide some background to the history of brass bands and of brass band music-making in the UK. After sketching an overview of the evolution of brass band activity of the past, I shall concentrate on how band music is making a significant impact on the present and what sort of work is currently being done to support players today, particularly during pandemic-afflicted times.

This subject has been an abiding passion for much of my life, and which eventually resulted in my appointment as CEO of an organisation known as Brass Bands England (BBE). Therefore, I shall begin with some brief personal context to explain my eventual connection with one of the world's largest and most proactive brass band organisations. This can be traced back to my childhood when, having started playing in my pre-school years, at the age of ten I followed my older brothers and began playing in one of Scotland's leading Championship bands. At 18, I joined Whitburn Band – Scotland's leading brass band and (then as now) one of the finest in the world. During the next 25 years I was privileged to perform with Whitburn under some great conductors in many of Europe's finest concert halls and at all of the major brass band competitions. After working in engineering for 20 years – but remaining a cornet player, band administrator and occasional writer for publications like Brass Band World and the popular website 4barsrest<sup>1</sup> – I became Editor of British Bandsman, then the oldest weekly music magazine in the world, first published in 1887, and the leading publication in the world on brass bands. For the next 14 years, I attended almost every major brass band event in Europe, working as a commentator and critic. I also became an advisor for Brass in Concert, the leading 'entertainment-style' band contest in the world held annually at Sage Gateshead (and for Siddis Brass, a similar event in Norway), a podcast presenter and an occasional adjudicator.

My work at the Bandsman also gave me terrific insight into the inner workings of every aspect of brass bands, so when the new position of CEO of BBE became available in 2018, my experience as a musician, administrator and journalist put me in a strong position.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.4barsrest.com/>

I will focus more on Brass Bands England later in the article, but first it might be useful to clarify exactly is meant by the term ‘brass band’? There are, of course, many different types of brass band throughout the world, but the ones I will discuss here are often referred to as ‘British-style’, although I will also illustrate why this description is fast becoming inappropriate in today’s world of international competition.

### **Brass Band History**

Brass Bands in the UK are a product of the 19th century industrial revolution, with bands being founded in many thousands of towns and villages from the very early 1800s following the development of Saxhorns in the 1840s by the Belgian inventor and musician, Adolphe Sax (who, unsurprisingly, also invented the Saxophone). Many of these brass, wind and reed bands became all brass, with the accepted format becoming: one E-flat soprano cornet, nine B-flat cornets, one B-flat flugel horn, three E-flat tenor horns, two euphoniums, two baritone horns, two tenor trombones, one bass trombone, two E-flat tubas and two B-flat tubas, with drums. It is important to note, however, that percussion was not used in major competitions until the late 1960s and, almost unbelievably, some march contests today still do not allow drums.

The development of the railway network in the mid-19th century meant that it became possible for bands from all over the north of England to travel to cities like Leeds and Manchester and back on the same day – thus providing the social conditions for both the first band contests and the very first special railway excursions in the world. Remember, this is two or three decades before we had organised football, while rugby and cricket were largely based around public schools at the time. One event, founded at Belle Vue in Manchester in 1853, still takes place annually at Symphony Hall in Birmingham and the British Open Championship, as it has been known since 1952, is thought to be the oldest surviving music competition in the world.

Wealthy industrialists soon saw great value in having their workers play in brass bands. Conditions in mills, factories and coal mines were very poor and, in addition to offering a cultural experience for these otherwise repressed communities, blowing regularly into brass instruments also helped relieve the many respiratory problems of the time, plus there was great prestige for companies with their own champion brass band. It also kept the players away from alcohol, which was a major factor in the growth of religious bands like those of The Salvation Army, and the Temperance and Rechabite movements, which became very popular during the late 19th century.

These industrial bands, mainly from the north of England, dominated the early years of brass band contesting. Many would attract the best players of the day by offering ‘jobs’ that involved very little work whatsoever, but a nice salary and a leading position in the company band. There was also a very



good living to be made as a professional conductor, and the very best of these, such as Alexander Owen, John Gladney, William Rimmer and William Halliwell, could often command attractive fees from as many as six or seven bands in the same contest.

In 1900, the Manchester event was joined by the National Brass Band Championships at the Crystal Palace in London, a venue that very soon became the ‘Mecca’ for the many thousands of brass band players throughout the UK, and which also achieved national prominence (videos of the event can still be found on the Pathé News website<sup>2</sup>). Bands like Wingates Temperance, Foden’s Motor Works and St. Hilda Colliery were the best of their time, but Black Dyke Mills has dominated more than any other throughout history. Fairey’s Aviation Works, Munn and Felton’s (Footwear) and Brighouse and Rastrick are other bands that have come to prominence, while Grimethorpe and Desford collieries remain the most successful surviving bands with roots in coal mining, even though neither has produced any coal in over 30 years. These bands were, of course, exclusively male, something that has thankfully been addressed in recent decades.

Until the early 20th century, brass bands almost always performed selections of classical, operatic, folk and popular music of the time. This all changed in 1913, when the impresario John Henry Iles, encouraged by British Bandsman Editor, Herbert Whiteley, began a process of commissioning leading British composers of the day – including Elgar, Holst, Vaughan Williams and John Ireland – to write for the National Championships. These were held at the Crystal Palace until it burned down in 1936 and then, from 1945 until the present day, at the Royal Albert Hall. This enlightened policy was responsible for arguably the finest original brass band music ever written and any readers wishing to hear it at its best can easily source a recording of Percy Fletcher’s *An Epic Symphony*, performed by Black Dyke Mills Band and conducted by the great Major Peter Parkes (1977), on Spotify or YouTube<sup>3</sup>. Many aficionados still consider this to have been among the finest brass bands in history, while Phillip McCann, its leader and principal cornetist at the time, is still held in equally high regard.

Appearances on national radio were regular for our leading bands around World War II and this continued for many years, with national television also showing brass bands regularly during the 1970s and ‘80s. This was also a time when brass bands were beginning to branch out into the wider musical world, influenced by significant brass music figures like Howard Snell and Elgar Howarth, with many performances of new and original repertoire by composers including Hans Werner Henze, Harrison Birtwistle and Robert Simpson in prestigious venues worldwide.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/brass-bands-contest/query/Luton> accessed 14 April, 2022.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UivkJNBmGxc> accessed 14 April, 2022.

As recently as 1974, no band from outside England had ever won the National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain – Cory Band, from Wales, being the first to do so that year and CWS (Glasgow)<sup>4</sup> first taking the title to Scotland in 1990. In 1978, the European Brass Band Championships also began in London, with British bands enjoying complete domination in the competition's early years. Bands from Norway, Belgium and Switzerland have since won what has now become the most prestigious title in international brass banding, and in the 21st century only three bands from the UK have managed to win the European Championships. Remarkably, relatively new brass band nations such as Austria, Germany and France have achieved better results than the English champions in recent years, although the green shoots of recovery were evident when Brass Bands England staged the 2022 European Brass Band Championships at Symphony Hall in Birmingham at the end of April, with Foden's taking an excellent third place for the home nation.



*Fig. 1: Foden's Band, Current National Champions of Great Britain.*

<sup>4</sup> The band first formed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century under the name the Scottish Co-Operative Wholesale Society.

While some of Europe's leading bands, like Eikanger-Bjørsvik Musikklag from Norway, Brass Band Oberösterreich from Austria and Paris Brass Band, give regular high-profile concerts in prestigious venues, the situation in the UK has been less impressive in recent years. There has only been one appearance by leading brass bands at the Proms in the past 30 years, although it is noted that the Tredegar Band from Wales is due to perform at the BBC Proms in 2022. Our regular presence on national radio has all but disappeared and television appears largely to contribute to a somewhat 'twee' perception in brass bands in the UK, which remain very much associated with their industrial roots in terms of media coverage.

Although there is as much chance today of finding doctors, scientists and teachers in brass bands as there used to be miners, mill workers or railwaymen, a stereotypical image still seems to endure. Broadcasters like the BBC invariably introduce brass bands as the 'working class' element into news stories on, say, industrial decline in the north of England. The bands themselves, when thrust into the public eye, all too often choose to play music such as that featured in the successful 1996 film *Brassed Off!* Rather than the music of Elgar, Holst or Vaughan Williams, or even Eric Ball, Gilbert Vinter or Philip Sparke, you are far more likely to hear *Death or Glory* or *Concerto de 'Orange Juice'* (an arrangement of Joaquin Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez* for guitar and orchestra), as made famous by 'Gloria', the fictional flugel horn player in *Brassed Off!*

### **Brass Bands England**

Brass Bands England is working to change the situation. BBE was first formed in 1968 as the British Federation of Brass Bands, to help support and promote brass bands throughout the UK. The organisation has been transformed in recent years, including a change in 2013 to its current name, but the past four years have seen a dramatic rise in funding from the Arts Council. We are both a Non-Profit Organisation and a Sector Support Organisation. With additional funding we have witnessed both a corresponding increase in activity and a satisfying rise to record membership levels.

BBE is based in Barnsley in Yorkshire, where 18 staff members and a host of regular freelancers provide support for our 475 member organisations, which encompass around 550 banding groups and around 18,000 players. These include youth groups with a handful of players, some of the leading contesting bands in the world, and everything in between. Among our services are insurance discounts, funding advice, safeguarding training and access to our artistic, player and governance events.

We also organise the National Youth Brass Band Championships of Great Britain and provide representation for our banding community on the European Brass Band Association. We are very active in our work with the

Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, especially when it has come to dealing with advice on Covid for member bands over the past two years. We have worked extensively with the Department for Education in Westminster on our ground-breaking solution to the administrative burden caused by Child Performance Licensing legislation, which is also now available to musical groups outside brass banding.

Simply put, BBE's role is to help our bands become the best they can be in everything they do, wherever they are in England, and whatever their ambitions and levels of ability may be.

Taking into account the many challenges facing virtually every type of community group today, our central aims are clearly unlikely to be achieved quickly or easily, or by tinkering around the edges of what we do. So, our development plan has seen Philip Harper, the musical director of highly successful Cory Band from South Wales (the world's number one ranked contesting band for the past 15 years), presenting artistic development seminars both around the country and online.

Supplementing these are player development sessions, conducted by one of London's finest trumpet teachers, Paul Cosh, and the world-famous cornet soloist and leading performance psychologist, Dr. Roger Webster, who is also a former principal cornet player with both Black Dyke and Grimethorpe Colliery bands. In normal times, these events take place in various venues around England, running in parallel with our government-approved safeguarding training courses – the highly-acclaimed BandSafe programme – which provides valuable guidance on how to look after young people and vulnerable adults within an organisation. These were recently joined by our band management bootcamp, aimed at providing resilience and sustainability for all banding organisations, and, most recently, our fundraising programme, itself backed financially by the Backstage Trust.

I explained earlier that public perception of brass bands in the UK is often very dated, but much of this problem is perpetuated by the bands and conductors themselves in the repertoire they choose and the very traditional nature of their presentation. There is also now a feeling among many – and the relatively poor performances of our best bands in international competition is a good illustration of this – that the musical quality of the product is just not good enough to withstand scrutiny by the public at a time when every type of entertainment imaginable is available to anyone at the touch of a screen.

As the most successful brass band conductor of the past decade, with an outstanding record in both the more serious test-piece contests and 'freestyle' events, Philip Harper is in a unique position to connect with the entire brass band community. By encouraging our member bands to challenge every aspect of their artistic output, he has already led considerable change in the

way some bands present themselves to their public. He has taken into account modern tastes and trends and, significantly, dispelling bands of the notion that we have to do things the way we do because that's the way we've always done them.

Above all, he reminds players that they are in the entertainment business and no longer restricted to a concert format passed down from our 19th century predecessors comprising march, overture, cornet solo, hymn tune, trombone trio and so on. This emphasises the truism that tastes change constantly, and brass bands need to change with them.

For the vast majority of us, Covid-19 has been the most impactful event in our lifetime and the damage it has done to the arts may take generations to repair. However, it's an ill wind that blows no good and the past 24 months have produced some valuable opportunities for both Brass Bands England and brass bands in general. Bands across our world have embraced technology like never before, with the ubiquitous 'lockdown video' becoming almost a daily feature of life on social media at the height of the Covid crisis. The internet proved extremely useful, though, both as vehicles for bands to continue playing and as a new and, sometimes, excellent way of showing the outside world what brass bands can actually achieve when they put their minds to it.



Fig. 2: BBE Brass Foundations Group during lockdown.

Lockdown also gave Brass Bands England an opportunity to advance our plans to connect Music Education Hubs with community brass bands, a key long-term aim since 2018, but we had previously lacked sufficient resources to be able to do this substantially. Through an award aimed at sector rejuvenation from the Government's Culture Recovery Fund, BBE was able to launch our Brass Foundations programme in January 2021. Initially a pilot project employing Youth Development Brass Specialists in five areas of the country, Brass Foundations has already vastly exceeded its initial goal of connecting ten music hubs with community brass bands in their jurisdiction. Once children were back in schools the actual business of turning groups of new players into youth bands began in earnest. In addition to the brass specialists, Brass Foundations also employs marketing staff and a funding consultant aimed at selling the benefits of engaging with brass to music hubs and finding enough money to continue the project until it becomes self-perpetuating.

### **Brass Band Archive**

Another significant beneficiary of the Culture Recovery Fund has been the Brass Band Archive. This collection originated in the Lancashire town of Wigan, and although recognised as a national archive, it is largely a collection of music and memorabilia acquired over a lifetime by a small group of enthusiasts. Problems involving accommodation and the ailing health of the elderly custodians meant that BBE had to rescue the archive's contents, and for over three years over 8,000 full sets of music and countless artefacts took up the entire boardroom in our offices in Barnsley.

Our recent funding has given us the opportunity to employ professional archivists who, along with a small army of volunteers, have spent the past 15 months working their way through the archive material and preparing it for its new home at Huddersfield University's Heritage Quay – also home of the Rugby League Archives. As you might imagine, the 'acquisition' of 8,000 sets of music over a long period also raises questions of both authenticity and provenance, so a considerable part of the current work relates to offering sets of music back to their original owners and removing photocopied sets that are still in copyright.

Ultimately, we hope to provide our members with online access to all the non-copyright music in the archive, some of which goes back as far as the early Belle Vue contests in the 1850s. Whenever we do manage to acquire bigger and more appropriate premises, a brass band museum is also part of our long-term plans.

This is just one example of a brass band music library, albeit a very substantial one, but it is mirrored in literally hundreds of band rooms all over the country. It is estimated that there are over 1,200 brass bands in England alone and nearly every single one has its own collection of music, often stretching

back to the band's origins. Some, like those of Black Dyke Band in Queensbury, West Yorkshire, are extremely well organised and staffed by dedicated volunteers who are rightly protective of the copious amount of historic material held in their trust.

Many bands today are adopting technology in securing their libraries' futures, with backup scans being taken of the thousands of sets of music they have acquired over the years, no doubt aware that historic libraries like those of Besses o' th' Barn, Foden's and Fairey bands have all gone up in smoke in recent years.

But where and how do bands acquire music in the first place? Specialist brass band publishers like Wright and Round, R. Smith and Company, and The Salvation Army have been around for well over a century, and along with Novello and Studio Music have produced many thousands of sets of classic works in the brass band repertoire. In recent years, continental publishers like Molenaar, Obrasso and Lake Music have also become well established through large catalogues of band music, while the likes of De Haske / Hal Leonard and Warner Brothers have been very influential, mainly through popular repertoire. The biggest shift in recent times has, of course, been the rise of self-publishing composers. While this has naturally provided opportunities for some who may not have chosen this option in the past, there are also those who would point to a corresponding drop in the overall quality of music being chosen as test-pieces for major band contests when there is a) a less vigorous, one-step vetting process and b) competition among composers to actually 'get the gig.' This means that fewer pieces are actually being commissioned than in previous years, when the real prize can now be found in the sale of over 100 sets of scores and band parts for the latest test-pieces.

At Brass Bands England we are confident that our new initiatives are providing the fundamental improvements required to begin the rebuilding of England's bands, both within the international brass band community and, much more importantly, in the consciousness of the general music-loving public. It may take us some years for it to happen, but these are the first steps in our mission to make England's brass bands, yet again, the best in the world!

Find out more about Brass Bands England by visiting: <https://www.bbe.org.uk/>



*Fig. 3: Youth Brass 2000, Current National Youth Champions.*

### **Abstract**

Brass Band performance has a long and distinguished tradition in the United Kingdom. This article provides an overview of the history of brass band culture from its origins in the early 1800s to its ever-increasing popularity in the early twenty-first century. Considering the predominant perception of brass bands and brass band players, the article takes into account how band personnel and band repertoire have changed over the years. It also reveals how challenges in performing and teaching have been met, particularly during covid. Significantly, it discusses the work of Brass Bands England, an organisation that offers support in education and performance. Brass Bands England has also assembled a major archive and the article outlines ways in which both preservation of and access to this collection has been achieved.

*Kenneth Crookston, a lifelong cornet player, is Chief Executive Officer of Brass Bands England.*



## **DJing AS SERIOUS LEISURE AND A HIGHER THING; CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INFORMATION BEHAVIOUR OF CREATIVE DJs**

*Keith Munro, Ian Ruthven and Perla Innocenti*

### **Introduction**

This article will seek to illuminate the world of DJing from the perspective of an information behaviour study, an activity underrepresented in this field, by studying its relationship to two key concepts from information science; *serious leisure* (Stebbins, 2009) and *higher things* (Kari and Hartel, 2007).

Our qualitative fieldwork investigates the information behaviour characteristics associated with DJing, and seeks to situate the activity within the concepts of *serious leisure* and *higher things*. Results are based on twelve semi-structured online interviews with practising creative DJs in Scotland, UK which leads to a definition of DJs as an occupational devotee within the concept of *serious leisure* and identifies examples of the joy and profundity of the activity, indicative of it being a *higher thing*.

### **Literature Review**

We first present a brief background to DJing as a creative and cultural practice. We then highlight the concepts of *serious leisure* and *higher things*, with suitable links to music and the activity of DJing.

### **A brief overview of the DJ**

One of the earliest instances of what can be considered DJing was an experiment in 1906 to transmit radio waves between the United States and Scotland by playing a musical recording of Handel's "*Xerxes*", conducted by Reginald A Fessenden, a colleague of Thomas Edison (Brewster and Broughton, 2014). The term DJ, an abbreviation of the term 'disc jockey', is used to describe someone who selects music for other people to listen to, and was first coined in the 1940s in relation to radio broadcasters. Throughout the 1950s the concept of a DJ playing records to a live audience caught on and over time encompassed myriad new styles of music, techniques, formats and changes in nightlife culture to become a popular musical activity with the potential to forge a career in (Broughton and Brewster, 2006, Ferreira, 2017).

## **The creative DJ**

While DJing at a basic level is just selecting music for others to listen to, there are a number of ways in which it can demonstrate creativity (Brewster and Broughton, 2014). A DJ can choose from a vast catalogue of recorded music and from this they will blend a selection of music together to create a performance for the enjoyment of others. Where this becomes a creative act lies in the lengths to which DJs will go to find new or relatively unknown music, their technical skills in mixing music together, as well as an innate understanding of the audience they are playing to and the space it is played in. This can involve utilising the emotional resonance of music, the physical frequencies of music, using judgment in selecting music at the right time and an unspoken form of communication with their audience. When all these processes and attributes align, the DJ is capable of creating moments of profound joy.

## **Instances of creative DJing**

Many early examples of creative DJing originate from Jamaica, where the development of Reggae music took place (Bradley, 2001, Brewster and Broughton, 2014). The earliest roots of Reggae are found in the establishment of sound systems by DJs, known colloquially as selectors. Selectors would grow the reputation and popularity of their sound systems by playing music exclusive to them, initially rare imported American records. Once this resource was exhausted, DJs created their own music to meet the need for exclusivity. From this, sound system operators, such as King Tubby, began making their own unique versions of popular songs, breaking down songs to their constituent elements and reassembling them in a way designed to receive a positive reaction from a crowd. This is the earliest form of what became known as remixing, a repurposing of an existing piece of music to meet the needs of a DJ and their audience.

Another instance of the creative DJ was the genesis of Hip Hop (Brewster and Broughton, 2014, Katz, 2012). Pioneered in New York, the earliest roots of Hip Hop came from a DJ called Kool Herc, originally from Jamaica, who operated a sound system similar to those from the island. He observed that the audience responded enthusiastically to certain portions of records, when it would break down to a simple percussive refrain. From this, he learned to repeat these passages, or '*breaks*', by using two copies of the same record, lining up the start of the break on one record to begin as soon as it ended on the other. This technique generated such a powerful response from dancers that it was rapidly adopted by other DJs in the city and led to other techniques commonly associated with DJing such as scratching, pioneered by Grand Wizard Theodore. Other Hip Hop DJs, such as Afrika Bambaata and Grandmaster Flash, would gain popularity not just for their technical ability, but their ability to find pieces of music containing '*breaks*' that were exclusive to them. This element of competition is a mirror to the sound systems in

Jamaica. Another area of similarity is that in New York an MC (Master of Ceremonies), and someone who speaks or sings rhyming lyrics, would rap through a microphone over the top of the music, similar to the 'toasting' of Deejays, the Jamaican term for someone singing or speaking over the music (Bradley, 2001, Brewster and Broughton, 2014). This combination of rapping over a DJ's music was pivotal to the development of Hip Hop as a musical form (Brewster and Broughton, 2014, Katz, 2012).

Another example of creative DJing is the technique of mixing music associated with Francis Grosso called beat-matching (Brewster and Broughton, 2014, Brewster and Broughton, 2012, Jones and Kantonen, 2011). This involved the DJ cueing up the next record to be in time with the music already being played, thus allowing for a seamless transition from one song to the next, allowing the audience to keep dancing without interruption. This form of mixing soon became commonplace alongside the rise of Disco music in New York in the 70s and would become a staple technique in styles of dance music grounded in Disco such as; Garage, House and Techno (Brewster and Broughton, 2014, Reynolds, 2013). In doing so, a DJ can stitch together a wide variety of genres, moods and styles to create a unique performance. As in Jamaica, DJs remixing records for their needs became commonplace amongst Disco DJs and beyond.

### **The DJ's role in wider culture**

DJs have played a role in broader cultural movements, for example, Jamaican sound system culture was imported to the UK via the Windrush generation and helped birth a vast array of DJ driven musical genres including; Bluebeat, Ska, Lover's Rock, Rave, Jungle, Drum & Bass, UK Garage, Grime and Dubstep (Bradley, 2013, Brewster and Broughton, 2014, Reynolds, 2013). These have all had a significant impact on popular music culture in the UK. Similarly, the importing of Jamaican DJ culture to New York led to Hip Hop becoming one of the predominant forms of popular music worldwide. Coincidentally, Francis Grosso, early pioneer of beat-matching, happened to be DJing around the corner from the Stonewall Inn on the night that a police raid instigated protests from an oppressed gay community in New York (Brewster and Broughton, 2014). The increased social freedoms that stemmed from this event were central to the eruption in energy at nightclubs in the city, attended predominantly by the Black and Latino gay community and soundtracked by DJs playing a wide range of music genres (Lawrence, 2004). Much of this energy from the era of Disco flowed into the genesis of Garage, House and Techno genres, again with DJs playing a pivotal role in popularising the music (Brewster and Broughton, 2014, Jones and Kantonen, 2011, Lawrence, 2004). From this, the DJ driven UK Acid House and Rave movements flourished in the late 1980's and early 1990's (Brewster and Broughton, 2014, Bussman, 1998, Collin, 2010, Reynolds, 2013).

### **The concept of *serious leisure***

A key concept identified to frame the information behaviour of DJs is that of *serious leisure* (Stebbins, 1982). *Serious leisure* is the theory that people pursuing a hobby, amateur or volunteering activity embark on a non-work related career to acquire expertise, comprehension and experience in that field. The concept was initially developed from research on traditional working patterns (Bosserman and Gagan, 1972) and people seeking to define themselves outside of their work (Lefkowitz, 1979, Yankelovich, 1979). Stebbins initially sought to differentiate *serious leisure* activities from casual leisure activities by positing that those engaging in *serious leisure* do so in a way that is the opposite of passively participating in casual leisure (Stebbins, 1982).

The *serious leisure* perspective has been used to guide studies into a wide range of different activities from an information science including gamers using the streaming platform Twitch, gourmet cooking, fanfiction writing, rubber duck collectors and historical re-enactors (Bingham, 2017, Hartel, 2006, Hill and Jen, 2017, Lee and Trace, 2009, Robinson and Yerbury, 2015).

### **Amateur versus Professional**

Stebbins developed his concept by looking at the relationship between an amateur and a professional (Stebbins, 1992). Stebbins posited that there can be a complex interrelationship between the two, that amateurs can mirror the role that professionals play in creative pursuits, with amateurs and professionals often performing together in such fields. This can be observed amongst DJs, being both professional and amateur, from a DJ learning in their bedroom, to a wedding DJ or renowned club DJ (Brewster and Broughton, 2014, Ferreira, 2017, Zemon, 2003).

### ***Serious leisure* as occupational devotion**

A further development of the *serious leisure* perspective was that of the occupational devotee, where the line between work and leisure is obscured (Stebbins, 2009). This devotion develops through a powerful, positive bond to the activity which rewards the participant with a sense of deep fulfilment, shared culture, a high degree of individual agency and an opportunity to channel their personality through the activity. From this, it is posited that occupational devotees can experience a degree of positivity in their lives that is profound. This can negate the less palatable portions of life and offers a chance for the marginalised to experience the pleasurable.

### ***Serious leisure* in music**

Of relevance to this piece of research, is a book written by Stebbins on barbershop singers (Stebbins, 1996). While the activity itself is grounded in a different area of musical activity there are some clear areas of overlap. In the

overview of the book Stebbins paints a picture of music providing an opportunity for the participant to experience an all-consuming sensation, where the mind is solely focused on the immediate act of musical activity. This state of mind is profoundly rewarding to the person performing the musical action, as is the case with occupational devotees (Stebbins, 2009).

### **The concept of *higher things***

A second key concept informing this research is *higher things* proposed by Jarkko Kari and Jenna Hartel (2007). They contend that much of the research undertaken in information science deals with what can be termed *lower things*; work processes, problem solving or negative areas of life. Their paper calls for a greater incorporation of *higher things* in information science research, often *serious leisure* activities, that bring humans happiness and joy. In doing so, it is posited that a more human element can be understood in the field of information behaviour, thus enriching the field beyond the more mundane, mechanical nature of everyday problem solving.

### **How DJing relates to *higher things***

At surface level, DJing may appear to be a simple activity associated with *lower things*, the simple act of playing recorded music. However there are a number of examples associated with DJing that demonstrate profound human experience. These include a link to ritual dance practices dating far back through human history (Brewster and Broughton, 2014), a sense of transcendent understanding amongst a crowd of dancers (St John, 2008), liberation from the constraints of moral norms on sexuality (Lawrence, 2004) and instances of deep emotional responses such as love and joy (Bussman, 1998, Collin, 2010, Reynolds, 2013). These are clear indicators that DJing as a pursuit can be characterised amongst other *higher things*, as called for by Kari and Hartel (2007).

From this review of literature, the following research questions were posed:

1. How do creative DJs relate to the concept of *serious leisure*?
2. Can DJing be considered a *higher thing*?

### **Research design**

This was a qualitative study which utilised semi-structured interviews to gather perspectives into the information behaviour of DJs based in Scotland. Interviewees were also asked to fill out a brief demographic questionnaire regarding their age, gender and employment status. Participants were considered to be creative DJs, broadly in line with the description in the literature review, this is as opposed to more functional and transactional forms of DJing,

where performances are tailored towards playing well-known music at social functions like weddings. There are overlaps between the two forms but the element of having *carte blanche* to play wide ranging and relatively unknown music that is afforded to creative DJs is a key distinction. The first author is a practicing DJ with two decades worth of experience playing in clubs, bars, music festivals and on radio in and around Scotland. He has also run music events at which DJs play. Further to this, he has ten years' experience working in record shops, an environment frequented by DJs looking for music and equipment, as well as being a social hub for meeting other DJs. Therefore, his personal experience was used to inform the methodology and enrich the analysis from an insider perspective (Merriam et al., 2001).

### **Participants**

Purposive and convenience sampling techniques were used in the recruitment process. Participants with broad experience of creative DJing practice were sought to provide insight on the activity. The first author had prior links to all participants, they had either played together at a music event, played at a music event run by them, met through his work in a record shop or through DJing on the radio. All participants could draw on years' worth of DJing experience in clubs and festivals either locally or internationally.

For the study, twelve participants were recruited (Table 1), all DJs based in, or had links to, Scotland, UK. Of particular relevance to the concept of *serious leisure* was the breakdown of participants' employment characteristics. DJing was the main source of employment for four participants. Eight participants had another job as their main source of employment, and although some of these were non-music related, all described how their career choices were based on allowing space for DJing.

**Table 1:** Participant demographics

ID	Age	Gender	Creative DJing as main source of employment	Main source of employment if not DJing
Participant 1	26-35	Male	No	Illustrator
Participant 2	36-45	Male	No	Music Retailer
Participant 3	36-45	Male	No	Parliamentary Reporter
Participant 4	18-25	Male	No	Restaurateur
Participant 5	36-45	Male	Yes	-
Participant 6	26-35	Male	Yes	-
Participant 7	26-35	Female	No	Hospitality staff
Participant 8	26-35	Male	No	Architect
Participant 9	36-45	Male	No	Massage Therapist
Participant 10	26-35	Male	Yes	-
Participant 11	36-45	Male	No	Laboratory Manager
Participant 12	18-25	Male	Yes	-

### Data collection and analysis

The interviews, using semi-structured questions, were conducted online in July 2020 using video calling applications. The interview questions were designed to explore key concepts set out in the review of literature, specifically *serious leisure* and *higher things*. They were also partly informed by the first author's personal experience of the activity. Eleven questions were asked on the relationship between DJing and other careers, how they prepare for a performance, how they seek music, how they evaluate performance, barriers faced in DJing, and how they communicate with the audience whilst performing. Approval was sought from the Departmental Ethics Committee, in compliance with best practice for any research involving human participants.

Online transcription software, in this case Otter AI, was used to process the data and generate transcripts. An iterative process of thematic analysis, in line with the methods detailed by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2019), was applied to the data by the first author, then critiqued by other authors. The themes of *serious leisure* (Stebbins, 2009) and *higher things* (Kari and Hartel, 2007) were used to code the interview transcripts, a deductive approach of thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2019).

### **Research limitations**

As previously detailed, the first author used their experience of DJing in participant recruitment and these personal connections were intended to make the interviews sociable. This does simultaneously lead to a limitation in the research in that the first author's positionality (Coghlan and Brydon-Miller, 2014), knowledge of the activity and relationships with the participants could result in an overly personal perspective on the interview process and subsequent data analysis. This potential risk of bias was mitigated by the input of other authors who critiqued the interview questions to ensure they were open questions which allowed interviewees to describe their own experiences.

The first author's demographic data at the time of the data gathering, a 38-year-old, male, working in music retail for whom DJing was not the main source of employment, is broadly reflected in the group of participants. In one aspect, the age range of participants, the range is wider but the male dominated, second career nature of DJing is common.

The sample of participants is tilted towards male DJs, as is often the case in the field, and this is an area where future research could hear more female voices or consider the DJing experience wholly from a female perspective. The research was not designed to consider race or sexuality, although both were present in the interview data and, given the key role that these factors played in the genesis of much of DJ culture (Brewster and Broughton, 2014, Lawrence, 2004), they too could be further represented in future research on the topic. New studies are welcome to further enrich this work.

### **Findings and discussion**

As detailed in the research design, the concepts of serious leisure (Stebbins, 1982) and *higher things* (Kari and Hartel, 2007) were used to frame the analysis of the interview data. Using these concepts as a lens, the analysis demonstrates how the participants got into DJing, how it developed from a hobby to something more serious and the fluid relationship between work and leisure found in their careers as DJs, as well as description of the joy of DJing. Discussion of links between these findings and its relevant literature for both concepts are then made.



### **DJing and its relationship to the concept of *serious leisure***

The first key concept used to analyse the data was Robert Stebbins' on *serious leisure* (Stebbins, 1982, Stebbins, 1992, Stebbins, 1996, Stebbins, 2009). Specific to this analysis were the ideas of what constitutes a hobby and when that might turn into a *serious leisure* activity, how *serious leisure* activities relate to amateurism or professionalism and when the line between leisure and work becomes so blurred that it can be referred to as an occupational devotion. The findings from this analysis were that DJs do not have a simple, easy to define relationship with the concept of *serious leisure* and what starts as a hobby can progress to a *serious leisure* pursuit that is remunerated, a part-time job, a full-time job, an activity that links with other areas of a career and an activity that shapes a career. Ultimately, it is proposed, based on the analysis, that DJs should be considered a variant of the occupational devotee (Stebbins, 2009), where the line between work and leisure is obscured but a commitment to the pursuit is paramount.

### **Getting into DJing**

The first question asked to participants was how they had first got into DJing. This was designed to indicate the factors that led to DJing becoming a hobby initially. Amongst the interviewees a number of different reasons were given, the most common being that they considered themselves enthusiastic music fans already, described in self-deprecating terms by Participant 5 as, "*I was always the music idiot*". Some other common factors included making music or being in a band, DJing at school events, engaging in the activity through friends, regularly going to nightclubs, making compilation tapes and working in a record shop. Working in hospitality, skateboarding culture and attending a workshop that taught DJ skills were also mentioned.

### **DJing becoming more than a hobby**

Typically, DJing can be considered a hobby when it is first taken up as an activity (Broughton and Brewster, 2006, Stebbins, 1982) and participants had a mixed response when asked when it had become more than a hobby to them. One interviewee suggested DJing was still a hobby to them, Participant 11 stating that '*I have only ever seen it as a hobby*'. Others instantly questioned whether 'hobby' was an appropriate term for something they considered a more serious activity. Questioning this was Participant 3, '*hobby is an interesting word to use because that has connotations of not being serious*' and by Participant 10:

*To me a hobby is more of an interest, you're not necessarily obsessed. Most of the DJs I associate with are music obsessed.*

Almost all the participants stated it had become more than a hobby when they began playing gigs in bars and clubs and, correspondingly, getting paid for gigs. Sometimes this was a quick progression from home-based hobby to paid gigs. Running music events and joining a female led DJ collective were also given as catalysts for the activity becoming more serious. This highlights how the gap between amateur and professional (Stebbins, 1992) is perhaps not as easy to define with a DJ as in other areas of *serious leisure*, with the commencement of a pursuit being considered more serious also coinciding with beginning of being remunerated for it.

### **How DJing interacts with a career**

One of the key means to understanding DJing in relation to *serious leisure* is to ascertain how the activity interacts with a career, with a particular emphasis on the concept of ‘occupational devotee’. This is where the line between work and leisure is so blurred that what is easier to define is a deep-rooted to commitment to the activity (Stebbins, 2009). From a demographic questionnaire four participants stated that DJing was their main source of employment, while eight stated that DJing was not their main source of employment. From this point a number of interrelationships were uncovered from the interview data. Some of the participants for whom DJing was not their main source of employment identified links to their main source of employment; working in art, record shops and hospitality. These links were evidenced by Participant 1, ‘*from DJing I’ve got illustration work for record labels and posters and logos for clubs*’, Participant 2, ‘*one of the reasons I’ve stayed in the record shop for so long is that it’s tied into the DJ thing or to making music*’, and Participant 7:

*A lot of the people who go the venue would be interested in the same kind of music or the same kind of nights I would go to or play at.*

There was a common thread amongst participants discussing a link between studying and DJing. For some their time studying at university had allowed them time and space to develop their DJ careers, others were about to return to further studies and one participant was currently studying. Amongst the interviewees, many mentioned making music as a common associated activity. Tying these aspects together, Participant 12 stated:

*I think through DJing I’ve gotten into making music and sound art. So that’s become my main practice. It has definitely influenced my practice and my art degree.*

Another common link between careers was a couple of participants working as therapists alongside DJing. One other associated activity of running a record label was identified. Overall, more than half of the participants had some kind of current connection between their job and DJing, through art, making music, working in record shops, running a record label and working in venues where DJs played. Of those participants who did not have a current link, most stated that their job could flex around DJing and that they considered this as a key component in their choice of job. Participant 10 who was due to return to their main source of employment, which was not DJing, after the time of this study described having a job that flexes around DJing as having a 'synergy'. Some of the interviewees who did not have a direct link between DJing and their job talked of aiming to create links in the future, for example in taking sound recording techniques used in DJing and applying them to sound therapy, or as Participant 10 described:

*My design skills and my DJing have started to overlap and I've been approached to do freelance architecture projects.*

### **Links to literature**

In terms of relating the analysis to the concepts of *serious leisure* in the review of literature (Stebbins, 1982, Stebbins, 1992, Stebbins, 1996, Stebbins, 2009), it is posited that, amongst the DJs interviewed, there is a fluid relationship between work and leisure. If DJing is not their main source of employment, there exists either a link to their main job, or an intention to ensure that their job will flex around it. There is also a link to associated activities such as making music, art, studying, working in music venues that further blurs the lines between work and leisure, as compared to a lawyer who goes canoeing at the weekend. This suggests the DJ should be considered a variant of the occupational devotee (Stebbins, 2009), where the clear definition between work and leisure is hard to differentiate between full-time work, part-time work or a bridge to other associated jobs and activities. The commitment to this pursuit that this level of devotion requires is motivated by the enjoyment and happiness that can result from performing.

### **Higher things and the joy of DJing**

The second key concept through which the interview data was analysed was the concept of *higher things* (Kari and Hartel, 2007), which calls for studies in information behaviour to look at areas of life, often *serious leisure* activities, where profundity can be experienced, as opposed to the more mundane aspects of everyday life. This also mirrors calls from Robert Stebbins (2009) that studies should seek to understand the pursuits in life that provide moments of joy. From the analysis of the participants' interview, there is

demonstration that DJing is a pursuit capable of delivering instances of fulfilment that are deeply meaningful.

### **Characteristics of the joy of DJing**

Kari and Hartel's (2007) call to investigate the activities in life that bring profound joy through the lens of information science are seen in the sentiments stated by all of the participants. The following words were all used by interviewees to describe the positive feelings associated with DJing: awesome, amazing, fulfilment, validation, brilliant, excellent and magnificent. The participants also talked of a range of sensations when they received a positive reaction, such as joy, ecstasy, love, emotional, euphoria, highs, buzzing, addictive, elation, warmth and intoxication. Further to these positive sensations there was frequent use of words that can be attributed to the collective joy felt between a DJ and their audience: transcendence, healing, primal, sharing, community, connection, stars aligning, unity, therapy, affinity, magic and ritualistic.

### **Links to literature**

As shown in the analysis, there are some clear links between the experiences of the participants and the profound joy sought in the pursuit of *higher things* (Kari and Hartel, 2007), there are also a number of links to other relevant literature discussed in conjunction with *higher things*. One is the idea that people gathering to dance to music can be traced back to ritual dance practices throughout history (Brewster and Broughton, 2014), a concept commented on by a number of participants, with one of them describing DJing in the following terms:

*There's something like, societal, we've always done this right from tribal kind of villages and all the rest of it, we've always done something that's actually strangely close to what we do now, we're listening to primitive beats and kinda almost sort of elevating yourself to trance like states through dance. I do think there is some sort of energy that happens within a club when you get people of roughly a certain age and roughly a certain mind set. There is, you know, there is an energy and a positivity that's just in abundance, it is palpable. (Participant 11)*

There was also a discussion of the idea of transcendence amongst some participants, tying in with academic writing describing the act of communal dancing offering a route to transcendent experiences (St John, 2008). This was remarked upon by one of the participants when relating the profound joy that is possible when DJing:

*It is that sense of transcending the self almost, that is the most enjoyable for me. So, more than just playing one piece of music and enjoying the reaction from that, is being able to sustain that feeling, and the end result at the very end of the night where you say, 'Okay, we did a good job, we've told the story or we all we all took part in telling a collective story here'. That's really... that's what makes you want to go and do it again. (Participant 2)*

A further link to the literature discussed around *higher things* was that DJing, and its associated nightlife, offered the opportunity for a freedom of sexuality to be experienced (Lawrence, 2004). This concept was related by one of the participants:

*When I get people come up to me and tell me that they live for, it's what they look forward to every month and it keeps them going through hard times, or people say that they've been having a really bad week and this has just completely turned that around and lifted their spirits. Trying to create a queer space and maintain a queer space for people, when people tell me that they feel comfortable and they feel validated by seeing other people like them. Being able to see people like trans people being able to take their shirts off comfortably and knowing that in the same venue that I do my nights in, they may not feel so comfortable doing that on another night. Enabling that kind of communal queer joy and just kind of communal dancing, joy and the joint creation of a space where the physical boundaries that we have between each other are temporarily suspended and dissolved. (Participant 3)*

There was also evidence of DJing offering opportunities for emotionally resonant experiences, as stated in the literature review (Bussman, 1998, Collin, 2010, Reynolds, 2013), and summed up in the following manner by one of the interviewees:

*Really, it's the main thing that you've been connected to a roomful of people, it is lovely, and that to aid in them having a really positive experience is such a gift. It's lovely. It's a great feeling. (Participant 9)*

DJing as a higher thing was also described by one participant in the following terms:

*'Yeah, it's really hard to describe... when it's going well, you're building an energy in a room and people are more engaged in what you're doing, which is a very, very gratifying, good feeling. It's kind of pretty unparalleled in terms of being able to control a room through music . . . that's why we do it right? I guess euphoric would be the right term.'* (Participant 4)

These findings clearly demonstrate the potential for profound joy from DJing and situates it amongst other activities considered as a *higher thing*, as well as linking it to the motivation of why a *serious leisure* pursuit leads to a participant becoming an occupational devotee.

## Conclusions

This paper has explored the previously understudied information behaviour of DJs through the concept of *serious leisure* and found that, within the participants studied, they can be defined as an 'occupational devotee', someone for whom the line between work and leisure is hard to define, but for whom a strong commitment to the activity is evident. This commitment is motivated not just by a love of music but in the potential for happiness and joy that can come from performing, situating the activity as a *higher thing* in information behaviour studies. Within the field of information studies, particularly related to music libraries and information systems, this increases understanding of a popular area of musical activity, and a group of potential users, that had previously been unconsidered.

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### **Abstract**

This article explores the information behaviour of DJs, a group not previously examined from the perspective of information science, by conducting interviews with a group of creative DJs based in Scotland for their insights and perspective on the activity. This qualitative interview data was thematically analysed for links to key information behaviour concepts, *serious leisure* and *higher things*, with links between findings and literature sought. From this, there was demonstration of how the information behaviours of creative DJs leads them to be seen as occupational devotees for whom the joy and profundity of DJing is critical to their engagement with this serious leisure activity.

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## **BRINGING THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND MUSIC COLLECTIONS TO LIFE THROUGH PERFORMANCE<sup>1</sup>**

*Almut Boehme*

### **The National Library of Scotland**

Inaugurated in 1689, the Advocates' Library in Edinburgh was given the legal right, under the 1710 Copyright Act, to claim a copy of every book published in Britain. In 1925 the National Library of Scotland (NLS) was formally constituted by an Act of Parliament. Since 1999, the Library has been funded by the Scottish Government. It remains one of six legal deposit libraries in the United Kingdom and Ireland and is governed by a board of management. The collections have grown to over 24 million items including over 400,000 music items with over 23,000 music sound recordings and 1,000 music manuscripts. The National Library of Scotland is the largest library in Scotland and is, by its nature, a reference library offering access to its physical collections through its reading room services on its premises in Edinburgh and Glasgow.

### **Music in a reference only Library**

Music library services in a reference only setting pose different access issues than books. While perhaps 98% of the general population can read text, we can assume that only about 5-10% possess some degree of music literacy. This can vary from a very basic understanding of how the dots on lines system works to hearing the music in the head when looking at notation. There are many levels in between. Some people may be able to follow a score while also listening to the music. Others can sightread music playing an instrument or singing. In a reference only setting music users usually have to sit in a silent reading room looking at dots on lines or perhaps listen to the music in a sound booth while reading the score. For the majority of the general public this means very limited and unsatisfactory access to the music offered by the Library. While out-of-copyright music can be reproduced, in-copyright music usually cannot be reproduced as a means of taking the music out of the Library to use it for what it has been created for: to perform it. For these reasons there have been efforts in NLS to increase the number of sound

<sup>1</sup> This article based on a paper given at the IAML (UK & Irl) Virtual Annual Study Event 2021.

recordings to aid use of notated music onsite. Furthermore, historic collections, which are largely out-of-copyright, have become available remotely through the Library's mass digitisation programme.



*Fig. 1: Special Collections Reading Room where music and sound recordings are consulted. Image courtesy of NLS.*

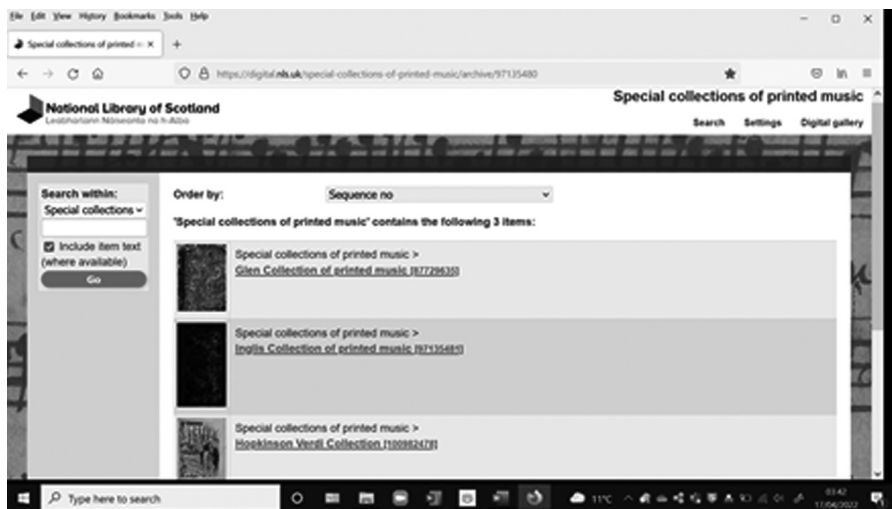
### **Making music accessible by other means: digitisation, sound collections, live and recorded performance**

There are three strands to making the onsite collection of music more accessible to users. Digitising out-of-copyright music for remote access enables users to print and use the Library's music collections for study and performance. Having more musical works available in sound in addition to notation aids users with limited notational skills to make use of collections that are only accessible onsite. Recording music collections and making the music available via social media channels reaches an even wider audience. It can introduce users to music in the NLS collection that they might not otherwise have searched for. They can listen and watch the music in performance, which

ultimately is the best way to bring the music to life. Music performances in the Library, including talks, lecture-recitals and other performances on library premises, are very popular.

### Full-text Music in the Digital Gallery at [digital.nls.uk](https://digital.nls.uk)

Over 300 volumes of music of the Glen, Inglis Collections and a sample from the Hopkinson Verdi Collection have been added to the Digital Gallery.<sup>2</sup> Improved metadata allows more flexible searching, such as individual song and tune titles in addition to publication details.



*Fig. 2: Special Collections of Printed Music on the Digital Gallery. Image courtesy of NLS.*

Some of the material is also available on the Internet Archive website, [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org) though with limited searching capabilities (search for nlsmusic to browse).

### NLS music on Twitter

During the pandemic a twitter thread with the hashtag #musicathome was started so as to offer a selection from the full-text music collection. The main purpose of this was to encourage people to look at the music available and access it from home for leisure or study and to discover our collections for

<sup>2</sup> <https://digital.nls.uk/special-collections-of-printed-music/> accessed 23 April 2022.

themselves. Selection is based around themes (anniversaries, seasons, places) and suitability for music making in the home, i.e. music that does not require advanced skills and can be performed by keyboard and melody instruments and singers. Occasionally dance music with dance instructions has featured, encouraging users to get a group together for a dance!

### **Videoclips on the NLS YouTube channel and the Library learning zone**

A video introduction<sup>3</sup> gives an overview of the music collections. It includes a case study wherein research of a Scottish tune is undertaken using the song and tune indexes. This leads to performances of a number of different settings of a particular tune, The Lea Rig, aka My Ain Kind Dearie O. First, a version set for German flute or violin, then as a setting for keyboard performed by violin and cello, finally as a Scottish song with a Viennese twist in a setting by Haydn for voice and piano trio but performed here in the absence of a piano by violin and cello. The performers are Library staff, a Library volunteer and a user of the Library, a professional singer and musicologist. The Haydn setting of My Ain Kind Dearie O can also be accessed as a separate video clip.<sup>4</sup>

### **The Schetkys: musical emigrants**

It is also possible to view a themed video clip telling the story of an 18<sup>th</sup> century German musician and composer who emigrated from Germany to Scotland. One of his children emigrated to the USA. It is an interesting story, adding insight into the vicissitudes of family emigration in the 1700s. The video, with its music performance by Library staff, is interspersed with text and images.<sup>5</sup>

### **Cèol nan Gàidheal, an introductory bi-lingual Gaelic music web resource**

This web feature provides an overview and introduction to Gaelic music. It includes recordings and video clips of music, some by Library staff as well as external contributors.<sup>6</sup> The site provides information about historical sources for Gaelic and Scottish music. It focuses on major topics such as the oral tradition, pibroch, songs and song collectors. The NLS's collection also contains material on the Royal National Mòd, an annual sporting, literary and musical event that has been celebrating Gaelic culture for over 125 years. The principal aim of the site is to instruct visitors about the Scots musical heritage and, by doing so, show that the NLS is taking a significant role in preserving it for future generations.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eMRfHX0TPU> accessed 23 April 2022.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BtrECbXg47o> accessed 23 April 2022.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MOOYXbrtz7w> accessed 23 April 2022.

<sup>6</sup> <https://digital.nls.uk/learning/ceol-nan-gaidheal/gaelic/index.html> accessed 23 April 2022.

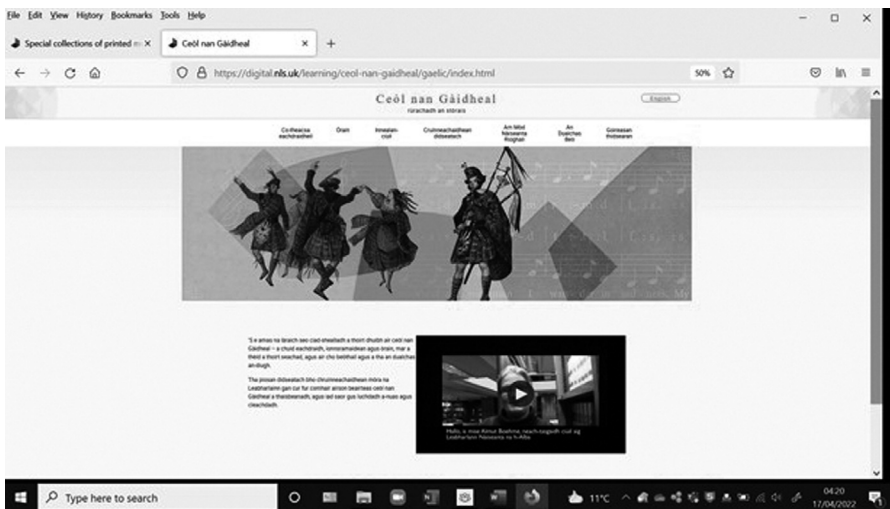


Fig. 3: *Ceòl nan Gàidheal*. Image courtesy of NLS.

### Live performance on Library premises

For many years the Library has presented live music on its premises. Sometimes in connection with the Edinburgh festivals, or as part of the public events programme or pop-up events. The repertoire ranges widely and often there is a connection to the collections held in the Library: lute music from the Panmure music manuscripts, an evening with Edith Piaf music, an Australian Celtic band performing Scottish folk music, lecture-recitals on Haydn's Scottish songs, Chopin in Scotland, choirs singing works by Robert Carver, Gaelic songs, or Christmas carols. Venues typically used in the Library for music performance are the Board Room, the main staircase in the main Library building and occasionally meeting rooms. Limits sometimes have to be imposed because of the such things issues as the number of musical instruments that can be accommodated or, indeed, the size of groups of musicians. The acoustics in the venues also need to be taken into consideration. The echo in the front hall is probably comparable to that in York Minster!



*Fig. 4: The Board Room. Image courtesy of NLS.*

The board room can accommodate an audience of about 60-80 people, depending on the size of the stage required for the performance. There is no storage space for a piano. The Library does not possess a piano and when one is required for a specific event it will need to be hired. Some performers insist on a grand piano, but a baby grand is all there is room for in this very limited area. The equation is simple: the larger the group of musicians, the smaller the audience.



Fig. 5: A choir performing on the main staircase. Image courtesy of NLS.

### **Concert in the Library by an amateur choir featuring music from the collections**

A local amateur choir contacted NLS wishing to perform a selection of Scottish music from the famous Carver Choir Book (NLS Adv.MS.5.1.25) as well as traditional music including Gaelic music. The initial idea had been to perform the music from the Carver Choir Book from facsimiles, but an early meeting showed that the choir had underestimated the skill required to read 16<sup>th</sup>-century music manuscripts. There was also an issue with the number of parts in the original version that were beyond the scope of the choir. As modern published printed editions were mainly limited to scholarly editions still in copyright it was decided to search for out-of-copyright arrangements for fewer parts. The selection of the work and identifying a suitable arrangement fell to the music curator. In the end *O bone Jesu*, one of only two surviving Carver motets, was selected, partly because a suitable online arrangement with rights permissions for the required use could be sourced from [www.cpdl.org](http://www.cpdl.org) (6-part arr. by Mick Swithinbank).



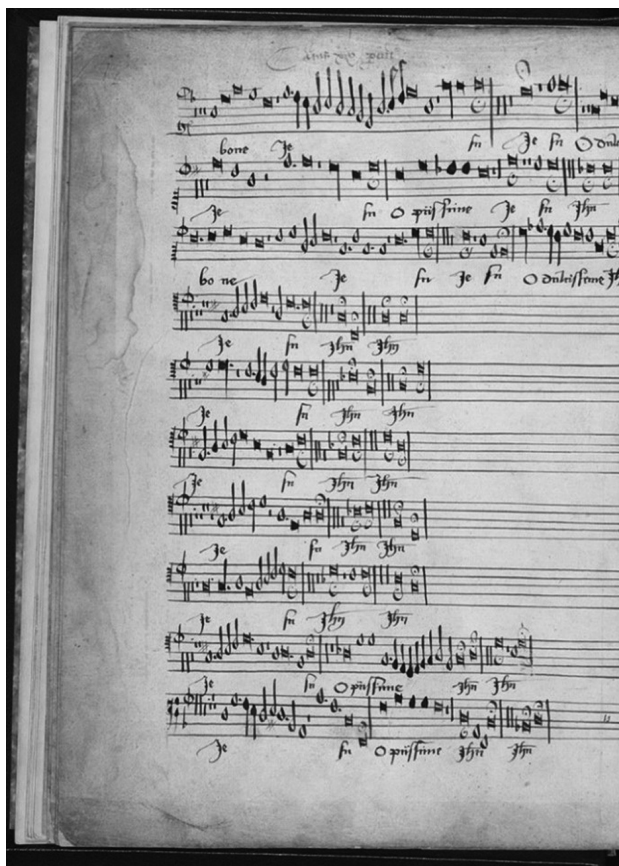


Fig. 6: *O bone Jesu* in the *Carver Choir Book* (NLS Adv.MS.5.1.25).<sup>7</sup> Image courtesy of NLS.

The music curator was also asked to find suitable Gaelic choral pieces from the collections. The main consideration had to be to seek out works that were copyright friendly. There was an abundance of choral music in suitable arrangements available. In the end the choir was very happy with the selection and the themes in the part-songs fitted the programme nicely. When the choir asked how the music had been found they were taken aback hearing that the main consideration had been the death date of the composer/arranger. Many

<sup>7</sup> The Scone Antiphoner, also called The Carver Choir Book, belonged to Robert Carver, a canon of Scone Abbey, and is one of very few pre-Reformation church choirbooks to have survived. Dating from the 16th century, it contains works by both Carver himself and by other composers of the period.

people assume that traditional music is in the public domain and belongs to everybody, but as the performers usually put their stamp on the music they are de facto arrangers of the ‘basic’ traditional tune. Choral arrangements of traditional songs are arranged more akin to art music, however. Finally, the music curator also contributed the programme for the concert that took place in the Board Room. This included brief notes on each work as well as providing copies of texts for the pieces.

### Christmas Shopping Night

Another occasion for music in the Library is the annual Christmas shopping night with Christmas carols. As this takes place during normal reading room opening hours the music has to be very time-limited to avoid disturbing the observed silence in the reading rooms for too long. As mentioned before, the acoustics in the front hall resemble that of York Minster, but it is a popular spot for music performances.



*Fig. 7: Christmas Shopping Night 2017.  
Image courtesy of NLS.*

### **Byrd International Singers**

In 2019 NLS was approached by the Byrd International Singers, a choir formed in connection with a residential choral workshop. They wished to organise a viewing of the famous Carver Choir Book on the day they were performing Scottish music in St. Giles' Cathedral as part of the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. In conjunction with the visit, which also included a tour of the Library, the choir performed a selection of their concert programme on the main Library steps. The music from the choir book included Carver's Gloria from the 10-part *Missa dum sacrum mysterium*, the earliest dated work by the composer from around 1506-1513 (no 11 in the ms, ff. 70v-96r) as well as his *Gaude flore virginali* (no 10 in the ms, ff. 66v-69r) and Nesbitt's Magnificat for Five voices.



*Fig. 8: Byrd International Singers viewing the Carver Choir Book. Image courtesy of NLS. Image courtesy of NLS.*

In conclusion, the Library's attempts to bring the collections to life by pursuing both onsite and remote performances of works in its collections, has its limitations but is generally viewed positively by onsite and remote visitors alike. It is hoped that physical limitations in terms of venue size, use of instruments and size of performing groups can be improved over time. Copyright considerations will always play a major part in the selection of music

and performers. There are advantages to making new recordings of music to avoid lengthy and costly licensing arrangements. Having Library staff involved in some of the making of these recordings shows audiences that there is music in the collections that is suitable for non-professional performers. It is hoped that this will encourage people to use our online full-text music for their own music-making, which the #musicathome Twitter campaign encourages.



Fig. 9: Carver Choir Book showing the famous drawings that always impress visitors! Image courtesy of NLS.

### **Abstract**

Over the past few decades the music collections that are largely only accessible via consultation in the National Library of Scotland's Reading Room have been brought to life via performances on the premises as well as online. Traditionally lecture-recitals and concerts have taken place as part of the Library's events programme and some have focussed on the collections held in the Library. More recently, performances have been produced inhouse for online delivery via the Library's YouTube channel. This article describes the trials and tribulations of preparing collection material for performance by amateur and professional performers. Selecting appropriate collection material, editing and producing suitable reproductions as well as limited options for the use of keyboard instruments are some of the challenges discussed.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

*Edited by Martin Holmes*

David Breitman, *Piano-Playing Revisited: What Modern Players can Learn from Period Instruments*. (Eastman Studies in Music). Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2021. xxi, 206 p. ISBN 9781648250101. Hardback. £60.00. [E-book version also available]

If one sentence from this extremely interesting and thought-provoking book could stand as a motto for its main message it would be this one taken from p. 127: ‘Go ahead and experiment – one cannot make a rule.’ Initially this strikes one as strange given that the author has taken a great deal of trouble elucidating the various ‘rules’ that the history of piano pedagogy has laid down over the past three centuries, especially with regard to phrasing, touch and expression. We hear a great deal from C.P.E. Bach, Carl Czerny, Daniel Türk, Leopold Mozart and others, all of whom were concerned about the correct approach to playing and interpreting both their own music and that of their contemporaries. Breitman’s central concern is that one should look at these sources with all the critical acumen we can muster, but then use our ears and minds to experiment with what they say so that ultimately we, as performers, can provide an interpretation of the classical piano repertoire that correctly mediates between the letter of the page and the spirit of the music for which the page merely provides the assembly instructions, as it were.

The book had its origins in practical classes in playing on historical instruments that the author convened at Oberlin Conservatory in Ohio, USA. His fundamental thesis is that, once we have informed our modern playing techniques by experimenting with earlier instruments such as the fortepiano and the clavichord, our approach to the classical and early romantic repertoire can be refined so that the composers’ original intentions can be much better realized and communicated on a modern instrument. As a fine teacher, Breitman is prepared to learn from his students, and their comments form an essential part of the book. Until relatively recently the fortepiano has sometimes been thought of as a step on the ladder of evolution of the modern piano, as a kind of intermediate technology. The harpsichord and clavichord have been regarded as end-points of different evolutionary branches and consequently used as a resource by modern composers (e.g. Martinu, Howells and the more radical Ligeti); but the fortepiano, whose character and sound varied

hugely between individual instruments and makers, has been thought of as having been superseded by the modern pianoforte and has largely been confined to the museum room. However, in the last thirty years, as many surviving instruments have been restored and expert copies have been made, the tonal qualities of these instruments have begun to be recognized as being an extremely important component of the aural imagination of the great composers who wrote for them. Mozart had the sound of a Walter fortepiano in his composing mind, not a Steinway Model D. I have read recently that the Japanese composer Dai Fujikura is undertaking two commissions for new works for the fortepiano, which may stimulate other composers to explore its sound world. There are truly great performers on the instrument too (Bilson and Brautigam particularly) whose performances are well worth exploring.

Breitman's main thrust is made clear from the outset: 'It is a practical book, not a theoretical or speculative one. The emphasis is on the music: how it sounds on period instruments, why the notation looks as it does, and how we might use those insights to enrich performances at a modern piano.' It is extremely refreshing to find an academic book on music that is so caring about the sound that performers make. The author is expert at getting to the point without wasting words. The first two chapters concentrate on the main issues of concern, firstly outlining 'in broad strokes' the main differences between modern and historical instruments and the pros and cons of each. We are given a whistle-stop tour of general issues of using treatises, the pitfalls of phrasing and articulation, the question of touch and the thorny question of pedalling. The issue of pedalling and its notation in the works of Chopin later in the book is particularly fascinating. Each of these topics could support a book of its own, and it is a testament to the author's skill that, despite his concision, everything he says is well thought out and admirably clear. The third chapter concentrates on the works of Haydn and Mozart. The fortepiano was the instrument for which they wrote and, although the instrument kept mutating over the next century, there is no way one could think of them as writing for the modern pianoforte. This chapter contains the heart of the book and should, I believe, be consulted by everyone interested in the way Haydn and Mozart wrote their music for the keyboard. The following chapter on Beethoven is fascinating throughout. The piano was beginning its long journey toward our modern instrument within Beethoven's lifetime and Breitman explores how Beethoven's approach to the piano changed as he went through his life. He focusses largely on the early and middle period works and the chapter culminates in a detailed discussion of the first movement of the Sonata op. 2, no. 3 in C major. The author is one of those rare creatures who can 'walk the walk' as well as 'talk the talk'. He recorded this sonata as part of a complete CD set of Beethoven's sonatas on period instruments and he plays it splendidly. Another feature of the book is

that it gives access to a portfolio of short videos (on *Vimeo*) of the author demonstrating various points and examples, which really brings his arguments to life. The next two chapters focus in on Schubert and Chopin. Once again, an entire book could be written on both these composers' approaches to the piano, yet Breitman deals expertly with the rather knotty problems, particularly with regard to pedalling, that each has to offer the modern pianist. Despite the detailed scrutiny of sources and technicalities, Breitman's main point is that we should use earlier instruments to open our minds to what is possible on modern ones. His anecdote at the beginning of the book, which tells of an occasion when, owing to problems of humidity and tuning, he was obliged to turn from a fortepiano to a Steinway between rehearsal and performance, is extremely telling here. He realized he was trying to make the modern instrument sound like a Viennese Graf piano so that his cellist partner in Beethoven wouldn't be swamped. From that instance of creative crisis came the genesis of this book.

The seventh chapter looks at the relationship between clavichord playing and modern piano playing and recommends that every pianist should, if they can, get practical experience of this instrument. His final chapter, 'Creativity in the Performance of Old Music', brings us back to his fundamental concerns of individual informed choice and the power of imagination: 'The performances I admire exude authority, not correctness. Striving to understand the composers' intentions isn't a moral obligation, a way to avoid 'errors,' but rather a path towards ownership of the material. With ownership comes conviction and the rewards of conviction are confidence and freedom – real authenticity, the genuine article!'

The appendix comparing the overtone spectrums of a Walter and a Steinway seems rather unnecessary and inconclusive. There are slightly misplaced turns in the Beethoven example on p. 110 and there is definitely something fishy in the right-hand part of the example from Schubert's Trout Quintet on p. 123, but otherwise the examples (of which there are a generous number) form an essential counterpart to the author's prose. The bibliography is most helpful, though there are a couple of omissions that are surprising; Michael Cole's book *The Pianoforte in the Classical Era* (OUP, 1998) should be on everyone's list.

At its best, reading this book is like attending a public lesson by a fine player who has undertaken a thoughtful and well-researched journey into how we should play classical music; not 'properly' but as if in intelligent communion with its composers on our modern instruments. I shall return to it to inform my own performances of this repertoire. Every pianist could benefit from reading it.



Arnold Whittall, *British Music after Britten*. (Aldeburgh Studies in Music, 14). Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2020. ISBN 9781783274970. Hardback. £65.00. [E-book version also available]

The enquiring and critical voice of Arnold Whittall has been a central part of musical cultural life since the early 1960s when his first articles (on Britten as it happens) appeared in *The Music Review*. If ever one saw his name on the cover of *The Musical Times*, it was sure there would be at least one article worth reading. Eschewing the lure of broadcasting, Whittall has written throughout his career on a huge variety of topics, from Wagner right through to the newest trends in composition, and has penned several books that feature on every university reading list. The volume under review falls into the sometimes awkward category of a monograph quilted together from essays previously appearing in periodicals (mostly *The Musical Times*). It is often difficult to make such a volume hang together convincingly, given the change of focus between each chapter, but Whittall's literate and elegant style and sturdy intellectualism makes this much less of an issue here. He acknowledges as much in his introduction.

The figure and music of Benjamin Britten are still highly divisive ones, at least among composers (audiences too regard him as something of a Marmite figure), and his influence, good and bad, is still to be felt fifty years after his death. Composers have felt either envy at his skill as a craftsman or at his comfortable commercial success; his individual approach to melody and harmony, as well as his determination to do something slightly different in every work, has been regarded as suspect by all who have to struggle to produce their music. Yet his powerful presence and legacy simply cannot be ignored. Whittall seeks to position the composers discussed here in relation to Britten, outlining what they think were his failings, how he was a positive influence and model, and how his works thread themselves through the compositions produced during the last fifty years. It is clear that British compositional history owes Britten a huge debt.

Each of the seventeen chapters, either focuses on a single composer (for example Michael Tippett; chapters on him bookend the volume) or takes a theme and runs with it. He conjoins two extremely different composers with the same surname in Chapter 16 'Power, Potential: Robert Simpson, Mark Simpson' to help examine the path of composers whom, though not anti-modernist in their approach, compose with full awareness of symphonic and tonal processes that were of importance to Britten (though Robert Simpson had a low opinion of Britten's symphonic credentials: 'this is music whose positive attributes do not depend upon the art of symphonic movement with all it implies' he wrote, referring to Britten's *Sinfonia da requiem* and *Cello Symphony*). Nevertheless, the chapter is somewhat unbalanced in that it considers

the lifetime's work of a 'conservative' composer (i.e. one looking towards Bruckner, Nielsen and Sibelius as models of musical coherence) and a composer at the outset of what promises to be a considerable career, who steers a careful path between the language of Britten and the more abstract and complex worlds of Ferneyhough, Dillon and the like.

Pairing composers like this is clearly one of Whittall's quirks (his only composer-based monograph to date is *The Music of Britten and Tippett: studies in themes and techniques* (CUP, 2nd ed., 1990). The chapter on Richard Barrett and Cornelius Cardew is a case in point, using the composers' views on politics, music and society as a guiding principal rather than seeking to elucidate any musical connections between the two. Likewise the uneasy pairing of Robin Holloway and Brian Ferneyhough, two composers who are effectively chalk and cheese but both happened to hit their sixtieth year at the same time. Elsewhere, Chapter 6 'Northern Roots: John Casken, Hugh Wood, John McCabe' considers three composers in quite some detail who perhaps carry on Britten's concern that music should reflect and influence the community in which it is written and performed. Whittall's detailed consideration of these composers' music makes one instantly go out and explore their work. Yet their marginality is such that if you asked the average urban bus queue who these men might be you would be met with blank silence, despite McCabe having composed music for television.

Other composers who merit detailed consideration are Thomas Adès, Julian Anderson, Joseph Phibbs, George Benjamin, Nicholas Maw, Morgan Hayes, James Dillon and Oliver Knussen. Some of the most interesting chapters (though there is little here that is dull or uninteresting) concern figures in their aesthetic environments. The spacious, quiet, elusive music of James Clarke gets a fine treatment in Chapter 7 'Affirmative Anger: James Clarke and the Music of Abstract Expressionism'. The inevitable pairing of Maxwell Davies and Birtwistle in the book focusses on their late works (the original article was a celebration of the composers at 80). To me, Maxwell Davies's final period has always seemed rather mannered and insubstantial, despite the extraordinary outpouring of music such as the Naxos Quartets and the Strathclyde Concertos, none of which I fear shall ever truly enter the repertoire. His last work, a short three-minute movement for string quartet, composed very shortly before his death, seemed to offer a vision of the great composer he once had been as well as a composer reaching out into the unknown and has an added poignancy because of this. The late music of Birtwistle, however, has an integrity and gritty individuality that has characterised his entire composing career. There was, at the time of his death in April 2022, no sign of the wellspring drying up.

The dense, allusive, culturally aware music of Michael Finnissy receives a dense, allusive and culturally aware chapter that focusses on the composer

writing 'music about music', but it is made clear that Finnissy also writes music about history, politics, sexuality, violence and compassion. In some ways, although the surface of his music has a high-modernist gnarliness that looks like a climbing-wall designed to resist climbing, Finnissy, especially more recently, embodies the type of composer Britten would think of as relevant to today's society. Whittall wisely avoids trying to get behind the compositional nitty-gritty of the notes, the notation and the difficulty of the music, and examines his language in the broadest terms, particularly paying attention to the ambiguous 'tonal' resolution of what might turn out eventually to be Finnissy's magnum opus, *Histories of Photography in Sound*.

As previously mentioned, the book begins and ends with a consideration of Michael Tippett, a Britten contemporary who lived much further on into the century and who is, despite Oliver Soden's fascinating recent biography, shamefully underperformed in the present century. The final chapter, 'Michael Tippett and the Model Musical Citizen' functions very well as a coda to the book and the opening chapter, 'Tippett and Twentieth-Century Polarities' considers the position of Tippett after Britten's death and examines the composer's relationship with culture-creation and society. It finishes with a dense paragraph that is quite characteristic of Whittall's writing: you have to read it five times, you think you understand it but you don't, but you are compelled to read it again and, even if ultimately you don't think you have understood it, you are still convinced you have read something important.

There are odd omissions in the book; Howard Skempton, arguably one of the most important voices in British music since the 1980s and with a personal connection to Britten, doesn't get a mention. Nor does Robert Saxton whose earlier music was a powerful force and a constant presence in the 1980s. Also, apart from Judith Weir, no female composers get a look in (Elizabeth Maconchy and Elisabeth Lutyens get brief mentions, but as far as I can see, the only other living female composers to be name checked are Emily Howard, Tansy Davies and Rebecca Saunders, and none receives much critical attention). However, this book contains a wealth of fascinating reading and does what the best books on music do: it makes the reader want to listen to the music under discussion, and that is how music continues to live and have its place in the world.

*Peter McMullin*

*Music in North-East England, 1500-1800*. Edited by Stephanie Carter, Kirsten Gibson and Roz Southey. (Music in Britain, 1600-2000). Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2020. xvii, 321 p. ISBN: 9781783275410. Hardback. £75. [E-book version also available]

This chronologically wide-ranging book of essays draws its content from conference papers delivered during a one-day academic conference held in 2014 at the University of Newcastle in the UK (p. 1). The fact of such a conference is surely due in no small part to the pioneering work of Roz Southey, whose *Music-Making in North-East England During the Eighteenth Century* (Boydell, 2006) placed the region firmly on the musicological map of British historical musicology.

The volume under discussion here begins with the three editors' co-authored introduction whose principal usefulness is to review a range of sources that attempt to define the area now broadly termed 'North-east England'. For the editors' purposes, it encompasses land from the northern edge of Northumberland to the southern edge of Yorkshire, and from the Pennines in the west to the eastern coast (p. 5). The fourteen essays that follow are helpfully divided into four thematic groupings as set out below. While throughout the volume there are frequent references to London as a significant influence on the region there is no meaningful mention of musical/cultural links with neighbouring Scotland, which did surprise this writer given that close-by country's increasingly sophisticated and flourishing musical/cultural scene during the long eighteenth century.

### **Centres of Musical Activity:**

1) Diana Wyatt: 'All Mynstralles betwene the Ryvers of Trent & Twede . . . yerely resorte vnto this towne and Borough of Beverley [. . .]'. The existence at Beverley of town waits as well as a recognised guild of musicians is well documented in the writings of scholars such as Richard Rastell and in the *Records of Early English Drama*. This chapter seeks to build and develop this earlier research and provides the reader with confirmation that Beverley was also the location of the north of England's 'Minstrel's Court'. This was a body that, into the sixteenth century, registered independent professional musicians and protected their rights to trade throughout the north of England. I would have liked some discussion – however brief – of the various groups' musical repertoire, or at least a pointer to other sources for such information.

2) Magnus Williamson: 'Recovering the Soundscape of pre-Reformation Newcastle upon Tyne'. The chapter reviews the scant data relating to the fabric and the personnel of the churches and religious institutions of the city and,

by comparison with some other English towns and cities, conjectures what might have been the types of musical repertoire embellishing the daily round of religious life in the city.

3) Matthew Gardner: ‘The Selection, Acquisition and Performance of Handel’s English Odes and Oratorios in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Durham’. The article notes the handful of regional cultural leaders who were responsible for local performances of a number of Handel’s odes and oratorios in concert and occasionally in church services, with dates and places of each work’s performance. Much of this information might have been more usefully presented in a table to make space for consideration of the performance of the music itself: the venues, the audiences, the choice of soloists, the choral/orchestral performers, and the performances’ reception.

4) Simon D. I. Fleming: ‘Compositional Activity in Durham City 1750-1810: Its Influences and Impact’. Here the author reminds his readers that during the eighteenth century, and until 1836, the historic ‘county’ of Durham was – uniquely in Britain – a Palatinate, in which the Bishop acted as the civil ruler and lord of the liberty of Durham, exercising temporal authority equal to that of the monarch. The city was far from being a provincial backwater and was an active centre of public and private concerts; it was regularly in competition for performers and audiences with neighbouring mercantile Newcastle. The cathedral benefitted financially from its large landholdings and was able to invest heavily in its liturgical music, with musicians actively recruited from across the country, attracted not only by higher than average salaries but also by the secular performance opportunities and regional, aristocratic patronage.

The article’s main focus is on the sacred and secular work of several Durham musicians. That of James Heseltine (1690–1763) and William Evance (c.1745–1828) is discussed to a lesser degree with the principal focus being on John Garth (1721–1810) and Thomas Ebdon (1738–1811). In addition to descriptions of these composers’ musical output there is useful information on the publication and reception of their works, both nationally and internationally; details are informed in large part by the author’s *Music by Subscription: Composers and their Networks in the British Music-Publishing Trade, 1676–1820* (Routledge, 2021).

5) Christopher Robert: ‘I esteem my lot fortunate, in residing in this happy country: Edward Miller, Social Networking and Music Making in Eighteenth-Century Doncaster’. Here is a biography of Edward Miller, somewhat more detailed than that available in Grove Music, perhaps until now the only recent scholarly source on the composer’s life, and is thus welcome. The author

rightly alerts us to Miller's influential role at Doncaster as organist, composer, music educator and advocate for the development of national provincial-musicians' charity. It is to be regretted that there are neither musical examples nor any discussion of Miller's compositional style by which to appreciate his particular musical voice. The inclusion of a detailed bibliography of all Miller's surviving print publications is most useful since these details are mere headlines in Grove Music.

### Sources:

6) Eleanor Warren: 'The York Antiphonal: History, Liturgy and Use in the Late Fifteenth Century'. Christian worship in medieval England appears as a mosaic of different practices (Uses) according to region, the 'Use of Sarum' (Salisbury) perhaps the best known. The 'Use of York' is less well documented and less well understood. This essay takes a fresh look at the York Antiphonal, the only extant copy of any 'Use of York' antiphonal. This late fifteenth-century service book was made for singers of the Collegiate Chapel of St Mary and the Holy Angels located on the north side of York Minster. While the significance of the antiphonal's music is known, coming at a key point in the evolution of polyphonic practice in England, the book's detailed rubrics – previously rather overlooked – are shown to reveal how the personnel of the Chapel and of the Minster worked closely together in sharing liturgical duties. From these rubrics the author has identified new details about the forms that comprised the 'Use of York' with a description of what may well have been the typical style and content of its various liturgies for Holy Week and Easter.

7) Andrew Woolley, 'Tunes for Violin or Recorder Collected in North-East England and London in the Late Seventeenth Century: The Provenance and Contents of the Blakiston Manuscript [. . .]'. Until now this substantial manuscript work has received only piecemeal attention. Here the author makes a thorough survey of the whole and places it in the context of the known music collections of elite British amateur musicians. As the title suggests, there is detailed discussion of works for violin (or recorder). The manuscript's precise origins are unknown – begun in the 1690s with additions into the first half of the eighteenth century – save for the names of William and Martin Blakiston that appear as copyists, both men identified as active in the North East of England. The author suggests that the manuscript may have been started by a member of the North-East's well-known, musical Sharpe family, it being associated with Granville Sharpe (1735–1813) at one point; it was later owned by Vincent Novello (1781–1861) who gave it to the British Library. While the contents are all drawn from known instrumental and vocal

works, by such as Greene, Lully and Purcell, its usefulness stems from the detail it adds to our knowledge of the repertoire of elite British amateur musicians. A detailed table of the contents is given. In the light of this thorough investigation it is to be hoped that the British Library will now revise and augment its catalogue entry for this item.

8) Stephen A. Marini, 'From Newcastle upon Tyne to Colonial Carolina: Transatlantic Tune Transmission and Durham Hills's *The Cashaway Psalmody* (1770)'. Durham Hills (1730–71) was a north-east-UK musician who spent the most productive years of his life in America. Aside from a potted biography of Hills, the chapter details the content of his manuscript collection of psalmody, completed in 1770. The manuscript takes its name from the American settlement of Cashaway Neck with which Hills was at one time associated.

This collection of 152 tunes and sixty-three texts is regarded as the only such collection extant from the colonial-era South, and was derived from various contemporary UK-published sources. To these sources Hills added a few of his own original contributions; there is a table that sets out the contents of the manuscript and their sources. The chapter also describes in detail the organisation of various Carolina Protestant church groups together with information about their inter-denominational cooperation in the realm of music provision. Sadly there are neither music examples to illuminate the author's particular taxonomy of the musical genres: 'Anglo-American psalmody', 'early Anglican psalm tunes', 'traditional tunes', 'country psalmody', 'London theatre style', 'London Methodist hymnody' (p. 157), nor exploration of performance practices, and there is next to nothing about music-making in North-east England. The chapter does however serve as a useful introduction to the author's book *The Cashaway Psalmody: Transatlantic Religion and Music in Colonial Carolina* (University of Illinois Press, 2020).

### **Recreation and education:**

9) Amanda Eubanks Winkler: 'Schoolboy Performance in the post-Reformation North-East'. A lot of this chapter is bound up with the establishment of new Grammar schools as a bulwark of the newly-imposed Protestant doctrines against outlawed Catholic ones. Thus a large part of the chapter is devoted to establishing what appears to be a nationally ubiquitous pattern for the setting up of schools in this period, and of the role of music and drama in the curriculum: the employment of school music teachers, of the pupils' psalm singing, their performances of plays and some thoughts about the possible role of dance. We learn too of the seemingly commonplace use of school children as performers in towns' and cities' civic welcoming parties for eminent

visitors. With the extensive scene set, the author documents the few surviving sources that allow us to glimpse the North East's post-Reformation school curricula in music and drama, mostly – but not exclusively – in Beverley, Durham, Newcastle and York.

10) Stephanie Carter and Kirsten Gibson: 'Amateur Music Making Amongst the Mercantile Community of Newcastle upon Tyne from the 1690s to the 1750s'. The chapter is an investigation of two manuscripts: the violin tune book (1694/5) of Henry Atkinson (1670–1759) and the diaries of Ralph Jackson (1736–90). Both men are introduced by their biographies and detailed descriptions of the content of each manuscript. By this means, the authors are able to ponder the place of music in the lives of the well-to-do men of Newcastle's merchant classes, either for domestic pleasure or as a means to enhance social mobility through private music meetings and in public life. We also catch glimpses of how some of the region's influential musical figures – Charles Avison (1709–70), John Garth (1721–1810) and (to a lesser extent) the Yorkshire-born, London-based John Hebden (1712–65) – variously crossed the mercantile classes' paths. There is a very useful table of the names that appear in Jackson's writings with brief details of them. I would have found useful a companion table of incipits of the contents of Atkinson's tune book.

11) Roz Southey: 'The Household Band of the Bowes of Gibside, County Durham, 1722-1760 [...]'. Here the writing is rich in detail but moves with a pleasing pace. Using the fulsome surviving household documents of George Bowes (1701-69) and his wife Mary (n.d.) this chapter details the constitution and training of a household band based at the family's north-east estate 'Gibside'. Players were drawn from the estate staff (which included members from Germany and France) and it performed a fashionable contemporary repertoire. We learn too of the hospitality that the Bowes family offered to visiting professional musicians – e.g. violinists Felice Giardini (1718–96) and Giuseppe Cattaneo (n.d.) – in return for their participation in domestic music making. We learn too of the family support for music in the north-east region. The Bowes's music-making was not restricted to life at Gibside but continued during their annual 6-month stay in London where George Bowes was attending parliament as an MP. His wife Mary was a talented singer, a pupil of Maurice Greene (1698–1755), and we learn of the considerable autonomy she had in developing her own and the family's musical life. There is a useful table of music bought for the band.



**Print and popular song:**

12) Amélie Addison: ‘William Shield’s *A Collection of Favourite Songs* (c.1775)’. The author investigates Shield’s origins and early successes in his native North-east by means of the extensive list of subscribers to his first printed collection of songs (published in Durham). Thus the author is able not only to present her conclusions regarding Shield’s social and professional networks at this early stage in his career but also to illuminate more generally the broad extent of musical literacy across the region, since here we are introduced to a diverse group of music lovers willing to subscribe to a not inexpensive volume. Given the extensive list of persons discussed here, this is a chapter that is particularly heavy with biographical data and to this end there are useful analytical charts that easily allow the reader to understand the subscribers by profession and status. Meanwhile, the details of individual subscribers’ lives are fleshed out in the text of the chapter. Most of these biographical details are very brief and somewhat anodyne, and – for me – would have been more usefully presented in a table, even at the expense of a shorter, less discursive chapter.

13) Barbara Crosbie: ‘Between the Broadside Ballad and the Folksong: Print and Popular Songs in Eighteenth-Century Newcastle upon Tyne’. The chapter establishes the importance of later eighteenth-century Newcastle’s major printed sources of popular song – the firms of John White (fl. 1706–69) and of the Angus family (fl. 1774–1825) – and describes the various everyday (ephemeral) single-sheet printed forms of popular song then available, such as broadside ballads, garlands, and song slips. We are offered insight into the variety of day-to-day social contexts described in song (broadly speaking, the amorous, bibulous, decorous, factional, gluttonous, scandalous), the performers and their venues (marketplaces, taverns and coffee houses). We are also able to witness this repertoire through the contemporary writings of the Tyneside engraver Thomas Bewick (1753–1828) and the Stockton-born antiquary and political radical Joseph Ritson (1752–1803). Unfortunately, despite the detailed ‘mise en scène’ there is little by way of a soundtrack, with neither a discussion of the music itself nor of performance practice.

14) Oskar Cox Jensen: ‘Canny Newcassel: Marshall’s Musical Metropolis of North Britain’. This chapter follows on very nicely from the preceding one, with which it might usefully be read. It considers music printing and publishing in Newcastle in the first decade of the nineteenth century, with particular reference to the production of ‘ephemeral’ song sheets, predominantly without music. The author explores some shared commercial-music interests between Newcastle and London in popular song repertoire, not least in the way such

repertoire reflects national and local politics. A close study of two songs by William Shield, with scores reproduced in full, underpins the author's discussion.

Andrew Pink

*Musical Exchange between Britain and Europe, 1500–1800: Essays in Honour of Peter Holman.* Edited by John Cunningham and Bryan White. (Music in Britain, 1600–2000). Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2020. 575 p. ISBN: 9781783274925. Hardback. £60.

As the book's title suggests, this is a *Festschrift* volume for the British musicologist and musician Peter Holman, whose impressive reputation has been defined not only by his pioneering studies of British music from former centuries but also by his pioneering, historically informed performances of it. The contributors to this book are drawn both from among Holman's long-time academic colleagues and musical collaborators and from among the impressive array of those he has taught and nurtured to success in doctoral research.

The aim of the book is to show how exchanges of music and musicians between Britain and other parts of Europe have enriched Western musical culture/s in the early modern period. The content, focussed predominantly on activity in England, describes a nation consistently producing original works of quality and influence. The essays are organised into three sections: 1. Repertory; 2. Practices; 3. People. There is an epilogue section containing some reminiscences of Peter Holman by friends and family and, of course, an introductory overview by the editors.

The first section, 'Repertory', examines: seventeenth-century English viol repertory by immigrant composers (Patxi del Amo); French tunes used by English dancing masters (Andrew Woolley); a study of William Babell's Solos for a melody instrument and through-bass (Alan Howard); Arcangelo Corelli's music in England (Min-Jung Kang); Gottfried Finger and Johann Pepusch and 'the first' Italian concertos in England (Robert G Rawson); and Francesco Geminiani's Minuets in England and Europe (Rudolf Rasch).

The second section, 'Practices', examines: the military origins of the 'Swiss pair' (flute and drums) in European courtly society (Nancy Hadden); Louis Grabu's English opera of Dryden's *Albion and Albanus* (Bryan White); the use of figured bass in later seventeenth-century German dance music (Michael Robertson); continuo realisation in seventeenth-century England (Thérèse de Goede); melody and the 'cadential 6/4' in eighteenth-century music (Michael Talbot); the use of choral singers in G.F. Handel's English

oratorios (Donald Burrows); the influence of German oboists on English music of the long eighteenth century (Samantha Owens); and British composers works to be found in Stockholm (Fiona Smith).

The third part, 'People', examines: the work of Angelo Notari at the English court (Jonathan Wainwright); the character of John Playford (Robert Thompson); the sale of the music collection of James Sherard (Stephen Rose); William Corbett's music library (John Cunningham); Phillip Hayes and the eighteenth-century promotion of Purcell in England (Rebecca Herissone); J. P. Rameau and the English (Graham Sadler); and Steven Storace and Mozart (Julian Rushton).

The essays are well provided with clear musical illustrations and tables and, while there is an index of all the manuscript sources mentioned, there is no bibliography. The pictorial illustrations are not so well reproduced. There are usefully detailed catalogues of Peter Holman's published works and of his numerous pioneer recordings. But given Holman's commitment to performance it is somewhat disappointing that the editors included neither any essay about his extensive and ground-breaking discography and the history of its creation, nor any discussion concerning present-day historically informed performance practices. Also, there is nothing here about the current state of the teaching of early-modern British music in UK higher education, a realm in which Peter Holman has played such a key role during his long career. Notwithstanding, this is certainly a wide ranging set of first-rate, tightly-focussed essays by leading scholars in their respective fields that makes a significant contribution to the on-going study of music in Britain.

By way of a coda, it is worth noting that this weighty volume comes with a not-so-sturdily-attached hard binding. In the course of reading this book this hard cover started to detach itself, although the pages themselves remained tight. Alas, there is neither a paper-back edition nor an electronic edition.

*Andrew Pink*

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# ePTFS Europe

## Koha

As our cornerstone product, Koha is an open source library management system that is now one of the most widely used library systems in the world. We support and continuously develop Koha for hundreds of library locations across the UK and Europe. With Koha, library staff access to the system is completely web based; acquisitions, circulation, cataloguing, ILL, serials and reports are all done through a web browser. Koha is particularly suitable for music and arts libraries supporting features such as Plaine & Easie code, multi-part handling and enterprise searching powered by Elasticsearch.

## THE LIBRARY IS OPEN

