

contact

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The Scottish Music Archive

THE SCOTTISH MUSIC ARCHIVE was established in July 1968 to provide a national centre for the collection, documentation and study of the music of Scottish composers; the original conception was that of Frederick Rimmer, Professor of Music at the University of Glasgow. The Archive was set up in premises made available by the University, with Professor Rimmer as Director and James McAdam as Secretary and Librarian. As this latter is a part-time post, there are now also an Assistant Librarian and an Administration Secretary, both full-time. An advisory committee, the Archive's governing body, was formed comprising representatives from the Scottish Arts Council, the Universities of Glasgow, Edinburgh, St. Andrews, Aberdeen and Stirling, BBC Scottish Television and the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, all of which provide financial support.

The Archive was officially opened on April 16, 1969 and began by concentrating on the acquisition of music written since 1920; some 40 composers were approached initially and within two years about 1,500 items had been collected and a catalogue issued. (A supplement was published in 1972; a new catalogue is planned for the autumn.) While maintaining the task of gathering new music, the Archive has also turned its attention to that of earlier periods; this has proved more difficult as much published music is out of print and manuscript sources lost. Nevertheless, through purchase and bequests, substantial holdings in music by late 19th and early 20th century composers have been acquired. To complement this material a comprehensive reference list of the sources of extant manuscripts is in preparation. Going further back still, the SMA has worked closely with Kenneth Elliott of the University of Glasgow, whose specialist knowledge of 16th and 17th century Scottish music has been invaluable in the collection and documentation of music of the Scottish court. Dr Elliott is currently working on a complete record of the music surviving from that period and has given his extensive microfilm collection to the Archive on permanent loan. In addition, the Archive has also acquired the published editions of 18th century Lowland music that are the fruits of Dr David Johnson's research. It will be apparent that the SMA has avoided the collection of what, for many people, is typically Scottish music — the traditional music of the Celtic heritage; this aspect is covered by the activities of the School of Scottish Studies in Edinburgh.

While the wider claims of Scottish music are met in these ways, the Archive still sees its chief function as the acquisition of music by living composers. Unlike the British Music Information Centre, it is not directly linked to the Composers' Guild, and composers need not belong to the Guild in order to be represented. The field within which the SMA operates is naturally far narrower than that of the BMIC, and its grant-aided status means that, unlike the London-based organisation, the expansion of the library does not depend on donations of scores and tapes by composers or publishers.

In order to qualify for inclusion in the SMA a composer must be Scottish by nationality or descent, or have lived in Scotland for more than three years. The country of residence is not important: Thea Musgrave and Iain Hamilton, for instance, live in the USA, David Gwilt in Hong Kong, and Buxton Orr, Morris Pert and Arthur Oldham have worked or are now working in England. Any composer meeting the requirements laid down by the SMA may apply for admission to it; a selection procedure operates but in practice very few applications are refused.

Every composer who is accepted is asked to lend manuscripts of his works to the library for photocopying, though many prefer to lodge their own autographs or transparencies with the Archive on permanent loan. As the majority of the composers are without regular publishers, the photocopying facilities are also used for the production of copies required for performances. This reproduction of unpublished music does not, however, make the SMA a commercial publisher; in effect it acts as an agent for the composer who retains his copyright on all unpublished material and receives a percentage of the proceeds of any purchase. With the composers' permission a number of sets of parts prepared by the SMA for specific performances have been retained for hire. Orchestral works by Martin Dalby, David Dorward, Sebastian Forbes, David Gwilt, Thomas Wilson and William Wordsworth are among the most often used, especially by the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. The composer again retains the copyright and receives a large proportion of the hire fee.

An aspect of the Archive's work that has recently expanded is the collecting and filing of information on composers and their music. It is intended that the career and works of each composer should be documented under the following headings: biography, list of works, list of first performances, list of recordings, copies of programmes and press-cuttings, journal articles. This information is stored in ring-binders on open shelves.

In addition to printed and manuscript materials the Archive has a collection of over 600 sound recordings, almost 100 of them discs. BBC Scotland has given permission for recordings to be made of all relevant broadcasts on BBC Radios 3 and 4 (Scotland); the equipment for recording and listening was donated by the Pilgrim Trust. For copyright reasons no tape or disc may be borrowed or reproduced for use outside the SMA's premises except by the composer.

As the Archive was founded chiefly to promote the music of Scottish composers, its success can only be measured by the degree of interest it has inspired. There is a constant stream of telephone and postal enquiries from Great Britain and abroad for information and for photocopies of scores and parts for performance; but if the survival of the enterprise depended on the number of enquiries made by students and performers in person, it would have ceased to function by now.

In order to stimulate interest in contemporary Scottish music and in the Archive itself, a number of schemes have been launched. Since 1976 four series of lectures have been given by 16 of the most prominent composers active in Scotland; these informal talks, illustrated from recorded items in the library, have met with varying success, the audiences ranging from a handful to about 20. Every year exhibitions of music and recordings are mounted at the Scottish National Orchestra Promenade Concerts and at the Edinburgh Festival. The latter has proved one of the SMA's most worthwhile ventures; a copy of every recording, with score, is transferred to Edinburgh for the Festival period, together with listening equipment and exhibits of special interest. This year particular attention will be paid to operas commissioned by Scottish Opera: Iain Hamilton's *The Catiline Conspiracy*, Robin Orr's *Hermiston*, Thomas Wilson's *Confessions of a Justified Sinner* and this year's commission, Thea Musgrave's *Mary Queen of Scots*. Material on Hamilton's *The Royal Hunt of the Sun* and *Tamburlaine* and on Musgrave's *The Voice of Ariadne* will also be available.

Plans for the future include the expansion of the Archive premises; negotiations are in progress to provide a listening room and a room to house microfilms, the microfilm reader, manuscripts and a piano. It is also hoped that a regular newsletter containing information on new acquisitions and advance notice of performances of SMA composers' works will soon be produced.

The Scottish Music Archive (c/o University of Glasgow, 7 Lilybank Gardens, Glasgow G12 8RZ, tel. 041-334 6393) is open to the public Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 5.30pm, Monday and Wednesday evenings, 6pm to 9pm, and Saturday, 9.30am to 12.30pm. Full information may be obtained from Paul Hindmarsh (Assistant Librarian).

Would prospective enquirers to the British Music Information Centre in London, featured in our last issue, please note that the telephone number is 01-499 8567 and not as previously given. We apologise to the BMIC, and to the lady who frequently answers 01-449 8567 and is surprisingly charming about referring callers to the correct number, for the inconvenience caused.

SCORES, BOOKS AND MAGAZINES RECEIVED

William Mathias

Clarinet Concerto (Oxford University Press)

Phyllis Tate

Explorations Around a Troubadour Song (Oxford University Press)
The Rainbow and the Cuckoo (Oxford University Press)

Trevor Wishart

Fidelio

Scylla and Charibdis

(both published by the composer and obtainable from Philip Martin Music Books)

Brilliant Corners 5 & 6 (an American arts magazine; for details see 'Foreign Magazines' in this issue)

The Canadian Music Educator, Vol. 17, No. 4 (the official journal of the Canadian Music Educators' Association; for details see 'Foreign Magazines' in this issue)

Parachute 4-7 (a Canadian contemporary arts magazine; for details see 'Foreign Magazines' in this issue)

Marc Battier, avec la collaboration de Jacques Arveiller
Musique et Informatique: une bibliographie indexée (Université Paris VIII Vincennes)

Brian Cherney

Harry Somers (University of Toronto Press)

Stewart Craggs, with a critical appreciation by Michael Kennedy
William Walton: a thematic catalogue of his musical works (Oxford University Press)

Célestin Deliège, trans. unknown

Boulez: Conversations with Célestin Deliège (Eulenburg Books)

H. Wiley Hitchcock

Ives ('Oxford Studies of Composers (14)', Oxford University Press)

Joan Peyser

Boulez: composer, conductor, enigma (Cassell)

Jim Samson

Music in Transition: a study of tonal expansion and atonality 1900-1920 (Dent)

Arnold Whittall

Music since the First World War (Dent)

Inclusion in this list does not necessarily presume a review in either the present or a later issue.

In addition it is hoped to continue to bring readers' attention to more foreign publications in due course, including magazines and other material not generally available in this country. Editors of foreign publications concerned at least partly with contemporary music are invited to send material and suggestions for ways in which we can act together for the mutual benefit of our readers.