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**The history and practice  
of the presentation of art music performance  
on BBC television 1936-1982**

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# ABSTRACT

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## THE HISTORY AND PRACTICE OF THE PRESENTATION OF ART MUSIC PERFORMANCE ON BBC TELEVISION 1936-1982

This thesis traces the history of the presentation of art music performance on BBC television including concerts, operas and ballets and analyses the ways found to present them. The background to the initial programming policies on BBC Television is analysed with reference to the art music activities on BBC Radio before 1936. The novel methods of televising art music are described: there were no precedents for live multi-camera shooting. Until the creation of commercial television in 1955, BBC Television broadcast about two hours of art music performance each week. From 1955 to 1963 the output of art music performance halved and the influence of Lionel Salter, Head of Music Productions, BBC Television, is traced. The creation of BBC-2 led to a revival in art music programmes and the contribution of Humphrey Burton, Head of Music and Arts, BBC Television, to restoring the amount of art music performance is considered.

Early scripts and archived programmes have enabled critical evaluation to be undertaken. This analysis has shown that the first producers of art music programmes regarded their main function as giving viewers the feeling that they were watching performances from the 'best seat in the house': the concept of the objective 'relay'. As musically trained producers emerged, there was a gradual change from the relay to that of involving the viewers as unseen participants in the performances. It is shown that art music performance programmes became the subjective interpretations of the producers involved. Salter said that only musically trained producers who could fluently read music would be capable of fully communicating its structure in television programmes. The truth behind this maxim is fully investigated and the conclusion drawn is that successful presentation of art music performance on television is easier for musically trained producers but a few others without musical qualifications have shown themselves capable of producing equally satisfactory and authoritative programmes.



# Table of contents

Table of contents .....	iii
Table of figures .....	viii
AUTHOR DECLARATIONS .....	ix
Acknowledgements .....	x
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Literature search.....	5
1.1.1 The place of classical music on television .....	9
1.1.2 Before Television – cultural elitism in Music on BBC Radio .....	10
1.2 The genres of music performance programmes .....	14
1.3 The quantity of music performance programmes .....	15
1.4 The quality of music performance programmes .....	19
1.5 The skills of directors of music performance programmes.....	21
1.6 The impact of classical music on BBC Television .....	21
1.7 The Committees on Broadcasting, 1935-1977 .....	23
1.8 The choice of end date .....	24
1.9 Terminology.....	25
1.10 A personal apologia.....	26
CHAPTER 2 METHODOLOGY.....	28
CHAPTER 3 PREAMBLE .....	31
CHAPTER 4 THE FIRST PERIOD OF EXPERIMENTATION: 1929 - 1939 .....	38
4.1 Before the first scheduled transmissions.....	38
4.2 The preparations and production staff recruitment .....	40
4.3 The preparations for the first transmissions .....	42
4.4 Pre-war transmissions .....	44
4.5 The final days before the Second World War.....	49
4.6 Press response to television broadcasts.....	50
4.7 The pre-war music programme producers .....	51
4.8 The BBC Television Orchestra 1936-1939.....	53
4.9 The dispersal of the Television Orchestra and Hyam Greenbaum .....	58
4.10 The state of the art.....	59
CHAPTER 5 THE SECOND PERIOD OF EXPERIMENTATION: 1946 – 1963 .....	60
5.1 The first post-war television staff .....	60
5.2 The creation of television production departments.....	61



5.3	The first post-war schedules.....	62
5.3.1	The first post-war viewers.....	67
5.4	The continuation of innovation in music programmes .....	70
5.5	1955 - a golden age of music performance programmes? .....	74
5.5.1	Viewers' appreciation of music performance programmes .....	80
5.6	The transformation of Music Programmes 1956-1963 .....	81
5.6.1	The growth of documentaries.....	87
5.7	The problem with dance.....	91
5.8	The 'Music for You' affair.....	93
5.9	The Television Orchestra .....	101
<b>CHAPTER 6 MUSIC PROGRAMMES: 1964-1982.....</b>		<b>104</b>
6.1	The creation of BBC-2 .....	104
6.2	The rise to power of Wheldon and Burton.....	108
6.3	The staffing of Music Programmes.....	111
6.4	The Culshaw era.....	117
6.4.1	The first staff in Culshaw's Music Programmes.....	119
6.4.2	Recruitment under Culshaw .....	122
6.5	The return of Burton.....	125
6.5.1	Young Musician of the Year .....	127
6.5.2	Dance Month and Opera Month.....	128
6.6	The resignation of Burton in 1981 .....	129
<b>CHAPTER 7 THE PRESENTATION OF MUSIC PERFORMANCE.....</b>		<b>131</b>
7.1	Introduction.....	131
7.2	Groping for an aesthetic – the years before Salter .....	133
7.3	The presentation of music on television.....	136
7.4	The use of camera shots to illuminate performance.....	141
<b>CHAPTER 8 THE CHOICE OF PROGRAMMES TO BE ANALYSED.....</b>		<b>144</b>
8.1	The television script .....	147
8.2	The changes in shot density 1936-1982.....	150
8.3	The competence of directors .....	152
<b>CHAPTER 9 AN ANALYSIS OF MUSIC PERFORMANCE PROGRAMMES.....</b>		<b>157</b>
9.1	The genres of music performance programmes.....	157
9.2	The background to shot composition .....	160
9.3	The building blocks of programme making .....	161



9.4	The Salter philosophy .....	164
9.5	An analytical approach to aesthetics .....	168
9.6	Broadcasts of non-theatrical music .....	170
9.7	Broadcasts of theatrical music .....	200
9.7.1	Broadcasts of opera.....	204
9.7.2	Broadcasts of dance.....	227
9.8	Bach's <i>St. Matthew Passion</i> .....	242
CHAPTER 10 CONCLUSIONS.....		245
10.1	Opera.....	245
10.2	Ballet .....	249
10.3	Non-theatrical music .....	251
10.4	The search for the ideal director.....	255
GLOSSARY OF MUSICAL TERMS .....		261
APPENDIX I MUSIC PERFORMANCE PROGRAMMES 1936-1982 .....		263
APPENDIX II PROGRAMME DETAILS .....		303
	Bolero: 8 <sup>th</sup> October 1937 (Munro).....	303
	Pride o' the Green: 20 <sup>th</sup> November 1937 (Kelsall).....	303
	Tristan and Isolde: 24 <sup>th</sup> January 1938 (Bower) .....	303
	A Wedding Bouquet: 25 <sup>th</sup> April 1938 (Bower) .....	303
	Checkmate: 8 <sup>th</sup> May 1938 (Munro).....	303
	Les Patineurs: 7 <sup>th</sup> December 1938 (Munro) .....	303
	The Sleeping Princess: 25 <sup>th</sup> March 1939 (Munro) .....	304
	La Chauve Souris: 28 <sup>th</sup> March 1939 (Bate).....	304
	La Chauve Souris: 14 <sup>th</sup> July 1939 (Bate).....	304
	Waltztime: 3 <sup>rd</sup> September 1951 (Foa, Simpson) .....	304
	Music in View: 25 <sup>th</sup> May 1952 (Simpson) .....	304
	Pagliacci: 9 <sup>th</sup> October 1952 (Fawcett) .....	304
	Les Sylphides: 3 <sup>rd</sup> April 1953 (Simpson) .....	304
	The Conductor Speaks – Leopold Stokowski: 7 <sup>th</sup> May 1954 (Bate).....	304
	Swan Lake: 9 <sup>th</sup> June 1954 (Simpson) .....	305
	International Celebrity Recital – Myra Hess: 20 <sup>th</sup> October 1954 (Foy) .....	305
	International Celebrity Recital – Benno Moiseiwitch: 3 <sup>rd</sup> November 1954 (Foy).....	305
	Sunday Celebrity Recital: 7 <sup>th</sup> August 1955 (Simpson).....	305
	La Traviata: 10 <sup>th</sup> October 1955 (Foa; Rogers (assistant producer)) .....	305



The Saint of Bleeker Street: 4 <sup>th</sup> October 1956 (Cartier).....	305
William Walton: 13 <sup>th</sup> February 1957 (Craxton).....	305
Celebrity Recital: 22 <sup>nd</sup> September 1957 (Foy).....	305
The Nutcracker: 21 <sup>st</sup> December 1958 (Dale).....	306
Celebrity Recital: 2 <sup>nd</sup> April 1959 (Todds).....	306
Two Brothers: 16 <sup>th</sup> August 1959 (Simpson).....	306
Othello: 1 <sup>st</sup> October 1959 (Cartier).....	306
Pineapple Poll: 1 <sup>st</sup> November 1959 (Dale).....	306
International Concert Hall: 9 <sup>th</sup> May 1961 (Todds).....	306
World Singer: 27 <sup>th</sup> January 1962 (Todds).....	306
Jacqueline du Pre: 4 <sup>th</sup> February 1962 (Foy).....	306
The Beggar's Opera: 31 <sup>st</sup> October 1963 (Rogers).....	306
La Traviata: 28 <sup>th</sup> April 1964 (Rogers).....	307
Iolanthe: 1 <sup>st</sup> October 1964 (Rogers).....	307
Il Trovatore: 27 <sup>th</sup> December 1964 (Vernon).....	307
Menuhin at Fifty: 1 <sup>st</sup> May 1966 (Large).....	307
Leonard Bernstein conducts: 22 <sup>nd</sup> January 1967 (Large, Burton).....	307
Eugene Onegin: 6 <sup>th</sup> March 1967 (Coleman, Messina).....	307
The Nutcracker: 10 <sup>th</sup> March 1968 (Vernon).....	307
La Vida Breve: 13 <sup>th</sup> October 1968 (Coleman; Messina).....	307
Stokowski Conducts: 28 <sup>th</sup> September 1969 (Todds).....	307
The Beethoven Symphonies: 26 <sup>th</sup> June 1970 (Todds).....	308
Gala Performance: 27 <sup>th</sup> March 1970 (Foy).....	308
Tchaikovsky Prizewinner: 10 <sup>th</sup> August 1970 (Tipping).....	308
The Beethoven Piano Concertos: 5 <sup>th</sup> April 1974 (Large).....	308
Omnibus at the Proms: 4 <sup>th</sup> August 1974 (Greenberg).....	308
The Marriage of Figaro: 21 <sup>st</sup> September 1974 (Coleman: Messina).....	308
André Previn's Music Night: 18 <sup>th</sup> June 1975 (Culshaw).....	308
André Previn's Music Night: 9 <sup>th</sup> July 1975 (Culshaw and Isted).....	308
United Nations Day Concert: 26 <sup>th</sup> October 1975 (Culshaw).....	309
Gianni Schicchi: 30 <sup>th</sup> May 1976 (Foy).....	309
The Sunday Prom: 22 <sup>nd</sup> August 1976 (Tipping).....	309
Hansel and Gretel: 27 <sup>th</sup> December 1976 (Large).....	309
André Previn's Music Night: 25 <sup>th</sup> May 1977 (Chappell).....	309



Ashkenazy plays Mozart: 8 <sup>th</sup> April 1978 (Greenberg) .....	309
The Sixth Leeds International Pianoforte Competition 1978: 15 <sup>th</sup> September 1978 (Greenberg; Corden).....	309
Pierrot Lunaire: 20 <sup>th</sup> January 1979 (Nears) .....	309
André Previn's Music Night: 1 <sup>st</sup> February 1979 (Butler; Engelmann) .....	309
St. Matthew Passion: 13 <sup>th</sup> April 1979 (Tipping; Greenberg) .....	310
Solti at the Proms: 27 <sup>th</sup> October 1979 (Burton).....	310
Solti conducts Russian music: 7 <sup>th</sup> January 1980 (Burton).....	310
La fille mal gardée: 4 <sup>th</sup> May 1981 (Vernon).....	310
APPENDIX III RANK AGGREGATION .....	311
APPENDIX IV THE EFFECT OF TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES.....	312
Introduction .....	312
Studios.....	312
Cameras, lenses and mountings 1936-39 .....	313
Cameras, lenses and mountings from 1946.....	314
Recordings.....	316
REFERENCES.....	318
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	338
Primary sources.....	338
Interviews carried out by the author.....	338
BBC files .....	338
Left staff files.....	338
Press cuttings boxes.....	338
Radio files.....	339
Audience research files.....	339
Scripts .....	339
Television files .....	340
Programmes viewed .....	344
Recordings consulted.....	346
Secondary sources.....	346
Published works consulted and cited .....	346
Published works consulted but not cited .....	349



## Table of figures

Figure 1: Annual output of art music broadcasts on BBC television in hours.....	16
Figure 2: Annual output of art music broadcasts on BBC television by number .....	16
Figure 3: Art music performance programmes as a percentage of total output on BBC Television.....	17
Figure 4: The change in average Reaction Index for music programmes.....	20
Figure 5: Members of the Television Orchestra in 1936 .....	56
Figure 6: Reaction Indices for different programmes in 1950.....	69
Figure 7: Numbers of viewers for different types of programme in 1950.....	69
Figure 8: Professional musical training of some prominent music directors 1936 - 1982	139
Figure 9: Comments and RIs for some editions of <i>Gala Performance</i> .....	145
Figure 10: Music scripts remaining in the BBC's written archives.....	148
Figure 11: Standard script layout .....	149
Figure 12: 'Grid' script layout .....	150
Figure 13: Shots per hour for all music programmes.....	151
Figure 14: Perceived competence of some prominent directors 1936 - 1982.....	153
Figure 15: Calculated ratings of some prominent directors 1936 - 1982.....	155
Figure 16: Ravel's <i>Bolero</i> orchestration of first eight instrumental entries .....	172
Figure 17: Comparison of shots in two recitals produced by Foy in 1954 .....	178
Figure 18: Structure of Todds' shooting script for <i>La Scala di Seta</i> .....	185
Figure 19: Opening shots for <i>Pride o' the Green</i> script.....	205
Figure 20: Shots from <i>Tristan and Isolde</i> script .....	206
Figure 21: Shots from <i>Tristan and Isolde</i> script (expanded) .....	207



# **AUTHOR DECLARATIONS**

1. During the period of registered study in which this thesis was prepared, the author has not been registered for any other academic award or qualification.
2. The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.
3. The programme of advanced study of which this dissertation is part has consisted of:
  - (i) Research Design and Methods courses
  - (ii) Participation in Research Colloquia
  - (iii) Supervision tutorials
  - (iv) Attendance at relevant research conferences

[All the above were held at the various campuses of De Montfort University or at the private residence of the tutor.]

R. Tipping

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Since this research is concerned principally with the part the BBC played in the presentation of music performance on television, the main sources of information have been the BBC's written archives at Caversham Park, Reading and the BBC's film and videotape library in Brentford, Middlesex. I would like to express my thanks to the following members and former members of the BBC's staff for their help in this research: Sue Malden, Corporate Affairs Manager, Information & Archives, Production Services; Chris Wilkie, Archive Manager; Sue Turner, Senior Librarian; Gwyniver Jones, deputy written archivist; Jeff Walden, Archives Researcher and Kay Green, senior document analyst, RAPIC.

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# CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

*There is much in musical performance that is deeply see-worthy; music on television should concentrate on it, and leave the rest to better-sounding radio, or better-looking museum files. (Hans Keller, music producer, BBC Radio)<sup>1</sup>*

*In a concert relay the producer is the servant of the score and the recorder of an event over which he has very little control. His job is to direct the cameras. The structure of the programme and its climaxes are musical, provided by the composer. (Humphrey Burton, acting Head of Music Programmes, BBC Television, 1965)<sup>2</sup>*

*Make popular music good and make good music popular. (Lionel Salter, Head of Music Productions, BBC Television, quoted by Humphrey Burton)<sup>3</sup>*

*There is no achievement in playing to an empty house. (Report of the Committee on Broadcasting, 1977 (Annan Committee))<sup>4</sup>*

This thesis traces the history of the presentation of art music performance programmes on BBC television and analyses the ways that BBC staff producers found to present those performances. The thesis provides a narrative account of the activities on BBC Television which parallels those of classical music on BBC Radio described in Kenyon's *The BBC Symphony Orchestra* (1991), Carpenter's *Envy of the World* (1996) and Doctor's *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music, 1922-1936* (1999). Over the period covered by this thesis, 1936 to 1982, the bureaucratic organisation of the television producers responsible for art music performance programmes was fairly fluid starting from the creation of an as-needed pool of multi-disciplinary producers in 1936 through to a department dedicated exclusively – and in an almost monopolistic way – to the manufacture of these programmes from 1967 to 1975. This thesis provides a narrative account of how this 'fluid' bureaucracy developed and evolved in the presence of other events such as the creation of BBC-2 in 1964. It also reviews and deconstructs a substantial number of programmes made during the nearly 50 years covered by this thesis. In that time well over a hundred directors tried their hands at making art music performance programmes, most of them with little impact on the development of such programmes: a relative handful has had a major impact and it is mostly their programmes that have been deconstructed.

From the start of television broadcasting in 1936 the underlying concept of presenting classical music performances was that of 'relay': giving the viewer the feeling that they



were sitting in the best seat in the concert hall or theatre. Over the years and particularly as musically trained producers were recruited by BBC Television this concept changed to that of the viewer being given the feeling of being a participant in the classical music performance: the ways in which musically aware producers achieved this change is discussed in the final chapters of this thesis.

Throughout this thesis the term ‘classical’ music refers to Western ‘art’ music of any period and style. Lionel Salter defined ‘good’ or ‘serious’ music – what in this thesis is called ‘art’ or ‘classical’ music – as ‘...music of intrinsic quality in which the composer is artistically more important than the interpreter...’<sup>5</sup> Occasionally in this thesis names of charismatic performers will appear and it might be thought that the adulation given to them would negate Salter’s definition. In defence of Salter it can be argued that there is a fundamental difference between, for example, ‘Karajan’s Brahms’ and ‘Louis Armstrong’s *Tiger Rag*.’ There is an understanding that when Karajan conducted Brahms he was attempting to bring his own insight into the wishes of Brahms as expressed in the printed notes of the composer’s score. It is highly unlikely that any but the most devoted aficionado would know or care about the composer of *Tiger Rag*,<sup>a</sup> the manipulation and distortion of the original by an artist such as Armstrong being far more important than the composer’s expressed wishes even if known.

LeMahieu in *A Culture for Democracy* (1985) offers a different perspective from Salter and neatly delineates the perceived difference between ‘popular’ culture and ‘elite’ culture. Popular culture is seen as ephemeral: its artefacts are ‘to be sold for profit rather than objects of intrinsic value or special moral worth.’ In contrast he implies that artists and ‘creators of elite culture’ claimed to be ‘guardians of enduring values’:<sup>6</sup>

Most British intellectuals in the early twentieth century agreed that authentic art transcended the conventional limitations of time, place, social class, and individual psychology...a great painting or piece of literature embodied insights that survived over generations.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> In fact the composer of *Tiger Rag* is unknown, the copyright being owned jointly by the members of *The Original Dixieland Jazz Band (ODJB)*.



The music included in this thesis complies with this concept of permanence, this idea of 'enduring values.' It is ironic that this music of a quality that seems to transcend 'time, place and class' should have been presented to its observers, the viewers, on a medium in which ephemerality should have been for so long part of its essence. In the absence of methods of preservation the television programmes from 1936 to 1953 have been lost for ever. Even after the invention of telerecording at the end of the 1940s and video-recording at the end of the 1950s the number of programmes which have been stored in the BBC's film archives, never again to see the light of day, hugely outweighs the number that have been felt to have that quality of permanence to justify resurrecting and repeating them many years after their first transmissions.

Georgina Born, an anthropology graduate, in her study of IRCAM<sup>a</sup>, the centre in Paris devoted to the study and creation of avant-garde music, *Rationalizing Culture* (1995), draws attention to a deficiency in the empirical study of high culture. She cites 'several major writers on the sociology of culture' including Wolff, Williams and Bennett who have asked for more attention to be given to 'empirical research on the institutions and practices of cultural production and reproduction, particularly those of high culture.' She points out that these writers and others, despite developing profound abstract theoretical arguments, 'lack engagement with the empirical complexities of contemporary culture.' Born continues by stating that the sociology of art and culture has been dominated by studies of mass media and popular culture and that this has led to a tendency to ignore 'another sphere of cultural power: "official", state-funded or subsidized culture.' She cites Wolff as asking for 'critical research on the institutions, practices and ideologies of particular areas of cultural production.'<sup>8</sup> This thesis is largely confined to the empirical discovery and exposition of the practices of cultural production and reproduction as found in the field of classical music at BBC Television and, it is hoped, will provide a source of empirical information which cultural sociologists will find a rich seam from which to mine.

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<sup>a</sup> *IRCAM: Institut de Recherche et de Coordination Acoustique/Musique*



After the present introductory chapter which includes an overview of the literature and the historical context in which the development of classical music on television took place, this thesis continues in chapter 2 with a description of the methodology used. This is followed by a chapter devoted to a philosophical **preamble** which examines the arguments put forward by a number of individuals both for and against presenting classical music performance on television.

In order to understand the way in which a coherent philosophy of presentation evolved the creation of departments responsible for classical music performance programmes has been traced. The background and abilities of the members of those departments are also described in order to show why a philosophy was needed and how it was implemented. For the historical aspects of the present research the development of staff and departments responsible for the presentation of music performance on television has been divided into three periods each of which has a separate chapter devoted to it:

- **The first period of experimentation** runs from the opening of BBC Television in 1936 to the closure of the television service two days before the declaration of war in 1939; it includes a brief description of the experimental broadcasts from 1929-1936.
- **The second period of experimentation** runs from the reopening of the television service in 1946 to the creation of the Documentary and Music Programmes Department in 1963, part of the reorganisation of BBC Television in preparation for the opening of BBC-2 in 1964.
- **The period of consolidation** runs from 1963 to 1982. The reasons for finishing in 1982 are discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

Having shown how the main practitioners came to be employed by the BBC this thesis goes on to evaluate the processes that led to the development of a philosophy for presenting classical music performance on BBC Television. The first coherent philosophy had been developed by Lionel Salter by 1959 and Chapter 7 of this thesis is largely devoted to an evaluation of that philosophy.

Well over a hundred directors in the period 1936 to 1982 tried their hand at making classical music performance programmes for BBC Television. This thesis cannot devote



space to all of them so Chapter 8 contains a novel method of trying objectively to assess the quality of these directors and to extract the relatively small number of them who might be considered 'successful'. Having separated out the core directors examples of their work are assessed in Chapter 9 in order to show how the ways of presenting music performance on television evolved in the hands of these significant directors.

Chapter 10 is devoted to conclusions to be drawn from this thesis.

## 1.1 Literature search

Classical music performance programmes have never represented a large fraction of the output of BBC Television. When BBC-2 was being planned in 1963/4 the most generous estimate of the fraction of airtime that might be devoted to opera, dance, concerts and recitals was 5%.<sup>9</sup> This figure has never been achieved in practice, just over 4% in 1955 being the highest post-war figure before or after the creation of BBC-2;<sup>10</sup> even this was in the period when most of the country had only one channel to view and the Reithian principle of giving the viewers what was felt to be good for them still applied. Viewing figures for individual programmes relevant to this thesis have also generally been small by normal mass viewing criteria. Rarities exist: according to viewing figures in the BBC's Written Archives the broadcast of the *Bolshoi Ballet* (1956) achieved a viewing figure of around 25% of the population,<sup>11</sup> while *The Last Night of the Proms* (1979) achieved over 27% during a period of industrial unrest in Independent Television.<sup>12</sup> To give just one further example of an exceptional television broadcast of high culture it could be noted that the televising of Richard Strauss' *Salome* (1957) achieved a viewing figure of 14% (about seven million viewers):<sup>13</sup> more people saw it on television in that one broadcast than had seen it on stage in all the opera houses of the world since its first performance in 1905.<sup>14</sup> Those exceptional viewing figures notwithstanding, arts performance programmes in the period of full competition have been lucky to gain audiences of over 2%. The output of music performance programmes was not as substantial an output as sport, drama or light entertainment but it was sufficiently important to have merited some modest academic analysis in the past. As far as can be ascertained there has been very little even when the definition of classical music is widened to include not only works written for church and concert hall but also dance and opera. The standard historical reference books on



the history of the BBC are the six volumes written by Professor Asa Briggs, *The History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom Volumes 1 to 5* (1961, 1965, 1970, 1979 and 1995 respectively, all revised 1995) which cover the period up to 1974 and *The BBC – the first fifty years* (1985) which covers the period 1922 to 1972. Briggs covers the history of classical music on radio in some depth but largely ignores classical music on television. Many other books on the history of the BBC which have been consulted suffer from the same blinkered approach to classical music on television. Standard works of reference such as Grace Wyndham Goldie's *Facing the Nation* (1977), Michael Tracey's biography of Hugh Greene *A Variety of Lives* (1983), John Cain's *The BBC: 70 years of broadcasting* (1992), Humphrey Carpenter's history of the Third Programme *The Envy of the World* and a host of others consulted, have either said nothing about classical music on television or contained, at best, a few oblique references to it. Standard texts on television as a whole have also ignored classical music on television completely; these include Geraghty and Lusted's *The Television Studies Book* (1998), Ellis's *seeing things – Television in the Age of Uncertainty* (2000), and several others listed in the bibliography of this thesis. Even *The Television Genre Book* (2001), edited by Creeber, which includes a substantial contribution from Donnelly on *Music on Television*, seems to define 'music' solely as 'pop' as exemplified by the MTV satellite channel. Fiske and Hartley devote a chapter of *Reading Television* (1978) to dance but they see dance either as a metaphor for class warfare (*Come Dancing*)<sup>15</sup> or as a source of sexual titillation for adolescent viewers (*Top of the Pops*):<sup>16</sup> classical dance on television is dismissed in one paragraph which it shares with comments on striptease as a dance form.<sup>17</sup> Books which have provided useful information have included Paul Ferris' biography of Sir Huw Wheldon, *Sir Huge* (1990) and Sir John Drummond's recent autobiography *Tainted by Experience* (2000). Wheldon was the Head of Documentary and Music Programmes Department which was created in order to have a major impact on the artistic content of both BBC-1 and BBC-2 when the latter opened in 1964. Ferris' book contains much useful information about this department and its successor Music and Arts Department which will appear periodically below. Drummond was a long-serving member of the department responsible for arts programmes in BBC Television and eventually became Assistant Head of Music and Arts Department: his book is a useful treasury of reminiscences



about what was happening in BBC Television's coverage of the arts from 1963 to 1977 when Drummond left the BBC to become Director of the Edinburgh Festival.

One publication which has proved valuable in the formulation of Chapter 9 of this thesis is one that has attempted to provide empirical analysis in the field of feature films: Barry Salt's *Film Style & Technology: History & Analysis* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition 1992).<sup>a</sup> This book is important in another respect in that it is one of the few books in the field of cultural analysis which adopts a strictly scientific approach. The scientific approach to expanding knowledge and understanding is that of developing theory, testing the theory against experiment and observation, making testable predictions, modifying the theory to take account of those experimental results and so on round the endless theoretical/observational cycle. Salt calls it Scientific Realism (his capitalisation.)<sup>18</sup>

There is an older tradition of investigation based on Greek science in which the workings of the world are deduced from argument and logic, the method of dialectic. Salt points out that in this method there are no agreed *a priori* assumptions and schools of dialectic often spring up in ways that are culturally determined and anathema to other cultures. He cites as one example the French education system which leads to a peculiarly French dialectical attitude to science.<sup>19</sup>

Salt is dismissive of those pseudo-sciences which are based on pure dialectic and produces a sort of progression of importance starting with the experimental sciences at the top such as chemistry, physics, biology, mathematics<sup>b</sup> and astronomy; in the middle he puts developing disciplines with aspirations but as yet few testable experimental results such as anthropology, much of linguistics, psychology and some parts of sociology; at the bottom he places charlatan sciences such as psychoanalysis, Marxism,

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<sup>a</sup> Appendix IV of this thesis discusses certain aspects of technological changes in television as they affected directorial style; parallels will be drawn with information about the film industry provided in Salt's book.

<sup>b</sup> Salt includes mathematics as an experimental science since it first started as an applied science with 'pure' mathematics being a tool to help the applied mathematicians. He asserts that even modern theoretical mathematics frequently leads to conclusions that can be tested experimentally even if many years after the original theoretical work.



the bulk of sociology, the French schools of both linguistics and structural anthropology.<sup>20</sup>

Before presenting his own empirical approach to filmic analysis Salt devotes a chapter of his book – *Chapter 2: Old Film Theory, New Film Theory* – systematically to dismembering established theories of film analysis. It is a compelling read especially for anyone who, like Salt, came through the disciplines of experimental science before being introduced to what Salt regards as the insubstantial world and shifting sands of cultural sociology.

Salt expands his disdain for most other types of interpretation but his own in the following chapter – *Chapter 3: The Interpretation of Films*. He starts by stating that the most conservative position that any analyst of film could take is ‘the denial of the possibility of any valid interpretation at all.’ This clearly is a self-defeating position since any subsequent comment is invalidated by the stated position of the analyst. The next most conservative position is that taken by Salt himself and one which, long after he had arrived at this position, he discovered had already been proposed by Hirsch with respect to literature in *Validity in Interpretation* (1967). This position he defines as

...all interpretation should be controlled by, and compatible with, what we know about the way the film was produced, including the context of the other films of that time and place, and also what we know about the ideas and personality of its maker.<sup>21</sup>

Salt shows a little more sympathy to a small number of American theorists including the early work of David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson. Their work, which is derived in large part from the Russian Formalists of the 1920s, was called by Bordwell and Thompson ‘Neo-formalism.’ Where Salt diverges from Bordwell and Thompson is in their belief that the perception of meaning in film by an observer is as important as the presentation of meaning in film by the creator. Salt seems to take the view that since the total perception of meaning is probably unique to every observer it is impossible to develop a coherent theory of filmic interpretation by using the observer. On the other hand he accepts that viewers of films develop an understanding of filmic conventions from a very early acquaintance with film; film makers use these conventions on the assumption that viewers will not be confused by them. Salt says that these conventions



mostly relate to shot transitions which are artificial and unrelated to reality: we do not cut from shot to shot in our own mind's perception of real life and even less do we dissolve or wipe from one scene to another which is unconnected in geography or time.<sup>22</sup>

Salt has a huge advantage over the analyst who is interested in television in that an enormous quantity of material from the earliest days of feature films has remained available for viewing. Salt himself claims to have viewed thousands of films, many of them several times, in order to arrive at his stylistic history. For the television analyst of music programmes the position is much less satisfactory. Not a single example has survived of the 750 music programmes transmitted in the period 1936 to 1952. Of the next 750 music programme transmissions which date from 1952 to 1959 just 51 still exist in the BBC's archives. It is extremely difficult for the analyst to discern trends from such a small sample of programmes especially as most that survive from this period come from a narrow range of genres: studio performances of opera and ballet. It is against this background that Chapter 9 in particular should be read.

### **1.1.1 The place of classical music on television**

Throughout this thesis there is an unstated but underlying conviction on the part of the BBC's bureaucracy and the overseers of the BBC's activities that classical music had a rightful place on BBC Television. Throughout the BBC's Written Archives, in *Radio Times*, in *The Listener*, in the reports of the various committees appointed by Parliament to investigate broadcasting, and in newspaper reviews, the concept of putting music performance on television has rarely been questioned. Such questions as do occur are mentioned in the text below but they are few and far between and are almost invariably concerned with the correct way of presenting classical music on television and not whether it should be done at all. There was certainly fierce bidding for airtime from every production department and sometimes it would appear from what was accepted that music performance programmes missed out. Until Lord Annan's *Report of the Committee on the Future of Broadcasting* (1977) which would lead to the creation of Channel 4 there would appear to have been no informed debate about the 'whether' of the arts on television: within the BBC's copious archives the researcher can search in



vain for an organised lobby to eliminate the performance programmes made by the Music Department.

The evidence, scant as it is, seems to indicate that the ‘given’ in 1936 about the place of classical music on television had already been established in the minds of those responsible for setting up the new service: it was a ‘given’ that would not be seriously challenged for over 40 years until the Annan Committee of 1977 (see Section 1.7). It is therefore necessary to step backwards in time to try to infer why this ‘given’ should have been.

### **1.1.2 Before Television – cultural elitism in Music on BBC Radio**

Scannell and Cardiff’s *A Social History of British Broadcasting (Volume 1 1922-1939)* (1991) deliberately ignores BBC Television: they describe it as ‘a purely experimental service’.<sup>23</sup> While preparing their book Scannell and Cardiff discovered that there had been virtually no academic discussion of the character of music culture from the period 1922 to 1939 whether ‘popular’ or ‘high’. Inadvertently they give some evidence of why this might be: they approached the subject as academics versed in media studies and make some elementary slips that no music graduate would have permitted.<sup>a</sup> The analysis of classical music in the media seems to require someone with degree-level knowledge of both music and media and this is rare. Despite the musical slips by Scannell and Cardiff, their volume and LeMahieu’s *A Culture for Democracy* provide many insights into what was happening in the worlds of culture until 1939; their research in relation to ‘high’ culture is relevant to the situation with regard to the place of classical music on the newly created BBC Television in the period 1936 to 1939 which is the subject of Chapter 4 of this thesis.

LeMahieu in *A Culture for Democracy* neatly summarises the place of the BBC in the 1920s:

In the 1920s the BBC acquired a monopoly over an entire medium by gaining the consent of key groups in British society. For reasons of their own self-

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<sup>a</sup> Examples: on p.212 they refer to Gershwin’s *Symphony in Blue* (1924) – it was called *Rhapsody in Blue*; on p. 218 they refer to Bartok’s Piano Concerto in the singular – he wrote three; on the same page they refer to ‘a Debussy quartet’ as if he wrote several – he wrote only one.



interest, the press, government, major political parties, radio manufacturers, and the entertainment industry recognised the advantages of a centralised authority licensed by the government to control broadcasting.<sup>24</sup>

Each of the groups mentioned by LeMahieu had good reasons for preferring a monopoly to competition: the politicians preferred it because it was easier to control one authority subject to Royal Charter than several; the manufacturers had successfully set up the British Broadcasting Company – later the Corporation – to create a demand for their products; the press, despite their suspicion of competition, preferred one opponent to many, especially as the BBC could not take advertising away from them except, to a limited extent, in *Radio Times*; at first the entertainment industry saw more advantages in their stars gaining publicity on the small number of ‘wireless’ sets in use than the possibility of the audience finding that the stars’ routines were becoming stale with over-exposure. The problem with monopoly was that there were no balancing forces between giving ‘what [the public] wanted’ and ‘what it ought to have.’<sup>25</sup> Radio critics took the BBC to task for its cultural elitism and by the 1930s continental stations deliberately targeted the British listeners with popular programmes interspersed with the very advertisements that the monopoly had been partly designed to exclude. LeMahieu gives evidence that continental stations were popular among lower-income families and that the owners of cable services were replacing some of the BBC’s programmes with transmissions from abroad. He cites *The Times* as saying

While the broadcasting is controlled with enlightenment and impartiality by a responsible public corporation, the listening is controlled by Tom, Dick and Harry.<sup>26</sup>

Throughout the 1930s the BBC, under pressure from its younger middle managers, gradually changed from a paternalistic organisation to one that took note of the wishes of its audience. These managers were more concerned with attracting and holding the growing number of listeners than the hierarchy who had managed the BBC in the 1920s. LeMahieu concludes that

A number of converging factors, both within the BBC and external to it, help explain the quiet accommodation of the Corporation during the 1930s to the tastes of its rapidly expanding audience, an accommodation often attributed to a later period in its history.<sup>27</sup>



Scannell and Cardiff devote about a quarter of their substantial volume to 'Music Policy': half of this section is devoted to the arguments within the BBC about the place of many types of popular music, some approved and others discouraged, which is outside the scope of this thesis, while the other half is devoted to the increasing tension between radio's Music Department – which was responsible for classical music and which was the largest department in the BBC – and the overall policy makers, most notably Reith himself.<sup>28</sup> The Music Department was responsible for two interwoven strands of programme making within classical music: first, maintaining and promoting the highest standards in the presentation of great music; second, increasing the listeners' appreciation of such music. Musical appreciation societies had sprung up with the rise of the leisured middle classes in Victorian England. The philanthropists among these *nouveaux riches* also saw it as their mission to bring 'high-class music at a low price within the reach of the lower orders'; radio was seen as the 'final step in the true democratization of Music.'<sup>29</sup> Doctor cites a broadcast from as early as 1923 by the musical populariser Percy Scholes in which he summarises his perceptive view of what he expected to happen:

Up to the present, the great music of the world has been the private preserve of a little band of people who happened to live in the places where it could be heard, and who happened to have money enough to pay to hear it. Henceforth, it belongs to everybody...the next generation...will accept the great symphonies of the world as a part of its regular natural daily and weekly pleasures.<sup>30</sup>

By 1934 the Music department had come to feel that the programmes designed to broaden the knowledge of the unknowledgeable had run their course. Scannell describes this as one symptom of the change from 'trying to win the ordinary listener to the appreciation of good music towards winning the approval of those who were musically knowledgeable.'<sup>31</sup> Until 1934 the Music department had planned its own output on radio with guaranteed and generous allocations of broadcast time; by 1936 there had been a substantial shift in responsibility for programme planning on radio. According to Scannell and Cardiff the 'small nucleus of senior personnel' who looked after the shape of overall planning including Reith, Eckersley (Head of Entertainment) and Dawnay (Controller of Programmes) came down heavily against the rather high-brow appearance of the schedules: they set about '...leaven[ing] it with more



entertainment.’<sup>32</sup> The reason for this change in attitude seems to have been a straightforward reaction to the impact of radio on the general public. Doctor in *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music, 1922-1936* cites Briggs and her own researches at the BBC’s Written Archive Centre as showing that at the end of 1926 only about 20% of the nation owned radios. By 1933 this figure had risen to 50% and the BBC was starting to have to think about communicating with a mass audience rather than a (wealthy and middlebrow?) minority.<sup>33</sup>

From these studies of broadcasting and culture from the 1920s and 1930s it seems clear that by 1936 classical music had an assured but diminished place on radio. The senior members of the BBC responsible for planning the output on radio seemed to have already come to the conclusion that the majority of the public wanted dance music and American music (jazz and crooners). The audience for classical music was an important minority: important because it was largely drawn from the moneyed and ruling classes but a minority nonetheless. LeMahieu in *A Culture for Democracy* also points out that when the BBC started in 1922 Reith was a young man of 33 and many of his other recruits were also young, many of them in their 20s. By the middle 1930s many of these men had entered their 30s and 40s and were no longer enthusiastic experimenters. They had been drawn almost exclusively from the middle classes and they had felt that their aspirations for self-improvement would be shared universally.<sup>34</sup> LeMahieu implies that their optimism may have been misplaced and taken with Scannell and Cardiff’s observations it would seem that the move from classical to popular music on BBC Radio was as much to do with the onset of managerial middle age and the loss of proselytising zeal as to any response to criticism in the press and from listeners.

It was against this slow change in broadcasting policy from substantial amounts of high-brow music in the 1920s to more mixed but predominantly middle-brow tastes in the mid-1930s that Television was to be created in 1936. One of the members of that ‘middle-brow’ hierarchy was Gerald Cock, the Director of Outside Broadcasts, who would be appointed the first Director of Television, and will be an important figure in Chapter 4 of this thesis.



## 1.2 The genres of music performance programmes

The background of academic near-silence with regard to classical music on BBC Television discussed above has led to this thesis being the largely original discovery of its history requiring the creation of systems for analysing art music performance on television. For one category of art music performance on television there are well-established techniques of analysis which offer some help: analysis of *theatrical genres* of music – opera and narrative dance – is closely related to analysis methods used for deconstructing drama narrative on television. The main difference between spoken drama and music drama is that the speed of delivery of the text in the latter – verbal or gestural – is only remotely connected to the speed at which those communicative ideas would be delivered in spoken drama. The underlying pace of communication is determined not by the text but by the music. It follows that any concept of ‘visual pace’ will seem to be laboured by normal dramatic standards and the deconstruction of operatic or balletic sequences will have to take this into account.

For *non-theatrical genres* of music – chamber, symphonic and concertante music – a new style of analysis has had to be devised related to the empirical methods of Salt mentioned above. Lionel Salter, who was successively Head of Music Productions, Television; Head of Opera; and Assistant Controller of Music in the BBC, said

Music has no literal ‘meaning’ (beginning, as Goethe said, where words leave off) and is of quite peculiar intangibility...<sup>35</sup>

Georgina Born in *Rationalizing Culture* expands this concept of ‘meaningless music’ even further:

...Musical sound is alogogenic,<sup>a</sup> unrelated to language, nonartifact, having no physical existence, and non-representational. It is a self-referential, aural abstraction...it is this non-representational core that makes musical sound especially resistant to decoding as ideology.

She goes on to point out that music’s ‘meaning’ has relevance only to other music when she writes ‘...This peculiar degree of self-referentiality is why musical sound may be considered a (relatively) empty sign.’ Born admits that music, through its ‘extraordinary

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<sup>a</sup> *Alogogenic*: not having a meaning than can be expressed in words.



evocative power' can induce into the minds of listeners all kinds of connotations – visual, sensual, emotional and intellectual. These metaphors are often unique to each listener and impervious to analysis; it is only when these metaphors become cultural and historical that ideological analysis becomes possible and then the analysis is more concerned with the 'talk, text and theory that surround music' than with the music itself.<sup>36</sup>

If Salter and Born are correct then those types of classical music performance presentation that have been called *non-theatrical* have no 'message' or 'meaning' within the normal concept of those words as used in conventional media analysis. The principal concern of the producers of these programmes has been an aesthetic one: one in which pictorial composition and conveying musical structure have been by far the most important aspects. As Ellis in *seeing things* points out: '...Television's visual qualities have received little attention in critical writing...'<sup>37</sup> Hansen *et al* in *Mass Communication Research Methods* (1998), refer to visual analysis as '...possibly the poor relation in mass communication research...'<sup>38</sup> This is a deficiency that this thesis attempts to redress, at least in part.

### **1.3 The quantity of music performance programmes**

The annual quantity of music performance programmes transmitted on BBC Television since the start of transmissions in 1936 has largely been a result of the interaction between the Head of Music Programmes (or the person exercising that function) and the Controller(s) of the television network(s). The first chart below shows three lines: the upper line is the aggregate annual duration of opera, dance and music programmes as reported in the annual reports of the BBC; the middle line shows the output of music performance originations (first transmissions); the lowest line shows the output of music performance repeats whether from telerecording, videotape or film; it also includes live repeats before recording techniques had been introduced. These latter two graphs have been derived from data that have been collected from editions of *Radio Times*, extant scripts and sundry other sources for the period 1936-1982.

The second chart shows two lines: the upper line is the number of music performance programmes for each year; the lower line is the number of repeat music performance programmes for each year.



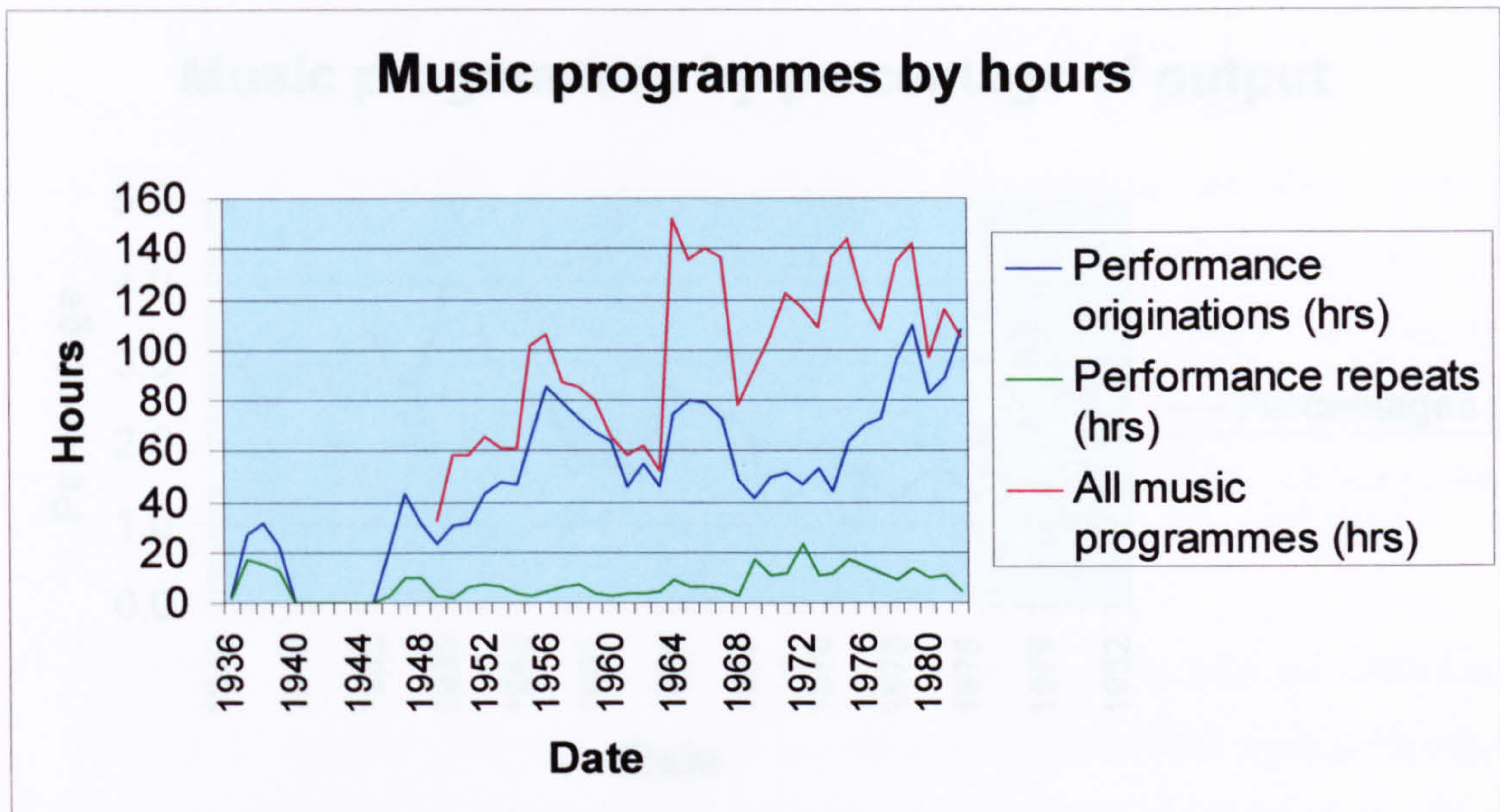


Figure 1: Annual output of art music broadcasts on BBC television in hours

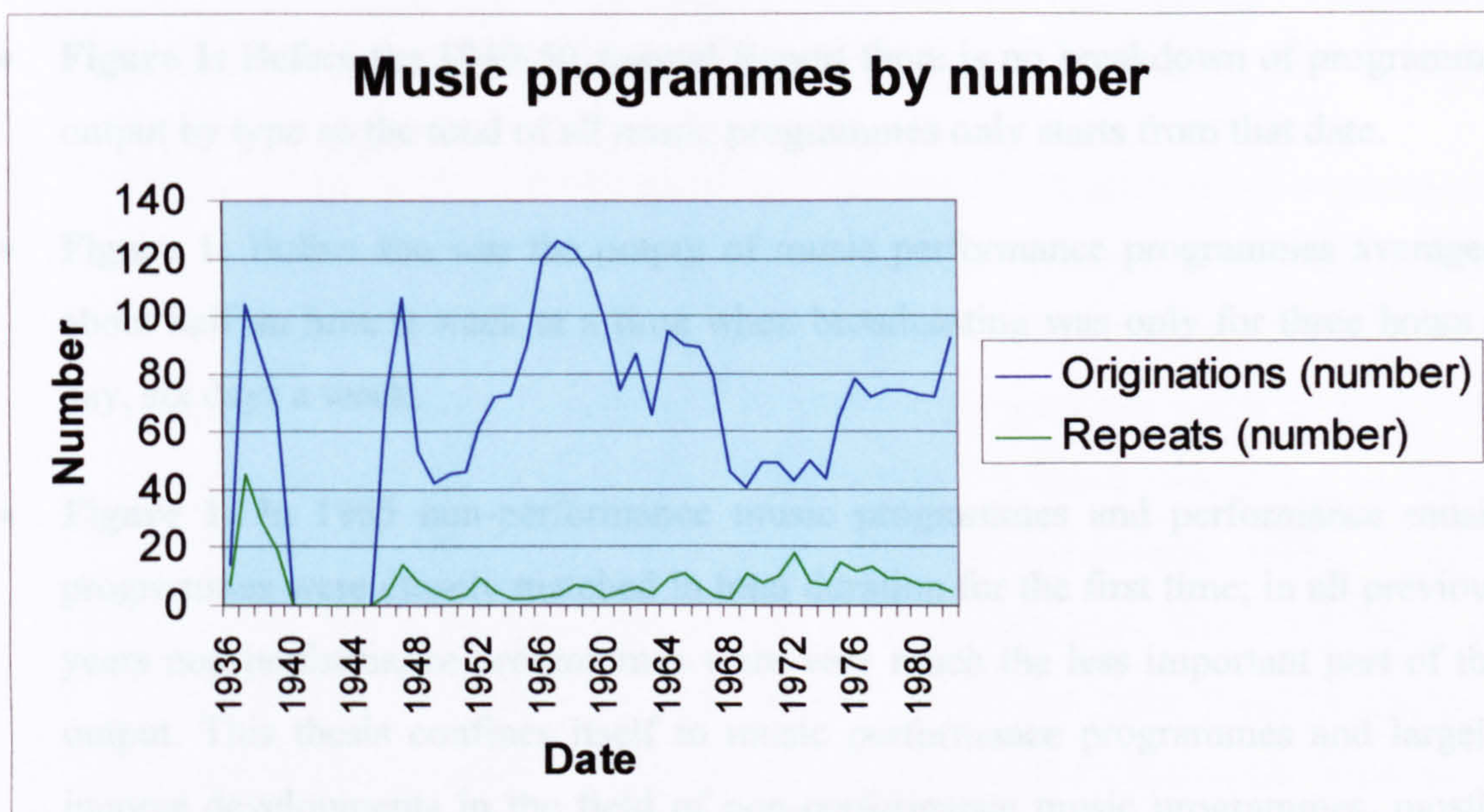
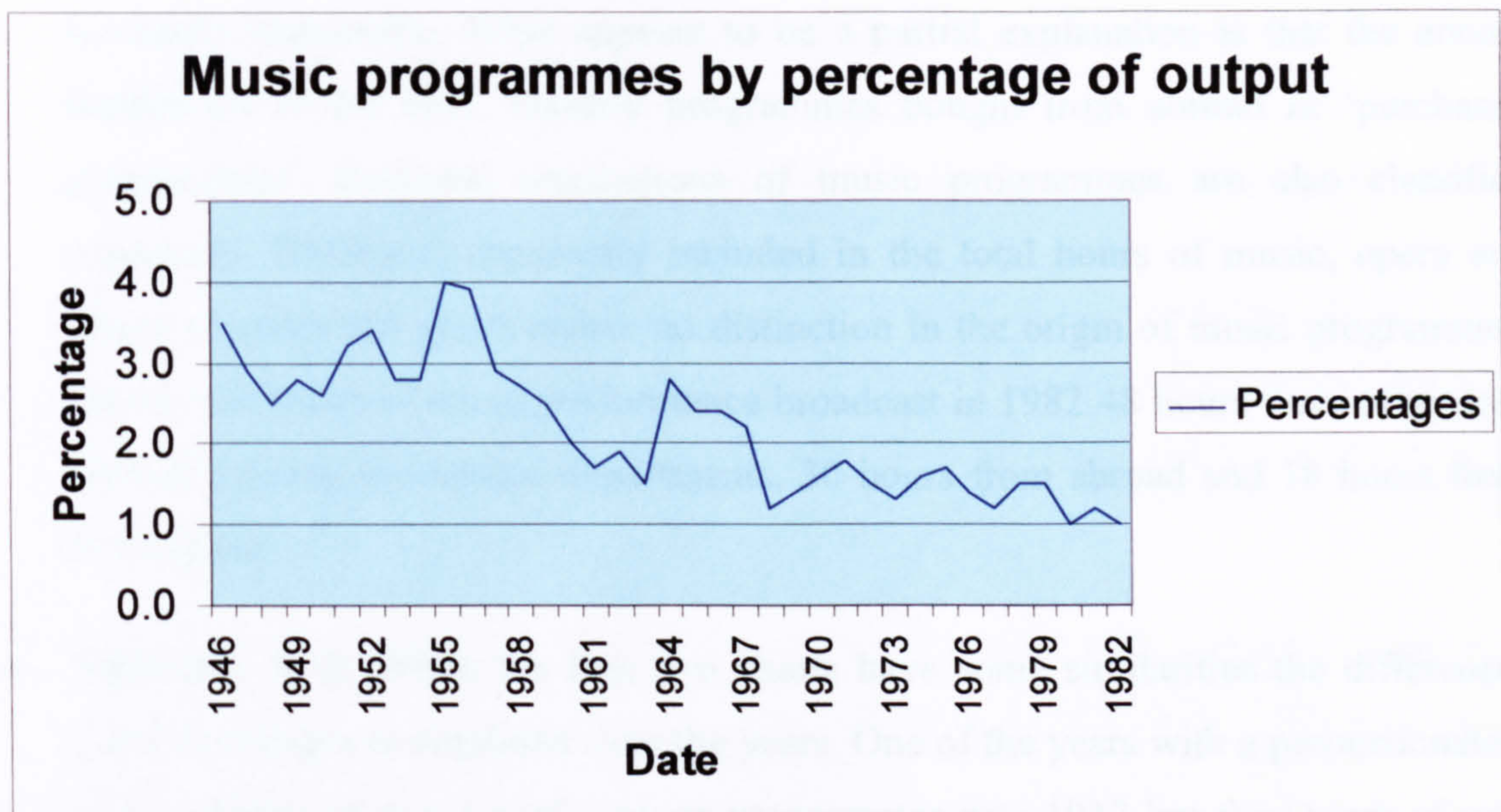


Figure 2: Annual output of art music broadcasts on BBC television by number

The third graph below shows the percentage of the BBC's total output that was devoted to music performance programmes.





**Figure 3: Art music performance programmes as a percentage of total output on BBC Television**

There are a few points to make:

- **Figure 1:** Before the 1949-50 Annual Report there is no breakdown of programme output by type so the total of all music programmes only starts from that date.
- **Figure 1:** Before the war the output of music performance programmes averaged about half an hour a week at a time when broadcasting was only for three hours a day, six days a week.
- **Figure 1:** In 1965 non-performance music programmes and performance music programmes were closely matched in total duration for the first time; in all previous years non-performance programmes were very much the less important part of the output. This thesis confines itself to music performance programmes and largely ignores developments in the field of non-performance music programmes, mostly taking the form of documentaries. Barrie Gavin, who is one of the most important directors of both performance and documentary programmes in the field of classical music, usefully defines the difference as ‘programmes **of** music’ and ‘programmes **about** music.’<sup>39</sup>
- **Figure 1:** There is an odd phenomenon in Figure 1 in 1982 where the hours of performance programmes seem to exceed the total of all music programmes which



is clearly impossible. What appears to be a partial explanation is that the annual handbooks of the BBC classify programmes bought from abroad as ‘purchased programmes’. Regional originations of music programmes are also classified separately. Neither is apparently included in the total hours of music, opera and dance whereas this graph makes no distinction in the origin of music programmes. Of the 106 hours of music performance broadcast in 1982 48 hours were originated outside London production departments, 30 hours from abroad and 18 hours from the regions.

- **Figures 1 & 2:** While the first two charts have some similarities the differences point to changes in emphasis over the years. One of the years with a proportionately large number of music performance programmes was 1937 but they were of very short average duration – about 15 minutes. After the war the years with the greatest number of programmes were 1957-59 but by 1967, when the total annual duration was similar to that of 1957, the number of programmes had dropped by almost 40%. The programmes being transmitted were becoming fewer but longer.
- **Figures 1 & 2:** Before 1969 the quantity of repeated material was not significant in the output of music performance programmes. Post-war programmes had been repeated because of the critical response to the first transmission rather than as convenient space fillers; live repeats of pre-war programmes seem to have been scheduled as an efficient way of using the studios. The first telerecording was made of the Cenotaph ceremony on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1947; the earliest music telerecording to have survived in the BBC archives was made five years later. The rapid fall in the cost of recording from the mid-1960s onwards made the storing and repeating of programmes much easier. From the late 1960s onwards there appears to have been a deliberate policy of repeating music programmes not merely because of excellence but as a way of reducing operating costs.
- **Figures 1, 2 & 3:** A change in the departmental structures of BBC Television and the opening of BBC-2 in 1964 led to a surge in music performance output.



- **Figure 2:** The erosion in the quantity of music performance programmes, which are a minority interest, can clearly be dated from the peak output year 1956. This was the first complete year in which commercial television was broadcasting in London.
- **Figure 2:** In 1967 the Music and Arts Department was split into two departments. This coincided with an initial decline in the annual number of music performance programmes: the output in terms of numbers of programmes fell to the lowest level in the history of post-war British broadcasting.
- **Figure 3:** The long term trend in the output of music performance programmes generally followed the expansion of broadcast hours from 1946 to 1958 at about 3-4% of the total output.
- **Figure 3:** Whatever the quantity of music performance programmes being made, from 1955 until 1982 the proportion of BBC Television's output devoted to this area of high art declined from 4.0% to a figure of around 1.0%. The modest recovery from 1.5% to 2.8% for the opening of BBC-2 in 1964 can be seen to have been transitory.

#### **1.4 The quality of music performance programmes**

The following chart is one measure of the quality of the programmes coming out of BBC Television's music department: it is derived from the daily viewing barometers in the BBC's Written Archive Centre and it shows the change in Reaction Index (RI)<sup>a</sup> over the period 1953 to 1982. The RI was derived from a weekly questionnaire sent to a representative sample of over a thousand viewers (and from a similar number of weekly interviews in the street); viewers were asked to place their enjoyment of programmes of which they had watched half or more on a scale from 0 (no enjoyment) to 100 (total enjoyment). Once viewers had a choice of viewing from 1955 onwards it was unusual for a programme to receive a low RI below 45 or so since they would have turned over to 'the other side' rather than continue to watch something that they disliked. It is for

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<sup>a</sup> The Reaction Index was sometimes called Appreciation Index (AI) or Viewer Reaction (VR).



this reason that the average RI across all programmes was around 60 and not 50 as might have been expected.

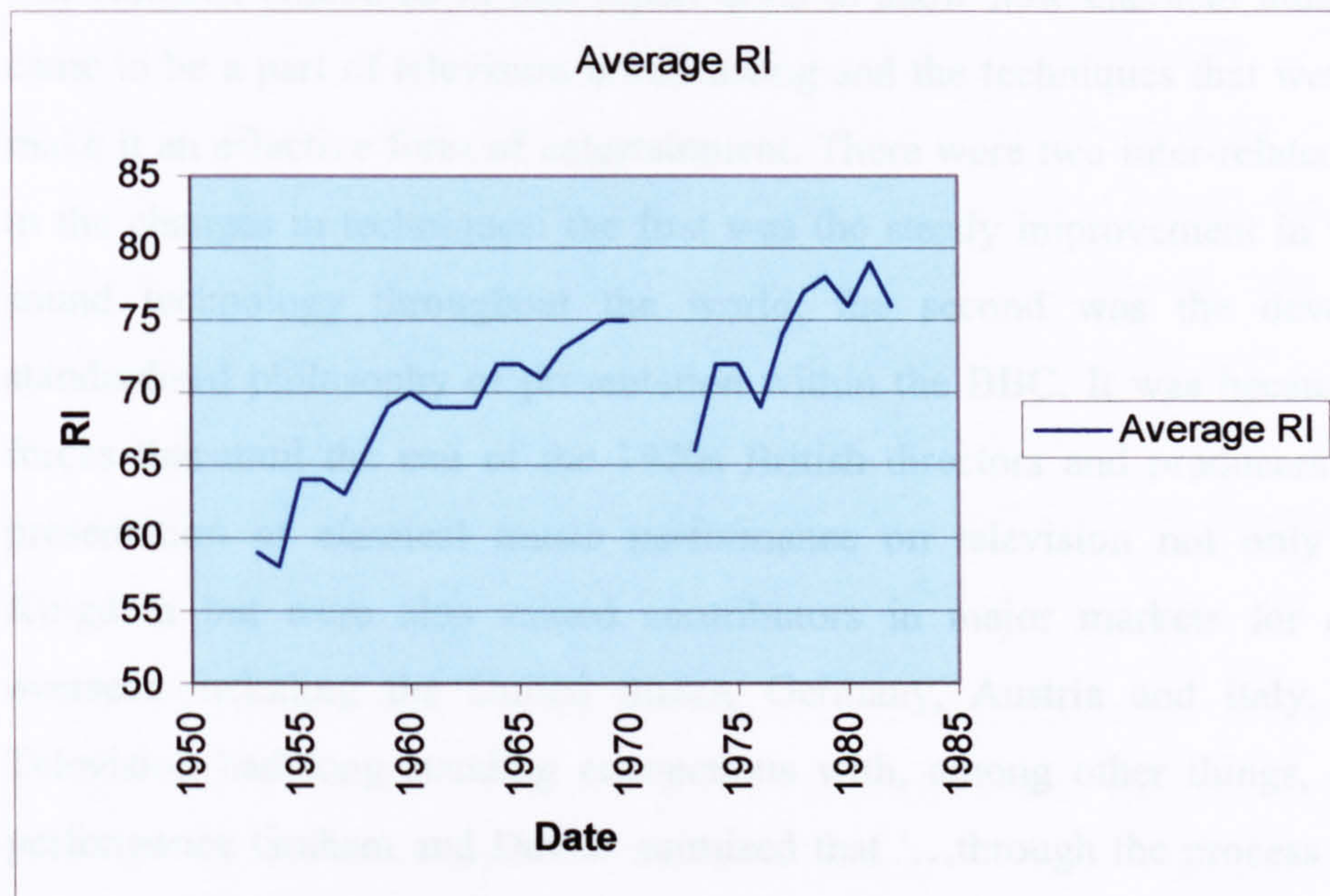


Figure 4: The change in average Reaction Index for music programmes

A number of points can be made about this graph:

- Reaction Indices were not calculated before 1953.
- Reaction Indices were not calculated from July 1970 to July 1973 when a quite different set of indices was issued which was not comparable to Reaction Indices.
- There was a fairly steady increase in the appreciation by viewers of the department's output possibly due to improvements in the skills of the music directors as will be shown.

While the development of programme ideas is important to the understanding of how the presentation of music performance on television changed over the years, this thesis will not be a chronological listing of programmes. Appendix I gives an overview of the most important broadcasts in chronological order. Many different *genres* of music performance programmes were developed over the years: it would be confusing if these



developments were handled chronologically so the development of each *genre* will be separately described as a sub-chapter where appropriate.

## **1.5 The skills of directors of music performance programmes**

The research embodied in this report aims to show how classical music performance came to be a part of television broadcasting and the techniques that were developed to make it an effective form of entertainment. There were two inter-related driving forces in the changes in techniques: the first was the steady improvement in film, video and sound technology throughout the world; the second was the development of a standardised philosophy of presentation within the BBC. It was because of these two forces that until the end of the 1970s British directors and producers dominated the presentation of classical music performance on television not only in the United Kingdom but were also valued contributors in major markets for classical music overseas including the United States, Germany, Austria and Italy. Because BBC Television had long standing connections with, among other things, classical music performance Graham and Davies surmised that ‘...through the process of ‘learning by doing’ the BBC had developed genuine advantages quite irrespective of its particular concerns as a public service broadcaster.’<sup>40</sup>

Directors of music performance programmes working within the constraints of technology can be perceived as being more able or less able to communicate their musical concepts to viewers. Three possible methods of measuring their success are the longevity of their careers as music directors and the number of programmes that they directed; the response of viewers; and the response of television professionals working in other fields, such as sport, drama, variety and so on. A technique of combining these three methods of assessment will be used to create a possible method of objectively assessing the quality and success of directors of music performance programmes.

## **1.6 The impact of classical music on BBC Television**

Music performance programmes on television have always been a minority taste. People in authority might not have watched music performance broadcasts on television but they were still regarded as being ‘A Good Thing’. The departmental and inter-departmental ‘spats’ that are mentioned below now have the appearance of the inconsequential territorial bickering of Tweedledum and Tweedledee. There have never



been classical music performance programmes that have caused annoyance to politicians in the manner of *Yesterday's Men* (BBC) (1971), *Cathy Come Home* (BBC) (1966) or *Death on the Rock* (ITV) (1988). Members of the BBC's senior management have rarely reacted to a classical music performance programme in the way that they did to *Culloden* (1964) or *The War Game* (1985). As a result the place of classical music performance programmes in the television output of broadcasters, especially the BBC, has had few denigrators and needed few champions. One of the few who has consistently championed this particular field is Humphrey Burton, who has twice filled the post of Head of Music and Arts, BBC Television, and is himself a noted television director of music performance programmes. Burton's contribution to this field is a prominent feature of this thesis from about 1962 onwards and the two interviews he gave are a source of much information from the same date.

There is a problem with this lack of political impact in the output of music performance programmes on television. In *Radio, Television & Modern Life* (1996) Paddy Scannell puts forward the polemical idea that the only reality known to media studies is one that involves '...power, struggle, conflict, ideology.' As a consequence, he continues, media studies academics have come to the conclusion that the only *interesting* questions (his emphasis) about the media are political.<sup>41</sup> It is a reality that he does not accept and one that would be regrettable if it were true. This thesis will have very little that non-musicians would recognise as '...power, struggle, conflict, ideology.' Programmes concerned with classical music performance have rarely if ever tried to score political points and the makers of such programmes, whatever their private political convictions, have not tried to use them to change minds other than to broaden those minds' artistic appreciation.<sup>a</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> The broadcasts of Tippett's *A Child of Our Time* (1977) and Britten's *War Requiem* (1964, 1976 and 1980) were powerful transmissions which were faithful to their composers' pacifism.



## 1.7 The Committees on Broadcasting, 1935-1977

It is noticeable that coverage of the arts on television gained scant attention in the various *Reports of the Committee on the Future of Broadcasting*<sup>a</sup> that have met periodically at the behest of Parliament, until the Annan committee of 1977. It is understandable that the Hankey committee of 1943 was almost entirely concerned with the technical problems of reinstating the television service once the war had ended. It was also concerned that the recommendations of the 1935 committee under Lord Selsdon about the extension of the service outside London should be implemented:<sup>42</sup> the Hankey committee's report contains virtually no references to programme content of any sort. The Beveridge committee's report from 1951 gives the bald statistic that opera, music productions and ballet represented 2.1% of the total output of BBC Television in the year ending March 1950 without any comment on it.<sup>43</sup> In the committee's conclusions the only aspect of television programme output to gain a specific recommendation is schools' broadcasting.<sup>44</sup> Even the minority report by Selwyn Lloyd which proposed the establishment of commercial radio and television stations does not address the place of arts broadcasting in a competitive environment.<sup>45</sup> A second minority report by six members of the committee is a vigorous attack on sponsored broadcasting and advertising. In this report the members point out that

...the audience for symphonies and operas...is a small audience and not a mass audience, under any system of broadcasting...[radio] sponsors for the [American commercial] network symphony orchestras have disappeared...<sup>46</sup>

This minority accepted the BBC's submission that '...the good, in the long run, will inescapably be driven out by the bad...'<sup>47</sup> The Pilkington committee's report from 1960 also fails to mention specific coverage of the arts except obliquely and then only in paragraphs devoted to the deficiencies of coverage by the Independent Television contractors.<sup>48</sup> The Annan committee's report of 1977 not only devotes a whole chapter to *The Arts in Broadcasting* but also shows much more understanding of the difficulties of the Independent Television contractors in meeting their statutory obligations in this

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<sup>a</sup> The titles of the committees responsible for reporting on the future of broadcasting varied over this period. They are usually referenced in the literature by their respective chairmen: Selsdon, Hankey, Beveridge, Pilkington and Annan.



area. Speaking about both the BBC and Independent Television, the report uses a phrase that is very telling for televised broadcasting of the arts:

...there exists, and will always exist, artists who at the time appear to create [works] for a minority so small as to be hardly visible...Some producers who spoke to us followed the logic of their own wish to see the range of programmes so widened, and the selectivity of the public so increased, that they were willing to defend even programmes and programme makers whose offerings attracted virtually no viewers...at all...there is no achievement in playing to an empty house.<sup>49</sup>

The paragraph is very telling since for the first time one of the Committees on Broadcasting accepted that there could be minorities who were so small that they did not have to be served by the broadcasters.<sup>a</sup> The Annan Report did not try to define the minimum acceptable size of an arts audience but its comments placed the coverage of the arts on television in a much more precarious position than previously.

## **1.8 The choice of end date**

The thesis ends in 1982 for a number of reasons:

- Humphrey Burton stepped down as Head of Music and Arts in 1981. Because of the length of time that it takes to plan television schedules there is an inevitable delay before a new incumbent can effect change: it may be assumed that most of the output of arts programmes until the new television season in autumn 1982 was effectively planned by Burton.
- The arrival of Channel 4 in 1983 made BBC-2 no longer the principal guardian of high culture on television: as a result there was a dissemination of talent in this field away from the BBC.
- The arrival shortly after 1982 of major satellite and cable networks put programming pressures on BBC-1 and BBC-2 (and Independent Television and Channel 4) which pushed arts broadcasting inexorably to the sidelines.

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<sup>a</sup> This is a little ironic since it was the Annan Report which was to make network television accessible to 'political' minorities both on Channel 4 and in access programmes created by the BBC.



Jeremy Isaacs, the first chief executive of Channel 4, lamented the recent decline and ‘dumbing down’ of arts broadcasting on BBC and Independent Television: he stated that the BBC’s interest in the arts on BBC-2 had peaked and slackened just at the time when he became the founding chief executive for Channel 4.<sup>50</sup> As a result it could appear to the viewer with a taste for the arts that there has been little innovation in this field on BBC Television since 1982. In 1991 Stephen Phillips wrote:

The outlook for British arts television is bleaker than it has been in a quarter of a century, but it remains the best anywhere, and with a few intelligent adjustments, we could have more of it, better quality, bigger audiences and better arts as a result. We may get what we deserve.<sup>51</sup>

This thesis is an introduction to the processes that led to a blossoming of classical music performance on BBC Television: it is for others to describe its possible decline.

## 1.9 Terminology

Throughout this thesis a consistent terminology will be adopted for certain words or phrases that have changed their usage in the BBC over the years. The word *producer* will be used to denote the organiser of a programme; the word *director* will be used to describe the person responsible for choosing the visual treatment in a programme. In music performance programmes the same person has usually exercised both functions so *producer* or *director* will be used depending on context. The senior member of the BBC bureaucracy who was head of a group was sometimes called the Director. The distinction will be made clear by using the upper case initial letter as in Director, Television. The standard industry expressions *assistant producer* and *production assistant* will be used for the junior producer and the producer’s personal assistant.<sup>a</sup> For consistency the television department responsible for the production of classical music programmes will generally be called Music Programmes even though it was known from 1956 to 1963 as Music Productions. There is also likely to be confusion between the department known as Outside Broadcasts – invariably abbreviated to ‘OBs’ – and the generic style of programmes known as outside broadcasts – confusingly also

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<sup>a</sup> Until the mid-1970s the BBC used the term *production assistant* for the next most senior member of the production team below the producer. Until the same period, the term applied to the producer’s personal assistant in the BBC was *producer’s assistant*.



abbreviated to ‘OBs’ – for which this department and others were responsible. To avoid confusion the abbreviations have not been used.

There is a curious divergence in cinematic and televisual usage of the term ‘jump cut’. Television directors, including myself, were taught the two meanings of the phrase used in the standard handbook used by the BBC’s Television Training Department: Millerson’s *The Technique of Television Production* (13 editions from 1961 to 1992). Here the ‘jump-cut’ means jumping a subject around the screen from shot to shot so that a character on the left in one shot appears on the right in the next one or else a change from one shot to another that is insufficiently differentiated from the first.<sup>52</sup> According to Salt’s *Film Style & Technology: History & Analysis* the ‘jump cut’ as used in the film industry is a cut which moves directly from one shot to another taking place at a different time: it is a temporal discontinuity.<sup>53</sup> Since this thesis is exclusively concerned with television, the former meaning will be used.

Rather than use the phrase ‘classical music’ whenever classical music is being discussed it is to be assumed that any mention of music which is unqualified refers to ‘classical’ music: repetition of the phrase ‘classical music’ is apt to become tedious.

## **1.10 A personal apologia**

After reading Physics, Mathematics and Electronics at Bristol University I joined the BBC in 1964 as a studio manager (sound balancer) in the BBC’s External Services including over a year with the African Service. In 1967 I moved to the North of England as an assistant producer in television where my work covered almost all aspects of television output: news and current affairs, sport, light entertainment and documentaries. For three years, from January to July each year, I worked on the Light Entertainment series *It’s a Knockout* and *Jeux sans frontières* with one of the most experienced variety producers in the United Kingdom, Barney Colehan.<sup>a</sup>

In 1970 I was recruited by John Culshaw and Walter Todds to BBC Television’s department responsible for music programmes of which Culshaw was Head and Todds

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<sup>a</sup> The catchphrase ‘Give him the money, Barney’, still to be heard in the North of England, came from Barney Colehan’s radio programme, *Have a Go*, with Wilfred Pickles.



was Senior Producer. For 22 years I worked at increasing levels of responsibility – assistant producer, producer, senior producer – until I took early retirement at the end of 1992. From 1995 to 1997 I read Music, Computer Languages and Mathematics for a second bachelor's degree at the Open University (OU) and Artificial Intelligence for a Computing Diploma in 1998 also at the OU.

During the period 1967 to 1992 I produced or directed over 500 programmes and worked alongside many of the people who will be mentioned in this thesis. Two of my programmes gained major awards: the live broadcast of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* on the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its first performance on Good Friday, 1979, which was directed by me and produced by Rodney Greenberg gained a British Academy Craft Award; the series *Young Musician of the Year* on which I was producer from 1977 to 1980 and executive producer from 1980 to 1992 gained an International Monitor Award. Despite this I had planned to 'airbrush' out my own contributions to this field: I had always regarded myself as being no more than a competent 'jobbing' director of no particular merit. When I read the minutes of the weekly Programme Review Boards it was surprising and gratifying to discover that I was regarded as rather more of a major player than I had thought. When I came to view some of my programmes which I had dismissed in my memory as being merely 'ordinary' but which had gained some especial praise it was a pleasant surprise to find that these programmes were sometimes meritorious.

I have therefore tried to apply the same criteria to my own work as I have applied to the work of others. It is inevitable that I may subconsciously take a more appreciative viewpoint of the work of my colleagues and predecessors that came closest to my own ways of working. I can only hope that my training in mathematics, physics and computer languages has given me an objectivity which will be maintained in this thesis. I worked closely with a number of people who will figure in this thesis: in particular, Brian Large, Humphrey Burton, Walter Todds and John Culshaw all had major influences on my career for which I will always be grateful. I hope that I am able to bring to this thesis an objective view of their contributions as well as my own.



## CHAPTER 2 METHODOLOGY

One of the intentions of the research embodied in this thesis is to discover which methods of presentation of music on television have proved the most successful. By 'successful' it is meant that the response of the director's peers and viewers to the techniques that the television directors have used has been positive to a greater or lesser degree. To this end the research followed two investigative routes: first, the history of music presentation on television and the principal protagonists' involvement was traced; second, the methods used by these protagonists were analysed.

Programmes were viewed as appropriate. The use of recording for music programmes only started in the early 1950s: until then all programmes were live. For earlier programmes it was necessary to deduce from the shooting scripts the visual treatment used. One of the problems involved in choosing programmes for Chapter 9 of this thesis has been the available choice of programmes for possible analysis. Had programmes been chosen so that their contents were uniformly spread throughout the golden age of Western Music, which can be assumed to have run from about 1000 A.D. to the present, it would not have fairly represented the output of BBC Television's Music Department. The latter's choice of output has been very firmly rooted in the period in which tonal music predominated in the West which was roughly from 1685 to 1914. In particular, although documentary makers have been allowed to make programmes about living and recently dead composers, performance programmes have largely ignored or paid grudging lip service to all but a handful of what might be called 'contemporary' composers: those from the last 50 years.

Written records are predominantly to be found in the BBC's Written Archive Centre (WAC) at Caversham Park, Reading. These cover in considerable detail the period from the beginnings of broadcasting through to the 1960s and then in rather more sparse detail from the 1960s to 1974. There is a particularly irritating problem associated with Music Programmes from 1967 to 1975: the late John Culshaw, the Head of Music Programmes, and his Senior Producer, the late Walter Todds, seem to have committed little of the departmental activities and discussions to paper. Much of the evidence in



this thesis from this period is uncorroborated personal reminiscence from those former members of the department who it has been possible to interview.

One problem which was highlighted by Gwyniver Jones, former Deputy Written Archivist at WAC, is that from the 1970s onwards the decision making processes were committed less and less to paper. Telephone conversations and casual meetings became more and more important in the creative process and these are long since lost. With the advent of ephemeral electronic communications such as E-mail the content of programme archives is set to deteriorate even further. Destruction of production papers to save shelf space in storage warehousing also appears to have become much more ruthless from the mid-1970s onwards.

Oral records have been collected for this thesis: interviews have been conducted with producers and administrators who were active in the music field. These are proving to be of less value than expected: checking oral evidence that can be cross-correlated with the written archives has shown that for a minority of those interviewed both loss of memory and 'adjustments' of memory are frequent. Where oral memories are quoted in this thesis without written corroboration they should be treated with appropriate circumspection.

Programme recordings by London departments that were made and still exist are kept at the BBC's Film and Videotape Library in Windmill Road, Brentford (WMR).<sup>a</sup> A substantial number of these recordings have been analysed for this research.

Publications that are closely concerned with music performances on television are remarkably sparse but sources consulted are given in the bibliography at the end of this thesis. The most important are secondary sources which generally draw on material at WAC.

Chapter 8 describes a novel qualitative method of assessing producers by combining three independent measures. A graph in Section 8.2 of this thesis relies on the

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<sup>a</sup> Some recordings have been transferred to the National Film Archive (NFA) where they are available to researchers.



mathematical technique of regression analysis; any textbook on statistics should include a description of regression analysis: a standard textbook for engineers, Glyn James' *Advanced Modern Engineering Mathematics* (Addison-Wesley, 1993) has a good introduction to the topic on p.804ff.

Since this thesis crosses the boundary of media studies and music a short glossary of musical terms that occur in the text has been included.



## CHAPTER 3 PREAMBLE

*The demonstrable appetite for music on the part of a large cross-section of the public is the prime reason for doing concerts on television. Two or three million people can't be wrong. (Humphrey Burton, acting Head of Music Programmes, BBC Television, 1965)<sup>54</sup>*

*I believe the enjoyment of music demands a cultivation of the senses. Sight in music is not the equivalent of hearing, but it adds another dimension to hearing. (Edward Lockspeiser, television critic, *The Listener*)<sup>55</sup>*

*I see better things and approve them: [but] I incline towards the worse. (Ovid)<sup>56</sup>*

*Quality broadcasting is a 'merit' good...consumers, if left to themselves tend to buy less than is in their own long term interests (Andrew Graham and Gavin Davies)<sup>57</sup>*

It may be surprising that performances of music are shown on television at all: to our modern way of thinking enjoying music is an aural experience so throughout the ages it must always have been so. Antagonism to certain types of music performance on television, especially non-theatrical music, existed even among music lovers themselves. Eric Robinson, who was to become the doyen of music conductor-presenters on BBC Television, was interviewed for the *Yorkshire Observer* in 1951.<sup>58</sup> He made the following observations which could well have returned to haunt him later in his career as television's 'Mr. Music':

- **Symphony concerts:** He said that these had not yet been made interesting for television. Even with all its vast resources Hollywood had not been able to 'do anything' longer than ten minutes and then only with expensive re-grouping of performers, relighting and multiple retakes. Even a concerto is 'oft-times apt to become tedious...'
- **Opera:** The medium of opera on TV would have to be improved before it became a notable part of the output; only popular operas would be possible for TV transmission. 'BBC Television could not make 'The Ring [by Wagner]' interesting pictorially.'
- **Dance:** 'Just a natural [for television]' He believed that there was a 'terrific' future for dance on television, especially commissioned ballets.



- **Oratorio:** In Robinson's opinion there could be no hope for transmission of such works as Handel's *Messiah*; he felt concert performances of oratorio would be far too static.

In America there was an equal reticence about putting music on television. Brian Rose cites Samuel Lipman as writing:

Music, after all is sound; it is meant to be heard, and when it is clearly heard, it is, in principle, fully experienced. The visual aspect...is felt...to be often a distraction and ...an adulteration.<sup>59</sup>

Rose continues by adversely comparing the televising of a static concert with the televising of '...colourful movement, strong conflict or unexpected novelty...' inherent in dance or opera.<sup>60</sup>

Finally from among the 'antis' of music on television a substantial quotation is presented from one of the foremost musical commentators of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Born in 1868 Ernest Newman was highly respected for his musical insights; even at the age of 85, in 1953, he had still managed to avoid ever having seen television. When introduced to music on television he reacted with horror; the musical contemporaries of his grandchildren would now regard his comments as quaint:

In the musical field I have been the shocked witness of some appalling crimes of television against St. Cecilia<sup>a</sup>; and my stricken heart leaped for joy last Sunday when I read what Mr. Maurice Wiggin had to say in protest against the televising a few evenings earlier of Mr. Menuhin performing in some violin concerto or other.<sup>b</sup>

May I suggest to whoever was responsible for that bright idea, that when music lovers are listening to instrumental music the last thing they want is to have their attention distracted from it now to the performer's fingers, now to his arms, now his face, now his feet, now his front, now his back, now to a few faces in the orchestra, now to a few more faces in the stalls, and so *ad infinitum*? 'The only way,' said Mr Wiggin, 'to enjoy the music was to close

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<sup>a</sup> The patron saint of music.

<sup>b</sup> A summary of this criticism can be found in Appendix I for the Yehudi Menuhin programme transmitted on 8.6.53.



our eyes.’ I agree with him entirely, though I cannot help asking myself whether television can be said to be doing the best it could for us when it sets up a passionate urge in us to blot it out by fair means or foul. But for me, alas, the dreadful exhibition had the deadly fascination of the snake for the rabbit; if I did succeed occasionally in closing my eyes I was under an irresistible compulsion to open them immediately, if only to see what further exasperations the spectacle might have in store for me.

[This is] suffering so atrocious that even Dante in his most vindictive mood would have shrunk from inflicting it on the vilest inhabitant of his Inferno.<sup>61</sup>

The opposite argument is that music performance was exclusively a visual as well as an aural experience until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The phonogram, which was first marketed in the 1890s, became established in the domestic environment only from about 1910;<sup>62</sup> before the 20<sup>th</sup> century the only way of experiencing music was to be present at a live performance: to hear music you had to see music, as it were. If the contemporaries of Mozart wished to hear a quartet by the master they had to go to a concert-hall, private salon or coffeehouse in order to see it. The musically gifted might be able to participate in an amateur performance at home or even read the score and experience it in their heads. Whichever method was chosen the aural was bound up with the visual and a music-lover saying in 1790 that he was going to hear a Mozart quartet would mean that he was going to see a Mozart quartet.

This has not changed: as Kenneth Wright pointed out in the *BBC Quarterly*, if people only wished to hear music, radio would have ‘...emptied the concert hall...’ which was clearly not the case. Quite the contrary happened according to Wright: radio introduced some listeners to music which encouraged them to go to see it performed.<sup>63</sup>

Crisell points out that there is an important difference between attending a public event *en masse* and watching the same event at home. The home viewer is essentially an isolated individual even if watching in the presence of his family or friends.<sup>64</sup> This leads to a quite different psychological attitude in the viewers from how they would feel if they were present at the event: the most important thing is that they are passive observers. At every moment in a television broadcast the director is telling the viewers on what they should be concentrating: if they were present at the event the viewers would be choosing the centre of their attention for themselves. For the subject studied in this thesis this leads to the conclusion that there are innate dangers in televising music



performances. Lionel Salter pointed out that music has some essential features that distinguish it from the other arts. First, it is temporal: it is changing from moment to moment so you cannot linger over it since that will immediately destroy its natural flow unlike a painting or piece of architecture.<sup>65</sup> Next, unlike a book or the visual arts it needs an interpreter ‘...to bring the composer’s thoughts to life.’<sup>66</sup> Salter said that because music possesses no intrinsic meaning and can possess a ‘...quite peculiar intangibility...’ there is scope for the television director to suffer from ‘...considerable confusion of thought, misconception and plain ignorance about how to present it in a visual medium.’<sup>67</sup>

The philosophy behind the concept of presenting music on television was expounded by Robert Wangermée:<sup>a</sup> he pointed out that public service corporations always saw music as an important part of their radio output. From the start of broadcasting radio stations employed their own orchestras and bands; when not broadcasting live music their radio output leaned heavily upon gramophone records of both classical and light music: ‘Television has not followed this model since it was originally thought that the image had little to offer in the field of music and that music should remain in the preserve of radio.’ It was soon discovered that the virtues of music performance were there for exploitation: ‘...The instruments in the orchestra, the choreography of the conductor, the faces and fingers of virtuosos during a concerto...’ and other dramatic aspects of music performance made the televising of non-theatrical music an event which helped the music-lover to experience music-making from the inside.<sup>68</sup> William Trevor, the arts critic of *The Listener* writing in 1966, expressed this sentiment in two reviews in which he spoke of a performance of Ravel’s *Bolero* being ‘...exhilarating to watch being played...’<sup>69</sup> and ‘...what television lacks in accuracy of musical reproduction<sup>b</sup> is to a degree made up for by its capacity for catching the essence of conductors at work...’<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> Chairman of the *Commission Consultative de l’Audiovisuel, Brussels* speaking in 1985 at the symposium *Strategies of the music industries and of radio organisations*, under the auspices of the Council of Europe.

<sup>b</sup> Until the introduction of NICAM digital stereophonic sound in the 1990s, which enabled television sound of high quality to be fed through a listener’s hi-fi system, the quality of the loudspeakers on television sets had been a fairly constant grouse among music lovers.



There is a quite distinct reason for putting music on television that comes directly from the philosophy of broadcasting embodied in the ideas of the BBC's first Director-General, John Reith. When radio broadcasting started under the British Broadcasting Company in 1922 Reith felt passionately that one of its functions should be to improve the listeners. Crisell points out that in 1922 much of the country left school at 14 relatively uneducated in the 'higher' things in life such as classical music, classical literature and classical drama. Most people could not afford to go to concerts, opera and dance.<sup>71</sup> It was also true that, since these arts were concentrated in the metropolitan areas, wealthy educated people living in rural areas were also denied access. Reith therefore deliberately set out to provide on radio 'the best' of music, literature and drama. The people who determined what constituted 'the best' were the educated (urban?) minority: the 'upper echelons of the social scale'. Reith famously said 'It is occasionally indicated to us that we are apparently setting out to give the public what we think they need – and not what they want – but few know what they want, and very few what they need.'<sup>72</sup> Crisell pointed out that if one of radio's functions was to give a scattered, intellectually impoverished population some access to the glories of the metropolitan areas then it may be surmised that it was also felt to be television's duty to do the same. The aim should be '...to open up to all those who had been denied them by a limited education, low social status and small income the great treasures of our culture.'<sup>73</sup> Ellis has pointed out that there was a strong feeling that the drive for 'quality' on television was based on the cultural values borrowed from the other arts at least until the end of the 1960s. The makers and commissioners of television programmes were from the same *milieu* as those in positions of authority. Many of them believed that '...quality broadcasting was the broadcasting of classical music, concerts, opera...' and other 'arty' forms outside the boundaries of this thesis. There was a consensus within and without the broadcasting community.

There was a moral imperative to providing music performance on television as well as Reith's proselytising one: public funding of arts organisations came ultimately from taxpayers whether they lived in artistically advantaged urban or artistically disadvantaged rural areas. Broadcasting, and especially television, gave those financing the arts a chance to vicariously enjoy the performances that they had indirectly funded. The argument went that Grimsby may never have enjoyed a visit from Pavarotti but



music-lovers in Grimsby could enjoy performances by Pavarotti through the broadcasters. Bakewell and Garnham in *The New Priesthood* (1970) point out that there was no way in which the small number of opera-lovers in each rural community could ever have hoped to raise enough money to pay for a visiting opera company even if there had been facilities to accommodate them: aggregated over the country their contributions and their numbers amounted to a significant whole.<sup>74</sup>

The evidence from *Radio Times* implies that the down side to this mentality was that the 'glories of the metropolitan areas' degenerated for much of the 60 years of television broadcasting into the 'glories of London.' Despite heroic efforts by production staff in Cardiff and Glasgow from the 1960s onwards the bulk of music performance broadcasting on national BBC Television has ignored the glories of the regional and national provinces with the exception of annual visits to the Edinburgh International Festival in the 1950s and 1960s. Reith's high-minded philosophy seems to have degenerated on television into a centralised attitude of self-satisfied superiority. Many of the appearances of the Hallé, Liverpool, Birmingham, Scottish National and BBC regional orchestras on network television had been broadcasts from concert venues in London apart from one experimental series of concerts, *Concert Hour*, in 1955 and 1956 which came from a variety of venues both in London and regional centres. As Stephen Phillips has pointed out in a challenging paper, the audience for a television relay from Glyndebourne (the London elite on a trip to the seaside?) extends the opera season's live audience of ten thousand to two million. 'Television provides access for a massive audience on the night, and massively enlarges the potential audience for the art form in the future.'<sup>75</sup>

John Culshaw, who did as much as anyone to create vinyl recordings of music that were as realistic and dramatic as possible, pointed out that the home-based lover of music was quite at ease with the sound of a symphony orchestra invading his lounge. What critics of music on television could not handle was having the sight of a symphony orchestra invading their lounge. He scathingly said that they would be happier sitting in some village hall with 200 like minded people listening to a string quartet with '...nothing to distract them save the draught, the smell of neighbouring socks and the atrocious acoustics...'<sup>76</sup> Somehow enjoying the same musical performance in the



comfort and solitude of their own home was detracting from the total experience. The composer Michael Tippett pointed out that music on television can be seen as coming to the viewer in two distinct psychological ways. The first is as a relay of an event to which the viewer would have had no access because of either geographical remoteness or because it was not open to the public (as in a studio performance.) The second he called 'a kind of reverse': for chamber music or any music of an intimate character it is as if the television set has become a window into an adjacent room where musicians are playing for the sole delight of the viewer. 'The BBC will one day dissolve the wall in my room so that a few feet away the Amadeus Quartet may play me Beethoven...or Schubert...' <sup>77</sup>

William Trevor, in one of his insightful reviews for *The Listener*, stated

Television has done something quite particular with the symphony concert. Even though the reception of music through the medium leaves something to be desired, there is much to be said for being allowed the opportunity to view so variously the source of sound. Close-ups can frame, for instance, a trio of flautists in a way that is, in actuality, impossible for the eye to organise: the cameras concentrate, vision and sound interlock. The same success obtains with the screening of sport. In almost every game there are brief moments when one's attention is focused on one player only; the cameras zoom in, scattering distraction. <sup>78</sup>

It could be said that the definition of a good television director in any *genre*, but especially music performance, is one who 'scatters distraction'.



## CHAPTER 4 THE FIRST PERIOD OF EXPERIMENTATION: 1929 - 1939

*A mighty maze of mystic mighty rays  
Is all about us in the blue;  
And in sight and sound they trace  
Living pictures out of space  
To bring our new wonder to you...  
Conjured up in sound and sight  
By the magic rays of light  
That bring television to you. (Television Comes to London [TV programme] 1936)<sup>79</sup>*

### 4.1 Before the first scheduled transmissions

The graphic artist Albert Robida anticipated the concept of visual entertainment being brought into the home in a drawing that he called 'le Telephonoscope' dating from 1891. The illustration shows a domestic situation with the spectator watching a projected image of Gounod's opera *Faust* on the wall. There is a fine reproduction of it in the article on Robida by Robert Hendrick in the July 1998 edition of *History Today*.<sup>80</sup> The most important early experimenter who tried to achieve what Robida had anticipated was the eccentric Scottish genius John Logie Baird. The first experimental television broadcast – a joint venture by Baird's company and the BBC – was on 30<sup>th</sup> September 1929 in a low definition system having 30 lines in each frame shown 25 times per second. There are conflicting accounts as to the content of that first broadcast: according to Briggs there were several speakers, a comedian and a singer;<sup>81</sup> the television documentary celebrating 50 years of public television broadcasts, *The Birth of Television* (1986), stated that it was a recital by the classical pianist Cyril Smith.<sup>82</sup> Whichever account is true it appears that attempts to present music on television date from the very earliest experimental days. By 1932 the experimental broadcasts were amounting to some two hours of transmission a week with a grand total in the three years 1932-4 of some 213 hours of transmission.<sup>83</sup>

Dance was an important ingredient from the start of the experimental broadcasts. This is quite remarkable because the performance area in the studio was 2m by 1½m which is hardly sufficient for a pirouette never mind a jeté or a lift. Janet Rowson Davis, who has catalogued many pre-war dance programmes, says that despite the small stage artists who had appeared as early as 1933 included Genée (making her world farewell as a



dancer), Karsavina, Markova and Dolin. Even more remarkable was the appearance of *Les Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo* in November of the same year with at least eight performers including Massine. The last broadcast in low definition was also of a world-class dancer, Lydia Sokolova, on 11<sup>th</sup> September 1935.<sup>84</sup> From that date onwards Baird used an improved system with 240 lines, still with 25 frames per second.

Three years after the experimental broadcasts began Noel Ashbridge, the BBC's Chief Engineer, reported on a visit to Baird's main rivals in what was to prove an important paper, *Report on Television Demonstration at EMI, 6<sup>th</sup> December 1932*: one conclusion reached by Ashbridge was that he felt that viewers were unlikely to be able to concentrate on television for more than an hour. Asa Briggs paraphrases him as saying that

There would still be 'a number of important items' – orchestral music, for example – in which there would be no obvious advantage in adding television to sound.<sup>a 85</sup>

Because of the anticipated high cost of television sets at the start of the service in 1936, it was recognised as early as July 1934 by Roger Eckersley, BBC Radio's Director of Programmes, that the audience would be socially and economically very narrow:

It may be a long time before Television is perfected and I suppose that at the beginning television sets will be so expensive as to be the toys of the favoured rather than pieces of furniture in the homes of the proletariat.<sup>86</sup>

The first substantial news of public scheduled television broadcasts appeared in the BBC Annual of 1936 which included an article about the forthcoming start of a television service. It includes a description of the two rival systems to be used at the start of the service: the Baird and the EMI systems. There was a real worry about eyestrain since it would be necessary to concentrate on the screen in a way that was not

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<sup>a</sup> In retrospect this evaluation of television seems rather quaint and reserved. That television is a return to a more 'real' representation of the world compared to radio was put forward by Maurice Gorham, the BBC's first post-war Head of the Television Service, when writing in 1949: '...visual broadcasting (is) a step back towards reality rather than one away from it.' (GORHAM, Maurice, *Television, Medium of the Future*. London: Percival Marshall, 1949, p. 137.)



necessary for a radio broadcast. As a consequence certain types of programme were not seen as being appropriate at least for the time being:

Serious musical activities...must for some time remain a function of sound broadcasting only... will the listener of the future, for example, watch an orchestra playing throughout an entire concert, or will his listening to their music be merely reinforced from time to time?<sup>87</sup>

The BBC saw the provision of music on radio as an important fulfilment of its commitment to 'information, education, and entertainment' in the words of its Charter.<sup>88</sup> The order of the words in the Charter – believed to have come from John Reith himself – contrasted in a subtle but important way with the earlier sentiments of David Sarnoff, the commercial manager of the Radio Corporation of America:

Considered in its broadest aspects...broadcasting represents a job of entertaining, informing and educating the nation<sup>89</sup>

For Reith the most important word was 'information'; for Sarnoff it was 'entertainment'.<sup>90</sup> Reith also believed that the radio output should be designed to broaden the knowledge of the listeners by scheduling a programme to which they chose to listen alongside one that they would not have chosen normally. With luck they would leave the radio switched on and gain some unexpected pleasure from the following programme.<sup>a</sup> This attitude imbued all radio's senior staff (chosen by Reith, of course) and when some of them transferred to television the attitude would transfer with them.

## **4.2 The preparations and production staff recruitment**

The Postmaster General announced in February 1935 that the BBC would be starting an experimental television service at some future date: the full statement was printed in *The Listener* Volume XIII.<sup>91</sup> It is the first substantial mention of television to be found in that journal. Staff started being recruited once government agreement had been gained that the BBC should start a scheduled television service in 1936: the most important of these was Gerald Cock. Below the Director-General and Deputy Director-General the next bureaucratic layer was that of the Controllers. In 1935, when he was

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<sup>a</sup> In television the similar technique of surrounding a potentially unpopular programme with two popular programmes became known as 'hammocking'.



appointed, Cock's post was at the next level down, that of the departmental Directors, his existing level of employment as Director of Outside Broadcasts: Cock was to become the BBC's first Director of Television.

Early in 1936 Gerald Cock prepared a four-month plan for the initial stages of the forthcoming television service. The intention was to broadcast for one hour in the afternoon from 3 p.m. and for two hours in the evening from 8 p.m. By June 1936 Cock had already appointed the core of his production staff: Dallas Bower and George More O'Ferrall were the first two producers appointed, both of them from the commercial film industry; Leslie Mitchell had been recruited from radio as the first television announcer following a distinguished career in commercial cinema newsreels; Donald Hunter 'DH' Munro had been appointed to organise the studio facilities and like Cock he was a BBC employee of long standing.<sup>92</sup> At the start of the service there were only four producers – O'Ferrall, Bower, Cecil A. Lewis and Stephen Thomas – as well as the senior administrators Cecil Madden and Munro, who also made programmes.<sup>93</sup>

Cock, who had come from radio with its heavy dependence on live music, decided that the new television service would need an orchestra. Cock consulted the head of music in BBC Radio, Adrian Boult, about a possible conductor for this orchestra. As a result of Boult's advice Cock recommended that a BBC Television Orchestra be created 'led' (Briggs' inaccurate description) by the conductor Hyam Greenbaum.<sup>94</sup> Details about the creation of the BBC Television Orchestra can be found in Section 4.8.

Hyam Greenbaum was universally known by the nickname 'Bumps' bestowed upon him by his wife Sidonie Goossens. He had considerable experience of the theatre starting in 1930 when he became musical director for the impresario C. B. Cochran. He also gained experience of films when he orchestrated William Walton's film score for *Escape Me Never* (1934) and then every one of Walton's films until Greenbaum's early death in 1942. His wide experience of both classical and light music made him an ideal candidate for television music director. He was very highly regarded by musicians of all persuasions and was widely expected eventually to pursue an important career in the classical field. According to Lionel Salter



[He was] short-tempered, very efficient and amazingly versatile. He would go in the same day from accompanying a cabaret turn to doing an opera in the evening – no problem at all.<sup>95</sup>

### 4.3 The preparations for the first transmissions

Meanwhile the BBC's publicity machine was grinding into action: articles in the specialist press such as *Wireless World* and *Popular Wireless* had generated a great deal of interest in television. Further interest was fuelled by rival demonstrations by Baird and EMI at *Radiolympia*, the annual broadcasting exhibition in West London. It might be thought that the first article about television in *Radio Times* would choose an already popular *genre* of radio broadcasting to make clear the concept of television as an extension to the BBC's existing activities. In fact it may be significant that the two photographs illustrating the first article were of the southeast tower of Alexandra Palace with its famous television mast, now a listed building, and of an unidentified violinist performing in front of a television camera.<sup>96</sup> The one photograph seems to represent the technical problems overcome while the other represents the rather middle-brow content of the initial programme offerings. As in the *Radio Times* article which prepared readers for the imminent arrival of television by showing a classical violinist performing in front of a camera, the artist asked to provide an illustration for *The Listener* in the same year chose to sketch what appears to be a scene from a ballet being televised: it is reproduced in Briggs' *History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom, vol. 2*. One dancer is performing on points in front of the cameras while the television orchestra is accompanying the performance behind the cameras at the opposite end of the studio.<sup>97</sup>

The first *Television Number* of the *Radio Times* appeared in the edition published on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1936 two weeks before the first scheduled transmissions on 3<sup>rd</sup> November. In this supplement the Deputy Director-General, Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Cappendale, gave a clear indication of the experimental and innovative state of television. He wrote that since the BBC was starting the first public service in the world

...there are very few lessons to be learnt from other people's successes and failures...If you can afford a television set ... the next few months will be full of interest. You will be watching the beginnings of a new art. ... Our engineers are still learning and so are the men and women responsible for the creative work of planning and performing programmes.<sup>98</sup>



The phrase 'men and women' gives an easily misunderstood idea of the gender balance in the new service: almost the entire senior engineering, administrative and production staff were male. In the staff list for November 1936 only three females in television are listed with grades higher than waitresses, shorthand typists or telephonists. One of these was the make-up artist Mary Allen; the other senior female appointments were Jasmine Bligh and Elizabeth Cowell, who were what were ingenuously called announcer-hostesses and who worked with, but subordinate to, the sole male ('senior') announcer Leslie Mitchell. It may be that Carpendale was thinking of women purely as performers whether dancers, singers, actresses or instrumentalists but the absence of women at senior administrative, engineering and production levels is very marked. The first woman producer to be appointed was Mary Adams; she replaced Cecil Lewis as the talks producer in 1937.

The activities of these male and female announcers were not quite as restricted as their formal titles would seem to imply. The announcers were sometimes given the by-line in *Radio Times* or in the programme logs of *Presented by* implying that they had some hand in the production of smaller programmes including recitals.<sup>a</sup> There was a public announcement issued by the BBC that the 'First Television Ballet' – that is the first to be specially commissioned by television – was to have the announcer Elizabeth Cowell 'in charge'.<sup>99</sup> Cowell had previous experience as a dancer so it was logical that she should use her experience as joint producer with Patrick Campbell. The ballet was *The Three Bears* choreographed by Joy Newton and featuring as Baby Bear the dancer Margaret Bolam, who would change her surname to Dale soon afterwards:<sup>100</sup> Margaret Dale will figure prominently in the next two chapters.

At the start of television broadcasting it appears from the archives that the administrative pioneers were blinkered by their previous experience: there was a general feeling that television was better suited to illustrate talks than to provide forms of entertainment. Cock wrote:

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<sup>a</sup> Cowell received four producer credits for music performance programmes; Mitchell received eight similar producer credits; no producer credits in this area for Bligh have been found.



In my view, television is from its very nature more suitable for the dissemination of all kinds of information than for entertainment ... it can scarcely be expected to compete successfully with films in that respect. ...Opera, ballet...lend themselves appropriately to the medium. ... It is to be hoped that a satisfactory way of presenting serious music, such as symphonies, will be developed. I think it may be left for viewers to switch the scene in and out as desired, and that listening would still be regarded as the main objective.<sup>101</sup>

The view from the top was that non-theatrical music on television was to be an aural experience with occasional moments of visual illustration. Cock did not think that music would make a great contribution to the television output with the possible exception of opera and dance. There was an average of half-an-hour's classical music on television each week for the next three years and yet he had appointed no producers who were equipped to create these programmes. It had been the intention to examine the music scripts of these non-musical producers to see how they coped not only with the novelty of making television programmes of music performance but also with the novelty of reading and understanding music. Unfortunately pre-war music performance scripts have largely failed to survive in the archives: only 18 opera and dance scripts remain in the BBC's archive out of a total of just over one hundred transmissions. There is only one example of a script of the transmission of a piece of non-theatrical music, Ravel's *Bolero*, which has survived in the personal memorabilia of Munro.

#### **4.4 Pre-war transmissions**

The official opening of BBC Television was at 3.30 p.m. on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1936. Experimental broadcasts had been transmitted from Alexandra Palace in North London for most of the preceding summer. There had also been relays for *Radiolympia* in August and September 1936 both for the purpose of publicising receiving equipment and thoroughly to test the system under genuine programme making conditions; the broadcasts to *Radiolympia* included two recitals of classical songs given by Helen McKay and pianist Henry Bronkhurst.

Two picture generating systems were in use – the Baird system and the EMI system – each of them in its own dedicated studio at Alexandra Palace. Both the EMI and Baird systems were monochrome: black-and-white or, more accurately, various levels of murky grey. The EMI system was similar in principle to the modern one: it was all



electronic with a vertical resolution of 405 lines comprising 202.5 lines shown 25 times a second interlaced with 202.5 lines also shown 25 times a second. The Baird system was a partly mechanical system that by 1936 had evolved into rather a complex and noisy process. Artists and producers had a low opinion of the Baird system: when Henry Hall was asked to do two performances on 9<sup>th</sup> February 1937 Madden reported that he refused to do more than one since he felt that the Baird system 'cannot do justice to his Orchestra.'<sup>102</sup> Stephen Thomas and Dallas Bower led the resistance that caused the Baird system to be abandoned in February 1937.<sup>103</sup> The Baird equipment stayed in position until spring 1938 which meant that the Baird studio could only be used for rehearsals with the EMI studio being the only one available for transmissions. In autumn 1938 the Baird studio was refurbished and converted so that now both studios were dedicated to the EMI system which greatly improved the flexibility of production.<sup>104</sup>

Although he had no specialist musicians on his production staff Cock was not deterred from an ambitious start to transmissions. The weekly television supplements to the *Radio Times* only start with the first issue of 1937 and before that date the programme logs are not always clear as to the content of individual programmes. November 1936 saw transmission of the first studio ballet – the Rambert Company on 5<sup>th</sup> November probably produced by Thomas – and the first studio opera – part of Coates' *Pickwick* produced by Bower. Cecil Madden, quoted in Bruce Norman's *Here's Looking at You* (1984), said that getting *Pickwick* was something of an extraordinary coincidence. The opening of this Covent Garden production had been postponed by a few days: the production, with its cast of top stars including William Parsons, Dennis Noble and the composer Albert Coates conducting, was unexpectedly available and was transported to Alexandra Palace.<sup>105</sup> The transmission was not received with complete enthusiasm: *The Times* found that the appearance of what seemed to be 'dolls' on the miniature screen, coupled with singers who projected their voices as if they were on the Covent Garden stage, was not successful. The writer showed commendable foresight in predicting that with experience opera could turn out to be a successful element of television.<sup>106</sup>

The position of ballet was also assured from an early date. According to Madden, again quoted in *Here's Looking at You*, the appearance of the Rambert Company on 5<sup>th</sup>



November prompted a telephone call from Marie Rambert's main rival, Lilian Baylis at the Vic-Wells, offering her company as often as Madden wanted them.<sup>107</sup> Dance was ideally suited to early television: it offered spectacle and movement with the best technique of coverage being from static cameras at a distance. There was also no need for any sound coverage of the dancers so the problem of keeping microphone booms out of shot, as in operas, did not arise.

There was a review of the first two months' transmissions of music programmes in the New Year's Eve issue of *Era*. The writer felt that opera and dance had already shown themselves to be eminently suited to the new medium. With remarkable prescience the unnamed writer felt that orchestral concerts were as yet unsuccessful not because of some inherent problem but because of the small size of the screen. The writer was more generous than his counterpart on *The Times* in seeing that whatever its problems *Pickwick* had been a brave attempt which 'pointed to a land of distinctive promise.'<sup>108</sup>

The first demonstration film for BBC Television, *Television Comes to London*, first broadcast on 30<sup>th</sup> October 1936, four days before the official inauguration, was principally a eulogy of the technical problems overcome in creating the production centre at Alexandra Palace. It includes a song specially written for BBC Television's inaugural broadcast and performed by Adèle Dixon; some of the words are transcribed at the head of this chapter. Its replacement in 1937 was a very slick feature film *Demonstration Film: 1937*<sup>a</sup> directed by Dallas Bower which concentrated on programme content. It contained specially re-created filmed excerpts from programmes previously broadcast on BBC Television. In 1936 and 1937 there was no way of recording television broadcasts so they had to be re-created for the film cameras: this means that some of the techniques used in this film were not indicative of the techniques possible with television cameras. At this time most people who saw television saw it in department stores: the two-hour demonstration film was the BBC's attempt to persuade people to buy television sets. The film contained a disproportionate

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<sup>a</sup> This film does not appear to have a title. In the BBC's Film and Videotape Library database (INFAX) it is called *Demonstration Film: 1937*; in *Radio Times* it was billed as *Film for Demonstration Purposes*; in the Programme-as-Broadcast logs it is called *Demonstration Film: Television Survey (Parts I – III)*.



amount of music – disproportionate, that is, to the percentage of television output that was being devoted to music. It included a substantial passage devoted to the BBC Television Orchestra playing a movement from Peter Warlock's *Capriol Suite* conducted by Hyam Greenbaum. In this excerpt Greenbaum – not yet 40 years old – was shown to be a prematurely balding man with an amazingly clear beat and communicative and penetrating eyes. Further sequences showed Margot Fonteyn; Irene Prador, a popular operetta singer; the violinist, Lisa Minghetti; an excerpt from Arne's operetta *Thomas and Sally* which was first broadcast on BBC Television on 10<sup>th</sup> April 1937; and a substantial excerpt from the ballet *Façade* performed by the Vic-Wells Ballet and first broadcast on BBC Television on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1936.

In the first complete calendar year in which television operated, 1937, there was an average of nearly two classical music programmes a week with an average duration of 15 minutes each. This reflected the fear that viewers – a term that would only come into use much later – would not be able to concentrate for much more than ten minutes at a time. The tiny screens of the time were dim and flickering by modern standards and viewers' eyestrain was a very real concern. There appears to be nothing like the concept of scheduling as far as music broadcasts were concerned and there were no regular 'slots': music programmes have a higgledy-piggledy appearance in *Radio Times* and were slotted in where and when there were artists available. Crisell points out that from the beginning of radio regular or fixed point scheduling was deliberately avoided. 'The high-minded intention was continually...to 'surprise' [the listener] into an interest in a subject she had previously not known about or disliked.'<sup>109</sup> The philosophy seems to have been transferred to television by the staff recruited from radio with the same idea of leading the 'surprised' viewer ever upwards on the intellectual ladder. The only consistent items of music 'scheduling', if such it was, were recitals at the end of the evening's broadcast which were often called *Music Makers* though this name was also used for recitals in the afternoon and early evening. There were 82 *Music Makers* televised before the war of which 48 were end-of-evening broadcasts.

Television soon ran into problems with the commercial theatres. At first relations between the BBC and the London theatre managements were cordial but this changed very quickly. By 1937 the General Theatre Corporation (GTC), led by George Black,



was telling artists that they would be blacklisted if they appeared on television while they were contracted to work at any of the theatres in the GTC. This applied even if there was a break in the middle of their contract with the GTC theatres when they would normally be allowed to work elsewhere, even for rival theatre chains. Even when a theatrical production had just ended and television wanted to mount it in the studio many of the actors were going on to new productions in the GTC group and so were still banned from appearing.<sup>a</sup> After April 1938 when Sunday television broadcasts began shows could be mounted in the studio on a Sunday. Before the war theatres were 'dark' on a Sunday because of religious sensibilities and the Sunday Observance Acts from 1625 to 1780 and some theatrical managers were unwilling to allow their artists to perform for television on a day – Sunday – when they were forbidden to work for the theatre.<sup>110</sup> By 1939 the BBC was trying to enlist the help of the union that represented many of the artists concerned, the British Actors' Equity Association (more commonly known as 'Equity'), without any success.

A further problem was with the Musicians' Union (MU). Because the BBC regarded any transmitted programme as a broadcast entity, the BBC felt that broadcasting simultaneously on radio and television was no different from broadcasting simultaneously from the London (radio) transmitter and the Manchester (radio) transmitter. The existing agreement with the MU was that a simultaneous broadcast from several radio transmitters attracted the same payment as a broadcast from just one transmitter; the BBC felt that broadcasting simultaneously on the Alexandra Palace television transmitter and radio transmitters was no different. The MU saw it differently and insisted that the fee for simultaneous broadcasts on radio and television should amount to the value of separate radio and television fees added together. The BBC saw this as a double payment for one engagement and refused to countenance it. Eventually the BBC accepted that television was rather more onerous than radio and agreed to a 4/6d additional fee over the sound fee for musicians performing 'normally' without make-up and in their normal clothes. In the event this fee was only paid to BBC staff musicians, all of whom had radio and television broadcasts included in their contracts.

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<sup>a</sup> There is much correspondence on this topic in the BBC Written Archive Centre files T16/37/1 and 2.



The MU still refused to allow their members not in BBC orchestras to perform on television until the dispute over simultaneous broadcasts was resolved: this did not happen until 1956. The extra fee for television appearances by BBC staff musicians was agreed on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1939 by which time it had become a Pyrrhic victory for the MU since television was to close down less than a month later.

#### 4.5 The final days before the Second World War

By the outbreak of war in September 1939 there were possibly around 20,000 to 25,000 television sets in use. Although at times anything up to a dozen people would be crowded around the small screen – 12” was the largest size – television still comprised Eckersley’s 1934 prediction: ‘toys of the favoured’. The output still contained a substantial proportion of highbrow programmes such as drama, music, and dance and a large number of repeats. There was no film or videotape recording: the artists returned to give a second (and sometimes third and fourth) live performance. The television manufacturers felt that this fare would not encourage Eckersley’s ‘proletariat’ to buy; they exerted pressure on the BBC from March 1938 onwards to alter the programme mix in a way that would now be called ‘dumbing down’. According to Briggs:

Their tastes were undisguisedly low-brow. They did not like ‘morbid, sordid or horrific plays’; they were sceptical about foreign cabaret and ballet; and they were unmoved by Handel’s *Acis and Galatea*. They objected to studio items being presented twice, a practice which was necessitated by the meagre programme allowance.<sup>111</sup>

By 1938 there had been 14 operatic productions ranging from musicals and operetta to more substantial offerings such as complete acts from popular Grand Operas such as *La Traviata* and *Aida*. In January 1938, and possibly one cause of the protestations of the ‘low-brow’ manufacturers, the next complete act of a major opera chosen was the unlikely choice of the second act of Wagner’s *Tristan and Isolde* produced by Dallas Bower. Because of the problems of getting good sound and co-ordination in the studio two casts were used: one group of singers performed out of vision alongside the orchestra while another group of actors performed the dramatic action while miming the



words in front of the cameras to choreography by Anthony Tudor.<sup>a</sup> (There is one account of this production that states that the actors did not mime but performed a masque to the music; Bower said that they mimed the words.)<sup>112</sup> Some measure of the reaction to the broadcast is outlined below in the discussion of press response to television.

On 1st September 1939 BBC Television was closed abruptly in the middle of a Mickey Mouse cartoon by order of the government. The ostensible reason was that the signal being broadcast from Alexandra Palace which was only six miles from central London would make a perfect direction finder for enemy bombers in the anticipated conflict. The true reason now appears to be that the most concentrated group of engineers experienced in the use of ultra short wave radio was that working in television for the BBC and they were urgently needed to work on the continued development of radar. The transmitter at Alexandra Palace remained operational throughout the war and was used as a source of jamming signals against the direction finding signals used to guide German bombers to their targets in Southeast England.<sup>113</sup>

#### **4.6 Press response to television broadcasts**

Because television could only be viewed in a relatively small part of the United Kingdom the national papers were in a dilemma as to how to report its progress. Technical journals were happy to discuss the principles and practices of television cameras, transmitters and receivers; newspapers and magazines covering the artistic side of transmissions had to balance the interest of their readers with the frustration of not being able to see the programmes. The BBC's own journal, *The Listener*, might have been expected to give readers distant from London some well-argued descriptions of what was happening early in the life of the new phenomenon. In fact it took the editor nearly a year to realise that regular articles on television programmes were going to be appreciated by all his readers. The first of these articles appeared in the 6<sup>th</sup> June 1937 edition and was devoted to a review of a programme about callisthenics by the Women's League of Health and Beauty together with a photograph of scantily clad lady

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<sup>a</sup> The technique was used on at least two other occasions in broadcasts of part of *Hansel und Gretel*, produced by Thomas on 15<sup>th</sup> January 1939, and *Rigoletto* produced by Foa on 16<sup>th</sup> January 1958.



athletes which was enticingly glamorous by the standards of the time. The first review of a music broadcast was of Stephen Thomas' realisation of Pergolesi's comic opera *La Serva Padrona* broadcast in September 1937; there was no appreciation of the directing.<sup>114</sup>

Further pre-war reviews of opera and ballet programmes are included in 9.7.

#### **4.7 The pre-war music programme producers**

In the early days of television broadcasting there was clearly an 'all hands to the pumps' atmosphere as far as music was concerned. While some producers had areas of speciality – Cecil Madden, for example, was responsible for magazine programmes – everybody was expected to make a contribution to broadcasts of music. In the programme logs the most frequent names are of D H Munro, who was the station's programme manager and therefore principally an organiser, and Stephen Thomas, who was an expert in lighting and a recruit from the world of theatre. Other names occasionally to appear are Madden (mentioned above as a magazine producer); George More O'Ferrall, another stage director; Dallas Bower, a sound specialist with film directing experience; Cecil Lewis, principally a writer of films and stage plays; and Leslie Mitchell, a radio announcer with some drama directing experience. It should be noted that none of these staff had professional music qualifications; the only musician among senior staff was Hyam Greenbaum. He was 'awarded' several production credits in early music programmes on television listed in the *Radio Times* but always jointly with – and below – either D H Munro or Stephen Thomas.

Thomas had been the stage manager to the theatre producer Nigel Playfair on the latter's production of *The Beggar's Opera* (1920) at the Lyric, Hammersmith; he was also an expert in theatrical lighting. His experience on the commercial stage was put to good use in BBC Television productions of the ballets *Façade* (1936), *Swan Lake* (1936) and *The Good-Humoured Ladies* (1937). He achieved a notable experimental success with the ballet *Fugue for Four Cameras* (1937) in which Maude Lloyd appeared as a quadruple superimposition to illustrate the four entries of a fugue theme.<sup>115</sup> His operatic output included *Thomas and Sally* (1937), *The Beggar's Opera* (1937), *Damon and Phyllida* (1937), *La Serva Padrona* (1937), *Acis and Galatea* (1938), *Arlecchino* (1939)



and *The Immortal Hour* (1939). His final contribution to BBC Television was a repeat performance of a concert called *Rule Britannia* on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1939.

Bower was an expert in sound for feature films and had also done some directing for the commercial cinema achieving some success with *The Path of Glory*. In 1937 Bower produced a two-hour demonstration film *Demonstration Film: 1937* about the varied output on BBC Television; it was shown most mornings to help publicise the new service and became very popular viewing in its own right. His main contribution to the normal output was in the field of dance including *Siesta* (1937), *Portsmouth Point* (1937), *Master Peter's Puppet Show* (1938), *The Wedding Bouquet* (1938) and *Les Rendezvous* (1938).

Despite having been recruited as an administrator Salter said that D H Munro was to prove an adept and innovative producer of music programmes in his own right especially in the field of dance.<sup>116</sup> In Chapter 9 several newspaper reviews of his dance programmes are detailed which show that within a year of the opening of the service he was to become the most successful of the producers putting dance on the television screen.

Because of the considerable pressure on the television staff, other members of the television establishment were encouraged to try their hands at producing when one of the regular producers was unavailable. The most fertile group for recruitment was the studio managers (floor managers) who worked closely with the producers on the one hand and the artists on the other. Munro became aware of the outside interests of one of the television studio managers, Philip Bate, when the latter was acting as a holiday relief director: Bate was to become the most important innovator in music programme ideas before the war; his first appearance in the programme logs as producer was for an edition of *Music Makers* in April 1937. Bate was a frequenter of the Vic-Wells Ballet and also knew Marie Rambert: it was natural for Munro to ask him to direct some dance sequences and by 1938 he had been appointed a full producer with special responsibility for dance and instrumental recitals. Bate was the most prolific producer of music and dance programmes before the war: the one area of music in which he did not operate was opera. Bate was more of a musician than the existing television producers: his



musical training consisted of learning the clarinet from a member of the pit orchestra in one of the Aberdeen theatres.<sup>117</sup>

There was one further appointment that was to have important repercussions nearly 20 years later. Although the Television Orchestra had a resident pianist, Harold Stuteley, it was soon realised that an additional pianist would be needed to accompany featured soloists in recital programmes. Lionel Salter was so frequently booked as an accompanist by the television producers that he was allocated permanent office space. Salter's other duties included acting as rehearsal repetiteur for Thomas and as a *pass-beats*<sup>a</sup> for Greenbaum during television opera broadcasts. The long and narrow shape of the two studios at Alexandra Palace meant that the orchestra and conductor would be at one end; the cameras, sound booms, technical personnel and '...gubbins of every conceivable kind...' would be in the centre of the studio; the sets and artists would be at the opposite end of the studio from the orchestra. Greenbaum, who would be facing the orchestra, had to have his back to the vocalists. Salter said 'I was engaged as a sub-conductor, a sort of *pass-beats* and I would conduct the performers looking over my shoulder to see if I was even in the same bar as Bumps down the other end of the studio.' There was so little room in the studio that he was often lying on the floor or conducting through a break in the set such as a fireplace, in order to stay in the eyeline of the singers and to stay out of the cameras' shots.<sup>118</sup>

#### **4.8 The BBC Television Orchestra 1936-1939**

One of the curious features of pre-war television was the appearance in the schedules of substantial orchestral, concertante, operatic and balletic works that would normally have needed a large orchestra. The evidence is that not only was a full orchestra not available but that there was nowhere in the BBC's part of Alexandra Palace that could

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<sup>a</sup> When Salter was interviewed for this thesis, he used the singular noun 'pass-beats' to describe the activity of a secondary conductor in a television studio who conveyed the main conductor's beat to performers, particularly opera singers, who couldn't see the conductor. It is a term that is not in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* or *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*. A search on the Internet produced no relevant information. Salter was quite firm in his use of the word, even when I subsequently telephoned him to check that I had understood what he had said. It is an expression I had never previously heard nor since.



accommodate one, had it been available. Major works from the classical repertoire had to be re-scored for the largest orchestra that could be accommodated.

Even before Cock had taken up his television post and before Greenbaum had been appointed Cock was consulting musicians about a possible Television Orchestra. He wrote on 18<sup>th</sup> July 1935:

It is likely that the orchestra will be required ...during 40 minutes in the afternoon session and one hour of the evening session...rehearsals would amount to at least one hour and possibly two hours per day.<sup>119</sup>

There was a major problem with accommodating an orchestra at Alexandra Palace and that was the size of the two studios: once room had been allocated for television settings, cameras and sound booms the available area left for musicians was only sufficient for a decent sized dance band. The suggestion from Music Executive was for an orchestra of 19 players plus a pianist. The exact constitution suggested was: flute doubling piccolo, oboe, two clarinets each doubling saxophone, bassoon doubling saxophone, two (French) horns, two trumpets, trombone, percussionist, three first violins, two second violins, viola, cello, double bass. The reason given for this combination of players was that with an orchestra of 20 players (including the pianist), it made possible 'the playing of a large repertoire of published music, opening up the small orchestra catalogues of Boosey & Hawkes, Chappell, Lafleur, A H & C, Carl Fischer, Schirmer, etc.'<sup>120</sup>

By the beginning of 1936, Stanford Robinson, who had recently become radio's Director of Music Productions, was recommending an orchestra of 21 players, the extra player being a third second violin. Some of them would have to double instruments: his proposed orchestra, like Music Executive's, included two clarinets and one bassoon the players of which would also be expected to play saxophone when needed; he also said that one of the second violins should be able to double guitar and the pianist be able to double piano accordion.<sup>121</sup> A week later the contracts department was outlining the way in which the estimated £10000 p.a. for orchestra and Music Director could be allocated. It was suggested that the 20-piece orchestra – Stanford Robinson's extra second violin had been dropped from the suggested ensemble – would be contracted for  $\frac{2}{3}$  of a working week. This would mean 24 hours a week at a salary of £7.10s 0d per week for



rank-and-file and either £9 per week for principals or ‘...in the case of certain principals we may have to go up to £10 per week...’ with the leader getting £15 per week.<sup>122</sup> The suggestion of a  $\frac{2}{3}$  working week was not BBC meanness but the recognition that the best players available would demand time off to pursue more lucrative occasional employment in chamber groups or playing for film sessions.

At the same time as these theoretical discussions were happening there was considerable discussion between Cock and his radio colleagues about using Henry Hall and the BBC Dance Orchestra on television on a weekly basis.<sup>123</sup> Henry Hall’s appearances were among the most popular features on BBC radio before (and after) the war and to get the band on television would have been quite a coup. Radio was unwilling to release Hall for sufficient time to make weekly television broadcasts possible so the initial plan was amended to fortnightly. The Baird and EMI systems were alternating weekly until February 1937 and it was realised that any programme scheduled on a fortnightly turnaround would only appear on one of the systems and not the other. As a result Henry Hall and the band were finally allocated a slot at three weekly intervals: the first trials were in October 1936 and the first transmission was on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1936 in a 25 minute broadcast. Henry Hall and the BBC Dance Orchestra gave the first television performance of Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue* on 19<sup>th</sup> March 1937 with Bert Read as soloist.

Early in 1936 Hyam Greenbaum started to recruit members of the BBC Television Orchestra: auditions were held and two hundred and fifty musicians were heard.<sup>124</sup> There were no satisfactory players available to play clarinet doubling saxophone and bassoon doubling saxophone so Greenbaum asked for two specialist saxophone players to be added to the 19 players already authorised. To maintain the orchestral balance Television Executive put in a further request for two additional string players.<sup>125</sup> In reply Programme Contracts Executive approved the saxophonists but not the extra strings.<sup>126</sup>



The appointed personnel were as follows (the forenames, where given, were mostly supplied by Salter):<sup>127</sup>

Leader	Boris Pecker
First violins	Guy Daines, L. Dight
Second violins (one doubling guitar)	Charles Kahn, Eric Robinson
Viola	Mark Beard
Cello	T. Hill
Double bass	F(red?) Underhay
Flute	Lionel Solomon
Oboe	J. Croft
Clarinets	Stephen Waters, Cyril Clarke
Bassoon	J. Castaldini
Horns	Emil Borsdorf, G. T. Holley
Trumpets	J. Curran, Eric Wild
Trombone	W. J. Teskey
Percussion and timpani	Gilbert Webster
Piano and accordion	Harold Stuteley
Additional saxophones	K. Gray, H. Levy

Figure 5: Members of the Television Orchestra in 1936

It should be noted that the second violin who was also able to double guitar was Eric Robinson, younger brother of Stanford Robinson: he will figure prominently in the post-war history of television music. (Eric) Robinson had been playing in the (radio) Variety Orchestra when Stanford was appointed conductor of the latter. The BBC has always had a fairly inflexible rule that a person could not have a supervisory role over a close relative. Patricia Foy said that as a result Eric had to be found a post in another BBC orchestra and the Television Orchestra was being created at the time.<sup>128</sup> It should also be noted that although Stuteley was the salaried pianist in the orchestra Salter frequently deputised for him after mid-1937.<sup>129</sup>

The first mention of the BBC Television Orchestra as an existing entity was in an experimental (television) transmission to *Radiolympia* on 27<sup>th</sup> August 1936 in the programme *Here's Looking at You*. The Television Orchestra gave its first full-length broadcasts on the Regional Programme of BBC Radio on 14<sup>th</sup> September and 16<sup>th</sup> October presumably both to shake out any problems and to justify the players' salaries: the content of these programmes is not listed in *Radio Times* but was called 'light



classical'. As with all the radio broadcasts of the Television Orchestra they performed live in one of the (television) studios at Alexandra Palace. The Television Orchestra was also in attendance at Alexandra Palace on the first day of regular television transmissions: they did not appear on screen but accompanied a nine-minute variety act and performed in sound only for an unspecified period leading into closedown on the first day.

The full Television Orchestra was not always needed for broadcasts and the frequent use of a sub-group of musicians led to the formal formation in 1938 of the Television Dance Band at the suggestion of Bower: they were already known from 1937 as Eric Wild and his Teatimers. This band comprised eleven players selected from the 'full' orchestra and two singers, Elizabeth Welch and Alice Mann, led by the trumpeter Eric Wild: there was also a regular troupe of dancers associated with the Dance Band.<sup>130</sup> In the opposite direction of size *Radio Times* credits mention that the BBC Television Orchestra was sometimes augmented to cope with additional musical demands. It is not made clear how the limited floor space coped with these extra players though Bower mentioned that the extra horns needed for the 1938 transmission of part of *Tristan and Isolde* were placed in a suitably cleared scene dock adjacent to the studio.<sup>131</sup> Salter sometimes had to conduct singers standing on the outside balcony adjacent to one of the Alexandra Palace studios when room on the studio floor was not available.<sup>132</sup>

In order to service the Television Orchestra it was necessary to appoint music librarians. The most significant of the people appointed was James Whittam Hartley known throughout his career as Jimmy Hartley. Hartley was a graduate of the Guildhall School of Music, who first joined BBC Radio's Central Music Library, and on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1936 was appointed as television's first music librarian in which post he was responsible for creating the Television Music and Gramophone Libraries.<sup>133</sup> In this post he came into close contact with Greenbaum and on 1st April 1938 was promoted to the post of Assistant to the Musical Director (Greenbaum). Foy said of Hartley that he was

[A] terrific brain, so well-educated...a great thinker and really well educated...an intellectual...a real intellectual...he'd read a lot...he'd been about...he knew about art. [His main problem was that he was] seriously alcoholic. He was one of those people that it had...very little effect. He did not



get paralytic; he did not slur his words. I think his eyes got a little bit glazed. He was still functioning mentally.<sup>134</sup>

It was Jimmy Hartley, Hyam Greenbaum and the clarinettist Cyril Clarke who made most of the reductions of the major orchestral scores used by the Television Orchestra mentioned above.

Salter said that Hartley was already demonstrating before the war that he was

Rather taciturn...he was not a very forthcoming person...he was pretty well informed...I would not describe him as being a very cultivated musician in the sense that Bumps was, but he knew his stuff.<sup>135</sup>

#### **4.9 The dispersal of the Television Orchestra and Hyam Greenbaum**

Once the television service had been closed down there was no further need for a Television Orchestra. It was therefore decided in September 1939 to use many of the Television Orchestra players together with conductor Hyam Greenbaum to form a second light orchestra for BBC Radio to be known as the Revue Orchestra. Its purpose was to relieve the existing Variety Orchestra from what was seen as an important and increasing aspect of the war effort: light music on radio to distract listeners from the expected miseries. In anticipation of a blitz on London by the Luftwaffe the Variety Orchestra and its administrative infrastructure were evacuated to Bangor, North Wales. The Revue Orchestra – administered from Bangor by the same staff as the Variety Orchestra – was evacuated to Bristol. For Greenbaum this was personally convenient since the BBC Symphony Orchestra – in which his wife Sidonie Goossens was the harpist – was also evacuated to Bristol. Unfortunately Bristol was also blitzed early in the war; the house where Greenbaum and Goossens were living was destroyed and they lost all their personal possessions apart from her harp which was in a rehearsal room untouched by the bombing.<sup>136</sup> As a result of this unexpected extension to the bombing campaign the Revue Orchestra and Greenbaum were evacuated to Bangor;<sup>a</sup> the Symphony Orchestra and Greenbaum's wife were evacuated to Bedford. Lionel Salter said that this second evacuation 'broke 'Bumps' heart'.<sup>137</sup> Greenbaum occasionally

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<sup>a</sup> The Revue Orchestra returned from Bangor to London in 1943 and was amalgamated with the Variety Orchestra in 1964.



travelled to Bedford to see 'Sid'; in January 1942 his health deteriorated and he left Bangor and moved to Bedford 'to be nursed by his wife'.<sup>138</sup> He was due to make his Bedford debut with the BBC Symphony Orchestra on 15<sup>th</sup> January 1942 but cancelled because of indisposition.<sup>139</sup> Greenbaum had been a pioneer in the presentation of music performance on television: his contribution is immeasurable. He conducted light music, operetta, opera, dance, concertante and orchestral works and in so doing conditioned the audience to accept the place of classical as well as light music on television. He finally succumbed to years of self-inflicted alcoholic mistreatment and died the day after his 41<sup>st</sup> birthday, 13<sup>th</sup> May 1942.

#### **4.10 The state of the art**

In the period from November 1936 to summer 1939 the television producers had experimented both successfully and unsuccessfully with techniques that were entirely novel. They were an intelligent group who were attentive to the small number of viewers; they responded quickly to feedback from their clients in finding techniques that worked and in rejecting those that failed. In his interview for this thesis in 1999 Bower was able to say with some confidence that by summer 1939

We set the norm and established procedures and...the procedures we established then are the procedures in use today.<sup>140</sup>



## CHAPTER 5 THE SECOND PERIOD OF EXPERIMENTATION: 1946 – 1963

*Television? The word is half Latin and half Greek. No good can come of it. (C P Scott, Editor, Manchester Guardian.)*<sup>141</sup>

Towards the end of the war a committee under Lord Hankey was set up to consider ‘the reinstatement and development of the television service after the war’:<sup>142</sup> its conclusion was that the service should start as soon as possible from the pre-war transmission site at Alexandra Palace using the same 405 line 50-cycle interlaced standard that had been used pre-war. One important reason for adopting the pre-war standard was that there were some 25,000 existing television receivers in private homes and these would be rendered redundant if a new standard were to be adopted.<sup>143</sup>

The mothballed television studios had already been ‘fired up’ in February 1945 for a visit by members of the Commonwealth Broadcasting Conference: a closed circuit broadcast featured the pre-war announcer Jasmine Bligh. It is clear from this event that, although the forces had hi-jacked a certain amount of technical equipment for the war effort, enough must have remained to make a reasonable showing for the visitors.<sup>144</sup> Broadcasting re-commenced on 7<sup>th</sup> June 1946 from Alexandra Palace which had been the only operational television transmitter before the war and was once more the only television transmitter in the United Kingdom for the next three years.

### 5.1 The first post-war television staff

After the war some BBC departments were ‘promoted’: their senior member was designated Controller. Hence Talks Department acquired a Controller, Talks where before the war the department only had a Director of Talks: in all there were six Controllers against the pre-war four. Television was not thought important enough to merit a Controller and Maurice Gorham was designated Head of Television Service. The status of television remained subordinate until 1950: it was in that year that the head of television was promoted to become one of the six most senior members of the bureaucracy under the Director-General not now designated Controllers but, confusingly, called Directors.<sup>145</sup> The day-to-day running of the television service was given to the Head of TV Programmes Cecil McGivern – ‘that maniac McGivern’ as George Barnes called him<sup>146</sup> – who had rejoined the BBC in 1947.



After the war the only staff returning to BBC Television who had gained previous experience in directing music included the former Television Production Manager Donald Hunter 'DH' Munro, who rejoined as a producer of music and dance. The pre-war producer Philip Bate resumed as the second specialist producer covering the whole range of music on television: opera, dance and recitals. Also returning to a position involved in music performance was the former Music Librarian, Jimmy Hartley, now given the more senior post of Music Organiser.

## 5.2 The creation of television production departments

After the return of McGivern to the BBC, the television service was re-organised in December 1947: for the first time television programme departments were created in much the same way as had occurred in radio exactly 20 years previously.<sup>147</sup> McGivern organised the production departments into four groups: drama; light entertainment; outside broadcasts and films; talks and talks features.<sup>a</sup> (The equivalent radio departments had been music, productions (including drama), education and talks.) As with the pre-war *ad hoc* arrangement producers and directors remained in a central pool and were allocated on an 'as needed' basis by McGivern. Some members of staff were not allocated to any of the four departments but were responsible to McGivern directly; the most important of these as far as this thesis is concerned was the producer Philip Bate whose work was primarily in the fields of instrumental recitals and dance. The new structure did not last very long since the department responsible for outside broadcasts and film was split in March 1948, barely three months after being created. Shortly after this first schism a distinct Music Department was created in May 1948: it comprised a single dedicated producer, Philip Bate; an Organiser, Jimmy Hartley; and the conductor, Eric Robinson. The creation of distinct departments would eventually lead to the curious division of responsibility for classical music on television into three parts that would last until the late 1960s: studio programmes – predominantly performance and instructional – were the responsibility of Music Department; documentaries on film and in the studio were the responsibility of Talks Department; performance programmes

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<sup>a</sup> The widespread conviction in Broadcasting House that television was merely radio with illustrations is best shown by the anachronistic creation of a department called *Talks* in a visual medium.



from locations away from the television studios were the responsibility of Outside Broadcasts Department.

The position of the Music Organiser, Hartley, was curious. McGivern was keen for him to develop his television talents and be considered as a possible contender for head of the Music Department. McGivern's encouragement was by no means universal among senior executives most of whom felt that Hartley was limited. Norman Collins, Controller, Television, was distinctly sceptical about Hartley's ability and challenged McGivern to show that Hartley was capable of original strategic thought.<sup>148</sup> There is also evidence of financial inefficiency in a memo from Knott, Head of Television Administration: a routine request for a costing analysis produced a figure from Hartley of £42,000 when subsequent investigation showed that the true figure was £22,000. Knott said '...we cannot conduct the Service on these lines.'<sup>149</sup> Despite this McGivern consulted Hartley on all matters concerning music: after criticism from McGivern that *Music Makers* was becoming 'too serious'<sup>150</sup> Hartley's reply seems to have been accepted: the use of modern music could be justified in *Music Makers* as long as lighter music was well represented in a series from outside Music Programmes called *Starlight*.<sup>151</sup> Shortly before, Hartley had been encouraged to put down in writing his vision for the future of music on television. From the paper he seems to have felt that the future of television music was in giving the viewers more of the same types of programmes that they had enjoyed before the war: these included *Music Makers*, operas and ballets from West End theatres and studio opera but with no mention of studio dance. The only new areas suggested were for programmes devoted to the work of composers for film and a series of programmes devoted to 'Composers of today' (Rubbra, Britten, Rawsthorne and Tippett were specifically mentioned.)<sup>152</sup> The paper he produced could be summarised as being strong on tactics but weak on strategy.

### **5.3 The first post-war schedules**

In the *Radio Times* the schedules for the early post-war transmission were remarkably similar to the pre-war ones. Gorham said that when former television staff met during the war they discussed ambitious plans for the service when it resumed.<sup>153</sup> The reality must have been a shock: post-war austerity meant that refurbishing the studios and outside broadcast vehicles was a slow process. Gorham stated that it was easier to get



permission and components to build a radio station in 1936 than it was to get materials to build a brick wall in 1946.<sup>154</sup> There was little chance of exploiting any innovative thoughts by the returning television staff about what the resumed service should be showing. As a result, at the resumption in 1946 *Radio Times* shows that there was still only about three hours broadcasting a day with an hour in the afternoon and two hours in the evenings and an extra hour of children's television on Sundays together with a demonstration film repeated each weekday morning for the benefit of the retail trade. Even this was the same film that had been used before the war – *Demonstration Film: 1937* – but with a new added title: *Television is here again*. The main programme output comprised variety, drama, sport and arts performance in decreasing order of airtime.

Apart from dance and opera the place of music on television was still regarded as suspect by senior management at Broadcasting House: the Annual Report and Accounts for 1946/7 includes the cryptic remark 'Serious music is still the art most suited to radio and least to television.'<sup>155</sup> Arts programmes mainly comprised three types: instrumental recitals, opera performances and dance performances which were almost always live programmes from the studio. There were two major reasons why these types of programme were confined to the studio: the first was a continuation of the pre-war ban by the Society of West End Theatre Managers on the appearance on television of artists who were presently engaged by London and – later – provincial theatres; the second was a ban on relays of non-BBC events from outside locations by the three main unions involved – the Musicians' Union (MU), the British Artists' Equity Association (Equity) and the Variety Artists' Federation (VAF).

The theatre ban was based on the belief that if variety artists or theatrical productions appeared on television no-one would want to see them again in the music hall or theatre. There is no doubt that variety artists had a limited repertory of songs and routines: these could be hawked from theatre to theatre for many years without exhausting the audience. The managers believed that once they had been seen on television the acts would no longer be novel for a live audience. Similarly once the home audience had seen a play on television their inclination to travel to the theatre to see it again would evaporate.<sup>156</sup> There were two managers who profoundly disagreed with this philosophy:



George Chamberlain at Sadler's Wells and David Webster at Covent Garden. For the ballets that they promoted the more they were seen on television the more likely viewers would be to come to the theatre to see the dancers in the flesh.<sup>157</sup> Kenneth Wright, the Head of Music Programmes, Television reported in 1953 that ballet companies had said that they were reaping the rewards of dance on television by gaining larger and more responsive audiences especially outside London.<sup>158</sup> Some ballet company managers, notably Colonel de Basil and Peggy van Praag, even felt that television enhanced their productions and was a very successful way of enticing new clients into the theatre.<sup>159</sup> Very early after the resumption the situation led to a major contretemps: late in 1946 the Sadler's Wells Company was contracted to perform on BBC Television; Chamberlain had been given lukewarm permission from his fellow managers and the programme was billed in *Radio Times*. At the last minute the company was threatened with the withdrawal of a contract to tour provincial theatres in 1947 if the broadcast went ahead;<sup>160</sup> the Pauline Grant Company agreed to take over. Soon afterwards the BBC managed neatly to sidestep the West End Theatre Managers' ban by importing French dance companies who, at the time, were of a higher standard than the English ones. By 1948 the Society of West End Theatre Managers was crying 'foul' over the use of foreign artists and the first cracks in their solidarity were appearing.<sup>161</sup> Although some outside broadcasts of dance and opera from Covent Garden and Sadler's Wells were successfully mounted, Briggs notes that co-operation between the BBC and the West End continued to be increasingly difficult;<sup>162</sup> the BBC even tried to get the Arts Council to intervene without success. Only one theatre encouraged visits by television outside broadcast units – the Cambridge. The correspondence between the theatre manager and television producers speaks of his coming under increasing pressure from his colleagues in other West End theatres to discontinue the visits.<sup>163</sup> Despite this a number of complete acts from popular operas were successfully mounted from the Cambridge: it was also from the Cambridge that the first complete opera from an outside location was broadcast. This was Puccini's *La Bohème* on 19<sup>th</sup> April 1948.

The ban on relays of non-BBC events by the MU, Equity and VAF was much more serious and long-lived. Before the war all three unions had insisted that any broadcasts that went out simultaneously on television and radio had to be regarded as separate



relays with a full fee paid for each medium. The BBC had never accepted the argument and insisted on the principle of one performance – one fee. After the war two issues arose which were either marginal or non-existent before the war – the relay and the recording. Relays were broadcasts of non-BBC events from locations other than the Alexandra Palace studios: the Musicians' Union refused to allow relays that involved members of the Union until the disagreement over separate fees for radio and television had been resolved. They made their position clear in 1946 and even made it an issue for submission to the Beveridge Committee in 1949 which was rejected as being outside the terms of reference of the committee.<sup>164</sup> There were no relays involving union members until 1956, apart from 'public interest' occasions such as the opening of the Royal Festival Hall and those involving the BBC orchestras whose contracts from 1953 included provision for television relays.<sup>165</sup> The only concession that the union made was to allow up to twelve theatrical relays and six opera or dance relays per year which could include musicians. When commercial television started the BBC programme planners asked for the contracts department to get this concession to be doubled to 36 relays 'to give the greatest help to theatre productions which are struggling for existence';<sup>166</sup> there is no evidence of this happening. What the union did concede was that up to twelve orchestral relays involving their members would be allowed in addition to the relays of the BBC orchestras. It is salutary to discover that the first relay of a non-BBC British professional orchestra from a public concert not mounted by the BBC was of the Hoffnung Symphony Orchestra in November 1956 exactly 20 years after the television service had started.

As early as August 1948 Collins had been predicting that recording of programmes would be a regular occurrence from the beginning of 1949.<sup>167</sup> Although he was rather premature in this, the MU saw it as another way to turn the screw on the BBC: they banned pre-recording of programmes including MU members until 1955. Solo artists were represented by the Incorporated Society of Musicians and under a separate agreement started pre-recording in 1953 both for deferred relays and for repeat broadcasts. It was the start of commercial television that resolved the problems with the MU: the contractors were much more amenable to the demands of the MU – they had no radio networks so there could be no problem over simultaneous relays – and this finally put sufficient pressure on the BBC to devise an acceptable agreement for relays,



pre-recordings and simultaneous broadcasts. It is ironic that the point on which the BBC would not budge for 20 years – the payment of additional fees for the simultaneous broadcasting of programmes on radio and television – has never been an important part of television's output. This is in contrast to pre-recording, relays of public concerts and recorded repeats which have proved much more important.

The first television broadcast of part of a Promenade Concert took place in September 1947 and there was considerable excitement at the achievement. McGivern, the Programme Director, wrote to Basil Nicolls, Controller (Programmes) on 26<sup>th</sup> September: 'I have spoken to dozens of people inside and outside the BBC. They were unanimous in their praise of this transmission.'<sup>168</sup> The early television cameras were very insensitive and required a great deal of light. The producer of this first Prom, Ian Orr-Ewing, had been allocated three cameras, two super Emitrons and a normal Emitron: in the available lighting the Emitron could see nothing and for the 90 minute broadcast Orr-Ewing was able to use only two of his cameras each fitted with a single non-zooming lens; this problem of insufficiently sensitive cameras, above all others, was to give years of aggravation to both musicians and directors. On the day after McGivern was lauding the Proms broadcast Kenneth Wright, the BBC's Assistant Director of Music in radio, who was later to become Assistant Head of Music, Television, wrote to Maurice Gorham, the Director of Television saying that another concert would not be possible 'because of the discomfort to musicians caused by glare and heat.'<sup>169</sup> Although another broadcast from the 1947/8 Winter Proms took place in January there was to be no further visit to the Proms until 1953 by which time more sensitive cameras had become available. It is still possible to find a fascinating piece of poetic hyperbole in an article in the *News Chronicle* from 1955 which starts 'The violin strings snapped, the harp strings burst asunder, but the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, sweltering under TV lights, were not deterred...' The conductor Eugene Ormandy and the orchestral musicians '...[who] had been so dazzled they had scarcely been able to see [the conductor]...' seemed to have taken the pragmatic view that the concert was being seen by 60 million viewers throughout Europe and a little discomfort was worthwhile if so many gained pleasure from the broadcast.<sup>170</sup>



### 5.3.1 The first post-war viewers

In the first few years of post-war broadcasts the impact of TV on the general public was growing but much too slowly for the manufacturers. Briggs notes that in the *Mass Observation Bulletin* of 1st August 1949 it was reported that the public interest in acquiring a television set was inhibited by the relative expense.<sup>171</sup> Briggs says that the cheapest set cost around £50 and realistically practical models were from £70 to £150: at the time the average wage for a manual worker was just over £7 a week and a family 'starter' car cost just over £100.<sup>172</sup> Translated into modern terms potential viewers were being offered a 12" black-and-white television with one channel broadcasting for about five hours a day including the surprisingly popular demonstration films and costing the modern equivalent of £5000 to £10000. Briggs also notes that two years before this report was published audience research surveys showed that almost half the television sets owned had been purchased by the top 12% of earners and a further quarter by the next 20%; the least well off owned disproportionately few sets.<sup>173</sup> Even at the inception of commercial broadcasting proportionately more members of the wealthy would own televisions than members of the lowest earnings groups though the absolute numbers would show a much greater number being bought by the latter group simply because there were more of them. It is hardly surprising that for many years BBC Television programmes were directed at a very distinctly middle-class audience.

Briggs notes that the surveys of radio listeners carried out by Robert Silvey for *Hinrichsen's Musical Year Book* in 1945 and 1949 showed that there was a substantial number who were enthusiastic for symphony concerts and opera – as many as four million and far more than the existing concert halls and theatres could accommodate: even for the more rarefied field of chamber music there were over a million in the highest category of enthusiasm. As might be expected the greatest proportion showing enthusiasm came from the professional upper middle class but there was a substantial minority from the less well educated who craved 'serious' music.<sup>174</sup> In 1949 Collins was certainly still thinking in middle-class terms as far as the Television Service's output was concerned: among the various important elements in his view of the future shape of television which he wanted to discuss with colleagues he included 'Art, Music, Literature, Classical as well as popular modern Drama, Ballet'.<sup>175</sup> It is curious that Collins should have thought this way, since his previous post had been as Head of the



Light Programme which was the lowest-brow of the three BBC radio networks. Nine months later he realised that television programmes of high culture on a single channel were not popular and that Television needed to be equated with the Light Programme (roughly, in modern terms, Radio 2) rather than a mix of Light, Home and Third (that is Radios 2, 4 and 3).<sup>176</sup>

Until 1950 the only methods of assessing the popularity and impact of television programmes were through internal BBC meetings, the occasional review in the press and viewers' letters to programme departments or *Radio Times*. The main arbiter of what went on television was McGivern who spent much of his time watching television and writing down his reactions in short, acerbic memos to the producers. McGivern disliked 'modern' music, regarding it as over-serious:<sup>177</sup> he was about to get powerful support for his resistance to the less popular end of the musical spectrum. In 1950 the BBC set up its Television Audience Research section, even though, at the time, there were only transmissions in the London area. Only 343,882 combined television and radio licences had been purchased by the end of March 1950: relatively few people had television sets.<sup>a 178</sup> After the Sutton Coldfield transmitter near Birmingham opened in December 1949 audience research figures were supplemented in the second half of 1950 by a second viewing panel in the Midlands. The Audience Research reports contain two important statistics: a 'viewing figure' which measured the number of viewers per 100 television sets in use and the Reaction Index (RI) which was a measure of how much the audience enjoyed a particular programme: the RI ran from 0 (a complete disaster) to 100 (a triumph). The RIs are an indication of the middle-class audience that still predominated: in 1950 the different categories of programmes watched achieved average RIs of:<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> Even so, according to the Beveridge Report of 1951, the United Kingdom was second only to the United States in the number of sets in use. The only other services operating anywhere in the world were in France and the U.S.S.R. in both of which countries there were believed to be very few viewers. (BEVERIDGE, Lord (Chairman): *Report of the Broadcasting Committee, 1949*: HMSO, 1951 p. 12.)



Type of programme	Average Reaction Index
Variety	55
Light Entertainment	57
Plays	68
Documentaries	65
Sport (mostly amateur)	77

Figure 6: Reaction Indices for different programmes in 1950

Music programmes in 1950 achieved RIs of between 27 for a satirical musician and 75 for Sir Malcolm Sargent conducting the Black Dyke Mills Band. The average for the 25 programmes assessed was just under 60 with a clear distinction between classical ballet and mainstream opera which achieved a fairly consistent figure of around 70 and the rest which tended to be much lower and more variable.

The average size of audiences for television programmes in 1950 is also instructive:

Type of programme	Viewers per 100 television sets
Variety	247
Light Entertainment	175
Plays	183
Documentaries	135
Sport (mostly amateur)	241

Figure 7: Numbers of viewers for different types of programme in 1950

(It might be noted that Variety programmes were watched by more people than any category and also gained the lowest average RI – many people watched but the programmes were disliked by many.)

For music programmes the average audience was 136/100 with a low of 21/100 for an afternoon recital and a high of 234/100 for a Saturday evening performance of *Gay Rosalinda* (*Die Fledermaus* by Johann Strauss II, sung in English) (1950). The audience research reports also included syntheses of the comments made by the viewing panels: the music programmes in general received praise for the production values shown even when the musical content was disliked though there were occasional complaints of 'restless camerawork'.



## 5.4 The continuation of innovation in music programmes

When BBC Television resumed in 1946 two specialist producers of music performance programmes returned: D H Munro and Philip Bate. In July 1947 Munro had a nervous breakdown and never worked for the BBC again: despite the pressure this must have put on Bate, now working on his own in the field of music programmes, he received warm praise in *The Dancing Times* for his August 1947 production of the ballets *Carnaval* and *Aurora's Wedding* with Colonel De Basil's troupe from Covent Garden.<sup>180</sup> Bate's production of *Suite Espagnol* in January 1948 with a solo dancer also gained high praise from R. Bellamy Gardner in *The Dancing Times* though Gardner was less complimentary the following month about Bate's directing of *Danses Polovtsiennes* with a full company: '...overcrowding and indistinctness on the screen became almost unbearable; the cameras just could not take in the wealth of action.'<sup>181</sup>

The loss of Munro and the realisation within the next two years that many in senior Television management had come to regard Bate as rather light-weight as a producer of music programmes led to the decision to restore the departmental producer quota to two. When an appointment board was held in 1949 for a second music producer the opinion was that three of the candidates showed greater talent than Bate:<sup>182</sup> his position was threatened by the arrival of Christian Simpson as a permanently appointed colleague and George Foa as a temporarily appointed one.<sup>a</sup> Kenneth Wright said of Bate that he had never met anyone so lazy in his entire life: Wright said of him that he was the only person he had met in his 40s who behaved like someone in his 80s. Foy described him as 'terribly lazy and a lousy director.'<sup>183</sup> The appointment of Simpson and Foa seems to have goaded him into more useful activity since he soon produced the two series that were to consolidate his position in the department: the revival of his pre-war series *The Conductor Speaks* and a major reworking of *Ballet for Beginners*. There is a curious half-paragraph in Gordon Ross' *Television Jubilee* in which he states that the monthly *Ballet for Beginners* with its companion shortened repeat for Children's

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<sup>a</sup> Peter Ebert was also a candidate who was felt to be superior in talent to Bate but a third new post could not be justified. Ebert, as a freelance stage director, was to produce a number of operas for BBC Television over the next few years working with Music Programmes staff directors creating the visual sequences.



Television involved a Television Ballet Group. According to Ross this group was created in October 1950 and was available to work on dance, opera and variety programmes: it was formed by Felicity Gray and was thus the first television ballet group in the world.<sup>184</sup> There is no other reference to this in the archives, *Radio Times* or publications that have been examined and Ross gives no bibliographic reference to justify his assertion.

Under the creation of television departments outlined in 5.3 some departments were given Heads and were responsible solely to television management. Other departments were regarded as being less important and the most senior departmental member was designated Assistant Head:<sup>185</sup> among these 'lesser' departments was Music. When Patricia Foy joined Music Programmes she was made aware that the reason the post was called Assistant Head of Music, Television was that the holder was answerable to the Head of Music at Broadcasting House;<sup>186</sup> there was a parallel post of Assistant Head of Music, Radio. The structure became unwieldy as television expanded rapidly and in 1953 the Assistant Head of Music, Television post was upgraded and redesignated as Head of Music. At the same time the practice of *de facto* reporting mainly to McGivern as Head of Television was formalised and the umbilical cord to Broadcasting House severed.<sup>a</sup> As a result of these changes the structure of Music Department was becoming more rational. In July 1951 Kenneth Wright, who was a music expert with an enthusiasm for brass bands and a composer of incidental music and operettas, took the post of Assistant Head of Music, Television having transferred from Music, Radio.

At about the same time the need for specialist music directors was also recognised by Outside Broadcast Department which appointed a producer who was to become distinguished in this field: Antony Craxton, a member of a famous London musical family.<sup>b</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> Foy maintained that regular meetings at Music, Radio's headquarters in Yalding House continued. (FOY, Patricia interviewed by Roy Tipping, author of this thesis. (Wiltshire, 9 Mar 1999).)

<sup>b</sup> Harold Craxton was his father; Janet Craxton was his sister.



The resistance to the presentation of music on television was being met with considered arguments and conclusions in the BBC Yearbook for 1951:

...Ballet and dance, which from the earliest days have proved so suited to television, are now being designed specially for the medium. Music and television, once doubtful companions, are coming to terms...<sup>187</sup>

The writer in the Yearbook went on to make special mention of broadcasts of Chopin and Tchaikovsky piano concertos. Other types of music had less success: Bate pressed for programmes to do for jazz what his existing series had done for orchestral and brass band music. When McGivern rejected the idea Bate objected that ‘...Music Department should take this...seriously for it is one of musical importance...’<sup>188</sup> Jazz would not be treated as a serious art-form on television until the opening of BBC-2 in 1964 although Simpson was able to present jazz in his series *Jazz Session* first tried in 1954 and more frequently transmitted from 1957 onwards. Controversy in the area of the presentation of music performance continued as directors became more and more imaginative. Yearbooks were not published in 1952, 1953 and 1954 but in 1955 the BBC resumed the annual publication under the new title ‘Handbook’. The unnamed author – presumably Wright himself – who wrote the section on music on television reawakened the controversy:

The problem of how best to present classical music on television is constantly under review. It was revived in acute form when Yehudi Menuhin, making his first appearance on British television, played Mendelssohn’s violin concerto in June 1953.<sup>a</sup>

The author went on to describe how some viewers were distracted by the directing but that one newspaper critic found the close-ups helped to convey the flow of the music. (This article may be contrasted with Ernest Newman’s attack on the same broadcast quoted in Chapter 3.) Theatrical music broadcasts was one area that was well-liked:

Studio presentations of opera on television are increasingly popular, and ballet, whether of the classical type or in forms specially created for the medium, has won itself a regular place in television programmes.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> This programme was directed by Christian Simpson



It is ironic that Simpson, who was so severely criticised for his handling of the Menuhin television debut, was also to be responsible in that same year for what was to be one of the most successful television music broadcasts. The European premiere of Menotti's short Christmas opera *Amahl and the Night Visitors* took place on BBC Television on 20<sup>th</sup> December 1953. Commissioned by NBC in America and given its world premiere in December 1951<sup>190</sup> Jennifer Barnes has pointed out that *Amahl* is possibly the only opera commissioned by television to have remained in the regular repertory.<sup>a</sup> <sup>191</sup> McGivern was unhappy about Simpson's deficiencies telling Wright that 'he is not really a first-class producer'; he recommended that Simpson have a drama producer working alongside him for future operas.<sup>192</sup> Wright agreed but pointed out that Simpson did not work well when asked to co-operate with another producer.<sup>193</sup> The idea seems to have been dropped and, in the event, McGivern seems to have been premature in his assessment of Simpson at this stage of his career: Simpson's second production of *Amahl* for Christmas 1954 gained him the Guild of Television Producers and Directors' Award which confirmed him as one of the most imaginative television directors of the day.

The anonymous author of the 1955 Handbook article who reported criticism of the production of Mendelssohn's violin concerto was partly rebuffed the following year by the article on televised music in the 1956 Handbook possibly by Wright again. After discussing the work of the music and gramophone libraries which was part of Music Department's responsibilities the author pointed out that opera and dance were continuing to be much appreciated parts of the department's output; popular instructional and entertainment programmes had joined these.<sup>b</sup> Even in the area of non-theatrical broadcasts, the author conceded that things were getting better:

Recently, great advances have been made in the application of outside broadcast cameras to public concerts and productions in the theatre. It has been argued that concert music belongs exclusively to the field of sound radio, but in fact the very considerable experiments made by television have shown that

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<sup>a</sup> It might be argued that Britten's *Owen Wingrave* (1971) has also remained a repertory work in its rearrangement for the theatre stage.

<sup>b</sup> The titles are not specified but *The Conductor Speaks* and *Music for You* were recent successes.



there are many aspects of pure music in which the fusion of sight and sound prove most valuable.<sup>194</sup>

## 5.5 1955 - a golden age of music performance programmes?

It was in 1955 that music broadcasts reached their highest proportion of total output in the post-war history of television at about 4%.<sup>195</sup> The 102 hours broadcast in 1955 would be marginally exceeded the following year when 106 hours of music were televised. Because of the increase in total hours broadcast by the BBC – part of the parliamentary horse-trading for the introduction of commercial television – the proportion of total broadcasting devoted to music would never again achieve the figure of 4%. (See Figure 3 in Section 1.3.)

On 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1955 commercial television started broadcasting in London and by May 1956 could be received in three major metropolitan areas of the country. In anticipation of this McGivern completely revamped the shape of BBC broadcasting starting on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> September. The government had agreed that the BBC should be granted some 40% more transmission hours and Music Programmes Department was a major beneficiary. The way that McGivern allocated additional time to music programmes was by concentrating most of the performance output into two major strands on Sundays: *Concert Hour* and *Music at Ten*. *Concert Hour* was a brave initiative that ultimately failed: starting at 3 p.m. every Sunday afternoon and normally running for the whole 60 minutes implied by the series title a classical concert was televised, usually by one of the BBC orchestras from their home base. The BBC Symphony and BBC Concert Orchestras generally broadcast from the Maida Vale studios, sometimes as a simultaneous broadcast with the Home Service; the BBC Northern Orchestra broadcast from the Milton Hall, Manchester; the BBC West of England Light Orchestra broadcast from the Colston Hall, Bristol; the BBC Midland Light Orchestra broadcast from a number of venues. Other British orchestras also appeared occasionally in *Concert Hour*: the London Symphony Orchestra (which gave the first *Concert Hour* broadcast on 4<sup>th</sup> September 1955), the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra each contributed one slot in 1955. Where there was a competent outside broadcast producer in the region concerned he produced the broadcast; if there was no one suitable Bate travelled to the region and produced the programme himself.



At first some two million viewers watched *Concert Hour*. As commercial television transmissions spread across the country the audience for *Concert Hour* declined to half its initial value and McGivern complained that *Concert Hour* was looking very old-fashioned in comparison to the opposition. *Concert Hour* was a mixture of serious and light music depending upon which of the orchestras was appearing: the light orchestras such as the Midland Light Orchestra and the Northern Orchestra tended to offer lighter fare.<sup>195</sup> *Concert Hour* continued until August 1959, though by then what had started as a weekly series was being frequently disrupted by other non-musical programmes. In October 1959 a similar programme called *Croeso* and coming exclusively from Wales replaced *Concert Hour* until December 1960 but thereafter the idea of a regular music performance programme on a Sunday afternoon was dead. The first signs of serious discontent from McGivern date from a Programme Planning paper that compared audiences on Sunday afternoons in 1958 on BBC Television with those on the commercial channel: on the specific Sunday discussed commercial television was offering a Western feature film opposite *Concert Hour*. The BBC offering which included *Concert Hour* was stated to be 'hopelessly uncompetitive.' McGivern suggested moving the music performance hour to late on a weekday evening<sup>196</sup> which Music Department found very attractive.<sup>197</sup> It did not work out quite as simply as that because no evening was safe from the irregular needs of Sports and Talks departments.<sup>198</sup> Despite these problems *Television Concert Hall* on Tuesday evenings from November 1959 became one of the most prestigious series of music performance programmes ever seen on British television. For a year there was an overlap with the Sunday afternoon concerts but the final *Croeso* was broadcast in December 1960. As Crisell has pointed out the arrival of competition had started to drive out 'elitist' programmes;<sup>199</sup> the BBC mandarins must have felt that their submission to Beveridge in 1951 – '...the good, in the long run, will inescapably be driven out by the bad...' – was being amply justified.<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> The BBC Northern Orchestra was already in the 1950s aspiring to a higher profile than its existing light orchestra status. Attempts to get it into one of the more prestigious Tuesday or Sunday night slots failed because of reluctance on the part of the television bureaucrats to recognize its improving status. See the minutes of *Programme Review Boards* of 20/27 May 1959 in file T16/105/8 *Programme Review Boards 1951-1962* (BBC Written Archive Centre).



*Music at Ten* was intended to be the consistently 'serious' equivalent to the lighter fare that was frequently offered on *Concert Hour: Music at Ten* revived the concept of the closedown recital. McGivern recognised that if quality artists were to be attracted the duration had to be at least 30 minutes; it also had to have a regular time and this was at 10 p.m. on a Sunday: in general the slot ran from 10 p.m. to 10.30 p.m. To demonstrate that this was highbrow territory Ralph Kirkpatrick, the harpsichordist, and an unnamed string ensemble conducted by Geraint Jones gave the first broadcast on 4<sup>th</sup> September 1955. The second broadcast on 11<sup>th</sup> September featured Alicia Markova, members of the Ballet Rambert and an orchestra conducted by Eric Robinson: this would have been unthinkably expensive for the old *Music Makers* closedown programmes. The third in the series was a live chamber concert from the home of J B Priestley on the Isle of Wight while the next was a studio recital by one of the world's greatest pianists, Julius Katchen. On 9<sup>th</sup> October 1955 the Black Dyke Mills Band appeared conducted by Edmund Hoole and Harry Mortimer; the rest of the year included Malcuzyński; a new ballet by Kenneth Macmillan and produced by Margaret Dale, who received her first *Radio Times* credit for the broadcast; André Navarra; the Chinese Classical Theatre dancers; Leonid Kogan; the Stars of the Paris Grand Opera ballet; the Moscow State Folk Dance Company. On 4<sup>th</sup> December the Belgian National Radio Symphony Orchestra, which had just given a public concert at the Royal Festival Hall, remained on stage to perform Franck's *Symphonic Variations* with Louis Backx at the piano: the concerto started at *Music at Ten*'s usual start time of 10 p.m. with the hardier members of the audience remaining in their seats. The *Ballet Espagnol de Pilar Lopez* gave the final *Music at Ten* in 1955 before the Christmas season started.

Philip Hope-Wallace, who was the independent critic of music programmes employed by *The Listener*, detected a regrettable decline in the artistic standards of *Music at Ten* from the beginning of 1956. His reviews of the 29<sup>th</sup> January (Ruggiero Ricci) and 12<sup>th</sup> February (Robert Farnon) programmes noted a general relaxation of standards. In his review of the Ricci recital he wrote of 'a tea-shappy element creeping in': he felt that 'the wonderful violinist' should have played 'a programme with fewer bits and pieces in it.'<sup>201</sup> His patience was further tried by the 'pier-pavilion type of concert' under Farnon's conducting represented by an American ballad; a 'Paddy tenor' singing 'Phil the Fluter's Ball'; and with apparently deliberate irony 'selections from Ivor Novello's



master-works.’ He had no objection to this type of light music – just the idea of the BBC presenting it in a slot previously dedicated to high culture.<sup>202</sup> By the 12<sup>th</sup> April edition of the series he was in considerable despair at the inclusion of Max Jaffa and his trio playing tea-shop arrangements – Hope-Wallace called them ‘...dismal selections...which we may call ‘Il Trocadero’...’ He drew the attention of the television planners to the Proms and Royal Opera House queues and to the programming policies of Glyndebourne and the Edinburgh International Festival: ‘[Do not] make it easier but make it more difficult. Consider their ways and be wise.’<sup>203</sup>

In retrospect the arrival of commercial television can be seen to strike at the heart of Reith’s broadcasting philosophy. There was a marked reluctance for listeners and viewers to turn off the radio or television once it was turned on: in a monopoly Reith believed that by interspersing programmes that a viewer wished to choose with those that they might normally ignore the viewer would be exposed to ‘improving’ programmes; now all that the unengaged viewer needed to do was turn a switch to the opposition. Crisell stated that the maintenance of a monopoly was inherent in the Reithian philosophy: when choice existed populist programming would tend to drive out all other kinds.<sup>204</sup> The strains on the broadcasting of all minority programmes in the period between 1955 when commercial television started and 1964 when the BBC’s second channel started placed enormous pressures on the heads of the three departments responsible for music: Talks and Documentaries, Outside Broadcasts and Music Programmes. It is possible that these strains contributed to the heart attack that Wright suffered on 10<sup>th</sup> May 1955.<sup>205</sup> McGivern responded quickly to Wright’s absence on sick leave: a memo from McGivern gave to Desmond Osland, the Music Organiser, Television responsibility for the ‘day to day running and administration’ of the department.<sup>206</sup> Osland had never had a formal musical training: his education had finished at secondary school level which he deeply resented for the rest of his life as he stated in the interview for this thesis. He had received organ lessons from a number of distinguished organists and had given regular recitals.<sup>207</sup> Salter characterised him as ‘...a very conscientious, thorough person but not a musician...he did have very good relations with the music world...he knew who people were and what their capabilities were...’<sup>208</sup> The fact that Osland was the *de facto* head of department although it was a post he never held *de jure* led to a curious error of memory on his part: when



interviewed for this thesis he became quite heated when informed that none of the BBC's Staff Lists ever described him as 'Head of Music Programmes' although his memory was that he had held this post for a number of years. It is possible that his error came from the period from July 1955 to April 1956 when he exercised this function.

When it became clear that Wright would be unable to continue as full-time Head of Music Programmes he was given a sinecure – Chief Assistant to Head of Music Programmes – until his official retirement at the age of 60 in 1959. Foy, who was a close friend of Wright, has said that despite his senior position Wright was in a permanent state of impoverishment and frequently borrowed money from his colleagues without ever repaying them. He had been married four times and the settlements with his three previous wives placed a severe burden on him. Foy thinks that the sinecure was the BBC's compassionate way of ensuring that Wright gained the maximum pension possible on his compulsory retirement at age 60.<sup>209</sup> When Wright's inability to continue as Head of Music Programmes became apparent George Barnes, the Director of Television, escorted Foy to a Rubinstein concert and before the concert began startled her by asking her if she was interested in taking over Wright's post: Foy felt at the time that she was too young and inexperienced to cope with the responsibilities and turned down the offer.<sup>210</sup> Wright was back at work by October 1955 and was representing Music Programmes at the Central Music Advisory Committee (C.M.A.C.). To the committee he gave an initial assessment of how he viewed the Independent Television Authority contractors' attitude to serious music which was that they were 'obviously scared' of it. He felt that the BBC should continue to present worthwhile artistic presentations including 'opera, ballet and fine recitalists' despite the coming battle for audiences.<sup>211</sup>

The post of Head of Music Programmes was advertised and an interview board in March 1956 appointed Lionel Salter, a world-class harpsichordist who had worked as a free-lance accompanist and arranger for BBC Television before the war. As Salter had never held a television production post his first appointment after taking up the post of Head of Music Programmes was with BBC Television's training department where he completed the course designed to train television producers. There is a curious memo dated 4<sup>th</sup> April 1956 in which Wright informed Osland that Salter would be joining the



training course from the following Monday: the memo is curious in that Wright signed the memo as coming from the Head of Music Programmes, the post he had vacated some months before.<sup>212</sup> Salter's appointment as Head of Music Programmes, Television took effect from 9<sup>th</sup> April 1956.<sup>a 213</sup>

While Wright was head of the music department he appointed two producers whose approach to presenting music performance on screen would represent the two extremes of the philosophy that will be analysed in later chapters. These two producers were Margaret 'Maggie' Dale and Patricia 'Paddy' Foy.

When a producer is asked to create a shooting script – what was known before the war by the useful term 'visual sequence' – they could approach the task from various points on a continuum from total pre-planning to total improvisation. Dale worked at the extreme pre-planning end of the continuum. One of her former floor managers, who asked not to be named, said that in her work with dancers she insisted that they were rehearsed and rehearsed and rehearsed until they could start and end a sequence of steps on a precise floor mark. Even such technically difficult steps as *fouettés* Dale insisted should be totally predictable. This made her shooting scripts remarkably tight for dance even on the live programmes with which she started as a producer in the early 1950s. There is a precision to her live *Sleeping Beauty* (1959),<sup>214</sup> for example, that would be little improved even with all the post-production that is now expected. The downside to this rigid approach is a certain lack of spontaneity both in the performances and the camerawork. Foy also said that some top performers including Fonteyn refused to work again with Dale after their first exhausting experience.<sup>b 215</sup>

Foy seems to have taken quite the opposite approach. Salter said that she was incapable of producing a camera script, despite much prompting from him.<sup>216</sup> One anecdote that was independently reported by several people was that at the start of rehearsals she

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<sup>a</sup> During the period that Salter was the head of the department, its name changed to Music Productions, Television and his title was Head of Music Productions, Television.

<sup>b</sup> Fonteyn danced in two complete ballets produced by Dale: *The Nutcracker* (1958) and *The Sleeping Beauty* (1959)



would sit in the director's chair and say: 'What can you see camera 2?'<sup>a</sup> For most cameramen this would normally be a tacit admission of incompetence since it is usually understood that the director should have a clear idea of what can be seen at all times by all cameras. This does not seem to have been the case with Foy, who was respected by most of the people she gathered around her. Her style of directing was also unique with a leisurely tempo of cutting that was divorced from the underlying structure of the music. Foy was a producer who understood her artists' fears and needs and always placed those above the needs of the studio staff: if anything she under-rehearsed and left a great deal to the professionalism of her artists and staff. She also leaned heavily on the skills of her technicians to the extent of tacitly leaving much of the responsibility for the visual sequences to those around her.

### **5.5.1 Viewers' appreciation of music performance programmes**

Audience research reports of this period demonstrate the rift that there was between those who were sympathetic to the televising of arts performance and those who were not. A substantial audience research report was commissioned in 1956 on Ballet: nearly 40% of the audience liked watching dance on television; 36% did not particularly like it; the remaining 24% were definitely antagonistic. The vast majority of those who enjoyed dance on television preferred classical ballet. The recent first visit of the Bolshoi to Britain included a studio broadcast on 26<sup>th</sup> October 1956 of most of Act 2 of Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake* which had been watched by over half the available television audience (25% of the population of the United Kingdom) and had been well liked. Among those with experience of dance in the theatre there was a minority who felt that studio production, '...with its 'limited area of vision' and absence of colour is no substitute for ballet in the theatre...'; the consensus was that '...the presentation of television ballet at the present time has reached a very high standard...'<sup>217</sup>

A similar research report on the Sunday afternoon series *Concert Hour* was much less clear. This series which included concerts of either light or more substantial music was

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<sup>a</sup> It is possible that this only happened on one occasion but that the humour of the event put it swiftly into television folk-lore. Repetition of the story would not necessarily mean repetition of the error. Foy is also reported by Burton to have instructed a (very static) telecine machine to track in, another story which



intended to attract the less committed viewer and seems to have been having remarkably little impact even on the relatively small audience who were watching. The comments must have made depressing reading for the producers:

The admass<sup>a</sup> is in a pretty tolerant and uncritical mood early on a Sunday afternoon (? a post prandial stupor) which shows itself in such ways as:

1. Not minding much whether there is any television to view or not
2. If there is, not minding much what kind of television it is, and
3. Not being anything like as querulous as usual if they do view.<sup>218</sup>

Programmes were also discussed by senior staff at the weekly programme review which was an innovation that started in the early 1950s. Comments from the weekly programme review will be cited in some of the analyses of programmes below. A further source of idiosyncratic appreciation of television music programmes is occasional mentions of them in the monthly critical articles in the BBC's own journal *The Listener*: the first of these appeared in May 1947 and was written by the theatre critic Harold Hobson.<sup>219</sup> Hobson had little interest in music and his only substantial comment in this area related to a broadcast of the ballet *The Three-Cornered Hat* in 1947. Hobson noted that the broadcast captured the atmosphere at Covent Garden better than a similar broadcast of the MCC/South Africa test match captured the atmosphere at Lord's the same week.<sup>220</sup> It was some seven years before *The Listener* employed a musically aware television critic in the person of Philip Hope-Wallace, who joined in the summer of 1954, and several of his insightful comments appear throughout this thesis.

## 5.6 The transformation of Music Programmes 1956-1963

As described in greater detail above the first head of the department responsible for music broadcasts on BBC Television was Wright, who was appointed in 1951. In May 1955 he suffered a heart attack and was given the sinecure post of Chief Assistant,

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quickly became established as part of television's folk-lore. (BURTON, Humphrey interviewed by Roy Tipping, author of this thesis. (London, 25 Feb 1999).)

<sup>a</sup> *Admass*: Section of the community that is readily influenced by advertising etc. [from AD+MASS][The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English, ed. J B Sykes, Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1976]



Music Programmes: his replacement as Head of Music Programmes was Salter, who took up his appointment in April 1956. In 1956 music on BBC Television comprised mostly performances either from the studios or from outside broadcast locations: of the 106 hours of music on BBC Television broadcast in 1956 only 20 hours were in categories other than performance. Salter had worked in television on *ad hoc* programme contracts as a pianist and conductor between 1937 and 1939 so he had a perspective on television music production based on personal experience. This experience was only as a performer on the floor of the studio: despite working with most, if not all, of the pre-war television producers he never entered the control room to watch a television programme being put together.<sup>221</sup> Between 1939 and 1956 he had gained a reputation as a world-class harpsichordist and competent conductor. After war service with the Army in what would eventually be called the Intelligence Corps he was invalided out in about 1943. He rejoined the BBC and worked for several BBC departments including being Assistant Conductor of the (radio) Theatre Orchestra under Stanford Robinson. From August 1946 he joined the administrative side of radio and worked his way upwards until by January 1956 he was Overseas Music Organiser.<sup>222</sup> After completing his time with BBC Television he was appointed Assistant Controller, Music, before retiring. My understanding as a BBC employee was that there was a central tenet of employment in the classical music departments of the various centres of radio: producers and more senior staff had to be musically qualified either academically or through experience as performing musicians. A further understanding in radio music departments was that there was rigid hierarchical responsibility: staff at lower levels slavishly followed and depended upon decisions taken at higher levels of the hierarchy.

Salter was developing a very clear philosophy of the way in which music performance should be shown on television. One of the most important tenets which he brought with him from radio was that only qualified musicians could faithfully convey the composers' and performers' ideas to the viewers. He felt that it would be possible to train suitable musicians to learn the art of television programme making; training television programme makers to understand and read music would be extremely difficult if not impossible.<sup>223</sup> Burton never worked under Salter but met him at a number of meetings concerning music programmes on television and remembers Salter as being



rather overbearing and putting up with us amateurs, that he was the only one who really knew the form...I think that now I can see that he was deeply caring and had had very high standards<sup>224</sup>

Salter must have expected that the members of his new department would share his developing philosophy. The reality came as a shock: when Salter arrived as Head of Music Productions, Television he soon found that the department comprised what must have seemed to him a group of mostly unqualified and uncooperative, even anarchic, individualists. His staff comprised: Philip Bate, Margaret Dale, George Foa, Patricia Foy, Charles Rogers and Christian Simpson as producers; James Hartley as Senior Programme Assistant; Desmond Osland as Music Organiser; and his predecessor Kenneth Wright in the sinecure post of Chief Assistant. It was understood that for outside broadcast concert relays he was able to call on the services of Antony Craxton and others; for studio operas he could use drama directors of whom the most distinguished was Rudolph Cartier. Of these Dale, Foa, Hartley and Wright were undoubtedly qualified; despite being a graduate of the Royal Academy of Music Craxton always professed to be musically unqualified:<sup>225</sup> he was highly regarded by Salter from the start. Salter dismissed Foy's qualification as a graduate of the Royal Academy of Music since he felt that she had never used it professionally.<sup>226</sup> One of his 'qualified' staff, Hartley, was dismissed from the service for persistent alcoholism within days of Salter's appointment, though before he took up his post: this cannot have been a pleasant start but was the resolution of a long-standing problem not of Salter's making.<sup>a</sup>

According to Salter in interview he was now faced with the situation that of his seven regular producers he respected the qualifications and output of only two of them without reservation: Dale and Craxton.

The weakness about the department, which I inherited from Kenneth [Wright], was that there were no professional musicians among them. They were all musical amateurs of greater or less knowledge – mostly less...Antony Craxton, who was in O[utside] B[roadcast]s...was the only person we could rely on to do a musical job... [Margaret Dale] was the most invaluable member of my staff,

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<sup>a</sup> Osland was promoted to Hartley's vacant post, the duties of which he had, in reality, been exercising during Hartley's final decline.



the only one for whom I had real respect. An absolutely died-in-the-wool professional.<sup>227</sup>

He tolerated Foa but Salter felt that his preferred field of operation which was 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Italian opera was far too narrow: in 1957 the responsibility for studio operas was transferred to Drama Department and Foa was moved with his operas; in Drama Department Foa continued to produce the operas that were his preference. Because the other members of Drama Department who directed opera were unable to read music with the necessary fluency there seems to have been a clear understanding that drama department could employ a member of Music Programmes as an assistant producer on their opera productions. Both Salter and Rogers fulfilled this role on a number of occasions and this practice continued well into the 1970s with Robin Lough *inter alia* fulfilling the same musical liaison function. Salter also tolerated Rogers whose field was light music, particularly musicals, an area for which Salter was happy to devolve responsibility. Before Rogers left the BBC in 1964 to become a hotel proprietor in Ireland<sup>228</sup> he had progressed to producing mainstream operas in his own right.

For the rest Salter appears to have started systematically to rid the department of those producers who he felt had no qualifications: Bate, Simpson and Foy. He felt that each of them was unable to come anywhere near his philosophical approach to presenting music performance on television: in a memo from 1959 he complained that some of his unnamed producers were unable to handle orchestral concerts to what he regarded as a satisfactory standard.<sup>229</sup>

Salter had little problem with Bate: he was rarely to be seen and Dale was surprised when she was told that he was doing work in the department until the late 1950s overlapping her by almost five years.<sup>230</sup> Before Salter became Head of Music Bate was producing about two dozen programmes a year, many of them substantial broadcasts of an hour or more's length; after the arrival of Salter his output comprised two or three short recitals per year: on paper it would appear that Salter froze him out. Throughout the late 1950s Bate took temporary secondments to the BBC's training department and eventually he was persuaded to take a permanent instructor's post in Staff Training Department: he appears in BBC staff lists as being a staff training instructor from



November 1957 so that the seven or eight programmes<sup>a</sup> he produced for Music Programmes after this date may just have been to keep in practice as a director.

Simpson was more difficult: he had been the most imaginative director in the television service but Salter said he was arrogant of his achievements and abilities. He was untrained musically and his highest musical achievement was a Grade 5 certificate, about the level normally achieved at around the age of twelve: his inability fluently to read music or to contribute to the intellectual production values of music programmes was seen by Salter to be a major handicap.<sup>231</sup> After 18 months of what seems to have been a seething standoff Simpson exploded at his annual interview in 1957. After this disagreement the Controller of Programmes, Kenneth Adam, agreed to a further hearing of Simpson's case: as was BBC practice this took place in the presence of Salter and Simpson once more exploded 'in violent terms'.<sup>232</sup> He was given a further private interview by Gerald Beadle, Director of Television and told to 'sort himself out'.<sup>233</sup> For the next 18 months the standoff between Simpson and Salter continued with Simpson working mainly on light music programmes such as the *Max Jaffa Trio*.<sup>b</sup> In mid-summer 1959 a further 'acrimonious exchange' between Simpson and Salter led eventually to the former being transferred away from music to the experimental drama group known as the Langham Group. Simpson never returned to Music Programmes even after Salter's departure as Head in 1963 and even though his salary continued to be paid nominally out of funds allocated for music producers.

Foy stated that she avoided the fate of Bate and Simpson by making sure that any rows she had with Salter were in public and that her programmes were irreplaceably popular.<sup>234</sup> She maintained very good relations with senior management and always went over Salter's head when problems arose. Foy's series *Music for You*, *Music in Camera* and *Profile in Music* were among the most popular classical music programmes ever produced. Foy was impregnable and to his intense irritation Salter knew it:

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<sup>a</sup> The producer of one programme is unclear in *Radio Times* but precedent would imply that it was Bate.

<sup>b</sup> This is the group whose 'tea shop' style was dubbed 'Il Trocadero' by Philip Hope-Wallace in section 5.5. Simpson had worked with Jaffa from 1952 onwards.



[Foy and Eric Robinson] regarded themselves as an independent kingdom.<sup>235</sup>

During his seven years as Head of Music Programmes Salter made only one appointment of a music producer. Salter had complained bitterly over the years that a television music producer had to be a musician with a visual sense: someone who could handle cameras and had a liking for music was no use ‘...[which was] what I’d got and what I’d been saddled with...’<sup>236</sup> The one appointment he managed was an old friend from radio, Walter Todds. He had left Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge in 1941 with an upper second in English and had gone straight into the Army eventually leaving with the rank of Captain in 1946. At the time of his offer of a BBC appointment as a radio Talks Producer in a letter of 13<sup>th</sup> September 1951<sup>237</sup> he was a schoolmaster at the progressive Dartington Hall School in Devon. Although never a professional musician he had sung and played the ‘cello at Cambridge and was friendly with the composer Professor Patrick Hadley.<sup>238</sup> Although Todds turned out to be an exemplary director of music programmes he did not seem to fit with Salter’s forthright statement quoted above:

It would be possible to train suitable musicians to learn the art of television programme making. The reverse – training television programme makers to understand and read music – would be extremely difficult, if not impossible.<sup>239</sup>

Todds was to prove an important and innovative producer in the period covered in the next chapter: it would appear that in this instance Salter relied on his instincts and experience from the days that he and Todds had worked on music programmes in radio rather than on his demand for paper qualifications.

Within three months of his arrival in television Salter tried to establish that all classical music including even short ‘acts’ within variety programmes was his domain: in July 1956 McGivern issued an instruction that all new performers appearing on television in this field had to be approved by Salter. While maintaining that Salter was not trying to establish authority over all music in television McGivern made it clear that classical music was now Salter’s fiefdom.<sup>240</sup> It did not happen: by 1960 Salter was writing sadly and confidentially to William Glock, Controller, Music (in radio):



Any general statement about the influence of Music Department in other departments' output is next to impossible to make: such consultation as there is has only been brought about on the Old Boy network.<sup>241</sup>

In his seven years as Head Salter had changed the musical profile of the department and the quality of its output: the work of Dale, Todds, Craxton, Rogers and Foy was liked by the public and praised by senior members of BBC Management. By 1963 virtually all 'light' music had been purged from the department's output: the department was now concentrating on high-brow music from well-established artists. The cost was that Salter had reduced the number of full producers working for his department from seven to five. It is hardly surprising that the department's output reached its apogee, in terms of numbers and hours of programmes produced, in the middle 1950s under Kenneth Wright and declined thereafter. In the final year that Wright planned as head of the department, 1956, the output of music, opera and dance reached 106 hours;<sup>242</sup> in the final year that Salter planned as head, 1963, the output was only 52 hours.<sup>243</sup> The departmental output in 1963 also had a much more restricted appearance with four ballets, four operas, six recitals, and 26 concerts involving some of the most eminent classical musicians of the day. Important parts of Music Programmes' output in the middle 1950s had been light music, jazz, and music 'shows' deliberately designed to appeal to the middlebrow: by the end of 1962 all of these had disappeared from the output of Music Programmes though Light Entertainment Department continued to produce programmes in these 'purged' genres at the lighter end of the musical spectrum with the exception of jazz.

### **5.6.1 The growth of documentaries**

Until 1958 the number of programmes devoted to music which were not performance programmes was rarely more than 20%: they were predominantly instructional such as Sidney Harrison teaching aspects of piano playing or Peggy van Praagh explaining the meanings of the gestures used in classical ballet. It was on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1958 that there was the first broadcast of a programme that would have important repercussions on the future of music broadcasting: *Monitor*, a fortnightly magazine about the arts, presented and edited by Huw Wheldon. Wheldon was one of the golden boys in the Talks Department run at first by Leonard Miall and later by Grace Wyndham Goldie. According to Humphrey Burton,<sup>244</sup> who became one of the assistant editors with Nancy



Thomas, *Monitor* pursued an independent, innovative line in the field of arts documentaries: it took no account of what the music performance producers were doing under Salter. *Monitor* only used music performance in a peripheral way as a method of illustrating whichever person or topic was the subject of a documentary. So successful were directors such as Burton, Ken Russell and John Schlesinger that the centre of influence in the field of arts broadcasting moved from Salter's decaying department to Wheldon's rampant sub-department.

*Monitor* was a curious example of the hierarchy knowing what was best for the viewers. The placing of *Monitor* varied somewhat during its nearly ten years on BBC Television but in general it alternated on a weekly basis with music performance programmes. *Monitor* generally gained respectable if not outstanding RIs of around 60. The music performance programmes with which it alternated gained rather higher RIs in the 65-75 region. On the whole it was editions of *Monitor* that gained the greatest praise from programme review boards: perhaps because *Monitor* demonstrated a greater perceived intellectual profundity it appealed to the elitism of many of the senior members of BBC Television. It is also true that the only music output of this period that has left any kind of persistent memory was that from the *Monitor* team under Wheldon rather than from the performance music producers under Salter. The latter apparently became so worried by the dominance of *Monitor* that he sent Dale on attachment<sup>a</sup> to the *Monitor* unit as a sort of spy. Dale created some short items for the magazine and became very impressed with Wheldon's enthusiasm for all the arts: while she always had amicable relations with Salter she was delighted when Music Programmes was absorbed into Wheldon's empire.<sup>245</sup>

After the early setbacks from the introduction of commercial television in the mid-1950s the end of the decade saw a newfound confidence in BBC Television largely disseminated downwards from the recently appointed Director-General, Hugh Carleton-Greene: Television Centre in West London opened in 1960 though with only administrative departments installed; *Radio Times* gained revamped television pages

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<sup>a</sup> Attachment: a temporary secondment, usually of four months, to a different department for the purpose of continuing personal development.



from 8<sup>th</sup> October 1960 together with a new logo for BBC Television; plans for the second BBC Television channel to be opened in 1964 were laid as early as 1962. Among those plans was the creation of a Central Planning Board that included the heads of Talks, Drama, Light Entertainment and Outside Broadcasts; four other departments already had guaranteed airtime: Schools, Women, Children and Religion. There was just one department not included in either of these two groups: Music Department. Salter was livid at being excluded from the process of allocating airtime: he called it '...an invidious and humiliating position...' <sup>246</sup> that in view of what happened next may have been deliberate.

In the summer of 1963 Salter was removed as Head of Music Programmes and given the sinecure title of Head of Opera with responsibility for both radio and television opera starting from 26<sup>th</sup> August 1963. <sup>247</sup> Since television opera made in the studio was the responsibility of Drama Department and other television operas were the responsibility of Outside Broadcasts Department it very neatly made sure that Salter was unable to interfere in the department responsible for all other types of music performances. Salter was soon sidelined in television studio opera as well since an announcement at the end of August 1963 stated that the Head of Drama Group, Sydney Newman, was maintaining responsibility for the production of television operas. Salter was designated 'consultant and associate producer' despite his nominal title of Head of Opera. <sup>248</sup> Talks Department was split into two with one department covering current affairs and the other making documentaries: on 26<sup>th</sup> August 1963 Huw Wheldon became Head of Documentary and Music Programmes, Television absorbing the existing music performance producers into the department. <sup>249</sup> The appointment of Wheldon as head of the television department responsible for music caused outrage among professional musicians. Wheldon had no training in music and had no special interest in it; his academic training had been at the London School of Economics where he read sociology. He had been head of the Welsh Arts Council where he met some musicians; through this contact with musicians he had acquired what some felt was merely a superficial knowledge of the speciality: according to Burton a number of influential musicians including Thurston Dart vowed they would never again perform for Wheldon's department. <sup>250</sup> Wheldon's musical weakness was recognised at both the top of BBC Television and BBC Radio with a particularly damning sentence in a joint



paper prepared by Director of Television (Kenneth Adam) and Director of Sound Broadcasting (Frank Gillard) called *The Broadcasting of Music* (1964):

Both C.Mus. and C.P.Tel.<sup>a</sup> have reservations about the calibre of the representation of music on the professional side under Mr. Wheldon.<sup>251</sup>

Even Wheldon's own staff believed that 'where music was concerned he was a complete ignoramus.'<sup>252</sup> The fact that Burton was appointed Senior Producer was not particularly mollifying since his history degree comprised only two years of music study and he had no professional experience as a performer.

The reason why Salter was pushed upstairs is not yet in the public domain: Salter declined to say what caused this change but did admit that it was the result of 'a row'. Wheldon is dead and any written record of the event is either lost or yet to be rediscovered. Salter died early in 2000 shortly after being interviewed for this thesis: his personal file will be placed in the public domain 30 years after his death. It is to be hoped that later research may find some additional information in Salter's personal file about the events surrounding his enforced departure: the most important result of Salter's departure was that the decline in the quantity of music performance programmes on television was about to be reversed.

By 1963 Salter had purged the output of Music Programmes of almost every element that smacked of populism: Simpson's jazz programmes were finished; Rogers was no longer producing light music programmes; Foy's series *Music for You* in which light music and excerpts from classical ballet and opera were intermingled had been 'killed'. According to Foy, Wheldon regarded the loss of programmes designed to popularise classical music as a grave mistake.<sup>253</sup> as soon as he replaced Salter as the head of department responsible for music performance programmes, he asked Foy for a series which would reinstate the middlebrow programme concept devoted to music. In November 1963 Foy produced the first edition of *Gala Performance*: in its various

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<sup>a</sup> C. Mus. was Controller, Music, who was William Glock. C.P.Tel. was Controller, Programmes, Television who was Stuart Hood.



guises *Gala Performance* continued for 13 years and became a major contributor to music performance programmes on BBC-1.

Independently of each other Barrie Gavin<sup>254</sup> and Ron Isted<sup>255</sup> both asserted that Salter was unconvinced of the place of music performance programmes on television: in this they were probably over-harsh. What is clear from the change in the department's output over the seven years in which he was in charge is that he saw television as a companion medium to radio, the concert hall and the theatre for the dissemination of what he regarded as quality artists and quality performance. The evidence implies that given the choice between more of what he regarded as lower quality and less of higher quality he would invariably have chosen quality over quantity.

## 5.7 The problem with dance

By 1951 the production of dance on television had moved from being an appreciated novelty to being somewhat irritating and frustrating to aficionados: on the first day of the year the dancer and choreographer Celia Franca expressed the professional's frustration at watching dance programmes of the time in a letter to *The News Chronicle*. The producers Bate and Simpson, though they were not specifically named, were neither dancers nor choreographers. Franca pointed out that merely transferring a production from the stage to the television studio was not enough: the television producers had to modify the choreography to fit the television screen and they did not have the proper experience for this.<sup>256</sup> Cyril Beaumont set a more appreciative tone a week later in an article in *The Sunday Times*: he wrote of Bate and Simpson having 'already done much to develop ballet'. As with Franca he wished for 'even more fruitful results' in which television dance would cease to be mere relay but would eventually 'emerge as a distinct art.'<sup>257</sup> There is slight evidence from an appreciative remark made by Dale to Barnes that Beaumont became involved in dance productions on television in which Simpson was the producer<sup>258</sup> and although there is no credit for such collaborations in the *Radio Times* one programme viewed for this thesis has him mentioned on the end credits as 'Artistic Adviser'.

In 1952 George Barnes, Director of Television, approached Dame Ninette de Valois with a view to discussing improving the coverage of dance on television.<sup>259</sup> Dame Ninette was antagonistic to television but she knew that one of her ballerinas, Dale, was



somehow involved and suggested that Barnes talk to her. While she was still a student at the Vic-Wells Ballet Dale had danced in a number of pre-war televised ballets under her family name of Margaret Bolam: thirteen years later in March 1951 she was asked to revive as choreographer one of these ballets, *The Three Bears*, for children's television with Naomi Capon as producer. This collaboration was so successful that Dale and Capon originated a number of ballets for children's television. When Dale met Barnes for lunch on 21st August 1952 Barnes reported that she offered various ways in which dance coverage could be improved:<sup>260</sup> she was particularly keen on television establishing a repertory dance company for six months of each year presenting dance every two weeks in that period. The unexpected outcome of the meeting was that Barnes said that if Dale ever wanted a job in television she was to telephone him. By 1954, when she was 32 years old, Dale was thinking of retiring as a ballerina and she contacted Barnes. Barnes consulted a number of senior television producers about the possibility of appointing Dale as a dance producer: Capon, who had worked closely with Dale as choreographer, predicted to Barnes that Dale would want to take over all dance production on BBC Television, to the exclusion of those general producers who made the occasional dance programme among their wider output.<sup>261</sup> Barnes ignored the advice and invited Dale to join the staff of the BBC: as a result she was taken onto the producers' training reserve and after six months she became a member of Music Programmes. Her appointment to the music department caused her intense irritation: she did not and still does not regard dance as being music and expressed considerable resentment that dance and ballet were being included within this thesis. She would have preferred to become part of Drama Department since she regarded dance as being theatrical rather than musical.<sup>262</sup> Capon's prediction about the creation of a Dale-oriented empire was correct: quite rapidly Dale established herself as the sole producer of complete dance programmes to the near exclusion of Bate and Simpson though not of her old friend Capon in Children's Programmes. The ironic side-effect of this was that there was a decrease in the average number of dance programmes on BBC Television from about 13 a year before her appointment to about nine a year afterwards which was the maximum that even the workaholic Dale could manage.

The unrecorded understanding between Dale and Barnes was that her appointment was not solely for the BBC to acquire an experienced dancer to direct dance programmes.



Dale had an entrée to the Sadler's Wells Ballet – later renamed Royal Ballet – that the existing dance producers Bate and Simpson did not have. At first this meant that Dale employed members of the company on an *ad hoc* basis, programme by programme. After the Royal Ballet signed a contract with the BBC in September 1961 to perform three full length ballets and six one-act ballets over the following three years, complete stage productions were transferred to the studio without this administrative hassle.<sup>263</sup> Salter recalled that when de Valois came into the studio to watch Dale's transmissions she was heard to say that Dale's adaptations were better than her own stage versions:<sup>264</sup> within four years of her appointment Dale was regarded by senior BBC management as 'the most advanced thinker on television ballet' in the world.<sup>265</sup>

## 5.8 The 'Music for You' affair

There was one genre that had been popular before the war and which was to become a departmental battlefield over the first four years of resumed broadcasts. The ambition of some variety conductors to stray into the field of classical music and the belief that the light classics would be popular led to several competing strands of programmes which were almost all originated by Light Entertainment department: they included extracts from works for instrumental soloist and orchestra, dance, opera, operetta and dramatic or comic monologues. For convenience this genre will be called *mixed extracts genre* in this thesis: it could be reasonably argued that the earliest *mixed extracts genre* programmes on television were three pre-war programmes called *The Fantastic Garden* produced by Bate. In post-war programmes of this type the presenter was usually the conductor himself: the three most successful conductor-presenters were Vic Oliver, Geraldo and Eric Robinson.

There were a number of early post-war experiments with programmes in this genre:

- On 14<sup>th</sup> July 1947 *Stars in your Eyes* produced by Munro used the format: the first programme included top dancers Beryl Grey and David Paltenghi; following Munro's breakdown that same month the series was taken over by Michael Mills.
- On 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1947 *Geraldo's Concert Orchestra* was a programme in the same genre with dance, light music, classical music and operetta. Geraldo did not present



the programme himself: Christopher Stone was the billed presenter. Mills also produced this series.

- On 31<sup>st</sup> May 1948 Bate produced the first of an occasional series in the *mixed extracts genre* called *Mirror to Music*. Unlike the other series this did not have a regular conductor, orchestra or presenter: the first programme featured Robinson and 'His Concert Orchestra'; the second featured Geraldo and his Concert Orchestra; the third featured the Philharmonia Orchestra with Muir Matheson; the fourth featured George Melachrino and his orchestra.
- Late in 1948 or early in 1949 another series began in the same genre: *Vic Oliver Introduces* was produced by Bill Ward and featured Oliver, who was a wealthy comedian who had formed his own orchestra.
- Finally on 14<sup>th</sup> September 1951 Bryan Sears produced *Rhapsody* with Robinson and his orchestra: it was billed as *A programme of music, ballet and songs of yesterday and today*. This programme marked a significant change in Robinson's status at least as far as the *Radio Times* was concerned: 'The name of Eric Robinson which usually appears at the end of programme announcements moves this week to the top.'<sup>266</sup> It was to be the start of his career as 'Television's Mr. Music.'<sup>267</sup>

McGivern evidently liked *Rhapsody* best of these programmes because by November 1951 he was in negotiation with the drama producer Eric Fawcett to run two 'pilot' programmes<sup>a</sup> in which Robinson conducted his own orchestra 'brought up to a strength of 33.'<sup>268</sup> The idea was that these programmes would introduce viewers to light music and music from the more popular classical repertory. Despite the fact that Fawcett was nominally a drama producer McGivern gave Wright, the Assistant Head of Music Programmes, departmental responsibility for the programmes; because of the music content the services of Hartley, the Music Organiser, were also to be available. Fawcett was extremely busy so he was also offered an assistant producer to direct the programme which he turned down.<sup>269</sup> These pilot programmes were transmitted under

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<sup>a</sup> Pilots are trial programmes in which various ideas could be investigated and the response of viewers to them evaluated.



the title '*Music for You*' on 28<sup>th</sup> December 1951 and 25<sup>th</sup> January 1952; the Viewer Research Report for the first pilot states

Viewers spent a very happy hour watching this programme. They found it a delightful and well-balanced selection of popular music, presented in a most winning manner by Eric Robinson.<sup>270</sup>

The viewing figure was 219 per 100 families with televisions and an RI of 78, both of them commendably high figures.

After the first pilot programme the Light Entertainment producer Mills wrote to Fawcett in the warmest terms: '...Thought it was the best production of it's (*sic*) type I've ever seen on T.V...Thank God I haven't got to follow it by doing the next one!'<sup>271</sup> The response to both programmes had been so encouraging that McGivern decided to have further programmes at approximately four-weekly intervals. In a long memo Fawcett declined to continue as producer: his ambitions were in the field of drama and he felt that he could not do both.<sup>272</sup> Starting with the edition of 14<sup>th</sup> April 1952 Graeme Muir and, from 5<sup>th</sup> November 1952, Sears produced the next few editions for Light Entertainment department apparently without reference to Music Programmes. The television critic of *The Listener* Philip Hope-Wallace described the programme as

A popular, luscious hour of music, ballet and singing put over – and doubtless in most homes received – *con molto brio*.<sup>a</sup> Mr. Eric Robinson is very much the man for this.<sup>273</sup>

It was as a result of these and other popular broadcasts that Robinson won the Television Society's silver medal in 1952 'for consistently high standard of performance.'<sup>274</sup>

The correspondence goes cold in the archives until 10<sup>th</sup> August 1953 when Wright sent a stinging memo to Robinson in which he tore the 5<sup>th</sup> August edition to shreds:<sup>275</sup> by then the programme that had started with several 'big name' classical artists was looking very tired. The sole exception to this decline was the special *Music for You* which Sears produced on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1953 called *Serenade for a Queen* celebrating the

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<sup>a</sup> *trans.* 'with much liveliness'



coronation of Queen Elizabeth II on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1953 and including three major talents of the time: the dancer Alicia Markova; the pianist Harriet Cohen; and the German soprano Elisabeth Schwarzkopf. Apart from this glittering edition, by October 1953 under Robinson's top billing and Robert Helpmann at number two the next highest billing was the comedian Richard Hearn ('Mr Pastry'); in November 1953 the top artist under Robinson was another presenter of comic monologues Wilfred Pickles. The directing was also felt to be much worse than Fawcett's and this led to some spirited exchanges involving McGivern, Ronnie Waldman (Head of Light Entertainment Department) and Wright.<sup>276</sup> The outcome of the exchanges was that Fawcett was somehow persuaded to return to produce the programmes from February 1954: it was agreed that Fawcett would once more work to Music Programmes on *Music for You* and he produced the first four programmes in 1954. Unfortunately Independent Television had recently been given the go-ahead: one result was that nearly 200 BBC production staff were 'poached' in anticipation of the start of transmissions<sup>277</sup> and one of those poached was Fawcett.<sup>278</sup> While he was working out his notice McGivern and Wright were faced with the problem of finding a successor: it could be surmised that Wright was not going to let the programmes out of his grasp again so none of the Light Entertainment producers were acceptable. In Wright's department were three full producers: Bate, now regarded as lightweight and lazy;<sup>279</sup> Simpson, regarded as hopelessly disorganised; and Foa, only interested in Italian opera. There was also the trainee Foy who was still comparatively inexperienced although she had already made a complex workshop programme about Tchaikovsky's *Francesca da Rimini* with Vic Oliver in September 1953.

In an act of faith Wright suggested Foy for *Music for You*: Foy said that Robinson was appalled. When Foy went to Fawcett's studio in June 1954 she watched the incredibly complex production: scenery was struck and set; artists cued on and off; a large orchestra played; Robinson read links on teleprompt to camera; there was dancing, operetta and chorus. The programme was live since there was no pre-recording of sound tracks in 1954 because of a ban by the Musicians' Union. At the end of the rehearsal Robinson came up to Foy, put his arm round her shoulders and said: 'You see, girl – you could never cope with this.'<sup>280</sup>



This unfriendly comment signalled the start of what is probably the most successful collaboration in the history of Music Programmes: *Music for You* with Robinson and Foy in charge ran for seven years until 1961. Even after commercial television started in 1955 *Music for You* was the only regular classical music programme broadcast at peak times which held its own against anything that what senior BBC management called 'The Competitor' put against it. Foy was given an important subsidiary brief by Wright in addition to directing the studio: she was to get rid of Robinson's orchestra which was little more than an augmented dance band and bring in 'real' orchestras. The thinking behind this was that if Foy wanted to get major artists from the opera, dance and concert world the first thing their agents would ask was 'Which orchestra are you using?' From July 1955 Foy was booking the major London orchestras to play in *Music for You* and the scratch band used for the first four years was relegated to Robinson's appearances in Light Entertainment programmes. This meant that the artists that Foy obtained were quite remarkable: Tito Gobbi, Joan Sutherland, Boris Christoff, Van Cliburn, Jacqueline du Pré (making her television debut at the age of 15), Giuseppe di Stefano, Svetlana Beriosova, Hilde Gueden, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (Schwarzkopf, although booked, did not appear, citing a sore throat), Teresa Berganza, Isaac Stern, John Ogden (before winning the Tchaikovsky Competition) and Yehudi Menuhin among many others.

Foy's function and achievement on the programme is a curious dichotomy which was apparent right from the start: Foy was an ambitious and perceptive producer who knew all the right people and knew how to get the best from stars notorious for their temperamental behaviour. Where she was less sure was in her directing abilities; already by late 1954 McGivern had put his finger on these strengths and weaknesses:

Musically, the programme continues to be high in standard and excellent for the purpose of this programme... Visually, it...is less satisfying... I longed for at least one item or sequence which had been conceived visually – or, at least, a sequence in which there was some visual excitement, or visual beauty...I am talking about television thought. There is little, and there is no evidence that it is being considered.<sup>281</sup>

Foy never escaped from this type of assessment of being conservative and almost dull in her directing as her programmes analysed in Chapter 9 will show. Where Foy had an immediate effect was in curing Robinson of a sickly sycophancy that gave him a curiously unctuous image: out went the 'wonderful singing' and 'superb playing'



comments that invariably followed each act even when they were clearly neither wonderful nor superb. As the critic of the *Evening News* put it ‘...At the mere mention of a famous name he would positively curl up in coy rapture and the viewer would feel almost a cad not to fall over sideways in dutiful ecstasy...’<sup>282</sup> Foy cut out the ‘swooning cackle’ and the programmes were felt to be the better for it. The programme was popular with the public and gained regular audiences of ten million upwards: in consequence it was popular with McGivern, Controller, Programmes (Television) and his successor Kenneth Adam. While Wright was Head of Music Programmes the memos backwards and forwards between Foy and her head of department were amicable, constructive and frequent: about 25% of the memos in the *Music for You* files until 1956 are between Foy and Wright. All this changed after Wright’s heart attack in May 1955 and his replacement by Salter nearly a year later. Why a researcher might feel it happened depends upon whose account is favoured but 40 years after the events the bitterness felt by Salter<sup>283</sup> and Foy<sup>284</sup> was still apparent. What is also clear from the files is that the schism was sudden and early: of the more than 100 memos and letters in the *Music for You* files from 1956 when Salter became Head of Music Programmes to 1961 when the programme was killed, only one was a direct communication between Foy and Salter. From the evidence of the files it is clear that each regarded the other as a non-person.<sup>a</sup>

Salter’s version of events surrounding *Music for You* was as follows: when Salter arrived in Music Programmes he was faced with a popular programme that was presented by a conductor, Eric Robinson, who was able and had a flair for assimilating things at short notice but whose taste was very questionable. Salter had worked with Eric’s older brother Stanford and he said that

[Stanford’s] knowledge of the musical repertoire and his abilities were unquestionable, whereas with Eric...it was largely a question of picking it up by osmosis... [Eric Robinson] was firmly convinced that he didn’t need any kind of supervision or discipline from anybody else.’

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<sup>a</sup> There is a curious contradiction to this antagonism in that when Salter produced and fronted a television programme about Scarlatti in August 1957, *The Father of the Modern Keyboard*, he chose Foy to direct it.



About Foy he was even more scathing:

Paddy Foy herself had two major drawbacks in my eyes: one, musical – she knew about as much as a 15-year-old schoolgirl...she'd been in the elementary...class at the Royal Academy.<sup>a</sup> The second one was that she had no real expertise in camerawork.

Salter claimed that he had remonstrated with her that she never produced a camera script; he believed that she was incapable of writing one. It is a remarkable thing that in the *Music for You* files from when Foy took over the camera scripts are austere in their use of instructions for the cameramen: Foy's style was either very simple or depended upon the innovative skills of the staff she gathered around her. Salter said that Foy and Robinson '...regarded themselves as an independent kingdom and wouldn't take any direction from me...'

Foy's version of events was as follows: Salter was a musician with an outstanding record as a harpsichordist but he was a musical elitist. He had spent his entire administrative career in various branches of radio:<sup>b</sup> he was '...totally unsuited to television...' The problem was that he had never been faced with the necessity to consider the audience and in view of 'The Competitor's' imminent start-up had never had to face competition.<sup>c</sup> Salter '...found it very offensive that the Department that he was head of, should sponsor someone who he didn't regard seriously as a musician...' Stanford Robinson was regarded by Foy as one of the most distinguished musicians and conductors of that period; Eric was the younger brother who had gone into light music and '...people tended to underestimate his talents...' Eric would do variety programmes with artists such as Charlie Chester one night and then *Music for You* the next. Eric's 'matey' approach to classical music struck a chord with viewers and from him they learned that they need not be frightened of it: serious musicians could not equate the

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<sup>a</sup> Foy was a Graduate of the Royal Academy of Music when she joined the BBC and was later elected a Fellow.

<sup>b</sup> In fact, Salter had worked as a freelance music assistant for BBC Television in 1937-9.

<sup>c</sup> Foy's chronology is faulty here – commercial television started in London on 22<sup>nd</sup> Sep 1955; Salter became Head of Music Programmes, Television some seven months later by which time the impact of Independent Television was already being felt. It is true, however, that Salter had never previously worked in a competitive environment.



'matey' with the 'classical'. Soon after Salter took up his post he was seen during a pre-transmission *Music for You* rehearsal

...crawling among the orchestral players and giving them notes...it was a very tactless thing to do...Eric put down the baton and walked out.

Robinson went straight to McGivern's office and said that he would not do the programme any more. McGivern and the Head of Administration agreed that Salter would be ordered from that day never again to enter Robinson's studio and he never did.

From 1954 to 1960 Foy had the support of McGivern; when the latter was promoted to become Deputy Director of Television in 1956 Foy continued to enjoy support from his successor as Controller, Programmes (Television), Kenneth Adam. At the end of 1960 McGivern was sent on sick leave as a result of his deteriorating alcoholism: he was offered a sinecure early in 1961 which he felt was an insult and resigned from the BBC; Adam once more stepped upwards into his empty shoes. Adam's replacement as Controller was Stuart Hood, who came originally from Overseas Broadcasting, and is described by Paul Ferris in *Sir Huge* as aloof and intellectual.<sup>285</sup> Foy said that Hood was an elitist like Salter and

completely agreed with Lionel's attitude towards Eric...who he didn't regard very highly as a conductor. The two of them, together, agreed that this was scandalous and the result was that [*Music for You*] just went.

At the end of the last *Music for You* in the 1960-1 season Robinson announced that a new series would be starting in the autumn; a similar announcement appeared in a *Radio Times* article about the programme in the issue for 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1961. Both of these were untrue and according to Foy strongly worded memos were sent out by Osland, Salter's right-hand man, to the effect that *Music for You* was finished:<sup>286</sup> these memos do not seem to have survived in the BBC's written archives. There is no doubt that even musicians who had shown consistent support for music performance programmes on television were a little embarrassed by *Music for You*: Philip Hope-Wallace in *The Listener* in January 1959 said that the programme was a little like putting medical powder inside jam to make it more easily consumed. He referred to the programme as '...Uncle Robinson's splendidly lavish rag-bag...recently there was one which gave us



snippets of four real top liners but all in such a way that one felt at the end vaguely condescended to.’<sup>287</sup> It is also a curious fact that Robinson’s involvement with music of the heavier varieties was against his own instincts and beliefs. A senior member of Television interviewed him on 16th January 1946: the signature on the Record of Interview is unclear but it is probably that of Maurice Gorham, Controller, Television. During the interview Robinson is reported as saying ‘...[Robinson] thought that [before the war] undue stress was placed on serious music that did not make good television entertainment.’<sup>288</sup>

A vigorous crusade to get *Music for You* reinstated was mounted in the *Daily Mail* by Peter Black: he described the programme as one that never departed from its objective ‘to offer the best in music performed as well as could be and presented in a friendly manner.’<sup>289</sup> Despite support from his readers the effect on the BBC’s management, especially Salter and Osland, appears to have been negligible. Robinson continued to present his popular, easy listening programmes: Light Entertainment Department sponsored them and they were usually produced by Sears. Robinson appeared in several successful series of programmes under a variety of titles such as *Melodies for You* and *Eric Robinson Presents*: it would appear that these series were mildly down-market versions of *Music for You*. In the late 1960s Robinson suffered a series of minor strokes and ceased to make any contribution to television from then onwards; he died in 1974.

When interviewed for this thesis Foy said that all telerecordings of *Music for You* had been systematically destroyed; research had already shown that the BBC’s film and videotape database, INFAX, listed two telerecordings of editions of *Music for You* but when these were viewed they turned out to be extracts which had been made for other programmes: the original complete telerecorded programmes no longer seem to exist. What had been assumed to be Foy’s residual paranoia about Salter and Osland’s determination permanently to kill *Music for You* would appear to have some basis in fact.

## **5.9 The Television Orchestra**

Before the war the BBC had employed a part-time orchestra of some 22 players which was responsible for accompanying all the musical acts on television whether they were concertos, opera, dance or variety. After the war there was some discussion about



reinstating a Television Orchestra. Only eight players of the original Television Orchestra were still available and so management discussed the possibility of taking over an existing commercial orchestra: Jack Payne's orchestra was in financial difficulties and was seen as a cheap possibility. When this idea fell through, Geraldo, who was to become a popular performer in television variety shows, pressed hard for his own orchestra to be the new television orchestra. Unfortunately for him many of the casual musicians used in television shows from the restart of television broadcasting were provided by the George Melachrino Organisation in which Eric Robinson was a partner: as a result of this they gained what appeared to be a stranglehold on the employment of freelance musicians on television. There was a most indignant exposé in the *Melody Maker* of what appeared to be a cosy arrangement between the BBC and the Melachrino Organisation to the exclusion of other talented musicians and bands.<sup>290</sup>

Once post-war television schedules settled down, it became clear that only the variety show producer, Harry Pringle, was using orchestras to any extent: Bate, Munro and Madden, who produced magazine programmes, occasionally used them but not enough to justify a permanent orchestra on the same basis as pre-war. Late in 1946 Denis Johnson, Television Programme Director, sent a circular to all television producers asking for their opinion about the reinstatement of a television orchestra: the suggestion was for an orchestra of ten players conducted by Robinson. During the war Robinson, who had played second violin and guitar in the Television Orchestra when it was first formed in 1936, took over a dance band called the Blue Rockets: he first appeared on post-war television conducting the Blue Rockets Dance Orchestra on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1946 and soon afterwards changed its name to the Eric Robinson Orchestra. Opinion was divided about the reinstatement of a television orchestra with the strongest opinions in favour being expressed by Desmond Davis and Bate both of whom had experience of music broadcasts. Davis expressed strong reservations about Robinson's ability to cope with serious music: he '...would hardly care to use the orchestra for any of my shows if it was under the direction of somebody like Eric Robinson...he has not got the taste or the intellectual qualifications required.'<sup>291</sup> Jan Bussell, who produced puppet programmes, Michael Barry, who produced variety programmes, and Fawcett, who was a drama producer who produced the occasional opera, all wrote in favour of the ten-piece orchestra augmented when necessary. Despite Davis' reservations Maurice



Gorham, Controller, Television decided that Robinson's organisation should be asked to provide a ten-piece orchestra for television shows though '...we should not call the orchestra The Television Orchestra and Eric Robinson would not be Television Music Director'<sup>292</sup> This is slightly curious because Robinson appears in the BBC's May 1948 staff list as 'Conductor, Television Orchestra' a post he held until 1956: the Robinson grip on television music was slowly tightening. In 1950 in the middle of all these discussions the BBC moved its most demanding programmes into the newly acquired film studios at Lime Grove in Shepherd's Bush, West London. Although this complex of five studios had hitherto been used for commercial feature films four of them were quickly converted to electronic television studios: the BBC shot virtually no film in them. (One studio was used exclusively for storing scenery.) Even after the Alexandra Palace studios had been closed for general programmes in 1954 BBC Television had gone from having two small operational studios of 195 square metres floor area to four medium to large studios ranging from 246 to 892 square metres floor area.<sup>293</sup> It became apparent that for the more ambitious programmes now possible variety programmes were going to need to use an orchestra of some 35 players and dance and opera would need at least 50 players. On 17<sup>th</sup> April 1952 the *Daily Mirror* carried an item stating that 'The BBC plans to have a permanent television orchestra' which was premature. Once again the problem was the Musicians Union with the issue of *Melody Maker* of 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1952 summarising the problems though the article reads like a briefing from the BBC's very effective press department: the general practice outside the BBC was that if a musician was offered an engagement at the same time as he was supposed to be rehearsing he would arrange for a deputy to attend the rehearsal; the booked musician would still attend the performance and pocket the performance part of the fee while the deputy would pocket the very much smaller rehearsal part of the fee. The BBC insisted that musicians booked for shows carrying reasonable rates of remuneration should attend all rehearsals: the MU felt that the fees for rehearsals were unreasonable for top musicians and the only solution was to create permanent, salaried ensembles. There was no possibility of the BBC employing a permanent television orchestra of an appropriate size under the conditions of service demanded by the MU so in March 1954 the proposal was officially dropped.



## CHAPTER 6 MUSIC PROGRAMMES: 1964-1982

*There may never have been a real golden age, but, compared to the flabby unadventurousness of television in the 1990s, the 1960s certainly felt like one... We cared about the audience, but did not think this meant giving them only what they wanted or knew about already. For all its limitations, television could bring great artists into people's homes and allow them to demonstrate what art meant to them and why it mattered, and the audience responded in numbers that far outran attendance at concerts or opera. (Sir John Drummond, former Assistant Head of Music and Arts, BBC Television, order of sentences changed.)<sup>294</sup>*

### 6.1 The creation of BBC-2

In 1960 the Conservative government set up a committee under Sir Harry Pilkington to make recommendations about the future of British television broadcasting: there was a two-fold incentive for this. First, the BBC was pressing hard to be given a second television channel to enable it to broaden its output. Commercial television started in London in 1955 and spread slowly first to the other large metropolitan areas then to the rural areas of the United Kingdom. There was a clear feeling that in order even to maintain the BBC's overall viewing figure at 30%, to which low figure BBC viewing had fallen by the late 1950s, the Corporation had to match what were perceived by the BBC hierarchy as 'low-brow' programmes on commercial television with 'low-brow' programmes of its own.<sup>295</sup> It was felt that a second channel would be needed in order to cater for minorities including music lovers without further erosion of the viewing base. Throughout the late 1950s the BBC maintained around 30% of its programmes in peak viewing time as 'serious' programmes; Independent Television had about 10% of its peak viewing time programmes in the 'serious' category.<sup>296</sup> The definition of 'serious' was that of the BBC and was not necessarily accepted by the Independents but it included current affairs programmes, news, single plays, classic plays and documentary features. At the same time Independent Television was showing advertising magazines (understandably), film excerpts, real life serials, westerns, comedy series, and crime films and series. It was only in light entertainment shows and religious programmes that there was parity between the two rival networks.<sup>297</sup> The BBC did not want to lose serious programmes from its peak viewing time and a second channel would give it an alternative outlet for at least some of them.<sup>298</sup> The second incentive for establishing the Pilkington committee was that the franchises of the existing Independent Television



contractors which had been awarded in 1955 for a period of nine years would be coming up for renewal in 1964.

Even before the government had announced the setting up of the Pilkington committee the BBC had started thinking about the logistical and programming implications of a second channel. One of the BBC's strongest arguments for getting the new channel was that a third channel given to commercial interests would mean three indistinguishable channels chasing the same audience by means of 'low-brow' programming.<sup>299</sup> The impression given by examining the BBC's archive files is that there seemed to have been no doubt in any quarter of the BBC that the second channel, if given to the BBC, would have a distinct character and would be complementary to BBC-1. Both channels would feature mixed programming and it was seen as important that BBC-2 should not become a cultural backwater where all the worthy but unpopular programmes from BBC-1 could be dumped. This thesis is not the place for a detailed analysis of the submissions to Pilkington and their outcome: Crisell in *An Introductory History of British Broadcasting* covers the ground as succinctly as anyone,<sup>300</sup> Briggs in *The BBC – the first 50 years* gives a more detailed account though with a greater emphasis on the BBC's submissions.<sup>301</sup> The Pilkington Report was published in 1962 and included the observation that Independent Television had 'failed to realize the purposes of broadcasting.'<sup>302</sup> Following extensive parliamentary modifications the BBC gained its second channel: BBC-2. Despite pressure from the government and manufacturers of television sets the BBC stuck to what it felt was a realistic schedule and refused to start the service when the government wanted, in autumn 1963, opening instead in April 1964.

Before the channel controllers had been appointed – this seems to have happened at the beginning of 1963 – most of the theoretical work came from Leonard Miall and a team appointed to plan the new channel. The earliest substantial paper in the BBC's archive dealing with the new second channel is called 'Towards a second channel by Autumn 1963' and was submitted by Miall on 11<sup>th</sup> July 1962.<sup>303</sup> While programme content was not neglected it was the technical problems that most exercised Miall and other senior members of BBC Television: the biggest problem was that the new service would not use the existing 405-line system which British television had been using since 1936 but



use a new international system of 625 lines. Television Centre, Lime Grove, regional centres and all the existing outside broadcast equipment were 405-line and would be impossible to convert in time: the lack of resources coloured the planning of programmes. It was anticipated that at the start of BBC-2 there would be three hours of broadcasting each weekday evening and five hours each weekend evening: each of the five weekday evenings would have to be built around what became known as the 'main dish', a programme lasting from 60 to 90 minutes; smaller dishes to make up the three hours total would surround this main dish. The main problem with this plan was that programmes lasting 90 minutes are difficult to find and come from a very narrow set of genres: drama, opera, variety, feature films, large scale outside broadcasts originated by the BBC and major events (including sport).<sup>304</sup> For the purposes of this thesis it should be noted that by 1962 the amount of music performance on BBC Television was between 1.5% and 2% of the total: if the balance of programmes on BBC-2 was to be the same as on the existing single channel – and that, broadly, was the plan – BBC-2 would also devote 2% of its output to music performance. Since the new channel was proposing to transmit for 25 hours a week, BBC-2 would have been expected *pro rata* to carry an average of 30 minutes music performance per week. A major opera will last upwards of two hours which represents four weeks' allocation of music performance time: it follows that the inclusion of opera in Miall's list amounts to the equivalent of less than one opera a month as the total contribution from Music Programmes to the new schedule.

By 9<sup>th</sup> October 1962 Miall was consolidating discussions that had followed the paper outlined above: not only was he considering the technical side but he was able to give greater space to programming in a consultative paper 'The Extension of Television'. It was still anticipated that there would be 25 hours of fresh material weekly: there would be five hours of elaborate entertainment programmes each week including 'serious' music. Miall felt that

...There would be space for more kinds of Music programmes, though it is unlikely that much more full-scale Ballet and Opera could be mounted than at present.<sup>305</sup>

At the beginning of 1963 Michael Peacock had been appointed Controller, BBC-2 (though at that stage his title was Chief of Programmes (BBC-2)). On 4<sup>th</sup> July 1963 an



unnamed source, presumed to be Peacock, issued a paper called 'BBC-2: First Draft Master Pattern.' As with Miall the previous year Peacock (?) did not see music being other than a marginal player on BBC-2: his proposed schedule included a fortnightly classical music programme with a 60 minute music feature alternating with a 90 minute 'Big Music Show' (assumed to be dance, opera or a major concert relay.)<sup>306</sup> The First Draft Master Pattern saw music performance supplying some 2.5% of the proposed output. By 8<sup>th</sup> August the 'Third Draft Pattern' had recognised that classical music could make a much greater contribution: the proposed content had more than doubled with a monthly 60-minute classical music programme, a monthly or bi-monthly 90-minute 'Major Music Production' and a weekly music programme provisionally timed at 35 minutes.<sup>307</sup> Music performance was now seen as supplying about 5% of the new channel's output. The reason for this increase is not entirely clear: one reason might be that the difficulties involved in supplying half a concert running for 45 minutes are little different from supplying a whole concert running at 90 minutes since the costs are largely unchanged while the efficiency of using a studio or outside broadcast unit is nearly doubled. As mentioned above the availability of studios and outside broadcast units was severely limited at the start of BBC-2 and so maximising use of these facilities could have been *force majeure*.

Peacock was the first controller of any BBC radio or television channel who turned away from a central programming concept of John Reith. When Reith started the first radio broadcasts it was pivotal to his philosophy that programmes should be freely mixed: the idea was that someone interested in sport, for example, might turn on the radio 'to warm up' ten minutes before a football relay started and hear the end of a string quartet. By this means listeners would gain unexpected pleasure from what would later be called 'serendipity': more importantly a small number of them would have their horizons broadened and would, perhaps, look out the next broadcast of a string quartet.<sup>308</sup> Peacock was radical in his thoughts for BBC-2: he originally had themed evenings which he called the 'Seven Faces of the Week'. Partly this was in response to a government request that the new channel should have a substantial educational element: Peacock catered for this by creating 'Tuesday Term' in which the bulk of the broadcasts on a Tuesday evening were educational. Another night was 'Family Entertainment Night'; another catered for hobbies; another was devoted to repeats (from



both channels) and so on. The policy was a disaster: instead of encouraging serendipity it seemed to create ghettos. It could be argued that a viewer who was not part of a conventional family would ignore all the programmes on 'Family Entertainment Night' because of the label; similarly one who felt he did not want to be educated did not even read the billings in *Radio Times* for programmes in 'Tuesday Term'. By August 1964 Peacock had abandoned 'Seven Faces of the Week' and returned to Reithian mixed programming except on Tuesdays which remained educational in deference to the government: it is arguable that if the Tuesday educational evening had also been abandoned its natural successor, the Open University, might have had much greater difficulty in becoming established. In 1964 the music 'ghetto' was on Thursday evening and from start-up to September 1964 when the ghetto was abandoned there was a music performance programme nearly every Thursday; in addition there were 28 'Big Music Shows' from April to the end of the year which was nearly one a week. As envisaged, BBC-2 was providing mixed programming that was complementary to BBC-1's. The music output on BBC-2 had not been poached from BBC-1: in 1963 there were 52 classical music performance programmes on BBC Television's single channel; in 1964 there were 48 classical music performance programmes on BBC-1 and 47 on BBC-2.

## **6.2 The rise to power of Wheldon and Burton**

As mentioned in 5.6.1 Huw Wheldon had been made Head of Documentary and Music Programmes in 1963. Wheldon was not a programme maker; according to Gavin he probably did not know how to direct but Gavin said he was 'The best executive producer I have ever worked for or seen working, in my life.'<sup>309</sup> Gavin suspected that he knew very little about the arts, particularly music, but he had a feeling for it: his strength was that 'he would ask the questions that an intelligent and curious audience would want to ask themselves.'<sup>310</sup> In order to mollify the music lobby Humphrey Burton was promoted to Senior Producer, Music Programmes with specific responsibility for planning the music output on the new channel. Burton had read music for two years at Cambridge before switching to history for his final year; after graduating in 1954 he gained a bursary from the French government to study the spread of music from Paris to the provinces in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In 1955 he joined the BBC as a studio manager in radio with the intention of specialising in music. A month after *Monitor* started in February 1958 Burton was recruited to Talks and Documentaries



Department by Grace Wyndham Goldie: he joined the *Monitor* production team with a specifically musical brief to help freelance directors such as Ken Russell and John Schlesinger. Like many of the *Monitor* producers, he maintained a peculiarly myopic attitude towards the music performance programmes being produced by Music Productions and Outside Broadcasts under Salter's leadership. It was only with the amalgamation of the music documentary producers and the music performance producers under Burton that he started to take a close interest in the presentation of music performance on television.<sup>311</sup> By the spring of 1965 Burton was already able to write an authoritative article about presenting music on television. While some of the article appears to show unattributed dependence on previously published works by Salter and Craxton, Burton insists that he had not seen them: even without this link it is clear that Burton had very quickly understood the problems and delights of devising images for the presentation of music performance on television.<sup>312</sup>

In 1965 Stuart Hood abruptly resigned as the most senior member of BBC Television responsible for programmes – his title was Controller, Programmes (Television) (C.P.Tel.): his logical replacement should have been selected from the next bureaucratic layer down in BBC Television which would have been one of the Controllers responsible for BBC-1 and BBC-2, Donald Baverstock and Michael Peacock respectively. Instead their subordinate Huw Wheldon, still Head of Documentary and Music Programmes, leapfrogged over them to become C.P.Tel. From his days as Head of the Welsh Arts Council Wheldon had been well connected in high places: he was by no means the first choice for C.P.Tel. but as the more obvious contenders were discreetly interviewed and rejected his connections realised that the field had narrowed itself down to one man. A more detailed account of the curiously Byzantine proceedings can be found in Wheldon's biography.<sup>313</sup> There were a number of repercussions to Wheldon's appointment. First, Baverstock resigned and Peacock was moved to BBC-1; Peacock's replacement as Controller, BBC-2 was David Attenborough who was probably the favourite controller of BBC-2 throughout its more than 30 years' existence, certainly among programme makers.<sup>314</sup> Next, Documentary and Music Programmes was split into two departments, one responsible for the arts and the other responsible for all other types of documentaries. The makers of arts programmes of all sorts became members of a new department called Music and Arts: its new Head was



Humphrey Burton who was Wheldon's favourite protégé. As a result of this appointment his influence on the portrayal of the arts on television was to be immense: in particular he encouraged the rapid expansion of all areas of music on television including performance programmes and others not central to this thesis including documentaries, workshops and master classes.

Wheldon had already stepped down as editor of *Monitor* to make way for Dr. Jonathan Miller under whose editorship it 'ground to a standstill' according to Drummond.<sup>315</sup> As soon as Peacock took over BBC-1 the series was axed, presumably with Wheldon's blessing: it was replaced with weekly single subject documentaries which was not entirely successful. The problem was that Sunday evening had been the regular time for both *Monitor* and the main music performance broadcasts on an alternating basis; with the Sunday documentary now being weekly, the music broadcasts were pushed to a weekday evening. The viewers did not like this and by the autumn of 1966 Burton and Peacock had re-instated the Sunday evening music performance programmes on BBC-1.

The presence of Wheldon as Controller, Programmes (Television) signalled the start of a golden age for the arts on BBC Television. Gavin perceptively pointed out that there is always a dominant discipline in television: at one time it might be News; at another it might be Current Affairs; yet again it might be Light Entertainment or Sport. With Wheldon in charge of the whole of BBC Television and Attenborough heading BBC-2 it was the Arts that came to the fore. Gavin said

It was a time when...the Arts part of the BBC was the most prominent part of it, certainly the most influential part, in the sense that we were more favourably looked upon. I think we were given enough scope, or, if you like, enough rope, to hang ourselves, which we surely did. [Wheldon] cared about these things. He may not have known about what was what but he wanted it to happen, and, by Gosh, it did happen.<sup>316</sup>

There was one final outcome from the Pilkington committee's recommendations that was to have a profound effect on the output of music on BBC Television: when the Independent Television franchises were eventually awarded in 1967 the contractors were thoroughly shaken up to such an extent that two of them – Rediffusion Television and Television Wales and West – lost their franchises. A new company, London Weekend Television (LWT), gained the lucrative franchise in the capital for Saturdays



and Sundays on the basis that it would improve public taste by its proposal for more elevated programming policies.<sup>317</sup> One of several high profile members of the BBC's hierarchy who left to become departmental heads at LWT was Humphrey Burton; his contribution to the elevation of public taste would eventually be the arts series called *Aquarius* which was based very much on *Monitor* where he had started his television career. Public taste did not want to be elevated on Independent Television: the lack of interest among the public in the 'elevated' programmes coming out of LWT was reflected by contractors in other parts of the United Kingdom refusing to purchase LWT programmes for re-broadcast. After a disastrous beginning LWT was eventually rescued by Rupert Murdoch and others in 1970 and restructured to give the public what it wanted. Burton was one of the victims of the putsch of 1970: it marked the abandonment of the concept of systematically elevating the taste of viewers of Independent Television.

There was a curious disdain among the BBC's arts programme makers towards Independent Television. In the fields of entertainment and popular drama the commercial companies were scoring considerable successes over the BBC from the start of broadcasting in 1955: there was a steady drift in viewing towards commercial television until the advent of BBC-2 which is made obvious in adverse viewing figures, particularly from 1955 to 1959. In the arts the contribution of Independent Television was limited and of little significance: Briggs quotes Huw Wheldon as saying 'I was certainly in competition, but my competitors were my colleagues, not the formal competitors of another network.'<sup>318</sup> This disdain was perceived as extending to external criticism as well as external competition: Anthony Burgess, who was the television critic of *The Listener* from 1963 until June 1965, expressed this in his valedictory article:

One thing I'm now quite sure of is that criticism has not the slightest effect on the things criticised, and that dear Huw Wheldon has modified my sensibility far more than I could ever modify his, or the sensibilities of those who now work under him.<sup>319</sup>

### **6.3 The staffing of Music Programmes**

When Huw Wheldon became Head of Documentary and Music Programmes, Television, in August 1963 he inherited four full producers from the defunct Music



Programmes department; he was also able to call on the services of producers from Outside Broadcast Department for relays away from the studio. The longest serving member of the department was Foy: she was a graduate of the Royal Academy of Music who assiduously maintained a network of contacts among both senior BBC staff and the finest musicians in the world. As a producer she was highly regarded but was felt to be unimaginative as a director: Burton characterised her directing as 'safe, traditional, stodgy...effective, nevertheless.'<sup>320</sup> The field in which she was pre-eminent was in popularising music. From 1963 her main output was the irregular series *Gala Performance* in which excerpts from opera, dance and concert music were presented for a middlebrow audience and the series *Profile in Music* in which the autobiographical interview of a musician was illustrated by studio performances by that same musician.

The next longest serving music performance producer was Dale: she was a former Sadler's Wells Ballet ballerina and in 1963 probably the most highly respected producer of television dance programmes in the world. Her output was confined to dance and ballet and until the arrival of her protégé Peter Wright in 1966 she fiercely defended her right to monopolise the field. According to Burton Dale served a rather lonely existence in Wheldon's department: Burton felt that he maintained a much more friendly and productive relationship with her than did Wheldon.<sup>321</sup> The evidence of *Radio Times* does not seem to support this conjecture; in his autobiography Drummond goes even further in saying that Dale was 'strongly supported' by Wheldon.<sup>322</sup> Dale produced two or three full-length ballets in the studios in each of the years 1960 to 1967: the only exceptional year was 1966 when Dale attempted to create a television ballet repertory company for a series of twelve specially created ballets under the series title *Zodiac* to be broadcast monthly coincident with the astrological sign of the date. According to Burton this was 'a very interesting series';<sup>323</sup> it was a ratings disaster being badly received both by the public and by senior management in BBC Television and it was axed after six editions.

Charles Rogers worked briefly for Wheldon: Rogers' main area of production had been light music of quality, particularly shows and musicals; he had also helped on operas in the 1950s and produced *La Traviata* shortly before leaving the BBC in October 1964.



The fourth producer was Walter Todds. He developed a major series of prestigious concerts which would run for six seasons firstly as *Television Concert Hall* (1959 - 1960) and later as *International Concert Hall* (1960 - 1966) and was probably the series that first demonstrated Salter's philosophy of directing music performance that will form the core of Chapter 7 of this thesis. Burton noted that one striking aspect of Todds' directing was that uniquely among his colleagues of the time he consciously analysed the music he was presenting and attempted to produce a visual sequence that reflected this analysis.<sup>324</sup> Todds' abilities were recognised in June 1961 when he was promoted from the regular salary grid of a staff producer to holding what was known in the BBC as a 'personal' grade '...in recognition of the exceptional and consistently high standard of your work...'<sup>325</sup> Two other series would establish Todds' name as a major influence in the field of television music: in association with Burton and the pianist Joseph Cooper he created the quiz *Face the Music* (1966 - 1984)<sup>a</sup> which lies outside this thesis; in association with Burton and me he was also instrumental in the creation of the television music competition *Young Musician of the Year* (1978 - ) which is described in more detail in 6.5.1.

There was a fifth producer on the payroll of the defunct Music Programmes: Simpson. According to Foy by 1964 he was a rather sad shadow of his former self who was no longer making full-length programmes but producing the weekly television appeals for charities; he died of cancer in 1968 while still in service.<sup>326</sup>

The most influential producer from Outside Broadcasts was Antony Craxton: his contribution to the philosophy of presenting music performance on television was probably as important as Salter's and this philosophy will also be analysed later in this thesis.

After Salter was ousted with the formation of Documentary and Music Programmes Department and the opening of BBC-2 the output of music performance programmes almost doubled: in order to cope with this sudden demand for more hours of output some former members of Documentary and Talks Department supplemented some of

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<sup>a</sup> Todds had earlier created a radio music quiz *Call the Tune* (1954).



the duties of the existing music producers. First, Burton became Executive Producer with a specific brief for music which, for Wheldon, was part of his new empire that he was happy to devolve to a suitably qualified underling. Burton until this point had been a maker of documentaries often working as Ken Russell's 'minder' to tame his more outrageous ideas.<sup>a</sup> Burton's first act as Executive Producer was to form a Music Group which would include both performance producers and documentary producers; it was the first time in television's history that these two elements would be working together: included within this group were John Drummond, Herbert Chappell, Barrie Gavin and Todds, as well as Burton himself.<sup>327</sup> Shortly before the merger Burton had made his first attempt at televising music performance in *Les structures sonores* transmitted on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1963 though this was an experimental spin-off from *Monitor*. His first freestanding performance programme of a more conventional kind came a year later in a recital by Peter Pears and Benjamin Britten which was transmitted on 21st June 1964 with Todds as the producer: this was to be the start of a career that would make Burton one of the most respected and requested directors of music performance programmes around the world.

When Documentary and Music Department was split in 1965 to give birth to the new Music and Arts Department four producers who wished to produce music programmes became part of the new department: Francis Coleman, Anthony Wilkinson, Drummond and Gavin. Coleman and Wilkinson were more prolific in the field of film documentaries while another producer whose direct contribution to the field of music performance programmes was marginal was Drummond. He has always held that his career was inhibited by Wheldon's dislike of him: some details are given in Paul Ferris' biography of Wheldon. Drummond had joined the BBC in the Paris office while still 'a prissy young academic', Drummond's own description of himself; he was interviewed for a job on *Monitor* but turned down and it was only when Burton became Head of Music and Arts that Drummond was able to move from administration to programme making.<sup>328</sup> Drummond received just two credits in *Radio Times* as a director of performance programmes: a 35 minute recital by the Tortelier family in 1964 and a

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<sup>a</sup> Burton, for example, was responsible for the commentary and some of the screenplay in Russell's *Elgar*.



shared opera/dance programme in 1968; Drummond had already made a highly praised series of master classes with Paul Tortelier and the recital seems to have been a spin-off from those.

Gavin had been an assistant film editor to the legendary Alan Tyrer: Tyrer had been responsible for editing many of the finest films on *Monitor* including several produced by Ken Russell. Gavin's musical insights came to the attention of Wheldon and Burton and he recalls how he was recruited to become an assistant producer in Music and Arts Department: Burton asked him if he would like to become one of his directors and Gavin protested that he was not a musician. Burton replied 'I'm surrounded by musicians who can't make programmes; maybe it will work the other way round.'<sup>329</sup> Gavin was an experimental director who was scathing in the early 1970s about what he called the 'tune chasers': those producers of performance programmes who followed the philosophy expounded by Salter to be discussed in more detail in chapter 7. Gavin felt that many in the department were showing the symptoms of those who 'spend [their] life in a monastery...or indeed being a long-term prisoner' and are unable to survive in the outside world.<sup>a 330</sup>

In the field of outside broadcasts it is possible that Burton was unhappy about relying on a single director, Antony Craxton, who was not too far from retirement. A number of other outside broadcast directors had been tried for music relays: Robin Scott (15 *Radio Times* classical music credits), Derek Burrell-Davies (four *Radio Times* classical music credits) and Brian Johnson (nine *Radio Times* classical music credits) were eminent events directors in their own right but do not seem to have been particularly successful. One director was successful: John Vernon had joined BBC Television as an outside broadcast stage manager in 1951 and after a distinguished career working on non-musical events became established as a director of music performance outside broadcasts. Vernon was the antithesis of Salter's description of a good director of music performance on television: 'a television music producer had to be a musician with a

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<sup>a</sup> Gavin resigned from the BBC in 1971 to become a freelance documentary director of some distinction. He formed a fruitful relationship with the composer/conductor Pierre Boulez in the form of a number of documentary programmes outside the scope of this thesis. It is ironic that in the 1980s and, particularly, the 1990s onwards he would become one of Europe's foremost 'tune chasers'.



visual sense.’<sup>331</sup> Vernon was an outside broadcast director who had a love of music and especially dance but for the whole of his television career he was unable to read music with anything like the fluency that Salter would have expected: he still became one of the most prolific directors of outside broadcast relays of music performance of all time. His first *Radio Times* credit for a music performance programme was for excerpts from the 1962 production of *The Pirates of Penzance* from Her Majesty’s Theatre. Vernon was active in the field of music performance programmes from 1962 until his retirement in the 1980s: most of his music productions were relays of dance or opera productions from theatres or concert halls.

Before Burton left the BBC in 1967 to become a departmental head at London Weekend Television he was instrumental in a number of important appointments. First he recognised Walter Todds’ considerable powers of organisation: as a result of this recognition Todds became Senior Producer, Music which was the post he would hold with distinction until he retired in 1980. Next Burton accepted into his department a current affairs producer, Kenneth Corden, who was surplus to requirements. Corden tended to be conservative in his production and direction: his main impact in music productions was as the editor of a number of important series. He had notable successes in his editorial leadership of relays from the Promenade Concerts and *The Leeds International Pianoforte Competition* (1975 - ) with directors such as Greenberg and me. Quite the opposite to the conservative Corden was Christopher Nupen: Burton characterised Nupen as a mercurial director who disliked and bridled against supervision and BBC bureaucracy. Nupen joined television from radio for a few months but disliked the conditions and was fairly opinionated during his stay.<sup>332</sup> Nonetheless his talent for television was recognised and he was encouraged to return: he made a number of distinguished films, notably a film concerning the rehearsal and performance of Schubert’s *Trout Quintet* (1970) that gained both praise and criticism. The last producer to be recruited by Burton to Music and Arts before his departure to LWT was Herbert Chappell who had read Music at Oxford and had studied composition under Egon Wellecz. He was a composer of some distinction in the light music field with a number of broadcast signature tunes to his name and who had joined the BBC as a radio schools producer: as with Nupen he did not enjoy the television experience at first. His approach to music on television was always that of the populariser: his documentary programmes



were often praised for their common touch.<sup>333</sup> A different perspective was offered by Gavin who said that if Chappell had ‘a choice between a hard decision and making an easy joke, he took the easy joke.’ In Gavin’s opinion this glib approach to programme making ‘eroded his work altogether’: Chappell seemed to have decided to embrace ‘entertainment’ while at the same time abandoning ‘information and education’ and this ‘frivolous approach...ruined his career’ in Gavin’s view.<sup>334</sup>

The most significant appointment in the period 1964 to 1967 was not in Burton’s department but was in Outside Broadcast Department. The failure to find enough events directors with musical awareness and ability led to the appointment of the man who has best encapsulated the Salter philosophy of the presentation of music performance for the past 30 years: Brian Large. Dr. Large was a young academic with a doctorate gained in the field of Czech music; he was recruited to outside broadcast department in 1965 and was influenced in music performance presentation by Craxton: in interview Craxton claimed to have trained Large.<sup>335</sup> By September of that year Large was already able to direct a concert in which he demonstrated his outstanding abilities: this was a live concert performance on 14<sup>th</sup> September 1965 of Stravinsky’s *Firebird* conducted by the composer with which Large established himself at the top of the music directors’ ladder, a position that he has not vacated into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>336</sup> Large encapsulated all that Salter and Craxton desired from a director of music performance programmes: he was well qualified musically and quickly learned the language and grammar of television production. Gavin said that Large was ‘the most televisual [music performance director who] brought a different standard to the televising of performance music.’<sup>337</sup> Large himself paraphrased one of Craxton’s axioms and stated that only one person should know the musical score better than the television director and that was the conductor.

#### **6.4 The Culshaw era**

Burton said that senior management in the BBC seemed to have felt that it would not be possible to find a replacement for him as Head of Music and Arts. The department was therefore divided into two parts: the larger became Arts Features under Stephen Hearst, who had been Burton’s second-in-command; the smaller became Music Programmes and would become responsible for music programmes of all kinds.<sup>338</sup> According to Chappell the new music department was in a curious position as far as appointing a



head from within the disbanded Music and Arts Department was concerned. The musically aware staff fell into two clear groups: one group was of staff members who were probably too old for promotion (Dale, Foy, Osland, Todds and Simpson);<sup>a</sup> the other group was of staff members who were too inexperienced (Drummond, Nupen, Chappell himself, and Gavin.) Burton consulted his staff about a successor and one man seemed to be acceptable to everyone: that man was John Culshaw.<sup>339</sup>

It is necessary to go back to 1965 to discover another link in the chain that led to John Culshaw taking over as Head of Television Music Programmes: in that year David Frost confidentially approached Burton to see if he was willing to become part of the team bidding for the weekend franchise for commercial television in London which was due to be awarded in 1967; Burton agreed to become an unnamed member of the bidding team. In 1966 when it looked as if the bid would go ahead Burton sounded out Culshaw to see if he might be interested in taking over Burton's music responsibilities at BBC Television. Culshaw was the star record producer on Decca's music staff who had received accolades for his pioneering sound recording techniques particularly in the recording of Wagner's *Ring* cycle.<sup>b</sup> It was becoming apparent to Culshaw that he had probably exhausted his promotional opportunities within Decca and that it might be interesting to find challenges elsewhere. Burton and Drummond had worked closely with Culshaw during the shooting of *The Golden Ring* (1965) which was a *Monitor* special about the recording of the final part of the *Ring* cycle, *Götterdämmerung*, conducted by Sir Georg Solti in Vienna; Culshaw had also distinguished himself by acting as interviewer in a series of television programmes featuring that same irascible conductor Solti. Culshaw had already joined the BBC's Central Music Advisory Committee early in 1967 so he was known to many senior figures in BBC management despite only having had time to attend one meeting of the committee.

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<sup>a</sup> Chappell also said that, at the time, the appointment of a female head was inconceivable.

<sup>b</sup> The commitment to vinyl disc of the four operas in Wagner's *Ring* cycle was the culmination of Culshaw's recording career. His autobiography, completed by Erik Smith after Culshaw's death, was aptly entitled *Putting the Record Straight* and, unfortunately, ends in 1967 just before he joined the BBC.



When Burton realised that the LWT bid had been successful and that he would be obliged to leave the BBC rather rapidly he passed Culshaw's name to Attenborough. Burton's argument was that the new Music Programmes department would gain from being headed by a man who had shown that he had a strong personality, big ideas, an international reputation and a curriculum of major achievements.<sup>340</sup> There was also Culshaw's enthusiasm for the possibility of developing stereophonic sound so that it became an integral part of the television signal: one of Culshaw's professed aims was to dispense with the lamentably bad sound reproduction on domestic television sets of the time.<sup>341</sup> A final reason for Culshaw's appointment was his close friendship with Benjamin Britten which culminated in the creation of the television opera *Owen Wingrave* (1971). Culshaw was appointed as Burton's replacement within a week of the latter's departure in 1967, taking up his appointment the following autumn: he was the first person from outside the BBC to be appointed to head the television department responsible for music broadcasts. In the event the appointment turned out to be much less successful than Burton had hoped.<sup>342</sup>

#### **6.4.1 The first staff in Culshaw's Music Programmes**

The break-up of the Music and Arts Department meant that producers had to choose between becoming part of Arts Features or Music Programmes: those who chose to join John Culshaw's new department included Todds (as Senior Producer), Chappell, Coleman, Corden, Dale, Drummond, Foy, Gavin and Nupen (as full producers), David Buckton (as an assistant producer), and Geoffrey Haydon, Jamila Patten and Ian Engelmann (lower ranked assistant producers). One of the directors that Culshaw inherited from Burton was Drummond: he had made very little impact in the field of music performance but he was influential in presenting performances of modern music within documentary items in the magazine programme *Music Now* (1968 - 1969) on which he was editor and occasional director. Unfortunately both Attenborough as Controller of BBC-2 and Culshaw as Head of Music Programmes disliked avant-garde music.<sup>343</sup> Drummond was also vastly knowledgeable about dance but Culshaw disliked dance and Drummond felt that Attenborough also had no interest in presenting dance on television. The talented Drummond succumbed to frustration and was head hunted by Stephen Hearst of the BBC's Arts Features department.<sup>344</sup> After Drummond left Music Programmes in 1969 the editing of *Music Now*, now called *Music International* (1969 -



1970), was taken over by the innovative Australian producer Bill Fitzwater. Later he stepped aside for the appointment of John Amis, who restored the name of the programme to *Music Now* (1970 - 1972), with Fitzwater continuing as one of his resident directors alongside Denis Moriarty and me. Amis grew to dislike Music Programmes department which he described as 'a rum outfit': he came to feel that Culshaw had lost his shine and was more interested in returning to the recording industry; many in the department shared his disdain for Culshaw's directing and producing. In his autobiography Amis repeats the belief that Culshaw was not really interested in music on television: he hardly ever seemed to watch the output of his own department.<sup>345</sup> This is flatly contradicted by Drummond: in his autobiography he says that Culshaw '...watched a great deal of television and...was genuinely interested in what it could do for music...'<sup>346</sup> Drummond<sup>347</sup> and Burton<sup>348</sup> are both agreed that Culshaw was a shy man who would rather avoid a confrontation than criticise one of his producer's efforts; Gavin did not use the word 'shy' but perhaps got closer to Culshaw's character: he called him 'desperately secretive.' Burton had been a corridor 'proowler' not in any pejorative sense but he liked to drop into producers' offices unannounced to discuss their latest projects; he also liked to keep his own office door open for return visits. Culshaw was very much a closed-door executive: he hid behind his secretaries.<sup>349</sup> The reasons for Culshaw's secretive nature may be linked with his homosexuality at a period when being gay could be dangerous even in the enlightened atmosphere that existed in BBC Television's Arts Features and Music Departments.

The other producer who was profoundly affected by Culshaw's dislike of dance was Dale: under all her previous heads of department she had produced a steady stream of outstanding ballets and dance programmes from the television studios; her output averaged about nine programmes a year from 1955 to 1967. The final year for which Burton had responsibility for planning saw Dale producing nine dance/ballet programmes one of which was directed by her protégé Peter Wright. On his arrival Culshaw cut Dale's programme allowance in half and it destroyed her career as a producer of studio dance. She was unwilling to produce outside broadcast relays from the great houses since she felt that she had insufficient control over both the dancers and the cameras: she therefore turned to making film documentaries about dance, winning awards in a field to which she was a reluctant convert. After 1968 she never again



produced one of the studio ballets with which she had become one of the world's most respected television directors.<sup>350</sup> It is an irony that some European directors had copied Dale's highly regarded studio methods of producing ballets, particularly in Denmark and these productions would start being bought by the BBC to replace the programmes no longer made by Dale. Foy has said that part of Dale's success under Wright and Salter/Osland was her forthright approach to the departmental administrators – Foy used the word 'bullying': Dale would not let anything go nor would she accept a refusal and the administrators before Culshaw gave in rather than have a face-off with her.<sup>351</sup> Culshaw was different: he had come from a tough commercial world and despite his secretive nature noted above had learned to hold his own especially against recalcitrant underlings.<sup>a 352</sup>

One programme innovation that was to be highly successful was Culshaw's creation of *André Previn's Music Night* (1971 - 1979) which was a series of concerts by the London Symphony Orchestra from the studios at Television Centre introduced by the eponymous conductor: the series used highly flexible camera techniques and up-to-the-minute picture manipulation more frequently seen on *Top of the Pops*. There were 33 editions on BBC-1 over the period 1971 to 1979 with very respectable RIs in the range 69 to 75 and viewing figures of around five million. It got off to a slow start: the third programme of the first series was described by the often-acerbic Michael Chanan as '...the dullest, most weary television music programme I think I've ever seen...'<sup>353</sup> Even the generally sympathetic Stephen Walsh was less than impressed with the second programme of the second series in which '...it's hard to believe a music producer could make such a mistake...some of the camera-work was slipshod...the promised 'visuals' [were] of unexampled feebleness...'<sup>354</sup> The public response was much warmer as letters in *Radio Times* indicated<sup>355</sup> though the attempts by Culshaw to de-mystify music in *André Previn's Music Night* did not always please the viewers: in the 1975 (fifth) series the casual clothes chosen for the musicians went too far for some of the more conservative viewers<sup>356</sup> though it stimulated a response from the radical wing of the

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<sup>a</sup> My personal memory of Culshaw is an affectionate and appreciative one. He would certainly prefer not to get into an argument particularly over an aesthetic disagreement. However, given a difficult matter that needed resolution he could be quite ruthless.



series' supporters and viewers that was vigorously sympathetic. Composer Malcolm Arnold and others wrote to the *Radio Times*: 'The LSO could turn up in lumberjack shirts, or pink negligees, or even Womble suits, and it would make not one bit of difference to their playing.'<sup>357</sup> The programmes slowly improved as Culshaw gained experience as director: they improved even further in the 1975 (fifth) series when newly promoted assistant producers Ron Isted and Robin Lough took over the directing with Culshaw maintaining responsibility for producing the series. Less successful were Culshaw's attempts at directing more conventional programmes with a performance of Schubert's cerebral song cycle *Die Winterreise* (1970) by Peter Pears and Benjamin Britten coming in for particularly savage criticism: Burton used the word 'ludicrous'.<sup>358</sup>

Although acknowledging that the pioneering work of the early 1960s was an understandably exciting period that could not be reproduced by a later generation of television directors Burton still felt that the Culshaw era was one of particular stagnation: the department lacked the energy and innovation that it had previously owned in the 1960s.<sup>359</sup> It has to be asked if Burton had any reason for denigrating the achievements of Culshaw in order to make his own periods as head of department appear to shine more brightly. It is an accusation which does not hold water very easily: of the 'witnesses' whose testimonies are still available Dale certainly regarded the appointment of Culshaw as a personal and artistic disaster;<sup>360</sup> Amis was disdainful of him as head of department;<sup>361</sup> Foy said very little about Culshaw in her interview for this thesis though what she said was appreciative;<sup>362</sup> Gavin was less charitable about Culshaw's directing abilities: accepting that everybody who comes into television directing 'knows nothing about it' at the start he went on to say that after seven or eight years as Head of Music Programmes 'he still didn't know anything about it.'<sup>363</sup>

#### **6.4.2 Recruitment under Culshaw**

One of the oddities of the Culshaw era is that although the hourly output of music performance programmes almost halved from about 80 hours per year to just over 40 hours per year there was a substantial drive to recruit staff to make music programmes. The decline in performance programmes was not due to an expansion in documentaries: in 1968-70 the hours devoted to music documentaries fell by over 40% only slowly recovering to their 1967 level by 1975.



Those new members of staff occupying or appointed to permanent posts who have not been mentioned already were, in roughly chronological order:<sup>a</sup>

- Basil Coleman (12 *Radio Times* credits for music performance programmes). Coleman was not strictly speaking part of Culshaw's department since he was on the strength of Drama department: over the period 1967-1975 he produced seven studio operas some of which were funded by Culshaw's budgets.
- David Buckton (25 *Radio Times* credits for music performance programmes). He first appeared in *Radio Times* as a music producer in 1967; according to Burton he was a patchy director capable of impressive work as in his tribute to Sir Michael Tippett based around *A Child of our Time* (1977). He was a producer possessing genuine artistic insight but sometime capable of producing programmes that were rather ordinary.
- Geoffrey Haydon was primarily a documentary producer though he gained six credits for music performance broadcasts between 1967 and 1974; Drummond has said that Haydon achieved less than his promise suggested.<sup>364</sup>
- Ian Engelmann (29 *Radio Times* credits for music performance programmes). He gained his first *Radio Times* credit in 1969: he was a skilled jack-of-all-trades who directed the cameras for *The Last Night of the Proms* from 1976 to 1980 as well as the final of the first series of *Young Musician of the Year* in 1978. Of the producers recruited in the period 1967 to 1982 Burton classed Engelmann as the most able. Engelmann died of cancer while still in service.
- Denis Moriarty (10 *Radio Times* credits for music performance programmes). He had been a BBC personnel officer before moving into television production: as with Engelmann he was a jack-of-all-trades though without Engelmann's flair. Moriarty was eventually to become a successful member of the history unit within Music and Arts Department.

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<sup>a</sup> The assessment of each of these producers is broadly based on that given by Burton and Gavin in their interviews for this thesis. They are not separately referenced.



- Rodney Greenberg (52 *Radio Times* credits for music performance programmes). Roy Tipping (58 *Radio Times* credits for music performance programmes). In 1970 Greenberg and I were appointed as music producers at the same appointments board convened by Culshaw and Todds. Burton characterised these appointments as 'excellent choices...absolutely the mainstays of performance programming'; Gavin said: 'I think both of you were considerable musicians. You knew how to play things, you knew how to read music, and you were...a great deal more [musically] literate than people like me.'<sup>365</sup> The appointments seemed to have been because of the need for directors to work alongside Large on the summer relays from the Promenade concerts: generally these had been directed by either Large or Craxton until the retirement of the latter from directing music programmes in 1971. I directed my first two Promenade concerts in 1973 and Greenberg joined Large and me to form the directing team for 1974. With Large's decision to go freelance towards the end of the 1970s Greenberg and I were left as the main directors of music performance programmes: over the period from 1970 to the end of the period covered by this thesis Greenberg and I were responsible for over a hundred music performance programmes. I also directed a number of documentaries.
- Robin Lough (6 *Radio Times* credits for music performance programmes). He was a former television floor manager who directed his first music performance programme in 1974: according to Burton he did '...very good programmes, some very good work.'
- Vincent 'Vic' Dowdall. (11 *Radio Times* credits for music performance programmes). He was a former member of BBC television's music library who tried to break into new areas of creativity in the field of music performance programmes. His unmediated efforts caused considerable irritation to senior management: his experimental series *Fusions* which attempted to create music videos in a style which would later become widespread in pop music was 'pulled' after one of the six programmes had been completed; the series was neither completed nor transmitted but the one viewed for this thesis showed considerable promise in a rather undisciplined way. Burton remembers having a



relatively uneasy time with Dowdall before the latter moved to Cardiff where he finished his long career with the BBC.

- Alan Benson. (4 *Radio Times* credits for music performance programmes). He started his distinguished musical career under Culshaw before leaving the BBC to join *The South Bank Show* at London Weekend Television.
- Ron Isted. (26 *Radio Times* credits for music performance programmes). Isted had been the most effective vision mixer of music programmes over a long period and was highly regarded for his vision mixing of *The Morecambe and Wise Show*. Isted was a reliable and competent director who always showed an insight into underlying musical structures in his programmes.
- Peter Butler. (31 *Radio Times* credits for music performance programmes). He was the final appointment by Culshaw before he left the BBC: Butler was characterised by Burton as ‘...very gifted...he made good programmes...’ Butler directed the first *International Young Musician of the Year* (1982 - ) with me as producer. Butler returned in the 1980s to his native Australia as Head of Science and Arts for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Burton’s own summary of Culshaw and the Culshaw era is damning:

Culshaw [was] a man whose career peaked relatively early [and he] was never able to recapture the experiment in changing media...he didn’t have anything like the visual flair that he had brought [in sound] to the recording industry...I think you have to say, and I’m afraid that I have to take some of the blame, that the appointment of somebody from the outside world without professional experience and without a vision proved to be a serious stumbling block.<sup>366</sup>

## 6.5 The return of Burton

Burton returned to the BBC as Head of Arts Features on 1st March 1975. The reasons for Burton’s return were various: first, his magazine programme on LWT, *Aquarius*, was enjoying considerably more popular and critical success than the parallel offerings on BBC-2 and BBC-1, *Review* and *Omnibus* respectively; second, Norman Swallow had taken over in 1971 from Stephen Hearst as Head of Arts Features and had told BBC management that he wanted to return to programme making at Granada Television. These two facts persuaded the BBC to approach Burton to return as Head of Arts



Features and ginger up the arts magazine programmes.<sup>367</sup> When Culshaw was informed of Burton's imminent return as head of the larger of the two arts department he approached Burton with the news that after seven years he had decided to resign as Head of Music Programmes from summer 1975. It was therefore decided that from Culshaw's date of departure Burton would resume as Head of Music and Arts which was the post from which Burton had resigned in 1967.

Burton felt that his main task was the reform of the Arts Group in the recreated Music and Arts Department. The music department was felt by Huw Wheldon, the Managing Director of Television and Aubrey Singer, the Controller of BBC-2, to need shaking up and revitalising: Culshaw was not felt to have been a very effective leader and the department had become moribund. Burton himself felt that the Music Department was at least well represented on the television screens in terms of air time and that his first priority was to get the Arts Group working effectively. One of Burton's immediate reforms in music was in the field of opera: he felt that Music Programmes had been lavishing too much money on one of Culshaw's enthusiasms, studio opera performed in English. While Burton acknowledged that the viewers needed to understand what was going on – in the early 1970s subtitling was an arcane and expensive art – the recording of operas in English meant that overseas sales were limited to the Old Dominions and the impoverished American Public Broadcasting Service. If operas were to sell in major overseas markets they had to be recorded in their original language which was something that the BBC did not accept until much later than successful commercial concerns such as the German company Unitel.

It is significant that during the period 1975 to 1981 while he was Head of Music and Arts Burton made no new appointments of specialist music producers and appeared reluctant to promote junior music producers into more senior posts. As music producers left the BBC (or died) their vacant posts were used to appoint producers who would work in the arts field especially in Burton's new creations including the arts magazine *Arena*. The one area of music where new talent was encouraged and promoted was in dance. Burton's second time as Head of Music and Arts saw him reversing Culshaw's antagonism to dance on television and offering new opportunities particularly to Colin Nears and Bob Lockyer. His concentration on the other arts did not mean that



innovation in music was discouraged: in music Burton felt that his most important innovations were *Young Musician of the Year* (1978 - ) and the biennially alternating *Dance Month* (1978 and 1980) and *Opera Month* (1979).

### 6.5.1 Young Musician of the Year

The first Leeds International Pianoforte Competition was held in 1963; the second competition in 1966 was covered by BBC Television in a notable documentary film made by Drummond. This triennial event became such a successful television feature that by 1975 BBC-2 was covering the final round live. In 1975 no British pianist reached the final round and Burton felt that this was not a fair reflection on the state of music training in Britain: he was also displeased that the organiser of the Leeds competition had not sufficiently acknowledged the BBC's considerable effort in transmitting and publicising the event. He therefore determined that BBC Television would organise its own international competition for pianists: he asked his senior music producer Todds to take charge of the project. In casual conversations with me Burton also asked for my opinion about the project: I pointed out that there were plenty of prestigious piano competitions around the world and the best pianists would regard a BBC Television competition as fairly small beer. I had already been carrying out research on behalf of Bedford Music Club which was thinking of sponsoring a music competition for young musicians: there was a need for a competition that was not bound to a single instrument or even a recognised group of instruments such as the strings and there was no national competition for pre-college musicians in the United Kingdom. He liked my idea of a *Young Musician of the Year* for all music instruments and asked me to work under Todds in developing the idea. *Young Musician of the Year* was included in the offers of programme ideas for 1976/7 to Bryan Cowgill, Controller, BBC-1; Cowgill was a self-confessed Philistine as far as the arts were concerned but liked the idea of *Young Musician of the Year*. He responded by calling it

one of the most exciting ideas to come out of this round of offers...I feel strongly that you should involve Radio and possible Regional Television in the early rounds...[I] would greatly welcome an association with the Arts Council...we can look forward to a major programme as the final...you will find me full of enthusiasm<sup>368</sup>

The announcement of the first *Young Musician of the Year* which would appear in the schedules for the following programme year, 1977/8, was to be made in July 1977:



there were to be 15 programmes and possibly as many as a thousand competitors to be auditioned before the first programme was transmitted. In April 1977 Todds became convinced that the concept of the series was untenable and that it was heading for disaster. Todds had been affected by shell shock during the Second World War although he had also been decorated for bravery under fire and had suffered several subsequent breakdowns.<sup>369</sup> As a result of the complexities and strains of supervising the planning of *Young Musician of the Year* he now suffered a further breakdown: Todds returned from convalescence to rejoin me for the start of the competition proper in autumn 1977. A large team of directors headed by Engelmann was assembled under my supervision for this major series.

*Young Musician of the Year* has proved to be one of the most popular and long-lasting series ever originated by Music Programmes with the first *Concerto Final* gaining an audience measured by *JICTAR* of some twelve million viewers: only occasional programmes such as the second half of the *Last Night of the Proms* had gained larger audiences since Independent Television had achieved full coverage of the United Kingdom. A letter in *Radio Times* and my response to it encapsulated the unexpected success of the first series: 'I have been overwhelmed by the warm enthusiasm which viewers have expressed towards the *Young Musician* series. We are hoping to run a further competition in 1980...' <sup>370</sup> *Young Musician of the Year* continued as a biennial competition under Todds and me until 1980 and then with me as Executive Producer until my retirement in 1992; the 13<sup>th</sup> series took place in 2001/2.

The success of the format led to the development of a number of derivative programmes such as *Tournoi des Jeunes Musiciens* (TF1, France, 1980 - ), *Eurovision Young Musician of the Year* (1982 - ), *Eurovision Young Dancer of the Year* (1985 - ), *Sainsbury's Choir of the Year* (1982 - ) and *Cardiff Singer of the World* (1983 - ).

### **6.5.2 Dance Month and Opera Month**

In order to gain the maximum publicity for Music and Arts Department's coverage of dance and opera Humphrey Burton created the concept of a month devoted to one of these theatrical musical entertainments. In May 1978 the first experiment was with *Dance Month* with intensive coverage of dance and ballet both in performance and documentary. There were eight programmes devoted to dance performance which was



an unprecedented cornucopia of riches: two BBC productions; one production each from German, Russian and Danish television; and three commercial productions from Reiner Moritz taken from the Balanchine Festival in America. In April 1979 it was the turn of opera with *Opera Month* including seven full operas and additional documentaries: the opera productions comprised a BBC relay from Glyndebourne; and one production each from Austrian, French, Italian, Russian, Swedish and American television companies. Dance once more returned in May/June 1980 with nine programmes of dance performance: six BBC originations; one production each from Russian and American television; one feature film. It may be significant that in the first *Dance Month* the BBC was only able to muster two productions out of the eight shown, an indication of the loss of talent in this field caused by Culshaw. Two years later both Nears and Lockyer had become sufficiently skilled for the BBC to be able to include six home-grown originations in the second *Dance Month*.

Some viewers were not convinced by this blunderbuss approach preferring to have the performances spread out more evenly through the year.<sup>371</sup> In *Radio Times* Burton gave a reasoned response to a mixed bag of mostly favourable letters.<sup>372</sup> The considerable effort put into broadcasting the finest dance and opera programmes from all around the world, including programmes made by the BBC, gave theatrical musical performance a remarkable prominence.

## **6.6 The resignation of Burton in 1981**

In July 1981 Burton resigned as Head of Music and Arts for the second time: Burton had spent seven years in a difficult post surrounded by some of the most truculent and opinionated production staff in the BBC. He had also been advising Warner/ABC in America on possible developments of arts broadcasting on cable: although this was with the full knowledge and permission of the BBC hierarchy Burton felt that Alastair Milne, Managing Director, BBC Television, was not happy about his pecuniary involvement with a possible rival to the BBC's output in America. Burton had also started particularly fruitful production relationships with the conductors Sir Georg Solti and Leonard Bernstein which he was keen to develop and exploit as director and producer: Burton had had enough of administration in an increasingly unsympathetic and bureaucratic BBC.<sup>373</sup> In 1981 when Burton stepped down as Head of Music and Arts to



develop a full-time career as a programme maker his Assistant Head, Richard Somerset-Ward, was promoted to take his place. Because of the time-lag that there is between planning programme schedules and their appearance on the screen the 1981/2 season would largely have been planned by Burton. The date chosen to terminate this chapter and this thesis marks the end of Burton's direct influence as head of department on the output of music performance programmes on BBC Television: autumn 1982.



## CHAPTER 7 THE PRESENTATION OF MUSIC PERFORMANCE

*The ear tends to be lazy, craves the familiar and is shocked by the unexpected. The eye tends to be impatient, craves the novel and is bored by repetition (The Dyer's Hand: W. H. Auden).*

*Whole swathes of the population have been deterred from theatre, opera and ballet by seeing the miserably inept attempts to translate performances to TV, which are inherently untranslatable. (Richard Eyre, Hamlyn lecture, grammar corrected)<sup>374</sup>*

*Who is worried about quality when there is not enough mediocrity to go round? (Anonymous Hollywood producer)<sup>375</sup>*

*I always used to assume that if it wasn't perfect, it wasn't good enough. Now you don't. And it will show in programmes. It certainly showed in my last series. (Anonymous BBC producer)<sup>376</sup>*

### 7.1 Introduction

When music performance was first presented on television there were few precedents available from the film industry for how a satisfying 'visual sequence' should be created. Each television director – the term used at the time was 'producer' – worked in his own way with good or not so good results.

In his perceptive paper *Before the Golden Age* in the collection of essays *Popular Television in Britain* (edited by Corner, 1991) Caughie points out that in the field of television drama the pre-war pioneers treated television as if it were solely a medium of relay. Drama on pre-war television mainly comprised either relays from West End theatres or productions from these same theatres transferred to the Alexandra Palace studios: the proscenium arch was present either in reality or in imagination; even studio dramas were shot frontally as if an outside broadcast was taking place from a theatre stage. The success of these early television dramas was not measured in how successful the creation of an art form *per se* had been but in how well the idea of relay had been achieved. Caughie says:

For early television...I would argue that...the artistic values were those of the theatrical even for the studio performance, and the values of form and style



were the functional values of relay: how well, or with how much immediacy and liveness, the technology and technique communicated the original event.<sup>377</sup>

According to Caughie there was also a feeling of the village hall amateur dramatics in that mistakes, informality and clumsiness were treated as virtues: what he calls the 'wizard prang' mentality.<sup>378</sup> Two things changed this: first there was the arrival of commercial television in 1955 and the creation of drama styles more appropriate to an audience unused to the conventions of the theatrical stage; second was the arrival of film telerecording and videotape recording: these offered the chance of using techniques stolen and adapted from the film industry. Television drama became more 'professional' and developed a language and style of its own.<sup>379</sup> One important difference between television studios and film studios was that film was almost always shot on a single camera one shot at a time; programmes in television studios were largely shot in multi-camera set-ups. Even when recording for television arrived it was still more normal to continue using the multi-camera techniques that were developed for and are unique to television.

Music performance on television was slow to emerge from the concept of relay if it has ever successfully shaken it off. It can be argued that there is one paramount difference between the ways in which television drama and televised music have developed: the increased mobility of cameras and the increased availability of zoom lenses have changed the perspective of the drama televiewer from that of the pre-war passive observer sitting in a good stalls seat to that of a (silent) participant in the action. When a character moves, the camera – the proxy viewer – is able to follow them: the involvement of the audience extends to feeling a part of *Coronation Street* (1960 - ) or being left with the very real feeling that they have drunk pints in the *Queen Victoria* in *EastEnders* (1985 - ). This idea – this ideal almost – of audience participation was exploited as early as *Armchair Theatre* in the late 1950s and has been a part of television drama ever since.<sup>a</sup> Caughie notes that it was a radio drama man – Val Gielgud

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<sup>a</sup> In Section 9.8.1 there is a brief mention of the same technique being used by Eric Fawcett in the broadcast of the opera *I Pagliacci* in 1952. The technique may have been exploited in Independent Television drama programmes (for which Fawcett became one of the directors) but it was not created for them.



– who pointed out as early as 1947 that television drama was confused about whether it was merely the medium for conveying an aesthetic or was an aesthetic medium in itself.<sup>380</sup> Gielgud perceptively noted that once television managed to discover its own aesthetic of drama the place of radio drama would become subordinate. For opera and dance, developments in camera techniques in television drama were merely transferred across to what were merely different *genres* of the theatrical stage: most of the post-war directors of television operas made in the studio – though not dance programmes – were drama directors such as Cartier, Foa, Coleman, John Gorrie, Bill Hays, Michael Hayes and Herbert Wise.

Where classical music performance differs – and here is meant performances of non-theatrical music such as concerts and recitals – is that the performers are tied to the music on their music stands: there is no dramatic movement of the performers so there is no need for the cameras to follow them around; the perspective of the viewer remained that of the passive observer in the best stalls seat watching but not participating. It was only with the arrival of trained musicians as directors of television relays of music performances that anyone perceived the need to give and experimented with methods of giving viewers a perspective more like that experienced by the performers themselves.

## **7.2 Groping for an aesthetic – the years before Salter**

There does not seem to have been any consensus about television aesthetics before the war particularly in the field of arts performance broadcasting: each producer devised his own methods of presentation in a hit-and-miss sort of way. As described above most programmes fell into the category of ‘relay’ and the producer tried to convey the sense of sitting in the best stalls seat. When an unusual event occurred producers had to show some ability to improvise. Munro seems to have stumbled on the ‘as directed’ style of shooting of music in a broadcast of the *Ballets Russes* in June 1937: the Russians wished to dance an unscripted, unrehearsed programme of ballet rehearsal so Munro disposed his cameras around the studio and ‘grabbed’ shots as best he could. He himself said ‘I think it was one of the most successful programmes I ever did.’<sup>381</sup> An article in *The Listener* made several very perceptive comments about this and other similar programmes: the writer made the point that on a huge cinema screen the director’s use



of visual composition is difficult to appreciate because it is impossible to take in the whole screen at once; in television, as in painting, the art of composition is much more important since the eye can see the whole picture. Continually developing composition becomes an important aspect since the artists are often moving and the picture changing.<sup>382</sup>

The lack of a philosophy among those responsible for directing symphony concerts and recitals came to a head as the result of a studio concert directed by Christian Simpson on 11<sup>th</sup> October 1953. Barnes, the Director of Television Broadcasting, sent a mildly irritated memo to Wright, the Head of Music, through McGivern asking ‘Is the technique of televising...non-programme<sup>a</sup> music settling down?’<sup>383</sup> The phrase ‘settling down’ is a curiously revealing one: as noted above in Section 4.10 Bower had come to the conclusion that in studio productions there was nothing new to be learned after 1939: all subsequent changes would amount to polish rather than essence.<sup>384</sup> Barnes seems to have been expecting that music producers should have reached the same degree of finality in ‘non-programme’ music broadcasts by 1953. The programme to which Barnes was referring in his memo of 13<sup>th</sup> October 1953 was a broadcast of Schumann’s piano concerto played by Kabi Laretei with the BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Clarence Raybould. There is a review of this programme by Philip Hope-Wallace in the 15<sup>th</sup> October issue of *The Listener*. Hope-Wallace’s attitude to Simpson’s visualisation of a fairly routine performance of the work wavered between admiration and irritation: at times he felt ‘[Simpson] is not only a genius; he has tact as well. It was very interesting to see what the pianist did with the fingering at that moment.’ Unfortunately he felt that Simpson made the viewer ‘skip rather too fast’; the centre of attention on screen changed more quickly than the music justified or the viewer’s attention could handle. He also highlighted a problem that has never been solved – musicians playing instruments often make disconcerting faces:

Not that they were ill-looking; on the contrary, the standard of looks was high, as musicians go, but it is impossible to see the clarinet being played close without seeing also the expression on the player’s face. This may, or may not,

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<sup>a</sup> See Glossary of Musical Terms



enhance the phrase he is playing...I found I was being bombarded by too many personalities other than Schumann's.<sup>385</sup>

The 'settling down' memo from Barnes apparently led to an office discussion between Wright and McGivern in which the latter expressed himself forcibly as always. As a result Wright wrote a jocular but vigorous defence of the programme based on internal and external expressions of praise:<sup>386</sup> he mentioned that both television staff and, more telling, radio staff had been pleased with the broadcast and he mentioned appreciative telephone calls from all corners of Great Britain 'all delighted with the Sunday programme.' A week later Wright sent a four-page memo to McGivern which summarises the situation of directing music performances as it existed at that time: he acknowledged that music without a soloist was causing the hardest problems; he also pointed out that Reaction Indices were rising so that the developing skills of his directors seemed to be bearing fruit. (See Figure 4 in Section 1.4.) Wright shared the general feeling that music without either a soloist or a clear narrative content was not appropriate for television. '...I have never proposed [orchestral music] ...except as a fill-up in a concerto programme...' He regarded those pieces of non-concertante music televised by his department up to that time as needing either apologies or unusual treatment.<sup>387</sup> In the whole of the five years that Wright headed the music department there was not a single concert relay whether from an outside location or a studio which comprised solely orchestral music; all concerts that included non-concertante works had as their centrepiece a concerto unless the concert had some greater significance as an event in itself such as *The Last Night of the Proms*. The first post-war televised orchestral concert to be found in *Radio Times* that does not include a featured soloist occurred on 5<sup>th</sup> February 1956: *Concert Hour* was devoted to Berlioz' *Symphonie Fantastique* though this is one of the longest examples of symphonic music with a deliberately illustrative programme.

Just over a week after his first four-page memo Wright sent a discussion document to McGivern dealing specifically with recitals, concertos and symphony concerts: once more his formula may be summarised as 'Do not televise orchestral music if at all possible. For recitals and concertos the better the music the less it needs fanciful treatment.' He even coined a pejorative term 'Simpsonism' for the style of imaginative



directing demonstrated by Simpson in which the pictures took precedence over the music. He ended by saying

Our progress in the past two years has been considerable, even in this problem of pure music which by definition is the most elusive 'subject' for vision. Nevertheless, the large interest in it, as shown by the audience size, and the upward trend in V.R.<sup>a</sup> figures, encourage me to submit that quite apart from the exploiting of music by Television, which music can enhance in countless ways, it is our duty to do something for music itself.<sup>388</sup>

### 7.3 The presentation of music on television

In the BBC's Written Archive Centre there is a twelve page paper by Salter which was the first full expression in the archives of the philosophy of presenting music performance on television: the front of the paper has a hand-written note 'Undated - ?1959' which is initialled MBH.<sup>b</sup> The paper expressed Salter's considered analysis of the best practice among his subordinates, colleagues and overseas producers that he had observed: it seemed to build on previous attempts at a coherent philosophy that his predecessor and colleague Wright had tried to formulate. In particular an article by Wright in *The BBC Quarterly* of Winter 1953/4 included some primitive concepts about the presentation of theatrical and non-theatrical music: his observations on theatrical music will be more closely examined in Section 9.7. On non-theatrical music his concepts were augmented and tabulated by Salter in the seven principles which are enumerated at the end of this section.<sup>389</sup>

Salter expressed the opinion that there were three ways of presenting non-theatrical music performance on television:

- By showing the music – the printed notes – at the same time as the performance is being heard
- By showing extra-musical images that illustrate the music
- By showing the performers as they play

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<sup>a</sup> V.R. = Viewers' Reaction, what has been called Reaction Index throughout this thesis

<sup>b</sup> This archivist (?) has not been identified.



The first according to Salter is the least successful: relatively few viewers can read music and for all but the simplest types of instrumentation the notes are far too small on the screen to be read easily. This technique has been tried at least for short passages of music by a number of directors including myself.

Salter said that the second ‘...is...a most controversial procedure, calling for the nicest artistic judgement...’ Salter pointed out that the addition of dancing, scenic film or cartoons to light music may not be of any great moment since reducing the music to mere accompaniment may be no more than it deserves: to do the same to a serious work reduces something that is artistically complete to the level of Muzak, an aural background for the visual foreground: ‘...Nothing infuriates true music-lovers more than forcing their art into a position of unjustified subordination...’

The third is the main subject of this thesis and superficially appears to be the most problematic. Showing performers in close-up with all their physiological eccentricities is surely unnatural: would it not be better just to dispense with the pictures and listen to the music on the radio or record player? The evidence contradicts this conjecture: Salter pointed out that anyone wishing to go to a concert that includes a solo pianist knows that the first seats to sell are those where there is a clear sight-line to the keyboard. Since the best sound is available over a much wider arc than the narrow segment where the keyboard can be seen the argument that the visual is unimportant appears to be negated by human behaviour. Salter stated that it is also true that if television and radio carry a simultaneous broadcast of non-theatrical music – *Live from the Proms* for example – the television audience will be at least five times as great as the radio audience: this is despite the fact that the sound reproduction from domestic television sets is markedly inferior to the sound reproduction from domestic radios. Even when the music being broadcast is uncompromising so that the chance of casual viewers distorting the figures is minimal the television audience is substantially greater than the radio audience.<sup>390</sup>

Two composers have stated that the visual aspect of seeing the performers is an important part of appreciating a performance. In *Chroniques de ma Vie* Stravinsky said that he had ‘...always had a horror of listening to music with my eyes shut, with nothing for them to do...’ He went on to say that the sight of the movement of the various parts



of the performer's body was essential to the full appreciation of a performance: those who listen with their eyes closed do so because '...[it] enables them to abandon themselves to the reveries induced by the lullaby of its sounds. And that is really what they prefer to the music itself...'<sup>391</sup> Pierre Boulez, like Stravinsky a composer and conductor of distinction, was quoted in *Radio Times* as saying that radio was insufficient in itself; most concerts should also be televised.<sup>392</sup>

Salter went on to an area that was to cause considerable grief within Music Department while he was the Head. He accepted that a director of science programmes on television need not be a scientific practitioner or even scientifically trained: '...it may indeed even be an advantage for him to be a layman, since he can then gauge the effect of the programme on a predominantly lay public...' He postulated that, in contrast, a director of music programmes must have had music training to understand the musical thought inherent in the works being presented. '...[He] should know the score almost as well as the conductor...' He summed up his hypothesis by saying

The camera director should not be merely a television practitioner who happens to like music, to a greater or lesser degree, but an experienced musician with visual imagination who has learnt to handle the television medium.

He went on to complain about the quality of music directing in television stations around the world:

Music in most places [is] being presented either rather amateurishly or not at all.<sup>393</sup>

If the date pencilled on the document, 1959, is reasonably correct Salter was still smarting after his clashes with Simpson: Salter was dismissive of the lack of musical training of some of the more antagonistic members of his staff and there is an inconsistency behind Salter's didactic statement that does not bear close empirical examination. To anticipate one of the postulates of this research some of the most experienced practitioners in this field are listed below with their musical backgrounds: they do not form a coherent indication that Salter's thesis is by any means justified. In particular several directors listed were musically unqualified in a formal sense but were self-trained and musically aware to a very high standard that showed in the well-respected and original work which was created. What is beyond doubt is that all of the



below-named individuals apart from Bate, Simpson, Vernon and the dance producer Dale could read even complex orchestral scores to the highest professional standards.

Name	Academic musical training
Philip Bate	None
Dallas Bower	None
Humphrey Burton	History/music graduate
Antony Craxton	Music college graduate
Margaret Dale	Professional dancer
John Drummond	None
Ian Engelmann	Cathedral chorister
George Foa	Music librarian and publisher
Patricia Foy	Music college graduate
Barrie Gavin	None
Rodney Greenberg	Music college graduate
Brian Large	Doctorate in music
Christian Simpson	None
Roy Tipping	None
Walter Todds	None
John Vernon	None

**Figure 8: Professional musical training of some prominent music directors 1936 - 1982**

Returning to Salter's undated lecture he postulated that any visual sequence created by a director should consist of images that should parallel and illuminate the sound: '...each shot must have a musical motivation and never be included because of mere pictorial attractiveness...' The structural rhythm of the music should determine the sequence of shots; any picture which distracts or interferes with the viewer's concentration on the music '...is an impertinence...' Salter dealt neatly with the red herring question 'Why not give us a picture of the whole orchestra and leave it alone?' He made two points: first, such a picture on a television screen would be '...a sea of small meaningless...all but motionless, blobs...' Second, the intelligent concertgoer is constantly changing the focus of his attention during a performance; the television director becomes a proxy eye for such a concertgoer. It is possible to make a clear parallel here with sporting relays where a continuously held wide shot of a football pitch or cricket ground would be all but useless: the skilled sports director chooses what he feels the viewer needs to see; according to Salter so does the skilled music director. Salter continued by saying that the problem arises with the non-musical director who puts images on the screen that frustrate the intelligent concertgoer and changes them at times that are musically



inappropriate. A musical director will make changes in the shots whether by zooming, panning, cutting or mixing which ‘...will seem natural and all but imperceptible...’ Salter drew the comparison with the way in which watching the lips of someone speaking makes their speech more intelligible: so the musical director by an appropriate choice of shots makes the musical structure more intelligible.<sup>394</sup>

Similar ideas to Salter’s had been expressed by the producer Antony Craxton: in the *Radio Times* of 12<sup>th</sup> April 1957 Craxton wrote an article defending the televising of non-theatrical music. Craxton summarised the *raison d’être* of music on television as he saw it:

I believe that television concerts should not be aimed exclusively at keen musicians but at the millions of people who have rarely had the opportunity of seeing a great orchestra making music.

He also pointed out that sight is ‘infinitely more compelling’ than sound and the sight of an orchestra in full flow had been found exciting by those who have ‘...ignored public concerts in the past...’ He said with some vigour that the pictures chosen must be appropriate to the music, and the technique of changing from one picture to the next must be precisely co-ordinated with the music.<sup>395</sup>

Somewhat later Humphrey Burton, Head of Music and Arts, BBC Television pointed out the problem of televising music: while enthusiastically accepting that music is meant to be seen as well as heard he also accepted the paradox that no two people look at a concert in the same way. Whatever the director shows is going to be problematic since he is attempting to do the concertgoer’s job for them.<sup>396</sup> Gavin went even further by saying that in a typical orchestra there would be perhaps 80 people playing with many strands of music happening at the same time: the television director’s efforts can only be a crude approximation to what the composer has put into the music – however complicated the director’s script might be it would ‘still be like a chimpanzee playing the piano compared to the original [orchestral textures].’<sup>397</sup>

In an unpublished paper Salter gave seven rules for a grammar of TV presentation of non-theatrical music:

1. All shots, shot changes and camera moves must be musically motivated.



2. In orchestral music the right instruments must be shown at the right time. Avoid visual synecdoche: if a group of instruments is playing do not show a single instrument; if a solo is being played do not show a group.
3. The speed of shot changes should match the tempo and mood of the music.
4. Shot changes should only occur at the ends of phrases.
5. Cutting from shot to shot rather than mixing is preferable except when musical phrases overlap or the music is fluid in character.
6. Never mix between two images of the same performer.
7. Cuts, tracks, zooms and mixes can be used to reinforce the character of the music – a zoom-in or track-in is the visual equivalent of a *crescendo*, for example.<sup>398</sup>

It is the investigation of these seven points and others that may be suggested that will form the core of Chapter 9 of this thesis: part of that investigation will look at how these rules developed over time and to what effect. The arrival of producers and directors who understood and responded to the structure of music was slow to develop. Throughout the BBC's archives are memos and letters from Controllers and Heads of Music Department expressing occasional hints at the frustrations caused by the failure of their staff to present pure music performance in a satisfactory way. Typical is an unsigned paper called *Music in Television* dating from June 1963;<sup>a</sup> the final paragraph summarises the writer's frustrations:

Television awaits the arrival of the man [*sic*] of music who is sufficiently equipped technically to be fertile in Television programme invention. We do not pretend yet to have found him, and we cannot prophesy when we will.<sup>399</sup>

#### **7.4 The use of camera shots to illuminate performance**

This thesis concentrates on the skill of the director in interpreting music performance and putting it on the television screen effectively. It might be thought that particularly in the field of music performance the aim of the director is to achieve the greatest degree

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<sup>a</sup> The secretary has put her initials, BJ, at the end but the BBC staff lists for 1963 do not include any secretary with these initials in an appropriate department.



of objectivity possible and many directors believe that they are doing just that: they are acting as a passive version of Salter's 'proxy eye'. Viewers have not always been convinced that this is the case: they have expressed dissatisfaction at the choice of pictures given to them by the director. The director can also try to manipulate the response of the viewer by his use of perspective particularly when it comes to people on screen. For example: few people face the screen directly and those that do are usually people having some status or authority: making the subject face the viewer can in some circumstances cause either a feeling of discomfort or intimacy. The director can also use different sizes of shot to influence the viewer: David McQueen in *Television: A Media Student's Guide* refers to the effect of different perspectives of shot as 'tight, claustrophobic' close-ups, more 'comfortable' medium shots or more 'objective' and distanced long-shots.<sup>400</sup>

The situation with music programmes is comparable: in general the only persons, in any form of music broadcast, who are shot facing directly into camera are the presenter of the broadcast – a figure of authority representing the broadcasting organisation – and the conductor – a figure of authority from outside the broadcasting organisation. One possible exception is the soloist in a concertante work where face-on shooting is sometimes used because psychologically the authority is now shared between soloist and conductor. There is a contradiction in drama and opera where a character may wish to pass their thoughts to the viewer: the convention is that they will turn and talk directly to the camera/viewer. There is a further contradiction in the field of 'pop' music which lies outside these investigations: pop singers frequently manipulate their television audience by 'working' the cameras; they know on which camera they are being featured for each line of their song and they change their eyeline so that they are always looking directly at the appropriate camera. One possible explanation is that popular songs are frequently the expression of the romantic or even erotic wishes of one person – the singer – towards another: since the viewer is being placed in the position of the proxy 'lover' it is natural that the words should be aimed directly at him/her; it becomes a variant of the point-of-view shot. The nearest equivalent to the pop singer in the classical music field is the song recitalist or the oratorio singer who will also sometimes manipulate the cameras to add effect to their performance.



In *The Times* in 1961 there was an article by 'Our Special Correspondent' whose arguments were remarkably similar to those of Salter outlined above:

From a tentative fussiness of camera movement designed with little musical justification to prevent boredom, BBC producers have developed a style designed 'to follow the musical thought.' The camera is used not to exploit the photogenic qualities of conductor or soloist but to follow the composer's argument by concentrating upon whatever performer or performers are making the major contribution at the moment...the more strictly musical the camera technique, we understand, the more certain the reaction of the audience.<sup>401</sup>

In a paper delivered to a seminar at the 1966 Prague Festival Kenneth Adam, Director of Television at the BBC, talked of his personal conversion from someone who had disbelieved Stravinsky's dictum: 'To hear music is not enough. It must be seen as well.' Over a period of ten years he realised that television could successfully relay musical events which vast numbers of the public could never hope to attend. He talked of the pluses of seeing as well as hearing: the frontal view of the conductor; a close-up of a pianist's hands; the dialogue – he used the word 'drama' – between soloist and conductor. He also spoke of the educational value of broadcasting music performances: the very act of 'tune-chasing' at which sophisticated music-lovers and moderate concert-goers were apt to sneer was an important method by which the producer could tactfully but clearly guide the uninitiated viewer into the structure of the work being shown. He went on to state what Salter had been saying ten years before that the producer of such programmes must necessarily be a musician who can read and learn a music score and who will not change a shot without a good musical reason for doing so.<sup>402</sup>



## CHAPTER 8 THE CHOICE OF PROGRAMMES TO BE ANALYSED

*[How to shoot music performance on television] seems to depend on the music in question and knowing, as in watercolour painting, what to leave out. I think I would recommend monthly courses in watercolour painting for BBC music television novices in general. (Philip Hope-Wallace, television critic, The Listener)<sup>403</sup>*

*[The director of music on television's job] is one of the hardest I know, and he is constantly walking the tightrope of inventive ingenuity across the pit of tastelessness. (Lionel Salter)<sup>404</sup>*

The guiding principle in the choice of programmes analysed has been to choose those programmes that in some way have been acknowledged to be of some measure of excellence or importance: the principal methods used for assessing this 'excellence or importance' are listed below at the end of this section. A further method used for choosing programmes to view was the assessment of the competence of directors: this method is described and implemented in Section 8.3.

The reason for choosing these criteria is that objective criticism of television as an art form has not yet developed to the state of maturity of criticism of other art forms. As long ago as 1976 Richard Adler was saying that one of the problems with developing a successful style of television criticism was the very ubiquity of the medium:

If television is an art form, it is surely the most popular of the arts...We need television criticism which will provide both a language for describing what appears on the screen and standards for discriminating excellence from mediocrity.<sup>405</sup>

Adler goes on to state that the audience response to an individual programme – what has been called in this thesis by the generic term 'RI' – is often determined by factors other than its innate quality, whatever that undefined term may be felt to mean:

The critic's problem is deciding what to isolate from [the programmes surrounding the one being considered and other programmes in the same series or strand]... most programmes are really parts of continuing series rather than isolated works... This suggests that the television audience derives as much pleasure from familiarity as from novelty.<sup>406</sup>



For example, there is a clear distinction in the appreciation of the viewers for a series such as Foy's *Gala Performance* compared to the much harsher criticisms of senior management:

Transmission date	Comment by Programme Review Board about <i>Gala Performance</i> transmission	Reaction Index from viewers
19 <sup>th</sup> November 1963	Strong criticism of the programme's general approach and of various production details.	81
1 <sup>st</sup> January 1968	Criticism of use of presenter which 'further' slowed down the programme.	84
1 <sup>st</sup> January 1969	General criticism of a below-standard programme.	86
28 <sup>th</sup> March 1975	Considerable criticism both of some of the content and the direction of this programme.	78

Figure 9: Comments and RIs for some editions of *Gala Performance*

It may be reasonable to say that any television producer who obtained RIs of 78 to 86 for their series and was subjected to that kind of peer abuse could justifiably feel hurt. The 26 programmes in this series gained an average RI of 78 which was well above the all-programme average of around 60: Adler would seem to imply that because *Gala Performance* was a long-running series the very familiarity of its content and format made the viewers warmer in their responses and more accepting of the occasional deficiency. It may be assumed from Figure 9 that the attitude of 'hard-headed' professionals was less likely to be swayed by repeated exposure to a format; this divergence of opinion does make more difficult choosing appropriate programmes to analyse for this thesis. What is an advantage in terms of this research project is that non-professional viewers who watch and who might be thought to be a keen and enthusiastic minority do not throw away their critical insights. Comprehensive analysis by Barwise and Ehrenberg into all viewing habits has shown that minority interest programmes do not fulfil the commonly held expectation that they are exceptionally and uncritically well liked by the few people watching: lovers of music may be delighted in principle to see concerts, ballets and operas on television but that does not stop them being critically aware of their quality.<sup>407</sup>



Over three thousand music performance programmes were broadcast on BBC Television between August 1936 and December 1982. In order to select a representative handful for analysis below it was intended to select those programmes that demonstrated some particular and distinctive excellence: one of the problems with choosing as a starting point the concept of 'excellence' is that, as Barwise and Ehrenberg note, there is little objective literature on the assessment of quality in television because it is so personal and idiosyncratic. From a scientific perspective it is difficult to measure quality: there is much literature on *issues* in television such as violence, sex, feminine issues and so on; there is also much literature on the economics of television but this concentrates on measurable concepts such as costs, prices and efficiency and not on the measurement of quality.<sup>408</sup> A multi-pronged approach to the choice of programmes to be analysed has been adopted since there is as yet no objective measure of either excellence or importance available and since relying on my own prejudices is something that I have striven to avoid in this thesis. Each of the programmes chosen meets at least one of the following criteria:

1. It gained an unusually high RI.
2. Peer comment was very favourable.
3. Memos from BBC staff and letters from the general public making positive value judgements on programmes.
4. The programme still exists in the BBC's Film and Videotape archive or the shooting script has survived in the written archive.
5. The programme has attracted attention for groundbreaking or innovation.
6. At least three representative programmes by each of the most prolific directors from 1936 – 1982 has been examined where available; the field with which the particular director became identified helped in determining the choice.
7. The choice of programmes analysed attempts to include examples of each of the small number of music performance genres – opera, dance, concertos, competitions, chamber music and so on.



8. Programmes which created new genres or affected the making of programmes in other genres.
9. Technological changes which caused reassessment of the way in which music performance was presented on screen: the major changes were the introduction of colour, zoom lenses and video recording. (See also Appendix IV) These and other lesser changes in technology such as stereophony have been considered.
10. Awards. The most important awards in this field are those granted by BAFTA (British Academy of Film and Television Arts) and any programmes that gained BAFTA awards have been considered for analysis.
11. Adherence or non-adherence to the Salter/Craxton criteria outlined in Section 8.3.

## **8.1 The television script**

In order to understand the analysis that follows a brief description is necessary of what became the standard form of television script for studio and outside broadcast programmes. The following graph shows two lines: the upper line is the number of music performance programmes per year over this period; the lower line is the number of scripts that have survived.



### Music scripts remaining in BBC Written Archive Centre

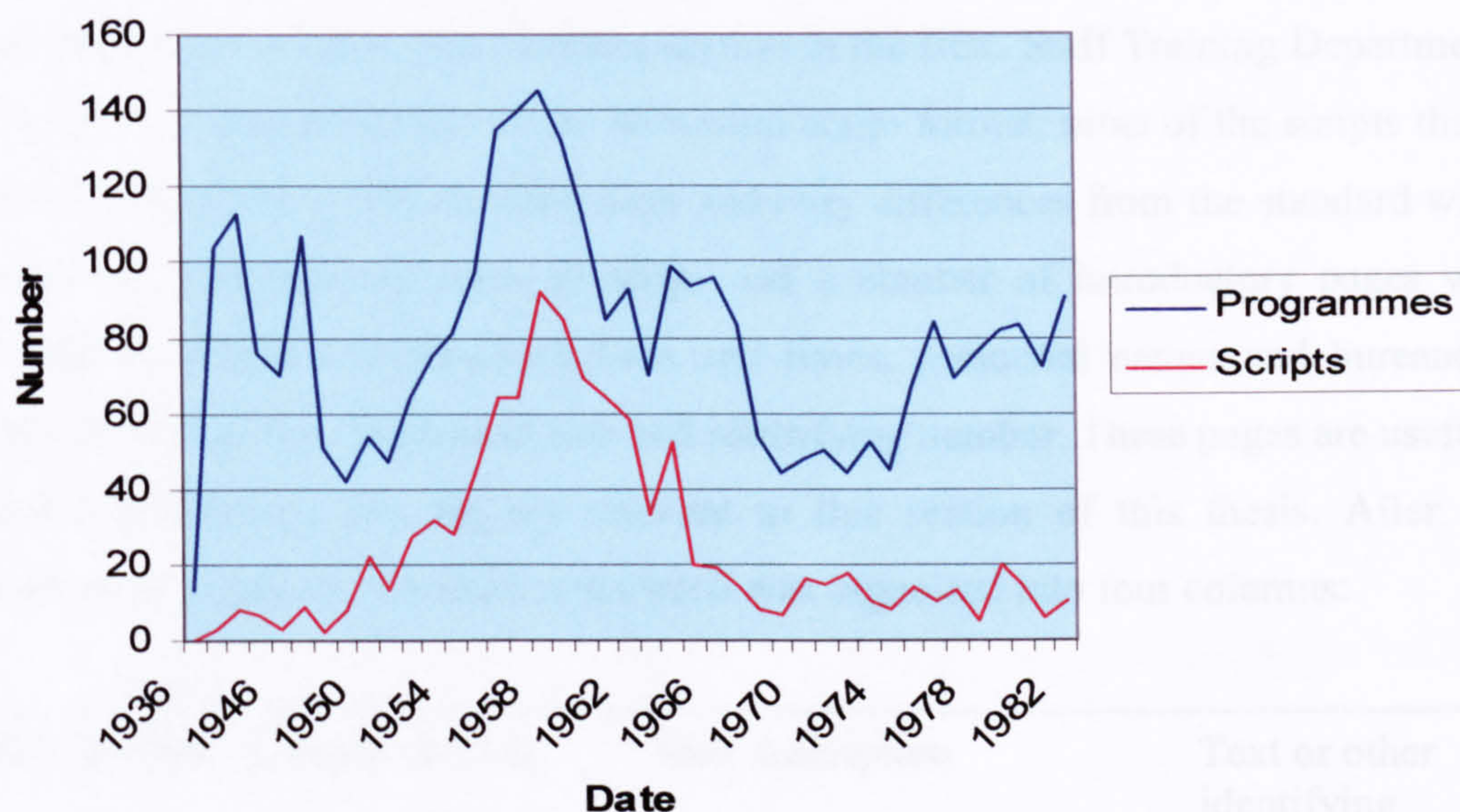


Figure 10: Music scripts remaining in the BBC's written archives

The graph shows that very few music performance scripts from the period 1936-1951 have been preserved. From 1952 proportionately more scripts have been preserved until by 1959 well over half the programme scripts are still available. This proportion continues until 1967 when there was an unexplained fall-off in the proportion; from 1968 very few scripts have been preserved. It could be surmised that this was an archival and storage decision since experience has shown that production assistants were uniformly diligent in sending copies of scripts to the first station on the archival road, the Registry department. There is a further complication that from about 1968 onwards musically trained directors started writing their shots directly onto music scores and these have not always been preserved.<sup>a</sup>

A script is a method by which the thoughts and instructions of a director can be communicated to others who may have to interpret his ideas. The most obvious of these

<sup>a</sup> Even for these programmes a short-form script would have been produced which gave bureaucratic details of the programme such as content, staffing, location and so on. Only the shots would be missing.



interpreters are the cameramen but other staff will also need to consult the script: this includes performers, vision mixer, lighting director, set and make-up designers, sound technicians, vision control technicians, floor managers and production assistant. The establishment of a Television Training section in the BBC Staff Training Department in 1951 led to a standardisation of the television script format: most of the scripts that are detailed below are in this standard form and only differences from the standard will be mentioned. The standard form of script had a number of introductory pages which included recording and rehearsal dates and times, personnel names and bureaucratic details including the programme title and identifying number. These pages are useful for historic information but are not relevant to this section of this thesis. After these introductory pages the standard script itself was organised into four columns:

Shot number	Camera number	Shot description	Text or other identifying information, such as bar numbers or cue letters
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**Figure 11: Standard script layout**

It was a considerable surprise to find that although this general description of ‘standard script’ applied to many pre-war scripts the first post-war scripts differed in an important respect: the ‘Shot number’ was missing. Since the shot number is an important method of finding a particular point in the script, the surmise is that all people working on a programme were issued with full scripts and page numbers were used for negotiation. Shot numbers only returned to scripts in about 1952 and even as late as 1956 Bate, who had already worked temporarily in Television Training, was still issuing scripts without shot numbers.

A second type of script was used for some outside broadcast music programmes: this seems to have been either invented or first adopted by Craxton in February 1957. This type of script was called a ‘grid’ and resembled the following:



Shot number	Camera 1	Camera 2	Camera 3	Camera 4
1	Conductor			
2		Close up pianist		
3	Conductor			
4			Close up oboe	
5				Close up trumpet
Etc.				

Figure 12: 'Grid' script layout

Scripts in the archives are predominantly in five categories:

- Director's script.
- Production Assistant's script.
- Timing script: the Production Assistant generally had a second script on which rehearsal and transmission durations were noted.
- Fair copy: a copy of the script that was destined for one of a number of recipients such as the head of department, registry (archives), presentation department and so on.
- Others' scripts: copies of the script that were originally possessed by other members of the production team such as the floor manager, producer (if different from the director), lighting supervisor, and sound supervisor and so on.

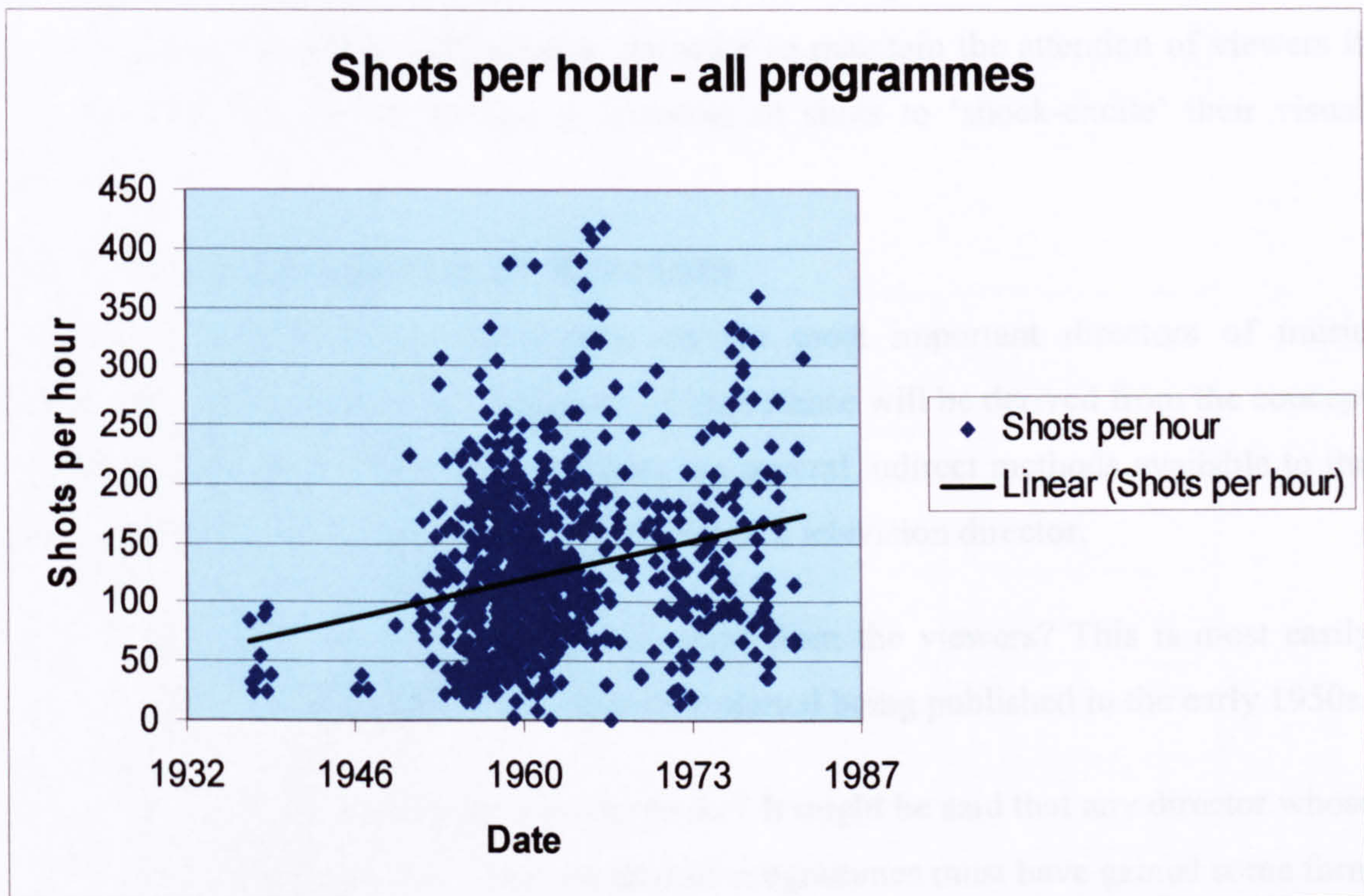
Those copies of the scripts that contain notes made by either the production assistant or the director during the rehearsals and final run are the most useful for this thesis: these give details of any second thoughts that the director had as a result of rehearsals and the number of changes in the script can be a fair indication of how well prepared the director was for the session. A number of other conclusions can be deduced from scripts that will become apparent in the rest of this chapter.

## 8.2 The changes in shot density 1936-1982

All the remaining music scripts in the BBC's written archives have been examined and the number of shots and duration of each programme have been noted. The scatter graph below shows the changes in shot density over the period with which this thesis is



concerned: each programme has had its shot density converted to shots per hour and is represented by a single plotted point on the graph.



**Figure 13: Shots per hour for all music programmes**

The graph shows that the shot density varies enormously from about one shot/hour to over 400 shots/hour. By using the mathematical linear regression function (available in the Excel spreadsheet program used to produce the above graph) a trend line can be produced, as shown above.

There are a number of points that can be deduced from the graph:

- The trend line rises from about 65 shots/hour in 1936 to about 170 shots/hour in 1982 which is an increase in shot density of 2.6 times.
- No programme before 1950 had a shot density of more than 100 shots/hour.
- The vast majority of programmes from 1950 to 1982 had shot densities of from 20 shots/hour to 250 shots/hour (or roughly four shots/minute).



The reason that directors tended to use greater and greater shot densities as the technology improved and offered this opportunity comes out of the idea embodied in the quotation at the top of Chapter 7: the eye bores easily and craves novelty while the ear is shocked by unexpected changes. In order to maintain the attention of viewers it became necessary to use increasing densities of shots to 'shock-excite' their visual sense.

### 8.3 The competence of directors

Chapter 9 of this thesis concentrates on the most important directors of music performance programmes: the definition of importance will be derived from the concept of competence, among other things. There are several indirect methods available to the researcher that give a guide to the competence of a television director.

- 1 What kind of reaction has been gained from the viewers? This is most easily ascertained from the RI figures which started being published in the early 1950s.
- 2 How many programmes did they make? It might be said that any director whose work extended over a large number of programmes must have gained some form of recognition from his superiors however grudging: *Radio Times* citations are a source for these data.
- 3 How did other professionals in television receive the programme? From 1951 the Managing Director of BBC Television held a weekly meeting of senior members of the BBC Television service. The people who attended were heads of programme making departments, heads of technical departments and heads of administrative departments: selected programmes were discussed in some detail at these meetings and consistent praise or its opposite for a director was a further measure of the quality of their work.

In Figure 15 these three criteria are summarised for all directors who have had 19 or more *Radio Times* credits for music performance programmes. The three directors with N/A against their names all worked before Audience Research was established by the BBC and before the weekly meeting of Managing Director, Television had begun.



	Measure of public appreciation	Measures of professional appreciation		
Name	Average RI	<i>Radio Times</i> credits 1936-82	Favourable Citations	Unfavourable Citations
Philip Bate	63	215	0	1
Dallas Bower	N/A	34	N/A	N/A
David Buckton	74	25	2	1
Humphrey Burton	72	19	1	0
Peter Butler	74	31	0	0
Naomi Capon	63	25	1	0
Antony Craxton	70	141	0	1
John Culshaw	70	25	4	1
Margaret Dale	67	60	6	0
Ian Engelmann	76	29	4	1
George Foa	58	54	2	1
Patricia Foy	70	257	6	8
Barrie Gavin	69	27	2	1
Rodney Greenberg	74	52	14	0
James Hunter	72	38	0	0
Ron Isted	72	25	2	0
Arthur Langford	59	29	0	0
Brian Large	74	158	27	4
Donald Hunter Munro	N/A	39	N/A	N/A
Christopher Nupen	75	22	0	1
Alan Rees	67	40	1	0
Charles Rogers	68	90	2	3
Christian Simpson	64	196	3	2
Stephen Thomas	N/A	44	N/A	N/A
Gethyn S Thomas	69	29	0	0
Roy Tipping	72	58	11	0
Walter Todds	69	157	3	1
John Vernon	76	70	8	3
J Mervyn Williams	80	31	0	0

Figure 14: Perceived competence of some prominent directors 1936 - 1982

Taking the average RI as the first criterion gives the following directors as the most highly regarded in decreasing order:



Williams, Vernon = Engelmann, Nupen, Buckton = Butler = Greenberg = Large, Burton = Hunter = Isted = Tipping

Taking the number of *Radio Times* credits as the second criterion gives the following directors as the most highly regarded in decreasing order of credits:

Foy, Bate, Simpson, Large, Todds, Craxton, Rogers, Vernon, Dale, Tipping, Foa and Greenberg.

Taking citations from the Managing Director's weekly meetings gives the following directors as the most highly regarded in decreasing order:<sup>a</sup>

Greenberg, Tipping, Large, Culshaw, Engelmann, Dale, Burton, Isted, Vernon, Craxton, Buckton = Capon.

It is significant that a number of names appear in each list; in order to assess the implied overall quality of each director it is necessary to combine these three lists. There is a **rank aggregation** technique which was first propounded in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by Jean-Charles de Borda known as 'election by order of merit' which has been used for this process of combination: it is described in more detail in Appendix III. The results are shown in Figure 15. Bower, Munro and Thomas have been omitted from Figure 15 since the technique is meaningless for them: there are insufficient data to carry out the technique.

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<sup>a</sup> In order to compensate for different periods of service, the formula used is (positive citations *minus* negative citations) *divided by* (number of *Radio Times* credits).



Name	RI rating position	<i>Radio Times</i> rating position	Citations rating position	Ratings total	Order of merit
Philip Bate	26	2	26	54	21
David Buckton	5	21	11	37	8
Humphrey Burton	9	26	10	45	16
Peter Butler	5	15	18	38	10
Naomi Capon	26	21	11	58	24
Antony Craxton	14	6	9	29	6
John Culshaw	14	21	4	39	13
Margaret Dale	23	9	6	38	11
Ian Engelmann	2	17	5	24	5
George Foa	30	11	15	56	22
Patricia Foy	14	1	27	42	15
Barrie Gavin	17	20	13	50	18
Rodney Greenberg	5	12	1	18	2
James Hunter	9	14	18	41	14
Ron Isted	9	21	7	37	9
Arthur Langford	29	17	18	64	27
Brian Large	5	4	3	12	1
Christopher Nupen	4	25	29	58	25
Alan Rees	23	13	14	50	19
Charles Rogers	21	7	28	56	23
Christian Simpson	25	3	17	45	17
Gethyn S Thomas	17	17	18	52	20
Roy Tipping	9	10	2	21	4
Walter Todds	17	5	16	38	12
John Vernon	2	8	8	18	3
J Mervyn Williams	1	15	18	34	7

Figure 15: Calculated ratings of some prominent directors 1936 - 1982

If the postulate of competence is valid then the finest directors of music performance programmes over the period 1950-1982 are, in order:

Large, Greenberg, Vernon, Tipping, Engelmann, Craxton, Williams, Buckton, Isted, Butler, Dale and Todds.

If in Figure 14 the public perception (the RI column) is separated from the professional perception (the remaining three columns) two orders of merit emerge:

**Public:** Williams, Engelmann\* = Vernon, Nupen\*, Buckton\* = Greenberg = Large, Burton\* = Hunter = Isted\* = Tipping



(\* directors with fewer than 30 *Radio Times* credits, whose performance position may be less statistically significant)

**Professional:** Large, Tipping, Greenberg, Craxton = Dale, Vernon, Simpson, Todds, Engelmann, Culshaw.

These two lists have several names in common: Engelmann, Greenberg, Large, Tipping and Vernon are the top five names in the overall pattern and all five names are in the 'top ten' of both the public and professional appreciation lists. There would appear to be a close correlation between public appreciation and professional appreciation.



## CHAPTER 9 AN ANALYSIS OF MUSIC PERFORMANCE PROGRAMMES

*Professionalism means producing a programme...in such a way that the effort, thought and care that goes into it does not obtrude but...is absorbed into the programme itself. A well-done thing is humanly pleasing because what it effortlessly gives off about itself ...is that care has gone into it...as such it honours those who made it and those for whom it is made. (Paddy Scannell)<sup>409</sup>*

*It is television's familiarity, its centrality to our culture, that makes it so important, so fascinating and so difficult to analyse. It is rather like the language we speak: taken for granted, but both complex and vital to an understanding of the way human beings have created their world. (Fiske and Hartley)<sup>410</sup>*

*I feel that we managed to find a language for reporting, for photographing...concerts. We managed to find a visual language which would respond to the music and I think that has been largely forgotten by a new generation that aren't being taught properly...and don't have the inner, innate musicality to understand what's required. (Humphrey Burton)<sup>411</sup>*

There has been little or no attempt to undertake the analysis of music performance programmes on television and what follows is substantially original. Where parallel work has taken place in other *genres* reference has been given but the paucity of such references is an indication of the way in which analysts have shied away from this area of programme making.

### 9.1 The genres of music performance programmes

In Section 1.2 music performance programmes were divided into two quite distinct *genres*. It is useful to look at these two *genres* from the perspective of *genre* analysis before proceeding to a more empirical style of analysis loosely based on Salt's methods in *Film Style & Technology: History & Analysis* which was mentioned in Section 1.1. *Genre* analysis usefully demonstrates why the analysis of these two *genres* is best tackled separately.

The *theatrical performance genre* includes opera and narrative dance including almost all classical ballet: in this *genre* the in-vision artists move about the performing area, they use properties, they are dressed in costume and there is a use of communicative language, either verbal or gestural. The performers are usually shot in wide-shot or mid-shot but much less frequently in close-up (see Section 9.3). The lighting is usually dramatic with extensive use of both high-key and low-key lighting: the lighting can and



often does change significantly from scene to scene. So far this *genre* demonstrates close similarities with the *genres* of single plays, drama series and drama serials including soaps. The *theatrical performance genre* is further connected with the single play but not with series and serials in that the dramatic plot is closed both at entry and at completion – pre-knowledge of the plot and characters is not needed and there is no sense of cliffhanging. Where *theatrical performance* differs from the single play is the presence of music with which the words or gestures of the performers are intimately connected: since musical ideas move much more slowly than verbal ones the speed of delivery of ideas is much slower than in the single play. As a consequence the rate of shot development – whether in the technical sense of developing shots (track, pan, zoom, focus pull) or in the rate of cutting/mixing – is much slower in the *theatrical performance genre* than in the *single play genre*.

The *non-theatrical performance genre* includes concert performances whether symphonic, chamber or concertante: in this *genre* the in-vision artists do not move about the performing area, they do not use properties and they are usually dressed in conventional clothes such as tails, dinner jackets, concert dresses and so on. There is no use of communicative language, either verbal or gestural, even in works where words have been set to music (as, for example, in the *finale* of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, the '*Choral*'): music dominates the proceedings – it is the *raison d'être* for the programme. The performers are usually shot in a comprehensive variety of wide-shot, mid-shot, and close-up. The lighting is usually static with fixed use of mainly high-key lighting: the lighting rarely changes within a single musical movement or even a complete work. The rate of shot development – whether in the technical sense of developing shots (track, pan, zoom, focus pull) or in the rate of cutting/mixing – is generally quicker than in the *theatrical performance genre* and also shows a much wider range of shot change rates from very rapid to very slow. This *genre* is distinct from almost any other television *genre* although it may have much in common with



other non-vocal types of music performances in the popular field including some works performed on programmes such as *The Old Grey Whistle Test* (1971 - 1987).<sup>a</sup>

There are a number of other considerations in *genre* analysis in other fields which are of much less importance in music performance programmes: the use of stars, sound, studio/location layout. In the early days of television from 1936 to around 1952 the artists engaged for music performance programmes were an eclectic mixture of the well-known and the less-well-known: who chose them is not clear from the files; it may be assumed that the small number of producers chose artists who had impressed them at concerts, recitals and on the theatrical stage. With the appointment in 1951 of Kenneth Wright as Assistant Head of Music Programmes, who was a knowledgeable manager with a background in artists' bookings for radio, there seems to have been a tightening up in the quality of artists being engaged. The schedules start to resemble a '*Who's Who of the Music Quality*' from all over the world and there are considerably fewer makeweights: since the BBC had to face no competition from 1951 to 1955 it may be assumed that one of the reasons for Wright's appointment was his knowledge of the top artists in music and his ability to get them to appear on television. The firebrand reputation of the Controller of Programmes, Television, Cecil McGivern, would have been enough to encourage Wright to sift out any chaff from his producers' suggestions: there is limited direct evidence of this in some fierce memos from Wright in which he castigates the producer of *Music for You* (Sears) for including the music of Albert Ketelby and the over-the-hill pianist Pouishnoff in the August 1953 edition. From 1952 until the end date of this thesis, 1982, the artists chosen to appear on television were generally the most established in their field apart from such clear exceptions as the talent-spotting *Young Musician of the Year* and the *Leeds International Pianoforte Competition*.

The use of sound showed little variation in its aims or achievements over the years: virtually without exception the aspiration in all music broadcasts on television was to produce high quality sound that would match the expectations of listeners to radio and

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<sup>a</sup> Non-vocal popular music – that is, purely instrumental popular music – is very much a rarity compared with vocal popular music.



commercial recordings. Sound was almost always 'live' in the sense that it was picked up at the same time as the pictures were being acquired: pre- or post-recording of sound has been virtually unknown in the field of classical music on BBC Television even for the obvious candidate of opera though there were occasional ballets where the sound was pre-recorded.

Studio and location layout of artists have almost always followed the conventions of the event being covered: concerts and recitals layouts have generally reflected the particular preferences of the artists concerned.

## **9.2 The background to shot composition**

This chapter draws heavily on the philosophical and aesthetic basis of shot composition and sequence creation. This thesis is not a primer in creating television programmes of music performance but certain techniques that have been generally accepted by directors and theoreticians will need to be explained. Fiske and Hartley have asserted that the television director does not have the freedom of the art-film director. There is an expectation from the television audience that constrains him to stick to the tried and tested: the television director's shots have to conform to the norms already established for the medium by his predecessors.<sup>412</sup> That the vast majority of television technicians and directors have conformed – and still conform – to ideas that are generally accepted is indicative of the conservative attitude of both television programme makers and the television audience: this is not to say that television directing is a static art but changes happen very slowly.

There is one way in which music performance programmes are unusual within the overall context of all television programmes. Ellis points out in *Visible Fictions* that the concept of *flow*, originally created by Raymond Williams, has become modified into the concept of *segmentation*. Television schedulers have tended to assume that the viewer is unable to concentrate for more than around a minute: advertisements last on average about 30 seconds; scenes in *EastEnders* and similar popular programmes rarely last more than a minute. It has therefore become the norm in scheduling to ensure that programmes, trailers and advertisements form a free flowing continuum in which the individual elements are no longer than it is assumed the viewer can manage.<sup>413</sup> In music broadcasts that has not been the case: although there are miniatures that last no more



than the assumed concentration span of the viewer, most musical structures last considerably longer. There are single acts of operas without even a scene change that last well over an hour, which is longer than the average programme. One of the ways in which directors of classical music programmes appear to have tried to overcome the tendency to visual boredom is to use more and more rapid changes of shot as shown in Section 8.2.

### 9.3 The building blocks of programme making

For over 40 years, through 13 editions, the classic reference book on making television programmes has been *The Technique of Television Production* by the BBC sound engineer Gerald Millerson.<sup>a</sup> Millerson himself describes the book as containing ‘...fundamental truths, widely-held maxims, and several controversial hypotheses, for which the author must be held responsible...’<sup>414</sup> and the following is a brief summary of Millerson’s ‘fundamental truths, widely-held maxims’. The description of shots is highly conventional and widely understood by professionals: on a single visual subject which will generally be a person but could be an object (‘one shot’ or ‘single’) these descriptions run from Long Shot to Extreme Close-up. Millerson divides the possibilities from one to the other into ten divisions, all of which he illustrates:

1. Long shots: (Very long; long) When very long they are used to establish locations but people in them are barely recognisable and therefore become depersonalised; ‘ordinary’ long shots show the relationship between people and location.
2. Medium shots: (Full length;  $\frac{3}{4}$  length; mid-shot) The subject now dominates the screen and, if a person, gestures remain within the screen width or height.

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<sup>a</sup> Millerson’s various books on production techniques have been cited in a wide variety of Journals including the expected *Screen*; *Journal of Electronic Imaging*; *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*; *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*; *Journal of Audiovisual Media in Medicine*; *Journal of Film and Video*; and *Journal of Educational Television* but also the less likely *UCLA Law Review*; *Medical Education*; *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*; *Language and Communication*; *ACM Transactions of Information Systems*; *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*; *International Journal of Oral History*; *British Journal of Educational Technology*; *Journal of Communication*; *Quarterly Journal of Speech*; and *Communication Research*.



3. Close-up shots: (Medium; close-up; big; very; extreme) The close-up 'concentrates the viewer's interest.' Close-ups, particularly the tighter ones 'rarely sustain our interest for long periods...tend to become detached...cause us to lose our orientation.' Gestures are lost outside the frame.<sup>415</sup>

Millerson is less comprehensive in his treatment of multi-person or multi-object shots but he does demonstrate that the available methods of framing are fewer than for single shots;<sup>416</sup> by implication the available range of emotional responses from the viewer that the director can elicit from multi-object shooting is more restricted than in singles. As will be indicated this has an important implication in the shooting of music performance where more than one performer is involved: any group shot is likely to be less emotionally involving for the viewer than the alternative use of close-ups.

Millerson next divides the changes from one shot to another into six categories which again he illustrates:

1. Tracking in or out. When a camera moves towards or away from a subject the impression is of the viewer approaching or departing: the emotional effect of the track is either a build-up (track in) or a relaxation (track out) of tension or involvement.<sup>a</sup>
2. Crabbing sideways. When a camera moves across a scene, maintaining a constant distance from the subject, the impression given is of 'inspection, critical observation, expectancy or intolerant appraisal.'<sup>b</sup>
3. Cutting. The cut 'shock-excites' to use Millerson's useful phrase: a sudden change of perspective stimulates the viewer's concentration and interest. If the cut changes width as well as direction it can also achieve a change of emotional involvement like a track but instantaneously.

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<sup>a</sup> The term 'dolly', as in 'dolly in', is sometimes used as a synonym for 'track'.

<sup>b</sup> The terms 'truck' or 'travel' are sometimes used as synonyms for 'crab'.



4. Mixing. The mix achieves something of both cutting and tracking in that the relationship between the before and after perspectives is gradual, as in a track, but takes place in a relatively short period of time, as in a cut.<sup>a</sup>
5. Pulling focus. Where the director has two main objects in shot he can manipulate the viewer's centre of attention by alternating which of the two is sharp and which is out of focus.<sup>417</sup>
6. Zooming. According to Millerson the zoom possesses 'pitfalls for the unwary.' In particular the track affects the emotional involvement of the viewer; the zoom, in a peculiar way, although achieving a similar change in size of shot, depersonalises the move: the effect is more akin to putting a telescope to the eye rather than walking towards the subject. As such the psychological separation of the viewer from the subject may not be overcome by simply zooming in.<sup>418</sup>

Having described the building blocks of television directing Millerson goes on to describe some of the methods of putting them into acceptable 'visual sequences'. It is not necessary to summarise all of his descriptions but three aesthetic concepts that will occur many times in the following analyses need to be explained in some detail.

The first is that in a pleasing sequence adjacent shots should contrast with each other in some fundamental way. The simplest change is from one performer to a different one or from one scene to a different one. If the same performer is to appear in adjacent shots then their size should change markedly: a change in the number of performers – a two-shot to a single, for example – may be acceptable if the change in size on the screen of the performer common to both shots is sufficiently contrasted. If the size of the principal centre of focus does not change sufficiently the undesirable effect is known as a 'jump cut.'<sup>b</sup> <sup>419</sup> Going from a shot of a performer to a similar shot of the same performer is only permissible if movement of the performer motivates the change – a turn, for example;<sup>420</sup> this will occur frequently in dance and opera but almost never in

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<sup>a</sup> The term 'dissolve' is sometimes used as a synonym for 'mix'.

<sup>b</sup> See Section 1.9 for the very different use of the phrase 'jump cut' in feature films.



non-theatrical music except in the case of conductors who will frequently change the direction in which they are facing. The second concept was discovered in the very early days of the movies. If a character on the screen is the primary centre of focus there is an imaginary line joining them to a secondary centre of focus: in an opera or dance it may be another character or an item in the set – perhaps a property such as a goblet; in non-theatrical orchestral music it is usually the line joining the conductor to the player on whom he happens to be concentrating; in chamber music the ‘line’ is more difficult to define but is usually found by using the eyeline of the main performer in shot. Whatever the musical medium, in adjacent shots, if either the primary or secondary centre of focus remains in shot, the camera is not permitted to ‘cross the line’. If the camera crosses the line then the primary centre of focus will appear to have changed the direction in which it is facing on the television screen which causes confusion and disorientation to the viewer. Unfortunately there is a duplication of terms at this point: in a dialogue between two characters, if one camera is concentrating on one character and a second camera is concentrating on the second character and both cameras are correctly placed on the same side of ‘the line’ joining the two characters the contrasting shots are known as ‘shot and reverse angle’. If the cameras are incorrectly placed on either side of ‘the line’ each character appears to be changing the direction of their respective eyeline every time there is a cut: this is known as a ‘reverse’.<sup>421</sup> In the descriptions that follow the word ‘reverse’ will be used in the sense of ‘crossing the line’ incorrectly.

There is a final observation from Millerson about the overall structure of a scene (or complete programme) that will be relevant to much that follows: directors from the early days of film have understood the need to orientate the viewer by starting each scene with a wide-angle shot which is usually called the ‘establishing shot’. Millerson observes that this is not always necessary: sometimes it is better to keep the viewer in the dark and satisfy his curiosity a little at a time with what are called ‘teaser’ shots. Even so he accepts that the normal way of opening a new scene is with an establishing shot.<sup>422</sup>

## **9.4 The Salter philosophy**

In Chapter 7 Lionel Salter’s seven unpublished rules for a grammar of TV music presentation for non-theatrical music performance programmes were summarised:



1. All shots, shot changes and camera moves must be musically motivated.
2. In orchestral music the right instruments must be shown at the right time. Avoid visual synecdoche – if a group of instruments is playing do not show a single instrument; if a solo is being played do not show a group.
3. The speed of shot changes should match the tempo and mood of the music.
4. Shot changes should only occur at the ends of phrases.
5. Cutting from shot to shot rather than mixing is preferable except when musical phrases overlap or the music is fluid in character.
6. Never mix between two images of the same performer.
7. Cuts, tracks, zooms and mixes can be used to reinforce the character of the music – a zoom-in or track-in is the visual equivalent of a *crescendo*, for example.

These rules are the only coherent philosophy for presenting music performance that have been committed to paper in the period covered by this thesis though they rest on previous publications by Wright and Craxton and were similar to observations made by Burton. They are therefore a useful reference from which to start analysing the work of directors.

To place these ‘rules’ in context it is useful to put against them the reactions of one of the most active of contemporary practitioners in this field, Barrie Gavin, when interviewed for this thesis.

Gavin pointed out that rule 1 is, in a sense, meaningless since every director of music programmes will assert that they obey it even in the face of disagreement. He pointed out that there is no third party ‘who defines whether they are musically motivated or not’: he drew the analogy to illustrations in novels – ‘But that isn’t how I see Mr. Micawber.’



Rule 2 Gavin accepted as having some basis in practice though he felt that sometimes it is better to show the accompanying instruments than the featured soloist. It has become the practice since Salter's time in the late 1950s to use tight shots of individual performers in broadcasts of orchestral concerts even when a whole section is playing. The main reason seems to be for visual composition: Gavin called the shot of a whole section 'a horrible shot which includes people at the corners who aren't playing.' Salter's rule 2 seems to have been modified by later directors to read:

In orchestral music, the right instrument must be shown at the right time. If a solo is being played, do not show a group.

Gavin found rule 3 uncontroversial.

Gavin said of rule 4 'Of course not!' If followed rigidly Rule 4 leads to a predictable pattern of shot changes that can cause visual boredom especially in pre-Romantic music where phrases tend to be in regular patterns of two, three or four bar lengths. Directors since Salter's time have generally tried to avoid this rigidity by sometimes changing the shot in the middle of phrases as a way of visually stimulating the viewer. It would be more difficult to find a director who complied with Salter's original rule than one who broke it: this rule is more honoured in the breach than the observance.<sup>a</sup> A more contemporary version of rule 4 might read:

Shot changes should generally follow the structure of the music. Changes of shot other than at the end of phrases should be chosen to enhance the composer's intentions rather than to demonstrate the 'cleverness' of the director.

Gavin also pointed out that in music from most periods there is also the innate difficulty that composers overlap phrases so that waiting until the end of one phrase means missing the beginning of the next one; in general it has been found more satisfactory to lose the end of an outgoing phrase than the start of a new one.

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<sup>a</sup> *Hamlet: I iv 14*



Gavin found rule 5 superfluous since all music is fluid to some degree.

Gavin agreed with the basic premise underlying rule 6 but with featured soloists it might be necessary to cut or mix from one image of the soloist to a different image of the same soloist.

Gavin found rule 7 irrelevant to his style of directing since he hardly ever uses zooms in his relays.

Gavin ended his reactions to the seven 'rules' by saying 'everything that Salter says is perfectly applicable but, as Beethoven once said, please believe that the opposite may also be true.'

It might also be observed in the following analyses that rules 3 and 7 became rather more malleable in the hands of skilled directors than Salter's rigid definitions might imply: the predictability of matching the speed of the music with the speed of the cuts would soon bore the audience (and the director!). The fashion of associating a zoom-in or track-in with a *crescendo* has periodically been turned on its head and the zoom-in or track-in has become associated with a *decrescendo* and *vice versa*. Each of the following programmes will be analysed on the basis of these (modified) rules.

There is a further point of some contention which is the concept of 'tune chasing': radical programme makers, as Gavin admitted that he was in the late 1960s, 'inevitably underestimated the conventional necessities of following the tune in performance programmes.' He posed the paradox:

People always sneer about following the tune – well, what else are you going to follow? [In a relay of Bruckner's eighth symphony] the producer from Zweiter Deutsche Fernseh said to me 'I'm so worried about this concert...if the horn plays a solo, we see the horn.' I said 'What do you want to see...you can either see the horn, or the conductor. The alternatives are to look at the roof of the hall, see the audience, see several people not playing instruments or cut to clouds over mountains or sea breaking on rocks...What do you expect?'<sup>423</sup>



In the following discussions a number of programmes are mentioned.<sup>a</sup> The programmes are mostly arranged in chronological order within each of two sections: non-theatrical music and theatrical music with the latter divided into opera and dance. Within each section discussion is concentrated on the ways in which presentation of each *genre* was changing and, arguably, improving: innovation was spasmodic and it is on the innovative aspects of each programme that the analyses will concentrate. The analysis of Greenberg's and my production of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* (1979) is placed in a separate section: 9.8.

## 9.5 An analytical approach to aesthetics

In the paper discussed above Salter avoids a topic that has caused distress to analysts in all the arts: what is the definition of a work of art and what is the aesthetic sense that recognises it? Janet Wolff devotes a fascinating monograph, *Aesthetics and the Sociology of Art* (1983), to investigating this subject and the responses of herself and other writers to it. She argues that the pure 18<sup>th</sup> century Kantian approach to aesthetics based on consensus and training (indoctrination?) is no longer tenable since cultural sociology has shown that both the creators of 'works of art' and those who express critical appreciation of those same 'works of art' are grounded and conditioned by their respective political and economic circumstances. In the final chapter of the monograph she summarises her own attitude:

The very products which aesthetics and art history posit as 'works of art' cannot be uncritically taken as somehow distinguished by certain intrinsic features, but must be seen as produced in that history by specific practices in given conditions.<sup>424</sup>

What constitutes a work of art is a question which she admits she skates around. A summary of Wolff's difficulty – one shared by even such an unequivocal writer as Marx – could be summarised by the question: How can a work like a Mozart quartet, a work without words, plot or apparent political intent, be admitted to be aesthetically pleasing by members of widely differing societies including those outside the European ambit and tradition? Conversely Wolff fails to answer a question of the form: how can

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<sup>a</sup> Bureaucratic details of these programmes, including first transmission, artists, location of recordings (if they exist) and other details, are included in Appendix II of this thesis.



composers such as Leopold Mozart and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Joseph Haydn and Michael Haydn who grew up in similar or identical political environments, produce such markedly different qualities of work? Wolff dismisses traditional modes of criticism outside the sociological ambit while admitting that ‘the sociology of art...needs a theory of the aesthetic’ which she convincingly demonstrates had not yet (in 1983) been supplied. Wolff herself displays an uncritical feminist stance in her admitted inability objectively to view classical ballet with its ‘reactionary and sexist (not to say silly) stories’,<sup>425</sup> which is an indefensible point of view in one trying to produce an approach to objectivity in aesthetics. Wolff comes to an open minded conclusion by the end of the monograph in saying that all she has demonstrated is that both pure Kantian philosophy and pure sociological analysis of aesthetics are insufficient in themselves – the undiscovered ‘truth’ lies somewhere in between the extremes.<sup>426</sup>

While the aesthetic quality of the musical works whose presentation on television are analysed below is of no concern to this thesis, the aesthetic quality of the pictures is central to much that will follow. In Section 9.3 Millerson’s descriptive definitions of shot size were outlined together with their implied emotional meaning. This emotional meaning was no longer the sole or even the most important criterion applicable to televised broadcasts of non-theatrical music: an important aim of the producer of all such broadcasts was that each shot should be aesthetically satisfying. This raised serious problems when he was responsible for a relay from a concert hall since concert stages tend to look messy on screen with music stands, sound cables, microphones, handbags, other players and instrument cases intruding into the pictures. There has been, therefore, a natural tendency for the shooting of concert performances to become tighter and tighter over the years as zoom lenses have become capable of offering narrower lens angles and cameras have become more sensitive (tight shots need more concentrated and intense light than wide angles.) This means that the close-up which Millerson reserves in ‘normal’ programmes for its shock effect and for highly dramatic moments<sup>427</sup> became much more widespread in music broadcasts. The visual intimacy with performers that the directors and their viewers gained was much appreciated as can be seen by the steady increase in Reaction Indices over the years (see Section 1.4). As music directors became accustomed to using close-ups in concert relays they did not



confine their use to outside broadcasts with their 'messy' platforms but began to use them in studio performances of non-theatrical music where the setting was much more easily controlled.

In Section 9.4 Gavin was quoted as saying 'the shot of a whole section is a horrible shot which includes people at the corners who aren't playing':<sup>428</sup> Salter also called the wide-angle of the whole orchestra '...a sea of small meaningless...all but motionless, blobs...'<sup>429</sup> Chapter 3 ended with a quotation by William Trevor from which it was suggested that a good director is one who 'scatters distraction.' Since the definition of an aesthetic camera shot has not yet been successfully concluded, certainly not in the field of music performance programmes, I propose arbitrarily defining a well-composed shot as one in which the director has, as far as possible, excluded all extraneous information: the director has scattered distraction in each shot so that the mind of the viewer is as concentrated on the performance and the aspect to which the director wishes to draw attention as may be possible. A corollary to this polemical assertion is that it is easier for the director to produce an aesthetic shot with a close-up than with a wide-angle: broadcasts with many wide-angles are going to be less aesthetically satisfying than broadcasts with few wide-angles.

## **9.6 Broadcasts of non-theatrical music**

Scripts of the earliest experiments in the broadcasting of performances of non-theatrical music have been almost impossible to discover. Not a single script has survived of the 136 recitals that were broadcast on BBC Television before the Second World War. Of the 22 concerts – that is programmes involving more than a single performer with piano accompaniment – only one script has survived and that is in a private collection.

There are a number of possible explanations.

- The producers of recitals may not have used scripts: recitals were shot 'off the cuff'.
- The producers may have used scripts but they were regarded as so inconsequential that their preservation was not regarded as a priority.



- Scripts for these recitals have been preserved in files that have been catalogued in such a way that their relevance to music is not clear.<sup>a</sup>

Whatever the reason the method of shooting and the appearance of pre-war recitals are probably lost forever.

The one non-theatrical music script to have survived from before the war is of a broadcast of Ravel's *Bolero* on 8<sup>th</sup> October 1937 with Munro producing. The original version of *Bolero* is a highly repetitive work with two melodic phrases played nine times each within a repeated AABB structure (the final iteration is a tightened AB.) Each repetition is played by a different solo instrument or group of instruments giving 18 different *timbres*; there is a side drum *ostinato* which accompanies and sometimes separates each repetition. Ravel uses a huge orchestra of up to one hundred players while the duration of the work is about 13 minutes. The instrumentation of Ravel's *Bolero* used in the television broadcast in 1937 was very different from the original work using 22 players plus piano: the television broadcast included a guitar which is not in the original and the scheduled transmission time was ten minutes. It is clear from the above information that Ravel's *Bolero* was considerably re-written (by Greenbaum?) for this broadcast: both the instrumentation and the duration were curtailed. The camera script seems to imply that compared with the 18 repetitions of the A and B figures in the original there were twelve repetitions in this broadcast which would fit well with the reduction in duration. In order to fit with Munro's proposed shooting script the order in which the different instruments played was also changed; the first five iterations of the themes in the broadcast are shown below:

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<sup>a</sup> This seems unlikely: nearly all scripts that have been found in files have been duplicated on the BBC Written Archive's collection of microfilmed scripts. The latter seems to be a comprehensive collection of any scripts that have been preserved elsewhere within the archives.



<b>Ravel's Original</b>	<b>Televised</b>
Flute	Clarinet
Clarinet	Oboe
Bassoon	Bassoon
E flat clarinet	Wind group
Oboe d'amore	
Flute & trumpet	
Tenor saxophone	Saxophone
Soprano saxophone	

**Figure 16: Ravel's *Bolero* orchestration of first eight instrumental entries**

Munro's script has certain aspects which are problematic; after the opening title captions and announcement the first few shots in the script are as follows:

Camera 2	C.U. of Drum sticks on Side Drum
Camera 4	Clarinet
Camera 1	C.U. of clarinet
Camera 4	Oboe
Camera 1	C.U. of oboe
Camera 4	Bassoon
Camera 1	C.U. of bassoon

The technical requirements make it clear that camera 4 (which was in the second studio at Alexandra Palace) was looking at captions. What is not clear is what those captions were: were they a picture of the instrument to follow or were they just a single word? In either case the effect would have been unusual not to say bizarre. The shots for camera 4 were written into the script by hand while the shots for cameras 1 to 3 are typed. Did Munro get to the studio and discover that the floor cameras could not get from instrument to instrument and maintain a satisfactory visual effect? Were the captions a late after-thought? One possible hypothesis is that after his secretary had typed the script but before the studio day Munro realised that he had a problem in getting from one instrument to another perhaps after conversations with his technicians. It could be imagined that he asked the graphics department to produce one word graphics to overcome the hiatus while the camera was tracked from one instrument to another. The surmise is that Munro was asking his cameramen to dwell on each instrument or group of instruments for the duration of a single 16 bar phrase, was mixing to the caption during the two bar side drum introduction to the next phrase, and then mixing to the next instrument when the camera had tracked to it out of shot.



When this programme is analysed structurally there are a number of things that immediately strike the analyst: first, the script has no establishing shot. This is entirely consistent with both Millerson and Ravel: Millerson allows that sometimes the viewer's curiosity is better served by being allowed only glimpses of the overall picture before a final *dénouement*; despite his hundred musicians Ravel starts the work with barely a handful playing. By starting with a close-up of the side drum sticks and then the clarinet Munro certainly illustrates visually the initial aural impact of *Bolero*. The musical structure of *Bolero* is a continuous *crescendo* whereas Munro's broadcast consists of a series of eleven close-ups or small group shots. It is in the antepenultimate shot that Munro introduces his only wider shot and even that is a pan along the orchestra and not a true wide angle. Even within the constraints of the Alexandra Palace studio Munro seems to have missed the opportunity to illuminate the underlying expanding structure of the music with a corresponding visual sequence. It is notable that Munro used the mobility of two of his cameras merely as a convenient way of getting from one shot to the next out of vision: there is no attempt in this early script to use tracking shots as part of the visual sequence. The broadcast took place well before the BBC had instituted any formal methods of assessing the quality of programmes: there is nothing in the archives to indicate the reaction either of viewers, fellow broadcasters or critics.

Although this broadcast took place before Salter had formulated his seven rules it seems that Munro had already anticipated Salter's philosophy of music directing within the limitations of the equipment at his disposal. All the rules except rule 5 (cut rather than mix) seem to have been observed as Salter would later intend: rule 5 is irrelevant since it was only possible to mix between cameras in 1937. As early as 1937 the pioneer Munro seems to have lighted on the 'rules' for presenting music performance on television that would become the norm over 20 years later. Where Munro could be said to have failed is that his camera script did not match the emotional structure of the music being televised.

The first music telerecording to have survived was recorded in October 1952: for post-war music performance programmes before that date it is once more necessary to rely on surviving scripts to see how directors created visual sequences. 79 scripts remain in the BBC's written archives out of the 425 broadcasts of music performance



programmes between June 1946 and October 1952. Of these only one is of a non-theatrical music broadcasts, the programme *Music in View* directed by Simpson and transmitted live on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1952. The script is notable for only listing the works being performed with room between the titles for shots to be entered by hand on the day: there was no pre-planning of shots for this programme.

The first telerecording of a non-theatrical music programme to have survived is of one of Bate's intermittent but long-running series *The Conductor Speaks*: this was the eighth programme to have been made under this title of which two were transmitted just before the outbreak of war in 1939. The next telerecording of non-theatrical music to have survived was of a recital by the oboist Leon Goossens. The third telerecording still in the BBC's film archives is of the 18<sup>th</sup> edition of *The Conductor Speaks* from 1954 featuring Leopold Stokowski introducing and conducting music played by the BBC Symphony Orchestra. It is difficult when viewing this programme to regard it as being other than thoroughly ineptly directed. As was pointed out in Section 5.4, Bate had come to be regarded as a very lightweight director especially compared to the newcomers Simpson and Foa. He himself admitted that he could not read music with any sort of fluency and this programme from 1954 shows all the evidence of a director out of his musical depth. If one measure of competent directing of non-theatrical music performances was the list of seven rules enumerated by Salter and listed at the top of Section 9.5 Bate failed to observe almost every rule. The very first shot of this programme is a meandering pan across part of the orchestra without regard to the structure of the music being played: in a programme called *The Conductor Speaks* it might be supposed that a priority would be to show the conductor at the start of the programme which Bate conspicuously fails to do. It may be recalled that Millerson regarded the normal way to open any programme was with an 'establishing shot' so that the viewer could orientate the location within his mind: there is no clear establishing shot in this edition of *The Conductor Speaks*. For much of this programme Bate fails to show the correct instruments playing, often missing important solos completely while the camera is looking at non-playing instrumentalists. The music in this programme varies in mood from the tragic Dido's lament from Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* to triumphant trumpet tunes by the same composer and the arrangement by Stokowski of Bach's *Toccatina and Fugue in D minor*. The pace of shot changes rarely alters from one



work to another and there seems to be no attempt to reflect the structure of the music by the structure of the visualisation. Bate uses many zooms in this programme – he shows the tendency of the neophyte director when first faced with a zoom lens to over-use it: it is a habit sometimes disparagingly called ‘hose piping’ though this term is not to be found in Millerson. Bate’s use of zooms is not apparently related to the musical structures involved.

This earliest telerecording of non-theatrical music to be analysed for this thesis has been chosen to show that not every director in the early fifties was coming to the same conclusions as to how to make satisfactory visual sequences. On the evidence of this programme Bate did not seem to have had any idea about how to put together a visual sequence that was both musically and visually satisfying. In Bate’s defence it has to be pointed out that the RI for this programme was 70; Figure 3 in Chapter 1 of this thesis shows that the average RI for all music programmes in 1954 was 58. The viewers seemed to have felt that this programme was much more satisfying than the average music broadcast. Stokowski was a charismatic and popular conductor, who was English by birth but American by residence and an infrequent visitor to England: his comments before and after each piece were heartfelt and well judged for a largely non-musical viewing public. The performance by the BBC Symphony Orchestra was good for the 1950s – Stokowski specifically praised the playing of the orchestra. It may be surmised that the positives embodied in Stokowski’s popularity and the playing of the orchestra more than outweighed the negatives of Bate’s directing and presentation.

There is an important point to be made about one shot used by Bate and that is the full-frontal shot of the conductor taken from a camera high above and behind the centre of the orchestra. This view of the conductor was one not seen by most concertgoers since normally they saw only the conductor’s back: the face-on view of the conductor was reserved for the performers. When viewers were offered the frontal view of the conductor they found it fascinating and illuminating. Edward Lockspeiser voiced a musician’s viewpoint in reviewing a much later series devoted to the Italian conductor, Carlo Maria Giulini, directed by Craxton: ‘...most musical people are happiest...when they are made to see how the conductor’s beats produce certain effects...’<sup>430</sup> The gestures of the conductor, normally only seen by the performers, were now revealed to



the viewers and could show with the right conductor ‘...how wonderfully articulate [those] gestures are...’ Lockspeiser went on to say ‘...the art of gesture in a conductor is not distracting; it is the music itself.’<sup>431</sup>

Just over a month after Bate’s production of *The Conductor Speaks* with Stokowski, Simpson produced a programme of excerpts from *Swan Lake* which was also telerecorded. The dance sections are discussed below but Simpson also includes three short orchestral extracts from the ballet in which Simpson shows a knowledgeable awareness of the musical structure which is certainly at variance with the assessment made of him later by Salter. In *The Dance of the Cygnets* the ten shots used by Simpson are much better chosen and executed than those described above for Bate’s programme. Simpson makes an elementary error by cutting to the second violins when the first violins have the melody but apart from that there is a professional competence to the choice of shots. The orchestra looks to be quite cramped by modern standards which certainly helps the framing of shots. Four of the cuts are noticeably late by four or five frames which is usually an indication of poor communication between director and vision mixer. There are three developing shots: two of them are combined cranes and pans, the other is a pan. Simpson cuts away from both cranes before they are completed and cues the pan rather late which again is a sign of poor communication between director and cameraman. Despite these criticisms the overall effect is of a visually and musically aware director showing considerably greater competence than his more experienced colleague Bate.

The earliest telerecorded recital to have survived in the BBC’s archives is one given by the oboist Leon Goossens directed by an unknown person and dating from November 1952. The next two surviving recitals were directed by Foy within a fortnight of each other in late 1954: both were of eminent pianists in the series *International Celebrity Recital*.<sup>a</sup> Foy had been directing for a little over a year when these recordings were made and they are the fifth and seventh studio recitals directed by her. It may be

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<sup>a</sup> Both programmes were broadcast as part of the first Eurovision exchanges between the United Kingdom and France over a recently opened microwave link across the Straits of Dover. The ‘International’ in the programme’s title seems to refer more to the U.K.-French collaboration than to the status of the performers.



recalled from Section 5.9 that McGivern had said of one of Foy's 1954 transmissions in the series *Music for You*:

Visually, it...is less satisfying... I longed for at least one item or sequence which had been conceived visually – or, at least, a sequence in which there was some visual excitement, or visual beauty...I am talking about television thought. There is little, and there is no evidence that it is being considered.<sup>432</sup>

The same criticism could be applied to these two recitals which are austere and lacking in visual imagination and variety. If the two recitals are placed side by side, as in Figure 17, the same shooting philosophy appears to have been used for the very different works played and the differing personalities of the performers. Identical or very similar shots are indicated by letters **A**, **B**, **C** and **D**; **A'** is more distantly related to **A**.

It should be noted that in each recital every movement was covered in a single shot. The Beethoven sonata played by Hess consists of a free-standing opening movement followed by a continuous sequence consisting of five clearly contrasted episodes: the fourth episode is a reprise of the second and the final episode is a fugue based on the inversion of the fugue subject of the third episode. Although not designated as separate movements by Beethoven the *scherzo* and *adagio* which form the first and second episodes have clearly defined beginnings and ends. Foy makes no attempt to illustrate the fact that the second and fourth sections and the third and fifth sections are closely related musically.

A further observation that comes from these two recitals is that Foy used very little variety in vertical lens position. None of the shots is taken from a lens height that is much below the shoulder line of either of the performers and none from a lens height that would be higher than the top of the piano's open lid. Only shot **B** in the Hess recital, the highest lens height for any shot in either recital, could be described as a high-shot and that is only relative to all the other shots used; shot **B** in the Moiseiwitch recital starts rather lower.



Myra Hess recital – 20 <sup>th</sup> October 1954		Moiseiwitch recital – 3 <sup>rd</sup> November 1954	
Work/movement Musical structure Duration	Shots	Work/movement Musical structure Duration	Shots
Bach arr. Hess <i>Jesu, joy of man's desiring</i> Chorale 3.32	¾ full shot; crab left and track in a little to mid-shot from end of keyboard. A	Schumann <i>Warum?</i> Ternary 2.32	¾ full shot; crab left to mid-shot from end of keyboard. A
Beethoven <i>Sonata in A flat</i> <i>Op.110 –</i> <i>Moderato</i> Sonata form 6.20	Mid-shot. Crab left and track in to ¾ full shot from end of keyboard.	Schumann <i>Grillen</i> Rondo 3.13	Over shoulder mid-shot with whole keyboard. Track in to mid-shot from end of keyboard. B
Beethoven <i>Sonata in A flat</i> <i>Op.110 – Allegro</i> Scherzo 2.07	Over shoulder mid-shot with whole keyboard. Static. B	Schumann <i>Träumerei</i> Ternary 2.43	Wide shot whole piano opposite bent side. Tighten to mid-shot. C
Beethoven <i>Sonata in A flat</i> <i>Op.110 – Adagio</i> 3.51	Wide shot whole piano opposite bent side. Static. C	Schumann <i>Träumewirren</i> Ternary 2.24	Low mid-shot from end of keyboard.
Beethoven <i>Sonata in A flat</i> <i>Op.110 – Fuga</i> Fugue with reprise of <i>adagio</i> followed by inverted fugue. 7.12	Wide-shot whole piano, from end of keyboard. Track in to mid-shot from end of keyboard. D	Wagner-Liszt <i>Tannhäuser</i> <i>Overture</i> ABAB with introduction and coda 14.43	Big wide-angle whole set. Track in to mid- shot over shoulder whole keyboard. Then crab right to mid-shot from end of keyboard. D
Bach <i>Adagio from</i> <i>Tocatta in C major</i> Quasi-improvised 3.53	¾ full shot from end of keyboard. Track in to mid-shot from end of keyboard. A'		

Figure 17: Comparison of shots in two recitals produced by Foy in 1954

What is very curious is that Foy made no attempt to illustrate the internal structure of any of these works/movements. In her interview for this thesis she said that when she first saw television in about 1953 she was appalled by the 'cut-cut-cut' techniques employed by the existing directors:<sup>433</sup> it might be argued that taking the whole of the complex *Tannhäuser Overture* in a single shot lasting nearly a quarter of an hour is taking this objection a little too far. The framing of all the shots in both recitals is always elegant. The change of shot in the Hess recital from a wide-angle of the whole



piano from opposite the bent side of the piano for the Beethoven *Adagio* to a wide-angle of the piano from the end of the keyboard for the following *Fuga* is an uncomfortable jump cut. The 'establishing shot' in the Moiseiwitch recital does not come until the beginning of the *Tannhäuser Overture* which is about half way through the recital: to the viewer it could have come as quite a surprise to discover that Moiseiwitch and the piano were placed on a two-step high dais looking a little like a bandstand. The Hess recital does not have a wide-angle of the whole set at all: there is no 'establishing shot' to demonstrate the studio layout. Both recitals had respectable viewing figures of around 10 million viewers which was very much in line with the average audience for music programmes in 1954 of just over 9 million viewers. The RIs for these popular performers were 63 (Hess) and 62 (Moiseiwitch) a little above the average for music programmes in 1954 of 58. Neither programme elicited internal comment from the Programme Review Board but two later recitals by pianist Claudio Arrau and 'cellist Gregor Piatigorsky directed by Foy in the same series received the comment 'Simple presentation was effective' contradicting to a certain extent McGivern's wish for Foy to demonstrate '...television thought.'<sup>434</sup>

The next two recitals to have survived in the BBC's archives date from 15<sup>th</sup> May 1955 and 7<sup>th</sup> August 1955 and were in the *Sunday Celebrity Recital* series. They were directed by Simpson and were among the last programmes directed by him before the arrival of Salter as his head of department and the acrimony which was to develop between them. The first recital was by the popular Australian pianist Eileen Joyce while the second was a recital by the young French 'cellist Paul Tortelier which received warm praise from the television critic on *The Listener* Philip Hope-Wallace: 'the interest here was surely the imaginative skill with which [Tortelier's] art was *shown*. Asked if I really think this added to our enjoyment of the music, I say emphatically that it did.'<sup>435</sup> The Tortelier recital is an interesting contrast with the two Foy recitals just mentioned. The first work performed by Tortelier is the *Sicilienne and variations* from a Weber piano sonata transcribed by Piatigorsky: it lasts just over eight minutes and contains ten shots. It may be recalled from Figure 17 above that Foy used only eleven shots in 60 minutes of performance spread over two recitals. The W. H. Auden quotation at the head of Chapter 7 of this thesis – the ear is patient, the eye is impatient – seems to imply that Simpson's approach was more appropriate to maintaining the



interest of the viewer than Foy's; the feeling of this first piece in the Simpson directed recital is certainly one of continually stimulating interest and this is despite the first shot lasting over two minutes. It is also significant that in the months immediately preceding Salter's arrival Simpson observes in this programme five out of seven of Salter's 'rules'. One of his rules was applicable only to orchestral shooting and only one rule was broken – Simpson has an ugly jump cut from a mid-shot of Tortelier to a mid-shot of the same player. This late Sunday evening recital gained an average RI of 62 and a slightly lower than average audience figure for the series of 6 million viewers.

The evidence from this limited number of surviving recital and orchestral programmes from before 1956 confirms the general opinions expressed about the directing abilities of Bate, Simpson and Foy found in Chapter 5. At the time Salter took over from Wright as Head of Music Programmes, of the three producers who were directing recitals and orchestral concerts, Bate was incompetent, Foy was unadventurous and unimaginative and only Simpson was demonstrating flair and imagination.

The first recording of an outside broadcast of a public concert to have survived in the BBC's archives dates from 1954: it is of a Promenade concert and was directed by an unknown hand. The next recording of an outside broadcast of a public concert to remain in the archives is also the first surviving recording of Craxton's directing: it dates from February 1957. It is of a live relay of a concert from the Royal Festival Hall in London which was an important occasion in the history of British music: the European premiere of William Walton's 'cello concerto. The concerto was commissioned by the 'cellist Gregor Piatigorsky and had been composed by Walton in Italy in 1956 and first performed by Piatigorsky with the Boston Symphony Orchestra in January 1957. Piatigorsky was again the soloist in this televised relay with Sir Malcolm Sargent conducting the BBC Symphony Orchestra. Craxton appears to have had four cameras of which two were fitted with zoom lenses and two with turrets. Two points are worth making about the disposition of the cameras: first, all of the cameras were on the audience side of the platform edge; there was no camera in the conventional position for shooting the conductor, directly in front of him and high behind the orchestra. In a concerto such as the Walton where the soloist has hardly any moments of silence this is not unreasonable. There are a couple of points in the programme where Craxton wished



to show the conductor without the soloist and the shots are a little uncomfortably from three-quarters behind the conductor's back and rather unflattering to Sargent. Second, all the cameras were disposed down the left hand side of the hall so that in all the shots the performers, soloist and orchestral members alike, were facing the same way.

As mentioned several times above Craxton was regarded by many members of the BBC's hierarchy as an ideal director of music programmes and the evidence of this concert, the 25<sup>th</sup> for which he gained a *Radio Times* credit, confirms that opinion. As the work had only been performed for the first time in the previous month it would not have been familiar to Craxton: despite this there is an awareness of Walton's language which makes for a most effective broadcast. It was normal from the 1950s to the mid-1970s for outside broadcast directors to do their own vision mixing and Craxton's switching from camera to camera has an admirable precision which clearly demonstrated a director who was at ease with reading a complex score. There are one or two 'blips' but it is without doubt a far better demonstration of musical skill than Bate's *The Conductor Speaks* of 1954. The basic shot of the solo 'cellist is well chosen and generally taken on one of the zoom lenses giving variety of size from full length to close-up. The final shot of the *scherzo* is a fine demonstration of Craxton's skill: it starts as a close-up of the 'cellist's face and left hand, low on the A string. The movement ends with a rapid glissando to a high harmonic and Craxton cues a zoom out that keeps the left hand in shot to end on a mid-shot. Craxton generally observes what would become Salter's rule number 2: do not show single shots as representative of whole sections. Observing this rule leads to untidy shots and Craxton demonstrates this several times with high group shots of string sections that contain more platform surface than musical action. Craxton's use of zooms is much more musical and sophisticated than Bate's of three years previously and never shows unmotivated hose piping. Walton's 'cello concerto is generally quite slow moving musically: to reflect this Craxton favours mixes against cuts but tends to use quite rapid mixes, many of them no more than four or six frames long; the slowest mix in this broadcast was 26 frames or just over a second between two of the variations that form the final movement of the concerto.

Just over four months before this broadcast Rudolf Cartier was demonstrating his superior studio technique for opera over the producers in Music Programmes (see



below) and in this broadcast Craxton demonstrates his superior musical insight over those same producers for non-theatrical musical relays. Of Walton's three concertos for string instruments – violin, viola and 'cello – the 'cello concerto is the one that most needs repeated hearings to fully appreciate its beauty and subtleties. This broadcast had a very good audience for new music – ten million – but the viewers clearly disliked the work giving it an exceptionally low RI of 38. The telerecording was never used for a repeat broadcast but it is a classic performance with fine playing from Piatigorsky and fine accompaniment from the orchestra under Sargent.

Foy's production of a recital in September 1957 by violinist Nathan Milstein accompanied by Ernest Lush demonstrates that in the three years since the piano recitals analysed above her approach to recitals was unchanged. Each of the seven works in the recital is covered in a single tracking shot with no real attempt to reflect the different characters shown by the pieces played. The opening Mozart *Adagio*, a work of deep serenity, receives the same treatment as the agitated *Perpetuum Mobile* of Novacek which closes the programme – they both start with a fairly wide two-shot which develops to a single of the violinist followed by a return to the two-shot, all on the same camera. The shots in the programme are never less than elegant but the lack of variety or structure is once again striking.

Todds was another director who was to prove innovative in the field of music performance. His first broadcast was in January 1958 and the first of his programmes to have been preserved dates from a year later. His 19<sup>th</sup> recital broadcast was the third of his programmes to have been telerecorded: it was transmitted live on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1959 and was of Clifford Curzon playing works by Schumann and Brahms. The transmission came from Riverside Studio 2 and Todds had three cameras, none fitted with zoom lenses. Schumann's *Kinderscenen – Scenes from Childhood* – is a series of 13 short movements that illustrate aspects of childhood. Todds chooses what is a very similar approach to Foy outlined above for her 1954 recitals: none of the movements is shot in more than one shot and several pairs of movements are concatenated into a single shot. The first shot that Todds uses is the same opening shot as Foy used in both of her recitals: a  $\frac{3}{4}$  frontal shot of the pianist followed by a track in and crab left to mid-shot profile which is a fairly conventional way of opening any piano recital. Hereafter Todds



shows how much recital shooting had progressed in five years. Firstly Todds uses a lower lens position for *Wichtige Begebenheit* than any that Foy used – the lens is almost at keyboard level: the danger of this is that the pianist's left hand is masked by the right; on the other hand the right hand is given greater prominence which is appropriate since that is the aural centre of this movement. During this movement Todds effects a lighting change from high-key to a highly contrasted low-key which is the first time that this has been observed in any of the *non-theatrical* recordings watched: the structural reason for this is that the following movement is *Träumerei* which is not only the central movement of the work but also the best-known and one that reflects its title: *Day-dreams*. Todds retains the low-key lighting for several movements and introduces another innovation in *Fast zu ernst* which is the use of a high crane shooting down at quite a steep angle onto the whole keyboard giving what is close to a point-of-view picture of the keyboard as seen by the performer. The following movement – *Fürchtenmachen* – involves a dialogue between a calm melody in the pianist's right hand and an agitated one in the left hand: Todds introduces yet another innovation by taking one of his cameras behind the pianist's back and shooting the left hand from the bass end of the keyboard. This can be a difficult procedure to handle since the pianist is facing camera left on this camera and camera right on both of the cameras at the treble end of the keyboard – a classic example of a reverse. Todds handles the problem with skill by shooting the left hand tightly and from a high angle, effectively in isolation: the right hand and body of Curzon are shot from low and wide giving a most effective visual sequence. Todds also restores the studio to the high-key lighting established at the beginning of the recital to give a visual symmetry to the work (which the work itself does not possess.) There are other technical points to make about this recital: all the developing shots are precisely started and precisely timed. The director's script has not survived but this precision can usually only be achieved by accurate score reading and counting bars for the benefit of the cameraman. Finally the cuts from shot to shot are generally placed a few frames before any musical change; this is a subtlety not mentioned by Salter in his rules but directors have found that this is more satisfying than cutting on the beat or, far worse, just after the beat. Todds' framing of shots is clearly derived from the previous work of other directors such as Foy and Simpson: as with their shooting it is highly effective and elegant. Where Todds seems to have



established a new level of directorial interpretation is in the greater variety of those shots and the use of varied lighting within a work to enhance the mood of the music. The recital was transmitted at the rather late time of 2245 and gained modest viewing figure of 2.0 million and a low RI of 57. The programme was not repeated.

In January 1962 Todds produced the tenth and final edition of *World Singer*, a series of which he had produced four editions. This series featured some of the finest singers of their generation in short recitals and was introduced by the popular accompanist Gerald Moore. The performers included Schwarzkopf, Fischer-Dieskau, Gedda, Borg, Sutherland and in the final programme the American soprano Teresa Stich-Randall. It is a beautifully sung recital ranging from the high culture of Schubert and Schumann through to one of Haydn's delightful settings of English words and an American folk song, *Hi-ho the preacher man*. It is a slightly odd recital in that Todds does not seem quite sure about how he is going to shoot the singer: each song has a consistent and effective approach but between the different songs a variety of techniques is used which gives a slightly uncertain feeling to the whole recital. Three songs are shot as two-shots with the pianist visible and the singer in near profile at the treble end of the piano facing the pianist as if in a domestic 'fun' sing-through; several songs are shot in a pleasing medium close-up with the singer looking just off-camera, one of them ending with the singer turning to camera for the final stanza of the song; one song is performed in a separate set with the singer in mid-shot, again singing just off-camera; and two songs are delivered directly to camera. One of the latter is the least successful of the recital: it is the American folk-song and Stich-Randall does not appear to have learned the words; she has to keep looking off-camera at 'idiot' cards which is a little uncomfortable for the viewer. Todds never cuts from shot to contrasting shot within a song even for the strophic songs which makes for predictability and dullness in the shooting. This late night recital gained a respectable audience of 2.2m but a low RI of 57.

In November 1959 Todds produced the first in the series *Television Concert Hall* – later *International Concert Hall* – with which he was to establish his name as an innovative and analytical director: Burton pointed out that Todds was possibly the first director to analyse the structure of the music he was directing and to reflect this in his shooting script.<sup>436</sup> The earliest of the *Concert Hall* recordings to have survived is the eleventh in



the *International* series, following seven in the earlier *Television* series. It features the Berlin RIAS Symphony Orchestra under Ferenc Fricsay with Yehudi Menuhin as the soloist in Bruch's first violin concerto. Most of the programmes in these two series were recorded in front of a small audience in Television Centre's Studio 4, one of three large studios in the complex. Todds' script for this broadcast has survived and it contains only three shot changes in 83 shots between the rehearsal and the transmission which is a remarkable tribute to the quality of Todds' pre-planning. There is a fluidity to the camera moves that is generally only seen in studio performances with the ultra-smooth floors of television studios designed for such freedom. The first work in the concert is the overture to Rossini's *La Scala di Seta – The Silken Ladder*: it is instructive to see how Todds organised the shooting of this work. The structure of the overture is one that Rossini used frequently – a slow introduction leading into an *allegro* in sonata form conventionally concluded with a *coda*. In this broadcast Todds starts with a wide establishing shot, followed by the conductor's bows in close up and then a different wide-angle of the orchestra for the opening of the overture – this could be regarded as another establishing shot for the start of the music. The exposition and recapitulation sections of the overture take the following visual form<sup>a</sup> (the introduction, development section and *coda* are omitted in Figure 18):

Structure	Exposition Shots	Recapitulation Shots
Theme A on violins	Wide-angle violins from behind conductor	Wide-angle violins from behind conductor
Repeat of A on oboe	Oboe and flute (and non-playing piccolo) from right hand side of orchestra	Oboe and piccolo (and non-playing flute) from right hand side of orchestra
Bridge passage on whole orchestra	Violins with conductor foreground. Track back to wide-angle whole orchestra	Close-up orchestra leader. Track back to include conductor and all first violins
Theme B on flute with oboe and clarinet	7 wind players – flutes, oboes, clarinets and one bassoon from right hand side of orchestra	7 wind players as before
Rossini <i>crescendo</i>	Whole orchestra. Tighten to conductor, violas and cellos	High frontal shot of conductor
Climax of <i>crescendo</i>	Small group of cellos	(shot remains on conductor)

Figure 18: Structure of Todds' shooting script for *La Scala di Seta*

<sup>a</sup> In sonata form, the bridge passage in the exposition, from tonic to dominant, is, perforce, slightly different from the bridge passage in the recapitulation from tonic to tonic.



The shots used are not remarkable in themselves – the third shot in the recapitulation, for example, should only include the first violins at the end since no-one else in the orchestra is playing. What is also unremarkable is Todds' deliberate decision to use related shots for the exposition and recapitulation: most competent directors would have come up with similar solutions. What is remarkable is his decision to use identical shots: he appears to be the first director consciously to attempt to give the viewers a visual aid to understanding the musical structure of a work being televised. As in Todds' coverage of Curzon's recital above there is a precision to the cueing of the cuts and developing shots which again shows a director at ease with reading a score and communicating that score to his technicians.

The Bruch concerto is well covered but less structurally motivated presumably because the presence of the charismatic performer Menuhin meant that Todds deliberately chose to feature him in medium close-up at all opportunities. In the orchestral *tuttis* when the soloist is not playing Todds generally keeps Menuhin in the wide angles used. The shooting is musically perceptive and one example will give an idea of Todds' insight: towards the end of the slow movement with its justifiably famous melody the timpani take over the rhythm of that melody for a couple of bars. Todds places his camera (and soloist) so that at the point of changeover from violinist to timpani he can shoot along the out-of-focus foreground violin using it as a kind of pointer to the timpanist, high and silhouetted against the cyclorama. Despite Menuhin having a couple of minor memory slips and already in 1961 showing the problems of bowing instability that would remain for the rest of his life, the performances in this concert were memorably fine and the programme gained a very respectable late evening audience of 4.7m and a high RI of 81.

The next recital viewed in a sense adds nothing to the above: it was the first television recital given by Jacqueline du Pre on 4<sup>th</sup> February 1962 and produced by Foy. Once more the strengths and weaknesses of Foy's directing are clearly shown: the shots are always elegant and nothing of du Pre's playing is missed. On the other hand the three pieces are each shot with a single developing shot: the first and last have a track in from a wide-angle of the whole set to a mid-shot cutting off at the 'cello bridge; the middle work is a crane down from a high mid-shot to a conventional mid-shot. Foy once again



demonstrates a lack of 'television thought' some eight years after she was first accused of the failing.

Large directed his first music programme for the BBC in June 1965: eleven months later he directed the coverage of the concert at London's Royal Festival Hall celebrating Yehudi Menuhin's fiftieth birthday, *Menuhin at Fifty*. Large's coverage of this event is a fascinating contrast to Craxton's coverage of the Walton 'cello concerto from the same venue nine years previously: all four of Large's cameras were fitted with zoom lenses and unlike Craxton's left-handed exclusivity Large disposes them fairly evenly around the concert platform: one on the left, one directly in front of the conductor and two on the right. The first work televised was Beethoven's *Romance in F* with Menuhin as soloist and Boult as conductor. This short, intense work is in the form of a slow rondo: for the main theme Large uses near-identical shots for each repetition – a medium close up of Menuhin used exactly as Millerson described to 'concentrate the viewer's interest.'<sup>437</sup> Large appears to have consciously used repetitive visual aids to help the viewers sub-consciously to appreciate the structure of this work following the pioneering approach of Todds in the studio noted above.

The main work televised was Mozart's concerto for three pianos with Menuhin conducting and Menuhin's two sisters and youngest son playing the solo parts. What Large brought into this programme for the very first time among programmes viewed was a substantial introduction which was filmed in advance using photographic illustrations and a narration by Richard Baker. A substantial interview with Menuhin was also included between the two works which was another novelty for a music performance broadcast. These innovations by the first producer of music programmes with a doctorate in music may have been among the factors that ensured that this broadcast gained a respectable audience of 7.1m and a very high RI of 86.

Seven months later Large was to expand on these innovations by getting Leonard Bernstein, a noted educator as well as conductor, to give an erudite but approachable introduction to a performance of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* in the form of an interview with Burton. The shooting script for this specially mounted programme has not survived but Large seems to have had at least eight cameras, two of which appear to have been fitted with turrets and both of which had some limited mobility which was



unusual for an outside broadcast where cameras were normally static. What is noteworthy about this programme is that it is the first relay of orchestral music viewed which has cameras on the concert platform – one is placed between the violas and second violins at about 20° to the left of the conductor's straight ahead direction and one is placed between the principal double bass and the edge of the platform. These cameras give viewpoints of the conductor and of musicians which the concert going public can never experience: they are only seen by performers during performances. What is also noticeable is that Large's directing and vision mixing is now much more a conscious interpretation of the performance rather than a passive relay: Large uses the cameras to deliver an impressionistic display largely by ignoring Salter's rule 2 – do not use a shot of a single player when a group is playing. He rarely shows more than four string players at a time except in wide-angles: Large delights in tight shooting and in using his stage and floor cameras to shoot from below instruments. His shooting of Bernstein also shows the same kind of gestural awareness that was the hallmark of Simpson and Dale noted in the section on dance below: Bernstein's hands are never allowed to leave the screen even when the conductor's gestures are extravagant. Earlier in this section Bate was criticised for failing to show the conductor at the start of a programme called *The Conductor Speaks*: Large does not make the same mistake in *Leonard Bernstein Conducts*. After the stylish opening graphics from Alan Jeapes featuring stills of the conductor and the ten-minute interview, Large starts the relay of this performance with a mid-shot of Bernstein entering the concert hall<sup>a</sup> and then stays with Bernstein until nearly at the end of the *Introduction*<sup>b</sup> to *The Rite of Spring* almost three minutes into the work. Although Large from this point starts to use conventional 'tune-chasing' techniques, the conductor still dominates the visual treatment and is rarely off screen for more than half-a-dozen short orchestral shots. Early in the performance there is an extraordinary 'domination' shot of Bernstein: the platform at the Fairfield Halls appears to be a metre or so high with the conductor's podium even higher on an extension towards the audience; a camera at stalls level is therefore at

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<sup>a</sup> In fact Large puts in a brief 'buffer' shot of the whole orchestra to avoid a 'jump-cut' in the feature film sense from Bernstein in interview to Bernstein in the concert hall.

<sup>b</sup> Sections of *The Rite of Spring* as denoted by the composer are indicated in italics.



about the level of a very low creeper in relation to the conductor – about level with his knee and alongside rather than behind. At the collapse of the violence in *The Augurs of Spring* Large uses a shot of Bernstein framed against organ pipes from this creeper position which achieves the visual effect noted below in the section devoted to opera of ‘threat’ or ‘dominance.’ The same shot is held for the transition into the second theme of this section which is a luscious tune on the solo horn and is accompanied by a change in body language by Bernstein that seems to betoken submission/affection: Bernstein even essays a smile. It is a quite astonishing and unique shot in the viewing for this thesis though repeated by Large later in this performance for *Glorification of the Chosen One*, a particularly violent section of this work and for the start of the reprise of the violent and complex *Sacrificial Dance: The Chosen One*. Large also uses a technique which he seems to have invented for maintaining visual interest: in a sequence such as in *The Mystic Circles of the Young Girls* Stravinsky gives the tune successively to two horns – flute and violins – two horns – three oboes and so on. The ‘lazy’ way of dealing visually with a sequence like this is to allocate one camera to the two horns and repeat the shot after cutting away for the intermediate shot. Instead Large allocates a camera on the right of the horns to the first statement and a camera on their left for the repetition: the shot is still a tight one of two horns so the musical structure is followed faithfully but the change in direction creates new visual interest for the easily bored eye. Large also ends each half of this work with identical pairs of shots – as the music gradually builds towards a climax there is a gentle zoom in by the stage camera from a medium wide-angle through the second violins to a mid shot of Bernstein followed by a cut to a BCU of the conductor’s face taken from the central camera: structurally Large seems to be using this two shot sequence as the visual equivalent of a ‘full stop’ terminating a musical ‘paragraph’.

In September 1969 Leopold Stokowski made another of his infrequent visits to the United Kingdom: the only concert he conducted was of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony and Schubert’s *Unfinished* Symphony at the Fairfield Halls in Croydon with the London Philharmonic Orchestra; Todds directed the outside broadcast with four cameras each fitted with a zoom lens. It was at least the fifth outside broadcast directed by Todds but it is a disappointing effort from this highly-regarded studio director. His reputation for musical analysis in his shooting scripts is not apparent and without the ability to move



his cameras noted above for *International Concert Hall* his directing frequently degenerates into unmotivated zooms and pans. There is still the precision in the cutting and mixing of a musical director but the framing of shots is often unsatisfactory and clearly demonstrates what Gavin said above: the shot of a whole section [is] 'a horrible shot which includes people at the corners who aren't playing.'<sup>438</sup> There is also an unadventurousness in the shooting which is surprising after the example set in the same hall by Large, noted above – the first movement of the Beethoven symphony is a tempting vehicle for the imaginative director but Todds takes the nine minutes of music in 19 unremarkable shots which is a very low shot density for such a dynamic movement. Not everything in the programme is disappointing – there is some remarkable camerawork from one of the cameramen; the script has not survived so it is not possible to tell whether the shots were 'grab' shots when offered by the cameraman or planned. To give one example: Stokowski's conducting is curiously ambidextrous in that he sometimes gives the beat with the left hand and the balance with the right and sometimes his hands reverse. In the extended transition from the third movement into the fourth the cameraman starts on a tightish mid-shot and pans to a very big close-up of Stokowski's right hand, gently pulling out to include the left and then the conductor's head as the climax arrives. For the musical viewer it is a most eloquent shot and just one example of some remarkable shooting from this unknown cameraman.

Todds directed the cameras at a performance of the same Beethoven symphony eight months later at the Royal Festival Hall as part of the complete cycle of Beethoven symphonies conducted by Otto Klemperer. Once again the sonata-form opening movement with its violent repetition of a four-note *motif* thrown from section to section of the orchestra is covered in a leisurely way, this time in 21 shots. Once more Todds chooses not to illustrate the structure and relies on unmotivated zooms. The cuts from shot to shot once more show a musician in charge in their precision but the aesthetic effect is disappointing: this time there is no imaginative camerawork to compensate for the lack of structure though Todds tries unsuccessfully to repeat the remarkable shot of the conductor's hands used in the Stokowski performance. The Klemperer series marked the end of Todds' career as a television director: he was to direct no further orchestral concerts in the ten remaining years he worked for BBC Television. His early work on *Television Concert Hall* and *International Concert Hall* had been justifiably



highly regarded but the concerts with Stokowski and Klemperer showed that he was being overtaken by a younger generation of more imaginative and adventurous directors.

Before considering the work of these younger directors in the 1970s and 1980s a brief mention will be made of a non-theatrical item in the edition of Foy's programme *Gala Performance* transmitted on 27<sup>th</sup> March 1970 which also figures in the dance and opera sections below. It was the 24<sup>th</sup> edition of this programme which had been running for nearly seven years and would appear a further eleven times before the final edition in January 1976, the year of Foy's retirement from the BBC. The edition viewed included a performance of Liszt's *Hungarian Fantasia* with John Ogden as the soloist accompanied by the Sadler's Wells Orchestra conducted by Charles Mackerras. Foy had four cameras: two of them were placed to cover the orchestra located in the orchestral pit of the Coliseum Theatre and two of them were able to cover the keyboard of the piano which was on the stage of the theatre. The concerto is in a single movement divided into clear episodes: Introduction – theme and variations – transition – theme and variations. As with all Foy's programmes viewed for this thesis her shooting of the work is unadventurous and rather dull. Foy's visual structure is a consistent sequence of orchestral shot followed by shot of the pianist followed by an orchestral shot and so on: the shots of the pianist are always either a mid-shot of Ogden or a wide-shot of the whole piano; the shots of the orchestra are always either a wide-shot of the whole orchestra or a mid-shot of the conductor, with two exceptions: a shot of a solo trumpet at one point and a shot of two double basses, panning and zooming into the conductor for the opening of the work. There is only one change of shot of the pianist not involving an intermediate shot of the orchestra and it is a curious and ugly one: it occurs at a point where, for whatever reason, the music has been cut. There is no edit – the continuity shows that the performance was continuous at this point – but an orchestral *tutti* has been removed from the performance and it may be that, for reasons of timing, the work was shortened after rehearsal and Foy, apparently incapable of re-scripting the sequence, was forced to go from one shot of the pianist to another without the orchestral buffer shot originally scripted at this point. Foy uses no close-ups of the hands or shots of the pianist's face which are conventional shots for a concerto performance and both available to Foy but not used. Towards the end of her career Foy seemed to be no more



interested in providing what McGivern called 'visual excitement...television thought' than at the beginning at least in non-theatrical music performance coverage.<sup>439</sup>

In 1970 I joined Music Programmes after spending three years as a director in the North of England where my work was divided roughly equally between News and Current Affairs on the one hand and Light Entertainment on the other. Shortly after joining Music Programmes I was asked to make a 30 minute programme celebrating the recent winning of the Tchaikovsky Competition gold medal in Moscow by pianist John Lill: it was predominantly a studio recital and was transmitted on BBC-2 on 10<sup>th</sup> August 1970. Viewing this programme over 30 years after I made it, this first effort at presenting classical music performance shows remarkable imagination and musical insight for a 27-year-old director. What is equally clear is that for the first time a director was coming to 'serious' music whose training had been predominantly in television Light Entertainment though Rogers had made his reputation with light music shows. There are a number of innovations not seen in previous programmes viewed for this thesis: each of the four works is given a different coloured lighting treatment and in three of the works the lighting is changed within the work to reflect changes in the internal 'mood' of the music (it may be recalled that Todds had effected a single lighting change in his 1959 recital with Curzon); the pianist is sometimes shot through the lid of the piano from near the tail, a novel face-on shot; at the start of one of the pieces the hammers of the piano are shown; a mirror is suspended over the pianist's head to give a point-of-view shot of the keyboard from the pianist's perspective; mixes occur quite deliberately before zooms and tracks have completed which is a much-used Light Entertainment technique. All of these seem to have been effects not previously used by Music Programmes directors. There is a complex craning and crabbing shot that is worthy of Simpson or Cartier at their most imaginative. The cuts and mixes are precisely calculated and the density of shots is higher than seen previously at about 200 shots per hour which again is more typical of Light Entertainment than Music Programmes hitherto. The first work in the recital, Liszt's *Paganini Study no. 2*, is in ternary form (ABACoda) but there does not appear to be any attempt to illustrate the structure. The cuts are all placed on bar lines though not predictably at ends of phrases but there is no repetition of shots in the two 'A' sections of the work. Similar observations could be made about the other three works in this recital: there is no attempt visually to help the



viewer understand the musical structures. Gavin said of Greenberg and me 'I think both of you were considerable musicians. You knew how to play things, you knew how to read music, and you were...a great deal more [musically] literate than people like me.'<sup>440</sup> While the comparison that Gavin makes with himself may not be justified, the sentiment certainly seems to be true as far as some of the other music directors were concerned judging by this first music programme produced by me. What is also apparent is that although Salter's seven 'rules' were unpublished and therefore unknown to me, I had already instinctively come to many of the same conclusions about how to direct music performance for television. Two of Salter's rules are inappropriate for a solo recital and already his rule 4 – only change shot at the ends of phrases – was generally ignored but I seem to have observed his remaining four rules in this recital quite unconscious of the philosophical opinions he had expressed over ten years previously.

In 1974 Large directed five programmes each featuring one of the Beethoven piano concertos played by Vladimir Ashkenazy with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Bernard Haitink in public concerts at the Royal Festival Hall. These would mark the end of the stage of Large's career devoted substantially to concerts and the changeover to his becoming the world's most prolific director of opera broadcasts – after the Beethoven concertos series he would direct only five further conventional concerts for the BBC up to the end of 1982.<sup>a</sup> If the broadcast is typical of Large's orchestral shooting from the 1970s it is possible to make two observations: it is not as adventurous as his shooting from the 1960s and he was being overtaken in visual imagination by his two 'protégés' Greenberg and me. It is instructive to compare an orchestral work from the Large programmes with one by each of the younger directors from about the same period: Greenberg's sixth music programme, his third orchestral concert broadcast on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1974 and my 25<sup>th</sup> music programme, my 17<sup>th</sup> orchestral concert broadcast two years later on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1976. The Large concerts included a performance of Beethoven's *Leonore No. 2 Overture*; both Greenberg's and my

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<sup>a</sup> Although Large is now best known for his relays from the world's opera houses he still directs orchestral concerts, most notably the *New Year's Day Concert* from Vienna.



concerts were Promenade concerts with Greenberg's including Debussy's *Images* and Schoenberg's *Accompaniment to a Film Scene* while mine consisted of Sibelius' *First Symphony*. The immediate impression from all three programmes is that in charge there is a musician with a well-developed visual aesthetic sense. There are very few 'ugly' shots in the sense defined by Gavin: shots with non-performing musicians intruding into the edges of the shot or large areas of platform between the performers. All four works are also structurally interpreted in the sense that musical excitement is reflected in visual excitement and musical stasis is reflected in visual stasis. A further immediate impression is that Large's direction is much more leisurely than either Greenberg's or mine. Large uses 28 shots in the 14 minute overture, a shot density of 120-shots-per-hour; in the Debussy work Greenberg's shot density is 240 shots-per-hour while in the Schoenberg work it is almost 150-shots-per-hour; in the Sibelius symphony my shot density is an even higher 460-shots-per-hour. Large also prefers looser shots – of his 28 shots only three are true close-ups (of a single player); when showing string players he prefers groupings of six or eight players; he uses more wide angles of the whole stage – what Salter described as '...a sea of small meaningless...all but motionless, blobs...' <sup>441</sup> – one of which lasts 82 seconds (the establishing shot) and one of which lasts 37 seconds; he holds one shot of the conductor for 76 seconds. Greenberg's establishing shot is also quite long – some 63 seconds – and he ends the third movement of *Images* (*Gigues*) with a 50-second shot of the conductor leading into a pull-out to the full orchestra lasting a total of 110 seconds. Apart from those two shots Greenberg uses fairly rapid shot changes and uses big close-ups for about a fifth of his shots. I do not use an establishing shot but a series of teasers – the first wide-angle comes nearly two minutes into the performance and lasts only ten seconds – it reflects my general avoidance in this broadcast of wide-shots: big close-ups represent about a quarter of my shots. My longest shot is used at the climax of the final movement and lasts about 50 seconds. Greenberg and I frequently use what Salter refers to as visual synecdoche <sup>442</sup> – using a single player or a pair of players to represent a whole group or section which Large deliberately avoids.

The impression given by these three programmes is that Large was still sometimes approaching a concert with the intention of giving the audience a feeling of 'relay' – of being present at an event and showing the viewers what they themselves would choose



to watch. Greenberg and I imposed our own personalities much more on the televising of our concerts: no longer was the intention to give the viewer an objective perspective (if such a thing is ever possible) but an idiosyncratic interpretation of an event. It may not be possible to compare the broadcasts in their audience impact since the music in Large's programme was central repertory and probably familiar to a substantial number of the viewers whereas the music in Greenberg's and my programmes was unlikely to have been familiar to many viewers: musical novelty is generally disliked. The reaction indices of 82 (Large), 55 (Greenberg) and 68 (Tipping) may be some indication that the viewers were happier with Large's 'objective relay' approach than with Greenberg's and my 'subjective and interpretative' approaches. Adler's comment above about the audience gaining pleasure from familiarity<sup>443</sup> may apply to the music performed but is not applicable to Large's directing in this series of five programmes – the RIs for his concerto programmes were 80, 78, 83, 80, 82 showing that the audience were as appreciative of the 'novel' first programme in the series as the 'familiar' final programme. Greenberg's Promenade Concert relay is the first programme analysed which has been deposited in the National Film Archive by the BBC.<sup>a</sup>

Between the Large/Greenberg programmes of 1974 and my programme of 1976 Culshaw directed nine editions of *André Previn's Music Night* and the annual concert from the General Assembly Hall of the United Nations. From the evidence of the UN concert and the first and fourth editions of *André Previn's Music Night* from Summer 1975 Gavin's assertion that Culshaw entered television in 1967 knowing nothing about programme making and left eight years later still knowing nothing about programme making is not as harsh or unwarranted as it might seem.<sup>444</sup> Culshaw does not appear to have the instinctive feeling for aesthetically satisfying shots that the good director develops. As may be expected from a record producer of his experience his musical sense was well-developed so that he rarely highlights an irrelevant performer but having chosen the shot in principle he seems incapable of adjusting it so that it is attractive and

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<sup>a</sup> The earliest music programme to have been deposited in the National Film Archive (NFA) seems to be *Ballet Class* produced by Dale in 1964. A small percentage of music programmes from 1964 to 1973 and the majority of music programmes from 1974 onwards appear to have been systematically deposited with the NFA.



meaningful. Far too often he accepts group shots in which it is impossible to see any activity or chooses directions for shooting a performer in which foreground clutter detracts from what he wishes to be the centre of attention: for example he tends to avoid profile shots of wind and brass players which are a conventional way of avoiding the intrusion of music stands. Far too often he seems happy to have what he wants somewhere in shot without realising that the viewer may be unable to understand what it is they are supposed to be watching in a frame containing much irrelevant detail. In Section 7.2 an anonymous writer in *The Listener* is quoted as saying

In television, as in painting, the art of composition is much more important since the eye can see the whole picture. Indeed, in television, since the artists are often moving and the picture changing, continually developing composition becomes an important aspect.<sup>445</sup>

It is a lesson that Culshaw appears not to have learned since in all three programmes Culshaw sets up many medium close-up shots and then zooms out through transient compositional pictures that are far from satisfying containing mostly non-playing performers and ending on wide-angles containing Salter's 'sea of meaningless blobs'. In the UN concert he covers the 35 minute symphony in 80 shots (130-shots-per-hour) of which two are zooms in; no fewer than 25 are zooms out; and 19 are static wide-shots. The psychological effect of over half the shots in the programme being wide-shots or zooms out to wide-shots is to dissipate the attention of the viewer rather than to concentrate it: it also gives the viewer unaesthetic pictures at which they have to look. In the two studio programmes with Previn discussed below Culshaw sets out to provide fluid directing with considerable use of developing shots which is very much in the style of variety programmes. He obtains some fine camerawork from his BBC crew but in attempting the same kind of fluidity in the UN concert there is very poor camerawork demonstrated by the United Nations Television camera team.

When viewing the second of the studio-based *André Previn's Music Night* programmes for this thesis it was surprising to note that the directing of Strauss' *Emperor Waltz* was considerably more 'involving' than the other works viewed in Culshaw's programmes with many more tight shots of players (or their instruments) well-framed and effectively put together in a satisfying visual sequence. It still maintained the fluidity and complex developing shots seen in other works in Culshaw's studio programmes but with a keener



eye for aesthetic composition. Investigation revealed that this work had been directed by the trainee assistant producer on the programme, Ron Isted,<sup>446</sup> who was to become a fine director of music programmes. It is a sad commentary on Culshaw's inadequacies as a director that the difference between his directing and that of a trainee should be so obvious and so much to his detriment. Culshaw produced four further editions of *André Previn's Music Night* in the year following his resignation as Head of Music Programmes, 1976, with Isted and Robin Lough as directors. In 1977 Herbert Chappell took over the series and for the first time produced four editions in the form of outside broadcasts from the Fairfield Halls in Croydon with a public audience. Chappell had limited experience of outside broadcast concerts being mainly a documentary maker but his approach to these programmes was in marked contrast to Culshaw. Because of the limited mobility of outside broadcast cameras Chappell uses fewer tracking shots but his compositional skills are demonstrated in pictures that are rarely other than aesthetically pleasing. The music is structurally followed in that the rate of shot change is related to the music being shown. Chappell shoots much more tightly than Culshaw – his shooting is generally even tighter than Greenberg's and mine noted earlier for the Promenade concerts: this is a musician directing with knowledge of musical structures and with a well-developed aesthetic sense. It is difficult directly to compare the impact that Chappell's directing had on the television audience compared to Culshaw's since Chappell's choice of repertoire is markedly more adventurous than Culshaw's including music by Korngold, Prokofiev and Walton: not the expected fare for a BBC-1 audience. The average RI of 67 for Chappell's four programmes was lower than Culshaw's average of 72 for his nine programmes for which RIs were calculated.

The final four editions of *André Previn's Music Night* were produced in 1979 by Ian Engelmann with Peter Butler directing two of them. The average RI was much higher at 80 for these four programmes which returned to a much more conservative repertoire largely based around Classical and Romantic works though the central works in the programme viewed were Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*, which is one of the few 20<sup>th</sup> century works to become part of the popular repertoire, and the second suite from Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloe*. Butler's directing in this programme follows very much in the style of Chappell's with the use of many close-ups and few wide-angles. The Ravel in particular is an impressive piece of impressionistic directing with the changes of shot



precisely choreographed to the musical score. Butler uses a high proportion of mixes rather than cuts in this work which gives the visual treatment fluidity to match the fluidity of Ravel's writing.

In 1978 Greenberg was involved in two sets of programmes involving pianists but of very different characteristics. In April 1978 three programmes centred on the Russian pianist/conductor Vladimir Ashkenazy were transmitted: the first comprised two Mozart piano concertos played and conducted by Ashkenazy and recorded in the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford. Greenberg treats the theatre as if it were a television studio with the outside broadcast cameras showing considerable flexibility in developing shots. The programme shows the same musical awareness previously noted in Greenberg's work but is notable for the extensive use of point-of-view shots from within the orchestra. As Ashkenazy was conducting the orchestra from the piano keyboard, the piano was placed with the tail within the orchestra so that the conductor/pianist was facing the orchestral players. The shots used by Greenberg from within the orchestra are mainly from a position close to one of the second violin's music stands, placing the viewer in the position of a second violin player; and between a double bass player and a viola, this time giving a viewpoint of one of the lower string players. As noted above these are viewpoints only ever experienced by orchestral players and were a novelty introduced in the 1960s and 1970s by directors with musical performing experience.

Greenberg's second exposure to pianists in 1978 was under quite different circumstances – the *Sixth Leeds International Pianoforte Competition*. The coverage comprised two long, live relays from Leeds Town Hall on successive evenings each including three piano concertos. Greenberg makes no mistake about setting the scene starting with a spectacular wide-angle of the stage with its large pipe organ forming the backdrop. In a public concert Greenberg's freedom of camera placement was much more restricted than at the Sheldonian and in these live programmes there are occasional infelicities. Apart from these, there is once again a developed musical awareness demonstrated both in the quality of many of the shots and the structure of the visual sequence in relation to the music being performed. Greenberg also introduces a new element into these programmes: being a competition there is an underlying gladiatorial aspect to the event which is reflected in occasional psychological shots of the pianists'



faces taken through the lid of the piano at times when they are not playing and are perhaps reflecting on the situation in which they find themselves. It is something which I myself developed further in the 1981 and 1984 competitions<sup>a</sup> to the extent that increasingly I dispensed completely with orchestral shots and concentrated on the responses of the pianists to the stresses induced not only by concert performance but the added layer of stress caused by competition. It is indicative of the response of the audience to Greenberg's and my emphasis on the personal aspect of these events that the RI's were all comfortably above 80 and well above the average figure of around 76 for music programmes in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

The final two programmes viewed for this part of the thesis were both directed by Burton and both involved the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Georg Solti. They illustrate the problems of presenting orchestral performances on television and two ways of achieving solutions. The later of the two programmes was recorded at a 1978 Promenade concert and broadcast the following year as part of a weekend's television devoted to Solti. Burton's recording was of Beethoven's first symphony and is a competent demonstration of the principles of directing which had become normal by the late 1970s: relatively high shot densities and a tendency to use more and tighter close-ups. Camera positions high at the back of the steeply raked platform at the Royal Albert Hall had been used for some years but Burton introduces a position on the floor of the platform with the camera on a low mounting between the first and second violins which is another early example of a performer's point-of-view shot of the conductor often with the bows and arms of the players deliberately framing the sides of the shot. In this broadcast Burton is less adventurous than Greenberg or me in his density of shot or in the consistent tightness of his shooting: he seems content to use longer, wider shots as buffers between sequences of tight shots allowing the concentration of the viewer to flag in a way that we tried to avoid. Burton's recording from the previous year, 1977, was made in Chicago's Symphony Hall with the same forces playing Russian music and broadcast on BBC Television as part of a Russian season in January 1980. In one way it is a hark-back to something that had been noted in 1957 for Craxton's broadcast of

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<sup>a</sup> The *Leeds International Pianoforte Competition* is triennial.



Walton's 'cello concerto – all the cameras save one are down the left-hand side of the hall and even the exceptional camera is directly in front of the conductor: the shooting is consistently one-sided to the distinct benefit of the viewer's orientation. The recording also shows a different approach which was pioneering and would become much more widespread in the period following that of this thesis. The basis of the broadcast was the same as the Promenade concert: a public concert recorded with a pre-planned camera script using six cameras placed strategically. Where this programme differed is that some of the cameras were connected directly to their own dedicated videotape recorders and the programme was finally assembled not at the time of the performance but in post-production. Burton also uses two cameras permanently looking at the conductor from among the players: one is placed in a cloth hide between the first flute and first oboe and the other among the second violins ensuring that Burton always has two contrasting shots of Solti from which to choose at any moment. This programme is almost devoid of unaesthetic shots and one movement of the Prokofiev *Classical Symphony* has an appropriate shot density of 900-shots-per-hour with a to-the-frame precision that would be impossible consistently to achieve in an 'as live' recording. The main problem of this approach is one of cost: additional time needs to be spent by the (expensive) director in post-production; the post-production editing is time consuming and costly. For a product quite clearly designed for the international purchasing market and possibly the video market this precision – it is tempting to say this 'perfection' though there is at least one misjudged shot – was becoming very necessary.

It is appropriate to end this section of the thesis with what was in the late 1970s a vision of the future of non-theatrical music performance presentation on television, a future which Gavin confirmed has arrived in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with some overseas broadcasters if not consistently in Britain.<sup>447</sup>

## **9.7 Broadcasts of theatrical music**

It took time for directors to come to grips with the requirements for putting dance onto the television screen. In March 1937 the *Daily Telegraph* was already observing that a performance of the final act of Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker* 'emerged from the screen astonishingly well' despite the lack of colour and the constraints of the Alexandra Palace studio. The sound and general atmosphere were well caught but the writer



observed that it was the individual dancers who suffered with the screen sometimes depriving them of feet: the lack of precision in the shooting was deplored. It was clear that new techniques for television would have to be developed that were unrelated to what the cinema had already achieved.<sup>448</sup> The script for this broadcast no longer exists for analysis. Nearly a year later it was clear that the dance directors had yet to learn the lesson that the most important parts of a dancer's anatomy were the legs: *The Observer* in January 1938 was complaining that the cameramen, obeying the producer, were still inclined to exploit the dancers' heads and shoulders at the expense of their 'all-important' feet.<sup>449</sup> By December 1938 the same paper was praising D H Munro's 'straight' presentation of *Les Patineurs* as 'the most beautiful thing we have yet seen on the home screen.'<sup>450</sup> It was Munro, again, who received considerable praise from *The Dancing Times* for his presentation of *Checkmate* in February 1939 (a repeat of its first presentation in May 1938.)<sup>451</sup> Munro was again being singled out by *The Dancing Times* for his imaginative presentation of ballet in a broadcast of *The Sleeping Princess* in April 1939.<sup>452</sup> A writer in *The Observer* particularly noted that groups of dancers were now appearing together on the screen 'without any apparent loss of detail.'<sup>453</sup> Partly this could have been because of improvements in camera and television tubes: it could also be contended that the producer had to be given credit for the way in which dancers were being grouped on the screen. Scripts for all three Munro ballets have survived.

Early pre-war opera on television fared rather better from the newspaper critics: in June 1937 the *Daily Herald* was making encouraging comments about a broadcast of Gay's *Polly* which was one of the first operas to be broadcast. The writer was particularly taken with the flow possible from scene to scene where in the theatre the curtain would have to have been dropped and the scenery changed; the use of moving cameras in otherwise static scenes was also commended as adding interest. The writer perceptively noted that opera on television 'has big possibilities' which the film companies had ignored.<sup>454</sup> The script for this broadcast has not survived. Chapter 4 mentioned the negative response that the critics gave to *Pickwick* but this seems to have been an exception to the generally cautious welcome given to opera on television before the war.



One broadcast that caused considerable dissent was the broadcast of Act 2 of *Tristan and Isolde* which led to the first exchange in *The Listener* of vigorously held opinions about a music transmission on television. The starting point was a review by 'G.G.W.' in *The Listener*:<sup>a</sup> this critic was not convinced that *Tristan* had been a good choice for the technique of off-screen singing and on-screen miming. The two principal actors Basil Bartlett (as *Tristan*) and Oriel Ross (as *Isolde*) had used two quite different techniques. Ross had kept her lips firmly closed so that her acting was more akin to a masque than a mime. Bartlett had used an intermediate technique and ended up looking '...more fishlike than heroic.'<sup>455</sup> *The Dancing Times* said 'the impression left by the whole performance was one of ceaseless and restless arm movement...How [Oriel Ross'] arms must have ached.'<sup>456</sup> The producer Bower produced a vigorous though ultimately unsatisfactory defence<sup>457</sup> since the method used was rarely repeated and was invariably unsuccessful. The choice of opera was felt to be a poor one since there is virtually no action in this particular act and it was intrinsically 'bad' television whatever method had been used to communicate its complex but physically static progress.<sup>458</sup> An analysis of part of the script of *Tristan and Isolde* will be found in Section 9.7.1.

In the April 1950 edition of *The BBC Quarterly* Cecil McGivern, the Head of Television Programmes, was regretting a problem that came as a result of the small sizes of domestic televisions: at a time when 62% of the television sets were the 9" size – 14" and 15" sets were coming into use but were comparatively rare – the only shots that had any meaning on the screens were close-ups. This meant that coverage of a discipline such as dance which demanded most of the shooting to be in medium wide-angle was next to impossible: in his usual forthright manner McGivern said '...a great deal of ballet [means] nothing in long shot and [is] plain silly in close-up...'<sup>459</sup> In the Winter 1953/4 edition of *The BBC Quarterly* Kenneth Wright, the Head of Music Programmes, gave a comprehensive summary of the state of directing music on BBC Television.<sup>460</sup> In the substantial section of the article devoted to opera and dance he

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<sup>a</sup> Grace Wyndham Goldie was the television correspondent for *The Listener* from 1936 to 1939. The coincidence of the same initials, in the wrong order, makes it possible that G.W.G. (Goldie) wrote the criticisms which carry the by-line G.G.W. Neither *The Listener* nor Goldie's autobiography offer any help in this matter.



identified a number of aspects of the transmission of these types of music which differed from the transmission of the apparently similar dramas. Wright pointed out that drama and opera worked best by the use of medium long-shots and close-ups; wide shots of the whole of a large studio set or a theatrical stage were ineffective: the only exception to this 'rule' was the establishing shot.<sup>461</sup> Where television actors and singers differ in their performance is that the former no longer have to project their voices to achieve their dramatic effect: for singers to produce the quality of sound expected projection is still necessary even in an intimate television studio. This means that the shooting technique of the drama producer is no longer applicable – wobbling tongues and dental fillings become rather distracting if the standard sizes of facial close-ups from drama are used in opera.

As television sets advanced technically with larger screens and better definition the viewers and critics became more demanding. Despite the praise for the pre-war ballets mentioned above, by the early 1950s the products of the two dance directors, Bate and Simpson, were being seen as inadequate. It was Dale who brought the imagination of a dancer to the visual presentation of dance: although she had already gained nearly a dozen credits in *Radio Times* it was probably her presentation of most of Act 2 of *Swan Lake* by the visiting Bolshoi Theatre Ballet in October 1956 that singled her out as an outstanding talent who, according to Philip Hope-Wallace in *The Listener*, '...unlike so many ballet producers, never once showed us the wrong thing at the wrong time.'<sup>462</sup> The end result was that Dale '[had] proved that good television could also be good ballet.' With the exception of her protégé Peter Wright it would be 20 years before other dance directors such as Colin Nears and Bob Lockyer would show the same kind of understanding though largely after the period with which this thesis is concerned. By 1957 the theory of coverage of dance was becoming formalised by Dale. In the May 1957 edition of *Dance and Dancers* E. C. Mason interviewed her: Dale stated that she based her general coverage on what she called 'the normal camera lens' by which it may be assumed that she meant the 24° lens. This was the television camera lens that most closely approximated to the perspective provided by the human eye. She eschewed using a wide-angle lens (35° or 50°) which distorted distances to such an extent that dancers apparently in the distance moving at normal speeds could appear in close-up 'within two bars of music.' Ballet contrasted with other programmes in that the latter



'are taken mainly in close-ups while ballet employs an accent on long shots.' The main problem with restricting the cameras to 'normal' lenses was that they needed room to get far enough away from the set and dancers to show everything that was happening.<sup>463</sup>

The contrast between the use of wide-angles in ballet and close-ups in opera and orchestral music was made clear in Salter's paper of 1959 *The Presentation of Music on Television* in which he makes some insightful comments about the problems of presenting opera on television:

Putting opera on the screen is like translating a piece of literature into another language: it must capture, so far as possible, the spirit of the original, but must equally be idiomatic in the new medium. This means that the rigid view of opera as something seen through the proscenium opening from a fairly distant seat must give way to a new conception.

He says that his comment about a wide-shot being meaningless for orchestral music is equally valid for opera. The cameras should 'bring the spectator into the very heart of the action...the spectator is no longer a passive onlooker but an active participant.'<sup>464</sup> It was an insight from someone who had never directed cameras that was only slowly realised by those directing opera performance for television.

### 9.7.1 Broadcasts of opera

The earliest opera script to have survived in the BBC's Written Archive Centre is of John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* which was first transmitted on 18<sup>th</sup> May 1937. As with the next surviving script of A. P. Herbert's *Derby Day* from 6<sup>th</sup> July 1937 it consists only of the opera's text with no information about technical resources used or how the performance was shot. The first full opera script to have survived is a fair copy of the camera script for Ian Whyte's *Pride o' the Green* which was first transmitted on 20<sup>th</sup> November 1937 and repeated a week later. There is no indication in the script of the studio design, properties or even of the identities of most of the staff involved. Four cameras were used, three in the studio with the performers and one in the second studio which was used for shooting captions; at least one of the cameras was mobile since the camera directions include 'Cam. 1 tracks back fairly quickly'. The shot density at about 50 shots in a programme lasting 35 minutes was much lower than would become normal in later years as indicated in Section 8.2. The opening sequence of shots (see below) already showed an awareness of the shot composition techniques that Millerson



called ‘widely-held maxims’ noted in Section 9.3; although shot numbers were not used in the script the opening shots were:

Shot number	Camera	Description (all the performers in this sequence were female fish sellers)
1	1	Start with close-up of property and end on five-shot of chorus
2	2	Start with close-up of property and end on single of soloist
3	1	Five-shot (not including soloist). Follow one of the five chorus members to join soloist in two-shot. End on close-up of soloist
4	2	Four-shot of remaining chorus
5	1	Close-up of soloist; pull out to two-shot
6	2	Close-up of second (new) soloist as she enters set
7	1	Two-shot as before
8	2	Four-shot of chorus
9	1	Close-up of second soloist

Figure 19: Opening shots for *Pride o' the Green* script

There are a few points to note in this sequence: this programme does not start with an establishing shot but it starts with a ‘teaser’. The close-up of a property – in this case it was a fish on a market stall – gives little information about the setting of the opera: the pull out to show the whole scene is designed to stimulate the viewer’s interest and curiosity. The same person is never in shots on either side of a cut:<sup>a</sup> the director avoids the ‘jump cut’ against which Millerson warns. The director also seems to have made an effort never to go from a close-up of one singer to a close-up of another singer: while this is perfectly acceptable to Millerson the cut from a close-up of one female fish seller to a close-up of a different female fish seller might have caused momentary confusion to the viewer. The director of *Pride o' the Green* was the radio producer Moultrie Kelsall who must have been working briefly for television since only one other credit for him has been found among music programmes, the opera *Anything may happen* (1938). As early as twelve months after the opening of the television service the creation of novel multi-camera techniques seems to have already settled into at least some sequences which would still be used even when zoom lenses and highly mobile camera mountings would be available.

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<sup>a</sup> In 1937 ‘cuts’ were not possible – the script only used mixes. The word ‘cut’ is used for convenience in the descriptions.



All three operas so far mentioned used a technique that would become normal for BBC opera broadcasts: the singers' voices were picked up live by microphones. One early exception to the practice of live sound and vision from opera singers has already been mentioned: it supplies the next surviving opera script. In January 1938 Bower tried an experimental method of presenting opera in a broadcast of the second act of Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*: the critical response to this broadcast was discussed in Sections 4.5 and 4.6. Bower's experimental method was to have the singers and orchestra in one studio while the in-vision performance in the other studio was given by actors and actresses enacting a mime arranged by Antony Tudor. The in-vision performers were in Studio 1 with three cameras while the orchestra and singers were in Studio 2. The actors in studio 1 were provided with a sound feed from studio 2 but there did not appear to be any reverse feed of what was happening in studio 1 to help the conductor and singers in studio 2. Of the three cameras in Studio 1 two were on mobile mountings while the third was on a static tripod which was high on the studio gallery and fitted with a narrow angle lens. The camera script for studio 1 gives skeleton details of what each of the three cameras should be shooting but not the size of shot: one typical sequence is listed as:

Shot number	Camera	Description
16	3	Brangäne Isolde (51 bars)
17	2	Tristan Isolde Mark Merlot Kurwenal (32 bars)
18	3	Brangäne Isolde (215 bars)
19	1	Isolde (47 bars)
20	3	Brangäne Isolde (70 bars)
21	2	Isolde (22 bars)
22	3	Isolde (20 bars)
23	1	Tristan (21 bars)

**Figure 20: Shots from *Tristan and Isolde* script**

From the studio diagrams that were attached to the script cameras 1 & 2 appear to have been working with 'normal' lenses of about 30° acceptance angle while camera 3 appears to have been working with a telephoto lens of about 14° acceptance angle:



camera 1 was closest to the performers, camera 2 was a little further away and camera 3 was furthest away so that three different perspectives were available to Bower. Camera 1 appears to have been operating about 2m from the actors: a 30° lens at 2m includes an object space<sup>a</sup> which is 1m wide or roughly a mid-shot. Camera 2's position in relation to the performers is less clear but could have been about 10m away: a 30° lens at 10m includes an object space 5m wide; the five performers in shot 17 could work comfortably within this area. Camera 3 was in a fixed position about 12m from the performers: a 14° lens at 12m includes an object space which is 3.5m wide; the two performers in shots 18 and 20 could work comfortably within this object space. These figures are crucial to interpreting the above excerpt from the camera script since Isolde is in seven consecutive shots which can be difficult to organise without jump-cuts and something that Kelsall appears to have tried to avoid in *Pride o' the Green* mentioned above. The *Tristan and Isolde* script excerpt could possibly be re-interpreted to read:

Shot number	Camera	Description	Size of shot
16	3	Brangäne Isolde (51 bars)	Fairly wide 2-shot
17	2	Tristan Isolde Mark Merlot Kurwenal (32 bars)	Wide 5-shot
18	3	Brangäne Isolde (215 bars)	Fairly wide 2-shot
19	1	Isolde (47 bars)	Mid-shot
20	3	Brangäne Isolde (70 bars)	Fairly wide 2-shot
21	2	Isolde (22 bars)	Wide single
22	3	Isolde (20 bars)	Fairly wide single
23	1	Tristan (21 bars)	Mid-shot

**Figure 21: Shots from *Tristan and Isolde* script (expanded)**

In a sense this raises more problems than it solves: the transition from shot 16 to shot 17 and back to shot 18 appears to be awkward as does the transition from shot 21 to shot 22. The latter may have involved a change in the direction in which Isolde was facing which would be justified under Millerson's 'rules' in Section 9.3 but the former

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<sup>a</sup> 'Object space' is a term created for this thesis: it defines the theoretical width of the widest object that could be included in a shot at the distance specified.



transitions are difficult to visualise as anything other than misjudged. There are several other points that emerge from the *Tristan and Isolde* script: the cameras were disposed across the set, left to right from Camera 1 to 3 and facing forward. The main set stretched across the whole width of the studio but was so disposed that cameras had little chance of entering: this accords very well with the concept of the relay of a theatrical production taking place by implication behind a proscenium arch which was put forward by Caughie and discussed in some detail in Section 7.1.<sup>465</sup> In the case of the Alexandra Palace studio the proscenium was hypothetical but seems to have been present in the subconscious of Bower from his method of shooting. There was a secondary set of a forest which ran down one of the long side walls, across the studio at the opposite end to the main set and back up the other side wall. This 'forest' was used for a travelling two-shot of Tristan and Isolde shot on camera 1 tracking backwards in front and to the side of the two illicit lovers with trees between the camera and the lovers. This shot appears to have lasted a remarkable 28 minutes with three brief superimpositions to add variety. This type of tracking shot was very much the stock-in-trade of Hollywood musicals of the period with which the film director Bower would have been familiar though it is unlikely that any Hollywood shot could last this length of time since film magazines were a maximum of ten minutes in length.<sup>466</sup>

*Tristan and Isolde* was an important and innovative production for BBC Television: as shown above it still retained some of the feeling of a theatrical relay but also experimented with cinematic techniques for at least one elaborate tracking shot and it tried to find a solution to the problem of having performers who were simultaneously acting and singing which critics did not always find a very pretty sight. It is reasonable to conclude that the experimental use of actors miming or acting a masque was not felt to be entirely successful since it was only tried once or twice again before the war and only once after the war as far as can be ascertained.

By 1951 the pre-planning of some directors' scripts seems to have become routinely sophisticated. In the outside broadcast *Waltztime* from the 1951 Radio Show at Earls Court, London the newly appointed directors Foa and Simpson created an elaborate entertainment lasting some 45 minutes. Broadcast at peak viewing time (2015) on the evening of 3<sup>rd</sup> September it comprised six excerpts from popular ballets and operas, all



in ¾-time at least in part.<sup>a</sup> The division of responsibility between Foa and Simpson is not indicated in the script and the script has no obvious points of changeover. There were three cameras, one on a crane and two on mobile floor mountings; the lenses fitted are not specified in the script: there is no mention in the script of zooming shots so fixed lenses were almost certainly fitted. There is an indication that at least one of the cameras was able rapidly to change perspective so that it may be inferred that it was fitted with a multi-lens turret. The script of the first opera excerpt from Verdi's *La Traviata* is an ambitious sequence with developing shots from one camera mounted on a crane and another on a mobile floor mounting: these developing shots are all achieved by tracking and craning. Violetta's aria *Ah, fors'è lui* (sung in English) is taken in a single shot which because of its length and the variety of emotions involved is a tribute to the acting powers of the singer Alma Caesari. The second operatic excerpt was of Olympia's aria from Offenbach's *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*: the visual sequence is considerably less ambitious than the previous operatic excerpt consisting of 14 apparently static shots. This aria is a comic one in which the clockwork mechanism of the mechanical doll Olympia runs down several times and has to be rewound: it may be assumed that the director allowed the comedy to speak for itself without over-egging the visual sequence. The doll was sung by Maureen Springer<sup>b</sup> and it is instructive to note that the soprano singing the trouser role of Nicklaus was Diane Dubarry, who appeared in a number of operatic broadcasts while Wright was in charge of Music Programmes.<sup>c</sup> The opera sequence which closed the programme was of the waltz scene from Gounod's *Faust* which includes both singing and dancing: once again the script includes ambitious tracking shots particularly on the camera on the crane.

The earliest telerecording of any music performance programme to have survived in the BBC's archives is of Fawcett's 1952 studio production of Leoncavallo's one-act opera *I*

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<sup>a</sup> The three dance excerpts are discussed in the dance section below.

<sup>b</sup> The script gives this singer the surname of Spriner; *Radio Times* gives her name as Springer which from her appearances in other television programmes appears to be the correct spelling.

<sup>c</sup> Diane Dubarry was Kenneth Wright's fourth wife.



*Pagliacci*.<sup>a</sup> Fawcett normally worked to the Drama Department of BBC Television and the sure hand of a drama director is shown throughout this production. The problem of facial contortions in opera noted above in the introduction to this section is notably absent: Fawcett seems to have assembled a cast who were able to produce beautiful and projected sounds while still looking dramatically natural and producing remarkably clear diction. The production itself is very much of its period and for this alone it would be a valuable document: the acting is sometimes excessively melodramatic and sometimes ineffectually wooden especially for the chorus. The English translation used is arch with frequent use of ‘ye’, ‘thee’ and ‘thou’ which is a curious convention for an opera set in Italy at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Grahame Clifford as the clown Tonio affects a remarkably upper class English accent that is entirely at variance with the vicious, scheming peasant implied by the libretto; he is also guilty of the least effective and the most melodramatic acting. The opera was broadcast live and went with remarkably few of the ‘wizard prang’ mistakes noted by Caughie in Section 7.1. What is also immediately clear from the telerecording is that the concept of the proscenium arch has gone: Fawcett chooses to have his cameras ‘mingle’ with the performers within a (single) multi-directional set designed to resemble an Italian town square with church, public bar, arches and parades leading off it. Fawcett shoots most of the action in mid-shot or wider: close-ups are noticeable for their absence since in the whole of the opera only five close-ups are used. With one exception these infrequent close-ups all come at climaxes in the opera’s progress:

- When a villager jokingly suggests that Tonio has a secret assignation with Canio’s wife, Nedda and Canio says that he would kill her if she were unfaithful.
- When Nedda agrees to elope with her lover Silvio.

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<sup>a</sup> *I Pagliacci – trans. The Players*. It is a short tragi-comedy about a troupe of *Commedia dell’Arte* players on tour in rural Italy. The performers were Arthur Servent as Canio, Eugenie Castle as his unfaithful wife Nedda, Grahame Clifford as the clown Tonio, Eric Whitley as the fourth travelling player Beppe and John Cameron as Nedda’s lover, Silvio. The performance was conducted by Eric Robinson whose conducting is remarkably assured and competent and provides a degree of contradiction to the adverse comments about Robinson made by Salter some years later, see Section 5.8.



- When Canio, playing Pagliaccio in a *Commedia dell'Arte* play, discovers that his (stage) wife has been having supper with her (stage) lover.
- When Canio (for real) knifes Nedda's (real-life) lover at the climax of the opera.

Each of these close-ups is dramatically involved with infidelity and Fawcett appears deliberately to reserve them for these symbolic moments alone. The only close-up without connotations of infidelity is in the prologue to the opera: *I Pagliacci* is a play within a play and in the Prologue the actor playing Tonio tells the viewing audience that they should remember that the actors are real people just like the viewers. Fawcett gets the singer to deliver his lines directly to camera so that the viewer is immediately involved in the drama; by following this direct appeal with shots in which the camera tracks through the set and through the chorus there is an immediate feeling of direct involvement in the action. On the other hand the lack of close-ups puts the viewer more in the place of a villager watching events involving other people at one remove rather than as another unseen principal.<sup>a</sup>

Most of Fawcett's visual sequences fit well with Millerson's later advice about picture composition: each new scene starts with an establishing shot; adjacent shots involving the same person are almost always motivated by a move or turn by that person. The apparently deliberate lack of close-ups seems to have given Fawcett some compositional problems which he fails to solve: there are a number of cuts from a two-shot to a two-shot of the same characters in a similar perspective; there are also a number of cuts from a wide-angle to a similar wide-angle. These are the uncomfortable jump cuts against which Millerson warns. By avoiding close-ups in most of the opera Fawcett makes some scenes curiously dispassionate which are normally very emotional on stage. The love scene between Silvio and Nedda is skilfully constructed by the composer to build through a series of ever heightened climaxes until Nedda says 'Yes': Fawcett shoots the whole of this scene in rather uncommitted two-shots until Nedda's final capitulation. It is always possible that the sensibilities of 1952 would allow nothing more explicit particularly for a general audience unused to theatrical passion. At

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<sup>a</sup> This concept of the involved viewer is discussed in more detail above in section 7.1.



the central psychological climax of the opera Canio sings *Vesti la giubba*<sup>a</sup> after discovering his wife and her lover together. Even this, the most famous part of the opera, is shot in a rather loose two-shot of Canio and his reflection in a dressing-room mirror which fails to make the maximum impact that Canio's despair offers. Despite these reservations it seems clear that in 1952 the drama director who created this opera broadcast was more advanced in his techniques of visual composition and visual sequences than the directors in Music Programmes and particularly those who were making non-theatrical broadcasts of music performance.

The second opera remaining in the BBC archives is a slightly shortened *La Traviata* by Verdi which was first transmitted on 10<sup>th</sup> October 1955 and produced by Foa; it was the 22<sup>nd</sup> opera produced by Foa for BBC Television. The title role of Violetta was beautifully sung by Heather Harper with an effective Thomas Round as her erstwhile lover Alfredo. It is one of the most popular operas in the repertory and the RI of 73 and audience figure of 14 million were very commendable. The repeat three days later gained an RI of 67 and there were 9 million viewers. Unlike Fawcett, Foa seems to have been tied to the idea of the theatrical proscenium arch – this broadcast looks more like an outside broadcast relay than a studio performance. There is very little cross-shooting in dialogues; the camera never strays into the sets and never pretends to be a silent participant by, for example, passing through doorways; there is no attempt to give a feeling of depth by using foreground features such as pillars or candelabra. There is a marked lack of close-ups: even in the moments of greatest drama the shots are generally no tighter than mid-shots which again giving the impression of an early theatrical relay rather than a studio drama production. The first medium close-up is nearly half-way through the broadcast while the first true close-up is of a dying camellia on Violetta's bedside table<sup>b</sup> followed soon after by a close-up of the dying Violetta on her death bed, over 70 minutes into the broadcast. In general Foa composes his shots in accordance with Millerson's (later) advice and the visual flow is well maintained and dramatically and musically organised. Foa takes care to use establishing shots in each change of

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<sup>a</sup> *trans. Put on your costume* but perhaps better expressed as *The show must go on*.

<sup>b</sup> The novel on which *La Traviata* is based is *La Dame aux Camélias* by Dumas fils.



scene: visual orientation is never a problem in this production. Not everything is well-organised: in the opening scene, which is a party with the five principals seated at a table, there are some unfortunate jump cuts in which Violetta jumps from one side of the screen to the other.

It is instructive to contrast Fawcett's *I Pagliacci* of 1952 with Foa's *La Traviata* of 1955: the acting is much more convincing in the later production and the occasional examples of melodrama are much less intrusive than in the earlier production. On the other hand Foa fails to take notice of advances in drama production of which Fawcett seems to have been aware: Foa's effort is dispassionate and uncommitted. This is curious: *La Traviata* belongs to a full-blooded tradition of rather over-the-top mid-19<sup>th</sup> century opera whereas *I Pagliacci* was one of the first operas in a new style of realism in opera known as *verismo* and much more like a theatrical contemporary drama than a pot-boiling melodrama.

The next opera to have survived in the BBC's archives was produced by arguably the most able and most effective studio opera director in the history of BBC Television, Rudolf Cartier. Cartier produced eight operas for the BBC at the same time as he was consolidating his reputation for drama with productions such as *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1954) and the *Quatermass* serials (1953 - 1959). His first opera was Menotti's *The Saint of Bleeker Street* which was first transmitted at 8 pm on 4<sup>th</sup> October 1956. It was a brave choice for the single channel of BBC Television which was already starting to suffer from competition with the one-year-old commercial channel: the opera had been first performed on stage in New York less than two years previously in December 1954. The audience of 12 million was good for a music programme in 1956 though the RI of 52 was understandably low for such a novelty. The telerecording of the performance was shown again three days later on a Sunday afternoon in place of *Concert Hour* and although the audience was much lower at 4 million the RI was 65 perhaps reflecting the number of viewers returning for a second helping of what they had already enjoyed.<sup>a</sup> *The Saint of Bleeker Street* is a dramatic opera in a post-Puccini musical language and

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<sup>a</sup> There was considerable praise in the press for the first broadcast and the comments may also have attracted and conditioned new viewers for the repeat.



in the *verismo* dramatic tradition of reality. Set in the Neapolitan quarter of New York it tells of the call of a young woman to become a nun and the unsuccessful battle her brother has in persuading her not to take the veil. Virginia Copeland, as Annina the 'saint' of the title, gives a deeply moving performance while Raymond Nilsson is most effective as her anguished brother Michele. The production took place in the two studios at Riverside, Hammersmith with the singers, sets and four cameras in Riverside 1 and the orchestra in Riverside 2. None of the cameras was fitted with zooms and most of the shooting appears to have been carried out on 24° lenses: the shots are remarkable for the absence of tell-tale distortions caused by wide-angle and telephoto lenses and are an indication of the space available in these two large studios for cameras to work at naturalistic distances from the performers.

From the very start of the opera it is clear that a very different dramatic approach is being adopted by Cartier from that of Foa and Fawcett: Cartier often crowds his pictures with faces either singing or in reaction. His first true close-up is only 14 minutes into the opera: a face-on close-up of Annina on Good Friday as the first evidence of the annual appearance of stigmata is detected. Cartier in this sequence uses a series of close-ups of Copeland's face lasting a total of five continuous minutes relieved only by silhouettes of Christ, the Virgin Mary or Roman soldiers. Copeland at times is so close to the camera that when she extends her arms it is almost as if she is embracing the camera and, by proxy, the viewer. It is a remarkably powerful piece of acting by Copeland and directing by Cartier especially so early in an opera lasting nearly two hours. Most of Cartier's shooting of the principals is in mid-shot or medium close-up and there is considerable flexibility in his use of tracking and craning shots to maintain this size of shot in varying situations. The climax of the first act is a religious procession in which a statue of the local saint is carried through the streets: some of the young men in the procession have determined to kidnap Annina and make her another saintly icon in the procession. For the first time noted for this thesis a director uses a low angle mounting known as a 'creeper': by using low shots of the nuns, priests and lay members of the procession a feeling of oppressive threat is created and the kidnapping of Annina is made to appear not just the fault of the headstrong juveniles but of the whole Neapolitan community including those of the cloth.



The second act starts with the reception after the wedding of Annina's best friend: Cartier once more uses the technique of crowding the camera shots with guests in the foreground so that the viewer is given the very real feeling of being part of the action. The climax of this act is when Michele is accused by his mistress of having an incestuous lust for Annina. In his rage Michele fatally stabs his mistress and in her dying stagger she reaches out her arms, almost embracing the retreating camera in a parallel gesture to Annina's vision in the first act. For the first two acts Cartier starts the action with establishing shots but in the third act, set in a New York Subway station, there is no establishing shot; indeed there is no wide-angle of the whole set anywhere in this act which is rather disorientating at times. Once more Cartier is not afraid of using close-ups: Michele, who is on the run from the police, is brought by a priest to Annina who has been told by her 'voices' that she is dying. She tells Michele in a very tight two-shot that before she dies she will take the veil. It is the emotional, musical and visual heart of the opera and fittingly caught by Cartier in some of his tightest shooting. The final act shows the dying Annina becoming a nun: once more Cartier places members of the chorus in such a way that the viewer feels not just an observer of the ceremony but a participant. Cartier carefully uses shots no tighter than mid-shots until the priest in medium close-up invites Annina to finalise her vows: Michele bursts into the ceremony and begs Annina to recant. The only close-ups in the act are then used: of the face of Sister Angela as Annina has been renamed; of her hair being symbolically cut by the priest; of a remarkable and unique point-of-view shot of her holding her ring finger towards the priest/viewer to receive the 'ring of faith' at the moment when she dies.

It is difficult not to come to the conclusion that Cartier brought qualities to his first operatic production that both Foa and Fawcett lacked: there is tautness in the shooting that maintains the tension from beginning to end. This is achieved by the use of many more tight shots than either of his predecessors and where it was necessary to use wide shots he often populates the shot with tightly bunched chorus members. His shot density was not noticeably different: Foa had 260 shots in 90 minutes while Cartier had 262 shots in 108 minutes. He was more imaginative and more demanding in expecting his shots to develop in tracks, crabs and cranes: this gives his production a much less static feel than Foa's *La Traviata*. The shooting is not perfect: there are a number of



unfortunate jump cuts in the first act as if the cameramen and director had not settled down completely; there is a curious shot at the end of the subway scene in which someone starts to shuffle into shot as the scene is faded out as if an actor was late on his cue or possibly was in the wrong place.

Cartier's 1959 studio production of Verdi's *Otello* – sung in English as *Othello* – was also viewed. It came towards the end of Cartier's career and reverts to a much more objective style of production: the style of relay. It may be that this historic tragedy was less appropriate to the style of viewer involvement used for *The Saint of Bleeker Street*. Shot on four cameras with fixed angle lenses on turrets – one of the few errors in this live production was catching a lens change – this production is an example of a style of grandiloquent directing that was coming to an end by 1959. Cartier's production had grown so large that both of the Riverside studios were used for sets and the orchestra had to be placed in Hammersmith Town Hall. The two major crowd scenes are heavily populated with non-singing extras who are present in the studio purely for effect: Cartier populates these crowd scenes most effectively; he shoots the intimate scenes in mid-shot and medium close-up with singers whose acting is, if anything, better than their singing. This criticism is not appropriate for Heidi Krall (Desdemona) who, apart from her thick German accent, sings and acts the part magnificently. Charles Holland (Othello) is not as competent a singer as she and as his character slowly descends into murderous madness his acting becomes more and more melodramatically unconvincing with much eye-rolling that is more reminiscent of *The Black and White Minstrels Show* (1958 - 1978) than Shakespearean tragedy – an example of a type of old-fashioned operatic acting that Salter characterised as being 'a refugee from a coon show.'<sup>467</sup> The first appearance of Desdemona is accompanied by a type of shot change which is noted in Millerson<sup>468</sup> but is the earliest example that has been found for this thesis: Desdemona, foreground and in focus, turns towards her husband Othello, background and out-of-focus; it is the first time that she has been alone with him since his 'miraculous' escape from a potential shipwreck. As he turns towards her the focus is pulled so that the centre-of-focus transfers to him; Desdemona becomes a foreground blur. Millerson says 'When co-ordinated with the action, this device can be quite effective. Too often, though, it can misfire or become just another gimmick.'<sup>469</sup> Cartier makes no mistake with this earliest example. In one of the most famous arias in the



opera, Iago's declaration of his creed of hatred, Cartier asks the singer to sing straight to camera which can be a most unusual and deliberately uncomfortable procedure for the viewer: as noted in Section 7.4 this is sometimes used in drama as a way of revealing the thoughts of a character and it would appear to be Cartier's intention here. Cartier rations his biggest close-ups to a small number of crucial moments in the opera: there are no more than about 25 close-ups out of a total of some 338 shots in the script. As a result the impact of them is as marked as in *The Saint of Bleeker Street*. The transmission gained a moderate audience of 6.4m and an RI of 68 which was average for music performance programmes of the period.

In the final twelve months of his eleven years career as a BBC television music producer Charles Rogers produced five major theatrical programmes comprising four operas and one ballet: *The Beggar's Opera* (October 1963), *La Belle Hélène* (January 1964), *La Traviata* (April 1964), *Peer Gynt* (May 1964) and *Iolanthe* (October 1964). Rogers had directed a number of operas produced for the stage by Colin Graham and transferred to the studio: these including the English Opera Group's production of Benjamin Britten's rewriting of *The Beggar's Opera*. *La Traviata* was the only Grand Opera that Rogers directed though even here the production was by Peter Ebert. *La Traviata* is less satisfactory vocally than *The Beggar's Opera* with some uncomfortable singing from Mary Costa, John Wakefield and Thomas Hemsley; dramatically Costa is more satisfactory and rather impressively manages to produce tears at two appropriate points in the drama. Despite the less-than-top-quality singing the first transmission was seen by 10.9m viewers who gave the transmission a high RI of 80; it was the first opera to be broadcast on the recently created BBC-1. The telerecording was repeated twice over the following two years, once on BBC-2 and again in 1966 on BBC-1 when it was watched by 9.8m viewers who gave it a satisfactory RI of 72. Rogers' final programme was an idiomatic production of *Iolanthe* with a particularly delicious performance from Elizabeth Harwood as Phyllis the ward of the Lord Chancellor. Watched by 7.1m viewers it gained an RI of 70 which was average for music programmes in 1964.

All three of these studio productions were shot in the adjacent large studios 3 & 4 at Television Centre and are remarkable for their unashamed return to the concept of an unseen proscenium. *The Beggar's Opera* even uses a theatrical curtain pulled across the



set at the ends of some of the acts as if to emphasise the theatrical nature of the production. The overall impression is that the advances in televised opera that Fawcett and Cartier pioneered had passed by Rogers. To give one technical example: in televised drama if there is an intimate scene with two people in each other's arms the normal way of shooting it is on three cameras. The characters face each other standing sideways across the set: one camera will shoot the character on the right from a position on the left of the set; a second camera will take the mirror-image shot of the character on the left; the third camera will be somewhere in the middle taking a two-shot. This is the long-established 'shot-reverse angle' technique discussed earlier. On the opera stage there is a need to project the voices forward so a different convention is used: the woman faces directly forward and the man stands behind and slightly to one side with his arms around her and also facing forwards: as they sing they can both project their voices forward. In all three television operas Rogers relies more on the 'artificial' operatic set-up for duets than the more 'natural' dramatic set-up. For opera aficionados this creates no problems – it is the convention to which they are used – but for the television viewer it creates an artificiality which Cartier seems to have been trying to remove. The criticism is less valid for Gilbert and Sullivan's *Iolanthe* which is an operatic satire and deliberately ridicules operatic clichés: removing any of the clichés would negate some of the creators' intent and humour and there is no doubt that this is the most successful of Rogers' final year's swan-songs visually, musically and artistically. One noticeable innovation in all three operas is the discreet use of zoom lenses which is the first time that these have been noted in theatrical music programmes. Rogers is also less inhibited than previous directors – but not Cartier – in the use of big close-ups of singers' faces even when they are singing. The final technical note of Rogers' work is a single shot towards the end of *Iolanthe* when Rogers uses a camera mounted on a 'creeper' which ingeniously serves a double purpose. First it fulfils the same dramatic purpose as Cartier's use of a creeper in *The Saint of Bleeker Street*: the fairy queen is condemning Iolanthe to death for marrying a mortal and the creeper makes her tower menacingly over the kneeling miscreant. Second it enables the camera to see the very top of the set showing the upper floors of the Houses of Parliament where all the other fairies are leaning out of the windows singing of their sorrow. This is



one of the reasons mentioned below that Dale gives for using lower camera heights than normal for dance: to enable the tops of tall studio sets easily to be seen.

At about the same time as Rogers was coming to the end of his television career John Vernon was directing his first music outside broadcast relays: he had been directing coverage of non-musical events for some time. His first music relay was of *The Pirates of Penzance* in March 1962 while the first remaining telerecording of one of his relays was also the first telerecording of an outside broadcast opera to have survived: an abridged *The Yeoman of the Guard* performed at the Tower of London in August 1964. Vernon also directed the cameras for a telerecorded relay from the Royal Opera House of excerpts from Verdi's melodramatic opera *Il Trovatore* in December 1964: this opera has what has been called the 'worst libretto that Verdi honoured with his music.'<sup>470</sup> The plot of *Il Trovatore* is convoluted and confusing and for viewers this relay must have been doubly so: complete scenes were shown but less than half of the complete opera was included; it was sung in the original Italian without subtitles; in the telerecording viewed there are no plot summaries or updates during the whole of the 65 minute broadcast. The viewing audience was too small to be measured either for numbers or Reaction Index and no viewers' report was commissioned.<sup>a</sup> Vernon's experience as an events producer shows in his invariable use of an establishing shot at the beginning of each scene: there is no possible disorientation in this relay. Each scene starts with the Royal Opera House curtains opening: this is an unashamed theatrical relay. Vernon shows a consistent but conservative approach to arias, duets and small ensembles: his handling of zooms is subtle, generally using a zoom-in from a full-length shot to a mid-shot as an aria moves towards its climax just as Foy had pioneered in studio recitals. Even in strophic arias he is content to use the zoom-in rather than an alternative sequence such as full length shot (verse 1) – wide shot buffer – mid-shot (verse 2) and so on. Throughout the relay the tightest shot used is a mid-shot though there is one shot which might just be called a loose medium close-up. Vernon is content to let the drama develop on stage; he rarely amplifies the action by his shooting. Even in the *dénouement*

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<sup>a</sup> In December 1964 few people yet owned 625-line television sets or separate converters so viewing figures for all programmes on BBC-2 were uniformly low.



just before the final curtain where the villain is informed that he has just killed his long-lost son and the latter's fiancée, Vernon uses a very loose two-shot of the villain and his informant standing widely separated rather than a Cartier-like sequence of his tightest available shots, cutting frequently from villain to informant during this bitter duet. It may be that in 1964 the zoom lenses available were unable to get any tighter than this: it certainly leads to a distancing of the viewer from the action as does the inevitable 'operatic' forward-facing stage acting as described above for Rogers' three studio operas. Where Vernon is less happy is in his handling of ensembles: in this production the ensembles are very static and the skilled director will get over the visual boredom by using frequent cut-aways to 'shock-excite' the viewer. Vernon does not seem aware of the need to overcome the visual boredom and holds shots well beyond the time at which they have made their dramatic point. Despite the criticisms of Rogers' productions above it is clear from this relay from Covent Garden that the camera directing techniques used in the studio for opera in 1964 were well in advance of those being demonstrated by this outside broadcast producer in the same year. On the other hand the relay from Covent Garden conveys the 'buzz' that is inevitably present at any 'live' event and the reactions of the audience certainly enhance the experience of this performance in a way that can never happen in a studio performance.

By the late 1960's the studio drama directors who were to build on Cartier's achievements were Herbert Wise, who directed three short operas in the mid-1960s; John Gorrie with three operettas and *The Tales of Hoffmann* (1970); Bill Hays with five operas (1966 - 1972); Michael Hayes with *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (1967) and *The Mikado* (1973); and Basil Coleman, who was to direct twelve major studio operas from 1966 until the end date of this thesis, 1982: Coleman's first full studio opera was *La Bohème* (1966) followed by *Billy Budd* (1966). All five directors generally worked under Cedric Messina as producer for opera.

After *Billy Budd* Coleman's next opera production was of *Eugene Onegin* (1967) and this production is probably the first videotaped origination viewed for this thesis. There is a clarity to the pictures that far surpasses even the best telerecording viewed though videotape was still technically primitive compared to how it would develop. The disadvantage of this clarity is that the studio 'exterior' sets have an unrealistic



'staginess' about them and the foliage in the garden scenes is quite clearly dead. The production was elaborate with the sets and singers in Studio 1 at Television Centre, at the time the largest television studio in Europe: some of the sets were very large particularly that used for Prince Gremin's palace. The orchestra was housed about a kilometre away in BBC's Television Theatre which must have made communication between the conductor and singers difficult at times. The conductor was a Russian music specialist David Lloyd-Jones while the cast, singing in English, was chosen from the cream of British singers with John Shirley-Quirk as the supercilious 'hero' Onegin and Margaret Price taking the role of Tatyana, a young girl caught by adolescent hormonal passion for Onegin: it is a remarkable production with fine performances from Shirley-Quirk and Price.<sup>a</sup> Coleman, like Cartier, treats the opera as pure drama and is not afraid of using all the panoply of shots available including big close-ups and elaborate tracking and craning shots. There are a few errors that might have been corrected in later productions: camera shadows intrude a few times while at one point the pass-beats' shadow is quite clearly seen.

In an opera lasting over two hours there are many felicities and only some of the more unusual will be mentioned. Just before the duel in which Onegin kills Lensky the men have a duet in which each expresses the same inner thoughts about how two such close friends can have come to this situation; Tchaikovsky even uses the archaic device of a canon to illustrate the identical emotions of the men. Coleman employs a shot that is generally deprecated by television training instructors: Lensky is left of frame looking left (out of frame) while Onegin is right of frame looking right (also out of frame). The shot encompasses the alienation of the former friends from each other and the separateness of their motives for the duel: Onegin regrets that convention will not allow him to back down; Lensky regrets being unable to accept any explanation by Onegin for the insult that Lensky feels has been inflicted (Onegin flirted publicly with Lensky's fiancée). After Onegin has spent several years in exile for killing Lensky he returns to find a strangely familiar face at a ball; on asking the elderly Prince Gremin to introduce

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<sup>a</sup> There are strong supporting performances from Robert Tear (Lensky), Yvonne Minton (Olga) and Don Garrard (Gremin).



him to the beauty he is astonished to be told that it is Tatyana, now Gremin's wife of two years. For the start of Gremin's aria of love for Tatyana declared unwittingly to Onegin, Coleman places the Prince on a landing some 1.5m above the ballroom floor. This has two effects: Gremin and Onegin in the foreground of a crane shot can look down on the guests including Tatyana. By placing Onegin one step below Gremin on the stairs leading to the landing and shooting the start of the love aria from a floor camera Gremin seems to tower over Onegin – the singers are of similar stature – which has the psychological effect of demonstrating their relative social position (Prince v. minor nobility) and their status with respect to Tatyana (husband v. admirer). Throughout Gremin's aria, which has a loose A-B-A-Coda structure, Onegin is generally kept in the foreground with careful framing so that he becomes tighter and tighter as the elaborate series of developing shots progress. As they move to the floor of the ballroom a couple takes their place on the landing and Coleman keeps this couple in shot in the background as if to imply that Onegin wishes that he were part of such a pairing with Tatyana. The second 'A' of the aria is a repeat of Gremin's gratitude that he, an elderly man, has been able to enjoy the partnership – and by implication the sexual favours – of his young wife Tatyana; it has Gremin and Onegin seated with Onegin in despair in big close-up left of frame while the unknowing and gentle Prince sings in mid-shot right of frame. At the Coda, the climax of the aria, the Prince rises and once more psychologically dominates the seated, distressed Onegin: it is a powerful sequence and a demonstration of some insightful directing and very fine camerawork.

The final example of Coleman's imaginative directing to be cited is less clear-cut and may just be coincidence. Four scenes in Coleman's *Eugene Onegin* employ burning candles: the first scene is a ball at the home of Tatyana's parents; the second is the fateful scene where the adolescent Tatyana writes a letter to Onegin declaring her love; the third is the ball at Prince and Princess Tatyana Gremin's palace; the fourth is the scene where Onegin writes a letter declaring his love to the now-married Tatyana. (Note: two balls, two letter scenes.) Musically two of the scenes are linked: Tatyana's letter song starts with a melody in which she declares to herself in a two verse song her new-found love which she will express in the letter to Onegin; the ball at the Gremin Palace ends with Onegin declaring to himself with the same music, again in two verses, that he loves Tatyana and has decided to write to her (in the following scene.) Although



these two uses of the same melody are over 90 minutes apart in the opera and the melody is used nowhere else quite so explicitly, Tchaikovsky is deliberate in repeating not only the melody and the two verses but also some of the orchestral counter-melodies. Coleman illustrates both repetitions of the melody with lit candles: in the case of Tatyana's declaration, two candles on her writing desk; in the case of Onegin's, two lit candelabra, one foreground and the other behind him. The effect of each scene is the same: a desperate individual chasing the unattainable; the method of illustrating it is remarkably similar both musically and (coincidentally?) visually.

The first studio opera to be shot in colour was Falla's *La Vida Breve* which was transmitted on 13<sup>th</sup> October 1968: it was directed by Coleman and produced by Messina with Margaret Price taking the main female role once again. Although a relatively unusual choice in that it is rarely performed in the United Kingdom it was an imaginative choice for the novelty of colour since the whole of the second act of this 65 minute opera takes place at a wedding celebration with much use of colourful flamenco dancers and musicians. The shooting shows no particular novelty compared to *Eugene Onegin* with the same structured use of establishing shots through to big close-ups at appropriate places. Unlike *Eugene Onegin*, which was shot entirely in the studio, *La Vida Breve* has some location filming with the two principals in Granada which is used to cover some of the extended orchestral interludes in this opera. In the flamenco dancing Coleman shows his knowledge of the work of Dale in utilising two principles that she established: ensembles are shot from a high crane to give a clear picture of the tableaux while solo dancers are shot from below shoulder level to show their relationship to the sets and better to emphasise their legs and feet. Lifts play no part in flamenco but the feet are more important than in classical ballet: Coleman uses judicious cutaways of the high-heeled shoes during characteristic drumming-on-the-spot steps. One stylised *motif* that Coleman uses in this opera is his use of light: at the start of the opera the gypsy heroine Salud (Margaret Price) is awaiting the arrival of her lover Paco (Ermanno Mauro); the mood is optimistic and the lighting is high key and bright since Salud does not know that Paco is about to get married to a rich Spanish girl, Carmela (Katherine Pring). The second act is set at the wedding reception of Paco and Carmela which is lit high key with Salud outside in the street with her uncle and grandmother. It is about dusk and, as the realisation dawns on Salud that she has been



betrayed, the sun sets and the street darkens in parallel with her darkening despair. The cuts from the brightly lit wedding party to the gypsy trio outside become more and more contrasted in lighting intensity.

The final studio opera directed by Coleman in a London studio was his 1974 production of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*.<sup>a</sup> This sumptuous production features fine performances from Thomas Allen (Figaro), Norma Burrowes (Susanna), John Shirley-Quirk (the Count), Elizabeth Harwood (the Countess) and Rosanne Creffield (Cherubino) but for the purposes of this thesis Coleman shows no invention that had not been seen in his previous productions. This is not to detract from the production: the framing of shots is immaculate; the use of depth in the BBC's largest studio is remarkable at times; the directorial approach is very much that of a drama director using techniques 'borrowed' from those used in studio originated single plays. There is no directorial advance on *Eugene Onegin* (apart from the use of colour and the foliage looking alive) and *La Vida Breve*.

In the 27<sup>th</sup> March 1970 edition of *Gala Performance*, recorded on the stage of the Coliseum Theatre in London, Foy included the closing scene from the first act of Puccini's *La Bohème* with Placido Domingo and Teresa Stratas. It is a delightful vignette with fine singing and acting from these performers who were already approaching the peak of their long-lived careers. Foy shoots neither performer tighter than a mid-shot and this gives this stage relay a curiously uninvolved feeling. The shots are always elegant, as always with Foy, and the camerawork is to the highest standards. Despite this there are moments in this opera excerpt, one of the most touching and intimate of all operas scenes, when the viewer cries out for a tighter shot – a need for some feeling of involvement and commitment.

By 1976 when she retired Foy had produced over two hundred and fifty music performance programmes in her more than 20-years' career with the BBC. In the field of opera she had only directed two complete operas, both of them short and both of

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<sup>a</sup> Coleman directed the premiere of the BBC Wales commissioned opera *The Rajah's Diamond* by Alun Hoddinott in 1979.



them relatively early in her career: Weill's *Down in the Valley* (1955) and Rota's 1950 radio opera *The Two Shy People* (1961). It is therefore a little surprising to find that her final production while on the staff of the BBC was of Puccini's black comedy *Gianni Schicchi* (1976). It is difficult not to view the production of this short opera as other than a missed opportunity. The relatively cramped floor space of BBC Birmingham's television studio led to a simple but effective set in which Foy's directing returns to the old-fashioned idea of the imagined proscenium arch: the cameras never stray across where the footlights would have been and many of the set-ups are very operatic in the sense that they are conceived in terms of a seated audience behind the plane of the cameras. This is compounded by several of the cast having to glance past the cameras for a conductor's beat rather than at the person to whom they should be addressing their remarks. There is no change in the lighting during the opera, which is something that could have been used to good effect in at least one sequence, and little use of different camera heights. The main aria of the opera (in fact the only moderately extended aria in this through-composed work) is the well-known *O mio babbino caro* and Foy shoots it in exactly the same way that she had been using since 1954 with a loose full-length shot of the singer tracking into a mid-shot. There are some astonishingly bad continuity slips in the recording including the lead-in to the main aria clearly shot separately from the rest of the opera. In summary it has to be said that in this production Foy does not seem to have adopted the changes in studio television opera production which had been brought about by Fawcett, Cartier and Coleman among others since the early 1950s. Throughout her career Foy seems to have judged the taste of her public with skill: her programmes regularly gained RIs in the upper 70s and 80s. By 1976 her approach seems to have been seen by the viewers as unsatisfactory (and old-fashioned?) since *Gianni Schicchi* gained a below-average RI of 68.

By 1976 Large was producing his seventh studio opera, *Hansel and Gretel*, for broadcast as part of that year's Christmas season.<sup>a</sup> It makes quite a contrast with Foy's *Gianni Schicchi* from earlier that same year: Large's work is very much in the

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<sup>a</sup> Four of Large's opera productions were produced at The Maltings, Snape with outside broadcast cameras but under what were, in practice, studio conditions.



Fawcett/Cartier/Coleman tradition with complex developing shots from cameras going deep within the elaborate and fantastic sets. The artists perform to each other as in a drama rather than to an audience beyond an imagined proscenium; Large gets the child-eating witch to sing some of her more gruesome asides directly to camera as if threatening not only the two children but the unseen viewer who has dared to accompany them into the enchanted wood. Large uses a wide variety of shot size from big close-ups to big wide-angles; there is much use of varied lighting; there is considerable use of colour separation overlay (CSO) to make animated toys, fairies, angels and such like – characterised by real dancers and singers – appear small in relation to the children. CSO is also used to get these fantasy characters to perform ‘tricks’ such as disappearing into a well or marching down into a clothes chest. It is both a technological and musical delight which does not appear to have appealed to the relatively large early evening audience of 2.3m who saw the first transmission: the RI is a disappointing 61.

As mentioned above, one of Burton’s economies on his return to the BBC in 1975 was to curtail the making of what he saw as an expensive luxury: studio operas in English. After *Hansel and Gretel* there were only five further full-length studio operas made between Christmas 1976 and the end of 1982.<sup>a</sup> Opera was not neglected – there were 33 broadcasts of opera during that six year period not including repeats – but now opera on BBC Television comprised mainly relays of the major British companies’ stage productions. Opera in 1936 had started out with the concept of relay being the underlying principle behind the broadcasting of opera whether true relays or studio performances. Forty years later the broadcasting of opera had come full circle and once again the dominant type of opera broadcast was the relay through the proscenium arch, now a consistent reality rather than predominantly a philosophical concept applied in the television studio.

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<sup>a</sup> Only two of these were on a Grand Opera scale: Large’s *Macbeth* (1977) to which a commitment may already have been made under Culshaw; and Large’s *The Love of Three Oranges* (1980). One opera was a ‘bought-in’ stage production: Isted and Buckton’s realisation of Kent Opera’s *Orfeo* (1979). The remaining two were chamber operas produced by Corden: *Orpheus in the Underground* (1977) and *The Impresario* (1980).



### 9.7.2 Broadcasts of dance

The first script of a ballet to have survived in the BBC's archives is of a broadcast on 25<sup>th</sup> April 1938 of Lord Berners' *A Wedding Bouquet* choreographed by Frederick Ashton and featuring Margot Fonteyn and Robert Helpmann. It was directed by Bower and was repeated two days later. This broadcast was at least the thirtieth dance programme to have been broadcast on BBC Television and the seventh dance programme to have been produced by Bower. On both counts there would seem to have been plenty of opportunity to have successfully experimented and discovered a satisfactory way of presenting dance on television. The script is not very illuminating on this point since the ballet itself was 'as directed': shots were decided during the rehearsal(s) and were not written into the script. Three cameras were used in the main studio, all apparently fitted with 30° lenses to give a 'normal' perspective. There was a technique used for immediately post-war outside broadcasts which was known as 'vertical stacking': it would appear that some post-war directors of theatre relays tried to place their cameras one above the other in the stalls, circle and upper circle respectively; this would give approximately the same lateral perspective and relationship between performers and set for all the cameras. For *A Wedding Breakfast* Bower also seems to have lighted on the same technique with 'vertical stacking' of cameras 1 and 2 which avoids the set 'jumping around' behind the dancers as the shot changed from one camera to the other. Camera 1 was the only mobile camera and was placed centrally on the studio floor tracking either straight in towards the set and dancers or straight out. The camera was at a maximum distance of 7m from the cyclorama at the back of the dancing area and would have been able to show anything from a medium wide-angle of  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the set down to a full length shot of a dancer without impeding the dancing. Camera 2 was directly behind Camera 1 but on a 'High camera rostrum':<sup>a</sup> this camera was 10m from the cyclorama and static; it could show only a wide angle of the set and stage. Camera 3 was only used in the opening sequence to identify the dancers at no more than about 1½m distance which could give a mid-shot to medium close-up: it was

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<sup>a</sup> 'High' is not defined in the script; to avoid getting camera 1 in shot the platform would have been 2m or more high.



a static camera at the side of the studio. Camera 4 was in the other studio and showed only captions.

The next ballet script to have survived gives no more illumination on visual sequences than *A Wedding Bouquet*: Munro's production of Arthur Bliss' *Checkmate* with choreography by Ninette de Valois and designs by Edward McKnight Kauffer had been transferred to Alexandra Palace from a stage production at Sadler's Wells Theatre. It was first broadcast on 8<sup>th</sup> May 1938 and repeated five days later: the whole programme lasted 55 minutes but included a discussion of undisclosed length between a number of people, including the choreographer, designer and composer. Three cameras were used for the ballet but the details were even sketchier than for *A Wedding Bouquet*. One camera was on the engineering gallery high above the studio floor giving a wide angle of the whole set. One camera was on the floor of the studio and the script said that it '...will track and pan as rehearsed and directed.' The third camera '...will only be rarely used in the early part of the ballet...[it] should however follow the action throughout in the event of a breakdown on Camera 1.' The camera crew had already seen the ballet on stage at Sadler's Wells and the script said that '...the procedure [the visual sequence] will be as discussed.' Since the lens used on the tracking camera was not specified it is difficult to deduce how Munro put together the visual sequence. During the opening caption sequence this camera was able to show 'CU Robert Helpmann in pose' so it is reasonable to infer that the lens used was no wider than 30°. The implication is that Munro alternated wide-angles on the high camera with mid-shots and close-ups on the main floor camera. During two fight sequences the third camera was brought into use: since it was available to 'cover' the main floor camera in the event of a breakdown, it may be inferred that it had a similar lens: in the fights it could provide similar sized shots of the antagonists to contrast with whatever the main camera was showing.

The next ballet script remaining in the archives is also one of Munro's productions, *Les Patineurs* to Frederick Ashton's choreography. The coverage of the ballet was also decided during the television rehearsal but Munro's own script has survived with his hand-written shots inserted between the typed opening and closing. Munro had three cameras: Camera 3 was high and static providing a wide-angle of the whole set; Camera



2 was on the studio floor and static at the side of the set with an implication that the lens angle was wide enough for a *pas de deux*; Camera 1 was mobile and also on the studio floor immediately in front of Camera 3 and able to track in and out but not sideways which is another example of 'vertical stacking'. The programme lasted 25 minutes of which the ballet seems to have occupied about 20: there were 27 shots during the ballet though one shot is shown as "1&3" so was probably 'as directed'. For the first part of the ballet Munro alternated shots between Cameras 1 and 3 (with one *pas de deux* shot on Camera 2) while in the second half, which included more solo variations, he alternated between Cameras 1 and 2. While it is difficult fully to deduce the appearance of this ballet there are a few points worth noting: the first shot of the ballet was a wide-angle on 3, an 'establishing' shot; Munro noted in the typed script that the final shot of the ballet was to be a full length shot of the principal male dancer so Munro had a clear idea of how he wanted the dancing to end on screen; the set and dancing area was so disposed that the cameras remained in front of the imaginary proscenium at all times – this studio performance was a 'relay' in all but name.

*The Sleeping Princess* was Munro's penultimate ballet before the outbreak of war, receiving two performances in March 1939. At 75 minutes duration it is also the second longest transmission of any pre-war music programme exceeded only by Stephen Thomas' production of Rutland Boughton's opera *The Immortal Hour* lasting 90 minutes and transmitted two weeks previously. Munro had sets in both of the Alexandra Palace studios and used five cameras, three in Studio A and two in Studio B. It was also ambitious in that it used film inserts at various points and a model of the set in Studio B for dream sequences. Unlike all the ballets discussed so far this ballet was fully scripted and provides a clear indication of Munro's shooting of ballet performances. Unfortunately there are no studio plans included: the script says 'Plans will be issued later to those concerned' so there is no indication as to whether Munro had changed his approach from that of the implied proscenium relay. In general Munro took each solo variation as a single shot of unstated lens angle: several ensembles were sometimes taken together in a single shot without the lens angle being specified; at no point in the script is there any close-up cutaway specified. It was this broadcast that the writer in *The Observer* praised in Section 9.7.



The two final pre-war dance scripts studied were both of broadcasts of dance entertainments by *The Theatre of the Chauve Souris, Moscow*: this company appeared three times on BBC Television in 1939 – on 18<sup>th</sup> January, 28<sup>th</sup> March and 14<sup>th</sup> July. Each programme was billed at 30 minutes long (14<sup>th</sup> July, 35 minutes long) and comprised a sequence of short, unconnected dances linked by a narrator. The producer, Bate, appears to have been unadventurous in his shooting in that each short dance was shot by a single camera with the exception of two out of seven dances on 28<sup>th</sup> March which were shot on two cameras and one out of five dances on 14<sup>th</sup> July which was also shot on two cameras. Three cameras were available, two with 30° lenses and the other with a 20° moderately telephoto lens: at one point in the script the camera with telephoto lens is instructed to ‘...pan on to main stage & stand by in case suitable shot may be found at rehearsal.’

What these six pre-war ballet scripts seem to indicate is that the directors were less confident about their ability to pre-plan dance visual sequences than opera visual sequences: in the latter the shooting seems to have been much more precisely planned. In the six dance programmes studied three different directors, who were all relatively experienced, chose to wait in five of the programmes until the performers were in the television studio before committing themselves to a visualisation: by this time it was too late to type it into the script. Rather than commit the visual sequence to paper during the rehearsal, in four of the programmes they seem to have relied on their own memories and those of their cameramen about what had happened in rehearsals or on the theatrical stage.

The outside broadcast *Waltztime* from the 1951 Radio Show at Earls Court, London produced by the newly appointed directors Foa and Simpson included three operatic excerpts which are discussed in Section 9.7.1. There were also three dance excerpts of which one was specially commissioned and two were taken from the standard ballet repertory. The first dance sequence to a Strauss *pot-pourri* was fully scripted with the complex developing shots that were to be the hall-mark of Simpson: this seems to imply



that he may have been the director of at least this sequence.<sup>a</sup> The second and third dance sequences comprised excerpts from acts II and III of *Swan Lake* and were not scripted: shots were ‘...decided on rehearsal.’ The dance critic of *The Dancing Times* was not impressed by Simpson’s imaginative approach saying ‘Odd pillars and wisps of material frequently competed with the dancers for attention.’<sup>471</sup> No recording of this programme was made so the success or otherwise of Foa and Simpson’s ambitions cannot be assessed.

The earliest telerecording of a dance programme to have survived in the BBC’s film archives is of Simpson’s production of *Les Sylphides* broadcast on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1953; it was Simpson’s 28<sup>th</sup> dance programme and his 23<sup>rd</sup> since his appointment as a full producer in November 1949. There is a confidence about the directing that shows that Simpson had a well-developed eye not only for the attractive shot but for methods of putting those shots into satisfactory visual sequences. *Les Sylphides* uses conventional gestures identical to those in narrative ballets but there is no plot or meaning to this dance creation: in the programme Karsavina called it ‘a romantic reverie.’ The set in Lime Grove Studio G was very cramped and some of the dancers’ travelling movements are very constrained. Simpson rarely makes the mistake of decapitating the dancers or losing their hands or feet; the lifts are also well-placed and successfully covered by one of the floor cameras though at one point the cameraman misjudges his position and the camera just catches a studio lamp at the top of shot, producing annular flares. For the 16 members of the *corps de ballet* Simpson uses a camera on a high crane taking in the whole set and tableaux which is a most effective procedure allowing the patterns of individual variations to be clearly seen. In the whole of the 26 minutes of the ballet Simpson uses only three close-ups, one being of Violetta Elvin, the others being of Alicia Markova, both better known in Britain in 1953 than the third ballerina, the newcomer Svetlana Beriosova who has no close-ups. There are a significant number of mid-shots of all three ballerinas and of the male dancer John Field almost always used

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<sup>a</sup> During the eight years that Foa worked for the BBC as a television producer, there is only one oblique reference to him producing sequences involving dancers other than as interludes in complete operas. This exception was in a ballet programme in April 1957 when Dale was almost certainly the director under Foa’s more senior supervision.



when there is no significant use of the feet taking place. The programme carries the closing credit 'Artistic Adviser Cyril Beaumont.' Beaumont was a dance critic for the *Sunday Times* and Dale, while she was still dancing, made appreciative comments about the Simpson/Beaumont television collaborations (see Section 5.7). This programme shows a clear visual awareness on the part of Simpson, guided by Beaumont, which seems to imply that the televising of dance which had received such severe criticism before and immediately after the war had managed to catch up the coverage of opera in terms of effective presentation by 1953. It should also be noted that Simpson used 58 shots in a 32 minute programme which is rather more ambitious than the shot density used until 1950.

The second telerecording of dance to have survived is of the same *pas de deux* from *Swan Lake* that had appeared in the *Waltztime* outside broadcast script discussed above. Simpson's production of the excerpts from Acts II and III of this ballet involved Margot Fonteyn and Michael Somes and was first broadcast on 9<sup>th</sup> June 1954: the programme does not appear to have been repeated by making use of the telerecording. The programme was broadcast from Lime Grove Studio 'G' which had to contain the orchestra and two sets, each with an appropriate area for dancing.<sup>a</sup> Within the confines of the studio Fonteyn copes extremely well with a particularly joyous solo variation in the Act III excerpt but Somes appears to be rather restricted in some of his more extravagant movements, especially in the Act III *pas de deux* which is a great showpiece for both of the dancers involved. Simpson had four cameras, none of them fitted with zooms and no evidence of use of other than standard lenses ranging from about 16° to 35° on the turrets. After the successful use of a crane in *Les Sylphides* Simpson had his three main cameras operating at shoulder height and made little effective use of the variation in height available from the fourth camera which was on a crane. The directing in this programme is sometimes rather less comfortable than in *Les Sylphides* with a small number of ugly cuts from two-shot to two-shot and cuts from mid-shot cutaway to full length shots that are motivated neither by dancers' movements

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<sup>a</sup> Although there is no plan in the surviving script, the recording seems to show that the two sets were on adjacent sides of the dancing area. The effort to keep the Act III set out of the Act II excerpt seems to have given both cameramen and dancers some problems due to the restricted operating area.



nor by changes in the music. Simpson uses no shot tighter than a mid-shot and on the whole is happy to allow the dancers to operate within a medium wide-angle with enough headroom to accommodate lifts. The programme was strongly criticised for the quality of its presentation at the following Programme Review Board.<sup>472</sup>

Dale joined the BBC shortly after Simpson's *Swan Lake* excerpts. There are few ballet programmes preserved from the next four years – just five – and by the time of the 1958 recording of a rather shortened *The Nutcracker* which was choreographed by Peter Wright and produced by Dale it is clear that enormous progress had been made in the presentation of ballet. This production was mounted in the two Riverside studios with the orchestral tracks pre-recorded, which is the first time that this technique has been found. To save on expensive orchestral repeat fees the rehearsals were carried out with a pianist in the studio. Dale used six cameras fitted with turrets and with mountings that vary from quite high cranes to what would become a benchmark of Dale's ballets: the use of fairly low mountings with the lenses at about waist level to give height to the scenery behind the dancers. The immediate impression compared to Simpson's *Swan Lake* is of the amount of space available to the dancers: in the Act II *pas de deux* performed by Fonteyn and Sones the greater amount of room available is now sufficient to give Sones enough space to demonstrate his talent. Dale makes considerable use of foreground detail to give depth to the shots but at times the shooting is rather slow with several scenes in which floor activity cries out for reaction shots. This is particularly true at the beginning of the ballet where a family Christmas party is extremely dull visually especially when there is no dancing taking place. It is almost as if Dale was comfortable with dancing but not with the linking passages. The coverage becomes much more effective with the arrival of Drosselmeyer and the presentation of the Nutcracker to Clara; this sequence has some delightful visual vignettes. Dale uses specially shot film sequences as links between scenes, which were presumably to enable the cameras to take up new positions: one filmed link was a slow-motion passage for Clara and the Nutcracker which is well accompanied by conductor Hugo Rignold. The second act is beautifully directed by Dale: it is a sequence of characteristic dances put on for the benefit of the dreaming Clara and the visual construction comes from someone who knows her ballet. Generally shot in medium wide-angle the dances are linked together by cutaway shots which always include Clara on her throne of



observation. Dale makes modest but very effective use of craning and tracking cameras since moving cameras can negate the movement of dancers on stage, a danger that Dale always manages to avoid. As with all the ballets viewed the sets are typically three-sided with the dancers working towards the open fourth side. Where Dale minimises the feeling of 'relay' is by giving the viewer the impression that he is always standing alongside one of the characters, usually Clara, and getting the character's view of the proceedings. It is an intermediate situation lying somewhere between pure relay and pure involvement of the type seen in *The Saint of Bleeker Street*. Dale's *The Nutcracker* of 1958 was watched by 15 million viewers and gained an RI of 86 which are both remarkable figures. The Programme Review Board of 31<sup>st</sup> December 1958 called it an 'outstandingly successful ballet production'<sup>473</sup> a judgment that certainly stands the test of time.

In August 1959 Simpson produced his penultimate major programme for Music Programmes.<sup>a</sup> It was the 30-minute ballet *Two Brothers* with music by Dohnanyi played by the Aeolian String Quartet and featuring the Ballet Rambert with one of the brothers of the title danced by the choreographer Norman Morrice. It was shot with four cameras in Riverside studio 1; there were no zooms used. The story is one of jealousy and murder: an older brother is engaged to a young woman for whom his educationally sub-normal younger brother has developed a passion. By mistake the fiancée allows the younger brother to kiss her in public at which the older brother becomes violent towards both fiancée and brother. Between the two short acts the younger brother kills the older brother and as the dim-witted brother is led away at the end of the ballet the fiancée realises that she has been the unwitting cause of destroying both brothers. There is particularly fine dancing from Gillian Martlew as the girl and John Chesworth as the younger brother. What is quite striking about this televised ballet is Simpson's effective and imaginative directing. Although Simpson has no zoom lenses he uses many of the complex developing shots that were central to his career. The camerawork at times is

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<sup>a</sup> *Amahl and the Night Visitors* was Simpson's final major production for Music Programmes at Christmas 1959. It was the fifth time that Simpson had produced this opera for Christmas and the archives show that he had to beg to be allowed to produce it again; Salter had originally allocated it to someone else, identity unknown. It was not recorded.



adventurous and remarkable and mostly works very well. The first act is predominantly a series of *pas de deux* and *pas de trois* for the fiancée and brothers while the second act is mainly an extended *pas de deux* for fiancée and surviving brother. The broadcast was live so there are occasional infelicities but there is only one really ugly shot. Cuts are well motivated by stage movement and the density of shots varies in response to the emotional content of the ballet: during the violent conflict between brothers and fiancée at the end of the first act there are eight shots in little more than a minute; at the start of the second act, as the fiancée reflects on the fight, her solo variation is taken in five shots lasting a total of 110 seconds. Simpson also uses a wider range of lens heights than previously seen in ballet: the highest is a crane at about 4m above the floor with a street lamp giving foreground detail and depth of shot while the lowest is a very low creeper at about 30cm. This latter mounting is first used when the dead brother is carried in and laid on the ground at the back of the set while the younger brother crouches close to the camera. As with Cartier's use of a rather higher creeper in *The Saint of Bleeker Street* in 1956 (see 9.7.1) there is a feeling of menace from the *corps de ballet* towards the younger brother in the shots using the creeper. The low creeper also conveys a feeling of concerned sympathy as the fiancée comes to the recumbent young man: it is not quite a point-of-view shot since the crouching killer is in the foreground but the fiancée's eyeline is directly towards the camera/viewer as she approaches. As with Dale's *The Nutcracker* the set is once again three-sided but Simpson, like Dale, manages a successful interstitial form lying between the relay and the involved viewer. Broadcast at the end of the evening's viewing, the programme attracted a moderate audience of 2.7m but this unfamiliar ballet gained a low RI of 52: there is no evidence of critical response to the broadcast either internally or externally and the telerecording was not repeated. This is another programme that has lain in the archives too long and deserves further informed critical assessment; if it is typical of Simpson's work at this late stage of his career it could be said that his hounding out of Music Programmes was a travesty of justice.

Later in the same year 1959 Dale produced a studio version of *Pineapple Poll* to music by Sir Arthur Sullivan arranged by Charles Mackerras and with designs by Osbert Lancaster and choreography by John Cranko. It is one of the wittiest ballets of the past 50 years and Dale's directing catches the wit, the energy and the sheer delight shown by



the whole company: there are particularly fine performances by Merle Park as Pineapple Poll and David Blair as Captain Belaye. The recording was made in Riverside studio 1 which was the same studio that Dale had used for *The Nutcracker* nearly one year before. What is very noticeable is that whereas for *The Nutcracker* Dale made frequent use of floor cameras with their lenses at waist or chest height which is uncomfortable for the cameramen but very appropriate for ballet, for *Pineapple Poll* all the floor cameras were operating at shoulder height: there are only a couple of shots taken from waist level, possibly on a crane. For ballet this is less satisfactory since lifts and jumps appear less spectacular and the scenery is cut off at a fairly low level. Whether the Lancaster sets were less tall than those for *The Nutcracker* is not revealed but the camera height used certainly detracts a little from the overall production: it is even more curious when Simpson was using an ultra-low creeper most effectively for ballet in the same studio only three months previously. This criticism notwithstanding this production of *Pineapple Poll* is another example of a valuable document than has been gathering dust for too long. The first transmission gained an audience of nearly 12m and an RI of 70. There is a note on the front of the PA's script to say that there was a 7 minute retake of part of the ballet immediately after the live transmission which must have been edited into the telerecording for a later repeat. *The Dancing Times* said of Dale's production that 'it 'came over' with tremendous vitality.'<sup>474</sup>

In 1963 Dale described her approach to creating a shooting script as '...follow the music...' When faced with a scene with much happening Dale would slightly readjust the choreography so that multiple activity could be contained within the shot without having to go wide and lose detail. Dale had a preference for low-angle shots giving a clear relationship between floor and background: she said that low angle was the best way of dealing with elevation.<sup>475</sup>

Mary Clarke said in January 1963 that *La fille mal gardée* was the best thing that Dale had done up to that date. With 'minimum of alteration and with adaptation planned so skilfully...the televised version was accepted without thought. Her method is to photograph the solos and *pas de deux* straightforwardly, keeping the images of the dancers as large as possible. For group dances...she shoots from above and from a



distance so that floor patterns are distinctly visible. Mime scenes are done in close-up,<sup>476</sup>

Before the arrival of colour television in 1967 ballet lovers had often voiced their displeasure at the loss of such an important aspect of the art as the colour of the costumes and sets. The efforts of the directors in trying to get onto a small screen an art which used such a large area of stage was also a source of some frustration. William Trevor voiced these doubts in one of his eloquent commentaries – criticism is too narrow a word – in *The Listener*:

[I] wish to experience it in its own size and in its own colours. It is like perusing a sepia print of Leonardo's *Annunciation* and pining for the Uffizi.<sup>477</sup>

Trevor went on to repeat what previous balletomanes had said, that '...half a bite is better than no cherry at all...' Trevor's predecessor as arts critic on *The Listener* was Anthony Burgess: in March 1965 he commented on Margaret Dale's realisation of Stravinsky's *The Firebird* in a studio production with the Royal Ballet featuring Nerina, Hynd, White and Bergsma:

Dale's production is perhaps the only one I have seen which has reconciled me to ballet totally televisual...this had something to do with the concentration on depth rather than width...the final scene, prince and princess in the foreground with the whole world stretching before them, was especially moving.<sup>478</sup>

In April 1968 Dale directed her final studio ballet with the Nederlands Dans Theatre in *The Anatomy Lesson*. Over the next 14 years there would be few studio ballet productions: all other ballet shown on BBC Television would either be programmes purchased from abroad or outside broadcast relays. One month before Dale's enforced retirement as a studio director Vernon was to direct the first outside broadcast of a complete ballet from the Royal Opera House, Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker* choreographed by and featuring Rudolf Nureyev. This is the earliest programme in colour viewed for this thesis<sup>a</sup> and the impact is striking: the need for colour in the sets and costumes mentioned above is clearly demonstrated and satisfied. What is also shown is that the splendid sets and the large tableaux of dancers simply do not work on

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<sup>a</sup> The first music programme in colour was broadcast three months previously.



a television screen except in establishing and closing shots: in 1968 Vernon was not yet sufficiently experienced to be able to choose well-judged close-ups to symbolise these tableaux. Michael Bayston put his finger on the problem:

The manner in which the ballet was presented gave a splendid impression of the costumes and scenery by Nicholas Georgiadis but, generally speaking, the camera work showed the limitations of televising a live theatrical performance. Detail was lost which could have been captured by judicious, and more frequent, use of close-ups.<sup>479</sup>

Time and again in *The Nutcracker* the viewer needs a cut to a close-up from the long shot that McGivern as long ago as 1950 had said meant nothing in ballet:<sup>480</sup> although McGivern was specifically talking about 9" television screens, on the larger screens available at the end of the 1960s the long-held wide-shots in *The Nutcracker* still offer insufficient detail and Vernon seems unaware of the need to offer appropriate close-ups. The broadcast also demonstrates a point that Dale made about outside broadcasts of ballet: the director is not in complete control of the position on the stage/floor of the dancers nor is the director able to move the cameras to precisely where they might be needed:<sup>481</sup> as a result each shot is a compromise and rarely gives precisely what is required for the aware viewer. This broadcast makes a fascinating contrast with the studio production of *The Nutcracker* by Dale described above: Nureyev's choreography at the Royal Opera House is generally much more imaginative than that of Peter Wright used by Dale in the studio but Dale's coverage of the earlier production in her visual sequence is much more satisfactory.<sup>a</sup>

In the 27<sup>th</sup> March 1970 edition of *Gala Performance* Foy included the *pas de deux* from Drigo and Minkus' *Le Corsaire* danced by Fonteyn and Nureyev: the programme was recorded as an outside broadcast from the Coliseum Theatre in London. As with Vernon's *The Nutcracker* the use of a single wide-shot in the opening *pas de deux* means that details of the dancing is difficult to discern on the screen: the performance cries out for 'judicious' use of close-ups. There is some intelligent and insightful use of full-length shots in the solo variations while the final *pas de deux* is well caught with

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<sup>a</sup> Wright continued to develop the choreography of *The Nutcracker* and, according to Burton, it is now regarded as one of the most satisfying realisations in use.



precise and well-judged cuts between wide-shots and full-length shots. The main problem with the coverage is the high placement of the cameras: Dale and Simpson had shown that a camera with its lens at about waist level gives the most effective coverage of dancers. For this programme Foy's cameras appear to be in the Grand Circle of the theatre shooting downwards onto the stage; Nureyev's prodigious leaps in particular are flattened while the remarkable dancing of the 50-year-old Fonteyn is not always seen to best advantage. It also has the unfortunate effect that the join between the stage and the backcloth often cuts the dancers' bodies somewhere between their waists and their knees which is visually very uncomfortable. As in so many other instances noted in this thesis Foy obtained some of the finest artists performing at the peak of their abilities and seemed unable consistently to translate it into effective sequences.

From 1968 to 1982 there were 29 ballets transmitted by BBC Television: the bulk of these were either relays from commercial theatres (twelve programmes), purchases from abroad (ten programmes), unknown provenance (three, probably purchases from commercial sources) and only four made in the BBC's studios. Of these one was of Indian ethnic dance directed by Jamila Patten (*Shanta's World of Indian Dance* (1970)) and one was a highly praised hybrid workshop-documentary on film directed by Bill Fitzwater and Vic Dowdall (*The Relay* (1971)). It follows that of the conventional types of studio performances that Dale had made such a speciality of BBC Television, only two were produced in the fourteen years following her retirement from the studios: Stravinsky's *Les Noces* (1978) with Bob Lockyer directing the ballet version and Greenberg directing the concert version; and *Pierrot Lunaire* (1979) in the form a workshop directed by Colin Nears.

*Pierrot Lunaire* is unique as far as this thesis is concerned in that it is the only performance programme viewed that was shot entirely on film: it was shot on the stage at the Round House, Camden Town with one of the BBC's most able film cameramen, Nat Crosby, operating. Glen Tetley's choreography of Schoenberg's mould-breaking music from 1912 is based on *Commedia dell'Arte* characters and is marvellously interpreted by Christopher Bruce (Pierrot), Lucy Burge (Columbine) and Leigh Warren (Brighella). Schoenberg's music consists of 21 songs divided into three groups of seven: Tetley uses these three sections to illustrate Pierrot's innocence, loss of innocence, and,



finally, his acceptance of his new state. The set comprises a white scaffolding tower on a black stage with black curtains for backdrops; the costumes are mostly white (Pierrot and Columbine in the first section), grey (Columbine in the second section) or black (Brighella) with Columbine adopting a scarlet costume for the final section when she portrays the idealised whore in Pierrot's sexually awakened mind. Until this final section there is a feeling of the 'silent' movies (with pit orchestra) which were contemporaneous with *Pierrot Lunaire* with only the bright red lipstick of Pierrot to contrast with the stark black, greys and white. Nears, unlike Dale and Simpson, is content to portray the performance as a pure relay: the shooting is very much from the perspective of the 'audience beyond the proscenium.' What Nears and Crosby demonstrate is that filming enables the composition and lighting of each shot to be rehearsed and perfected before each take, something that can be a compromise in a multi-camera electronic set-up whether studio or outside broadcast. Nears uses a wide variety of camera positions from creeper to high crane with each chosen appropriately: gestures are never lost in the shots. The remarkable agility and athleticism of Bruce is well captured especially in his long series of solos in the first section of the work. Nears is able to use many more medium close-ups in this filmic presentation of dance than might have been possible with multi-cameras: having shot a number of possibilities, the most appropriate can be chosen at leisure in the cutting room which is a luxury not normally available to electronic performance directors though there is one error of continuity which must have proved impossible to correct at the editing stage. One technique that Nears uses which had been avoided by Simpson and Dale is a crabbing camera which parallels the movement of a dancer across the stage. In classical ballet this technique can belittle the athleticism of the performer making movements seem less impressive than might otherwise be: Nears is careful always to use the technique to change the perspective to the advantage of the performers and to create depth in what is an otherwise uncompromisingly shallow set. In this 36 minute ballet Nears uses only three true close-ups preferring instead to use the mid-shot or occasional medium close-up as the tightest shots for reactions: full length and wider shots are used for the dancing. The three close-ups are all connected with Pierrot's sexual awakening: the very first shot of the ballet is a close-up of Pierrot's face as he swings on the set, a picture of innocence; the first shot to reveal Columbine as a red-dressed whore is a close-up of her



face; after Pierrot and Columbine have enjoyed sex for the first time there is a third close-up of both faces reflecting their post-coital *tristesse*. This remarkable programme with its uncompromising music attracted an audience of 0.4m on its first transmission in January 1979 and only slightly more on its repeat 18 months later. Programme Review Board merely noted that it had been 'well directed' which is true but hardly adequate.<sup>482</sup>

The final ballet viewed was Sir Frederick Ashton's *La fille mal gardée* which was an outside broadcast relay of the Royal Ballet production at the Royal Opera House directed by Vernon. The two other Vernon relays viewed for this thesis – a truncated *Il Trovatore* and *The Nutcracker* – were disappointing with many failures to understand either the structure of the works or to find satisfactory visual sequences with which to convey the performances. *La fille mal gardée* was Vernon's 13<sup>th</sup> ballet relay in the 13 years since *The Nutcracker* – he had also directed five further opera relays in the same period – and his directing had acquired a polish and understanding that is reflected both in the large early evening BBC-1 audience of 7.6m and the high RI of 82; even the normally hard-to-please Programme Review Board praised the 'occasion and directing.'<sup>483</sup> Vernon's directing is based around a standard size of shot for solo dancers which places their heads on the  $\frac{3}{4}$  line of the screen and their feet about 10% from the bottom: not only is it an aesthetically balanced shot but all arm gestures and elevations are easily contained without the cameramen having to make the background jump around. Vernon's main cameras are placed in the stalls so that the discovery by Dale and Simpson that the best height for ballet cameras is below the dancers' shoulders is also observed. His tableaux are normally shot as wide-angles either from the stalls or from the circle, once more observing what Dale and Simpson had done twenty years before with studio cranes used for the *corps de ballet*. Vernon's only uncomfortable habit is one of cutting from a wide-angle on a circle camera to a shot with the same perspective on a stalls camera, a rather uncomfortable jump cut. Vernon is much happier using close-up cutaways than he had been a decade earlier particularly of principal dancers: it is a pleasing improvement on his shooting of *The Nutcracker*. Vernon catches the fine dancing of the two main principals, Lesley Collier and Michael Coleman, and is alert to the humour displayed by the 'dame' Brian Shaw. This final ballet viewed is a fine tribute to a director who became well respected after what



appears to have been a rather slow start at least in the field of music performance programmes.

## 9.8 Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*

The final programme analysed for this thesis is one that seems in many ways to be the summation of all the techniques and practices analysed except for those appropriate to dance. On Good Friday, 1729, as part of the annual cycle of performances of *The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ* at the Church of St. Thomas in Leipzig it was the turn of the Gospel narrative ascribed to St. Matthew and the turn of the composer Johann Sebastian Bach. The result is one of the masterpieces of Western classical music: a huge work lasting over three hours involving two orchestras, three choirs and six vocal soloists. For the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its first performance the BBC mounted a live transmission on Good Friday, 1979, from Lincoln Cathedral which was broadcast throughout Europe on both television and stereo radio. Rodney Greenberg, a practising Jew, had become something of a specialist in the visual interpretation of music settings of Christian texts: by 1979 he had directed performances of Mahler's 8<sup>th</sup> symphony (which includes a huge setting of the Christian hymn *Veni, Creator Spiritus*) (1975), Berlioz' *Te Deum* (1976), Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* (1976), Britten's *War Requiem* (1976), Handel's *Messiah* (1976), Verdi's *Requiem* (1978), and Janacek's *Glagolitic Mass* (1978). It was natural that with this background and experience he should be asked to interpret Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*. Unfortunately in 1979 the Jewish feast of Passover coincided with Easter and Good Friday fell on one of the days when practising Jews remain at home. He therefore asked me if I would direct the programme while he retained the producer's functions during the preparations and rehearsals until dusk on Maundy Thursday. It was a happy circumstance which led to a programme which for all its many flaws was described by a variety of senior BBC managers at the following Programme Review Board as '...a stunning programme, very well dressed and directed...a really great achievement...great credit was due to Rodney Greenberg, David Ellis [the radio producer] and Roy Tipping...' <sup>484</sup> The programme gained a British Academy Craft Award for Best Outside Broadcast Sound.

As with all the preceding analyses what follows is based on viewing the programme several times: my own memories of the event are hazy and unreliable. The way in which



the Cathedral is used is very much in the tradition of divided locations used for television studio operas: the orchestras and choruses are in the Nave immediately in front of the choir screen while four of the solo singers are seen elsewhere in the Cathedral. All the performers are costumed: the orchestral members and the choirs are dressed in matching blue, white and black; the Evangelist (Jon Garrison) is placed on the floor of the Nave in front of one of the orchestras in a bright red robe; Jesus (Alan Titus) is placed between the two choirs on a high platform in an off-white robe so that he dominates all the scenes in which he sings; the four other solo singers, who in Bach's conception represent various aspects of Everyman, perform in various side chapels of the Cathedral and wear different coloured robes which are modified by coloured sashes when necessary. While the performers never move in shot the cameras indulge in many tracking, craning and panning shots giving the whole programme a remarkable fluidity and implied involvement of the viewer as if he were wandering around the Cathedral during the performance. The immediate impression of the visual sequence is that all Salter's rules are followed with the exception of the troublesome rule 2 – many close-ups of musicians and choir members are used to represent the whole of the section of which they are part. The Evangelist, as the narrator, always sings directly to camera very much like a newsreader or story-teller on a children's programme; there are some instances where the Evangelist changes his eyeline from one camera to another at a hiatus in the narrative which is a technique reminiscent of *Top of the Pops*. The size of shot of the Evangelist is varied from full-length to close-up in parallel with the intensity of the narrative; similarly the size of shot of Jesus is varied according to the dramatic intensity. Not only is Jesus placed on the highest platform of the elaborate set but he is always shot from below as if from a 'creeper' to emphasise his dominance of the narrative. At the point towards the end of the work where Jesus dies on the cross the high platform is left vacant for the first time. The three choirs fulfil a number of functions: at times they comment on the drama like a Greek chorus; at times they are participants often in the form of a howling mob; at times they represent the Christian community particularly in the Lutheran hymns known as chorales: the way that they are shot often reflects the intensity of what they are singing. The lighting on the orchestras, choruses, Evangelist and Jesus is varied considerably both in intensity and colour as in an opera to reflect the passing drama. There is a Foy-like concentration on zooms-in but



there is a difference from Foy's approach in that the zooms never occupy complete movements but seem to be synchronised to sections of the music by what must have been a precise bar count for the cameraman's benefit. The recitatives and arias sung by four of the soloists possess a variety of structures but it is very noticeable that all seven of the arias that are in *da capo* form are shot with a *da capo* script: a conscious decision must have been taken by me to reflect Bach's musical structure in the visual treatment just as Todds and Large had pioneered. Where dialogue occurs between members of the two choirs as in a double fugue, one choir is clearly represented as facing one way on screen while the other choir is shown as facing in the other direction. The whole work has a pleasing symmetry: the opening shot is a track in from a big wide-angle of the whole cathedral (the establishing shot) to a wide angle of all the performers. The final chorus contains a reverse of this sequence with the exception that the pull out is in stages with the changes in shot size covered by close-ups of chorus members. There is a precision to the cutting and cueing which shows that a musician is in charge of the visual sequence.

A letter in *Radio Times* summarised much reaction to this broadcast

Watching in colour revealed how effective was the use of simple costumes to suggest the identities of the soloists. The camera work fully exploited the setting in Lincoln Cathedral and listening to the sound in stereo added a further dimension so that I felt I was actually present in the Cathedral...<sup>485</sup>



## CHAPTER 10 CONCLUSIONS

The research in this thesis set out to discover the successful methods used by directors for putting music performances of concerts, operas or ballets on the television screen. Of necessity it traced the history of the departments responsible for putting music performance on the screen and the ways that those departments chose to recruit staff for that purpose.

Throughout the history of BBC Television it has been found difficult to find directors capable of satisfactorily presenting music performances on television. From 1936 to 1982 nearly 140 BBC staff directors tried their hands at finding methods of visually presenting music in over 3000 programmes; of these directors, only 28 were thought sufficiently talented to be given more than 20 programmes to direct.<sup>a</sup> Even if directors are included whose main work was in drama and who were asked to present opera performances on the screen, the figure only rises to 34 directors showing adequate talent for a career which concentrated on this discipline. The reason for this paucity of talent is connected with the nature of music and music performance which will be further discussed in 10.4.

Lionel Salter had strongly held views about the presentation of music performance on television whether opera or concerts, including recitals. In a similar way Margaret Dale had strongly held views about the presentation of dance on television. These two philosophies have been behind the analyses of programmes in Chapter 9 and will overlay the comments about directorial quality and innovation which follow. A final assessment of these two philosophies will also be made in Section 10.4.

### 10.1 Opera

Salter stated that opera is the most popular of all forms of classical music even if it is the most expensive to mount: even when there is a recession in the number of people going to concerts or ballet, opera seems better able to maintain its position. It was

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<sup>a</sup> A small number of directors were just starting their careers in the late 1970s and early 1980s. They would direct more programmes after 1982 when this thesis finishes. This has not been rigorously evaluated but an educated estimate would be that there were no more than two or three of these junior directors who would develop sufficiently to join the elite.



natural that, from the start of television broadcasting, opera would be a significant part of classical music output.<sup>a</sup>

From the beginning of television broadcasting in 1936 the methods for putting opera on television were the most rapid of the musical disciplines to evolve and the experience of the directors in producing spoken drama was highly relevant: opera is, in many ways, drama with music and the structure and meaning of the music is intimately connected with the structure and meaning of the words. In the early days of television drama the directors seem to have decided that the most effective way of 'putting over' the performances taking place in the television studios was to treat them as if they were taking place on a theatrical stage. In spoken drama the initial aim of the directors was encompassed by the concept of 'relay' – the idea of putting the viewer in the best seat in the house. The same concept also seems to have been central to the early realisations of opera performances for the television screen. The scripts examined which have studio plans attached show that the disposition of the performers and the cameras was no different from that which would have been used in a theatre, with the important difference that the cameras were able to get closer to the performers and, in a limited way, were able to adjust their positions. Although the two studios at Alexandra Palace did not possess proscenium arches, they were present in the minds of the producers and, as a result, were communicated invisibly to the viewers. The 'relay' was present in studio presentations as well as in outside broadcasts.

Attempts to make opera visually acceptable were blighted by a fundamental problem: the sight of opera singers emoting with wide open mouths and voices that were projected as if from the stage of a large opera house was not regarded as pleasant by the critics or viewers. Dallas Bower in *Tristan and Isolde* (1938) and Stephen Thomas in *Hansel and Gretel* (1939) attempted to overcome this problem by placing the emoting singers out of vision alongside the accompanying orchestra and using actors or dancers

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<sup>a</sup> Analysis of those programmes for which RIs were collected shows that on television the most popular music performance broadcasts were those of mixed extracts (RI=74), then concerts (RI=70), then operas (RI=67), then ballets (RI=65) and finally recitals (RI=63).



to perform the opera, with or without their mouths miming the words. It was not a successful technique and was not seriously pursued after the war.

Once television resumed in 1946 opera was once again an important part of music performances on television. In 1949 George Foa was appointed as a television music producer: he came from a theatrical background gained from his work at La Scala, Milan and with the music publishers Ricordi; he was the first director with a specific brief for presenting opera on television. Over the nine years that he worked for BBC Television he produced 56 operatic broadcasts of which four have survived in the BBC archives. On the evidence of *La Traviata* (1955), which was viewed and analysed for this thesis, he maintained a theatrical perspective on opera performances for the television screen. The performers were directed in exactly the same way that they would have been directed on the opera stage and the cameras operated much as they would have done at an outside broadcast. If it is assumed that the criticisms made of the pre-war opera broadcasts were valid, there was a clear difference in the way in which the opera singers played their parts by the mid-1950s: their facial expressions were more like those seen in costume drama and many of them had learned to project their voices without an uncomfortable display of dental fillings and wobbling tongues.

The comparison made with the drama director Eric Fawcett's production of *I Pagliacci* (1952) showed that Foa had encouraged and achieved more natural styles of dramatic acting than the rather melodramatic hamming that marred Fawcett's production, but that Fawcett was much more in advance of Foa in his use of cameras and sets as a way of developing a directorial style that abandoned the proscenium and the three-sided set. Fawcett managed to create an 'involved' style of directing where the viewer was led to believe that he was a member of the cast (or, in this case, the chorus), participating at first-hand in the drama and able to wander in and out of a 'real' Italian town centre.

After Fawcett left BBC Television to become one of Independent Television's drama directors, his televisual descendants at the BBC built on the concept of the 'naturalistic' studio sets that he pioneered. The use of talented performers who were aware of the dangers of over-performing to television cameras, against which Foa seems to have striven, was a further concept that led to strengthening qualities in the studio operas made in the late 1950s. The work of the drama director Rudolf Cartier was analysed and



the intense atmosphere which he managed to create in *The Saint of Bleeker Street* (1956) and *Othello* (1959) was an advance on the work of Foa and Fawcett both in terms of the performances of most of the singers and, particularly, in the quality of the directing, the sets and the camerawork. Cartier also brought to opera a substantial number of innovations which he had already used successfully in his drama productions. These included the use of extras to crowd the scenes; many more and bigger close-ups of singers' faces; and the use of high and, especially, low camera mountings to enhance the 'drama' of operatic scenes.

The directors of opera in the 1960s and 1970s, particularly Basil Coleman and Brian Large, inherited Cartier's flexible use of camera height and size of shot. Both were musically and dramatically aware and were imaginative in their exploitation of existing techniques such as adventurous camera moves, dramatic close-ups and large sets into which the cameras took the viewer. They also made use of new techniques particularly colour, zoom lenses and the ability to vary the intensity of lighting to reflect the mood and meaning of the text whether verbal or musical. In *Hansel and Gretel* (1976) Large exploited the recently developed electronic trickery which was known as colour separation overlay by which characters could be 'shrunk' or 'expanded' to illustrate the dramatic content of the opera. Large also used the technique of getting a character to sing directly to camera in order to convey meaning directly to the 'involved' viewer which had been noted for the first time in Fawcett's *I Pagliacci*: in Fawcett's opera it was in the form of a narration directed at the viewer in the manner of a newscaster; in Large's opera it was a bloodthirsty witch gloating over her victims' intended fate and, by implication, directly threatening the viewer that they might be next.

The innovations in opera were not a linear process: later directors did not observe the improvements brought about by their predecessors and automatically incorporate them. In 1976, Patricia Foy's *Gianni Schicchi* was sumptuous and, in places, extremely well sung but was directed in a dull and old-fashioned manner that seemed to ignore much of what had gone before. It returned to the hypothetical concept of the proscenium arch framing a three-sided theatrical set into which the cameras were not allowed to enter. In this she was inadvertently prescient since studio operas ceased to be a major part of



BBC Television's output from the late 1970s and relays from commercial stages became the standard origin of opera performances for the television screen.

Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language* defined opera as 'an exotick and irrational entertainment'; television opera directors have tried to bring a logical dynamic to this curious intermingling of the dramatic and musical where the latter can sometimes seem to diminish the former and sometimes to over-egg it. With the exceptions of Foa and Large, the successful directors of opera broadcasts have not been musicians by training but have been experienced drama directors with a love of music, assisted if necessary by a musically trained assistant producer.

## 10.2 Ballet

Dance fared less well than opera before the war. From the evidence of the scripts examined, the directors responsible for broadcasts of ballet on television were unsure of how to realise the art on the small screens of the viewers. If these scripts are typical, the directors seem to have been incapable of planning their coverage in advance of the studio rehearsal; they had to wait until they had the dancers in front of the cameras before they could create a suitable visual sequence. In the first year or so of broadcasting, the ballet programmes were often criticised because the cameramen were cutting off the dancers' heads in lifts and amputating their feet. The directors also seemed incapable of taking an already choreographed ballet and rearranging the dancers so that they made aesthetically pleasing pictures on the screen without the choreography being compromised. Only Donald Hunter Munro seems to have made some progress towards satisfactory shooting of ballet before the war.

After the war, although coverage of dance appears to have improved to a limited extent, the demands of the viewers – or at least the dance critics – seem to have become more sophisticated. By the early 1950s considerable criticism was being voiced in the specialised press about coverage of dance. None of the television producers had received training as dancers and despite the enthusiasm shown for the discipline by some of the Music Department employees, the results were viewed as inadequate. Only Cyril Beaumont was writing encouraging articles though still noting the inadequacies of some of the coverage of ballet; it may be because of his positive attitude that he was



employed as a ballet consultant on some of the programmes emanating from BBC Television in the early 1950s, apparently with beneficial results.

It was the arrival of a former ballerina Margaret Dale that transformed the output of dance on BBC Television from that of the enthusiastic amateurs to that of the knowledgeable professional. Dale joined BBC Television in 1954 and took time to discover a style of coverage of dance that would please the critics and, perhaps more importantly, would please her. By 1957 she was able to present, in interview, her developed philosophy of shooting dance which would become the standard for all subsequent dance directors in the BBC and, to a significant extent, in continental Europe. Analysing Dale's most successful ballets leads to the following assessment of her most important techniques:

- Tracking cameras in dance had to be used with great discretion. Tracking away from and towards dancers was acceptable but crabbing sideways was not: it negated their own travelling movements and minimised the spectacle.
- The lens angle which best approximates to that of the human eye, 24°, was to be used for the vast majority of shots. Using either wide-angle lenses or telephoto lenses so distorted the dancers' movements and athleticism as to be an insult to them. The problem with using this lens was that in order to cover a reasonable amount of floor area without too much movement of the camera the studio had to have considerable depth, something that was not possible until the two Riverside studios came into use in the late 1950s.
- The producer of dance on television had to have a practical understanding and experience of choreography so that groupings on screen could be modified to maximise the aesthetic quality of the shots.
- A lens height approximating to the height of the waists of dancers gave the best coverage of lifts, leaps and sets in dance.
- A high crane, looking downwards, gave the best coverage of *corps de ballet* patterns and general tableaux.



The quality of Dale's productions and her determination to monopolise dance on television had two effects: first, it made it almost impossible for the existing multi-disciplinary producers to continue making dance programmes; second, no newcomers were able to break into the monopoly without Dale's agreement and only one person managed to obtain this, the choreographer Peter Wright.

With Culshaw's decision in 1968 to cut ballet budgets, the making of television ballet programmes in the BBC studios was ended and the skills of Dale, Wright and their highly trained and experienced studio crews were lost. It was only towards the end of the period covered by this thesis, from the late 1970s onwards, that a small number of talented dance directors started to re-learn the lost arts of the studio ballet production under the encouraging leadership of Humphrey Burton.

Ballet relays from commercial theatres probably didn't first appear until the mid-1960s with the appearance of Russian companies on West End theatre stages. An early relay of a Royal Ballet production by John Vernon of *The Nutcracker* (1968) from the Royal Opera House seemed to indicate that the restricted range of lens angles available on outside broadcast cameras of the time made coverage of ballet an unsatisfactory affair compared to Dale/Wright's studio productions and adaptations. It was also probably true that the outside broadcast directors used for these relays were, at best, enthusiasts for dance and lacked the professional insight that Dale, Wright and their later inheritors were to bring. After ten years' experience the outside broadcast director Vernon had, by the late 1970s, achieved much of the skilful camera manipulation shown by his studio counterparts but he was still restricted by the constraints that Dale had rejected in 1968: the outside broadcast cameras couldn't be placed in, and moved to, the optimum positions for coverage of dance; the outside broadcast director was limited in the amount of modification that she would be allowed to make to commercial stage productions better to fit the television screen since she was no longer in a position to be able to insist on working only with an amenable choreographer.

### **10.3 Non-theatrical music**

It is virtually impossible to hypothesise about the appearance of non-theatrical music performance programmes made before 1952. The first recording to have been made of a non-theatrical music broadcast dates from November 1952 and only two scripts of this



type of programme have survived from before this date. The early television critics seem to have ignored non-theatrical music broadcasts, concentrating on opera and ballet, and correspondence within the BBC seems to show a similar lack of critical assessment: there is no help to the researcher from these sources. Even the two scripts of non-theatrical programmes which have survived are unhelpful for this thesis. The first to survive is of Munro's realisation of Ravel's *Bolero* from 1937. From the correspondence about the planning and execution of this project, it seems highly likely that it was an out-of-the-ordinary broadcast. Munro was given extra rehearsals with the orchestra; the script has evidence of last-minute changes of mind that seems to betoken a high degree of unexpectedness; and the post-mortem memos to Gerald Cock seem to indicate that the broadcast was a technical and, possibly, artistic disaster. Although the shooting was in line with Salter's later 'rules', the programme itself was not ambitious and failed to follow the emotional structure of the music: the continuous *crescendo* of the music would imply that some attempt would be made at creating a visual sequence that followed a logical and continuous progression from a representation of the quiet beginning through to a representation of the climactic end. In Munro's script the end is barely distinguishable from the beginning.

The second non-theatrical music script to have survived is no more than a running order and the director's visual interpretation of the music is probably lost for ever.

From 1952 onwards the situation improves considerably for the researcher: recordings of programmes still exist and many more scripts have been preserved. What seems to be clear is that the three full producers who were making non-theatrical music programmes each had an individualistic approach – there seems to have been no departmental consensus or consistency.

Of Philip Bate's large output of programmes from 1937 to 1960 only four telerecordings have survived. The one programme viewed for this thesis confirmed a number of written and oral assessments made of him that he was directorially incompetent. His pre-war skills, as an innovative director of dance in particular, do not seem to have survived into the post-war period when his talents were seen not to have developed in line with the needs and expectations of an increasingly sophisticated television service.



Christian Simpson had flair and imagination: what he lacked was organisation in terms of both financial and time management. The recognition of his very real talents reached its apogee in 1954/5 with his direction of *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. His clashes with Salter from 1956 onwards seem to have undermined his confidence in his own skills. For all their faults his programmes viewed show qualities that were considerably in advance of the work of his contemporaries in Music Programmes.

Patricia Foy ploughed her own furrow. Foy had a good eye for the aesthetic shot but never developed a consistent skill for going from one aesthetic shot to another. To avoid this problem of creating visual sequences in non-theatrical music, where there was no movement of the artists to motivate a change of shot, she seems simply to have decided to cut from shot to shot as little as possible and only at the ends of movements or sections if obliged to do so. Early in her career she alighted on the device of setting up an attractive shot and getting the cameraman either to track in or to track out to end on a different but equally attractive shot in order to avoid visual boredom. If the piece of music was extended in length, as in Wagner's *Tannhäuser* overture or Liszt's piano sonata, and possessed a complex structure, Foy was content to cover it in a single developing shot that might be ten minutes or more in length.

By the mid-1950s Antony Craxton in outside broadcasts was already pointing the way to a much more musically involved style of directing. His ability fluently to read music was apparent in the precision of his cutting from picture to picture. His understanding of musical structure led to a style of directing that matched musical activity and stasis with visual activity and stasis. Despite the fact that he was unable to move his cameras and so was limited to the use of zooms for developing shots, his imaginative creations in the limited circumstances of outside broadcasts gained him justifiable praise from musical and non-musical administrators alike. The arrival in the late 1950s of Walter Todds brought a similarly imaginative and perceptive mind to the presentation of non-theatrical music performance in the television studios. The ability to move the cameras with greater freedom was exploited by Todds to give a fluidity to his directing that was based on, but much more advanced than, the visual sequences of Foy and Simpson. Where Todds was very much in advance of all his contemporaries except Craxton was



in developing a visual language with which he was able to communicate the underlying structures of the music he was presenting.

The next major step forward in non-theatrical music programmes was brought about by the arrival of Large in the mid-1960s. Large brought an even deeper academic insight than Todds to finding solutions to the problems involved in communicating musical language and structure to the viewers. Before Large, all the directors of non-theatrical programmes were still working with the concept of 'relay' – of providing the viewer with the 'best seat in the house' even for studio performances. Although Large's non-theatrical productions were almost all of concerts from commercially run venues, soon after his arrival he started to experiment with impressionistic realisations of those concerts by placing cameras within the orchestra; shooting the players far tighter than had been attempted before; using higher rates of shot change; using novel directions for shooting conductors and instrumentalists. Large, like Craxton, did his own vision mixing in the 1960s and this gave to his programmes the same type of precision that the players on screen were demonstrating. Like Todds, Large sometimes deliberately used the structure of the music being televised to determine the structure of the visual sequence: musical repeats were given a semblance of visual repeats though sometimes from a different direction with the apparent intention of reinforcing the visual memory.

In a sense Large marks the end of the development of a philosophy for shooting non-theatrical music performance. The most successful of his successors – David Buckton, Ian Engelmann, Rodney Greenberg, me, Humphrey Burton, Ron Isted, Robin Lough, Peter Butler, Barrie Gavin – all used the same techniques, polished and improved as the technology improved, but the same techniques nonetheless. Shot densities increased; shots became tighter; wide-angles became fewer; the number of cameras concentrating on the all-important conductor increased; 'isolated' cameras recording to their own independent videotape recorders became a normal part of the director's armoury. What Large had pioneered was the idea that the personality of the director was now yet another valid ingredient to add to the mixture, provided that this personality was musically aware.



## 10.4 The search for the ideal director

At the top of Chapter 8 Adler was cited as saying that discovering the innate quality of a programme, whatever that contentious phrase may mean, is obfuscated by the innate desire of the viewers to see the familiar. Conversely, when faced with the familiar the viewers were less likely to show objectivity in their assessment of its qualities and could give the programme a higher quality rating than the programme inherently deserved. There is a similar problem with assessing the quality of directing in arts music programmes: the overwhelming aspects of classical music programmes on BBC Television that gained high audience reaction figures were either world famous and charismatic artists, like Menuhin and Fonteyn; works from the central repertory; or music competitions. The contributions of the directors took very much second place. If the 3000 classical music performance programmes broadcast between 1936 and 1982 are placed in decreasing order of Reaction Indices the first programme to contain both unfamiliar performers and a work that might conceivably be called 'difficult' or 'unfamiliar' is the 67<sup>th</sup> in the list, Berlioz' *Te Deum* (1967) performed at the dedication of Liverpool Cathedral. At the other end of the scale of Reaction Indices, the majority of programmes with RIs in the 30s and 40s were first performances of modern operas and dance; working from the lowest rated programme upwards, the first work from a reasonably central repertory was the 65<sup>th</sup> in the list, a performance of Rossini's *Cenerentola* (1953) in English.

Classical music performance is a complex art to have to present on television and throughout this thesis it has been divided into three distinct but related categories: opera, ballet and non-theatrical music. The language of opera is closely related to the verbal language used in drama written at the same historic period: in successful opera the underlying musical language is closely related to the overlying verbal language – in many ways it is inseparable from it and even, as in Wagner, the music is expected to convey the overlying verbal language even in the latter's absence. The task of communicating the meaning of this language to the viewing public seems to have been exactly the same as the task of communicating the meaning of drama to the viewing public. Because the techniques of presenting drama and opera on the screen are so similar, successful directors from the world of drama also proved successful in the field of presenting opera despite not normally having a professional grounding in music.



The language of ballet is more stylised than the language of opera but, once the language has been learned, is no different in essence albeit less able to convey either subtlety or complexity. It follows that methods of conveying it to viewers were found to be related to the methods of conveying opera though with certain important physical differences. In opera the main sources of communication are parts of the face: the eyes and the mouth. In ballet the communication is much more by means of the whole body, especially the arms and the legs as well as the face. What became clear was that a director who wished to present ballet on television had to have a clear understanding of choreography so that the contradiction between the need to show large areas of stage for extravagant movement and tableaux and the inability of the television screen to cope with wide angles could be intelligently solved.

Non-theatrical music is much trickier, as many would-be directors have discovered. In Section 1.2 Salter and Born were cited as saying that (non-theatrical) music has no meaning and Salter stated that this poses a problem for the director trying to convey the essence of a performance to the viewers. Ignoring programme music, which quite clearly does have an intended meaning, it is perhaps necessary to add a caveat to what Salter and Born said. What they were not saying was that music has no structure, no purpose and no design, all legitimate synonyms for 'meaning'. What they were saying is that non-theatrical music is, on the whole, abstract; it does not have within itself the ability unequivocally to convey concrete ideas to an unprepared audience. Of course the audience is not wholly unprepared: it lives in a sea or, perhaps, a miasma of musical influences and has come passively to accept that certain musical clichés have innate connotations.<sup>a</sup> The 'message' conveyed by music, whether familiar or unfamiliar, is at best obscure and is normally abstract, unstated and unknown. The director of non-theatrical music is therefore faced with an abstract creation in which melodies, rhythms, motifs, harmonies and many other structural devices are used as building blocks in creating an artistic entity; it becomes his task to convey, by the use of seemingly

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<sup>a</sup> Certain arpeggiated passages denote 'the sea'; certain rippling passages denote a 'bubbling brook'; castanets denote 'Spanish'; a dominant 7<sup>th</sup> chord is going to be followed by a tonic, 6-3 or subdominant chord; and so on.



distracting images of instrumentalists playing and conductors emoting, the ways in which those structural devices have been used to construct the entity.

The language of music is expressed through the interpretation of the printed notes on the page. It follows that any director who wished fully to understand what players and conductors in non-theatrical performances were trying to convey had to be able to read music. As programmes became more complex and the viewers became more sophisticated and demanding, the need to read music ever more fluently became essential. Salter's insistence that directors of non-theatrical music performances were musically trained may have been brutal for the non-musical staff members who were in the department when he arrived but later experience showed that he was prescient of the needs of future audiences. Even those directors who joined the department with a partly developed ability to read complex music scores, like Gavin and myself, became established partly because of their determination to perfect the skill as quickly as possible.

The method of recruitment of directors in the field of presenting music performance on television was at first haphazard and developed slowly until the choice was narrowed to considering only those with established musical knowledge and skill. In 1936 Gerald Cock had more important priorities in his choice of suitable directors for the television service than their practical knowledge of music. He was only able to recruit four staff directors, though he showed skill in choosing two front-of-camera presenters with production abilities and two senior administrators who were also able to develop directorial skills in the studios. With classical music representing less than 10% of his output it is hardly surprising that the ability to present this art was not high on his list of priorities. One of his directors, Thomas, was familiar with music performed on the stage and it may be surmised that his skill in this area and Bower's skill in drama presentation permeated through the service and led to the high quality of opera presentation that was apparent from soon after the start of television broadcasting. Bate's knowledge of ballet was one of the factors behind his promotion to programme production in 1937 and, again, it may be surmised that his presentations of this branch of the arts led the small group of producers to note what worked and what didn't; Munro seems to have been the most perceptive in this. Before and after the war the directors still seemed to be groping



in the fog and by 1950 the standards demanded were such that the pioneers Bate and Munro were no longer able to cope: a new generation was recruited by the fire-brand Cecil McGivern and his departmental heads. There was now recognition that professional qualifications or experience gained outside the BBC were going to be necessary for this new generation. Only Simpson, promoted from within the BBC, was unqualified musically and this would become the normal method of finding new directors for the future: a small number were promoted internally without formal musical qualification but many of the intake of successful directors from 1950 onwards could demonstrate either academic or workplace abilities in the field of art music performance gained outside the BBC.

The use of musically qualified directors led to a progressive change in emphasis in the way music was presented. The best directors in all three areas – opera, ballet and non-theatrical music – developed an ability to involve the viewers in what was happening on the musical stage, whether in a theatre, a concert hall or a television studio. The viewer as a passive observer gradually ceased to be an option for the music director; the objective of the successful director was to involve the viewer as a participant either within the opera or ballet set, or on the concert platform.

Foy was not a part of this ‘progress’. She learned early the lesson embodied in the first paragraph of this section: if you want to make programmes whose popularity could be guaranteed, only use top, preferably charismatic, artists; if possible, only show works from the central repertoire. That way she gained a reputation, among viewers and some critics in the popular press, for quality programmes quite at variance with the assessments made of her by her colleagues and from analysis undertaken for this thesis. She developed an extremely static form of directing in which the pictures distracted from, and added to, the performance as little as possible. She took some time to become recognised and to settle into her role as a television director possessing public esteem: paradoxically it was during her difficult years with Salter as her head of department that the viewers showed their earliest appreciation for her approach. For the ten years from 1958 to 1968 her leisurely and undemanding style of passive directing was liked by the viewers; with the arrival of more dynamic directors in the late 1960s, her style seems to have become regarded as old-fashioned and dull. By the time of her retirement,



appreciation of her programmes was lagging well behind the appreciation of the programmes of her younger colleagues.

What has been very noticeable from this research is that the skills of many directors seemed to follow the shape of the traditional statistical bell-shaped curve: at the start of their careers it took time for them to gain skills and to become appreciated; in the middle of their careers, if they managed to survive the early learning period, their work became widely admired; at the end of their careers they started being regarded as left-over anachronisms from a previous generation. This happened to Munro, Bate, Simpson, Foa, Cartier, Todds and Foy. Dale had her career as a studio director cut short while still at the top of the 'bell' while Large, Burton, Greenberg and I were still at the top of our respective 'bells' at the end date of this thesis. What is also clear is that these 'bells' overlapped and the younger directors were able to get their initial inspiration from the outgoing directors who were still in post and not yet into terminal artistic senility.

Salter set out his own polemical views on the ways of presenting art music performance in the fields of non-theatrical music and opera in a lecture from 1959 (?) and its companion but unpublished paper given to me during the course of his extensive interview for this thesis. Those views are discussed in greater detail above. What is clear is that much of what he said gets to the foundations of good music presentation: the director needs to understand the construction and detail of the music being presented with an equal insight to that shown by the performers. If he doesn't he won't be respected by those performers and he won't be appreciated by his audience. The director needs to manipulate his pictures in such a way that the viewer is barely aware of the technique being used but the viewer's understanding is being illuminated by the director's visual insights – Salter used the analogy of seeing a person's lips moving during conversation. Dale came to many of the same conclusions for ballet in interviews with journals; in the interview given for this thesis; and in the results on the screen: without a professional insight into choreography, which includes an understanding of movement and groupings, the director has little chance of communicating the essence of the performance.



The decline in the amount of art music performance on BBC Television as a percentage of total output started in 1955, partly as a result of the elitism shown by Salter. Belatedly Lionel Salter concluded his paper *The Presentation of Music on Television* (1959?) with this paragraph:

What of the future? Unless television is to slide into the morass of facile, superficial, unthinking Admass entertainment – and this has been seen to happen in the United States – we must make every effort to ensure that intellectual and artistic programmes find sufficient representation. So far the former – programmes of informed comment, discussion and investigation – have found readier acceptance with planners and public than the latter, which demand enlightened professional guidance. But I am hopeful that in the field of music the public's response will encourage the televising of more concerts, recitals and operas; and I look forward to the day when the repertoire can be widened, and time allowed to experiment with new forms of presentation idiomatic to this most stimulating and powerful of mediums.<sup>486</sup>

It may be too late for Salter's vision to be realised. In 2002 Robin Lough, now an eminent and talented director of classical music performance programmes, summarised the reasons for the ever-increasing dearth of talent in this field:

...we music directors learned most of our skills not from training courses and textbooks but from watching and working closely with other good directors...with the phasing out of training attachments and holiday relief work, there are now far fewer opportunities for aspiring music directors and this, I think, is why so few of them exist in the generation [which is following] us.<sup>487</sup>



## GLOSSARY OF MUSICAL TERMS

(Most of the following definitions are condensed from *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (ed. Stanley Sadie; London; Macmillan; 1980))

**Aria** – a distinct solo song with a clear beginning and end within an opera, oratorio or cantata.

**Ballet** – generally taken to mean professional theatre dancing.

**Baroque music** – music written roughly in the period 1650 – 1740.

**Bridge (instrumental)** – a wedge or bar inserted between the strings and belly of string instruments. Its purpose is to lift the strings so that a performer's fingers can press down on the string to vary the tuning of notes being played. The design of bridges varies considerably from solid bridges in guitars and lutes (and strung keyboard instruments) to elaborate cutaway structures found on members of the violin family.

**Canon** – a compositional technique in which the same melody is repeated in displaced counterpoint against itself – the round is a simple type of canon.

**Cantata** – a work for one or more voices with instrumental accompaniment.

**Chamber Music** – music for a small ensemble of solo instruments.

**Chorale** – the congregational hymn of the German Protestant church service.

**Classical music** – music written roughly in the period 1740 – 1810.

**Coda** – *literally 'tail'* – the last part of a piece or melody, by implication added onto the end of a standard musical form.

**Concertante** – concerto-like.

**Concerto** – an instrumental work which maintains contrast between an orchestral ensemble and a solo or small group of instruments.

**Crescendo** – getting louder.

**Da capo** – *literally 'from the head'* – a type of movement in which the opening section is followed by a contrasting middle section and then a repeat of the opening section: in shorthand 'ABA'.

**Decrescendo** – getting quieter.

**Fugue** – a composition, or compositional technique, in which imitative counterpoint involving one main theme is the most important device.

**Non-programme music** – a non-standard term used by George Barnes to characterise music in which there is no clear descriptive narrative.

**Opera** – musical dramatic works in which the actors sing some or all of their parts.

**Oratorio** – an extended musical setting of a sacred text made up of dramatic, narrative and contemplative elements.

**Ostinato** – *literally 'obstinate'* – a passage of music in which a pattern is repeated many times in succession while other musical elements are continually changing.



**Overture** – a piece of music of moderate length, either introducing a dramatic work or intended for concert performance.

**Programme Music** – music in which the composer attempts to illustrate a pre-defined descriptive narrative.

**Recital** – a musical performance by a solo performer, sometimes with instrumental accompaniment.

**Romantic music** – music written roughly in the period 1810 – 1900.

**Rondo** – a musical form in which the first section recurs between subsidiary sections: in shorthand 'ABACA...A'.

**Scherzo** – a movement in triple time generally of a light and swift character.

**Sonata** – a general term used to denote a piece of instrumental music usually consisting of several movements.

**Sonata form** – an important musical form from the Classical period to the 20th century. The form is that of a single movement which aims to develop a musical argument. This is often articulated in three main sections: the 'exposition' in which the main themes are stated using contrasting tonal centres and musical material; the 'development' in which the themes are manipulated; and the 'recapitulation' in which the main themes are reprised with the tonal centres changed to emphasise the 'home' key. These sectional divisions developed and modified considerably as the form itself expanded through the 19th and 20th Centuries.

**Strophic songs** – songs in which the words are laid out in verses, generally of the same length and metre. Strophic songs are generally, but by no means invariably, set to the same melody in each verse.

**Symphony** – a term, together with its adjective 'symphonic', now normally taken to signify an extended work for orchestra.

**Ternary form** – a work in three parts with the structure ABA – or, since the repeat of A is often modified, better expressed as ABA'. The work may also have a *coda*.

**Timbre** – the tonal quality of a sound. When the same note is played by two different instruments or combination of instruments, the different qualities of the perceived sounds are the *timbres*.

**Transition passage** – a linking piece of music between two well-defined sections of a work.

**Trouser role** – a role in opera in which a male character is sung by a female singer.



## **APPENDIX I MUSIC PERFORMANCE PROGRAMMES 1936-1982**

**Note:** This appendix contains a summary of the most noteworthy programmes in each of the years of televised music performance programmes covered by this thesis.

In 1950 regular weekly meetings to discuss programmes were instituted by the Director of Television. They were known by various titles, but 'Programme Review Board' has been used as a generic.

In 1952 Audience Research Department instigated the first measurement of audience response to all programmes, after two years of assessing the response to selected programmes. These responses were again called by a variety of names but the generic 'Reaction Index' and its associated abbreviation RI have been used. It was generally felt that any programme gaining an RI above 75 was exceptionally good. Some programmes gaining an RI below 40 are worthy of investigation to see what it was that displeased viewers, but was not so displeasing as to make them turn off the television. (In the latter case their views would not have registered in the audience research report.) After the opening of Independent Television at the end of 1955, the fact that viewers had a choice meant that very low RIs became much less frequent. The existence of greater numbers of programmes with low RIs in the period 1950-55 is not to be taken as an indication that more programmes before 1956 were of a low standard – only that people with no choice were more likely to continue watching programmes they positively detested.

Audience figures for BBC-2 started being collected from 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1965.

From July 1970 to June 1973 the BBC changed its method of measuring audience response and RIs were not published for this period. A fuller description of the system is to be found in the list of programmes for 1970.

In April 1982 the two separate systems used by the BBC's audience research department and JICTAR, used by Independent Television, were combined into a jointly funded research system called BARB. Unfortunately for this thesis, from April until December 1982 BARB does not appear to have published Reaction Indices (or Appreciation Indices, as they are called under BARB).

The citations of the Programme Review Boards and audience research are not generally given separately but are to be found on the microfilms of the programme review boards and the daily barometers respectively, all held at the BBC's Written Archive Centre.

The name in brackets after the programme title is the director, if known, or '?' if unknown. If two names are given, they are director/producer respectively. My surname has been used in this bracketed reference where appropriate but the words 'I' or 'me' when I was mentioned by name in quoted or paraphrased text.

'Noteworthy programmes' in this appendix are those which received noteworthy comment on the direction at programme review boards or received Reaction Indices outside the normal range of 50 – 75.

Until 1952 and the introduction of RIs the description of noteworthy programmes is discursive and based on anecdotal evidence.



An asterisk indicates a programme that still exists in the BBC's Film and Videotape Library.

<sup>NFA</sup> indicates that a programme has been transferred to the National Film Archive.

## 1936

There were 14 music broadcasts in 1936. The total duration was nearly three hours. Almost half were repeated, generally as a second performance on the same day. There were five dance programmes, one concert, two operatic programmes and six recitals.

### Noteworthy programmes

The experimental broadcasts to *Radiolympia* in August and September 1936 included two examples of music performance programmes, both of them recitals by the singer Helen McKay, accompanied by Henry Bronkhurst. The official opening of the television service was in November 1936. In the remaining two months of 1936 there were four recitals, six dance programmes including a masque called *Job*, a movement of a Mozart piano concerto and the longest music programme attempted, a substantial excerpt from Coates' musical *Mr. Pickwick* lasting 35 minutes.

## 1937

There were 104 broadcasts of music performance in 1937, the first full year of television broadcasting. There were 46 repeat performances. The total duration was 26 hours of originations and 17 hours of repeats out of a total output of rather more than 600 hours of broadcasting, representing 7% of output.<sup>488</sup> Fifty-four of the programmes were recitals, generally no longer than ten minutes in length. There were 20 programmes devoted to dance performance, ten concerts, 14 of opera or operetta and 53 recitals.

### Noteworthy programmes

Because of the general feeling that audiences would not be able to concentrate on programmes of longer than 20 minutes in length, there were only twelve programmes of greater length, ten of them operas or operettas, two of them ballets.

The most important music performances were a broadcast of Mozart's A major piano concerto on 6<sup>th</sup> March with Lisa Minghetti, which appears to have been the first complete piano concerto on television. There is no producer credited with this programme. Thomas was responsible for two cut-down operas by John Gay, *The Beggar's Opera* on 18<sup>th</sup> May and *Damon and Phylida* on 15<sup>th</sup> June. He also produced A. P. Herbert's comic opera *Derby Day* that had two performances on 6<sup>th</sup> July and four further performances over the next twelve months. Thomas produced Pergolesi's short opera *La Serva Padrona* for its two performances in September and Mehul's *The Good Young Man* for performances in October. Munro produced a programme with the Vic-Wells Ballet featuring Fonteyn and Helpmann in May while Fonteyn appeared in two programmes accompanied by Sidonie Goossens in March and June, both produced by Munro. One of the concerts was of the Trapp Singers of Salzburg, who would achieve fame many years later as the family featured in *The Sound of Music*.

## 1938

There was a slight reduction in the number of music performance programmes in 1938 at 81, while the number of repeats was sharply down from 46 to 29. The amount of



material transmitted increased slightly from 26 hours to 27 hours, while the duration of repeats was little changed at nearly 16 hours. The total hours of broadcasting in 1938 was over 800;<sup>489</sup> music performance programmes represented 5% of output. There were 24 programmes devoted to dance performance, 31 concerts (including 26 relays of Promenade concerts in sound only), twelve of opera or operetta and 44 recitals.

#### Noteworthy programmes

Programmes were getting longer as fears over eyestrain in viewers receded. For the first time since television broadcasts began, five music programmes of over 60 minutes were transmitted, all of them operatic or with vocal interludes.

The opera broadcasts were Bower's productions of the second act of Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* and Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*; Thomas' productions of Handel's *Acis and Galatea* and Sheridan's *The Duenna* with music by Alfred Reynolds; and Munro's production of Leoncavallo's *I Pagliacci*. Other notable broadcasts included Joy Newton and Frederick Ashton in Munro's production of Bliss' ballet *Checkmate* with another composer, Constant Lambert, conducting the Television Orchestra. For Christmas Bower produced an unlikely offering: *Cinderella*, 'an opera by Spike Hughes.'

One important innovation was the relaying in sound only of five of Toscanini's concerts with the BBC Symphony Orchestra from the London Music Festival, also broadcast on either the National or Regional radio networks. These were followed by 26 sound only relays from the Promenade Concerts, not all of which were available on radio.

#### 1939

From the eight months broadcasts before the enforced closedown, it would appear that there was planned to be a modest increase in the amount of music performance televised in 1939. Up to the end of August there had been 24 hours of music originations. This is equivalent to an annual figure of 36 hours compared to 27 hours the previous year. Repeats were little changed at 13 hours, equivalent to 19 over a full year. There were 24 programmes devoted to dance performance (including one in rehearsal on the day of close-down), ten concerts, five in an early *mixed extracts genre*, four of opera or operetta and 33 recitals.

#### Noteworthy programmes

The major broadcasts were of Tchaikovsky's ballet *The Sleeping Princess* with Margot Fonteyn and Robert Helpmann produced by Munro; and the operas *Arlecchino* by Busoni and *The Immortal Hour* by Boughton produced by Thomas.

1939 saw the first breakout from the pattern of recitals, concerts, dance, operas and masques that had been in place since 1936. Bate produced the first of his *The Conductor Speaks*, the first music workshops on British television, with Sir Henry Wood; and *From Bach to Handel* which was Bate's attempt to bring what would become the *mixed extracts genre* to music and dance. Bate also experimented with several broadcasts called *The Fantastic Garden* that was his creation of a free-flowing entertainment that also contained singing and dancing. Bate's other contribution to television innovation was *Schubert Night*, which would now be described as 'faction in music': a true event was embroidered with imaginative creativity to make a musical entertainment built around some of the composer's songs.



Four music programmes that had been scheduled for transmission, and were presumably in rehearsal, were lost because of the shutdown on 1st September. These were a short ballet featuring Wilma Vanne; a closedown recital by the pianist Ena Baga; the third edition of *The Conductor Speaks* with Sir Eugene Goossens and the Television Orchestra; and a ballet called *Swans* that was to have featured Anton Dolin and Wendy Toye.

## 1946

(Note: until the 1952/3 annual accounts, a breakdown of television broadcasts by type was not published for BBC Television. The figures given below for 1946-1948 inclusive are based on *Radio Times*, scripts and similar sources. No claim is made for their comprehensiveness.)

The aggregate duration of arts performance programmes in 1946 was nearly 23 hours out of a total of a little under 650 hours broadcasting. Arts performance programmes represent 3.5% of the total, a figure typical of the years until the advent of independent television. There were estimated to be between 15000 and 25000 television 'receiving sets' in operation when broadcasting resumed in June.<sup>490</sup> For the first time viewers were charged for receiving television broadcasts. The combined radio and television licence fee was set at £2 from June 1946, compared to £1 for a radio only licence.<sup>491</sup> There were 21 hours of music performance and two hours of repeats of music performance broadcast during the year. These included 13 dance programmes, two *mixed extracts genre*, four operatic programmes and 52 recitals.

### Noteworthy programmes

When television broadcasts resumed in 1946, there was little change from the pre-war schedules in the types of arts programmes being broadcast. On the first day of the resumption, 7<sup>th</sup> June 1946, one of the stalwart genres of pre-war television was represented. Generally called *Music Makers*, (or *Music Maker* or *Music-Maker*) this was an instrumental recital used to fill the final ten to 15 minutes of broadcasting before the sound-only news summary that preceded the playing of the National Anthem. In the seven months of 1946 during which television programmes were being broadcast, there were no fewer than 52 recitals, not including the occasional 'recitals' by variety artists such as the cabaret singer Irene Prador. Only three of the recitals were not of the closedown variety, all of them by eminent musicians. These were peak viewing appearances by the French composer/pianist Francis Poulenc, the influential violinist Max Rostal and the operatic tenor Beniamino Gigli. The artists in the closedown recitals varied from the unknown to the world famous. Among the latter, apparently happy with their 'ten or 15 minutes of television fame' were Richard Tauber, William Primrose, Moura Lympany, the Griller Quartet, Pierre Fournier, Malcuzyński and Suggia.

In 1946 there were four arts performance programmes of mixed content using instrumentalists and dancers, including one devoted to Negro dance, *Ballet negres*.

Of the remaining 16 art performance programmes, twelve were ballets. Three of the programmes were operettas specially written by Claud Jenkins using music by, respectively, Johann Strauss II, Offenbach and Delibes. The last of the 16 arts performance programmes was a substantially complete *Beggar's Opera*, lasting 90 minutes, broadcast on 26<sup>th</sup> November.



## 1947

The arts performance programmes in 1947 represent nearly 3% of the total broadcasting hours. There were 43 hours of music performance and six hours of repeats of music performance broadcast during the year. These included 15 dance programmes, three concerts, one *mixed extracts genre*, eleven operatic programmes, 75 recitals and three workshops.

### Noteworthy programmes

1947 was notable for including the broadcast of five substantial operatic excerpts and four complete operas. There were as yet no complete classical ballets shown, but on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1947, BBC Television made its first live visit to the Royal Opera House to show a double bill of Frederick Ashton's *Symphonic Variations* and Leonide Massine's *The Three Cornered Hat*.

This same year saw the first broadcast of a *Henry Wood Promenade Concert*, when the last night was shown live, conducted, as was the fashion, by the four conductors who had borne the brunt of the preceding season, Boult, Sargent, (Stanford) Robinson and Cameron.

Once more, the only producers credited in *Radio Times* for the studio transmissions were Bate and Munro. Munro had a major nervous breakdown in July and Bate was on his own thereafter. There are two programmes in *Radio Times* on 1st August with Munro credited as producer. This is presumably because the magazine went to press before his breakdown.

In 1947 Bate produced the first of what was a new departure for post-war television, an occasional series devoted to a single concerto, generally under the title *Concerto*. The first post-war televised concert was the *Last Night of the Proms* mentioned above. Its success may have encouraged McGivern to ask for more 'straight' music and since orchestral music was regarded with suspicion, the concerto, with its 'struggle' between soloist and orchestra, would be natural for television. The first (studio) concerto broadcast was the Haydn cello concerto in D, with Thelma Reiss as soloist and Eric Robinson conducting 'The Concert Orchestra'. Seven days later was a further innovation, with Boyd Neel conducting 'An orchestral concert for children', again produced by Bate.

One of Bate's two major series for television, *Ballet for Beginners*, was mentioned in Section 5.4. *Ballet for Beginners* was an idea of McGivern's. He had noted the popularity of dance on television, but also the incomprehension among a substantial majority of the viewers. He therefore determined to have a short experimental series in which ballet was explained to this uncomprehending majority. The programmes were first broadcast in 1947 with a script written by Felicity Gray, delivered by Peggy van Praagh and produced by Bate. So successful were they, that, as the sale of TV sets was accelerating, McGivern took the opportunity to repeat the series, now with Gray both writing and presenting. Not only was the series revamped and transmitted at peak viewing times, never later than 2100, the programmes were frequently shortened to 30 minutes and repeated in the following day's *Children's Hour*. A new series of *Ballet for Beginners* was produced each year until 1953 (when Bate was producer and Rogers the director) after which it appears to have been discontinued. The children's producer,



Naomi Capon, produced a very similar series of three programmes in 1954 called *Steps into Ballet*, this time written and presented by Peggy van Praagh.

## 1948

The amount of music performance on BBC Television in 1948 fell to 41 hours. At 2.5% of the total broadcasting time, it was the lowest figure for any year before the arrival of Independent Television in 1955. There were 31 hours of music performance and ten hours of repeats of music performance broadcast during the year. These included 23 dance programmes, six concerts, five *mixed extracts genre*, six operatic programmes, 25 recitals and four workshops.

### Noteworthy programmes

In 1948 there was a major policy change, probably instigated by the newly arrived Cecil McGivern. Before the war the cinema newsreel makers – British Movietone and Gaumont-British News – had allowed their newsreels to be shown occasionally on BBC Television. After the war this was no longer allowed. In 1948, therefore, the BBC set up its own newsreel department, at first with fewer than ten employees, but soon expanded to more than 50. These *Television Newsreels* were placed in the 9.40/9.45 p.m. slot, immediately before the sound only news bulletin, which had hitherto been the domain of the *Music Makers* closedown recitals. The number of closedown recitals plummeted – there were 74 in 1947, half of them in the *Music Makers* series, there were 14 in 1948 and only three in 1949, of which two were by television favourites, Pouishnoff and Moura Lympny, whose recitals normally occupied early evening slots.

The *Last Night of the (Winter) Proms* was broadcast on 17<sup>th</sup> January 1948, but until the arrival of more sensitive outside broadcast cameras, it was to be the last visit to the Proms for five years.

Bate was incredibly busy in 1948. He produced four operas, seven major dance programmes, three *mixed extracts genres*, and four workshops. This is an average of a major production every three weeks. It is to be assumed that the pressure on Bate was recognised by McGivern, since it was in 1948 that a former television cameraman who had become a studio manager (in modern parlance, a floor manager) was given the chance to direct some music programmes. This was Christian Simpson who was soon to become admired as the most visually brilliant of all television directors, not just those in the field of arts broadcasting.

It is possibly because of the loss of Munro in July 1947 and the consequent shortage of music producers that the amount of music performance origination on BBC Television in 1948 fell to fewer than 33 hours.

There were a couple of notable novelties in 1948. Firstly the broadcast of the whole of Puccini's *La Bohème*, presented by the New London Opera Company, from the Cambridge Theatre on 19<sup>th</sup> April. The Cambridge had been the venue for a number of operatic outside broadcasts since soon after the resumption, but these had always comprised excerpts, usually one or two acts, rather than whole operas. There is a joint credit for two producers, Campbell Logan of Outside Broadcasts, and Bate of Music Programmes. It was also notable because the normal start time of evening television, 8 p.m., was brought forward to 7.30 p.m. to fit in with the theatre's start time.



The second notable outside broadcast was of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra under Furtwangler performing Beethoven's *Eroica Symphony* in the second half of a concert at the Royal Albert Hall on 2<sup>nd</sup> October. This performance does not appear to have been telerecorded. This is not the first appearance of a foreign orchestra on British television. Toscanini conducting the NBC Symphony Orchestra had appeared in a 20 minute excerpt from the film *Hymn of the Nations* on the afternoon of 6<sup>th</sup> July 1947 – but the 2<sup>nd</sup> October broadcast was the first appearance in a live concert by a foreign orchestra.

In 1948 there was the first post-war example of what would become an important genre in television music performance – the orchestral performance workshop. In this type of programme a musician – generally the conductor – would dissect a piece of music to show how it had been put together and then give a performance of the whole work as the climax of the programme. The first series of four programmes of this type were called *Meet the Orchestra* and were presented by Sir Malcolm Sargent in the fortnight beginning 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1948. The series was produced by Bate.

## 1949

In 1949 music, dance and opera broadcasts amounted to 39 hours of airtime, some 2.8% of the total hours of broadcasting. This figure does not include outside broadcasts, where music relays are not listed separately.<sup>492</sup> There were 23 hours of music performance and three hours of repeats of music performance broadcast during the year. These included 16 dance programmes, six concerts, one *mixed extracts genre*, one operatic programme, 16 recitals and three workshops.

### Noteworthy programmes

Music broadcasts in 1949 were very much in the same mould as previous years. There were a few recitals under the generic title *Music Makers*. Stage works included several substantial studio dance programmes, including four featuring visiting French companies and three short operas. The latter included a studio production of Leoncavallo's *I Pagliacci* by Eric Fawcett that was taken to Paris as a stage production after its second transmission on 9<sup>th</sup> January 1950. There were several studio performances of popular concertos, including a Chopin piano concerto as part of the centenary of his death. The Chopin centenary celebrations on television also included a new production by Simpson of the ballet *Les Sylphides*. There was little by way of innovation in 1949.

## 1950

In 1950 music, dance and opera broadcasts amounted to 43 hours of airtime, some 2.6% of the total hours of broadcasting. This figure does not include outside broadcasts, where music relays are not listed separately.<sup>493</sup> There were 34 hours of music performance and three hours of repeats of music performance broadcast during the year. These included 19 dance programmes, five concerts, seven operatic programmes, eleven recitals and five workshops.

### Noteworthy programmes

1950 saw a number of innovations as well as imaginative excursions in existing genres. Possibly the most important innovation was Bate's post-war revival of his series *The Conductor Speaks*. In the style of a 30-minute workshop, Sir Adrian Boult introduced and conducted favourite works. It was to be the first of over a dozen programmes in this



revived genre that Bate would produce over the next seven years. The series featured conductors as diverse as George Melachrino, Stokowski, Sir John Barbirolli (twice), Sir Arthur Bliss introducing and conducting his own music, and Sir Adrian Boult re-appearing at what became the normal duration of the programme, 45 minutes. The Stokowski (7<sup>th</sup> May 1954) and Barbirolli editions (20<sup>th</sup> November 1952) were telerecorded and have survived in the BBC film archives.

Foa made his debut in 1950 with a recital by Tito Gobbi and then plunged straight into opera production – Pergolesi's *La Serva Padrona*, Bizet's *L'Arlesienne* (strictly speaking, a pastoral drama with incidental music), and Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* and *Il Tabarro*. All were performed in English, three with translated titles – *Madam the Maid*, *Madam Butterfly* and *The Cloak*.

1950 also saw the first Benjamin Britten opera to be televised, *The Little Sweep*, which forms part of *Let's Make an Opera* written the previous year. *Let's Make an Opera* is unusual in that the audience have to participate. During the first act the performers on stage and the audience in the theatre learn four songs that are performed in the second act. The producer of this broadcast, Henderson of Outside Broadcast department made sure that the television audience was able to participate by encouraging them to learn the songs during the transmission of the first act.

Scientific viewer research started in 1950. At first programmes were assessed by two figures: the Reaction Index (RI) which measured from 0 to 100 the pleasure a programme gave the viewers, and an audience figure which showed the number of viewers per 100 television sets sold. For the purposes of this research project the RIs are the more important (see Section 8.3). In 1950 the highest RIs were recorded for Sidney Harrison playing the Schumann piano concerto (74; Bate), *The Conductor Speaks* (69; Bate), *Gay Rosalinda* (69; Caldwell of Light Entertainment Department) and the second half of *Madam Butterfly* (64; Foa). The lowest RIs were recorded for the satirical pianist Betove in *Music Makers* (27; Bate) and experimental dance in *British Dance Theatre* (37; Simpson)

## 1951

In 1951 music, dance and opera broadcasts amounted to 58 hours of airtime, 3.2% of the total hours of broadcasting.<sup>494</sup> There were 33 hours of music performance and ten hours of repeats of music performance broadcast during the year. These included eleven dance programmes, seven concerts, two *mixed extracts genre*, seven operatic programmes, 16 recitals and three workshops.

### Noteworthy programmes

The most important innovations in 1951 were the first *Music for You* to which section 5.8 was devoted.

1951 also saw the first broadcast from Glyndebourne. For this broadcast of Mozart's *Così fan tutte* on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1951 the producer was George R. Foa, making a remarkably ambitious Outside Broadcast debut as a relatively inexperienced director.

*Suite for Strings and Dancers* (Simpson; *Dancing Times* March 1951) Some novel and some hackneyed effects.

*The Little Swan* (Programme board 1.3.51) Excellent programme.

*The Fairy Queen of Wu* (Bate; Programme board 22.3.51) Production criticised.

*Les Sylphides* (Simpson; *Dancing Times* May 1951) Design and romantic atmosphere of stage version 'preserved as far as possible.'



*Victoria de los Angeles* (Foa 17.5.51 *The Listener* 28.6.51 Harold Hobson) 'Miss Victoria de los Angeles introduction to television was impressive. [She] just stood up in front of the camera, looking very serious...nodded her head graciously from time to time and sang. There were no camera tricks.'

*Choreography for Cameras* (Simpson; Programme board 24.5.51) Programme disappointing

*The Consul* (Fawcett; Programme board 31.5.51) Fawcett's handling was commended.

*Le Pavillon d'Armide* (Simpson; *Daily Mail* 21/7/51) 'Television ballet is rapidly becoming an art form in its own right. [Simpson's] production was superbly stylish.'

*Music Maker: Helga Mott* (Programme board 6.9.51) Not considered successful. Too fussy.

*La Bohème* (Foa 9.9.51 *The Listener* 20.9.51 Philip Hope-Wallace) Considerable praise for this studio production.

*Pilar Lopez* (Simpson; *Dancing Times* Nov. 1951) 'The programme...received excellent treatment from Christian Simpson.'

*La Belle Helene* (Foa 25.11.51 *The Listener* 29.11.51 Philip Hope-Wallace) Much criticism of this production.

## 1952

In 1952 music, dance and opera broadcasts amounted to 66 hours of airtime, a small increase on the previous year, 3.4% of the total hours of broadcasting.<sup>495</sup> There were 44 hours of music performance and nine hours of repeats of music performance broadcast during the year. These included 13 dance programmes, four concerts, eight *mixed extracts genre*, seven operatic programmes, 23 recitals and nine workshops.

### Noteworthy programmes

For 1952 the output was very much the same mixture as in 1951 – *Music for You*, *The Conductor Speaks*, *Ballet for Beginners*, seven operas, a substantial number of ballets including several produced for *Children's Hour* by Naomi Capon. Among the small number of novelties were two analysis programmes with Vic Oliver as conductor/analyser. Oliver was a wealthy comedian who had formed his own orchestra. His image as a comedian detracted from his very real talents as a conductor and musician; in many ways he would have been more suitable than Eric Robinson as presenter for *Music for You*. Both analysis programmes were concerned with Tchaikovsky tone poems. The first was *Romeo and Juliet*, produced by Simpson, and the second was *Francesca da Rimini*, produced by Foy. This innovation would not lead to any further programmes of this sort by Oliver.

1952 saw the first relay from the Edinburgh International Festival: music relays from the Edinburgh Festival became a regular feature of television's output.

*The Sleeping Beauty* (Simpson 11.1.52 *The Listener* 24.1.52 Philip Hope-Wallace) Modified praise for this studio production.

*Les Sylphides* (Bate; *Dancing Times* March 1952) 'The production was outstandingly successful

*Concerto* (Simpson; Programme board 14.2.52) Very interesting indeed. 'TV can encompass more than some had thought'

*Rigoletto* (Foa 17.2.52 *The Listener* 28.2.52 Philip Hope-Wallace) Condemned the production as '...the funniest *Rigoletto* I have seen...' since a near lynching at Deauville les bains.

*Faust* (Foa; Programme board 4.12.52 and 11.12.52) General discussion of opera on TV. '...not achieving the visual excitement necessary to compensate for the lack of theatrical atmosphere.'

(*The Listener* 18.12.52 Philip Hope-Wallace) Well-liked production.



## 1953

In 1953 music, dance and opera broadcasts amounted to 61 hours of airtime, a small decline on the previous year to only 2.8% of the total hours of broadcasting.<sup>496</sup> There were 49 hours of music performance and six hours of repeats of music performance broadcast during the year. These included ten dance programmes, 13 concerts, six *mixed extracts genre*, seven operatic programmes, 23 recitals and 15 workshops.

### Noteworthy programmes

Two Christmas novelties in 1953 that would become 'fixtures' were the first British broadcast of Menotti's Christmas opera *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, directed by Simpson, and Handel's *Messiah* conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent, directed by Bate. *Amahl* was to be broadcast for each of the next three Christmas seasons and revived periodically over the next 20 years. Sargent's gargantuan Christmas broadcasts of excerpts from *Messiah* from the Huddersfield Town Hall would become something of a fixture for the next four years.

It was also in 1953 that another regular programme made its first appearance on television, a relay of part of *The First Night of the Proms* on 25<sup>th</sup> July. This first broadcast started at 7.25 p.m., just before the concert started at 7.30 p.m., and the whole of the first half of the concert was televised: Elgar's *Cockaigne* overture and Moiseiwitch playing Rachmaninov's second piano concerto. In future years, the distaste of McGivern and Wright for televising purely orchestral music meant that television only broadcast the concerto that invariably was the highlight in the first half of the concert.

*The House of Cards* (Simpson 11.5.53) RI 35

*The Bridal Day* (Simpson 5.6.53; *News Chronicle* 6.6.53) Needs a screen double the size. Too many tiny figures – the eye tires, so does the mind. (*The Times*, 8.6.53) Television is young and has much exploring to do. But O dear, O dear! RI 26

*Yehudi Menuhin* (Simpson 8.6.53 *Sunday Times* 14.6.53) '...the close-ups were not only distracting her attention from the music but made her feel she was prying too closely into private emotions. (*Daily Telegraph* 9.6.53) The higher fidelity of TV sound channels was most effectively demonstrated. But restless camera movement was distracting. The producer would have been better advised to do less camera juggling.'

*Glyndebourne: The Seraglio* (Foa; Programme board 6.8.53) All agreed this had been a first class programme with good picture quality.

*Edinburgh International Festival* (?; Programme board 3.9.53) '...expressed his appreciation of the camera work on Solomon concerto and also praised the handling of the violin concerto...'

*Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra* (?; 12.9.53) RI 80

*Ballet for Beginners* (Rogers, Bate; Programme board 8.10.53) '...improved décor, lighting, use of cameras etc. had been negated by a chaotic script. All agreed disappointing...'

*The Highland Fair* (Bate 15.9.53) RI 38

*The Medium* (Simpson 24.9.53) RI 36

*National Brass Band Championship* (Monger 17.10.53) RI 76

*Kirsten Flagstad* (Craxton; Programme board 22.10.53) 'All agreed an excellent programme.'

*Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet* (Capon; Programme board 22.10.53) 'All agreed very good'

*Braziliana* (Foy 15.11.53) RI 28



*Messiah* (Bate 16.12.53 *Huddersfield Daily Examiner*) 'Bate's direction was both skilful and imaginative, and he obtained a number of most effective shots from his three cameras...there was clever use of 'zoom' lens.' RI 77

## 1954

In 1954 music, dance and opera broadcasts amounted to 61 hours of airtime, the same as the previous year at 2.8% of the total hours of broadcasting.<sup>497</sup> There were 50 hours of music performance and three hours of repeats of music performance broadcast during the year. These included 14 dance programmes, eleven concerts, eight *mixed extracts genre*, nine operatic programmes, 28 recitals and eleven workshops.

### Noteworthy programmes

*Dark Sonnet* (Vance 2.2.54) RI 33

*Nostell Priory* (Burell-Davis; Programme board 4.2.54) OB programme and the quartet from the same venue the following night had been excellently handled.

*Spanish Dancing* (? 7.3.54) RI 37

*Music for You* (Fawcett; Programme board 18.3.54) An excellent programme. Studio atmosphere praised.

*Carmen* (Foa 25.3.54) (*The Listener*) Good review

*The Dreamers* (? 1.4.54) RI 26

*Dvorak Commemoration* (Craxton; Programme board 20.5.54) The excellent handling of this relay...was highly commended.

\**Swan Lake* (Simpson 9.6.54) (Programme board 10.6.54) ...strong criticism was expressed of the presentation.

*Music for You* (Fawcett 7.6.54) RI 76

*Cavalleria rusticana* (Foa 25.6.54) 'Foa is to be admired for his pertinacity with the presentation of opera rather than for his achievement. There was no evidence that the difficulties are being overcome.'

*Don Giovanni* (Craxton 25.7.54) (Philip Hope-Wallace review in *The Listener*) General criticism that the staging and stagy acting was unsuited to the television screen.

*Music for You* (Foy; Programme board 5.8.54) First class production RI 77

*Last Night of the Proms* (? 18.9.54) RI 76

*The Girl of the Golden West* (Foa 30.9.54; *Daily Telegraph* 1.10.54) 'The producer...contrived to make it more effective on the screen than he made the more popular *Carmen* and *Cavalleria rusticana*...'

*Celebrity concerts Arrau, Piatigorsky* (Foy; Programme board 7.10.54) Simple presentation was effective.

*Gioconda da Vito, Yehudi Menuhin* (Foy 13.10.54, 15.11.54) (Philip Hope-Wallace review in *The Listener*) Considerable praise for Foy's simple presentation. Foy 'refrained from jiggling the cameras round and about...'

*Jazz Session* (Simpson 29.11.54) RI 31

*Musique pour vous* (French TV service 11.12.54) RI 37

*Music for You* (Foy 13.12.54) RI 76

*Service of Lessons and Carols* (Smith 23.12.54) RI 76

## 1955

The output of music, dance and opera in 1955 was 102 hours, 4% of the total broadcast time.<sup>498</sup> There were 68 hours of music performance and four hours of repeats of music performance broadcast during the year. These included ten dance programmes, 37



concerts, 13 *mixed extracts genre*, nine operatic programmes, 27 recitals and two workshops.

### Noteworthy programmes

For the first eight months of 1955 the mixture was much the same as for 1952-4. Novelties included the first television appearance of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain from the Royal Festival Hall on 21st April. From September 1955 the schedules were substantially reorganised to compete with Independent Television, which started broadcasting in that month. This led to a substantial increase in the amount of music on BBC Television.

*The Nightbell* (Foa 21.3.55) (Programme board 24.3.55) Production good. RI 39

*The Message* (Simpson 8.4.55) (Programme board 14.4.55) Warmly commended. (*Dancing Times* May 1955) ‘...Simpson at his best. Action was contrasted with repose, general scene with telling detail...despite considerable camera movement and manipulation, at no point was the movement and flow disrupted.’

*The National Youth Orchestra* (Craxton 21.4.55) RI 78

*A Dinner Engagement* (Foa 16.5.55) RI 31

*Gilbert and Sullivan* (Bate 30.5.55) RI 76

*Clifford Curzon* (Simpson 29.5.55) (Philip Hope-Wallace review in *The Listener*) ‘...presented with marvellous tact and grace by Christian Simpson.’

*Music for You* (Foy 20.6.55) RI 77

*First Night of the Proms* (Craxton 23.7.55) (Philip Hope-Wallace review in *The Listener*) ‘The eye of the camera travelled about intelligently, under Antony Craxton’s guidance.’

\**Paul Tortelier* (Simpson 7.8.55) (Philip Hope-Wallace review in *The Listener*) Considerable praise for Simpson’s presentation of the artist’s performance.

*Music for You* (Foy 15.8.55) RI 76

*Concert Hour* (Craxton 4.9.55) RI 79

*Last Night of the Proms* (Craxton 17.9.55) RI 81

*Music at Ten* (Simpson 6.11.55) RI 76

*The Moscow State Folk Dance Company* (Simpson 27.11.55) RI 82 (Philip Hope-Wallace review in *The Listener*) Criticism of camera direction – moving cameras detracted from the dancers’ movements, diminishing them rather than enhancing them.

*Ballet Espagnol de Pilar Lopez* (Dale 11.12.55) (Philip Hope-Wallace review in *The Listener*) ‘This presentation on the screen by Margaret Dale was really triumphant; the best capturing of ballet I have seen for a very long time.’

*Messiah* (Bate 22.12.55) RI 81

*Music for You* (Foy 25.12.55) RI 79

## 1956

In 1956 the total output of music, dance and opera was 106 hours, slightly down compared to 1955 as a proportion of total broadcasting at 3.9%.<sup>499</sup> There were 94 hours of music performance and six hours of repeats of music performance broadcast during the year. These included twelve dance programmes, 56 concerts, 15 *mixed extracts genre*, nine operatic programmes, 39 recitals and two workshops.

### Noteworthy programmes



Programmes in 1956 showed little innovation but consolidated what had been produced previously. The regular series included *Concert Hour* on 34 Sunday afternoons, *Music at Ten* on 14 Sunday evenings and 13 *Music for You*. There were four prestige music programmes – *Mañana*, Arthur Benjamin's opera with a libretto partly written by George Foa, was given its world premier performance with Foa producing. There was a studio production by Foa of *La Bohème*. The ballet *Romeo and Juliet* by Prokofiev was shown in the form of a purchased Russian film. Perhaps the musical highlight of the year's television was Rudolf Cartier's studio production of Menotti's *The Saint of Bleeker Street*.

The pressures from Independent Television on the BBC schedules finally started to be felt by the end of 1956. In those areas where there was a choice of viewing – Independent Television spread slowly outwards from the main English metropolitan centres – the BBC's share of the audience had fallen to 28%. Salter was fighting a rearguard action to defend Music Department's output. He argued<sup>500</sup> for retaining a quarterly cycle of one major dance, one opera and one operetta on film. Of the operetta he said '...the last category should be included in our schedule...' presumably to stop Light Entertainment Department claiming it as theirs. In addition, he said, there should be one dance programme per month from the BBC's studios. Celebrity recitals, Max Jaffa concerts, weekly Sunday afternoon classical concert, *Music for You* and special programmes were also on his list of desirable retention.

It was all to no avail. McGivern had his knives out for programmes that included orchestral music.<sup>501</sup>

\**Mañana* (Foa 1.2.56) RI 35

*Music at Ten* (Simpson 13.5.56) RI 81

*La Bohème* (Foa 31.5.56) RI 80

*The Soviet Army Ensemble* (Simpson 1.7.56) RI 89

*Contrasts* (Rogers 8.7.56) RI 76

*Last Night of the Proms* (Thomas 15.9.56) RI 78

\**The Saint of Bleeker Street* (Cartier 4.10.56) Considerable pre-publicity (31 articles in the press cuttings in the BBC's Written Archives) and almost exclusively eulogistic reviews afterwards (48 articles in press cuttings). A typical review, from the 5<sup>th</sup> October issue of *The Times*, after praising the performances of the principals, said: '...Cartier's fluent production was on the same high level, discreet, yet strikingly imaginative in all sorts of apparently insignificant but nevertheless eloquent details.'

*Swan Lake* (Dale 21.10.56) RI 76 The press cuttings in the BBC's Written Archives contain 29 articles, mostly praising the broadcast. The only disappointment was that only the second act was televised.

*Music at Ten: Tortelier* (Simpson 9.12.56) (Philip Hope-Wallace review in *The Listener*) '...the playing was shown to you with a precision you might easily miss in a concert hall.'

*Music for You* (Foy 25.12.56) RI 79

## 1957

In 1957 the total output of music, dance and opera was 87 hours, sharply down compared to 1956 as a proportion of total broadcasting at 2.9%.<sup>502</sup> There were 86 hours of music performance and seven hours of repeats of music performance broadcast during the year, including those light music programmes originated by Music Department which are included in the Light Entertainment returns in the BBC



Handbook. These included eleven dance programmes, 50 concerts, 15 *mixed extracts genre*, eight operatic programmes and 56 recitals.

### Noteworthy programmes

McGivern was no longer convinced by orchestral music broadcasts on television. In a typically acerbic memo he refers to them as ‘...our programmes in total feel like stone-age television...’<sup>503</sup> McGivern should not be represented as some kind of Philistine in this – there was evidence that the audience was losing its enchantment with music on television, particularly for orchestral concerts. When hour-long Sunday afternoon concerts started in 1955, they regularly gained audiences of over two million viewers, very respectable figures by any measure. Two years later the audience had halved and while McGivern noted that ‘...even a 2% audience is getting on for 1,000,000 viewers, by no means a negligible number...’ he clearly felt other departments could achieve better for less.<sup>504</sup>

Even though output was declining by 1957 there were some notable broadcasts. Once again Rudolf Cartier was responsible for the plum transmission, Strauss’ *Salome* with Helga Pilarczyk as the eponymous and undraped necrophile. This production was unusual in one respect: the distinguished tenor Jon Vickers had been engaged to sing the part of John the Baptist. A few days before transmission he lost his voice and the only replacement available who had *Salome* in his repertory – Hasso Eschert – was unable to learn the English translation in time. He sang most of his part in German while the rest of the cast sang in English. Foa contributed Puccini’s *Madam Butterfly* and the annual visit to Glyndebourne was for Rossini’s *Le Comte Ory*. The only major ballet was Delibes’ *Coppélia* with Helpmann and Nerina, produced by Dale. 1957 also saw the acceptance of the first strand of art programmes devoted to jazz, *Jazz Session*, produced by Simpson and the trainee producer Arthur Langford.

\**William Walton* (Craxton 13.2.57) RI 38

*The Haunted Ballroom* (Simpson 22.2.57) (Review by J. C. Trewin in *The Listener*) Appreciative review.

*Madam Butterfly* (Foa 4.7.57) RI 76

*Those Wonderful Shows* (Rogers 10.7.57) RI 76

*Music at Teatime* (Foy 25.8.57) RI 82

*Royal Swedish Ballet* (Capon 27.8.57) RI 80 (Note: this *Children’s Hour* broadcast compares to the evening broadcast on 25.8.57 with Dale producing, which gained an RI of 74)

*Music for You* (Foy 1.10.57) RI 82

*Salome* (Cartier; Programme board 2.10.57) It was agreed that, despite the many difficulties encountered, and notwithstanding the unfavourable comments of some professional critics, the programme had been a landmark in the presentation of opera on television. The production was warmly commended.

*Music at Ten* (Simpson 20.10.57) RI 77

\**Coppélia* (Dale 27.10.57) RI 84 (Review by J. C. Trewin in *The Listener*) Warm praise for Dale’s ‘excitingly supple television terms.’

*Music at Ten* (Simpson 17.11.57) RI 76

*Music at Ten* (Simpson 15.12.57) RI 82

*Messiah* (Simpson 22.12.57) RI 76



## 1958

In 1958 the total output of music, dance and opera was 85 hours, down compared to 1957 as a proportion of total broadcasting at 2.7%.<sup>505</sup> There were 84 hours of music performance and six hours of repeats of music performance broadcast during the year, including those light music programmes originated by Music Department which are included in the Light Entertainment returns in the BBC Handbook. These included nine dance programmes, 31 concerts, 28 *mixed extracts genre*, nine operatic programmes and 69 recitals.

### Noteworthy programmes

1958 saw the revival of a technique of producing opera that had first been tried on BBC Television in 1938 with Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* and which was also used by some European television services. For the 1958 production of Verdi's *Rigoletto*, two casts were assembled: the first was a cast of singers who performed alongside the orchestra, out of vision; the second was a cast of actors who performed in front of the cameras and mimed the words being sung. It is a technique that is rarely, if ever, convincing and the BBC seems never to have repeated the experiment. 1958 also saw a controversial broadcast of Arthur Benjamin's *A Tale of Two Cities* which seems to mark the start of antagonism between Talks Department and Lionel Salter.

\**Rigoletto* (Foa 16.1.58) (Review in *The Times* 17.1.58) Criticised for restless camerawork and lack of wide-angle scene establishing shots.

\**Music for You* (Foy 26.1.58) RI 81

*Ukrainian State Cossack Company* (Dale 18.3.58) RI 78

*Music for You* (Foy 23.3.58) RI 78

\**Les Sylphides* (Dale 6.4.58) RI 76

*The Merry Widow* (Rogers 7.4.58) RI 83

\**Tito Gobbi* (Foy 16.5.58) RI 83

\**Music for You* (Foy 18.5.58) RI 76

*Music at Ten* (Simpson 25.5.58) RI 77

*Those Wonderful Shows* (Rogers 1.6.58) RI 76

*Music for You* (Foy 15.6.58) RI 77

*Music for You* (Foy 13.7.58) RI 84

*Max Jaffa* (Simpson 20.7.58) RI 79

*First Night of the Proms* (?; Programme board 30.7.58) The informality of the occasion was thought to have been captured excellently, resulting in some enchanting shots, although a tendency to linger on the more eccentric members of the audience during the actual performance was criticised. It was agreed that the presence of the audience and the sense of participation that resulted often enhanced the presentation of the music, particularly for the uncommitted viewer.

*Music for You* (Foy; Programme board 13.8.58) General praise for an excellent programme.

*Max Jaffa* (Simpson 31.8.58) RI 76

*Owen Brannigan Sings* (Craddy 14.9.58) RI 76

*Last Night of the Proms* (Thomas 20.9.58) RI 79

*Opera Omnibus* (Foy 24.9.58) RI 77



*Music for You* (Foy 5.10.58) RI 78

\**Antonio* (Simpson; Programme board 15.10.58) There was general and high praise for Simpson's production. HMPTel commended particularly the producer's skilful and imaginative use of lighting.

\**Music for You* (Foy 19.10.58) RI 79

*Music for You* (Foy 2.11.58) RI 78

*Max Jaffa* (Simpson 16.11.58) RI 77

\**Giselle* (Dale 23.11.58) RI 82 (Review in *Dance and Dancers* by E. C. Mason) Very warm praise.

*Tosca Act 2* (French TV Service 19.12.58) RI 77

\**The Nutcracker* (Dale 21.12.58) RI 86 (Programme board 31.12.58) Highly praised as another outstandingly successful ballet production. (*Times Educational Supplement*) Very warm praise.

*Music for You* (Foy 28.12.58) RI 77

## 1959

In 1959 the total output of music, dance and opera was 80 hours, down compared to 1958 as a proportion of total broadcasting at 2.5%.<sup>506</sup> There were 78 hours of music performance and five hours of repeats of music performance broadcast during the year, including those light music programmes originated by Music Department which are included in the Light Entertainment returns in the BBC Handbook. These included nine dance programmes, 43 concerts, 15 *mixed extracts genre*, eight operatic programmes, 50 recitals and seven workshops.

### Noteworthy programmes

The notable highlights of the music output in 1959 were Cartier's production of Verdi's *Otello* and Dale's studio production of Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty* with Fonteyn. One innovation that was to mark a major step forward in the presentation of music on television was Walter Todds' *Television Concert Hall*. This came from a proposal for a weeknight replacement for the ill-fated *Concert Hour* on Sunday afternoons, put forward by Salter earlier in the year.<sup>507</sup> Later to be called *International Concert Hall*, Todds' directing in the studio and Craxton's directing at outside locations was to establish a style which would become the benchmark of good music performance directing.

\**Music and Sir Malcolm* (Simpson 11.1.59) RI 77

\**The Lady and the Fool* (Dale 3.5.59) RI 77

*Stars of the Ballet* (? 12.5.59) RI 76

*Die Fledermaus* (Rogers 31.5.59) RI 79

*Handel Anniversary Concert* (? 10.6.59) RI 78

*Music for You* (Foy 14.6.59) RI 82

*The Men behind the Music* (Rogers 11.8.59) RI 77

*Promenade Concert* (? 22.8.59) RI 83

*Music for You* (Foy 16.9.59) RI 76

*Last Night of the Proms* (David J Thomas 19.9.59) RI 81

*Music with Sir Malcolm* (Todds 4.10.59) RI 78

*Music for You* (Foy 14.10.59) RI 76



*Television Concert Hall* (? 3.11.59) RI 78

\**The Sleeping Beauty* (Dale 20.12.59) RI 82 (Programme review board 30.12.59) 'A magnificent production...enhanced the BBC's prestige...at home and...on Eurovision.'

## 1960

In 1960 the total output of music, dance and opera was 66 hours, down compared to 1959 as a proportion of total broadcasting at 2.0%.<sup>508</sup> There were 72 hours of music performance and three hours of repeats of music performance broadcast during the year, including those light music programmes originated by Music Department which are included in the Light Entertainment returns in the BBC Handbook. These included five dance programmes, 49 concerts, 14 *mixed extracts genre*, eight operatic programmes, 33 recitals and five workshops.

### Noteworthy programmes

By 1960 it was opera that was suffering from reductions in allocated time. Salter was writing to McGivern<sup>509</sup> that the intention to replace Menotti's short comic opera *The Telephone* with a non-operatic music programme would leave only four opera in the year's output. '...Such a year as this has never before been seen in the Television Service, except for 1949...' In this instance, Salter's wishes prevailed and eight operas were transmitted, including *The Telephone*. The highlight was undoubtedly the world premier of Bliss' *Tobias and the Angel*, another outstanding studio production by Cartier. Glyndebourne contributed Geraint Evans in the title role in Verdi's *Falstaff* while the Russians supplied a film of Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*.

1960 also saw the culmination of a project that was dear to Salter's heart.<sup>510</sup> He had been the co-chairman of the organisation responsible for co-ordinating joint broadcasts of music between European stations, the IMZ. His co-chairman was Wilfried Scheib of Austrian Television who was also responsible for producing the annual New Year's Day broadcast by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra under Willy Boskovsky from the Musikverein in Vienna. On 1<sup>st</sup> January 1960 this concert was broadcast on BBC Television for the first time and it has featured in the BBC's output ever since.

The loss in 1959 of the Sunday afternoon series *Concert Hour* from the output of Music Department gave the remaining programmes in 1960 a very curious look, considering Salter's reputation for elitism. The major series was very much to Salter's natural taste, *Television Concert Hall* (renamed *International Concert Hall* in the autumn), produced by Todds. The two next most important series were the 'middle-brow' *The Max Jaffa Trio* and *Music for You* produced by his two most troublesome members of staff, Simpson and Foy respectively.

Dance was poorly represented in 1960 with the only substantial programmes being Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale* and the London Festival Ballet's Christmas production of *Graduation Ball*. There were also three mixed bag programmes by visiting overseas companies.

*Croeso* (Gethyn S Thomas 24.1.60) RI 79

*Music with Max* (Simpson 28.2.60) RI 76

*Music for You* (Foy 2.3.60) RI 77

*Croeso* (Gethyn S Thomas 13.3.60) RI 76

*Concerto* (Todds 4.4.60) RI 80



*Television Concert Hall* (Wilson 19.4.60) RI 79  
*Television Concert Hall* (Todds 3.5.60) RI 77  
*Stars of the Bolshoi Ballet* (Dale 24.7.60) RI 79  
*Music for You* (Foy 14.9.60) RI 76  
*Last Night of the Proms* (David J Thomas 17.9.60) RI 79  
*Music for You* (Foy 18.10.60) RI 81  
*Music for You* (Foy 15.11.60) RI 76  
*\*I Pagliacci* (Sheybal 1.12.60) RI 80  
*Music for You* (Foy 13.12.60) RI 79  
*\*London's Festival Ballet* (Dale 27.12.60) RI 78

## 1961

In 1961 the total output of music, dance and opera was 58 hours, down compared to 1960 as a proportion of total broadcasting at 1.7%.<sup>511</sup> There were 52 hours of music performance and four hours of repeats of music performance broadcast during the year, including those light music programmes originated by Music Department which are included in the Light Entertainment returns in the BBC Handbook. These included nine dance programmes, 27 concerts, 14 *mixed extracts genre* (including one *Profile in Music*), five operatic programmes and 31 recitals.

### Noteworthy programmes

In 1961, Salter's fears for opera were realised with only one complete production, Rossini's *Barber of Seville* from Glyndebourne. Dance had a modest improvement on the previous year with two major productions, Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* from the Royal Ballet in a studio adaptation by Dale, and Prokofiev's *The Stone Flower* by the Kirov, also in the studio with Dale. There were three mixed bag dance programmes by other overseas companies.

Performance programmes were strong: Todds produced 15 *International Concert Halls*, there were eight *Celebrity Recitals*, most of them by eminent pianists, and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra appeared in a relay from the Edinburgh International Festival, produced by the regional producer Alan Rees. Another innovation by Foy was the series *Profile in Music*, in which a musician was treated biographically using specially shot studio performances to illustrate their career.

*New Year's Day Concert from Vienna* (Austrian TV 1.1.61) RI 81  
*Music for You* (Foy 12.1.61) RI 80  
*Music for You* (Foy 16.3.61) RI 76  
*\*The Sylphide* (Dale 2.4.61) RI 81  
*Music for You* (Foy 6.4.61) RI 77  
*\*International Concert Hall* (Todds 9.5.61) RI 81  
*Music for You* (Foy 29.6.61) RI 79  
*Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra* (Rees 28.8.61) RI 76  
*Last Night of the Proms* (David J Thomas 16.9.61) RI 80  
*Tito Gobbi introduces...* (Foy 28.9.61) RI 78



*Ukrainian State Dance Company* (Dale 5.11.61) RI 85

\**Profile in Music* (Foy 21.12.61) RI 81

## 1962

In 1962 the total output of music, dance and opera was 62 hours, the first increase in six years, up compared to 1961 as a proportion of total broadcasting at 1.9%.<sup>512</sup> There were 60 hours of music performance and four hours of repeats of music performance broadcast during the year, including those light music programmes originated by Music Department which are included in the Light Entertainment returns in the BBC Handbook. These included six dance programmes, 31 concerts, 18 *mixed extracts genre* (including six *Profile in Music*), eleven operatic programmes, 21 recitals, two master classes and three workshops.

### Noteworthy programmes

In 1962, opera enjoyed some resurgence with nine broadcasts. The complete operas were Tchaikovsky's *Queen of Spades* in a Russian television film; Gilbert and Sullivan's *HMS Pinafore* produced by Norman Campbell for Canadian television; Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore* from Glyndebourne; another Cartier studio production, this time of Bizet's *Carmen*; and Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado* produced by Rogers.

There were five dance productions of which Dale produced three of the most important in the studio: Stravinsky's *Petrushka* in Fokine's choreography; *La fille mal gardée* with music by Hérold and choreographed by Ashton; and *Les Rendezvous*, also choreographed by Ashton. One other important dance broadcast came from the Hamburg television station and was of Stravinsky's *Apollon Musagète*, conducted by the composer.

Among televised concerts, one given by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Eugen Jochum was striking because it was part of the festival to mark the opening of Coventry Cathedral, built to replace the Cathedral destroyed by German bombers in the Blitz. There were 14 editions of *Music in Camera*, the *mixed extracts genre* replacement for *Music for You*, and 15 editions of *International Concert Hall*. The six editions of Foy's *Profile in Music* in 1962 comprised four singers and two violinists.

*Music in Camera* (Foy 10.1.62) RI 77

*World Singer* (Rees 13.1.62) RI 77

\**International Concert Hall* (Todds 16.1.62) RI 77

*Arthur Fiedler* (Rogers 19.1.62) RI 76

*International Concert Hall* (Todds 13.3.62) RI 82

*Music in Camera* (Foy 15.4.62) RI 79

\**International Concert Hall* (Todds 24.4.62) RI 76

\**Profile in Music* (Foy 28.6.62) RI 76

*First Night of the Proms* (Craxton 21.7.62) RI 76

*HMS Pinafore* (Campbell 6.8.62) RI 81

*Stars of the Edinburgh International Festival* (Rees 9.9.62) RI 76

*The Last Night of the Proms* (Craxton 15.9.62) RI 77



\**Yehudi Menuhin and David Oistrakh* (Craxton 23.9.62) RI 76

\**Profile in Music* (Foy 30.10.62) RI 79

\**Birth of a Record* (Craxton 18.11.62) RI 78

\**Profile in Music* (Foy 11.12.62) RI 81

\**Carmen* (Cartier 2.12.62) RI 82 (Press cuttings in BBC Written Archive Centre) Much criticism of this truncated opera

*The Mikado* (Rogers 24.12.62) RI 78

\**The Royal Ballet* (Dale 27.12.62) RI 82

## 1963

1963 was to show the lowest output of music, dance and opera from 1950 to 1981, with 52 hours representing 1.5% of all output.<sup>513</sup> There were 48 hours of music performance and four hours of repeats of music performance broadcast during the year, including those light music programmes originated by Music Department which are included in the Light Entertainment returns in the BBC Handbook. These included five dance programmes, 28 concerts, 26 *mixed extracts genre* (including four *Profile in Music*), four operatic programmes and eight recitals.

### Noteworthy programmes

In 1963 only one major dance programme was shown, Bliss' *Checkmate* in a studio adaptation by Dale of the Royal Ballet's production.

Three complete operas were shown: Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Gondoliers* from Norman Campbell of Canadian television; Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* from Glyndebourne; and Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* produced by Rogers and starring Kenneth McKellar.

Fourteen editions of *International Concert Hall*, seven editions of *Music in Camera* and two editions of its replacement *Gala Performance* and four editions of *Profile in Music* (all profiles of instrumentalists) comprised the established pattern of concert performances. There was one orchestral novelty. Until 1963 the only broadcasts from the Promenade Concerts on BBC Television were of either the first or last nights. 1963 saw the first televised broadcast of part of one of the other concerts in the series, this one a 30-minute extract of a concert given by the BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski

*Profile in Music* (Foy 3.1.63) RI 79

*The Choice is Yours* (Sears 24.6.63) RI 77

*Music in Camera* (Rogers 2.7.63) RI 77

*The Gondoliers* (Campbell 18.7.63) RI 78

*First Night of the Proms* (Craxton 20.7.63) (Programme Review Board 24.7.63) Shooting criticised by HMPTel.

*Henry Wood Promenade Concert* (Craxton 25.7.63) (Programme Review Board 31.7.63) Prom concert - television presentation commended.

*Music in camera* (Rogers 30.7.63) (Programme Review Board 31.7.63) Lack of cohesion criticised; deficient in showmanship.

\**The Royal Ballet 'Checkmate'* (Dale 31.7.63) (Programme Review Board 7.8.63) Shooting commended.



*Music in camera* (Todds 13.8.63) (Programme Review Board 14.8.63) Shooting criticised. RI 77

*Music in camera* (Rogers 27.8.63) (Programme Review Board 28.8.63) Commended.

*Marriage of Figaro* (Vernon 29.8.63) (Programme Review Board 4.9.63) Visual quality commended.

*Music in camera* (Rogers 10.9.63) (Programme Review Board 11.9.63) Mediocre

*Last Night of the Proms* (Craxton 14.9.63) (Programme Review Board 18.9.63) Particularly good this year. RI 77

*The National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain* (Todds 17.9.63) RI 78

\**David Oistrakh* (Craxton 24.9.63) RI 77

*Stars of the Bolshoi Ballet* (Dale 3.10.63) RI 81

*International Concert Hall* (Todds 22.10.63) RI 78

*International Concert Hall* (Rees 29.10.63) RI 76

\**The Beggar's Opera* (Rogers 31.10.63) (Programme Review Board 6.11.63) Direction criticised.

*International Concert Hall* (Craxton 5.11.63) RI 78

\**Gala Performance* (Foy 19.11.63) (Programme Review Board 20.11.63) Strong criticism of the programme's general approach and of various production details. RI 81

*Gala performance* (Foy 10.12.63) (Programme Review Board 11.12.63) An improvement on the first programme but still unsatisfactory.

## 1964

In 1964 there were nearly 13 million television broadcast licences purchased. 1964 saw the opening of BBC-2. The output of music, dance and opera amounted to 44 hours on BBC-1 and 108 hours on BBC-2, nearly double the proportion of the previous year at 2.8%.<sup>514</sup> There were 75 hours of music performance and nine hours of repeats of music performance broadcast on the two channels during the year. These included ten dance programmes, 40 concerts, five *mixed extracts genre*, ten operatic programmes, 22 recitals and two workshops.

### Noteworthy programmes

*New Year's Day Concert from Vienna* (Lanske? 1.1.64) RI 77

*International Concert Hall* (Todds 7.1.64) RI 77

\**La Belle Helene* (Rogers 23.1.64) Commended at Board of Management, though some criticism at M.D.Tel's weekly programme review (29.1.64)

*Gala Performance* (Foy 20.2.64) RI 78 (Programme review board 26.2.64) was described at Programme Review Board as 'effective'

\**International Concert Hall* (Craxton 10.3.64) RI 78 (Programme review board 11.3.64) HDMP Tel said Antony Craxton's production had been very well done. He thought the use of Watford Town Hall had been successful.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Ballet Class* (Dale/Wright 27.3.64) (Programme review board 1.4.64) ChPBBC-1 thought it had been a splendid programme. HDMP Tel thought it was a connoisseur's piece.

\**International Concert Hall* (Craxton 7.4.64) RI 76

\**Solti Rehearses* (Todds 14.4.64) RI 80

\**La Traviata* (Rogers 28.4.64) RI 80 (Programme review board 29.4.64) D.Tel thought it had been a good programme. HDG Tel thought it had been very good but not unusual or brilliant enough for entry to a festival.



\**Quintet* (Dale 17.5.64) (Programme review board 20.5.64) C.BBC-2 said 'the texture of the music and the scale of the dancing made it good for television' HDMPTel thought it had been well shot and the decision to use a small orchestra rather than a big one completely justified.

*Peer Gynt (Ballet)* (Rogers 28.5.64) RI 84

*Gala Performance* (Foy 4.6.64) RI 76

\**Music 625: Beethoven's Choral Symphony* (Craxton 8.11.64) (Programme review board 11.11.64) HDMPTel thought it had been a great event magnificently handled by Antony Craxton.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Workshop: Tippett in Vision* (Todds 9.11.64) (Programme review board 11.11.64) Generally praised, with some reservations. Some visual sequences felt to be particularly beautiful.

*International Concert Hall* (Craxton 24.11.64) RI 76

*International Concert Hall* (? 8.12.64) RI 77

*Rostropovich and Richter* (Rees 14-19.12.64) Burton said Alan Rees had directed the programme completely off the cuff and, he thought, brilliantly. The programme had also been praised at Board of Management.

\**The Royal Ballet: Coppélia* (Dale 27.12.64) RI 80

## 1965

In 1965 there were over 13 million television broadcast licences purchased. The output of music, dance and opera amounted to 43 hours on BBC-1 and 93 hours on BBC-2, 2.4% of the total output.<sup>515</sup> There were 80 hours of music performance and six hours of repeats of music performance broadcast on the two channels during the year. These included six dance programmes, 55 concerts, five *mixed extracts genre*, twelve operatic programmes, and eleven recitals.

### Noteworthy programmes

*Giulini conducts* (Craxton 5.1.65) RI 81

\**Giulini conducts* (Craxton 19.1.65) RI 78

*Giulini conducts* (Craxton 2.2.65) RI 82

*Gala Performance* (Foy 4.2.65) RI 81

\**The Firebird* (Dale 18.2.65) (Programme review board 24.2.65) HDMPTel said Dale was to be congratulated on her production. CPSTel thought it had been absolutely brilliant. (Programme review board 11.5.66 commenting after repeat in 5.66) CPTel said that the ballet had been a big one and difficult to screen on TV, but Margaret Dale had handled it most successfully.

*Opera 625: The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* (Saville 28.2.65) (Programme review board 3.3.65) Burton said it had been most exciting television, brilliantly cast and brilliantly directed. A generally enthusiastic discussion followed.

\**Gala Performance* (Foy 18.3.65) RI 79

*International Concert Hall* (Todds 30.3.65) RI 76

*Julian Bream* (Burton 13.6.65) (William Trevor review in *The Listener*) Much praise for this programme and unobtrusive camerawork.

*Youth and Music* (Large 14.6.65) (Programme review board 16.6.65) HDGTel and HSerialsDTel commended the production. HMATel said it had been an auspicious debut for Brian Large.

\**Royal Ballet: Checkmate* (Dale 31.7.63 repeated 16.7.65) (Programme review board 21.7.65) Disagreement among members – CPTel and D.Tel thought it magnificent, with good production. CBBC-1 thought it dated.



*Henry Wood Promenade Concert* (Large 3.8.65) (Programme review board 4.8.65) It was generally agreed that this programme had been well directed.

*Henry Wood Promenade Concert* (Johnson 17.8.65) RI 80

*Last Night of the Proms* (? 11.9.65) RI 77

\**Music 625: Stravinsky conducts Stravinsky* (Large 14.9.65) (Programme review board 15.9.65) HMATel said this had been a distinguished programme, well handled by Large.

*Commonwealth Arts Festival* (Craxton 16.9.65) RI 76

*The Bolshoi Ballet: Part 1* (Burrell-Davis 8.10.65) RI 78

*Music on Two (Dido and Aeneas from Glyndebourne)* (Vernon 12.10.65) (Programme review board 13.10.65) C.BBC-2 said the production had been very successful with beautiful singing and sets, intimate details and good shooting.

*Gala Performance* (Foy 15.10.65) RI 81 (Programme review board 20.10.65) HDGTel praised the production.

*The Bolshoi Ballet: Part 2* (Burrell-Davis 22.10.65) RI 83

*Music on Two: Hallé Orchestra* (? 2.11.65) RI 79

*Gala Performance* (Foy 12.11.65) RI 78

*The Childhood of Christ* (Large 25.12.65 repeated 21.3.66) (Programme review board 29.12.65) CBBC-2 said it had been spectacularly good. (Programme review board 23.3.66) AHRBTel said the programme had been wonderful and asked if it could be shown on BBC-1. (William Trevor review in *The Listener*) Very warm commendation of the broadcast.

## 1966

In 1966 there were over 13 million television broadcast licences purchased. The output of music, dance and opera amounted to 54 hours on BBC-1 and 86 hours on BBC-2, 2.4% of the total output.<sup>516</sup> There were 79 hours of music performance and seven hours of repeats of music performance broadcast on the two channels during the year. These included eleven dance programmes, 39 concerts, seven *mixed extracts genre*, ten operatic programmes, and 22 recitals.

### Noteworthy programmes

*La Bohème* (Coleman/Messina 16.1.66) (Programme review board 19.1.66) Direction highly praised.

*Music on Two: Gala concert for start of BBC-2 in Yorkshire* (Scott 24.1.66) RI 76

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Gala Performance* (Foy 4.3.66) RI 79 (William Trevor review in *The Listener*) ‘...[programme] bent over backwards to offer something for everybody, which means...that nobody gets much of anything...television programmes that are made up like boxes of assorted chocolates leave one with a confused taste...and very little else.’

*The Rachmaninov Concertos* (Large 13.3.66) RI 81

*Zodiac* (Dale 18.3.66) RI 47

*The Rachmaninov Concertos* (Large 20.3.66) RI 76

*The Rachmaninov Concertos* (Large and Craxton) (Programme review board 30.3.66) ACPSTel said the programme had been beautifully shot. (It is not clear which of the series was being commended.)

*Zodiac* (Dale 15.4.66) RI 40

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Gala Performance* (Foy 22.4.66) RI 80

\**Menuhin at Fifty* (Large 1.5.66) RI 86

*Double Concerto* (? 15.5.66) RI 83



*Giulini Conducts* (Craxton 20.5.66) RI 78

*Susanna's Secret* (Wise) (Programme review board 25.5.66) C.BBC-2 commended the direction, which was first rate.

*Giulini Conducts* (Craxton 27.5.66) (Programme review board 1.6.66) Directing praised.

*Music for You* (Sears 28.5.66) RI 78

\**Masterworks: The Amadeus Quartet* (Gavin 1.6.66) (Programme review board 8.6.66) Mixed comments with production not entirely successful but some excellent shooting.

*Giulini Conducts* (Craxton 3.6.66) RI 79

*Missa Solemnis* (Craxton) (Programme review board 8.6.66) CPTel said it had been an excellent programme, magnificently directed by Antony Craxton.

*From the Bergen Festival* (? 16.6.66) RI 77

\**Berlioz Requiem* (Large 22.7.66) RI 77 (Programme review board 27.7.66) CPTel said the director had managed to successfully convey a most exciting occasion.

*First Night of the Proms* (Craxton 23.7.66) RI 76

*The Sunday Prom: Strauss Night* (Vernon 31.7.66) RI 82 (Programme review board 3.8.66) C.BBC2 said he had been disappointed. The direction seemed to him to have been below standard. HMATel thought likewise.

*The Sunday Prom: Tchaikovsky 4<sup>th</sup> Symphony* (Craxton 21.8.66) RI 77

*The Sunday Prom: Gilbert & Sullivan Night* (Vernon 28.8.66) RI 77

*The Marriage of Figaro* (Rennert 28.8.66) RI 77

*Gala Performance* (Foy 29.8.66) RI 82 (William Trevor review in *The Listener*) '...Menuhin with the Bath Festival Orchestra [was] superbly photographed: in close-up after close-up the camera drifted calmly and unhurriedly with the music, always in sympathy with the movement of the bow and with the composition itself.'

*Edinburgh International Festival: Hallé and Barbirolli* (Large 12.9.66) RI 77

*The Last Night of the Proms* (Vernon 17.9.66) RI 77 (Programme review board 21.9.66) Some minor criticism of the shooting.

*Gala Performance* (Foy 23.10.66) RI 79

*The Mines of Sulphur* (Hays/Messina 13.11.66) RI 37 (Programme review board 19.11.66 ?) Direction praised but opera a disappointment.

*Yehudi Menuhin* (Craxton 4.12.66) RI 79

\**Billy Budd* (Coleman/Messina 11.12.66) (Programme review board 17.12.66?) Praised as a marvellous production, wonderfully directed. CPTel said the programme had been a thrilling experience, virtually flawless. (Programme review board 15.11.67 after first repeat on 9.11.67) 'Flawlessly produced'. It should be kept in the archive and under no circumstances be destroyed or wiped.

*The Leningrad Kirov State Ballet* (Vernon 25.12.66) RI 76

*Die Fledermaus* (Vernon 25.12.66) RI 80

*Gala Performance* (Foy 26.12.66) RI 76

*Julian Bream & John Williams* (Nupen 27.12.66) RI 78

*Mozart for New Years Eve* (Nupen 31.12.66) RI 82

## 1967

In 1967 there were over 14 million television broadcast licences purchased. The output of music, dance and opera amounted to 54 hours on BBC-1 and 83 hours on BBC-2,



2.2% of the total output.<sup>517</sup> There were 73 hours of music performance and six hours of repeats of music performance broadcast on the two channels during the year. These included eight dance programmes, 45 concerts, three *mixed extracts genre*, nine operatic programmes, and 15 recitals.

### Noteworthy programmes

*New Year's Day concert from Vienna* (Austrian TV 1.1.67) RI 79

\**Leonard Bernstein Conducts* (Large Three programmes, 8, 15 & 22.1.67 – all three still in BBC archives) RI 76 for 15.1.67 (Programme review board 11.1.67 ?) General praise for first programme though some reservation that the production had been 'a touch too clever'.

\* *Soloist Conductor* (? Three programmes 20, 27.1.67 & 3.2.67 – all three still in BBC archives) RI 82 for 20.1.67 (Susskind) RI 80 for 3.2.67 (Barenboim)

*Gala Performance* (Foy 12.2.67) RI 79

*Wilhelm Kempff* (Craxton 19.2.67) RI 76

\* *Eugene Onegin* (Messina/Coleman 6.3.67) (Programme review board 8.3.67) Some disagreement about this production with the singers and production praised but some reservations about the costumes and settings.

\**The Royal Ballet: The Dream* (Dale 26.3.67) RI 80

*Isaac Stern* (Large 2.4.67) RI 77

*Gala Performance* (Foy 9.4.67) RI 76

*Giulini conducts Beethoven* (Craxton 21.4.67) RI 77

*The Royal Opera House: La Traviata* (Vernon 24.4.67) RI 82 (Programme board 26.4.67?) There was considerable praise for this, the first complete opera from the Royal Opera House.

*The Count of Luxembourg* (Hays/Messina 21.5.67) RI 82

*Berlioz Te Deum* (Large 18.6.67) RI 82

\* *Segovia* (? 30.6.67) RI 77

*First Night of the Proms* (Craxton 22.7.67) RI 77

*Wilhelm Kempff* (Large 23.7.67) RI 77

*The Sunday Prom* (Craxton 30.7.67) RI 81

*The Sunday Prom* (Large 6.8.67) RI 77

*Belshazzar's Feast* (Large 11.8.67) (Programme review board ?) The first colour outside broadcast from the Royal Albert Hall gained much praise.

*The Sunday Prom* (Craxton 20.8.67) RI 80

*Don Giovanni* (Vernon 3.9.67) (Programme review board ?) Considerable criticism of this realisation of the relay from Glyndebourne.

*The Sunday Prom* (Large 10.9.67) RI 76

\* *The Last Night of the Proms* (Large 16.9.67) RI 81

*Menuhin plays Bach* (Foy 14.10.67) RI 78

*Contrasts: Graduation Ball* (Danish Television 15.10.67) RI 78

\* *Omnibus: Elena Suliotis* (Hearst/Foy 20.10.67) RI 83

*Omnibus: Beethoven Fifth Symphony* (Large 17.11.67) RI 76

*Faust* (Messina/Coleman 19.11.67) RI 76 (Programme review board 22.11.67) Considerable criticism of the production, design and lighting.



## 1968

In 1968 there were 15 million monochrome television broadcast licences and 20 thousand colour television broadcast licences purchased. The output of music, dance and opera amounted to 30 hours on BBC-1 and 48 hours on BBC-2, 1.2% of the total.<sup>518</sup> There were 49 hours of music performance and three hours of repeats of music performance broadcast on the two channels during the year. These included four dance programmes, 22 concerts, two *mixed extracts genre*, six operatic programmes, and twelve recitals.

### Noteworthy programmes

*Gala Performance* (Foy 1.1.68) RI 84 (Programme review board 3.1.68) Criticism of use of presenter which 'further' slowed down the programme

*New Year's Day Concert from Vienna* (Lanske, Austrian TV 1.1.68) RI 77

\**Artur Rubinstein* (Craxton 7.1.68) RI 85

\**Fauré's Requiem from King's College* (Large 4.2.68) (Programme review board 7.2.68) Some criticism for the opening of the programme but thereafter praise for direction.

\**Aida* (Vernon 5.2.68) RI 86 (Programme review board 7.2.68) Very warm praise both for the direction and the technical qualities of this broadcast from the Royal Opera House. (Programme review board 14.2.68) Considerable praise from various newspapers reported by MDTel.

*Wilhelm Backhaus* (Unitel film 3.3.68) RI 77

\**The Nutcracker* (Vernon 10.3.68) RI 81 (Programme review board 13.3.68) Warm praise for this first complete ballet in colour from Royal Opera House.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Rigoletto* (Messina/Coleman 12.4.68) RI 77 (Programme review board 17.4.68) Praise for this studio production. Only criticism was of the English translation used.

\**The Dream of Gerontius* (Large 14.4.68) (Programme review board 17.4.68) HAF thought its success marked a significant development in Brian Large's range as a producer.

*At the Garden* (Drummond & Large 2.6.68) RI 83

\**Rubinstein and the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra* (Craxton 9.6.68) RI 80 (Programme review board 12.6.68) HMPTel paid tribute to very good production by Antony Craxton.

\**Clifford Curzon* (Todds 30.6.68) RI 77

*Stars of the Future* (Vernon 3.7.68) RI 76

\**Così fan tutte* (Vernon 22.7.68) RI 81 (Programme review board 24.7.68) Warm praise for Vernon's direction.

*The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra* (Nupen 4.8.68) (Programme review board 7.8.68) C.BBC-2 thought that this had been a slipshod production. There was no excuse in a studio-mounted production for the appearances of cameras, monitors and booms.

*Triple Concerto* (Large 8.9.68) RI 76

*The Last Night of the Proms* (Large 14.9.68) RI 76

\**La Vida Breve* (Messina/Coleman 13.10.68) (Programme review board 16.10.68) 'A gorgeous entertainment' with particular praise for the set and colour. Some reservations about some of the performances.

*Vladimir Horowitz* (Englander 17.11.68) RI 84

\**The Burning Fiery Furnace* (Large 24.11.68) (Programme review board 27.11.68) This performance 'a masterpiece'.

*Contrasts* (? 10.12.68) RI 79



*Handel's Messiah* (Large 22.12.68) RI 78 (Programme review board 1.1.69) Warmly praised by several of those present. Minor reservations concerning the illustrations used.

\* *The Merry Widow* (Messina/Gorrie 25.12.68) RI 81 (Programme review board 1.1.69) 'Undiluted pleasure'. The direction, colour, design and singing all praised. Hearst, as 'an old Viennese expert' had suffered 30 years of poor performances and so he rejoiced in this one.

## 1969

In 1969 there were over 15 million monochrome television broadcast licences and 99 thousand colour television broadcast licences purchased. The output of music, dance and opera amounted to 31 hours on BBC-1 and 61 hours on BBC-2, 1.4% of the total.<sup>519</sup> There were 42 hours of music performance and 17 hours of repeats of music performance broadcast on the two channels during the year. These included two dance programmes, 22 concerts, one *mixed extracts genre*, five operatic programmes, eight recitals and three workshops.

### Noteworthy programmes

\**Gala Performance* (Foy 1.1.69) RI 86 (Programme review board 8.1.69?) General criticism of a below-standard programme.

*New Year's Day Concert* (Lanske 1.1.69) RI 82

\**The Sleeping Beauty* (Vernon 26.1.69) RI 81

\**Elisabeth Schwarzkopf* (Foy 9.2.69) (Programme review board 25.3.70 after repeat 23.3.70) Programme found to be 'arch to a degree'. Richard Levin (HTelDesG and Foy's husband!) said the producer would agree.

\**Otello* (Messina/Coleman 16.2.69) RI 79 (Programme review board 19.2.69?) Considerable praise for this English language studio production.

*Workshop* (on Pictures at an Exhibition) (*Chappell* 4.5.69) RI 77

*National Youth Orchestra* (Large 25.5.69) RI 82

*Musicamera* (Gavin 20.7.69) (Programme review board 30.7.69) Considerable divergence of opinion about this reinterpretation of *Pictures at an Exhibition*. Some praised it, others condemned.

*The Bolshoi Ballet* (Vernon 27.7.69) RI 77

*Omnibus at the Proms* (Engelmann 3.8.69) (Programme review board 6.8.69) Much criticism of this programme, both of the performances and the direction.

*Omnibus at the Proms* (Large 17.8.69) RI 76

*Omnibus at the Proms* (Large 24.8.69) (Programme review board 27.8.69) Monica Sims thought this programme had been very well handled. John Culshaw agreed.

*Last Night of the Proms* (Large 13.9.69) RI 78 (Programme review board 17.9.69) Considerable criticism of the directing of this programme. The gist of a long conversation was that Large had tried to cover it as a musical occasion rather than a social event.

*Czech Philharmonic Orchestra* (Large 14.9.69) (Programme review board 17.9.69) DPTel said that this Promenade Concert had been very well covered by Brian Large.

\**Stokowski Conducts* (Todds 28.9.69) RI 80

\**Fou Ts'ong* (Foy 26.10.69) (Programme review board 29.10.69) 'The best designed recital he (DPTel) had ever seen.' The recital in a room was warmly welcomed.

\**Peter Grimes* (Culshaw/Large 2.11.69) (Programme review board 5.11.69) Considerable praise for this production from the Maltings. Reports of largely complimentary reports in press.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Carols from King's* (Large 24.12.69) RI 76



## 1970

In 1970 there were over 15 million monochrome television broadcast licences and a quarter of a million colour television broadcast licences purchased. The output of music, dance and opera amounted to 31 hours on BBC-1 and 74 hours on BBC-2, 1.6% of the total.<sup>520</sup> There were 50 hours of music performance and eleven hours of repeats of music performance broadcast on the two channels during the year. These included five dance programmes, 29 concerts, three *mixed extracts genre* type of programme (including one *Profile in Music*), four operatic programmes, and nine recitals.

### Noteworthy programmes

(In Week 26, 1970 – the end of June – BBC Audience Research changed from issuing a single Reaction Index for a given programme to a series of Reaction Profiles. These are much more detailed than the Reaction Index, but much more difficult to compare, one with another. All programmes from July 1970 have been evaluated from these profiles. For this thesis the figures for ‘Enjoyable’ and ‘Well photographed’ have been used. The figure for RF has been calculated by subtracting the negative value from the positive value. Thus if a programme got a figure of 89 for ‘well photographed’ and, consequently, a figure of 11 for ‘badly photographed’ the derived Reaction Profile (RP) has a value of  $89 - 11 = 78$ .)

\**Walton's The Bear* (Cartier 1.2.70) (Programme review board 11.2.70) MDTel commended a lovely production of this comic opera. ‘A great success’. CPOTel also noted praise from the critics of the *Daily Telegraph* and *Daily Mail*.

\**Moura Lympany* (Buckton 22.2.70) (Programme review board 25.2.70) EdPresProgTel critical of the camera direction. HMPTel agreed. DPTel gave adverse comparison with the recent Fou Ts'ong recital.

*The Seven Last Words of Christ from the Cross* (Todds 27.3.70) (Programme review board 1.4.70) C.BBC-2 thought it had been very well done. Praised in the *Daily Telegraph*.

\**Gala Performance* (Foy 27.3.70) RI 83

*Romeo and Juliet* (Fedina 21.4.70) RI 77

*Tamas Vasary* (Foy 3.5.70) (Programme review board 6.5.70) Foy congratulated for covering the whole of the Liszt sonata on a single camera.

\**Mozart's Idomeneo* (Large 10.5.70) (Programme review board 13.5.70) Praise for the direction but reservations about putting a very ‘stagey’ production on television without modifications.

\**The Beethoven Symphonies* (Todds Six programmes 19, 21, 26, 28.6.70, 3, 5.7.70 – all six programmes still in BBC archives) RIs of 76 & 77 and RP of 78 (Programme review board 24.6.70) DPTel noted that the *Eroica* had been most tactfully shot by Todds. It had been a model of what orchestral shooting should be. (Central Music Advisory Committee 11.70) Todds’ *Beethoven Symphonies* were praised by Lord Harewood. He said that they were the best straight music television that he had ever seen.<sup>521</sup> Also praised by Huw Wheldon (MDTel) and Lionel Salter (Asst. C. Mus.) ‘because they eschewed all gimmickry.’

\**Tchaikovsky Prizewinner* (Tipping 10.8.70) (Programme review board 12.8.70) HMPTel commended this first effort as a [music] director by me.

*Omnibus at the Proms* (Large 30.8.70) RP 84

*Omnibus at the Proms* (Craxton 6.9.70) RP 80

*The Last Night of the Proms* (Large 12.9.70) RP 80

*Beethoven's Choral Symphony from UN Headquarters* (? 25.10.70) (Programme review board 28.10.70) Todds thought this programme...must surely take the prize for mediocre camera direction of a concert. MDTel agreed.



*The Trout* (Nupen 8.11.70) RP 90

\**Die Winterreise* (Pears and Britten) (Culshaw 15.11.70) (Programme review board 18.11.70) Widely divergent reactions from extremes of praise and criticism. CPOTel reported thoughtful and appreciative press reviews, mostly from the musical press.

*The Royal Concert* (Craxton 2.12.70) RP 90

\**The Royal Ballet* (Vernon 25.12.70) RP 76

\**The Tales of Hoffmann* (Messina/Gorrie 26.12.70) RP 86

## 1971

In 1971 there were 15 million monochrome television broadcast licences and over ½ million colour television broadcast licences purchased. The output of music, dance and opera amounted to 41 hours on BBC-1 and 81 hours on BBC-2, 1.8% of the total.<sup>522</sup>

There were 51 hours of music performance and eleven hours of repeats of music performance broadcast on the two channels during the year. These included four dance programmes, 25 concerts, five *mixed extracts genre* (including two *Profile in Music*), six operatic programmes, nine recitals, one workshop and one magazine programme devoted to performance.

### Noteworthy programmes

*New Year's Day Concert from Vienna* (? 1.1.71) RP 100

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Gala Performance* (Foy 1.1.71) RP 92

*Music on Two: Bernstein in London* (Large 21.3.71) (Programme review board 24.3.71) Thought a strong edition with some virtuoso camera-work. HTelTraining was critical of the directing in the Schumann symphony.

*Gala Performance* (Foy 9.4.71) RP 88

\**Owen Wingrave* (Large 16.5.71) (Programme review board 19.5.71) Considerable discussion in which the overriding impression is of praise for almost all aspects of the commission and production. Detailed criticisms offered within this praise. (Central Music Advisory Council 12.4.72) When discussing Owen Wingrave Culshaw reported that the response of viewers to newly commissioned works had been depressing. Even for Owen Wingrave the audience had been very small. Television Music Department had to concentrate on the bread and butter needs of the public. Mr. Culshaw had taken great comfort from the enthusiasm of the camera crews working on the production who once they had heard the music often, had become very enthusiastic for it.<sup>523</sup>

*Andre Previn's Music Night* (Culshaw Three programmes 25.6.71, 2, 9.7.71) (Programme review board 30.6.71) General praise for this new series though some of the illustrations used were criticised. C.BBC-1 said that it had been a great credit to Culshaw that he had been the person to try something new.

*Music on Two: The Relay by Alwin Nikolais* (Fitzwater 27.6.71) (Programme review board 30.6.71) Mixed reception for this highly experimental ballet specially created for television. On balance the praise exceeded the criticism.

*Omnibus at the Proms* (Foy 1.8.71) RP 82 (Programme review board 4.8.71) HMPTel regretted that the tracking of camera and unfortunate use of lighting had been obtrusive during the [Promenade] concert.

*Omnibus at the Proms* (Craxton 8.8.71) RP84

*Omnibus at the Proms* (Large 5.9.71) (Programme review board 8.9.71) The programme, of Berg, Webern and Debussy, generally disliked with some criticism of the direction.

*Omnibus* (Engelmann 19.12.71) RP 80

\**The Royal Ballet* (Vernon 25.12.71) RP 96

\**Die Fledermaus* (Messina/Gorrie 26.12.71) RP 88



## 1972

In 1972 there were 15 million monochrome television broadcast licences and 1½ million colour television broadcast licences purchased. The output of music, dance and opera amounted to 30 hours on BBC-1 and 87 hours on BBC-2, 1.5% of the total output.<sup>524</sup> There were 47 hours of music performance and 23 hours of repeats of music performance broadcast on the two channels during the year. These included three dance programmes, 25 concerts, four *mixed extracts genre* (including three *Profile in Music*), five operatic programmes, and nine recitals.

### Noteworthy programmes

*New Year's Day Concert from Vienna* (Lanske 1.1.72) RP 92

\**Messiah* (Large 2.1.72) (Programme review board 5.1.72) HCPTel thought this broadcast marvellous. HMPTel thought it very good musically even if some of the camera-work had been a little fussy.

*Music on Two: In a Minor Key* (Gavin 5.3.72) RP 82

\**Music on Two: Profile in Music* (Foy 23.4.72) RP 78

\**Andre Previn's Music Night* (Culshaw Three programmes – 4, 11, 18.7.72 Only the first preserved in the archives) Some reservations expressed about Andre Previn's Music Night. Paul Fox, C.BBC-1, had asked for a more novel presentation for three concerts at peak viewing times. Professional opinion was divided about some of the production techniques used. On the other hand, the programmes were remarkably popular and produced an extraordinarily strong reaction from viewers. David Attenborough said that the programmes were aimed at non-specialists rather than musical enthusiasts. What was remarkable, however, was how few of the latter had been put off.<sup>525</sup> (*Radio Times* letters page 50 3.8.72) Three very warm letters about the series of programmes. (Programme review board 19.7.72) C.BBC-1 said that the series had been getting very high Profiles and he and others regretted that it had come to an end. DPTel said the duty log [of phone calls to the BBC] had recorded several warm tributes to the programme.

*Omnibus at the Proms* (Large 6.8.72) RP 86

*Omnibus at the Proms* (Large 20.8.72) RP 90

*Omnibus at the Proms* (Large 27.8.72) RP 84

\**Music on Two: Profile in Music* (Foy 17.9.72) RP 84

\**Vaughan Williams Centenary Concert* (Tipping 18.10.72) (Programme review board 25.10.72) HMPTel said this...concert had been very well handled with good presentation on the screen.

*Carols from King's College Choir* (Large 24.12.72) (Programme review board 3.1.73) DPTel saluted a splendid hieratical occasion, well produced.

\**Falstaff* (Messina/Coleman 26.12.72) (Programme review board 3.1.73) A 'marvellous' production ranking alongside Billy Budd. MDTel thought it the best rendering of Verdi's opera he had ever seen.

\**The Gondoliers* (Hays 29.12.72) RP 76

## 1973

In 1973 there were 14 million monochrome television broadcast licences and over three million colour television broadcast licences purchased. The output of music, dance and opera amounted to 35 hours on BBC-1 and 74 hours on BBC-2, 1.3% of the total output.<sup>526</sup> There were 53 hours of music performance and eleven hours of repeats of music performance broadcast on the two channels during the year. These included six dance programmes, 29 concerts, three *mixed extracts genre*, two operatic programmes, nine recitals and one workshop.

In Week 27 Audience Research Department resumed issuing Reaction Indices (RIs) for programmes.



## Noteworthy programmes

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Gala Performance* (Foy 1.1.73) RP 80

*Music for Westminster Abbey* (Nick Hunter 3.6.73) RP 80

\**Murray Perahia* (Tipping 3.6.73) (Programme review board 6.6.73) HAFTel noted a very good programme.

\**Andre Previn's Music Night* (Culshaw Four programmes 20, 27.6.73, 4, 11.7.73) (Programme review board 27.6.73) Warm praise for the first programme in the new series.

\**Bernstein's Mass* (Large 8.7.73) (Programme review board 11.7.73) Considerable criticism of the work coupled with considerable praise for Large's direction.

*Omnibus at the Proms* (Tipping 2.9.73) (Programme review board 5.9.73) Very effectively directed but doubts about choice of Shostakovich's 15<sup>th</sup> symphony.

*Karajan conducts* (Beta films 18.11.73) (Programme review board 21.11.73) HMPTel agreed with review by Peter Black in Daily Mail that this film of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra was not as well shot as BBC orchestral concerts.

\**La Traviata* (Messina/Large 29.12.73) (Programme review board 2.1.74) Much praise for this studio production in English.

## 1974

In 1974 there were twelve million monochrome television broadcast licences and nearly six million colour television broadcast licences purchased. The output of music, dance and opera amounted to 35 hours on BBC-1 and 102 hours on BBC-2, 1.6% of the total output.<sup>527</sup> There were 44 hours of music performance and twelve hours of repeats of music performance broadcast on the two channels during the year. These included two dance programmes, 34 concerts, one *mixed extracts genre*, three operatic programmes, and four recitals.

## Noteworthy programmes

*New Year's Day Concert from Vienna* (Lanske 1.1.74) RI 84

\**Menuhin at Philharmonic Hall* (Tipping 8.3.74) (Programme review board 13.3.74) Much praise for this programme.

\**The Beethoven Piano Concertos* (Large Five programmes 22, 24, 29, 31.3.74, 5.4.74 – all still in BBC's archives) (Programme review board 3.4.74) Much praise for these programmes. RIs 80, 78, 83, 80, 82

\**Gala Performance* (Foy 12.4.74) (Programme review board 17.4.74) Reservations expressed about this programme. HMPTel felt the series had got [stuck] in a groove so that it seemed dull. It was in urgent need of re-examination.

\**Garrick Ohlsson* (Lough 23.6.74) (Programme review board 26.6.74) Warmly commended by HFETel and C.BBC-2.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Thomas Hemsley* (Tipping 21.7.74) (Programme review board 24.7.74) Following three well-liked master classes, there were some reservations about the set and the use of tight close-ups of the singer in this follow-up recital. SPMPTel thought it one of the most successful recitals he had seen.

*The World Youth Orchestra* (Benson 28.7.74) (Programme review board 31.7.74) Treatment had been 'eccentric'.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Omnibus at the Proms* (Tipping 11.8.74) (Programme review board 14.8.74) The collapse of a soloist had been covered well but the captions used were not well handled. RTM(Northwest) thought that the director had achieved remarkably good shots of the orchestra.



<sup>NFA</sup> \**Omnibus at the Proms* (Large 18.8.74) (Programme review board 21.8.74) Some complaints about the restrictions caused by the limited locations available for cameras. The need for cameras in the arena of the Albert Hall was expressed.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Omnibus at the Proms* (Tipping 25.8.74) RI 76

*The Last Night of the Proms* (Large 14.9.74) (Programme review board 18.9.74) Much discussion about the clash between the pictures and the Radio-3 stereophonic image. Agreement that the use of lightweight cameras had been very effective.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Marriage of Figaro* (Messina/Coleman 21.9.74) (Programme review board 25.9.74) Considerable praise for a 'superb' studio production in English of this opera. Particular mention for Coleman as 'a great director of this type of programme.'

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Rostropovich plays the Dvorak concerto* (Greenberg 22.9.74) (Programme review board 25.9.74) Ed.Comm.Prog had found this programme beautifully directed by Greenberg. It caught the spirit of both the music and the occasion.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Handel at St Johns* (Greenberg/Corden 13.10.74) RI 78

*Daniel Barenboim* (Nupen 13.12.74) RI 77

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Amahl and the Night Visitors* (Large 24.12.74) (Programme review board 8.1.75) HCPTel found it 'most rewarding'. C.BBC-2 saluted a wonderful production. The composer (Gian-Carlo Menotti) regarded it as 'definitive'.

## 1975

In 1975 there were ten million monochrome television broadcast licences and nearly eight million colour television broadcast licences purchased. The output of music, dance and opera amounted to 28 hours on BBC-1 and 116 hours on BBC-2, 1.7% of the total output.<sup>528</sup> There were 64 hours of music performance and 17 hours of repeats of music performance broadcast on the two channels during the year. These included seven dance programmes, 49 concerts, three *mixed extracts genre*, four operas, and two recitals. This was a significant increase in all categories except recitals over recent years.

### Noteworthy programmes

<sup>NFA</sup> \**New Year's Day Concert from Vienna* (Lanske 1.1.75) RI 84

*The Royal Concert* (Greenberg 12.1.75) (Programme review board 15.1.75) Had been well directed.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**A Gargantuan Pianistic Extravaganza* (Tipping 26.1.75) (Programme review board 29.1.75) Some praise for this programme.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Magnificat: Bach* (Dowdall 2.3.75) (Programme review board 5.3.75) Unanimous condemnation of this experimental treatment of the work. MDTel outlawed the phrase 'videosonic treatment' used in *Radio Times* for the future. CDevTel noted the appallingly unaesthetic way in which the programme had been handled. He also said there was no wish to stifle creativity but this had been 'a badly cooked potato.'

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Gala Performance* (Foy 28.3.75) (Programme review board 2.4.75) Considerable criticism both of some of the content and the direction of this programme. RI 78 (Joan Bakewell review in *The Listener*) 'Gala Performance...proved that Reader's Digest anthologies of the arts, whatever the artistic...acumen of its stars...lack direction, look boring and give Culture a bad name.'

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Un ballo in maschera* (? 29.3.75) (Joan Bakewell review in *The Listener*)

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Brahms Symphonies* (? Four programmes 27.4.75, 4, 11, 18.5.75 – all still in BBC archives) (Programme review board 30.4.75) Some disquiet about the artificiality of the shooting of these post-synched films. The very perfection of each shot made the whole rather unreal.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Andre Previn's Music Night* (Culshaw Four programmes – 18, 25.6.75 and 2, 9.7.75, all still in the archives) (Programme review board 25.6.75) Praise for the first in the new series with particular mention of the novel set which allowed 360° shooting. (Programme review board 16.7.75) Reservations about the dress of the players but praise for the 'unfussy' directing of Culshaw. (*Radio Times* letters page 49)



12.7.75) Two letters criticising the casual dress of the orchestra. (*Radio Times* letters page 49 26.7.75) Four further letters discussing dress, mainly in favour of casual attire for orchestras. RI (18.6.75) 77

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The First Night of the Proms* (Greenberg 25.7.75) (Programme review board 30.7.75) Muted praise for Greenberg's direction – 'had done as well as he could have done.'

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Sunday Prom* (Tipping 3.8.75) RI 79

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Sunday Prom* (Moriarty 10.8.75) (Programme review board 20.8.75) Reservations about the camera positions at the Royal Albert Hall. Criticism of the shots of the piano soloist.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Sunday Prom* (Tipping 17.8.75) RI 78

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Sunday Prom* (Buckton 31.8.75) (Programme review board 3.9.75) Mike Wooller said this concert had been very well shot. Bartok [piano concerto?] worked particularly well on television.

\**Autumn Ballet* (Benson 7.9.75) (Programme review board 10.9.75) Beautifully shot by a team including [cameraman] Brian Tufano. Mild criticism of one aspect of the shooting – a repetitive shot of an old lady.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Leeds International Piano Competition* (Greenberg 13.9.75) (Programme review board 17.9.75) DPTel and C.BBC-2 commended a...first-rate programme. HMA Tel commended very skilled production by Greenberg. RI 76

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Big Top Ballet* (Vernon 21.9.75) RI 81

*Rudolf Kempe conducts* (Tipping 12.10.75) DPTel said that this had been very good. Paul Bonner said that the direction had been very effective in conjunction with stereo sound. HMA Tel said I had taken great care over this.

<sup>NFA</sup> \* *The Flying Dutchman* (Large 9.11.75) (Programme review board 12.11.75) Generally high praise with a few minor carping comments. (*Radio Times* Review by Philip Hope-Wallace page 78 29.11.75) A long article summarising his own response to this studio production – 'a triumph' – and the response of his acquaintances, both musical and non-musical, generally very favourable. (*Radio Times* Letter page 69 29.11.75) Five adulatory letters about the production.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Royal Ballet: Enigma Variations* (Archibald 15.12.75) (Programme review board 17.12.75) C.BBC-2 thought this the best ballet he had seen on television. RI 77

## 1976

In 1976 there were nine million monochrome television broadcast licences and nearly nine million colour television broadcast licences purchased. The output of music, dance and opera amounted to 19 hours on BBC-1 and 101 hours on BBC-2, 1.4% of the total output.<sup>529</sup> There were 72 hours of music performance and 20 hours of repeats of music performance broadcast on the two channels during the year. These included six dance programmes, 41 concerts, one *mixed extracts genre* (the final transmission under this billed title took place on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1976), six operatic programmes, and 28 recitals. The list of recitals included a substantial number of short recitals used at the end of broadcasting on BBC-2 under the generic title of *Music at Night*.

### Noteworthy programmes

<sup>NFA</sup> \**New Year's Day Concert from Vienna* (Lanske 1.1.76) RI 79

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Music for Good Friday* (Isted 16.4.76) RI 79

<sup>NFA</sup> \**A Night at the Opera: Cav and Pag* (Large 16.4.76) (Programme review board 21.4.76) Warmly praised relay from Covent Garden with particular praise for the stereo sound and Large's direction. RI 78

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Andre Previn's Music Night* (Culshaw/Culshaw, Isted, Lough Four programmes 16, 23, 30.6.76, 7.7.76) (Programme review board 23.6.76) First programme in series praised with good direction by Isted. RI (16.6.76) 77



<sup>NFA</sup> \**First Night of the Proms* (Greenberg 16.7.76) (Programme review board 21.7.76) AHMPTel praised this programme with some reservations. (*Radio Times* letter page 46 7.8.76) Two letters, one criticising, one praising the television broadcast. Good reply from Greenberg.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Live from the Proms: Britten War Requiem* (Greenberg 15.8.76) (Programme review board 18.8.76) AHMPTel thought this had been very well directed.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Sunday Prom: National Youth Orchestra – Sibelius First Symphony* (Tipping 22.8.76) (Programme review board 1.9.76) HMA Tel said that this programme...was the best directed Prom he had seen for a long time.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Last Night of the Prom* (Engelmann 11.9.76) (Programme review board 15.9.76) C.BBC-1 said that this had been the best directed Last Night of the Proms he had seen. DPTel welcomed a modest triumph.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Lively Arts in Performance – Coppélia* (Sanders 25.9.76) RI 78

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Lively Arts in Performance – The Barber of Seville* (Ponnelle 2.10.76) RI 77

*The Lively Arts in Performance* (James Hunter 9.10.76) RI 76

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Lively Arts in Performance – The Stuttgart Ballet: Eugene Onegin* (Sutherland 30.10.76) (Programme review board 3.11.76) AHMPTel noted good direction by David Sutherland.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Nutcracker* (Vernon 28.12.76) RI 76

## 1977

In 1977 there were eight million monochrome television broadcast licences and nearly ten million colour television broadcast licences purchased. The output of music, dance and opera amounted to 19 hours on BBC-1 and 89 hours on BBC-2, 1.2% of the total output.<sup>530</sup> There were 75 hours of music performance and twelve hours of repeats of music performance broadcast on the two channels during the year. These included four dance programmes, 34 concerts, two *mixed extracts genres*, eight operatic programmes, and 20 recitals, including several in the occasional series *Music at Night*.

### Noteworthy programmes

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The New Year's Day Concert from Vienna* (? 1.1.77) RI 85

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Lively Arts: Tamas Vasary in Rachmaninov Paganini Rhapsody* (Greenberg 23.1.77) (Programme review board 26.1.77) A very well directed edition. Drummond said that some exciting pictures had been produced.

*The Lively Arts – Tchaikovsky 1<sup>st</sup> Piano Concerto* (Isted 6.2.77) RI 78

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Capriccio* (Vernon 19.3.77) (Programme review board 23.3.77) MDTel said it had been beautifully done. HMA Tel said that the coverage had been very accurate and [it was a] sharp piece of direction by Vernon.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Walton at 75: First Symphony* (Greenberg 27.3.77) (Programme review board 30.3.77) HP(F)Tel thought this the best attempt at orchestral direction he had seen. The use of different colours for the movements caused some dissatisfaction to HSerialsDTel.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Lively Arts – in performance: Giselle* (Campbell 23.4.77) RI 81

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Andre Previn's Music Night* (Chappell 11, 18, 25.5.77, 1.6.77) (Programme review board 8.6.77) Some criticism of the direction and over-use of close-ups. HMA Tel defended the technique as more interesting than general views of the orchestra.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Queen's Silver Jubilee Gala* (Large 30.5.77) RI 76

*Music for a Jubilee* (Vernon 16.6.77) RI 82

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Sunday Prom: Holst's Planets* (Isted 28.8.77) (Programme review board 31.8.77) Compliments on the direction of this programme, particularly as the conductor had refused to rehearse the whole work for the cameras. RI 76



NFA \**The Sunday Prom* (Buckton 11.9.77) RI 77

NFA \**Live from the Proms: Beethoven 9<sup>th</sup> symphony* (Greenberg 16.9.77) (Programme review board 21.9.77) Very warm praise for 'a superb outside broadcast', particularly for the stereo sound and Greenberg's direction. RI 82

NFA \**The Last Night of the Proms* (Engelmann 17.9.77) RI 80

NFA \**The Lively Arts in Performance – Prince Igor* (Tikhomirov 24.9.77) RI 77

NFA \**The Lively Arts – in Performance: Prokofiev's Romeo and Juliet* (Czinner 1.10.77) RI 78

NFA \**The Lively Arts – in Performance: Messiaen's Turangalila* (Gavin 8.10.77) (Programme review board 12.10.77) 'A memorable television event' with warm praise for Gavin's presentation.

*The Lively Arts – in Performance: Fidelio* (Sellner 15.10.77) RI 76

*The Lively Arts – in Performance: Mozart piano concertos* (Isted 22.10.77) RI 85

NFA \**The Lively Arts: Dvorak New World symphony* (Isted 30.10.77) RI 79

NFA \**The Lively Arts – in performance: Boris Godunov* (Barannikov 5.11.77) RI 76

\**The Lively Arts – in performance: The Nutcracker* (Macheret 6.11.77) RI 82

NFA \**The Lively Arts – in performance: Gala concert in Moscow* (Moiseyev 12.11.77) RI 77

NFA \**Macbeth* (Large 3.12.77) (*Radio Times* letters page 69 7.1.78) Very mixed reaction to this controversial studio production, either very pro or very anti.

NFA \**Die Fledermaus* (Large 31.12.77) RI 80

## 1978

In 1978 there were seven million monochrome television broadcast licences and eleven million colour television broadcast licences purchased. The output of music, dance and opera amounted to 30 hours on BBC-1 and 105 hours on BBC-2, 1.5% of the total output.<sup>531</sup> There were 100 hours of music performance and nine hours of repeats of music performance broadcast on the two channels during the year. These included ten dance programmes (including eight in May 1978 under the series title *Dance Month*), 39 concerts, seven *mixed extracts genre* (all in the series *The World of ...* produced by Yvonne Littlewood of Light Entertainment Department), ten operatic programmes, and eight recitals.

### Noteworthy programmes

NFA \**The Lively Arts – The New Year's Day Concert from Vienna* (? 1.1.78) RI 80

NFA \**Haitink conducts Mahler* (Hoedeman, Dutch TV 3.1.78) (Programme review board 4.1.78) The direction regarded as too fidgety compared to offerings from Music and Arts producers.

\**Karajan* (Burton 8.1.78) RI 79

*James Galway's World of Music* (Littlewood 13.2.78) RI 81

*Harry Mortimer's World of Music* (Littlewood 20.2.78) RI 78

*Owain Arwel Hughes World of Music* (Littlewood 13.3.78) RI 77

*Elijah* (Chappell/Buckton 19.3.78) (Programme review board 22.3.78) Programme commended with slight reservations for being 'rather rushed around.'

NFA \**Ashkenazy plays Mozart* (Greenberg 8.4.78) RI 83

NFA \**Young Musician of the Year: Concerto final* (Engelmann/Tipping 9.4.78) (*Radio Times* letters page 65 20.4.78) Very enthusiastic letter about the series in general and the final in particular. An acknowledgement from me in my role as producer was also published. RI 80



*Dance Month – The Taming of the Shrew* (Junkers 20.5.78) RI 79

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Dance Month – The Nutcracker* (Macheret 27.5.78) RI 84

*Stuart Burrows Sings* (H. Williams 1.7.78) RI 84

*Stuart Burrows Sings* (H. Williams 8.7.78) RI 77

*Stuart Burrows Sings* (H. Williams 15.7.78) RI 82

<sup>NFA</sup> \**First Night of the Proms* (Greenberg 21.7.78) (Programme review board 26.7.78) Brilliant direction of a fine performance.

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Sunday Prom* (Butler 6.8.78) RI 76

*Stuart Burrows Sings* (H. Williams 12.8.78) RI 76

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Sunday Prom* (Buckton 27.8.78) RI 77

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Live from the Proms* (Isted 28.8.78) RI 79

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Sunday Prom* (Buckton 3.9.78) RI 77

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Sunday Prom* (Greenberg 10.9.78) RI 77

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Leeds International Piano Competition* (Greenberg/Corden Two programmes – 15, 16.9.78, both in BBC archives) (Programme review board 20.9.78) Much praise for the productions and for the shooting, particularly of the piano. RIs 86 & 89

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Last Night of the Proms* (Engelmann 16.9.78) RI 79

*Horowitz* (Browning 24.9.78) RI 87

*In Performance – An Evening with the Royal Ballet* (Nears and Large 28.10.78) (Programme review board 1.11.78) The direction by both directors was warmly praised. 'The cutting and adroitness of it had fitted in so well with the musicality of the occasion.' RI 82

*Carlo Maria Giulini conducts Beethoven's Ninth Symphony* (Browning from America 29.10.78) (Programme review board 1.11.78) Curiously directed; HSFTel suggested [it] had made him realise how good the BBC's own Music and Arts direction was. Generally criticised.

*Tosca* (Bosio 25.11.78) RI 86

*Sleeping Beauty* (Large 24.12.78) (Programme Review Board 3.1.79) C.BB1 warmly commended the direction of this show by Brian Large. RI 81

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Itzhak Perlman plays Brahms* (Nupen 30.12.78) RI 80

## 1979

In 1979 there were six million monochrome television broadcast licences and nearly twelve million colour television broadcast licences purchased. The output of music, dance and opera amounted to 18 hours on BBC-1 and 124 hours on BBC-2, 1.5% of the total output.<sup>532</sup> There were 112 hours of music performance and 13 hours of repeats of music performance broadcast on the two channels during the year. These included eleven dance programmes, 36 concerts, eight *mixed extracts genre* (including six *The Much Loved Music Show*), 16 operatic programmes (including seven in April 1979 under the series title *Opera Month*), and eleven recitals.

### Noteworthy programmes

<sup>NFA</sup> \**New Year's Day Concert from Vienna* (Lanske 1.1.79) RI 89

*Itzhak Perlman and Pinchas Zukerman* (Nupen 1.1.79) RI 85

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Andre Previn's Music Night* (Engelmann 11.1.79) (Programme Review Board 17.1.79) It was agreed that the programme had been very well directed. RI 83



- NFA \**Andre Previn's Music Night* (Engelmann 18.1.79) RI 80
- NFA \**Pierrot Lunaire* (Nears 20.1.79) (Programme Review Board 24.1.79) Well directed.
- NFA \**Andre Previn's Music Night* (Butler 25.1.79) RI 77
- NFA \**Andre Previn's Music Night* (Butler 1.2.79) RI 80
- NFA \**Julian Bream and John Williams* (Greenberg 3.2.79) RI 79
- An Evening at the Russian Ballet* (Macheret 17.2.79) RI 81
- NFA \**Carmen* (Zeffirelli 1.4.79) RI 81
- NFA \**St. Matthew Passion* (Tipping/Greenberg 13.4.79) (Programme review board 18.4.79) AHMATel described this as 'a stunning programme, very well dressed and directed.' AHPresTel(Ops) added his praise for a splendid programme and DMDTel considered it a really great achievement for which congratulations were due both to Music and Arts and to Outside Broadcasts. AHMATel replied that it had been an 'unaided' BBC production for which great credit was due to Greenberg, David Ellis [of BBC North] and me. Won a British Academy Craft Award for best outside broadcast sound.
- The Crucifixion* (J Mervyn Williams 13.4.79) RI 85
- NFA \**La Bohème* (Zeffirelli 29.4.79) RI 78
- Ray Charles' World of Music* (Littlewood 13.5.79) RI 82
- \**Luisa Miller* (Large 4.6.79) RI 78
- NFA \**Sir Robert Mayer 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday* (Engelmann/Todds 6.6.79) RI 85
- NFA \**The Gypsy Princess* (Biro 6.6.79) RI 78
- An Evening at the Kirov Ballet* (Macheret 8.7.79) RI 81
- NFA \**The First Night of the Proms* (Greenberg 20.7.79) RI 80
- NFA \**Young Musicians of the World* (? 28.7.79) RI 83
- NFA \**The Sunday Prom* (Tipping 29.7.79) RI 79
- Young Musicians of Europe* (Kach 15.8.79) RI 81
- NFA \**The Sunday Prom* (Buckton 26.8.79) RI 79
- \**A Gala Evening from the Vienna Opera* (? 1.9.79) RI 79
- NFA \**Muti and the Philharmonia* (Greenberg 2.9.79) RI 77
- NFA \**The Sunday Prom* (Greenberg 9.9.79) (Programme review board 12.9.79) HOBGTel said 'The best programme of the week...' HMATel said that Greenberg was becoming a particularly distinguished director of performance programmes. RI 83
- NFA \**The Last Night of the Proms* (Engelmann 15.9.79) RI 82
- An Evening with Fred Ashton* (Nears 15.9.79) RI 79
- NFA \**Solti and Pollini* (Greenberg 20.10.79) RI 81
- NFA \**Solti at the Proms* (Burton 27.10.79) RI 76
- The Much Loved Music Show* (Vernon 11.11.79) RI 76
- NFA \**The Royal Concert* (Greenberg 25.11.79) (Programme Review Board 28.11.79) DMDTel noted good direction.
- \**Wiener Blut* (Lanske 1.12.79) RI 78
- \**The Alpine Symphony* (Engelmann 8.12.79) (Programme Review Board 12.12.79) Mr Ecclestone warmly commended the way in which cuts had been made to the instrumentalists before the first note of their individual contributions. RI 77
- The Much Loved Music Show* (Vernon 9.12.79) RI 78



*Cinderella* (Large 23.12.79) RI 79

*The Much Loved Music Show* (Vernon 23.12.79) RI 80

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Music for Christmas* (Butler 24.12.79) RI 80

*Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet: Double Bill* (Lockyer 26.12.79) RI 79

## 1980

In 1980 there were five million monochrome television broadcast licences and 13 million colour television broadcast licences purchased. The output of music, dance and opera amounted to 19 hours on BBC-1 and 78 hours on BBC-2, 1.0% of the total output.<sup>533</sup> There were 87 hours of music performance and ten hours of repeats of music performance broadcast on the two channels during the year. These included 20 dance programmes (including eight in May 1980 under the series title *Dance Month*), 40 concerts, five *mixed extracts genre* (four of them in the series *Stuart Burrows Sings*), ten operatic programmes, and 15 recitals.

### Noteworthy programmes

<sup>NFA</sup> \**New Year's Day Concert from Vienna* (Lanske 1.1.80) RI 86

*Stuart Burrows Sings* (H Williams 13.1.80) RI 79

*Stuart Burrows Sings* (H Williams 3.2.80) RI 78

*St David's Day Concert* (J Mervyn Williams 1.3.80) RI 78

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Dance Month: The London Festival Ballet in La Sylphide* (Bailey 31.5.80) The programme had been well directed by Derek Bailey, who was rapidly becoming to Dance Month what Brian Large was to performed music Programmes. RI 80

*Dance Month: Tales of Beatrix Potter* (Mills 1.6.80) RI 80

\**Edinburgh International Festival opening concert* (Greenberg 17.8.80) (Programme Review Board 20.8.80) Richard Somerset-Ward warmly commended Greenberg's directing of this concert. CIntR considered it marvellously done. RI 81

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The Last Night of the Proms* (Engelmann 13.9.80) RI 80

*Invitation to the Dance* (Sanders 23.9.80) RI 82

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Young Musicians of Europe* (Tipping 26.9.80) RI 77

*Gala Concert for St Andrew's Night* (Shepherd 30.11.80) RI 81

<sup>NFA</sup> \**Placido Domingo's Christmas Choice* (Engelmann 24.12.80) RI 81

*The Nutcracker* (Charmoli 26.12.80) RI 81

*Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet* (Nears 28.12.80) RI 84

## 1981

In 1981 there were four million monochrome television broadcast licences and 14 million colour television broadcast licences purchased. The output of music, dance and opera amounted to 14 hours on BBC-1 and 102 hours on BBC-2, 1.2% of the total output.<sup>534</sup> There were 89 hours of music performance and 13 hours of repeats of music performance broadcast on the two channels during the year. These included six dance programmes, 32 concerts, four *mixed extracts genre* (all in the series *The Much Loved Music Show*), 15 operatic programmes, and 13 recitals.

### Noteworthy programmes

<sup>NFA</sup> \**The New Year's Day Concert from Vienna* (Kach 1.1.81) RI 85



*\*The Tales of Hoffmann* (Large 2.1.81) RI 80

*The Much Loved Music Show* (Vernon 11, 18, 25.1.81, 1.2.81) RI's 83, 78, 80, 79

*Faust* (Large 7.2.81) RI 76

*The Marriage of Figaro* (Ponnelle 7.3.81) RI 80

*\*Live from the Met: La Traviata* (Large 28.3.81) RI 79

<sup>NFA</sup> *\*La fille mal gardée* (Vernon 4.5.81) (Programme Review Board 6.5.81) Philip Lewis (HEEPTel) noted very good production by John Vernon. Keith Williams (HPDTel) said it had been an occasion and beautifully shot. RI 82

*Mozart: the last decade* (J Mervyn Williams 10.7.81) RI 79

<sup>NFA</sup> *\*Andre Previn and friends* (Engelmann 16.7.81) RI 82

*Mozart: the last decade* (J Mervyn Williams 17.7.81) RI 80

*Stuart Burrows Sings* (J Mervyn Williams 24.7.81) RI 83

*Stuart Burrows Sings* (J Mervyn Williams 31.7.81) RI 85

*The Sunday Prom* (Butler 2.8.81) RI 79

*Live from the Proms* (Greenberg 14.8.81) RI 81

*Stuart Burrows Sings* (J Mervyn Williams 21.8.81) RI 79

*Stuart Burrows Sings* (J Mervyn Williams 28.8.81) RI 79

<sup>NFA</sup> *\*Solti conducts Wagner* (Burton 31.8.81) RI 78

*Stuart Burrows Sings* (J Mervyn Williams 4.9.81) RI 83

<sup>NFA</sup> *\*The Sunday Prom* (Burton 6.9.81) (Programme Review Board 9.9.81) HMATel commended a performance of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, brilliantly directed.

<sup>NFA</sup> *\*Last Night of the Proms* (Greenberg 12.9.81) RI 81

*\*Leeds International Pianoforte Competition* (Tipping/Corden 18/19.9.81) RI 84, 82 respectively

*New York City Ballet* (Eriksen 12.12.81) RI 78

*Margot Fonteyn introduces the London Festival Ballet* (Greenberg 25.12.81) RI 82

## 1982

In 1982 there were four million monochrome television broadcast licences and 15 million colour television broadcast licences purchased. The output of music, dance and opera amounted to 19 hours on BBC-1 and 86 hours on BBC-2, 1.0% of the total output.<sup>535</sup> There were 108 hours of music performance and five hours of repeats of music performance broadcast on the two channels during the year. These included nine dance programmes, 55 concerts, one *mixed extracts genre*, 15 operatic programmes (including the ten acts of Wagner's Ring cycle transmitted as separate broadcasts), and twelve recitals. As explained above, no Reaction Indices or Appreciation Indices were published between April 1982 and December 1982.

### Noteworthy programmes

*Aida* (Large 2.1.82) RI 79

*La Bohème* (Large 20.2.82) RI 77

*Kyung Wha Chung plays Bach* (Hunter 11.3.82) RI 76

*Manon* (Nears 13.3.82) RI 79

<sup>NFA</sup> *\*Messiah* (Tipping 20.3.82) RI 78



*The Much Loved Music Show* (Vernon 21.3.82) RI 80

*The Much Loved Music Show* (Vernon 23.12.82) RI 77

*Service of Nine Lessons and Carols* (Griffin 24.12.82) RI 85

*Call Me Kiri* (Burton 26.12.82) RI 82



## APPENDIX II PROGRAMME DETAILS

The programmes below are mentioned in the text of the thesis. The programmes are listed in chronological order of transmission. Each entry follows a standard format:

**Programme name as billed in *Radio Times*: date of first transmission (Director; Producer)**

Duration; transmission time; date of recording; date of repeat transmissions; location of production; artists; repertoire; viewing figure and reaction index; programme number; tape spool number; location of recorded material (WMR = BBC Film and Videotape Library, Windmill Road, Brentford. NFA = National Film Archive.)

**Bolero: 8<sup>th</sup> October 1937 (Munro)**

10'; 2100; live studio performance; Alexandra Palace Studio 1 (captions in Studio 2); BBC Television Orchestra conducted by Hyam Greenbaum; Ravel *Bolero*; not recorded. (Note that the script specifically mentions 'Studio 1' and 'Studio 2', and not 'A' and 'B' which were the correct designations for the Alexandra Palace studios.)

**Pride o' the Green: 20<sup>th</sup> November 1937 (Kelsall)**

35'; 1525; live studio performance; Alexandra Palace Studio 1; repeated 2100 27<sup>th</sup> November 1937; artists unknown; *Pride o' the Green*, words by Rae Elrick, music by Ian Whyte; not recorded.

**Tristan and Isolde: 24<sup>th</sup> January 1938 (Bower)**

65'; 1500; live studio performance; Alexandra Palace Studio 1 (orchestra and singers in Studio 2); repeated 2100 the same day; actors: Basil Bartlett, Oriel Ross, Mary Alexander, Paul Jones, Hugh Laing, Peter Garoff; singers: John Wright, Isobel Baillie, Gwladys Garside, Robert Easton, George Baker; BBC Television Orchestra conducted by Hyam Greenbaum; Wagner *Tristan und Isolde (Act 2)*; not recorded.

**A Wedding Bouquet: 25<sup>th</sup> April 1938 (Bower)**

30'; 2125; live studio performance; repeated 1525 27<sup>th</sup> April 1938; Alexandra Palace Studio A; The Vic-Wells Ballet: Margot Fonteyn, Robert Helpmann, Mary Honer, June Brae; BBC Television Orchestra and Vic-Wells Opera Group conducted by Hyam Greenbaum; Berners *A Wedding Bouquet*, words by Gertrude Stein, choreography by Frederick Ashton, costumes by Lord Berners; not recorded.

**Checkmate: 8<sup>th</sup> May 1938 (Munro)**

55'; 2125; live studio performance; repeated 1520 13<sup>th</sup> May 1938, 2120 19<sup>th</sup> February 1939, 1520 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1939; Alexandra Palace Studios A & B; The Vic-Wells Ballet: Robert Helpmann (Frederick Ashton 13<sup>th</sup> May 1938), Pamela May, Harold Turner, June Brae; the BBC Television Orchestra conducted by Constant Lambert; discussion group: Ninette de Valois, Arthur Bliss, Edward McKnight Kauffer; Bliss *Checkmate*, choreography Ninette de Valois, costumes Edward McKnight Kauffer; not recorded.

**Les Patineurs: 7<sup>th</sup> December 1938 (Munro)**

25'; 2150; live studio performance; Alexandra Palace Studio B; Vic-Wells Ballet, Mary Honer, Elizabeth Miller, Margot Fonteyn, Robert Helpmann, June Brae, Pamela May, BBC Television Orchestra conducted by Hyam Greenbaum; *Les Patineurs* Meyerbeer arr. Lambert; costumes William Chappell; choreography Frederick Ashton; not recorded.



**The Sleeping Princess: 25<sup>th</sup> March 1939 (Munro)**

75'; 1500; live studio performance; repeated 29<sup>th</sup> March 1939 at 2110; Alexandra Palace Studios A & B; Vic-Wells Ballet, Margot Fonteyn, Robert Helpmann, John Hart, Joy Newton, Claude Newman, Jill Gregory, Pamela May, Mary Honer, Elizabeth Miller, Julia Farron, June Brae, John Greenwood, Harold Turner, Frederick Ashton, William Chappell, Frank Staff, Ursula Moreton, Augmented BBC Television Orchestra conducted by Constant Lambert; *The Sleeping Beauty* Tchaikovsky; costumes Nadia Benois; choreography Marius Petipa; not recorded.

**La Chauve Souris: 28<sup>th</sup> March 1939 (Bate)**

30'; 2100; repeated 1500 30<sup>th</sup> March 1939; live studio performance; Alexandra Palace Studio B; the Theatre of the Chauve Souris, Moscow; unnamed orchestra; *Love in the Ranks*, *Babi*, *Abduction from the Seraglio*, *Russian Interlude*, *Dragon-fly*, *L'amour fatal*, *Katinka*; not recorded.

**La Chauve Souris: 14<sup>th</sup> July 1939 (Bate)**

35'; 2100; live studio performance; Alexandra Palace Studio B; the Theatre of the Chauve Souris, Moscow; unnamed orchestra; *Trepak*, *L'amour fatal*, *Winter Dream*, *Dragon-fly*, *Russian holiday*; not recorded.

**Waltztime: 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1951 (Foa, Simpson)**

45'; 2015; live outside broadcast; 1951 Radio Show Earls Court; Alma Caesari, Murray Dickie, Violetta Elvin, John Field, Maureen Springer, Ernest Frank, Diane Dubarry, Martin Lawrence, unnamed orchestra conducted by Eric Robinson; Johann Strauss *Potpourri*, Verdi *La Traviata (Brindisi)*, Tchaikovsky *Swan Lake (Pas de deux Acts II & III)*, Offenbach *Les Contes d'Hoffmann (Olympia scene)*, Gounod *Faust (waltz)*; not recorded.

**Music in View: 25<sup>th</sup> May 1952 (Simpson)**

20'; 2150; live studio performance; Alexandra Palace Studio A; Gladys Whitred, Olive Zorian, Enid Simon, Max Worthley, Noel Mewton-Wood; Villa-Lobos *The Song of the Black Swan*, Liszt *Valse oubliée*, Morley *Sweet nymph*, Schubert *Violin sonatina in D*, trad. *I know where I'm going*, Carey *Love in a Village*, Chopin *Tarantella*; not recorded.

**Pagliacci: 9<sup>th</sup> October 1952 (Fawcett)**

62.27 (75' slot); 2015; repeated 1945 13<sup>th</sup> October 1952; live studio performance; unknown location; Arthur Servent, Eugenie Castle, Grahame Clifford, Eric Whitley, John Cameron, unnamed orchestra/Eric Robinson; Leoncavallo *I Pagliacci* (sung in English); LMA5957E; VC191800; WMR.

**Les Sylphides: 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1953 (Simpson)**

32.47 (30' slot); 2015; live studio performance; Lime Grove G; introduced by Tamara Karsavina, Alicia Markova, Violetta Elvin, Svetlana Beriosova, John Field, Unnamed orchestra/Eric Robinson; choreographer Fokine, Chopin arr. Glazunov *Les Sylphides*; RI 73; LMA6934T; VC242531; WMR.

**The Conductor Speaks – Leopold Stokowski: 7<sup>th</sup> May 1954 (Bate)**

41.22 (45' slot); 2125; live outside broadcast; unknown location (probably Maida Vale 1); BBC Symphony Orchestra/Stokowski; Purcell *Cibell*, Purcell *The Fairy Queen* – excerpts, Purcell *Dido and Aeneas – Dido's Lament* (orchestral arrangement.), Bach *Toccatina and fugue in D minor*, Bax – *Tintagel* (excerpt, illustrated with specially shot



film of Tintagel, Cornwall), Enescu – *Rumanian Rhapsody* (excerpts); RI 70; LMA5621L; VC265749; WMR.

**Swan Lake: 9<sup>th</sup> June 1954 (Simpson)**

? (telerecording incomplete 40' slot); 2135; studio performance; Lime Grove G; Fonteyn, Somes, London Philharmonic Orchestra/Robert Irving; Tchaikovsky *Swan Lake – pas de deux* from acts 2&3; choreographer unknown; RI 71; LMA6930S; VC264281; WMR.

**International Celebrity Recital – Myra Hess: 20<sup>th</sup> October 1954 (Foy)**

29.40 (30' slot); 2130; telerecording of live studio performance; unknown studio location; Myra Hess; Bach arr. Hess *Jesu, joy of man's desiring*, Beethoven *Sonata in A flat Op. 110*. Bach *Adagio from Toccata in C*; VF 9.0m; RI 63; LMA6775A; VC270178; WMR.

**International Celebrity Recital – Benno Moiseiwitch: 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1954 (Foy)**

28.30 (30' slot); 2115; telerecording of live studio performance; unknown studio location; Benno Moiseiwitch; Schumann – *Warum? Grillen, Träumerei, Träumewirren*, Wagner-Liszt *Tannhäuser overture*; VF 10.0m; RI 62; LMA5895E; VC196921; WMR.

**Sunday Celebrity Recital: 7<sup>th</sup> August 1955 (Simpson)**

? (Telerecording incomplete) (30' slot); 2215; live studio performance; unknown location; Paul Tortelier and Ernest Lush; Weber arr. Piatigorsky *Sicilienne and variations*, Chopin arr. Bazleff (?) *Prelude in E minor*, Nin *Chants d'Espagne: Granadina*; VF 6.0m; RI 62; LMA5295W; VC271653; WMR.

**La Traviata: 10<sup>th</sup> October 1955 (Foa; Rogers (assistant producer))**

97.17 (90' slot); 2045; live studio performance; repeated 2045 13.10.55; Lime Grove studio G; Heather Harper (Violetta), Thomas Round (Alfredo), Jess Walters (Germand), Patricia Kern (Flora), London Philharmonic Orchestra/ Edward Renton; *La Traviata* Verdi (shortened, sung in English); VF 14.0m RI 73 (repeat VF 9.0m RI 67); LMA7025N; VC170303; WMR.

**The Saint of Bleeker Street: 4<sup>th</sup> October 1956 (Cartier)**

107.28 (120' slot); 2000; live studio performance; repeated from telerecording on 7<sup>th</sup> October 1956 and 19<sup>th</sup> April 1957; Riverside 1 (set and singers), Riverside 2 (orchestra); Virginia Copeland, Raymond Nilsson, Rosalind Elias, June Bronhill, Jess Walters, London Symphony Orchestra/Thomas Schippers; Menotti's *The Saint of Bleeker Street*; VF 12.0m RI 52 (7.10.56 VF 4.0m RI 65; 19.4.57 VF 5.0m RI 57); LMA6761H; VC125693; WMR.

**William Walton: 13<sup>th</sup> February 1957 (Craxton)**

34.28 (30' slot); 2030; live outside broadcast performance; Royal Festival Hall; Gregor Piatigorsky, BBC Symphony Orchestra/Sir Malcolm Sargent; Walton's 'Cello Concerto (1<sup>st</sup> European performance); VF 10.0m RI 38; LMA6587B; VC269744; WMR.

**Celebrity Recital: 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1957 (Foy)**

29.06 (30' slot); 2215; live studio performance; Riverside 1; Nathan Milstein, Ernest Lush; Mozart *Adagio in E*; Mozart *Rondo in C*; Paganini *Caprices in C & A minor*; Falla *Jota & Asturiana*; Novacek *Perpetuum Mobile*; VF 10.0m RI 62; LMA5296P; VC196920; WMR.



**The Nutcracker: 21<sup>st</sup> December 1958 (Dale)**

59.30 (60' slot); 2135; live studio performance; repeated from telerecording at 1515 on 29<sup>th</sup> March 1959; Riverside 1 (set and dancers), Riverside 2 (orchestra); Margot Fonteyn, Michael Somes, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra/Hugo Rignold; Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker* (shortened); VF 15.0m RI 86 (repeat VF 5.0m RI 76); LMA6173D; VC265262; WMR.

**Celebrity Recital: 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1959 (Todds)**

19.06 (20' slot); 2245; live studio performance; Riverside 2; Clifford Curzon; Schumann's *Scenes from Childhood*; Brahms *Capriccio in D minor*; VF 2.0m RI 57; LMA5299X; VC196924; WMR.

**Two Brothers: 16<sup>th</sup> August 1959 (Simpson)**

27.30 (30' slot); 2200; live studio performance; Riverside 1; Gillian Martlew, John Chesworth, Norman Morrice, Aeolian String Quartet; music Dohnanyi; VF 2.7m; RI 57; LMA5259H; VC175694; WMR.

**Othello: 1<sup>st</sup> October 1959 (Cartier)**

(120' slot); 2000; live studio performance; Riverside 1 & 2 (singers and sets), Hammersmith Town Hall (orchestra); Charles Holland, Ronald Lewis, John Ford, Heidi Krall, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra/Brian Balkwill; Verdi's *Otello* (sung in English); VF 6.4m; RI 68; LMA5921R; VC56031 (1<sup>st</sup> reel of 2?); WMR.

**Pineapple Poll: 1<sup>st</sup> November 1959 (Dale)**

45.50 (45' slot); 2050; live studio performance; repeated from telerecording 5<sup>th</sup> June 1960; Riverside 1; Merle Park, David Blair, Stanley Holden, Royal Ballet, London Symphony Orchestra/Charles Mackerras; *Pineapple Poll* Sir Arthur Sullivan arr. Mackerras; choreography John Cranko; designs Osbert Lancaster; VF 11.8m RI 70; LMA6167N; VC216834; WMR.

**International Concert Hall: 9<sup>th</sup> May 1961 (Todds)**

51.23 (50' slot); 2220; telerecording of studio performance; TC studio 4; Yehudi Menuhin, Berlin RIAS Symphony Orchestra/Ferenc Fricsay; Rossini *La Scala di Seta* overture, Bruch *Violin Concerto No. 1*, Beethoven *Leonore No. 3* overture; VF 4.7m RI 81; LMA5557Y; VC223145; WMR.

**World Singer: 27<sup>th</sup> January 1962 (Todds)**

19.41 (20' slot); 2255; live studio performance; Riverside Studio 2; Teresa Stich-Randall, Gerald Moore; Haydn *Piercing Eyes*, Mozart *To Chloe*, Schubert *Nacht und Träume*, Schumann *To Spring*, Fauré *Clair de Lune*, Debussy *Green*, Trad. *Hi-ho the preacher man*; VF 2.2m RI 57; LMA7175W; VC256897; WMR.

**Jacqueline du Pre: 4<sup>th</sup> February 1962 (Foy)**

13.27 (15' slot); 2235; live studio performance; Television Centre Studio 4; Jacqueline du Pre, Iris du Pre; Mendelssohn Song without words, Granados arr. Cassado Intermezzo from Goyescas, Saint-Saens *Allegro appassionato*; VF 1.6m RI 68; LMA5637S; VC259392; WMR.

**The Beggar's Opera: 31<sup>st</sup> October 1963 (Rogers)**

94.45 (95' slot); 2110; studio performance: Television Centre Studio 4; Janet Baker, Heather Harper, Kenneth Mackellar, The English Opera Group, English Chamber Orchestra/Meredith Davies; John Gay (re-orchestrated Benjamin Britten) *The Beggar's Opera*; production Colin Graham; VF 8.4m RI 59; LMA5010S; VC272296; WMR.



**La Traviata: 28<sup>th</sup> April 1964 (Rogers)**

92.07 (90' slot); 2125; BBC-1; studio performance; (repeated 29<sup>th</sup> July 1964 BBC-2; 8<sup>th</sup> April 1966 BBC-1); Television Centre Studio 4; Mary Costa, John Wakefield, Thomas Hemsley, London Symphony Orchestra/Brian Balkwill; Verdi *La Traviata* (abridged; sung in English); production Peter Ebert; VF 10.9m RI 80; (8.4.66 VF 9.8m RI 72); LMA7026H; VC272400; WMR.

**Iolanthe: 1<sup>st</sup> October 1964 (Rogers)**

78.39 (80' slot); 2130; BBC-1; studio performance; Television Centre Studio 3; Patricia Kern, Elizabeth Harwood, Heather Begg, Julian Moyle, Sadler's Wells Chorus and Orchestra/Alexander Faris; Gilbert and Sullivan's *Iolanthe*; VF 7.1m RI 70; LMA5604L; VC215063; WMR.

**Il Trovatore: 27<sup>th</sup> December 1964 (Vernon)**

66.10 (65' slot); 2005; BBC-2; telerecorded relay from Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; Gwyneth Jones, Peter Glossop, Bruno Prevedi, Giulietta Simonato, Orchestra of the Royal Opera House/Carlo Maria Giulini; Verdi's *Il Trovatore* (extracts); no figures; LMA 7064J; VC163709; WMR.

**Menuhin at Fifty: 1<sup>st</sup> May 1966 (Large)**

61.43 (60' slot); 2155; BBC-1; telerecording of relay from Royal Festival Hall; Yehudi Menuhin, Hephzibah Menuhin, Yalta Menuhin, Jeremy Menuhin, London Philharmonic Orchestra/Sir Adrian Boult; Beethoven *Romance in F*, Mozart *Concerto for three pianos*; VF 7.1m RI 86; LMA6915F; VC224259; WMR.

**Leonard Bernstein conducts: 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1967 (Large, Burton)**

51.40 (50' slot); 2150; BBC-1; telerecording of relay from Fairfield Halls, Croydon; London Symphony Orchestra/Leonard Bernstein; Stravinsky *The Rite of Spring*; VF 3.3m RI 71; LMA5678B; VC263825; WMR.

**Eugene Onegin: 6<sup>th</sup> March 1967 (Coleman, Messina)**

130.30 (130' slot); 2105; BBC-2; videotape recording of studio production; Television Centre studio 1 (singers), Television Theatre (orchestra); Tchaikovsky *Eugene Onegin* (complete, sung in English); John Shirley-Quirk, Margaret Price, Robert Tear, Yvonne Minton, London Symphony Orchestra/David Lloyd-Jones; VF 0.2m RI 70; LMA1032W; VC186613/VC186614; WMR.

**The Nutcracker: 10<sup>th</sup> March 1968 (Vernon)**

110.23 (120' slot); 2005; BBC-2; videotape recording of outside broadcast; Royal Opera House; Nureyev, Merle Park, Royal Opera House Orchestra/John Lanchbery; Tchaikovsky *The Nutcracker* chor. Nureyev; VF 2.6m RI 81; LON9562L; VC111756; WMR.

**La Vida Breve: 13<sup>th</sup> October 1968 (Coleman; Messina)**

64.18 (65' slot); 2105; BBC-2; videotape recording of studio performance; Television Centre Studio 6 (set and singers), Riverside 1 (orchestra); Margaret Price, Ermanno Mauro, Inia Te Wiata, New Philharmonia Orchestra/James Lockhart; Manuel de Falla *La Vida Breve* (sung in English); VF 0.6m RI 68; LMA1717T; VC195702; WMR; NFA.

**Stokowski Conducts: 28<sup>th</sup> September 1969 (Todds)**

60.38 (60' slot); 2015; BBC-2; videotape recording of outside broadcast; Fairfield Halls, Croydon; London Philharmonic Orchestra/Leopold Stokowski; Beethoven 5<sup>th</sup>



Symphony, Schubert *Unfinished* Symphony; VF 1.1m RI 80; LMA1733A; VC53476; WMR.

**The Beethoven Symphonies: 26<sup>th</sup> June 1970 (Todds)**

77.55 (75' slot); 2110; BBC-2; videotape recording of outside broadcast; Royal Festival Hall, London; repeated 4<sup>th</sup> August 1972 on BBC-2 at 2050; Beethoven Symphonies 4 & 5; New Philharmonia Orchestra/Otto Klemperer; VF 1.1m RI 77; LMA1265E; VC34837; WMR.

**Gala Performance: 27<sup>th</sup> March 1970 (Foy)**

61.04 (60' slot); 2130; BBC-1; videotape recording of outside broadcast; Coliseum Theatre, London; Margot Fonteyn, Rudolf Nureyev, Placido Domingo, Teresa Stratas, John Ogden, Sadler's Wells Orchestra/Charles Mackerras; *Granada*, Bizet *Flower Song* from *Carmen*, Liszt *Hungarian Fantasia*, Drigo and Minkus *Le Corsaire – Pas de deux*; Puccini *La Bohème – finale Act 1*; VF13.5m RI83; LMA1256H; VC61438; WMR.

**Tchaikovsky Prizewinner: 10<sup>th</sup> August 1970 (Tipping)**

29.36 (30' slot); 2230; BBC-2; videotape recording of studio performance; TC studio 2 (?); John Lill; Liszt *Paganini Study no. 2*, Chopin *Ballade no. 1*, Bach *Prelude and Fugue in F sharp minor*, Rachmaninov *Etude-Tableau in E flat minor Op. 39*; VF 0.7m RI ?; LMA9029Y; VC138331; WMR.

**The Beethoven Piano Concertos: 5<sup>th</sup> April 1974 (Large)**

61.10 (60' slot); 2210; BBC-2; videotape recording of outside broadcast; Royal Festival Hall, London; Vladimir Ashkenazy, London Philharmonic Orchestra/Bernard Haitink; Beethoven *Leonore No. 2 Overture*, Beethoven *Piano Concerto No. 5 'Emperor'*; VF 2.2m RI 82; LMA1356J; VC138360; WMR.

**Omnibus at the Proms: 4<sup>th</sup> August 1974 (Greenberg)**

54.43 (50' slot); 2230; BBC-1; videotape recording of outside broadcast; Royal Albert Hall, London; BBC Symphony Orchestra/Pierre Boulez; Debussy *Images*, Schoenberg *Accompaniment to a Film Score*; VF 3.0m RI 55; LMA1071R; VC 61671; WMR; NFA.

**The Marriage of Figaro: 21<sup>st</sup> September 1974 (Coleman: Messina)**

164.56 (170' slot); 2100; BBC-2; videotape recording of studio production; Television Centre Studio 1 (set and singers) Studio 3 (orchestra); repeated 14.3.76; Thomas Allen, Norma Burrowes, John Shirley-Quirk, Elizabeth Harwood, Rosanne Creffield, New Philharmonia Orchestra/Charles Mackerras; Mozart *The Marriage of Figaro* (sung in English); VF 2.0m RI 71; LMA1349A; VC235211/235212; WMR; NFA.

**André Previn's Music Night: 18<sup>th</sup> June 1975 (Culshaw)**

48.42 (50' slot); 2200; BBC-1; videotape recording of studio performance; Television Centre Studio 1; repeated 27.11.75 on BBC-2; Horacio Gutierrez, London Symphony Orchestra/André Previn; Tchaikovsky *Piano Concerto No. 1*, Dukas *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*; VF 9.3m RI 77; LMA1148D; VC164583; WMR; NFA.

**André Previn's Music Night: 9<sup>th</sup> July 1975 (Culshaw and Isted)**

52.42 (55' slot); 2155; BBC-1; videotape recording of studio performance; Television Centre Studio 1; repeated 18.12.75 on BBC-2; Christina Ortiz, London Symphony Orchestra/André Previn; Strauss *Emperor Waltz*, Dohnanyi *Variations on a Nursery Song*, Ravel *La Valse*; VF 6.4m RI 68; LMA1147J; VC164560; WMR; NFA.



**United Nations Day Concert: 26<sup>th</sup> October 1975 (Culshaw)**

51.14 (55' slot); 2015; BBC-2; videotape recording of outside broadcast; General Assembly Hall of United Nations, New York; The Vienna Symphony Orchestra/Carlo Maria Giulini; Beethoven *Symphony No. 7*; VF 1.3m RI 63; LMA1521S; VC165338; WMR; NFA.

**Gianni Schicchi: 30<sup>th</sup> May 1976 (Foy)**

57.40 (60' slot); 2015; BBC-2; videotape of studio recording; BBC Birmingham studio; Zero Mostel, Norma Burrowes, David Hillman, Sheila Rex, Don Garrard, Orchestra of the Royal Opera House/Robin Stapleton; Puccini *Gianni Schicchi*; VF 0.8m RI 66; WMR; NFA.

**The Sunday Prom: 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1976 (Tipping)**

51.36 (50' slot); 2230; BBC-1; videotape recording of outside broadcast; Royal Albert Hall; The National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain/David Atherton; Sibelius *First Symphony*; VF 3.6m RI 68; LMA1143H; VC165408; WMR; NFA.

**Hansel and Gretel: 27<sup>th</sup> December 1976 (Large)**

(100' slot); 1830; BBC-2; videotape recording of studio performance: Television Centre Studio 1 (singers and sets), Studio 3 (orchestra); Patricia Parker, Elizabeth Gale, Ann Howard, Benjamin Luxon, New Philharmonia Orchestra/David Lloyd-Jones; Humperdinck *Hansel and Gretel* (sung in English); VF 2.3m RI 61; WMR; NFA.

**André Previn's Music Night: 25<sup>th</sup> May 1977 (Chappell)**

51.18 (50' slot); 2140; BBC-1; videotape recording of outside broadcast; Fairfield Halls, Croydon; Martha Argerich, London Symphony Orchestra/André Previn; Prokofiev *Lieutenant Kije*, Prokofiev *Piano Concerto No. 3*; VF 6.5m RI 70; LMA1181J; VC43739; WMR; NFA.

**Ashkenazy plays Mozart: 8<sup>th</sup> April 1978 (Greenberg)**

76.40 (80' slot); 2015; BBC-2; videotape recording of outside broadcast; repeated 12<sup>th</sup> April 1980; Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford; Vladimir Ashkenazy, Philharmonia Orchestra; Mozart *Piano Concerto in G K 453*, Mozart *Piano Concerto in C K 467*; VF 1.2m RI 83; LMA1579B; VC194373; WMR; NFA.

**The Sixth Leeds International Pianoforte Competition 1978: 15<sup>th</sup> September 1978 (Greenberg; Corden)**

154.57 (135' slot); 1845; BBC-2; live broadcast from Leeds Town Hall; Kathryn Stott (1), Etsuko Terama (2), Lydia Artymiw (3), BBC Northern Symphony Orchestra/Norman Del Mar; (1) Beethoven *Piano Concerto No. 5 'Emperor'*, (2) *Schumann Piano Concerto*, (3) *Brahms Piano Concerto No. 1*; VF 1.9m RI 86; LMAC264X; VC195785/198505; WMR; NFA.

**Pierrot Lunaire: 20<sup>th</sup> January 1979 (Nears)**

(60' slot); 2105; BBC-2; filmed performance; The Round House, London; Christopher Bruce, Lucy Burge, Leigh Warren; Schoenberg *Pierrot Lunaire* chor. Glen Tetley; LMAG060K; VC173034; WMR; NFA.

**André Previn's Music Night: 1<sup>st</sup> February 1979 (Butler; Engelmann)**

50.47 (50' slot); 2215; BBC-1; videotape recording of outside broadcast; Fairfield Halls, Croydon; John Williams, London Symphony Orchestra/André Previn; Rossini *The Italian Girl in Algiers Overture*, Rodrigo *Concierto de Aranjuez*, Ravel *Daphnis and Chloe: Second suite*; VF 6.6m RI80; LMA1421W; VC195652; WMR; NFA.



**St. Matthew Passion: 13<sup>th</sup> April 1979 (Tipping; Greenberg)**

189.08 (230' slot); 1100 (Part 1) 1430 (Part 2); BBC-2; live outside broadcast; Lincoln Cathedral; Alan Titus, Jon Garrison, Sheila Armstrong, Ann Murray, John Elwes, James Morris, BBC Singers, BBC Northern Singers, Choir of Chetham's School of Music, BBC Northern Symphony Orchestra/Raymond Leppard; Bach *St. Matthew Passion* (sung in English); VF 0.4m RI ?; LMAF033P; VC208873/209553; WMR; NFA.

**Solti at the Proms: 27<sup>th</sup> October 1979 (Burton)**

32.39 (35' slot); 2100; BBC-2; videotape recording of outside broadcast; repeated 29<sup>th</sup> August 1981; Royal Albert Hall, London; Chicago Symphony Orchestra/Sir Georg Solti; Beethoven *Symphony no. 1*; VF 1.6m RI 76; LMAE368J; VC209351; WMR; NFA.

**Solti conducts Russian music: 7<sup>th</sup> January 1980 (Burton)**

58.02 (60' slot); 2100; BBC-2; videotape recording of outside broadcast; Orchestral Hall, Chicago; Chicago Symphony Orchestra/Sir Georg Solti; Mussorgsky *Khovantchina Overture*, Prokofiev '*Classical*' *Symphony*, Shostakovich *1<sup>st</sup> Symphony*; VF 1.2m RI 74; LMAF051J; VC207716; WMR; NFA.

**La fille mal gardée: 4<sup>th</sup> May 1981 (Vernon)**

96.50 (100' slot); 1910; BBC-1; videotape recording of outside broadcast; Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; Lesley Collier, Coleman, Orchestra of the Royal Opera House/John Lanchbery; Hérold arr. Lanchbery *La fille mal gardée*; VF 7.6m RI 82; LMAG371A; VC995; WMR; NFA.



## APPENDIX III RANK AGGREGATION

In Chapter 8 the ranking of the best directors is derived by using the **rank aggregation** technique which was first propounded in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by Jean-Charles de Borda, known as ‘election by order of merit’ which has been used for this process of ranking. It assumes that each of the three lists of perceived competence of directors shown in Figure 14 is of equal importance. The technique is to place the lists in order and to allocate to the director a score equal to their position in the list.<sup>536</sup> Each director will get three scores which are added together. The highest rated director will be the one with the lowest combined score.<sup>a</sup> The result of this process is shown in Figure 15, but now with each director’s positional score and the cumulative total.

To give a concrete example: Craxton is 14<sup>th</sup> in the order of RIs; he is 6<sup>th</sup> in the *Radio Times* list; and he is 9<sup>th</sup> in the citations from senior management. His cumulative score is therefore  $14 + 6 + 9 = 29$ , the 6<sup>th</sup> best score in the ‘order of merit’. There are other ways of combining these ratings by giving them weightings that could reflect the perceived relative importance of each list: no attempt has been made to do this.

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<sup>a</sup> De Borda in fact suggested the reverse technique – he gave the lowest ranked a ‘score’ of 0, the next lowest 1 and so on. After adding together the scores, the highest ranked is the one with the highest aggregate score.



# APPENDIX IV THE EFFECT OF TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES

## Introduction

While this thesis is not the place for a comprehensive history of the technology of television, the constraints of the hardware have affected how directors have been able to put their ideas on the television screen. In the analysis of programmes that forms Chapter 9 of this thesis it will have to be borne in mind that directors were frequently frustrated by the studios, cameras, lenses, mounts and recording techniques available. Throughout the history of television, directors have been dependent on the technology with which they work. This has had several effects. First, they were restricted in achieving what they wanted because of these shortcomings. Second, the technology developers listened to the frustrations of the directors and developed ways of overcoming them. Third, when new technology was introduced, the more adventurous directors found new, unexpected ways of using it. This cycle of frustration, resolution and extension has continued throughout the history of television programme making.

## Studios

When BBC television started at Alexandra Palace in 1936, there were two studios having approximately the same dimensions, about 9m by 21m. They were known as Studios 'A' and 'B' and were on the same floor of the building, connected by a long corridor. In November 1936 one studio was equipped with cameras provided by Baird while the other contained EMI equipment: the two sets of equipment were incompatible. In February 1937 the Baird equipment ceased to be used but remained in position until autumn 1938 when the studio was refurbished with more EMI equipment. The studios were incredibly cramped, especially for dance where the more extravagant moves by dancers were quite impossible. At first each studio was used for a week's transmissions and then, while the other studio was in use, for rehearsals. The only compromise apparent from the schedules is that a camera in studio 'B' could be looking at captions required for a production being transmitted in studio 'A' and *vice versa*.<sup>a</sup>

In 1950 the BBC acquired four larger studios in Lime Grove, Shepherd's Bush which would now be available for dance and orchestral broadcasts. This made more ambitious programmes practicable, especially since it was now possible to put an orchestra in one studio with singers or dancers performing on large sets in the other studio. The largest ballets were still cramped when a full *corps de ballet* was required and in order to cope with the biggest productions now being transmitted from the mid-1950s, the BBC started using two studios in Hammersmith known as Riverside each with a floor area of about 455 square metres. Dale said that by putting the orchestra in one studio and the sets and dancers in the other she found that, at last, she was able to get cameras far enough away from dancers that a natural perspective was possible for the first time in television history.<sup>537</sup> The acoustics at Riverside, and the presence of a dubbing theatre large enough for a full orchestra, made it popular with music producers. Salter expressed the fear that the move to Television Centre in the 1960s would be a backward

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<sup>a</sup> From February 1937 until autumn 1938 one of the studios was only available for rehearsals, not transmissions.



step.<sup>538</sup> Television Centre opened in 1960 and was eventually to have one very large studio and three large studios as well as a number of medium sized and smaller studios. In these studios virtually anything that music producers wished to mount could be accommodated; opera, large symphonic works and dance were no longer restricted by the space available. There were two main problems with all the studios when used for music productions. First, the sound in the studios was very dead and musicians disliked playing in them. Benjamin Britten, for example, after recording *Billy Budd* in the television studios in 1966, refused to allow his operas *Peter Grimes* and *Owen Wingrave* to be recorded under the same conditions.<sup>539</sup> A number of possible solutions were tried, including a foldback echo system called 'ambiophony'. None was successful and it was only possible to produce an acceptable sound through post-production manipulation. Second, the floors were concrete with plastic coverings and lacked elasticity for dancers. There was no satisfactory solution to this problem.

### **Cameras, lenses and mountings 1936-39**

In the Alexandra Palace studios the EMI cameras – and Baird cameras – had a single lens; this was screwed into the front of the camera housing. A number of lenses were available with different focal lengths so that a director could decide on the perspective required from that particular camera. It was not possible to change the lens during a programme so the perspective, once chosen, was fixed. The cameras could be placed on a number of different 'mounts', though, as with the lenses, once chosen at the beginning of a programme, the mount could not be quickly changed. Some of these mounts, such as the 'Iron Man' were, in practice, immovable. Others resembled perambulators and had limited manoeuvrability. Thus, for most of the shots the only change in perspective available to the director was the movement of artists, or the limited tracking forwards and backwards of the perambulators.

One early problem in changing from one camera to another was that the electronics were unable to react quickly enough for the vision mixer to execute a direct change from one source to another – a 'cut'. If he – they were invariably male at the beginning – used a cut, the picture suffered from a visual type of distortion called 'tilt and bend'. Vision mixers were instructed at the beginning of broadcasting in 1936 to blend the two sources progressively, with one source being faded out gradually as the other source was faded in – a 'mix'. The mix had to last at least eight seconds to avoid tilt and bend.<sup>540</sup> From a director's point of view this was quite restrictive. If the mix were to last eight seconds, then it would hardly have been artistically acceptable to have the incoming shot established for less than the same length of time, eight seconds, before starting the next mix. This means that each change of shot could occupy no less than about 16 seconds of screen time; this is about four shots a minute maximum, or about two-hundred-and-forty shots per hour average. As will be shown, in the early days of television, the average was very much less – more like 50 shots an hour. Of the music scripts that have survived from before the war, the mostly heavily mixed show was a ballet with 47 shots in 30 minutes, an average of 94 shots per hour. The problems with tilt and bend were substantially solved before the war, though the date by which the 'eight-second' rule was relaxed has not been discovered.

The early camera tubes were also insensitive to light in general and the ambient light levels in the studio and at outside broadcasts had to be very high. Since the only source of light was from arc or tungsten filament bulbs, the amount of heat generated in the



studio or on location was huge. Artists not only had to work under thick make-up but in intolerable conditions of heat.

This was the state of television broadcasting, both technical and artistic, when war broke out in September 1939, and the television service was closed down.

### **Cameras, lenses and mountings from 1946**

The Television Service restarted in 1946. The Second World War had seen considerable improvements in cathode ray tubes for use in radar; domestic television sets benefited from these technical improvements. There had, conversely, been no military advantage discerned in developing television cameras. In 1946 the state of development of studio and outside broadcast equipment was much as it had been in 1939. In anticipation of the resumption of television broadcasting, the wartime government reconvened the Television Committee under Lord Hankey. Their conclusion was that, given that initially viewers would be confined to the 9" and 12" black-and-white televisions manufactured before the war, the existing design of cameras would be satisfactory. Their main concern was in the lack of definition in wide-angle shots produced by the EMI Emitron cameras. Since these tended to be visually meaningless on the tiny television screen, they felt confident that directors would be using them sparingly.<sup>541</sup> The commercial potential of manufacturing equipment for television was soon seen by a number of electronics companies. By 1947 EMI had put into service its Super Emitron cameras that were much more sensitive than the pre-war Emitrons. This started the trend to using lower and lower light levels both in studios and at outside broadcast locations, which has been a continuing feature of television.

There still seemed to be a problem with changes of shots that were too rapid. Even as late as September 1947, vision mixers at outside broadcasts were not allowed to cut between sources and mixes could be no quicker than one second in duration. This was a considerable improvement on the eight-second minimum imposed in 1936. The telerecordings from the 1950s viewed showed a curious technological deficiency – when the vision mixer cut from one source to another, the system inserted a two frame fade to black, a single frame of black and a two frame fade up to full intensity. To the modern viewer the effect is quite disconcerting. Some directors of the period seem to have consciously tried to avoid this ‘black frame’ by substituting rapid mixes for cuts.

After the war, as in the years 1936-9, the single lens on the front of largely static cameras gave directors a limited choice of shots from which to choose at any moment in a programme. Once more this led directors in the period 1946-49 to use similar rates of changes of shot as pre-war: rarely more than 50 shots per hour for music programmes. This is outlined in more detail in Chapter 8 of the thesis. The limitation of the single lens camera was overcome by the addition of a rotating bezel to the front of the camera casing incorporating a number of lenses of different focal lengths. This device, operated by the cameraman by means of a remote control on the camera's tilt-and-pan handle, was called a ‘turret’. The turret appears to have been introduced in 1949.<sup>542</sup> Turrets meant that cameramen could change perspective very quickly; it only took about two seconds to change lens and refocus. The BBC's archives include advertising leaflets for Philips cameras with turrets carrying three, four or six lenses. There is no evidence for the BBC putting into general use turrets of other than four lenses though a photograph exists of a BBC Television camera fitted with a four position turret with one position blanked off effectively to give a three-lens turret.



Music scripts have been examined that have survived in the BBC's written archives for evidence of the use of turrets either in the studio or on location. The first reference found to cameras with turrets is in 1952, for the St David's Day National Festival Concert. Turrets were fitted to the outside broadcast cameras, but the number of lenses was not specified in the Technical Requirements. There is a memo from the outside broadcast director Campbell Logan, dated 19<sup>th</sup> April 1948, in which he regrets not having the use of turret lenses for the first complete opera broadcast on BBC Television.<sup>543</sup> It is not clear whether he was implying that the BBC should invest in this technology or that he regretted that, although the BBC already had it available, he was not allowed to use it. Later in 1948 the BBC hurriedly fitted turrets to the cameras used for the Olympic Games, when four outside broadcast units were in operation, each with three cameras as standard. As will be shown below, music scripts for studio programmes from 1950 onwards show an explosion of far higher shot densities than the 50 per hour before that date. From this evidence, it may be assumed that turrets arrived in the studio at around 1950. By 1956 studio cameras' turrets were routinely fitted with lenses with acceptance angles of 9°, 16°, 24° and 35°. 24° on a camera approximates to the perspective seen by the human eye. The narrower angles of 9° and 16° are telephoto lenses, used to bring distant objects apparently closer. Wider angled lenses than 24° give a wider field of view, at the expense of causing some gross distortions in movements towards and away from the camera.

The next major change in camera technology was the introduction of the zoom lens. The turret still had the disadvantage that, while the camera was on air, once a lens had been selected, moving the artists or moving the camera was still the only way to change perspective. The zoom lens had a continuously variable acceptance angle, again operated by a control on the camera's tilt-and-pan handle. One artistic effect, which was entirely novel, was the ability of the cameraman to change the perspective while on the air. 'Zooming' has become such a part of normality both in film and television that it is easy to forget what a revolution it caused when it was made available to directors. The first zoom lenses typically had a range of about 10° to 50°, a ratio of 5:1. The rarity of zoom lenses is typified by the response by a technical manager to a request for zoom lenses from the producer of the BBC's coverage of the 1948 Olympic Games. The manager said he knew of only two zoom lenses for television cameras in the whole world and the manufacturer was still using one of those experimentally. According to *The Daily Telegraph* the BBC first used a zoom lens in 1951, for horseracing at Ascot.<sup>544</sup> This may have been the first time on outside broadcasts, but there is an article in the *BBC Yearbook 1950* in which the introduction of the zoom lens to the studios is put in 1949.<sup>a 545</sup> By 1957 each outside broadcast unit carried one zoom lens (which could be fitted to any of the four cameras carried as standard.) For music programmes, requests for an additional – second – zoom lens were generally accepted.<sup>546</sup> Even by 1968, it was still necessary to ask permission to use additional zoom lenses. For a music

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<sup>a</sup> Zoom lenses first appeared in the feature film industry in the 1930s but were disliked for two reasons: the extra lenses absorbed light which meant that additional lighting was needed and the additional lenses through which the light had to pass meant that it became diffused and less precisely focussed. This was a major problem for a medium projected onto large screens and zoom lenses were only adopted on a widespread basis in feature films long after they had become accepted for television with its much lower level of acceptable definition. (See Salt *Film Style & Technology: History & Analysis* p.207 et seq.)



broadcast in 1968 involving eight cameras, five of them were fitted, exceptionally, with zoom lenses, the others carrying the standard four-lens turret.<sup>547</sup>

Changes in cameras and lenses were not the only advances in technology to help directors. In 1950 the BBC moved its major productions from Alexandra Palace to its new studios in West London, at Lime Grove. New mobile mountings for all cameras were made available at Lime Grove, so the restriction of static mountings such as the 'Iron Man' was another encumbrance removed from directors and cameramen. As is shown in Chapter 8 of the thesis, the result of these improvements led to a tendency for directors to use an ever-increasing number of shots per hour.

After the introduction of the zoom lens in the 1950s, advances in cameras have been ones of refinement, with the exception of the introduction of colour in the late 1960s. Zoom lenses have gained wider and wider ranges. In the 1970s 10:1 ratios were normal; by 1990 the 30:1 zoom was frequently specified; at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century 50:1 is normal with 75:1 available. Cameras became smaller, lighter and more sensitive, while mounts became more flexible and easier to manoeuvre.

## Recordings

In 1936, at the start of television broadcasting, there was no method available for recording television programmes that were electronically generated in the studio. The only form of permanently recording a programme was to shoot it on film, with all the subsequent costs of editing, dubbing and processing. BBC Television in its early days did not have the resources to originate any of its programmes on film. Repeats which appear in *Radio Times* were repeated performances given by the same cast at a later time. It was very much in the spirit of the second house at a music hall or cinema.

Soon after the war, experiments in America in recording programmes came to the attention of the BBC's engineers. The technique, which was known as 'kinescope' in America, was to put a 35mm film camera in front of a high quality electronic television monitor and to film the programme as it was being transmitted.<sup>548</sup> After the film had been developed, it was available for repeat transmissions, without having to involve the original performers.<sup>a</sup> In the BBC the technique of recording television programmes from the screen to film became known as 'telerecording' and was first used at the Cenotaph ceremony on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1947, the recording being used for a repeat later the same evening. The earliest music telerecording to have survived in the BBC's film archive is from October 1952, an almost complete performance of the opera *I Pagliacci*. Telerecording was a big advance on the chancy business of a second performance but it was still relatively cumbersome. For performance programmes, if a mistake was made in the original performance, it remained in the repeat performance. The studios were not geared for retakes and finance was not available for subsequent editing of the telerecording. In a telerecording from 1959 of Tchaikovsky's ballet *The Sleeping Beauty* viewed for this thesis, one of the ballerinas has quite a bad fall in the Bluebird *pas de*

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<sup>a</sup> There were a number of technical problems to be overcome, the most important of which was to ensure that the film, which normally ran through the camera at 24 frames per second, was synchronised to the television pictures, which changed at 25 frames per second – 30 frames per second in America. If the synchronisation was even marginally incorrect, black bars travelled up or down the final recording pictures.



*deux*, a fall which must have remained for the repeat transmission at Easter 1960. Documentaries made in the television studios had built into their budgets multiple takes and time to edit the telerecordings of those takes. Directors with experience of film, such as Gavin, found that working in the studio with multiple cameras, multiple takes and post-production editing was little different from working on location with single camera.<sup>549</sup> This does not appear to ever have been a normal way of working for performance programmes.

The main advance which overcame this deficiency was recording onto magnetic tape; it had a profound effect on the making of all television programmes. The BBC's research department had a working video tape recorder by the end of the 1950s, but the American Ampex Corporation had a much more reliable machine available at about the same time. Once modified to British standards, the Ampex Videotape machine was introduced to the BBC from the early 1960s. At first the only way of editing videotapes was by cutting them under a microscope with a razor. As a result, documentary makers such as Gavin continued to prefer using telerecording rather than videotape.<sup>550</sup> By the early 1970s electronic editing became normal and it made video editing much quicker and reliable.

The most important change that the introduction of telerecording and videotaping produced was that retakes could be incorporated into programmes in place of faulty takes. This brought television programmes into line with radio, gramophone recordings and films for television and cinema. It marked the end of what has been called the 'wizard prang' period of television programme making, in which a more consistently professional, polished product replaced the spirit of amateur dramatics. The other major change, which is less relevant to this thesis, was that directors could now use the film technique of shooting programmes one shot at a time and editing the various shots together in the videotape-editing suite. It is less relevant to this thesis because music performance cannot easily be broken down into single shot snippets in the way that drama can. One innovation brought about by the adoption of video-recording was that music directors from the late 1970s onwards sometimes had a camera permanently looking at the conductor – 'locked off' – and recording to a separate videotape channel. Shots of the conductor making unexpected but meaningful gestures could then be incorporated into the final programme without having to second-guess those gestures.



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### **BBC files**

BBC written archive files are catalogued in certain general groupings:

Files with an initial letter 'L' are Left staff files: these are vetted and released to researchers not on the staff of Written Archive Centre only 30 years after the death of the member of staff concerned. On request the archivists at Written Archive Centre may disclose uncontroversial details including employment records from files not yet released.

Files with an initial letter 'P' are press cuttings boxes.

Files with an initial letter 'R' are Radio files, including research reports about television programmes

Files with an initial letter 'T' are Television files

Inside audience research report files, the individual reports, usually two sides of A4 paper, are labelled VR for Viewing Reports for television, LR for Listening Reports for radio and SP for Special Reports.

### **Left staff files**

L1/312/1-2 Left staff file: Donald Hunter Munro. File not generally available  
L1/464 Left staff file: Kenneth Anthony Wright (d. 1975). File not generally available  
L1/506/1 Left staff file: James Whittam Hartley (d. 13.12.1958)  
L1/1530/1 Left staff file: Andrew Christian Simpson (d. 5.1.1968)

### **Press cuttings boxes**

P591-593 Personal publicity 1951-1955  
P602-606 Staff 1955-  
P615, 617-623 Press cuttings television 1936-1945  
P653-654, 657-659, 662-663, 669-670, 677 Television programmes 1951-1962



## **Radio files**

R6/44 Music Advisory Committee 1943-54  
R6/45 Music Advisory Committee 1934-42  
R6/46 Music Advisory Committee 1933-35  
R6/47/1-2 Music Advisory Committee 1933-35  
R6/48 Music Advisory Committee 1935-53  
R6/49 Music Advisory Committee 1936  
R6/50 Music Advisory Committee 1936  
R6/75 Opera Advisory Committee 1926-1937  
R6/221/1-3 Central Music Advisory Committee 1969-1983  
R6/233/1-5 Central Music Advisory Committee 1955-1972  
R6/234 Central Music Advisory Committee 1973-1975  
R6/235 Central Music Advisory Committee 1956-1966  
R6/236/1 Central Music Advisory Committee – a catalogue (by composer) of serious music broadcast in 1960/1  
R27/49 Music – general (National Council for Music)

## **Audience research files**

(Audience research figures for television are published in daily ‘barometers’ which show the viewing figure, as a percentage of the adult population, and a Reaction Index (RI). Television audience barometers started on 29.6.52. RIs are shown from 2.11.52)

R9/7/1 Audience Research Reports, Television, VR 50/2 - 50/534  
R9/9/1 1937 LR/1 Viewers and the television service  
R9/9/3 1939 LR/75 Viewers opinions on television programmes  
R9/9/12 1948 LR/48/631, 729, 793, 831, 937, 994, 1047 ‘Viewers’ vote’  
LR/48/1219 TV: some points about the audience  
1949 LR/49/970, 1014, 1073, 1260 Research data for the Television Enquiry  
R9/10/3 1956 VR/56/644 Ballet  
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R9/35/1-14 Listening and viewing barometers 29.6.52 – 2.7.65  
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R9/148 Special Report SP83/048 Opera on television  
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R9/1017 Information Service Report IS/90/016 The Late Show  
R9/1092-1100 Television audience reaction reports 1983-91 (noted but not examined in detail)  
R9/1128/1 and R9/1129/1 Reaction indices for 1981/2  
R9/1146 to 1154 Television audience figures 1983-91 (noted but not examined in detail)

## **Scripts**

(Scripts that remain in the BBC archives have been transferred to microfilm. Early music scripts are stored in alphabetical order of programme or series title. Early outside broadcast scripts are stored in alphabetical order of venue. Later scripts are not generally separated by department or genre. They are stored by date of transmission, in



alphabetical order on each day. Because of a mistake in numbering, scripts 257-276 do not exist.)

Script microfilms – Music scripts 1 to 9

Script microfilms – Music scripts second sequence 1 to 3

Script microfilms – Ballet and Opera

Script microfilms – Outside broadcast scripts 1 to 2

Script microfilms – Scripts 1 to 387 (except 257-276, see above)

### **Television files**

(All files with the prefix T5 are generally referenced 'Drama' and include operas produced by members of drama department)

T5/202 Gay Rosalinda

T5/419 The Queen of Spades (this is Pushkin's play, not Tchaikovsky's opera)

T5/533 Tobias and the Angel (a play, not Bliss' opera)

T5/827 Amahl and the Night Visitors

T5/1315 Eugene Onegin

T5/1362 Faust

T5/1560 La Bohème

T5/1561 La Vida breve

T5/1684 Mines of sulphur

T5/1876 Rigoletto

T5/2059 Othello

(All files with the prefix T10 are generally referenced 'Foreign General')

T10/64/1-2 European Broadcasting Union co-productions

T10/133 European Broadcasting Union: Salzburg Opera Prize 1965

(All files with the prefix T11 are generally referenced 'Foreign relays')

T11/21 TV Foreign relays: Salzburg Festival, Vienna State Opera (opening in 1956)

T11/36 Foreign relays: Eurovision 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary ballet programme

T11/73 Stravinsky 80<sup>th</sup> birthday

(All files with the prefix T13 are generally referenced 'Television music')

T13/72/1 Memos 1947-1950

T13/72/2 Memos 1951-1954

T13/76 Music for You 1951-4

T13/113 Tristan and Isolde 1937-1938

T13/114 BBC Dance Orchestra 1935-1937

T13/115/1 Orchestras 1935-1939

T13/115/2 Orchestras 1945-1947

T13/115/3 Orchestras 1948-1954

T13/269/1 Masterworks - general

T13/353/1 Midweek music – general

T13/354/1 Music for You

T13/355/1-8 Music for You 1955-1961

T13/364/1, 365/1,2,3 Music in Camera



(All files with the prefix T14 are generally referenced 'Television outside broadcasts')

T14/286 Concert Hour 1955-59  
T14/294 Covent Garden 1938-54  
T14/483/1-9; T14/484 Glyndebourne Opera 1951-58  
T14/640 Let's Make an Opera 1949  
T14/721 Music, general 1952-54  
T14/728 National Youth Orchestra 1949-52  
T14/768 Orchestral Concerts 1947-49  
T14/806 Philadelphia Orchestra 1949  
T14/836/1-5 Promenade Concerts Files 1947-58  
T14/837 Promenade Concerts television 1947-56  
T14/1012 National Youth Orchestra 1952  
T14/1013 Symphony Concerts  
T14/1984 Giulini conducts (requested, but missing from archives)  
T14/2377/1 Giulini series General

(All files with the prefix T16 are generally referenced 'Television policy')

T16/7/1-2 Amateur performers  
T16/11/1-2 Artists  
T16/12/1 Artists (refusal to appear)  
T16/12/7 Artists (*Monitor 'Opera'*)  
T16/12/8-12 Artists – Equity agreement  
T16/16/2 Rehearsal rooms  
T16/17 Artists – outside broadcast stage managers  
T16/18/1 Artists – Equity opera singers  
T16/18/2-5 Artists – Equity 'rationing'  
T16/19/1-3 Artists – Equity – transcriptions and recordings  
T16/22 Foreign artists  
T16/23 Artists – Theatre opposition  
T16/24/1-2 Artists – ISM *television* fees  
T16/27/1-9, /28, /29/1-3 Artists – Musicians' Union fees  
T16/31/1-3 Artists – unions  
T16/35/1-3, /37/1-2 Artists – theatres  
T16/37/1-2 West End Theatre Managers  
T16/38 Studio audiences  
T16/40/1-2 Audience research (background)  
T16/41/1-2 Auditions  
T16/50/4, /52/2 Contracts  
T16/58 Credits  
T16/78 Television policy (1935-39)  
T16/97 Television development committee  
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T16/101/1-6, /102/1-2 Television management meetings  
T16/105/1-10 Television Programme Review Boards 1951-61  
T16/110 Television policy (1935-39)  
T16/111 Television progress meetings  
T16/112 Television weekly meetings



T16/115/1-2 Television Policy: Music  
 T16/149/2-3 Programme planning  
 T16/184 Report for post-war service  
 T16/188/1, 3 Sound and vision  
 T16/216 Television development committee  
 T16/267, 268, 269, 282, 288, 291, 292, 297 Artists – Equity  
 T16/290 Musicians' union  
 T16/291 North American Symphony Orchestra  
 T16/292 Orchestral Employers' Association  
 T16/297 State commission on employment of musicians  
 T16/310/1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8 BBC governors  
 T16/315/1-2 BBC-2  
 T16/316 BBC-2 master plan  
 T16/327/1-2 Pilkington committee  
 T16/333 Ballet  
 T16/363, /364, /365, /366, /367 D.Tel. 2<sup>nd</sup> programme committee  
 T16/399 Features  
 T16/423 BBC-2 publicity and presentation  
 T16/424 CPTel meetings  
 T16/425-6 D.Tel. finance meetings  
 T16/427 D.Tel. monthly meetings  
 T16/434 D. D. Tel. meetings with heads  
 T16/435 Papers  
 T16/436 Television output  
 T16/437/1-5 and /438 Programme management board  
 T16/439/1-6 Programme planning committee  
 T16/459, 460/1-3, /462 Extension sub-committee  
 T16/464-467 Television management information  
 T16/468/1-2 Television management meetings  
 T16/469 Television network committee  
 T16/474 Background music  
 T16/475 Music: Goodman enquiry  
 T16/536 Arts seminar  
 T16/538 BBC-2  
 T16/736/1-3 Controllers' meetings

(All files with the prefix T17 are generally referenced 'Premises')

T17/11 Microphones  
 T17/64, /65 Outside broadcast equipment  
 T17/67 Outside broadcast mobile control rooms  
 T17/68 Outside broadcast – general  
 T17/70 Zoom lenses  
 T17/91, /92 Studio equipment  
 T17/132 Technical memos  
 T17/140 Technical memos – outside broadcasts  
 T17/180 Equipment for BBC-2  
 T17/181 Colour  
 T17/183 Sound recording



T17/185 Outside broadcast colour  
T17/189 BBC-2 – technical  
T17/192 Television Centre cameras

(All files with the prefix T18 are generally referenced 'Programme allowance')

T18/22 Music

(All files with the prefix T19 are generally referenced 'Programme statistics')

T19/4 (Hours of broadcasting 1936-39)

(All files with the prefix T26 are generally referenced 'Routine meetings')

T26/8, 12 D. Tel meetings  
T26/17 Meetings: general 1951-4  
T26/18 Music Department 1947-54  
T26/21/1-3 Outside broadcasts 1939-54  
T26/22 Outside broadcasts 1954  
T26/23 Producers' meetings 1936-54  
T26/24/1-2 Programme planning 1946-50

(All files with the prefix T31 are generally referenced 'Staff')

T31/103/1-3 Music Department - General  
T31/104 Music Department - Opera  
T31/122 Producers  
T31/124 Production staff  
T31/136 Eric Robinson  
T31/380 Ballet 1953-1956  
T31/384 Music & Arts Department  
T31/403 C.P.Tel's production conferences

(All files with the prefix T34 are generally referenced 'D.M.D. Tel's office')

T34/3 Souvenir menu 'Vive la tele' ORTF/BBC 1970

(All files with the prefix T41 are generally referenced 'TV central registry')

T41/110 European Broadcasting Union music experts meeting  
T41/112 European Broadcasting Union collaboration in TV music programmes  
T41/113 European Broadcasting Union opera commissions – General 1966-72  
T41/114 European Broadcasting Union opera commissions – Case file 1968-71  
T41/144 British Actors Equity Association - General  
T41/145 British Actors Equity Association - Claims  
T41/146 Musicians Union  
T41/153 Beethoven bicentenary  
T41/174-179 Owen Wingrave (commissioned opera)  
T41/245/1 European Broadcasting Union TV music experts  
T41/246/1 European Broadcasting Union TV music experts – minutes and meetings  
T41/439, /440 Eric Robinson



(All files with the prefix T42 are generally referenced 'Kensington House registry')

T42/5-6 Music & Arts offers

T42/80 Opera

T42/88 Musicians' Union

T42/92 European Broadcasting Union music

T42/119 Music & Arts group

T42/142 Music & Arts group

(All files with the prefix T47 are generally referenced 'TV central registry')

T47/95/1 Opera meetings – minutes

(All files with the prefix T51 are generally referenced 'Music & Arts')

T51/279 BBC 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary concert, 1972

T51/414 Last Night of the Proms 1979

### **Programmes viewed**

(The date given for each reference is the first transmission date given in the BBC Film and Videotape database/catalogue. For programmes with a first transmission after the opening of BBC-2, the channel on which the first transmission occurred is shown in parenthesis thus: (2))

Where different persons exercised the functions of director and producer, this is reflected in the production credit below.

*A Gargantuan Pianistic Extravaganza* – 26/1/75 (2) – Roy Tipping

*A Night at the Opera: Cav & Pag* – 16/4/76 (2) – Brian Large

*André Previn's Music Night* – 18/6/75 (1) – John Culshaw

*André Previn's Music Night* – 9/7/75 (1) – John Culshaw and Ron Isted

*André Previn's Music Night* – 25/5/77 (1) – Herbert Chappell

*André Previn's Music Night* – 1/2/79 (1) – Peter Butler (director) Ian Engelmann (producer)

*Ashkenazy plays Mozart* – 8/4/78 (2) – Rodney Greenberg

*BBC Proms 1975: Live from the Proms* – 29/8/75 (2) – Brian Large

*BBC Proms 1975: Live from the Proms* – 29/8/75 (2) – Ron Isted

*BBC Proms 1976: The Sunday Prom: Sibelius 1<sup>st</sup> Symphony* – 22/8/76 (2) – Roy Tipping

*BBC Proms 1977: The Sunday Prom: Holst Planets* – 28/8/77 (1) – Ron Isted

*Berlioz' Requiem* – 22/7/66 (2) – Brian Large

*Celebrity Recital* – 22/9/57 – Patricia Foy

*Celebrity Recital* – 2/4/59 – Walter Todds

*Demonstration film: Television comes to London* – 30/10/36 – producer unknown

*Demonstration film: 1937* – 1<sup>st</sup> transmission unknown – Dallas Bower

*Demonstration film: Television is here again* – 24/6/46 – Dallas Bower (apart from a new introduction, this is identical to *Demonstration film: 1937*)

*Eugene Onegin* – 6/3/67 (2) – Basil Coleman (director) Cedric Messina (producer)

*Falstaff* – 26/12/72 (2) – Basil Coleman (director) Cedric Messina (producer)

*From the Proms* – 23/8/74 (2) – Brian Large

*Gala Performance* – 27/3/70 (1) – Patricia Foy



*Gianni Schicchi* – 30/5/76 (2) – Patricia Foy  
*Giulini conducts* – 19/1/65 (1) – Antony Craxton  
*Hansel and Gretel* – 27/12/76 (2) – Brian Large  
*I Pagliacci* – 9/10/52 – Eric Fawcett  
*Il Trovatore* – 27/12/64 (2) – John Vernon  
*International Celebrity Recital – Myra Hess* – 20/10/54 – Patricia Foy  
*International Celebrity Recital – Benno Moiseiwitch* – 3/11/54 – Patricia Foy  
*International Concert Hall* – 9<sup>th</sup> May 1961 – Walter Todds  
*Iolanthe* – 1/10/64 – Charles Rogers  
*Jacqueline du Pre* – 4/2/62 – Patricia Foy  
*La Traviata* – 10/10/55 – George Foa  
*La Traviata* – 28/4/64 – Charles Rogers  
*La Vida Breve* – 13/10/68 – Basil Coleman (director) Cedric Messina (producer)  
*Leonard Bernstein conducts* – 22/1/67 (1) – Brian Large  
*Leonard Bernstein conducts Mahler's 8<sup>th</sup> Symphony* – 17/4/66 (2) – Brian Large  
*Les Sylphides* – 3/4/53 – Christian Simpson  
*Menuhin at Fifty* – 1/5/66 (1) – Brian Large  
*Messiah* – 2/1/72 (2) – Brian Large  
*Murray Perahia* – 3/6/73 (2) – Roy Tipping  
*Music for You: Boris Christoff* – 19/10/58 – Patricia Foy  
*Music from Great Houses* – 1/7/73 (2) – Roy Tipping  
*Music from Great Houses* – 28/10/73 (2) – Roy Tipping  
*Music from Great Houses* – 16/6/74 (2) – Roy Tipping  
*Music on Two: Idomeneo* – 10/5/70 (2) – Brian Large  
*Music on Two: Milstein plays Beethoven* – 6/2/72 (2) – Brian Large  
*Music on Two: Stern plays Sibelius* – 28/11/71 (2) – Brian Large  
*Music on Two: Vaughan Williams Centenary* – 18/10/72 (2) – Roy Tipping  
*Music on Two: Walton Birthday Concert* – 2/4/72 (2) – Brian Large  
*Music Scrapbook (1922-1972)* – 15/11/72 (2) – Ian Engelmann  
*Omnibus at the Proms: Elgar 2<sup>nd</sup> Symphony* – 26/8/73 (1) – Roy Tipping  
*Omnibus at the Proms: Ravel Daphnis & Chloe* – 4/8/74 (1) – Rodney Greenberg  
*Opera 625: Iolanthe* – 1/10/64 (1) – Charles Rogers  
*Othello* – 1/10/59 – Rudolf Cartier  
*Pineapple Poll* – 1/11/59 – Margaret Dale  
*Sleeping Beauty* – 20/12/59 – Margaret Dale  
*Solti at the Proms* – 27/10/79 (2) – Humphrey Burton  
*Solti conducts Russian Music* – 7/1/80 (2) – Humphrey Burton  
*St. Matthew Passion* – 13/4/79 (2) – Roy Tipping  
*Stokowski Conducts* – 28/9/69 (2) – Walter Todds  
*Sunday Celebrity Recital* – 7/8/55 – Christian Simpson  
*Swan Lake* – 9/6/54 – Christian Simpson  
*Tchaikovsky Prizewinner* – 10/8/70 (2) – Roy Tipping  
*The Beethoven Piano Concertos (five programmes)* – 22/3/74 to 5/4/74 (2) – Brian Large  
*The Beethoven Symphonies – 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>* – 26/6/70 (2) – Walter Todds  
*The Beggar's Opera* – 31/10/63 – Charles Rogers  
*The Birth of Television* – 1/11/76 (channel unknown) (producer unknown)



*The Birth of Television* – 30/7/84 (this is an edited version of *The Birth of Television: 1/11/76*) (channel unknown) (producer unknown)  
*The Conductor Speaks – Leopold Stokowski* – 7/5/54 – Philip Bate  
*The Dream of Gerontius* – 14/4/68 – Brian Large  
*The Lively Arts: Die Fledermaus* – 31/12/77 – Brian Large  
*The Marriage of Figaro* – 21/9/74 (2) – Basil Coleman (director) Cedric Messina (producer)  
*The Nutcracker* – 21/12/58 – Margaret Dale  
*The Nutcracker* – 10/3/68 (2) – John Vernon  
*The Saint of Bleeker Street* – 4/10/56 – Rudolf Cartier  
*The Sixth Leeds International Pianoforte Competition 1978* – 15/9/78 (2) – Rodney Greenberg (director) Kenneth Corden (producer)  
*The Sunday Prom – Sibelius 1<sup>st</sup> Symphony* – 22/8/76 (1) – Roy Tipping  
*Thomas Hemsley* – 21/7/74 (2) – Roy Tipping  
*Those Wonderful Shows* – 24/8/58 – Charles Rogers  
*Two Brothers* – 16/8/59 – Christian Simpson  
*United Nations Day Concert* – 26/10/75 (2) – John Culshaw  
*William Walton cello concerto* – 13/2/57 – Antony Craxton  
*World Singer* – 27/1/62 – Walter Todds

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