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# Exploring Music Beyond the Canon: Radio Orchestras, the CBC and Contemporary Music in the Mid-Twentieth Century

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Exploring Music Beyond the Canon:  
Radio Orchestras, the CBC and Contemporary Music in the Mid-Twentieth Century

by

Robert Warren Bailey

A THESIS

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# ABSTRACT

The emergence of broadcast technology in the twentieth century fundamentally changed how people could experience music. Networks across the world assembled orchestras to serve a variety of functions—background music for dramatic presentations, light entertainment and symphonic concerts. Radio emancipated the orchestral concert from the confines of the concert hall, bringing to the masses a cultural experience which was formerly the domain of the privileged classes. As early as the 1930s, the notion of a radio symphony orchestra—that is, a permanent concert orchestra based in the broadcasting studio—began to emerge. Through unconventional programming philosophies, as well as distinct social and political roles, many of these orchestras gradually acquired identities distinct from traditional symphony orchestras. However, radio symphonies have not received a large amount of scholarly attention. The purpose of this dissertation is to establish the historical context from which radio symphony orchestras emerged, with a specific focus on Canada. My primary focus is the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and its relationship with twentieth-century music, as seen through the lens of the CBC Symphony Orchestra (1952–1964). The study proceeds in three stages. First, I provide a broad historical overview of the origins of radio symphony orchestras before World War Two, exemplified by the NBC Symphony Orchestra, the Frankfurter Rundfunk-Sinfonie-Orchestra and the BBC Symphony. Second, I look at the emergence of radio orchestras in Canada, and the CBC’s patronage of twentieth-century music in Canada following World War Two. These concepts are brought together in the final section, which focuses on the work of the CBC Symphony. Born as an intended

symbol of Canada's musical achievement, the CBC Symphony regularly featured music from outside the traditional orchestral canon. Not only did this policy introduce modern composition to Canadian listeners, it provided Canadian composers with regular opportunities to write for large orchestras—opportunities which had previously been few and far between, if present at all.

# PREFACE

An earlier version of Chapter 4 has been published as Bailey, Robert W. “John Roberts and the Evolution of the CBC Radio’s Music Commissioning Policy, 1960–1964.” In *John P.L. Roberts, the CBC/Radio Canada, and Art Music*. Edited by Friedemann Sallis and Regina Landwehr. 117–130. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2020.

All other parts of this thesis are original, unpublished independent work by the author, R. Bailey.

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I would like to extend a special thank you to the University of Calgary's Graduate Program Advisor for music, Alison Schmal, for your guidance and support throughout my time at the University of Calgary. I sincerely appreciate everything you have done to keep me on the path to academic success.

I am very appreciative to a number of archivists and CBC employees (both past and present) who offered their knowledge and resources during my research. Thank you in particular to Denise Ball, Brenda Kilpatrick, Michael Juk, George Laverock and Colin Preston. The enthusiastic response I received to all of my inquiries reinforced for me the importance of the project I was undertaking.

I would like to acknowledge Regina Landwehr and the entire staff of the University of Calgary's Archives and Special Collections and the Interlibrary Loan Centre for their tireless work obtaining the archival and reference material I needed during research for this dissertation. I am also grateful to the staff of Library and Archives Canada, whose hard work and efficiency made both of my research trips to Ottawa fruitful from beginning to end.

During the early phase of my research, I was fortunate enough to correspond with three important musicians who were witnesses to many of the events described in this dissertation: John Beckwith (1927–2022), Victor Feldbrill (1924–2020) and George Zukerman (1927–2023). Regrettably, I was unable to complete the project before they passed. However, I hope that this dissertation stands as a small tribute to the large achievements that they and their colleagues made to art music in Canada.

I am grateful to John and Christina Roberts for entrusting me with the preliminary inventory of John's records before he donated them to the University of Calgary's Archives and Special Collections. It was an honour to be a part of the archival preservation of John's immense contribution to music in Canada.

I would like to offer a heartfelt thank you to my parents, Warren and Brenda, for your love and support throughout my academic career. Your investment in my success and happiness will never be forgotten.

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For Madeline, Colette, Ruby and Mabel



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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Context

The past two decades have witnessed a sustained questioning of the values and structures that provide citizens with a sense of social equity and coherence. Ukraine's Orange Revolution (2004), which initiated the country's move to become a member of the European Union and The Arab Spring (2011) are just two examples that have resulted in social upheaval and civil strife. In Canada, the revelations of what occurred in this country's residential schools, the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015) and the final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019) have fed a desire to revisit our past and the stories we tell ourselves about it. The recent removal of statues of John A. MacDonald in Montreal (2020) and Kingston (2021) and the debates about the renaming of public spaces (Montreal's Amherst St became Atateken St. in 2019) and institutions (Ryerson University was renamed Toronto Metropolitan University in 2022) are just a few examples of actions resulting from our renewed interest in our cultural history.

Jonathan Vance's recent *A History of Canadian Culture* (2009) is both a symptom of this renewed interest, but also a glaring example of what more needs to be done. The book begins by evoking the "first artists" who produced stone carvings thousands of years ago. However, Vance then quickly notes (in the second paragraph of the book) that

these surviving artifacts do not fit into European preconceptions of art.<sup>1</sup> From this rather paternalistic point of departure, the author then tells the story of how European culture became implanted in Canada.

Vance's study leans heavily towards popular culture, adopting the assumption that underwrote the work of Marius Barbeau (1883–1969) and the Canadian Handicrafts Guild (1906–1974): that culture was and is “an activity to be engaged in by everyone, not just a small group of intellectuals and arts promoters.”<sup>2</sup> Given that Vance is discussing Canadian culture and not ‘folk’ culture, he does reserve some space for architecture, literature, the visual arts, dance and film, but has almost nothing to say about art music. Considerable sections of the book do deal with folk music and popular commercial music: Gordon Lightfoot and Gilles Vigneault are both cited in the index. Harry Freedman, Harry Somers and Oscar Morawetz are mentioned in passing on page 382 (but not in the index) and R. Murray Schafer is quoted on pages 425–426 (and cited in the index), but nothing at all is said about the music they composed.

The lack of attention paid to art music in Canada is notable. As professor and Research Chair in Conflict and Culture at the University of Western Ontario (home to one Canada's largest Faculties of Music), he can hardly claim ignorance about Canadian composers and their work. Whether by oversight or deliberate omission, Vance regrettably missed an important opportunity to use his platform to raise awareness of this music to a broader audience. Whatever his reasons, this is a problem. This thesis attempts to address this problem through an examination of the impact that the CBC and its radio

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<sup>1</sup> Jonathan F. Vance, *A History of Canadian Culture* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 275.

orchestras had on the music culture of Canada during the middle decades of the twentieth century. Specifically, I will look at the opportunities that the CBC Symphonic Orchestra (1952–1964) provided to a new generation of Canadian composers to write music for large ensembles and to have it broadcast across the country.

To be sure, any discussion of art music comes with baggage. Today it is increasingly seen as a vestige of past values that assume its inherent superiority over the music of the rest of the world. Alessandro Baricco has observed that the amateurs of classical music often behave as though they inhabit a musical Switzerland: “an oasis in the midst of an ocean of corrupted taste.”<sup>3</sup> As I will discuss, this is precisely the attitude that many of those in charge of programming at the CBC, the BBC and European public broadcasters held during the decades before and after World War II. Indeed, they took it upon themselves to impose this repertoire on their captive audiences, assuming that it inevitably be good for them.

As true as this is, it is important to remember that the elitist and racist ideas embedded in these attitudes are not inherent in the music. For all its complexity and subtlety of sound, art music is not imbued with a sense of superiority by the composers who create it or the musicians who perform it, but rather by those who receive and disseminate it. As Carl Dahlhaus has pointed out, the art music of the first half of the twentieth century was thoroughly ensconced in an aesthetic paradigm that he called the ‘idea of absolute music’: a concept of art music whose origins can be traced back to the German speaking lands of central Europe in the late eighteenth century.<sup>4</sup> At that time, a

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<sup>3</sup> Alessandro Baricco, *L'anima di Hegel e le mucche del Wisconsin : Una riflessione su musica colta e modernità* (Milan: Garzanti, 2002), 16.

<sup>4</sup> Carl Dahlhaus, *The Idea of Absolute Music*, trans. Roger Lustig (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1989), 1–17.

new way thinking about and listening to music emerged that was closely associated with the gradual emancipation of instrumental music and the rise of the strong work concept.<sup>5</sup> During the nineteenth century, this concept spread across Europe and eventually around the world through colonial connections and networks. To this day, it remains so dominant in some quarters that it is uncritically taken for granted. Such was the case for the vast majority of administrators and producers charged with the broadcast of music in the middle decades of the past century.

## 1.2 Why Radio Orchestras?

In June 2015, the Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della Rai announced that the esteemed American conductor James Conlon would become its principal conductor beginning in October 2016.<sup>6</sup> Music critic George Loomis subsequently published an editorial about Conlon's appointment in the *New York Times*, which he prefaced with an important question: "Why did one of America's leading conductors, who once served as principle conductor of the Paris National Opera, choose the podium of a radio orchestra to tilt his career back toward Europe, rather than that of a prestigious independent orchestra?"<sup>7</sup> The question is compelling in relation to present-day North America, where the debate over state patronization of the arts remains deeply divided and audiences for

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<sup>5</sup> For more on the rise of the strong work concept and its consequences, see Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 148ff.

<sup>6</sup> Michael Cooper, "Orchestra in Turin, Italy, Names James Conlon as Principal Conductor," *New York Times*, 9 June 2015, accessed 2 March 2016, <https://archive.nytimes.com/artsbeat.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/06/09/orchestra-in-turin-italy-names-james-conlon-as-principal-conductor>.

<sup>7</sup> George Loomis, "Europe's Radio Orchestras Adapt to Changing Times," *New York Times*, 28 October 2015, accessed online 22 March 2016, [https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/28/arts/international/europes-radio-orchestras-adapt-to-changing-times.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/28/arts/international/europes-radio-orchestras-adapt-to-changing-times.html?_r=0).

classical music have continuously declined over the last seventy years.<sup>8</sup> However, it is the language Loomis uses to contrast radio orchestras from their “prestigious” independent counterparts which warrants deeper exploration.

To be clear, Loomis himself was not asking the question. Rather, he was speaking hypothetically in third person, imagining what an average classical music enthusiast might be thinking in 2015. In an age when the consumption of music has largely moved away from traditional broadcasting mediums such as radio and television to digital platforms such as on-demand streaming services, why would a musician of Conlon’s stature choose to lead an orchestra owned by a public broadcasting service—a service whose relevance in modern society was rapidly eroding? North American audience members in particular would be forgiven for asking such a question; the last radio orchestra to perform on that continent, the CBC Radio Orchestra in Vancouver, had been dismantled seven years earlier, and the United States itself had not hosted an orchestra of the kind since the NBC Symphony Orchestra stopped performing over sixty years earlier. However, as Loomis explains, even the NBC Symphony did not serve the same function as those in Canada and in Europe. The NBC Symphony was instead primarily a commercial venture created to entice Arturo Toscanini back to North America, and was decommissioned upon the conductor’s retirement in 1954.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, as Loomis points out,

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<sup>8</sup> Leon Botstein notes that audience numbers for classical music started a particularly significant decline in the late 1950s to early 1960s. There are a multitude of reasons for this. In North America, for example, the development and proliferation of sound reproduction technologies (such as the phonograph, radio and, later, the long-playing vinyl record) allowed individuals easy access to a multitude of different styles of music. In turn, mass communicatory systems such as radio broadcasting perpetuated on a grand scale the existing gulf between popular and art music styles. For a more detailed explanation, see Leon Botstein, “Music of a Century: Museum Culture and the Politics of Subsidy,” in *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-Century Music*, eds. Nicholas Cook and Anthony Pople (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 40–68.

<sup>9</sup> The NBC Symphony Orchestra is discussed further in Chapter 2.

today one must look to Europe for the answer to his question, where radio orchestras run by state-owned broadcasting companies continue to be valued particularly for their contributions to twentieth- and twenty-first century music.<sup>10</sup>

In fact, several major studies have demonstrated how public broadcasting companies served as both catalysts for new music and mediums through which it was promoted. According to Amy Beal, it was West German public radio, “more than any other single cultural entity in Germany, [that] drove the burgeoning trade of new music” after the Second World War.<sup>11</sup> Quantitative research by Rüdiger Weißbach supports Beal’s assertion: he has identified 933 new works that were commissioned between 1946–1975 by the ARD (Arbeitsgemeinschaft der öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunkanstalten der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, a national network of six regional broadcasting stations) and RIAS Berlin (Rundfunk im amerikanischen Sektor Berlin).<sup>12</sup> West Germany is certainly an outstanding example, but Frederick Dorian’s 1964 study of arts patronage systems in Europe reports similar commissioning programs amongst numerous public broadcasting companies across the continent at that time.<sup>13</sup> In Canada, Patricia Kellogg has shown that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) played a crucially important role in the maturation of Canadian composition during the post-war years, with 462 works commissioned between 1950 and 1980, after which the Canada Council and other public agencies took on greater roles in commissioning Canadian

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<sup>10</sup> According to Loomis, for example, the BBC Symphony developed a “cutting-edge reputation for new music,” and German radio orchestras “recognize a special duty to foster contemporary music.” See Loomis, “Europe’s Radio Orchestras.”

<sup>11</sup> Amy Beal, *New Music, New Allies: American Experimental Music in West Germany from the Zero Hour to Reunification* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006), 52.

<sup>12</sup> Rüdiger Weißbach, *Rundfunk und neue Musik. Eine Analyse der Förderung zeitgenössischer Musik durch den öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunk* (Dortmund: Barbara Weißbach Verlag, 1986), 97.

<sup>13</sup> Frederick Dorian, *Commitment to Culture: Art Patronage in Europe and its Significance for America* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1964).



composers.<sup>14</sup> As Goslich and company state in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music*, by the turn of the twenty-first century radio had “[in] most parts of the world... become not only one of the leading employers of performing musicians but also the most important patron of new music; its technical and artistic resources, financial independence and influential position make it the modern equivalent of the courts of previous centuries in this respect.”<sup>15</sup>

### 1.3 Introduction to the CBC Symphony Orchestra

Around the same time Loomis’ article appeared in the *New York Times*, the University of Calgary held a two-day symposium entitled “John Roberts, the CBC and Music in Canada.” On 1–2 October 2015, musicians and scholars from across Canada and the United States discussed the impact that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) had on the development of art music in Canada during the twentieth century.<sup>16</sup> At the time, I was two months into my PhD, and although I wanted to pursue research on Canadian music, I had not landed upon a firm object of study. During the symposium’s closing discussion, however, John Beckwith made a striking comment. An earlier presenter had used an incorrect name for the CBC Symphony Orchestra, referring to it simply as the “CBC Orchestra.” The firm manner in which Beckwith corrected the

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<sup>14</sup> Patricia Kellogg, “Sounds in the Wilderness: Fifty Years of CBC Commissions,” in *Musical Canada: Words and Music Honouring Helmut Kallmann*, eds. John Beckwith and Frederick A. Hall (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 257.

<sup>15</sup> Siegfried Goslich, Joanna C. Lee, Rita H. Mead and Timothy Roberts, “Radio,” in *Grove Music Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed 3 August 2016, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/subscriber/article/grove/music/42011>.

<sup>16</sup> The catalyst for the symposium was the recent donation of John P.L. Roberts’ papers to the University of Calgary’s Archives and Special Collections. Roberts had served twenty years with the CBC, including five as Head of Radio Music and Variety from 1970–1975. I had a personal investment in the project, beginning in 2013 when I did a preliminary inventory of Roberts’ holdings in his home. I later assisted with cataloguing the John P.L. Roberts fonds following its donation to the University of Calgary.

innocuous mistake struck my attention: the CBC Symphony Orchestra (hereafter CBC SO), as it was properly known, clearly held a special significance in his memory.<sup>17</sup> He proceeded to explain its importance for composers like himself in the 1950s and early 1960s, during a time when opportunities to have their music performed were few and far between. He then proceeded to lament the lack of scholarship on the CBC Symphony. Thus prompted by his rather emotional recollection of the orchestra, I endeavoured to investigate it further.

As I began my research, I discovered that Beckwith's respect for the orchestra was shared by many other musicians from the era. References to the orchestra's positive impact on the development of symphonic composition in Canada abound. John Roberts himself wrote in 1969 that because of the CBC SO, orchestral composition in Canada "underwent a major development as more and more Canadian works were broadcast under the direction of Canadian conductors."<sup>18</sup> Murray Adaskin affectionately referred to it as the Canadian composer's "symphonic patron," and in 1964 the Canadian League of Composers called the orchestra "the most important medium for the extended works by Canadian composers."<sup>19</sup> George Proctor cites the creation of the CBC SO as one of a number of important developments in the early 1950s that opened up musical avenues for composers—such as modernism and large-scale orchestral composition—which had

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<sup>17</sup> Beckwith, then 88 years old, had not only witnessed the CBC Symphony Orchestra, but had written about it in newspapers and had his own music performed by it.

<sup>18</sup> John Roberts, "Communications Media," in *Aspects of Music in Canada*, ed. Arnold Walter (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 179.

<sup>19</sup> Murray Adaskin, undated memo (circa November 1959), LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6-4-6, part 2, 1958-1961 (CBC Symphony Orchestra). [I have reasonably dated the memo to November 1959 based on its placement between other memos from that same month in the archival folder.]; Letter from Jean Papineau-Couture and John Weinzweig on behalf of the Canadian League of Composers to Jean Marie-Beaudet, Vice-President of the CBC, 4 July 1964, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6-4-4, part 3, 1961-1967.

previously been closed to them.<sup>20</sup> Gordana Lazarevich has boldly claimed that there was “a direct causal link between the number of symphonic works written by major [Canadian] composers during the 1950s and the existence of the CBC Symphony Orchestra.”<sup>21</sup> Like Roberts and Proctor, however, Lazarevich does not offer any substantive examination of the orchestra’s repertoire to support these claims.

Furthermore, as Beckwith acknowledged during the 2015 conference, there have been no studies devoted specifically to either the CBC SO nor its sister orchestras. These included the CBC Vancouver Chamber Orchestra (later the CBC Radio Orchestra; 1938–2008); the CBC Winnipeg Orchestra (1947–1984); and Les Petites symphonies in Montreal (1948–1965).

#### **1.4 Primary Sources and the Challenges of Archival Material**

This dissertation is primarily based on archival research which I completed during two separate trips to Library and Archives Canada (LAC). The first was from 6–12 March 2016, and the second from 17–24 February 2019. During these trips I consulted thousands of primary records held in the Canadian Broadcasting Corporations fonds, as well as the fonds of other important figures related to the CBC SO, such as Geoffrey Waddington, Terence Gibbs and the Canadian League of Composers. I examined hundreds of internal memos, letters, meeting minutes, contracts and other correspondence which served to build a perspective of the CBC’s music policies and operations. I also examined concert programs, annotated scores, newspaper clippings and other

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<sup>20</sup> George A. Proctor, *Canadian Music of the Twentieth Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 34.

<sup>21</sup> Gordana Lazarevich, *The Musical World of Frances James and Murray Adaskin* (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 147–148.

paraphernalia which offered evidence about the repertoire performed by the CBC's radio orchestras and how this repertoire was received by their respective publics.

After extensive research in the CBC fonds, I discovered a large discrepancy between the extant archival material versus the time period which it purported to cover. This was most obvious with regard to the CBC's radio orchestras. The CBC Vancouver Chamber Orchestra (CBC VCO) offers a clear example of this disparity. The CBC VCO was in fact the longest-serving radio orchestra in North America: it was formed under the leadership of John Avison in 1938 and served until 2008, at which point the CBC unceremoniously dismantled it. In a 2003 retrospective on the CBC VCO, Robert Jordan notes that Avison and the CBC VCO were well respected for their programs, which stretched outside of the traditional canon and included a large number of Canadian works.<sup>22</sup> From 1963–1988 alone the orchestra premiered over 200 works from approximately 80 Canadian musicians, ranging from Murray Adaskin, John Beckwith and Barbara Pentland to Stephen Chatman, Jacques Hétu and Udo Kasemets.<sup>23</sup> The CBC VCO's commitment to twentieth-century music was acknowledged at the international level with an official commendation from the International Society for Contemporary Music in 1960.<sup>24</sup>

For an orchestra with such a long and distinguished history, one would reasonably expect its archival record to be expansive. However, I was only able to locate three folders of documents relevant to its operation. The first was a single folder in the CBC Vancouver Orchestra fonds, which totaled a mere one centimetre of textual records which

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<sup>22</sup> Robert Jordan, "CBC Radio Orchestra at 65," *Music Scene* (September-November 2003): 13.

<sup>23</sup> "CBC Symphony Orchestra," *Canadian Encyclopedia*, accessed 6 October 2015, <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/cbc-symphony-orchestra-emc>.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

pertained solely to community tours that the orchestra undertook between 1971–1977.<sup>25</sup> The other two folders are generically catalogued under the header “Vancouver Orchestras” in the CBC fonds. At approximately two centimetres of textual records combined, the number of documents is marginally higher than those in the CBC Vancouver Orchestra fonds, but only approximately a quarter of the records actually pertain directly to the CBC VCO itself. The two folders contain sources relevant to various musical activities in Vancouver in which the CBC participated, including broadcasts of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra and the First Symposium on Canadian Contemporary Music held there in 1950.<sup>26</sup> Nor is this dearth of primary source material on the CBC VCO a problem confined to LAC. In 2016, I was informed by current CBC music producer Denise Ball that there are virtually no remaining records at the CBC’s regional office in Vancouver.<sup>27</sup> The question remains, then: Where are all of these primary records? The answer is unclear, but I would reasonably speculate that they were likely destroyed, intentionally or not.<sup>28</sup> This does not of course prevent further research into the CBC VCO. In addition to extant recordings, published newspaper reviews, and other published material, the private fonds of musicians such as Jon Avison, Mario Bernardi, George Zukerman and others will almost certainly fill many of the voids

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<sup>25</sup> LAC, CBC Vancouver Orchestra fonds, R14426; see Library and Archives Canada, “CBC Vancouver Orchestra fonds [textual record],” accessed 4 June 2023, <https://recherche-collection-search.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/home/record?app=fonandcol&IdNumber=212601&q=cbc%20fonds>.

<sup>26</sup> LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6–4–7, part 1, 1938–64 (Vancouver Orchestras) and part 2, 1964–73 (Vancouver Orchestras).

<sup>27</sup> Email from Denise Ball to author, 10 February 2016.

<sup>28</sup> In a private conversation sometime around 2014, John Roberts informed me that records from the CBC were often carelessly discarded without consideration of their possible value to posterity and future research. For a good overview of this problem, see Regina Landwehr, “An Archival Odyssey: The Records in the John P.L. Roberts fonds,” in *John P.L. Roberts, the CBC/Radio Canada and Art Music*, eds. Friedemann Sallis and Regina Landwehr (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing), 190–206.

present in the CBC fonds at LAC.<sup>29</sup>

Archival evidence from the CBC SO is slightly more abundant. In the CBC fonds at LAC there exists three folders of documents which total approximately five centimetres of textual records. As with the CBC VCO, the surviving source material for the CBC SO likely pales in comparison to what must have been generated during the orchestra's lifetime, and was likely subject to disposal at some point in the past fifty years. The remaining documents span the twelve years of the orchestra's existence, and include internal and external correspondence; correspondence with guest musicians; concert programs; tour proposals and budgets; newspapers clippings; and other miscellaneous documents. Like the CBC VCO, this constitutes a small selection of material for an orchestra which performed for twelve years. Regrettably, there are no records preceding its first season in 1952, sources which might offer direct evidence for the orchestra's original conception. However, I also discovered valuable documents in other subsections of the CBC fonds, as well as in other fonds altogether. The Terence Gibbs fonds, for example, includes a small but valuable scrapbook that Gibbs (one of the orchestra's co-founders) put together at some point after the mid-1960s. The scrapbook constitutes approximately two centimetres of textual records, and includes lists of repertoire, photographs, newspaper clippings and other important records which served as a primary source of information for this dissertation.

Working within these source material limitations and the dearth of secondary

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<sup>29</sup> For example, in February 2016 the late George Zukerman, who served for many years as the orchestra's principle bassoonist, informed me he was in possession of a large number of artifacts from his years with the orchestra. I was regrettably unable to travel to Vancouver to consult his collection, but thanks to Zukerman's keen historiographical awareness, his estate (presumably) contains a valuable trove of sources for future research on the orchestra.

literature, I have structured this dissertation to examine the concept of a radio symphony orchestra and its relationship with twentieth-century music through the lens of the CBC Symphony Orchestra. I acknowledge that this decision necessarily limits the scope of my discussion, particularly in relation to regional music cultures. As a Toronto-based orchestra, the events I describe largely involve English Canadian musicians working in Southern Ontario, even if their performances were broadcast nationwide. As I will argue in Chapter 5, there are a number of reasons why I believe the CBC SO served a unique function among the CBC's permanent radio orchestras. It was clearly designated from the beginning to serve as the Corporation's flagship national symphony, regionally based but international in ambition.<sup>30</sup> At the time, it was the first and only full-sized radio symphony orchestra in Canada. Its adventurous programming policies not only gave many Canadian composers their first opportunity to write large-scale orchestral works; they were allowed to explore modernist styles which were traditionally ignored by independent symphony orchestras.

## **1.5 Methodology, Structure and Narrative**

Although research on the subject has not been abundant, there are important studies which examine the relationship between twentieth-century music and the radio. For example, Rüdiger Weißbach's *Rundfunk und neue Musik* offers valuable data on the impact public broadcasting had on the creation of new music in the mid-twentieth

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<sup>30</sup> The National Arts Centre Orchestra was founded in 1969, five years after the CBC SO was dismantled. There is in fact a series of correspondence held in the CBC fonds dating from the late 1950s in which CBC producers and executives debated moving the orchestra to Ottawa and changing its name to the CBC National Symphony. See LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6-4-6, part 2, 1958-1961 (CBC Symphony Orchestra).

century.<sup>31</sup> A number of studies approach the subject from the national perspectives, such as those by Ida De Benedictus and Amy Beal.<sup>32</sup> In *Radiodramma e arte radiofonica*, Benedictus examines modernist experiments with radiophonic music in Fascist Italy, while Beal's *New Music, New Allies* situates the radio within a broader context of Germany's cultural rehabilitation under Western occupation following the Second World War. Specifically, extensive state funds and a monopoly of state broadcasting in occupied Germany during the late 1940s and 1950s benefited members from across the art music discipline: new music commissions were frequent; well-funded radio symphony orchestras employed highly-skilled performers; new music festivals facilitated the spread of new ideas; and musicological work commissioned by radio stations examined and communicated those ideas to a broader audience. As Beal points out, "the symbiotic relationship between commission-granting radio producers (often composers themselves) and living composers needing studio space and rehearsal time mattered little if listeners lacked tools for appreciating new music."<sup>33</sup> In *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music*, Jennifer Doctor explores the promotion of the Second Viennese School by the BBC from 1922–1936. Doctor gives particular attention to the repertoire and policy decisions made by the Corporation in an attempt to educate and cultivate an appreciation for the modernist school among British audiences. Among these pursuits were numerous performances of works by Schoenberg, Webern and other related composers by the BBC Symphony Orchestra after it was founded in 1930.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Weißbach, *Rundfunk und neue Musik*.

<sup>32</sup> Angela Ida De Benedictis, *Radiodramma e arte radiofonica. Storia e funzioni della musica per radio in Italia* (Turin: EDT, 2004); Beal, *New Music, New Allies*.

<sup>33</sup> Beal, *New Music, New Allies*, 54.

<sup>34</sup> Jennifer Doctor, *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music, 1922–1936: Shaping a Nation's Tastes* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).



Radio symphony orchestras have traditionally constituted a principal vehicle by which many broadcasters promote the work of contemporary composers, but their role is usually mentioned only peripherally in scholarly discourse. However, there have been a small number of histories written about specific ensembles or conductors. For example, Alfred Sous and Nicholas Kenyon have published detailed chronologies of the Radio-Sinfonie-Orchester Frankfurt and the BBC Symphony Orchestra, respectively.<sup>35</sup> In *Jean-Marie Beaudet: l'homme orchestre*, José Beaudet examines in detail the career of Canadian conductor and radio executive Jean-Marie Beaudet (1908–1971).<sup>36</sup> Drawing on public and personal archival materials, Beaudet demonstrates the integral role Beaudet served in the CRBC and CBC/Radio Canada both as a performer and producer. Beaudet was an ardent champion of contemporary Canadian composition, and in 1933 was responsible for the creation La Petite Symphonie, one of the first two earliest radio symphony orchestras established in Canadian public broadcasting.<sup>37</sup>

Mortimer Frank's survey of Toscanini's work with the NBC Symphony Orchestra is another good example of an individually-focused study.<sup>38</sup> Frank served as the curator of the Toscanini Collection at Wave Hill (which was later moved to the New York Public Library), which included extensive recordings from the conductor's career with NBC. Drawing upon his intimate knowledge of Toscanini's work and these recordings, Frank presents a critical survey of each season of the NBC Symphony, followed by detailed

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<sup>35</sup> Alfred Sous, *Ein Orchester für das Radio. Das Radio-Sinfonie-Orchester Frankfurt* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Waldemar Kramer, 1998); Nicholas Kenyon, *The BBC Symphony Orchestra: The First Fifty Years, 1930–1980* (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1981).

<sup>36</sup> José Beaudet, *Jean-Marie Beaudet: l'homme orchestre* (Montréal: Fides, 2014).

<sup>37</sup> The second radio symphony orchestras created in 1933 was the Melodic Strings Orchestra, which I discuss in Chapter 3.

<sup>38</sup> Mortimer H. Frank, *Arturo Toscanini: The NBC Years* (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 2002).

breakdown of every work he conducted, categorized by composer.<sup>39</sup> However, the focus of Frank's research is clearly from Toscanini's perspective: his analysis does not delve into the historical background or context of the orchestra itself. A broader survey of NBC Symphony is provided by Donald Meyer in his 1995 dissertation on the orchestra.<sup>40</sup> Meyer's chronological narrative effectively establishes the immediate circumstances which brought together Toscanini and the NBC, but he too neglects to place the orchestra within a wider historical scope.

It is my goal in this dissertation to establish a general historical framework from which future scholarship on the relationship between radio symphony orchestras and twentieth-century music can be based. In the chapters that follow, I have elected to utilize a form of qualitative analysis which focuses on significant aspects and events (such as repertoire, commissioned works, policies and concerts), rather than a quantitative analysis of hard numbers (percentages of modern music within an orchestra's repertoire, for example). As discussed above, a lack of reliable statistics motivated this decision.

I have organized my analysis into four main chapters that are interrelated but do not adhere to a strict chronological thread. In Chapter 2, I trace the emergence of radio symphony orchestras in three different national contexts prior to Second World War: the NBC Symphony Orchestra in the United States, the Frankfurter Rundfunk-Sinfonie-Orchestra in Germany and the BBC Symphony Orchestra in England. All three of these examples identified themselves as traditional orchestras created for the express purpose of broadcasting, distinguishing themselves from the popular or utilitarian radio orchestras

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<sup>39</sup> It should be noted here that Toscanini only conducted an average of ten to fifteen of the NBC Symphony's performances each season. The remainder were led by guest conductors. See Donald Carl Meyer, "The NBC Symphony Orchestra" (PhD diss, University of California, Davis, 1994), 6.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

of the time. For the NBC Symphony, its distinction from independent orchestras stopped at the radio medium: under the director of Arturo Toscanini, its programs mostly reflected the same repertoire found on the programs of traditional symphony orchestras. Conversely, the BBC Symphony and the Frankfurt Radio Symphony established a further distinction for themselves by frequently engaging with non-canonic repertoire. In particular, the creative autonomy provided by public funding allowed both orchestras to frequently engage with twentieth-century music, including modernist works that were rarely given space on traditional symphonic programs.

In Chapter 3, I narrow the focus to early radio orchestras in Canada. As the Canadian political system spent the 1920s debating the best path for broadcasting regulation in Canada, companies such as the crown corporation Canadian National Railway and its private counterpart, the Canadian Pacific Railway, established successful orchestral programs which aspired to traditional symphony concerts on radio. With the establishment of the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission in 1932 and, four years later, the CBC, radio symphony orchestras were created with the express purpose of supporting Canadian performing musicians and educating the Canadian public on the virtues of high art music. With few exceptions, the programs of these orchestras initially reflected the colonial conservatism of independent orchestras such as the Toronto Symphony. If the techniques of twentieth-century music were heard at all on the radio, it would have been in the context of incidental music for radio dramas and documentaries. CBC Radio's primary objective in the 1930s and 1940s with regard to art music was to encourage the professional growth of performing musicians. This started to change in the late 1940s as the CBC VCO began to program modern works more frequently. It was not

until after World War Two that the Corporation turned its attention in earnest to patronizing the creation of new music, primarily but not solely from Canadian composers. As I examine in Chapter 4, the CBC gradually formulated a cohesive policy for commissioning new works during the 1950s and 1960s, of which orchestral music was an important part. I argue that although such a program was never effectively stabilized, the work of producers such as John Peter Lee Roberts (b. 1930) and his colleagues gave many Canadian composers the freedom to develop their compositional voices and to have their music heard across Canada and abroad. Chapter 4 has been previously published in the *John P.L. Roberts, the CBC/Radio Canada, and Art Music*, and I have included it here because the CBC's development of its commissioning policy in the 1950s and 1960s facilitated the CBC SO's ability to work closely with contemporary composers.<sup>41</sup>

Finally, my analysis of the CBC Symphony Orchestra in Chapter 5 draws on all of these concepts to explain how the CBC SO attempted to create a national symphony to promote the creativity of Canadian musicians—performers, conductors, and composers. Drawing heavily on archival records, I argue that the CBC SO attempted to normalize the performance of Canadian music within the context of normal orchestral programs. The orchestra attempted to avoid what John Weinzweig called Canadian “premiere syndrome,” wherein promoters framed the performance of Canadian music as a novelty to draw in audiences.<sup>42</sup> The CBC SO repeated numerous works, programming them *between* relatable works from traditional canonic composers instead of as a *preface* (or overture)

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<sup>41</sup> Robert W. Bailey, “John Roberts and the Evolution of the CBC Radio’s Music Commissioning Policy, 1960–1964,” in *John P.L. Roberts, the CBC/Radio Canada and Art Music*, eds. Friedemann Sallis and Regina Landwehr (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing), 117–130.

<sup>42</sup> Roxanne Snider, “Violet Archer & John Weinzweig,” *Canadian Composer* 4/2 (Spring 1993): 12.

to them. The orchestra also established a number of precedents, including the first invitation to a Canadian orchestra to perform for the United Nations Day celebrations in Washington, D.C., as well as at the United Nations headquarters in New York City. It is my hope that the ideas I propose in these chapters will serve as a foundation for further research on the CBC's other radio symphony orchestras and the way in which they responded to the needs of both regional and national audiences, as well as how they engaged with twentieth-century music.

# Chapter 2

## The Emergence of Radio Orchestras Before World War Two

### 2.1 Introduction

On 13 January 1910, a performance by the New York Metropolitan Opera was heard outside the walls of the old Opera House on Broadway for the first time. Inventor Lee de Forest placed a microphone from the facility's intercom system onstage and fed it to a telephone receiver on the building's top floor. By placing another microphone against the receiver, de Forest was able to transmit the signal to the neighbouring community through a portable radio transmitter connected to two antenna masts erected for the occasion on the roof above him. An announcement in the *New York Times* two days before the performance gave listeners in New York a chance to tune in, although advised that "this will only be an experiment and perfect results are not expected immediately."<sup>43</sup> On the bill for the evening was *Tosca*, starring a guest performance by the Czech soprano Emmy Destinn.<sup>44</sup> For the small number of journalists and hobbyists who were able to tune in, the quality fell far short of satisfactory; as Peter Wynne puts it, "the inventor had made history, but he'd also jumped the gun. The setup linking stage to transmitter was little better than a tin-can telephone."<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> "To Hear Opera by Wireless: Experiment to be Made at Metropolitan at 'Tosca' Performance," *New York Times*, 9 January 1910, 9.

<sup>44</sup> "Metropolitan's Operas," *New York Tribune*, 6 January 1910, 7.

<sup>45</sup> Peter Wynne, "Wireless Wonders," *Opera News* 58/5 (November 1993): 30.

While this was a significant moment in the wireless transmission of sound, it would take several more years for the technology to catch up to the concept. In 1916, the Marconi Company, founded by Italian inventor Guglielmo Marconi, made a large leap in wireless telephony (as radio was originally conceived) by demonstrating a conversation between radio operators in Aldine, New Jersey and a steamship called Bunker Hill. This was Marconi's first attempt at developing a wireless telephone—the natural progression from his achievements in wireless telegraphy. The *New York Times* reported that listeners were “amazed” by the quality of the sound transmitted from the steamship floating up the Long Island Sound over sixty miles away. The two-hour conversation was capped by the transmissions of phonograph recordings of the American and French nation anthems, as well as *Tipperary*, a popular Irish tune of the time:

There was a few moments' silence and then, clear as a bell, came the strains of 'The Star-Spangled Banner,' played by a full orchestra. The music was so loud that the crowd standing on the deck outside the wireless room of the Bunker Hill all heard it, and when the final crescendo rang out they greeted it with cheers. Then came the stirring strains of the 'Marseillaise,' which was also cheered to the echo. By this time those on the Bunker Hill began to think they were attending [a] concert, and there were cries of 'Encore!' Mr Weagant responded, for the final selection, with 'Tipperary,' the strains of which, while perfectly clear, began to become faint, owing to the distance the vessel had traveled since the demonstration began.<sup>46</sup>

This was a demonstration of wireless telephony, or two-way communication by which audio took the place of telegraphic signals. Four years later, the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company of Canada used the technology to present one of the first regular radio broadcasts during a one-way presentation transmitted wirelessly from a single

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<sup>46</sup> “Waft Music into Air By Wireless Phone: Phonograph Playing at Aldine, N. J., Heard on the Steamer Bunker Hill 60 Miles Away; Talked for Two Hours,” *New York Times*, 12 June 1916, 11.

source to a large audience. On 20 May 1920, the Marconi Company's first radio station, XWA, broadcast a performance by soprano Dorothy Lutton in Montreal to members of Royal Society of Canada listening in Ottawa.<sup>47</sup>

This chapter is not about the evolution of broadcast technology, or music's place in the development of the prototypical broadcast schedule. These examples instead demonstrate the natural tendency by inventors and users alike to adapt the new technology to the diffusion of music. As Eric Hobsbawm points out, music was "significantly affected by radio...since it abolished the acoustic or mechanical limitations on the range of source."<sup>48</sup> New technologies like the gramophone and especially the radio allowed music to transcend the walls of the concert hall for the first time. For someone like Lee de Forest, who later revolutionized radio broadcasting with his invention of the Audion amplifying tube, the dissemination of art music was a motivating force behind his work. A great lover of the opera, de Forest himself was a member of the cultural elite who envisioned the lofty possibilities for public enlightenment through the radio. He wrote later in life that, "if this were the only application of the radiophone, its ability to educate the people in good music, that alone would amply justify the Government, or our musical societies, in endowing and maintaining such a service as I have just described."<sup>49</sup> Indeed, De Forest was not alone among cultural leaders in believing that art music had the power to influence the education and moral integrity of the greater public, and nor was he alone in his decision to prioritize the dissemination of art music using the new

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<sup>47</sup> Mary Vipond, *Listening In: The First Decade of Canadian Broadcasting, 1922–1932* (Montreal and Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 3.

<sup>48</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century 1914–1991* (London: Abacus, 1995), 196–197.

<sup>49</sup> Timothy D. Taylor, "The Role of Opera in the Rise of Radio in the United States," in *Music and the Broadcast Experience: Performance, Production, and Audiences*, eds. Christina L. Baade and James Deaville (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 74.



medium.

As radio transmission and public reception flourished in the 1920s, music quickly assumed a primary role filling broadcast schedules across the world. Radio producers sought to transplant the musical concert to the airwaves, but in many cases were confronted with suspicion from traditional concert promoters and were thus often forced to assemble their own orchestras for the task. This was particularly true of state broadcasters, who operated with a unique autonomy granted to them by public funding.

In this chapter I will examine how the radio, symphonic music and contemporary composition interacted within three national contexts—the United States, Germany and Great Britain—prior to the Second World War. Radio orchestras evolved out of a practical need for dedicated broadcast ensembles, from which they assumed additional roles which, in many cases, could not be easily filled outside the radio industry. This was particularly true of state funded broadcast orchestras in nations such as Britain and Germany. As I will explain, however, capitalists in the United States likewise found ways to bring the radio orchestra to the centre of attention in a way which mutually benefited both musicians as well as their sponsors.

## **2.2 The United States and the NBC Symphony Orchestra**

In the United States, art music received heavy airtime in major cities during the early 1920s. New York City based WQXR spent eighty percent of its broadcasts playing classical music, while Chicago's KYW was devoted solely to replaying performances by the Chicago Civic Opera.<sup>50</sup> According to Robert Hullot-Kentor, manufacturers went so

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<sup>50</sup> Robert Hullot-Kentor, "Second Salvage: Prolegomenon to a Reconstruction of 'Current of Music,'" *Cultural Critique* 60 (Spring 2005): 138.

far as to advertise their high-end radio sets as “fine ‘instruments’” themselves, “having been built for distinguished music.”<sup>51</sup> There was in the United States a fervent push to democratize art music through the radio, insofar as broadcasting removed the physical barriers which had traditionally confined classical concerts to the privileged classes. As David Goodman points out, lofty claims of the universality and popularity of art music were “anthropologically and even sociologically absurd.” Removed from its Western European roots, art music in the United States was seen to have “transcended national antagonisms, spoke to all humanity, and thus both exemplified and advocated a cosmopolitan ideal.”<sup>52</sup> Programs on the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) and Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) networks included both pedagogical as well as interactive elements to engage active and sometimes participatory listening. For example, in 1936 NBC introduced the *NBC Home Symphony* program, during which radio listeners were encouraged to perform along with the symphony from home.<sup>53</sup> Art music was an essential part in radio’s “civic paradigm, and its ambition to create modern citizens with a developed capacity to absorb information, empathize across cultural borders, experience and control emotion, and arrive at reasoned personal opinions.”<sup>54</sup>

During the 1920s high-brow symphonic music thrived on the commercialized market of American radio. Traditional symphony orchestras particularly benefited from live broadcasts of their concerts starting as early as 1922, when the New York Philharmonic was first heard regularly on CBS. Corporate sponsorship of symphony

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 138.

<sup>52</sup> David Goodman, *Radio’s Civic Ambition: American Broadcasting and Democracy in the 1930s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 125.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 130.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 118.

orchestras became a popular way for American businesses to gain prestige and legitimacy in the eyes and ears of consumers. This method of institutional advertising, as opposed to product-based advertising, was exemplified by the General Motors Symphony Orchestra, which performed on NBC from 1929–1937.<sup>55</sup> However, the sponsorship model also left the artistic integrity of sponsored orchestras open to unwanted influence from their patrons. In 1935, for example, the President of General Motors, Alfred P. Sloan, nearly cancelled the company’s sponsorship of the General Motors Symphony Orchestra after guest conductors Leopold Stokowski performed an arrangement of “a Bach number” and Eugene Goossens performed “one of his own compositions” on back-to-back broadcasts. Sloan feared that the complex nature of the works would lose the attention of the audience—that is, GM’s customer base: “Technically considered, [the] concerts are wonderful, but practically viewed, they are over the heads of 120,000,000 people.”<sup>56</sup> To appease Sloan’s concerns and ensure GM renewed its contract for the following season, NBC’s President Merlin Aylesworth reluctantly assured Sloan that “if you will decide to broadcast another series of programs, I will undertake the responsibility of so organizing the programs in cooperation with your Advertising Agency and anyone you may designate from General Motors, that we will see to it that there will be melody and popular melody with dignity rather than ‘just a little melody’ with a continual struggle to obtain ‘just a little melody.’”<sup>57</sup>

America’s most famous broadcast orchestra, the NBC Symphony Orchestra, was founded in 1937 to entice Arturo Toscanini to remain in the United States. David Sarnoff,

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<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 120–121.

<sup>56</sup> Donald Carl Meyer, “The NBC Symphony Orchestra” (PhD diss, University of California, Davis, 1994), 68. The exact works performed by Stokowski and Goosens are not specified.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.* 68–69.

President of NBC's parent company Recording Company of America (RCA), was a shrewd businessman and saw Toscanini's retirement from the New York Philharmonic in 1936 as a prime opportunity to bolster the Company's reputation. As Sarnoff wrote at the time, the orchestra's existence was at its core a business venture:

The National Broadcasting Corporation is an American business organization. It has employes [sic] and it has stockholders. It serves their interests best when it serves the public best. We believe in this principle and maintain it as our guiding policy. This is why we organized the new NBC Symphony Orchestra and invited the world's greatest conductor to direct it.<sup>58</sup>

One contemporary critic likened the engagement to a move of a modern-day corporate aristocracy, calling it a

twentieth-century gesture of Medici-like magnificence, carried through by an American business corporation for the benefit of millions of anonymous but powerful listeners. Only American audacity would approach the god of all conductors, and having won him, proceed to build an orchestra worthy of him.<sup>59</sup>

In fact, Toscanini himself had demanded the orchestra be of world-class status; if it had not met the standards set by the Boston Symphony, New York Philharmonic or the Philadelphia Orchestra, he reportedly would have walked away from the deal.<sup>60</sup>

Independent symphony orchestras across the country feared that their most talented players would be lost to the opportunity to play for Toscanini in a new world-class orchestra. Their fears were justified, as twenty-one members of the final NBC Symphony came from first-desk positions at other prestigious orchestras across the United States.<sup>61</sup>

However, the orchestra itself was not in fact entirely new. NBC had employed a full-time

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<sup>58</sup> "Toscanini to Present NBC Concerts for Three Years Under New Contract," *Broadcasting*, 15 March 1938, 36.

<sup>59</sup> Mortimer Frank, *Toscanini: The NBC Years* (Portland: Amadeus Press, 2002), 32.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

house orchestra since 1926, which performed under various guises—a common practice for networks at the time. (The General Motors Symphony Orchestra, to which I referred above, was an example.) Of the NBC Symphony’s ninety-two performers, thirty-one were retained from the Corporation’s existing roster of staff orchestral musicians. The remaining sixty-one seats were filled after a series of rigorous auditions to find first-class musicians who met Toscanini’s standards.<sup>62</sup> The venue from which the orchestra performed was a large studio capable of holding fourteen hundred people on the eighth floor of the RCA building in New York’s Rockefeller Centre. It was, like most broadcast studios, acoustically treated to remove sonic reflections and reverberation. Such a “dry” space is traditionally detrimental to the orchestral sound, but it was ideal for clear radio transmissions. According to Mortimer Frank, this latter point may have been one of the reasons Toscanini tolerated the space, as it complemented the “textural transparency which he favoured.”<sup>63</sup> Besides its venue, however, the NBC Symphony was a direct transplant of a traditional symphony orchestra into the broadcast booth. Toscanini himself conducted only a portion of the broadcasts each season, but he was given full artistic control of the musical programming. Frank observes that

The music on the broadcasts did not diverge in any way from the typical programs of major symphony orchestras. Nor was the presentation style of the broadcasts—in its comments about the music or in its supplementary commentary—any different from that used in New York Philharmonic broadcasts carried by CBS.<sup>64</sup>

For example, the repertoire of the thirteen performances Toscanini conducted during the orchestra’s first season came almost exclusively from the late-eighteenth and

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<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 30. See also Meyer, “The NBC Symphony Orchestra,” 45–46.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

nineteenth-century European canon. Over the years new music was not completely absent from the orchestra's catalogue; the premiere performance of Barber's enduring *Adagio for Strings* on 5 November 1938 was a notable example. However, from the beginning the NBC Symphony Orchestra's primary function was not to creatively engage with the broadcast medium or to promote specifically American music. It was created expressly within the context of a capitalist venture which utilized the radio to further enhance Toscanini's reputation on the one hand, and the legitimacy of NBC's cultural standing on the other.

To be sure, twentieth-century composers were not altogether neglected by American radio before the Second World War. In 1932 NBC sponsored five orchestral awards, for which five American composers (defined as citizens or "intended citizens") received \$10 000 each for a new orchestra work. The winning works were performed by Eugene Goossens conducting the NBC's house orchestra on 8 May 1932. These included *Station WGZBX* by Philip James; *The Dancer Dead* by Max Wald; *Traffic* by Carl Eppert; *Symphonic Intermezzo* by Florence Grandland Galajikian; and *Sinfonietta* by Nicholai Berezowsky.<sup>65</sup> Four years later, in 1937 CBS initiated its "Columbia Composers' Commissions" program. Over the next two years twelve American composers were commissioned: Aaron Copland, Louis Gruenberg, Howard Hansen, Roy Harris, Walter Piston, William Grant Still, Robert Russell Bennett, R. Nathaniel Dett, Vittorio Giannini, Jerome Moross, Quincy Porter and Leo Sowerby. The composers were not limited to a genre, but the available orchestral forces (CBS's house orchestra) were specifically prescribed. Furthermore, composers were encouraged to integrate the studio

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<sup>65</sup> Akihito Taniguchi, *Music for the Microphone: Network Broadcasts and the Creation of American Compositions in the Golden Age of Radio* (PhD diss., Florida State University, 2003), 14–17.

microphone into their orchestrations, due to their ability to offer new tonal colours depending on both their physical placement in the room, as well as their manipulatable volume (or gain) levels. According to Deems Taylor, the CBS producer in charge of the commission program, the new works would “offer the radio audience an opportunity to realize the extent to which radio has made new instrumental and tone colours possible.”<sup>66</sup>

### **2.3 Radio Music, *Der Lindberghflug* and the Frankfurter Rundfunk-Sinfonie-Orchester**

The notion that composing for radio required a new way to approach art music composition had long become a subject of debate in Europe. In June 1933, the Union Internationale de Radiodiffusion (International Broadcasting Union, or UIR) in Geneva issued a bulletin which discussed the emerging concept of radio music. Citing recent competitions for new works hosted by Italian and Spanish broadcasters, the UIR outlined both sides of the argument, pointing out that

It is felt, for example, that certain sound effects which have a definite place in compositions to be performed in the presence of the listeners have no value in a performance radiated by wireless, and that, on the other hand, it is possible to conceive of new combinations of sound and tonal values achieved through new methods of orchestration, which will give to broadcast music a distinctive character.<sup>67</sup>

During the second half of the 1930s, the UIR collected monthly information from twenty-six member nations to compile “all available information as to music specially written for broadcasting and to communicate the information received periodically to

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<sup>66</sup> Quoted in *Ibid.*, 33–34. Taylor very specifically outlined the instrumentation to which composers were to adhere, which was limited to a total of thirty-seven instruments. See *Ibid.*, 25. Composers were encouraged to take advantage of the tonal possibilities

<sup>67</sup> Cited in Davidson Taylor, “Music Written for Radio,” in *Papers Read by Members of the American Musicological Society at the Annual Meeting* (New York: American Musicological Society, 1939), 252.

members of the Union.”<sup>68</sup> Nazi Germany was an active respondent to the questionnaires distributed, but because the Nazis had proscribed all modern art as *entartet* (degenerate), the Reichsrundfunkgesellschaft not surprisingly dismissed all activity in the field of radiophonic music as “without importance.”<sup>69</sup> Before the Nazis’ seized power, however, it was in Germany that *Der Lindberghflug* (1929), a work that Angela Ida De Benedictis has singled out as exemplary of early radio art, was produced.<sup>70</sup> This was a collaborative “radio cantata” by Bertolt Brecht, Paul Hindemith and Kurt Weill about Charles Lindbergh’s triumphant solo flight across the Atlantic ocean in 1927. It was commissioned by Südwestdeutscher Rundfunk in Frankfurt for the 1929 Baden-Baden Festival. Hermann Scherchen conducted the premiere performance on 7 July 1929 with the Frankfurt Radio’s resident orchestra, the Frankfurter Rundfunk-Sinfonie-Orchester. The music of *Der Lindberghflug* deals directly with the limitations of the day’s broadcast technology. It was initially scored for soprano, tenor, bass and baritone soloists with a chorus and a wind orchestra. As in Weill’s previous radio work, *Das Berliner Requiem*, the composers of *Der Lindberghflug* omitted strings due to the “technical conditions of the microphones and loudspeakers of the period: it needed to be clearly audible.”<sup>71</sup> According to Weill, both *Das Berliner Requiem* and *Der Lindberghflug* were “expressly intended for use by radio station,” and his fervent interest in the medium equipped him with knowledge about “the acoustic conditions of the studio, with the orchestral and instrumental possibilities of the microphone, with the distribution of vocal registers and

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 251–252.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 253.

<sup>70</sup> Angela Ida De Benedictis, *Radiodramma e arte radiofonica. Storia e funzioni della musica per radio in Italia* (Turin: EDT, 2004), xii.

<sup>71</sup> Josef Heinzelmann, “Kurt Weill’s Compositions for Radio,” liner notes for *Der Lindberghflug and The Ballad of Magna Carta*, by Kurt Weill. Kölner Rundfunkorchester, Jan Latham-König, Hermann Scherchen (Capriccio Digital 60 012–1, 1990, compact disc), 18.



the harmonic boundaries imposed on a composition for radio.”<sup>72</sup> Even when Weill added strings in a subsequent revision of *Der Lindberghflug*, they are noticeably confined to their lower registers: the low bass instruments often perform walking lines, while the upper strings are confined at the uppermost to their middle registers. This style of orchestration enabled the woodwinds and the voices to occupy the upper harmonic spaces, as their timbre was presumably more effectively transmitted over the ether.

Moreover, the social accessibility of the broadcast medium directly informed Weill’s musical style:

The primary consideration is that the radio audience consists of people from all social strata. It is therefore impossible to proceed from the same premises that apply to the concert hall. Concert music was always intended at the time of its genesis for a particular and limited group of listeners from the educated and well-to-do classes. Radio presents the serious musician of our time with the novel challenge of creating works that can be comprehended by as large a group of listeners as possible. The content and form of these radio compositions must be capable of reaching a large number of people from all groups, and the musical means of expression should not present the primitive listener with any difficulties.<sup>73</sup>

The orchestra that premiered *Der Lindberghflug* was the Frankfurter Rundfunk-Sinfonie-Orchestra, which continues to perform to this day as one of Germany’s oldest radio symphony orchestras.<sup>74</sup> When Südwestdeutsche Rundfunkdienst AG (Radio Frankfurt) was established in April 1924, conductor Reinhold Merten began broadcasting with a small ensemble of strings and piano. Although it was advertised as an orchestra, one could hardly call it such. In its earliest years it consisted of merely two violins, cello

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<sup>72</sup> Quoted in Stephen Hinton, *Weill’s Musical Theater: Stages of Reform* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 325.

<sup>73</sup> Quoted in *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> Alfred Sous, *Ein Orchester für das Radio: das Radio-Sinfonie-Orchester* (Frankfurt am Main: W. Kramer, 1998), 18.

and piano—little more than a piano quartet whose members performed largely for their own personal fulfillment before proceeding to their regular jobs with the Frankfurter Opera- und Museumsorchester. Over the next six years, however, this small ensemble blossomed into a chamber orchestra of approximately twenty-eight members by 1927. By the time it was officially designated the Frankfurter Rundfunk-Sinfonie-Orchestra on 1 October 1929, the orchestra had grown to a healthy sixty-one members.<sup>75</sup>

The Frankfurter Rundfunk-Sinfonie-Orchestra's repertoire initially spanned everything from Irish folk songs arranged by Percy Grainger, to Paul Hindemith's *Minimax*, composed in 1923. A native of Frankfurt, Hindemith was so impressed by the possibilities presented by this broadcasting orchestra that it influenced his decision to compose *Anekdoten für Radio* (1925, published as *Three Pieces for Five Instruments*).<sup>76</sup> Like the BBC's 2LO Wireless Orchestra (discussed below), the orchestra performed regularly but informally for its first five years. It was not until 1929 that Radio Frankfurt officially designated it the Frankfurter Rundfunk-Sinfonie-Orchestra. At that time Hans Rosebaud (1895–1962) was appointed its founding director, upon a recommendation by Hindemith. Rosbaud was a staunch proponent of modern music, and regularly programmed works by Schoenberg, Webern, Berg, Hindemith, Stravinsky, and Bartók until the Nazis came to power in 1933 and proscribed modernism and its proponents.<sup>77</sup> In his *Autobiography*, Stravinsky expressed respect for Rosbaud and his orchestra:

In contrast with the pre-war custodians of old dogmas, a fresh public joyfully and gratefully accepted the new manifestations of contemporary art. Germany was definitely becoming the centre of

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 16. It is now known as the hr-Sinfonieorchester Frankfurt.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, 15.

<sup>77</sup> Joan Evans, "Rosbaud, Hans (Johann)," Grove Music Online, accessed 27 March 2023, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.23825>. See also Joan Evans, *Hans Rosbaud: A Bio-Bibliography* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1992).

the musical movement, and spared no effort to make it succeed. In this connection I should like to mention the enlightened activity in the realm of music of such organizations as the *Rundfunk* (radio) in Berlin and that of Frankfurt-on-Main, and to note particularly the sustained efforts of the latter's admirable conductor, Rosbaud, who, by his energy, his taste, his experience, and devotion, succeeded very quickly in bringing that organization to a very high artistic pitch.<sup>78</sup>

## 2.4 Great Britain and the BBC Symphony Orchestra

In the same chapter of his *Autobiography*, Stravinsky gives praise to another radio orchestra, this one from Britain. During a tour in late 1929 he conducted a BBC orchestra in a performance of his work *Oedipus Rex*. Thrilled with the success of the performance and talent shown by the British performers, he wrote how “a few well informed and cultured men—among them my friend of long standing, Edward Clark—have been able to form within this organization a small group which, with praiseworthy energy, pursues the propaganda of contemporary music, upholding its cause with invincible tenacity. The B.B.C. has succeeded in forming a fine orchestra, which certainly rivals the best in the world.”<sup>79</sup> Like NBC in the United States and Radio Frankfurt in Germany, the BBC maintained a house orchestra to perform various broadcasting roles. The British Broadcasting Company (as it was known until its incorporation in December 1926) organized a semi-formal orchestra under the moniker of the 2LO Wireless Orchestra, which began giving public concerts in 1923. According to Nicholas Kenyon, in its early years the BBC was frequently stonewalled in its efforts to secure broadcasting permission from existing orchestras. Concert promoters regarded the medium with great hesitation, fearing that broadcast performances would “lower receipts in the hall and cause the death

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<sup>78</sup> Igor Stravinsky, *An Autobiography* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 1962), 158.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 139.

of live music-making.”<sup>80</sup> However, it was a matter of pride that the BBC achieve excellence not just in symphonic music performance, but in the context of *live* performances before in-person audiences.<sup>81</sup> It was through the symphony orchestra, and not the opera, which the BBC sought to capture the nation’s attention: “The BBC Music Department’s primary aim in the 1920s was to establish a national reputation for serious music making, appreciated both at home and abroad. Such a goal entailed a quite specific remit: to achieve excellence in the realm of *symphonic repertory*, the primary music benchmark at that time.”<sup>82</sup> An orchestra of such repute also fit the BBC’s mandate to widen the scope of the education and appreciation of “good music”—understood to mean Western art music—to the entire British population. In its 1929 *Yearbook*, the BBC stated that it would finally democratize the dissemination of art music: “The shepherd on the downs, or the lonely crofter in the farthest Hebrides and...the labourer in his squalid tenement...may all, in spirit, sit side by side with the patron of the stalls and hear some of the best performances in the world.”<sup>83</sup> During the 1920s the BBC utilized listener correspondence to gauge the success of the Corporation’s high-art programs. When faced with recurring complaints from listeners who felt the high-art programming was irrelevant and out of touch with general tastes, the Corporation doubled down on its

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<sup>80</sup> Nicholas Kenyon, *The BBC Symphony Orchestra: The First Fifty Years, 1930–1980* (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1981), 4.

<sup>81</sup> Jenny Doctor, “Broadcasting—Concerts: Confronting the Obvious,” in *Music and the Broadcast Experience: Performance, Production, and Audiences*, eds. Christina Baade and James A. Deaville (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 53. Doctor further points out that, from a practical perspective, ticketed concerts allowed the BBC to profit from ticket sales, as well as the acoustics of a fully attended concert venue allowed for higher-quality transmissions.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>83</sup> Paddy Scannell, “Music for the Multitude? The Dilemmas of the BBC’s Music Policy,” *Media, Culture and Society* 3/3 (1981): 244. See also Jennifer Doctor’s detailed discussion in *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music, 1922–1936: Shaping a Nation’s Tastes* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 27–37.

policy and placed the onus on the listener to correct their perspective. In September 1927 they asserted that “If there be an art of broadcasting there is equally an art of listening...There can be no excuse for the listener who tunes into a programme, willy nilly, and complains that he does not care for it. He should decide his broadcast-entertainment for the evening with as much care as he would decide whether to go see a Bernard Shaw play or a Revue.”<sup>84</sup>

BBC producers began very early on creating their own symphony orchestra to serve its audiences and achieve its desired cultural leadership. Beginning on 21 June 1923, a small orchestra of eighteen players performed a live concert from a private studio known as Savoy Hill under the direction of the Company’s music director, Percy Pitt (1869–1932). Over the following year it became known as the BBC Wireless Orchestra (known colloquially as the 2LO Wireless Orchestra, as 2LO was the station’s call sign). Over the next seven years the orchestra gradually grew, giving live broadcast performances from such prestigious venues as Covent Garden and under such iconic guest conductors as Pierre Monteaux (10 December 1924) and Bruno Walter (12 February 1925), among many others.<sup>85</sup> During the 1926–1927 season, the Wireless Orchestra had bolstered its roster through a partnership with the Covent Garden Orchestra. This amalgamated orchestra was dubbed the “National Orchestra,” and under the adventurous programming of Pitt and Edward Clark (1888–1962) saw a series of guest conductors performing a number of twentieth-century works. A few examples included Arthur Honegger, who appeared with the orchestra to conduct his orchestral

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<sup>84</sup> Cited in Doctor, *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music*, 35.

<sup>85</sup> For a detailed discussion of the BBC’s orchestra’s early years, see the first chapter of Kenyon, *The BBC Symphony*, 1–48.

work *Pacific 231* and his oratorio *Le Roi David*; Richard Strauss, who conducted his *Alpine Symphony*; and Hermann Scherchen, who performed Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht*, Op. 4.<sup>86</sup>

Like its Frankfurt counterpart, the BBC Wireless Orchestra operated on a semi-formal basis throughout the 1920s without a permanent identity. The transient nature of the orchestra's membership caused persistent concerns over the quality of its performance. Contracted performers operated by a deputy system, whereby any member could substitute themselves without providing notice, at any time. The orchestra lacked a collective musical identity, and this fact was not lost on its audiences. Following a performance by the BBC National from Queen's Hall in January 1928, a critic in the *Musical Times* accused the BBC of a "heinous" offence that it committed repeatedly:

For this corporation with all its assumed and conspicuous wealth, has given and is giving us the worst orchestral performances ever heard in London... This year at Queen's Hall they have assembled an orchestra which sounds as if it were composed in great part of 'substitutes.'<sup>87</sup>

In the face of continuing protests from private organizations who viewed the crown Corporation's orchestral ambitions as a threat to private concertizing, the BBC Symphony Orchestra was finally unveiled in 1930.<sup>88</sup> Its 114 members were carefully chosen from all over Britain, and Adrian Boult was enticed from his position with the

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<sup>86</sup> Kenyon, *The BBC Symphony*, 12.

<sup>87</sup> Quoted in *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>88</sup> On the eve of the BBC Symphony's inaugural season in 1930, Hamilton Harty, the President of the Incorporated Society of Organists and former conductor of the Hallé Orchestra in Manchester, condemned the BBC's public concertizing, claiming that "it is morally wrong and quite indefensible for [the BBC] to enter into direct competition with private musical interests. It was never meant that the BBC should have the trusteeship of large sums of public money in order to use this money to crush and imperil private enterprise." Quoted in *Ibid.*, 47.

City of Birmingham Symphony to be its permanent director.<sup>89</sup> There was an obvious element of national pride motivating the Corporation, as they declared that their new orchestra would “set a standard for English orchestral playing, and should bear comparison with the finest orchestras in the world.”<sup>90</sup> However, the BBC Symphony was also structured pragmatically according to its status as a broadcasting orchestra. When required, the 114 members of the BBC Symphony were divided into four smaller ensembles in order to cover a number of musical contexts, including smaller symphonic works (78 members), theatrical music (36), light symphonic repertoire (67 members), and a “popular orchestra” for various other broadcasting needs (47 members).<sup>91</sup> The various iterations of the orchestra performed on different nights of the week, but the full orchestra appeared twice a week: on Wednesday nights at Queen’s Hall before a live audience, and on Sunday nights from “No. 10,” an old warehouse converted into a makeshift studio to accommodate the large ensemble. Despite the studio’s primitive accommodations, it hosted many notable guest performances in its first years. For example, Schoenberg conducted *Erwartung* and his orchestral arrangement of Bach’s Prelude and Fugue in E-flat on 9 January 1931; Webern conducted his Five Movements for String Orchestra as well as Schoenberg’s orchestral arrangement of his “Song of the Wood Dove” from *Gurrelieder*, and *Accompaniment to a Film Scene* on 8 May 1931; and Manuel de Falla performed harpsichord as well as conducted the orchestra during a concert on 24 June 1931 which included a suite from *El Amor Brujo*, Concerto for Harpsichord, Flute, Oboe,

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<sup>89</sup> The BBC had hoped to entice Thomas Beecham to lead its new orchestra, but after nearly two years of negotiations the two parties reached an impasse and talks were abandoned. A full analysis of the failed partnership is presented in Nicholas Kenyon, “Beecham and the BBC Symphony Orchestra: A Collaboration that Never Happened,” *Musical Times* 121/1652 (October 1980): 625, 627–628.

<sup>90</sup> Kenyon, *The BBC Symphony*, 54.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

Clarinet, Violin and Violoncello as well as *Master Peter's Puppet Show*.<sup>92</sup>

The repertoires of both the 2LO Wireless Orchestra and the early BBC Symphony Orchestra included an emphasis on twentieth-century European music due in large part to the influence of two producers, Percy Pitt and Edward Clark. Pitt was a relatively unknown figure in British music. He had studied in France and Germany after the Great War and was well informed about contemporary trends in European music. Pitt served as the BBC's first Music Advisor (later Music Director), until he was succeeded by Adrian Boult in 1930.<sup>93</sup> Edward Clark had studied with Schoenberg and maintained friendships with many of the most important composers of the time, including Stravinsky.<sup>94</sup> In his detailed study of the orchestra, Nicholas Kenyon cites in particular Clark's programming philosophy as an "open-minded assault on a narrow public taste."<sup>95</sup> He maintained his adventurous programming policies with the BBC Symphony until his resignation in 1936. In this case, "adventurous" may be defined as both the new and the unknown—explorations of music which generally fell both inside and out of the purview of the great canon within which independent orchestras generally kept their programs. During the Wednesday live concerts from Queen's Hall, for example, audiences heard works ranging from Borodin's Second Symphony and Strauss' *Also sprach Zarathustra* (19 November 1930), to the British premiere of Schoenberg's *Pelleas und Melisande* (10 December 1930).<sup>96</sup> However, like any orchestra—radio or otherwise—the programming philosophy

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 488–489.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 5; Jennifer Doctor, *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music, 1922–1936: Shaping a Nation's Tastes* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 59–60.

<sup>94</sup> Kenyon, *The BBC Symphony*, 5; Doctor, *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music*, 81; Stravinsky, *An Autobiography*, 139.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 125.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 448. Appendix B and C of Kenyon's book include comprehensive lists of first performances (world premieres, British premiere performances, public premiere performances, etc.) given by the orchestra from 1930 to 1980.



of the BBC Symphony evolved over time as different personalities with contrasting musical, social and political convictions took charge. As Kenyon explains, by 1934 the BBC's own Music Advisory Committee was equating the orchestra's engagement with new music from the Continent as neglect for British music, which precipitated a nationalist shift towards emphasizing music by British composers.<sup>97</sup> This nationalist shift would also be later taken up by its sister orchestras such as the BBC Scottish Symphony and the BBC Philharmonic.<sup>98</sup>

## 2.5 Summary

The three case studies presented in this chapter offer three different contexts within which radio orchestras emerged before the Second World War. On a fundamental level, all three were borne of a practical need for music to be played on the radio. Although the NBC Symphony's establishing year stands considerably later than its British and German counterparts—1937, versus 1930 and 1929, respectively—its roots as a house orchestra similarly stretched back to the late 1920s. All three networks used the orchestras to present concerts, musical events shaped for radio, but modelled on concerts presented in traditional concert halls. It was largely through their choice of repertoire that the Frankfurt and BBC radio symphony orchestras began to form an identity separate from their independent counterparts. In the United States, the NBC Symphony was by

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 125.

<sup>98</sup> As recently as 2016, the BBC Philharmonic's online history continued to promote itself as a champion of "British composers and works with world class artists from a range of genres and styles. 2014 saw the return of BBC Philharmonic Presents, a series of collaborations across BBC Radios 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 live, 6 Music and the Asian Network, showcasing the versatility of the orchestra and its adventurous, creative spirit." See "BBC Philharmonic - About the Orchestra - BBC," <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/2K8VBt7Qmvh3d5j6hxTjBCf/about-the-orchestra>, accessed 17 July 2016. As of 2023, however, the biography has been modified to remove this statement.

and large a transplant of the traditional symphony orchestra to the airwaves. While twentieth-century art music was not completely absent from American radio, there was a defined effort to bring the experience of a Toscanini concert hall performance to the masses within the context of a free market venture. In Germany, networks were commissioning new works as early as the late 1920s and composers began actively engaging with the radio medium in their work. A role of radio orchestras was thus carved out to serve as the vehicle for the introduction of musical modernism sooner than independent orchestras were willing. The BBC Symphony was from the outset intended to recreate the highbrow experience of an orchestral concert on the airwaves. By the beginning of the 1930s, however, it had set itself apart from other British orchestras by diverging from the traditional orchestral canon. As I will explore in the chapters that follow, the precedents set by all three of these orchestras would influence the policies and musical direction of the radio symphony orchestras established by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in the years to come.

# Chapter 3

## The Evolution of the Medium: Early Canadian Radio Orchestras

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on how orchestras fit into the context of early Canadian radio policy and programming. After inheriting the seeds of a nascent national music policy from the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission (CRBC), which leaned heavily on music to fill its broadcast schedules, the CBC gradually expanded the parameters of its musical patronage from championing Canadian performers in the 1930s to a multifaceted enterprise which focused its resources on the creation, performance and dissemination of Canada's music. Given the breadth of this topic, I will limit my analysis of CBC Radio's music policies to those which directly and indirectly affected the eventual creation and work of the Corporation's radio orchestras. Underlying these policies was a fluid and problematic interaction between dominant personalities within the CBC, the music community, and the public, which ultimately shaped the direction and content of the CBC's musical activities in the twentieth century.

A vital difference between the CRBC and the CBC was its management structure. Whereas decisions about the CBC's operation, policies, programming, and its duties as the national broadcasting regulator were spread across an executive board of directors, producers and station managers, for the CRBC these issues were dealt with by a mere

three-man committee. An in-house history of the CBC later recalled that the CRBC was “right from the start...severely handicapped by lack of money, lack of independence, and the inadequacy of the Commission itself, which asked so much of just three men.”<sup>99</sup>

Among the many aspects of the CRBC’s work which were negatively affected by this inefficient and ultimately unworkable arrangement was programming. Perpetual budget restrictions limited the number of homegrown programs that the Commission was able to produce, and as a result much of the programming relayed over its network was of American or British origin. In the realm of music, however, the experiences of the CRBC—its challenges, its successes, but particularly its failures—were to prove a valuable woodshed for many musicians and administrators. These included John Adaskin (1908–1964), Jean-Marie Beaudet (1908–1971) and Geoffrey Waddington (1904–1966), all of whom would later become central figures in CBC Radio’s music department. Moreover, it was under the direction of the CRBC that the first attempts to establish radio symphony orchestras in Canada were made. For these reasons it is important for me to provide here an overview of the CRBC’s music policies, as they had direct implications for music broadcasting in Canada for decades to follow. I will first preface this discussion with a brief overview of music radio broadcasting prior to 1932.

### **3.2 Early Broadcasts, 1922–1932, Part 1: The Canadian National Railway**

Various surveys conducted on audience habits throughout the 1920s and early 1930s indicated that listeners preferred music over other types of broadcast programming. This in turn suited the needs of the broadcasters themselves, who saw music as an

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<sup>99</sup> Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, *CBC: A Brief History and Background* (Ottawa: CBC Information Services, 1972), 7.

inexpensive way to produce content because “the same songs could be played over and over again; indeed, unlike plays or comic skits, familiar oft-repeated material was frequently the most popular.”<sup>100</sup> In Montreal, for example, music constituted approximately ninety-three percent of total programming by the city’s broadcasters from 1924–1927, and similar percentages were noted in other major Canadian cities.<sup>101</sup>

For its part, the Canadian National Railway (CNR) relied heavily on unpaid and amateur performers for its broadcast content. There was a reciprocity to this arrangement which benefited both parties, whereby amateur musicians and ensembles willingly provided broadcasters with content during primetime listening hours (19:30–24:00) while the use of recordings was banned.<sup>102</sup> Since the quality of the performances varied from day to day and city to city, regular performers such as hotel dance orchestras were paid in cash to ensure a certain standard was maintained.<sup>103</sup> The music performed by these orchestras was of the light and popular variety: “pleasant tunes and good rhythms,” although hot jazz numbers were also broadcast on CNR stations in the later evening hours.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> See Mary Vipond, *Listening In: The First Decade of Canadian Broadcasting, 1922–1932* (Montreal and Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1992), 86.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

<sup>102</sup> Phonograph recordings provided a particularly cost-effective way to fill airtime. However, their use during prime listening hours (19:00 to midnight) was banned between 1925–1926 because the government feared that their use would stunt the development of radio audiences. Broadcast regulators were concerned that members of the public would not purchase radios or tune in to broadcasts of phonograph recordings which they could simply purchase themselves directly. Maria Tippett, *Making Culture: English-Canadian Institutions and the Arts before the Massey Commission* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 14. See also T.J. Allard, *Straight Up: Private Broadcasting in Canada 1918–58* (Ottawa 1979) 13. According to the CNR’s programming director, Austin Weir, amateur performance competitions (known as “elimination auditions”) were a particularly popular means to entice amateurs to the airwaves. See Weir, *The Struggle for National Broadcasting*, 26–27.

<sup>103</sup> Weir states that while performances on CNR broadcasts “put many aspiring artists on the first rung of the ladder,” it was also an economical way for the broadcaster to fill its program schedule. Weir, *The Struggle for National Broadcasting*, 26–27.

<sup>104</sup> Vipond, *Listening In*, 88.

In its capacity as a public service broadcaster, the CNR maintained an equitable balance between popular and serious music.<sup>105</sup> Art music initially constituted a large percentage of early Canadian radio programs, but as the 1920s wore on pressure to monetize broadcasting by drawing larger audiences swung favor away from art music towards light and popular fare.<sup>106</sup> As Mary Vipond points out, the classical selections were, like popular music, chosen “less to challenge than to entertain.”<sup>107</sup> Many classical programs tended to operetta and light-concert repertoire, such as works by Gilbert and Sullivan, Elgar’s *Pomp and Circumstance*, Rossini’s *William Tell Overture*, and other works typical of the British musical canon.<sup>108</sup> A special collaboration was made in the mid-1920s between the CNR and the Hart House String Quartet, the esteemed Canadian ensemble which would become a mainstay of Canadian radio and a champion of new music for the string quartet medium.<sup>109</sup> During the 1925–1926 season, the CNR contracted the Hart House Quartet to embark on a Canadian tour during which they performed concerts from CNR stations across the nation.<sup>110</sup>

Symphonic music was moved into the Canadian radio spotlight in 1929, when the CNR commenced “simultaneous” (i.e. network) broadcasting. Austin Weir, the CNR’s Director of Radio, recalled that during these early years of symphonic broadcasting there were concerns about the transmission quality of orchestral performances. In addition to its monaural and low fidelity quality, primitive early broadcast technology required

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<sup>105</sup> Len Kuffert, *Canada Before Television: Radio, Taste, and the Struggle for Cultural Democracy* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2016), 163.

<sup>106</sup> Vipond, *Listening In*, 89.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 88.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>109</sup> For a more in-depth history of the Hart House Quartet, see Robert William Andrew Elliott, “The String Quartet in Canada” (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 1990), 20–28.

<sup>110</sup> Weir, *The Struggle for National Broadcasting*, 29.

manual manipulation of the input volume. As one contemporary critic pointed out, poor monitoring of the volume could have a drastic effect on the overall effect of an orchestral performance:

[...] the agency of the operator's hand on the monitoring dial is necessary. *Pianissimo* passages might be so subdued that they would not be within the broadcasting station's audible range and the result, for the listener-in, would be as if the station had gone off the air. *Fortissimos* might result in such a surge of current that the automatic cutout at the broadcasting station would function to save the equipment from being burned out, thus cutting the station off the air.<sup>111</sup>

Thus when the Toronto Symphony Orchestra (TSO) was approached about broadcasting concerts of its 1929–1930 season, TSO management required assurance from the CNR that the transmissions “would be as remarkable as [they are heard] in Massey Hall.”<sup>112</sup> Their concerns were obviously assuaged, as the orchestra signed on for a series of twenty five broadcasts beginning on 20 October 1929. The TSO series was called the *All-Canada Symphony Concerts*, and was the first trans-continental symphonic radio series in North America.<sup>113</sup> Weir reported that the studio from which the TSO's performances were transmitted—the eighth floor dining room of the Robert Simpson Company department store in Toronto—was particularly amenable for broadcasting purposes, even if “the resonance [of the empty hall] was slightly too strong to be perfect.”<sup>114</sup> Richard Warren, in his history of the TSO, reasonably speculates that the orchestra likely repeated the works it performed during its regular weekly public

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<sup>111</sup> Imperial Oil, “Our Next Programme Follows Immediately,” *Imperial Oil Review* (November-December 1930): 13.

<sup>112</sup> Weir, *The Struggle for National Broadcasting*, 44.

<sup>113</sup> Keith MacMillan, “Broadcasting,” *Canadian Encyclopedia*, accessed 1 August 2019, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/broadcasting-emc>.

<sup>114</sup> Weir, *The Struggle for National Broadcasting*, 44.

concerts.<sup>115</sup> Under its director, Luigi von Kunits, the TSO's repertoire largely adhered to the European canon, but the magnitude of the works chosen—among them Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony and Brahms' Third Symphony—indicated how high the young orchestra had set its sights.<sup>116</sup>

If the bulk of its repertoire was drawn from the nineteenth-century canon, the *All-Canada Symphony* clearly put the spotlight on Canadian performers, especially those who had gone abroad in search of better career opportunities. A CNR promotional pamphlet declared that the program was dedicated to “Broadcasting the [TSO] with All-Canadian Soloists, from Atlantic to Pacific.”<sup>117</sup> CNR President, Henry Thornton, introduced the *All-Canada Symphony*'s inaugural broadcast in October 1929 with the following statement:

One of our first considerations is the encouragement of Canadian talent. In Canada we have long watched our most promising artists depart for other lands where, all too frequently, they lose their identity as Canadians. Through this and other programs we hope to present to Canadians those gifted individuals, thus offering encouragement to them, directly or indirectly, to remain in their own country and labour for the advancement of art with that ardour which has always characterized Canadians in their varied efforts. We also hope to bring back, temporarily at least, some of those Canadians who have attained international fame on the concert and radio stage.<sup>118</sup>

According to Weir, the CNR's policy stipulated that each program would feature “one outstanding Canadian vocalist or instrumentalist” for a fee of one hundred dollars—

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<sup>115</sup> Richard S. Warren, *Begins with the Oboe: A History of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press Incorporated, 2002), 17. To the best of my knowledge, there are no extant recordings of these broadcasts.

<sup>116</sup> John Beckwith and Clifford Ford, “Toronto Symphony Orchestra,” *Canadian Encyclopedia*, accessed 29 July 2019, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/toronto-symphony-orchestra-emc>.

<sup>117</sup> Canadian National Railways, “Broadcasting the [TSO] with All-Canadian Soloists, from Atlantic to Pacific,” promotional brochure, 1929, LAC, CBC fonds, R13965, Vol 3, Folder 3–8 - CBC Broadcasts (c.1929–1948).

<sup>118</sup> Weir, *The Struggle for National Broadcasting*, 44–45.



approximately \$1500 CAD in 2019.<sup>119</sup> The first guest of the 1930–1931 season was Albert Cornellier. He was a tenor from Montreal who had moved to Paris in 1922 to study with Albert Carré at the Paris Conservatoire, and from 1927 performed with the Opéra-Comique until his return to Montreal in 1947.<sup>120</sup> Oddly, the program contained no discernable vocal works. According to the *Globe and Mail*, the orchestra performed three orchestral works: George Butterworth’s *Shropshire Lad: A Rhapsody for Full Orchestra* (1913), the Overture to *Le domino noir* (1837) by Daniel Auber, and a *Spanish dance* by Moszkowsky.<sup>121</sup> Perhaps Cornellier and the orchestra performed additional numbers from *Le domino noir*. Given the primetime slot of 5 o’clock in the evening, Cornellier and the other soloists engaged in the series were given a national audience across eighteen major centres, from Halifax to Vancouver. This would be the first major effort by publicly funded broadcasting network to use the new medium for the benefit of Canadian performers, a task which the CBC later took up in earnest.

### 3.3 Early Broadcasts, 1922–1932, Part 2: The Canadian Pacific Railway

Art music was also prominently featured on the radio network of CNR’s private sector counterpart, the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR). Two programs of note focused on symphonic music: the *Imperial Oil Hour of Fine Music*, and the *Fireside Symphony Hour*. These two programs represented orchestras in Canada’s two largest cities, Toronto

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<sup>119</sup> “Symphony Concerts – Canadian Network to Resume Oct. 12,” *Globe and Mail*, 4 October 1930, 3; Weir, *The Struggle for National Broadcasting*, 45.

<sup>120</sup> “Wins Paris Music Prize—A Canadian Obtains Conservatory Award and Place in Opera,” *New York Times*, 8 July 1926, 29; Hélène Dion-Gauthier, “Cornellier, Albert,” *Canadian Encyclopedia*, accessed 12 February 2023, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/albert-cornellier-emc>.

<sup>121</sup> This was likely one or all of Moritz Moszkowsky’s *Five Spanish Dances*, Op. 12 [1876], but it is not specified whose orchestral arrangement of the piano four-hands work was used.

and Montreal, respectively. At nine o'clock on Sunday evening (three hours after the CNR's *All-Canada Symphony* finished its performance) the CPR presented the *Imperial Oil Hour of Fine Music* from Toronto. The series was founded in 1929, and featured an orchestra of approximately fifty players, conducted by Reginald Stewart. An article announcing the new orchestra in the *Globe* promised "universally-known artists" to be regular features of the broadcasts; such names included the British American pianist Harold Bauer, the Ukrainian violinist Lea Luboshutz, and the London String Quartet among others.<sup>122</sup> Dubbed the Imperial Oil Symphony Orchestra, it was "undoubtedly the finest Canadian Symphony on the air," according to a correspondent for the *Musical Times* in 1931.<sup>123</sup> CFRB, CPR's Toronto station, did not have a studio large enough to accommodate such a large orchestra, so the Imperial Oil Symphony performed its first season in a makeshift studio assembled in the Roof Garden of Toronto's Royal York Hotel, with a control room set up fourteen floors below it.<sup>124</sup> Larger studios were eventually constructed at CFRB's Toronto facility for performances after 1930, which were heard over twenty one stations from Montreal to Red Deer. Like the CNR's programs, the Imperial Oil Symphony's programs focused on nineteenth century repertoire, such as Beethoven's Fifth Symphony (early 1931), the Overture to Weber's *Der Freischütz* (6 October 1929) and a suite from Bizet's *Carmen* (12 October 1930).<sup>125</sup> In order to accommodate listeners unfamiliar with this music a commentator provided

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<sup>122</sup> "Notable Concert Series Beginning October 6," *Globe*, 21 September 1929, 19.

<sup>123</sup> H.C.F., "Notes From Abroad: Toronto," *Musical Times*, 72/1059 (1 May 1931): 461. Exactly which musicians constituted the orchestra is unclear; after all, the All-Canada Symphony, which was the Toronto Symphony Orchestra under an assumed broadcast title, finished its performance on CNR radio only three hours before the Imperial Oil Hour began.

<sup>124</sup> "Our Next Programme Follows Immediately," *Imperial Oil Review* (November-December 1930): 11.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 15; "Radio," *Globe*, 5 October 1929, 6; "Radio," *Globe*, 11 October 1930, 21; "Musical Notes From Abroad: Toronto," *Musical Times* 72/1059 (1 May 1931): 461.

information about the various works on the program.<sup>126</sup> This was a common technique used by radio music programmers. Descriptive pre-concert explanations of a work's musical structure, musical themes, instrumentation, libretto and sociohistorical context aimed to fill in the blanks for audiences who may have been experiencing such music for the first time.

Two years later, in 1931, the CNR introduced a similar program from Quebec, called the *Fireside Symphony Hour*.<sup>127</sup> Broadcast from Halifax to Winnipeg, the *Fireside Symphony* performances were given by the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, conducted by McGill University's Dean of Music, Douglas Clarke. The orchestra performed in Montreal's premier performance centre, Tudor Hall. The broadcasts were produced by Charles Jennings, who also produced the *Imperial Oil Hour* and would later be an important figure in CBC Radio's music department. The *Fireside* series was designed as a didactic survey of Western art music, during which listeners were offered

the best in music for the last three centuries, in which the art of composing reached its height, and every listener...will acquire a knowledge of music which it would take the ordinary concert goer years to get...<sup>128</sup>

There was a prominent British bias to programming strategies, with English composers such as Elgar, Holst and Vaughan Williams featured regularly. For example, the inaugural concert on 21 February 1931 quite literally ran the epochal gamut. A fugue by J.S. Bach, complete with a formal analysis by Clarke for the less-informed of listeners, satisfied the Baroque component, while works by Haydn and Wagner filled out the

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<sup>126</sup> "Radio," *Globe*, 11 October 1930, 21.

<sup>127</sup> According to contemporary reports, the Saturday afternoon program was intended to "[demonstrate] the quality of Canadian musical talent." See "Notable Concert Series Beginning October 6," *Globe*, 21 September 1929, 19.

<sup>128</sup> "Montreal Symphony Orchestra on Air," *Alice Arm and Anyon Herald*, 30 June 1933, 2.

ensuing stylistic periods. The modern period was represented by an unspecified *Serenade* by Glazunov and the Ballet Music from Holst's comic opera *The Perfect Fool*.<sup>129</sup>

### **3.4 The CRBC's Music Programming: Education Versus Entertainment in a 'Culture Of Caution'**

The common thread between many of the programs produced by the CNR and the CPR was the desire to transplant the concert experience from the concert hall to the broadcast medium, an ambition carried forward by the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission. Research by Mary Vipond shows that the CRBC produced the majority of its own content, primarily from its main production studios in Montreal and Toronto, but also in smaller centres such as Halifax and Vancouver. This was not, however, a unilateral decision among the network's small executive staff. Weir, the CRBC's first program director, believed that instead of emphasizing homegrown programs, the CRBC would be wisest to act as a "program organizer and facilitator, taking the best shows from wherever they could be found and sending them out to the network."<sup>130</sup> In this way, he believed, Canadian audiences could enjoy the finest programming radio had to offer and would not be swayed to American transmissions which were easily picked up in Canada's major cities. Ultimately the Commission chose to retain control of its programs in order to retain maximum quality control, and its program schedules were filled with less than twenty percent of American content. At the same time, however, the CRBC's reliance on public money to operate amidst the economic conditions of the Great

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<sup>129</sup> "First Orchestra Broadcast Given; Montreal Symphony's Two Programs Well Received," *McGill Daily*, 23 February 1931, 1.

<sup>130</sup> Mary Vipond, "What's a New Public Broadcaster To Do?: The Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission's Programs in Transnational Context, 1932–1936," *Journal of Radio & Audio Media* 20, no. 2 (2013): 303.

Depression also resulted in a “culture of caution” which prompted Commissioners to steer away from “daring” programming deemed too educational or high-brow which might have risked alienating large sectors of the population.<sup>131</sup> Most musical programs were not tailored to a particular listenership; instead, the CRBC preferred musical potpourris of disparate musical genres, which often had “thematic (but very forgettable) [titles] like *Sunshine and Deep Shade*, *Gaiety and Romance*, or *No Mournful Numbers*.”<sup>132</sup> Network publicists touted programming that sought broad appeal with “catch-all variety material like *Everybody’s Music*, a gay kaleidoscope of tunes and melodies—not ‘highbrow,’ not low, just everybody’s choice.”<sup>133</sup>

Extant CRBC broadcast schedules reflect this programming policy. Focusing on July 1933, for example, performances by popular hotel orchestras were a mainstay on weekly schedules, with their programs usually punctuated by scenes from classic dramas or presentations like the aforementioned *Hour of Gaiety and Romance*.<sup>134</sup> Rex Battle and the Royal York Hotel Orchestra in Toronto were quite popular. Battle (1892–1967) was an accomplished British pianist and conductor who settled in Toronto around 1929 and spent the 1930–1931 season conducting an orchestra for CPR’s radio network.<sup>135</sup> He was contracted by the CRBC in 1933 for no less than three weekly spots on the network’s schedule, on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.<sup>136</sup> Battle’s programs were firmly

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 303. Jonathan Vance likewise points out that the impact of the Depression rendered the federal government unable to grant the CRBC the necessarily funding to build its planned national network. See Jonathan F. Vance, *A History of Canadian Culture* (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press Canada, 2009), 256–257.

<sup>132</sup> Vipond, “What’s a New Public Broadcaster To Do?,” 300.

<sup>133</sup> Kuffert, *Canada Before Television*, 167.

<sup>134</sup> CRBC Official Program Schedules, LAC, CBC fonds, RG4–A–IV–2–C, Vol 39, File 2–2–8–1 (Pt. 1)

<sup>135</sup> Ruth Pincoe, “Battle, Rex,” *Canadian Encyclopedia*, accessed 13 February 2021, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/rex-battle-emc>.

<sup>136</sup> CRBC Official Program Schedules, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41–A–IV–2–C, Vol 39, File 2–2–8–1 (Pt. 1).

grounded in the Western European art music canon, with a mix of larger works (or at least excerpted movements) and lighter, semi-classical fare. An example of one such concert program that predates the CRBC contract was published in the 18 June 1932 edition of the *Globe*. The list provides a good example of the type of music that was offered by these ensembles at the time:

1. Felix Mendelssohn, *Overture to a Midsummer Night's Dream*
2. Karel Komzák, *Love and Life in Vienna* (Fideles Vals)
3. Excerpts from Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado*
4. Charles Dawes, *Melody in A Major* performed on the harp
5. A selection of songs and piano pieces by composers including George Gershwin, André Messager and Mendelssohn
6. Oscar Straus, *One Hour with You*
7. Jean Sibelius, *Valse triste*
8. Percy Grainger, *Shepherd's Hey*
9. Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Fourth Symphony, Finale.<sup>137</sup>

Such an eclectic assemblage of works might seem strange according to modern programming policies. As Vipond points out, however, such “potpourris” were commonplace at that time; for a public broadcaster, it was a safe line to offer for “something for everyone.”<sup>138</sup>

### **3.5 The Evolving Function of Radio Orchestras: *Melodic Strings***

The programming policy that sought to attract a broad audience was part of the discussion that surrounded the creation in 1933 of a new program entitled *Melodic Strings*.<sup>139</sup> Produced by John Adaskin, the Melodic Strings Orchestra was a chamber orchestra of approximately twenty-five string players directed by the Russian expatriate,

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<sup>137</sup> “Rex Battle at the Royal York,” *Globe*, 18 June 1932, 11.

<sup>138</sup> Vipond, “What’s a New Public Broadcaster To Do?,” 300.

<sup>139</sup> It remains unclear when exactly *Melodic Strings* ceased production. The latest records in the CBC fonds date to 1939. See LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, Accession Number 1986–87/031 GAD, Vol 9, File J Adaskin (CBC Files) - Program - Melodic Strings - Scripts.

Alexander Chuhaldin (1892–1951). Listeners seemed thrilled to learn of the orchestra’s formation, but disagreed about what musical direction it should take. One commenter in the *Toronto Star* noted that Chuhaldin was “greatly responsible for the wealth of brilliant young violinists in Toronto,” but added the following advice on repertoire: “forget about that symphony stuff, will you...Play tuneful stuff, will you? Play tangoes. Play dreamy melodies. Play Russian folk songs. Play Viennese waltzes.”<sup>140</sup> Without reference to specific works, the writer relegated modern music to mere “technical numbers,” one of which should be performed “now and then...just to show that your fiddlers know how to play their instruments.”<sup>141</sup>

The orchestra relied heavily on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century favourites, including movements from Haydn’s string quartets and symphonies; overtures and other operatic arrangements of music from Handel, Mozart and Rossini; and orchestral and chamber works by J.S. Bach. They also performed a considerable number of more recent works, such as the “Suite ‘Noveletten’,” Opus 58, no. 2 by Danish composer Niels Gade; the Symphony No. 6 “Spirituelle,” Op. 38 by Gade’s pupil Asger Hamerik; *Serenade for Strings*, Opus 24 by Gustave Sandré; *Traumerin*, Opus 3 no. 2 by Julius Grimm, a contemporary of Brahms; and the Suite for Solo String Quartet and Orchestra, Opus 20, by the Italian composer Rosario Scalero.<sup>142</sup>

In 1939 the Melodic Strings Orchestra was the recipient of the CBC’s first commissioned work: Benjamin Britten’s *The Young Apollo*, Opus 16. The Corporation commissioned the work following a performance on 18 June 1939 of his *Frank Bridge*

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<sup>140</sup> Frank Chamberlain, “Are You Listening,” *Toronto Star*, 16 May 1933.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Program from 19 April 1937, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, Accession Number 1986–87/031 GAD, Vol 9, File J Adaskin (CBC Files) - Program - Melodic Strings - Programs.

*Variations*.<sup>143</sup> During his brief visit, Britten was struck by the strides being made in Canada's musical scene. "Here is a continent just leaping ahead in the arts. Music means something here. Imagine English newspapers interviewing composers! Yet here I got a large amount of space in each of the three Toronto newspapers—[and] in 2 cases in the centre page!"<sup>144</sup> *The Young Apollo* was given its first performance (with Britten performing the solo piano part) on 27 August 1939. The work was the centrepiece of a program bookended by Carl Busch's arrangement of *My Old Kentucky Home* and Frederick Bye's *Puppets Suite in Four Parts*.<sup>145</sup>

Like the other orchestras discussed thus far, the Melodic Strings Orchestra continued to fulfill an educational role by covering a wide berth of musical history—even if its chamber size reduced the number of large-scale orchestral works that it could realistically tackle. Moreover, broadcasts were often punctuated by commentators providing historical information and stylistic features of the music to enrich the listening experience. On 19 September 1937, for example, the orchestra performed *Symphony Spirituelle* (1897) by the Danish composer Asger Hamerik (1843–1923). In addition to a brief biographical sketch, a commentator noted prior to the performance Hamerik's relationship to Berlioz, which would reveal itself through the music's "unusually rich fund of genuine musical humour and spontaneity."<sup>146</sup>

From a broader perspective, the Melodic Strings Orchestra also pointed towards

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<sup>143</sup> Suzanne Robinson, "An English Composer Sees America': Benjamin Britten and the North American Press, 1939–42," *American Music* 15/3 (Autumn 1997): 327.

<sup>144</sup> Cited in Stephen Ralls and Bruce Ubukata, "Britten in Canada: A Continuing Connection," *Opera Canada* 54/3 (September 2013): 37.

<sup>145</sup> LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, Accession Number 1986–87/031 GAD, Vol 9, File J Adaskin (CBC Files) - Program - Melodic Strings - Programs.

<sup>146</sup> Typed script, 19 September 1937, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, Accession Number 1986–87/031 GAD, Vol 9, File J Adaskin (CBC Files) - Program - Melodic Strings - Scripts.



the radio orchestra of the future: a vehicle not just for entertainment and education, but for the creation of new music. The Melodic Strings Orchestra provides an excellent example of this early evolution. The orchestra served as a vehicle for one of the few autonomous works of art music (that is, a music work for its own sake, not subservient to a larger production such as a radio drama) commissioned for performance on the CRBC. In 1934, John Adaskin's twenty-eight year old brother, Murray, was commissioned to write *Serenade for Strings* for Chuhaldin's orchestra. Such commissions often marked important milestones in the recipient's career. For Murray Adaskin, the premiere broadcast of *Serenade for Strings* had a decisive impact on the future of his career. Upon hearing the work performed on the CRBC, Ernest MacMillan offered the 28 year old composer a scholarship to study with him.<sup>147</sup> Godfrey Ridout, a contemporary of the Adaskins, pointed out in 1980 that Chuhaldin's engagement with twentieth-century composers "probably accounts for the fact that so many Canadian composers list string work dating from those years in their catalogue."<sup>148</sup> Many of these works and their performers were also broadcast in the United States as part of a long and successful program exchange with the US Mutual Broadcasting System. According to the *Louisville Courier*, *Melodic Strings* was first relayed on the American network in 1933 and won "immediate popularity" in its first broadcast season.<sup>149</sup>

Indeed, the Melodic Strings Orchestra presents a rich opportunity for further research on the early interaction between broadcasting ensembles and the creation of

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<sup>147</sup> Gordana Lazarevich, *Murray Adaskin: An Annotated Catalogue of His Music, A Unison of Life, Music and the Man* (Victoria, BC: Dolce Publications, 2003), 80.

<sup>148</sup> Godfrey Ridout, "Fifty Years of Music in Canada? Good Lord, I Was There for All of Them!" in *The Arts in Canada: The Last Fifty Years*, eds. William Keith and Ben-Z. Shek (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 128.

<sup>149</sup> "Melodic Strings Tonight," *The Courier-Journal*, *Louisville*, 12 June 1934, 7.

music in Canada. There were, of course, other orchestras engaged in similar programs which popped up in other major Canadian centres, and these too provide unique points of departure for future research on this topic. One example for which there appears to be little primary information, yet which surely deserves further investigation, is *La Petite Symphonie* in Quebec City. *La Petite Symphonie* was spearheaded by Jean-Marie Beaudet. The young conductor was determined to build in Quebec City an orchestra that could hold its own beside those of Toronto and Montreal. In 1933 he successfully petitioned the CRBC's vice-president, Thomas Maher, to add a program of music performed by *La Petite Symphonie* to the network's schedule. For the next four years, Beaudet and his orchestra of approximately seventeen musicians performed half-hour programs from the CHRC broadcast studio in Quebec City. Beaudet disbanded the orchestra in 1937, when he accepted the role of Quebec Program Director for the newly-formed Radio-Canada.<sup>150</sup> Based on Josee Beaudet's account of her uncle's original proposal for the orchestra, it would seem that Jean-Marie Beaudet's programming philosophy was quite similar to Chuhaldin's in Toronto: "His suggestions included semi-classical repertoire, popular enough to entice an audience, but he was adamant about the importance and necessity of featuring more complex works of music."<sup>151</sup>

### **3.6 The Shifting Priorities of the Early CBC**

In early 1937, the CBC decided to improve the strength and quality of its music departments on both the English and French networks, and looked outside the

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<sup>150</sup> Josee Beaudet, "L'amour des ondes: Jean-Marie Beaudet and CBC/SRC," in *John P.L. Roberts, the CBC/Radio Canada and Art Music*, eds. Friedemann Sallis and Regina Landwehr (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing), 45–46.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

organization for guidance. In March of that year, CBC General Manager Gladstone Murray approached Ernest MacMillan and Wilfred Pelletier about serving as the Corporation's external music advisors for the English and French divisions, respectively. In a letter on March 2, Murray explained to MacMillan that he and Pelletier would "not be undertaking responsibility or any executive functions," but would rather fill a more amorphous role to "look over program schedules, to offer opinions on matters of general policy affecting music, to make suggestions about auditioning and rehearsals and, of course, about ways in which our standards may be improved."<sup>152</sup> Both MacMillan and Pelletier accepted Murray's offer. MacMillan responded on 6 March 1937, emphasizing that his work with the Toronto Symphony and the Toronto Conservatory of Music must remain his priorities, but he saw potential benefits in the arrangement for those institutions as well: "As you will realize, I should like to feel free to offer suggestions which affect these bodies and, therefore, it may be said that I have an axe to grind. I would like your Board to understand that I do not promise to refrain from grinding it, but I think that you may relay [sic] on any advice I shall offer being as impartial as circumstances allow, and you will naturally judge for yourself of the worth of it."<sup>153</sup>

MacMillan had been critical of Canada's public institutions in the 1936 *Yearbook of the Arts in Canada*. Among a wide range of concerns about the state of Canadian music culture, he lamented the fact that even though the "development of Canadian musical organizations was one of the chief reasons for the creation of the [CRBC]," it did

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<sup>152</sup> Letter from Gladstone Murray to Sir Ernest MacMillan, 2 March 1937, LAC, Sir Ernest MacMillan fonds, MUS 7, Box 6, File 1969-28/A-135.

<sup>153</sup> Letter Ernest MacMillan to Gladstone Murray, 6 March 1937, LAC, Sir Ernest MacMillan fonds, MUS 7, Box 6, File 1969-28:A-135. MacMillan was paid \$1000 dispersed in quarterly payments plus expenses, as per MacMillan's request.

“virtually nothing” of the sort.<sup>154</sup> Both Pelletier and MacMillan insisted that the Corporation use its national communicative power to nourish the public’s understanding and appreciation of music. For MacMillan, however, the need to focus on supporting professional Canadian musicians, both in performance and composition, was particularly urgent. Less than a month after he was appointed CBC music advisor, MacMillan spearheaded a “series of full two hour programs with Canadian musicians as assisting artists,” and appointed John Adaskin as the chief musical director and adjudicator for open “dramatic and vocal” auditions. This series became *The Concert Hour*: “a new music appreciation series,” which featured “a comprehensive review of the most representative shorter works of composers from Handel forward.”<sup>155</sup> The Concert Hour Orchestra was the first in-house orchestra formed specifically by the CBC, and was comprised of leading Toronto musicians conducted by a series of distinguished of Canadian conductors.<sup>156</sup>

Organizational growing pains became quickly evident, however. In May 1937, MacMillan did not mince words when he penned a summary of his professional observations of the Corporation. He criticized among other things the CBC’s decision (against MacMillan’s recommendation) to use a series of guest conductors for *Concert Hour* instead of a permanent one. He further criticized the CBC’s tendency to rush major commitments without due process, particularly in regards to the musicians and ensembles chosen for broadcast. Lastly, he pointed out the poor administrative coordination between musicians and the Corporation with regards to rehearsal schedules. Performers were first

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<sup>154</sup> MacMillan, “Problems of Music,” 84.

<sup>155</sup> Letter from George A. Taggart to Col. A. E. Kirkpatrick, 24 April 1937, LAC, Sir Ernest MacMillan fonds, MUS 7, Box 6, File 1969–28/A–135.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid

on his mind, as he urgently pointed out in a letter to Gladstone Murray on 1 June 1937: “It is becoming increasingly difficult to keep first-class men here: [the TSO’s] finest viola player has just signed a contract with the Cleveland Orchestra, and only the U.S.A. Immigration law keeps others here.”<sup>157</sup>

MacMillan believed that the financial and artistic benefits from a broadcast contract with the CBC would help bolster the TSO’s reputation and, consequently, the calibre of its personnel: “Four or five such players would make a world of difference to the quality of the work, but the orchestra is not, by itself, able to offer them sufficient inducements to come here.”<sup>158</sup> This point struck the heart of MacMillan’s criticism of the music broadcasts during the CRBC era, during which budgetary constraints had precluded it from regular broadcasts by Canadian orchestras. CRBC airtime had been largely filled by performances by the New York Philharmonic and other American orchestras, while only small selections were presented from Canadian orchestras outside of Toronto, such as Vancouver and Winnipeg.<sup>159</sup> MacMillan’s argument was also one of reciprocity: the additional employment gained from CBC contracts would help encourage the best performers to remain in Canada, and, in turn, the CBC would retain access to those performers for its broadcast work.

MacMillan resigned from his position as music advisor to the CBC after two years, in part because he believed his advice was not being heeded and because he was frustrated by an over-reliance on recordings of American orchestras. Following his resignation he once again wrote to Murray to rebuke this imbalance, pointing to broadcast percentages

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<sup>157</sup> Letter from Ernest MacMillan to Gladstone Murray, 1 June 1937, LAC, Sir Ernest MacMillan fonds, MUS 7, Box 6, File 1969–28/A–135.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>159</sup> Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, *CBC: A Brief History*, 7.

from October 1938–October 1939 which showed a fifty percent increase in “live ‘popular’ music programs” while serious music presentations fell by approximately fourteen percent.<sup>160</sup> He argued that this imbalance was a symptom of much larger and more serious problems in Canadian music culture, solutions to which the CBC should be focused on creating:

If United States competition meant simply keeping us on our toes by the challenge of excellence all would be well, but, when we lack rich patrons to support musical activities on a scale commensurate with the generosity of many Americans, when no government subsidies ... are available for orchestras, when union conditions render it increasingly difficult to bring in first-class players for key positions and our music schools are given practically no assistance in training first-class young players to take the place of those who are getting on in years, finally, when we have to contend with that ‘colonial complex’ (I can give it no other name) which on the one hand pats home-town mediocrity on the back and on the other openly assumes that the home-made product will never measure up to what comes from outside, when such conditions obtain it is hard that one who has always endeavoured as I have to stand for quality in Canadian music should see the development of such tendencies as I have outlined in the one body that might save the situation.<sup>161</sup>

### 3.7 Conclusion

The available evidence reveals a number of commonalities among early Canadian radio orchestras. One was the desire to bring the concert hall experience to the airwaves. Programs were structured according to the norms of a traditional orchestral concert, albeit in abbreviated form in order to accommodate the constraints of broadcast timetables. To

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<sup>160</sup> The debate over the proportion of art music versus popular music broadcast on the public radio was not new, nor has it ever been satisfactorily resolved. Jean-Marie Beaudet, for example, spent his entire career advocating for a larger percentage of art music to be broadcast on the CBC/Radio Canada. See Beaudet, “L’Amour des ondes,” 56–61.

<sup>161</sup> Ezra Schabas, *Sir Ernest MacMillan: The Importance of Being Canadian* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 135.

replace the traditional printed programs, broadcasts were accompanied by pre-, post- and even inter-concert discussions. This information was intended to give listeners the ability to identify musical elements on their own, adding a communal level of engagement in an otherwise individualized and detached listening experience. This practice also suggests that producers understood that many listeners were not familiar with the music. For example, the programs of the *The Imperial Oil Hour*, *Fireside Symphony* and *Melodic Strings* regularly sought to present all eras of the traditional canon equally. As the 1930s came to a close, and the CBC began to find its feet as Canada's national broadcaster, the role of the radio orchestra began to expand beyond entertainment and education. Following the creation of the CBC (2 November 1936), the administration of music programs was professionalized. MacMillan, Pelletier and Beaudet were all highly trained pianists and well regarded as orchestral conductors. During World War II the CBC and its new radio orchestras became vehicles for the stimulation of Canadian music culture by supporting local talent. Indeed, MacMillan was not the first nor the last prominent voice to call for an increased focus on Canadian musicians within these ensembles and their repertoire. As I will examine in the following chapter, the 1950s and 1960s saw CBC Radio work in earnest to establish a formal policy for commissioning new music.

# Chapter 4

## The Evolution of CBC Radio's Music Commissioning Policy, 1960–1964

### 4.1 Introduction

One of the most ambitious musical works commissioned by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) in the twentieth century was R. Murray Schafer's *Apocalypse* (1980). Based on an adaptation of text from the Book of Revelations, *Apocalypse* is a massive two-hour musical-theatre work in two parts: Part One, "John's Vision" and Part Two, "Credo." Its production called for approximately five hundred performers, including seven conductors, six choruses, four instrumental groups, soloists, organ, and recorded tape. It was premiered on 28 November 1980 at Centennial Hall in London, Ontario, in a joint production between the CBC, the London Symphony Orchestra, and the University of Western Ontario.<sup>162</sup> Shortly after the premier, the Chairman of the Applied Music Department at the University of Western Ontario, Robert E. Creech, wrote a congratulatory letter to the Director of the Canadian Music Centre, John Peter Lee Roberts. Roberts had been responsible for commissioning *Apocalypse* several years earlier during his tenure as Head of Radio Music and Variety (1970–1975) for CBC Radio's English Services Division (hereafter CBC Radio). As Creech rightly

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<sup>162</sup> Kirk MacKenzie, "Apocalypse," in *Encyclopedia of Music in Canada*, second edition, eds. Robin Elliott, Helmut Kallmann, Mark Miller, Gilles Potvin and Kenneth Winters (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 30–31.



pointed out, Roberts was “to be commended for initiating the concept” of “one of the most significant works by a Canadian composer premièred in Canada.”<sup>163</sup> In response,

Roberts modestly explained that when

commissioning *Apocalypse* from Murray Schafer I realized I was stretching the CBC in a completely new way. However, I feel we all must run to keep up with the best creators in this country. While of course I am quite used to people not understanding some of the things I have had to do, I hope that everyone now understands the commissioning of *Apocalypse* is one of the most important contributions the Corporation has ever made to the creative musical field.<sup>164</sup>

The ambitious premier of *Apocalypse* was the embodiment of everything Roberts and his CBC colleagues set out to achieve with commissioned works: the creation of major musical works of art that stood on their own merit, independent of ancillary functions such as background music for radio dramas or ceremonial occasions. Since the 1940s, CBC Radio producers and administrators sought to use the resources of the Corporation to enable the realization of composers’ creative ambitions and the professionalization of their craft. As Roberts wrote in the 1990s, “the policy of CBC management [up to 1970] was to allow those in charge of music programming to operate freely, without written objectives, in order to provide what they believed to be the best and most imaginative kind of public service broadcasting.”<sup>165</sup>

This chapter will focus on the development of CBC Radio’s music commissioning policy up to the early 1960s during which time Roberts and his

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<sup>163</sup> Letter from Robert E. Creech to John Roberts, 4 December 1980, University of Calgary, Archives and Special Collections, John P.L. Roberts fonds, Accession 919/13.18, file 05.22.

<sup>164</sup> Letter from John Roberts to Robert E. Creech, 10 December 1980, in University of Calgary, Archives and Special Collections, John P.L. Roberts fonds, Accession 919/13.18, file 05.22.

<sup>165</sup> John Roberts, “Canadian Broadcast Policy and the Development of Concert Music,” in *A Celebration of Canada’s Arts, 1930–1970*, eds. Glen Carruthers and Gordana Lazarevich (Toronto: Canadian Scholars’ Press Inc., 1996), 185.

colleagues attempted to bring cohesion to a process which had, until that point, been largely implemented ad hoc. By examining records in the John P.L. Roberts fonds in the University of Calgary's Archives and Special Collections, as well as records in the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation fonds at Library and Archives Canada, I will expand on existing research by former CBC radio archivist Patricia Kellogg, Roberts and others who have examined the relationship between the CBC and Canadian music.<sup>166</sup> As I will argue, the CBC Radio commissioning program had a ground-breaking impact, because for the first time Canadian composers were encouraged to write large-scale ensemble works outside of the realm of functional music, especially in the orchestral genre.

#### **4.2 Music Commissions on Early Canadian Public Radio**

Until the 1950s, most CBC music commissions were issued to accompany other CBC Radio productions, particularly dramas and documentaries that required musical soundtracks. This practice was described in 1939 by Davidson Taylor, who received his information directly from one of the CBC's chief music producers, John Adaskin.<sup>167</sup> In a paper titled "Music Written for Radio" given to the Annual Meeting of the American Musicological Society in New York, Taylor reported that "most of the music written for the [CBC] has been background, mood, and scene music."<sup>168</sup> Adaskin also informed

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<sup>166</sup> See, for example, Patricia Kellogg, "Sounds in the Wilderness: Fifty Years of CBC Commissions," in *Musical Canada: Words and Music Honouring Helmut Kallmann*, eds. John Beckwith and Frederick A. Hall (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 239–261; and Roberts, "Canadian Broadcast Policy," 175–195.

<sup>167</sup> John was the eldest brother of the celebrated composer Murray Adaskin. Murray enjoyed a long and fruitful relationship with the CBC, and many of his most well-known works—among them the *Algonquin Symphony* (1959, rev. 1961), *Grant, Warden of the Plains* (1967) and *Qualala and Nilaula of the North* (1971)—were CBC commissions.

<sup>168</sup> Davidson Taylor, "Music Written for Radio," in *Papers Read by Members of the American Musicological Society at the Annual Meeting* (New York: American Musicological Society, 1939), 260. At

Davidson that “although in only a few cases were works specially commissioned, many original compositions have been written for radio in Canada.”<sup>169</sup> He does not list specific works, nor the exact nature of the compositions produced for radio (incidental or ceremonial music, musical dramas, chamber or orchestral works, etc.). He does, however, provide a cross-section of the composers from whom works were commissioned, a list which spans roughly three generations, from Louis Waizman (1863–1951), Harold Eustace Key (1881–1947), Healey Willan (1880–1968) and Ernest MacMillan (1893–1973) to Murray Adaskin (1906–2002) and John Weinzweig (1913–2006). Furthermore, Adaskin’s assertion also confirms the fact that there was, at least until the end of the Second World War, no formal policy at the CBC for commissions; they were instead issued sporadically, either when funds were available or to mark special occasions.<sup>170</sup>

Among the earliest music commissioned for public radio in Canada was a series titled *Premiere at Nine*, which aired approximately thirteen episodes in 1935 on the national network of the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission, the CBC’s predecessor from 1932–1936. The episodes of *Premiere at Nine* were variously described by its producers as “musical theatre,” “musical comedies,” “operetta with music and book by Canadians” and a “half hour of song and story.” Each episode featured a story written by a Canadian author with musical accompaniment by a Canadian composer, but the setting and subject of each story varied; not all were strictly Canadian themed. An example is *Prairie Fire*, an episode written by author Don Henshaw, set in “those

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the time of the AMS meeting, Davidson Taylor (1907–1979) was a broadcasting executive with the Columbia Broadcasting System. Taylor also served as an executive for the National Broadcasting System, and was a founding member of the School of the Arts at Columbia. For a brief biographical sketch, see “Davidson Taylor, Who Headed Columbia’s School of Arts, Dies,” *New York Times*, 28 July 1979, 22.

<sup>169</sup> Taylor, “Music Written for Radio,” 260.

<sup>170</sup> There were, for example, nine works commissioned by the CBC for the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953. See Kellogg, “Sounds in the Wilderness,” 244.

adventurous days in the American West when great wagon trains made their way across the prairies and the mountains to California in answer to the call of ‘Gold!’<sup>171</sup> The music for *Prairie Fire* was written by Donald Heins and directed by Geoffrey Waddington. According to the program’s script, the music in *Prairie Fire* functioned similarly to that in operettas: as theatrical punctuation (“guitar and string effect”); in “folksy” vocal and choral performances (“such as ‘O Susana,’ — perhaps reflecting the lure of the gold fields in California”); for dramatic effect (“wild battle music”; background piano in ‘typical “Mining Town honky tonk”’); and even an emotional “aria” (“Laura’s Dance Hall Song....[which] should have lots of ‘heartbreak’ in it”).<sup>172</sup> Musical scores and recordings of *Premiere at Nine* have yet to be uncovered (if any are in fact extant), and thus the musical style in which these pieces were composed remains unstudied. Like most of the music commissioned by the CBC until after the Second World War, the scores composed for *Premiere at Nine* were functional; commissioning music to accompany radio dramas and documentaries was a practical way for the CBC to fill the need for original background music while also providing work to Canadian composers.

### **4.3 *Opportunity Knocks*: Professionalizing the Canadian Composer**

By the end of the Second World War, music by many of Canada’s younger composers was given a national hearing on *Opportunity Knocks*, a CBC Radio program founded and produced by John Adaskin in 1947. According to Adaskin, the purpose of *Opportunity Knocks* was twofold: to give Canadian musicians “a chance to be heard and

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<sup>171</sup> Typewritten script, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, Accession Number 1986–87/031 GAD, Vol. 9, File “J Adaskin (CBC Files) - Programme - Premiere at Nine (scripts).”

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

assessed in as fair a way as possible and at the same time to earn a professional fee while appearing before an audience that might number in the hundreds of thousands.”<sup>173</sup> Singers and instrumentalists were chosen through a standard process of a written application and a subsequent audition, which was adjudicated according to four categories: “(1) Voice or Tone Quality, 2) Technical Facility, 3) Artistry (Musicianship) (based on accepted standard for type of performance); 4) General Performance.”<sup>174</sup> All performers heard on the broadcasts were “paid the regular professional fee—which means that if they are not already pros, they step into the professional ranks the minute they are on the air.”<sup>175</sup> In 1950 Adaskin introduced a composition category to *Opportunity Knocks*, and over the next seven years 101 “short pops-concert works” from sixty-seven composers were broadcast on the program. Harry Freedman, one of the prize-winning composers on the series, described the *Opportunity Knocks* compositions as “demonstrations of the ‘craftsmanship’ that [we] were all learning at the time...the pieces were for very restricted orchestra and were limited to three or four minutes...”<sup>176</sup> The music of many of Canada’s most important twentieth-century composers was performed on *Opportunity Knocks*, including works by John Beckwith, Jean Coulthard, Harry Freedman, Harry Somers and John Weinzwieg. As Freedman later noted, *Opportunity Knocks* was an important program for Canadian composers because it “made known to all Canada that such a thing as a Canadian composer existed. The public thought that all

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<sup>173</sup> “‘Opportunity Knocks’—With John Adaskin,” unpublished manuscript, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, Accession Number 1986–87/031 GAD, Vol 3, File “J. A. Productions (Current) - Opportunity Knocks, Publicity.”

<sup>174</sup> “Opportunity Knocks, Adjudicating Sheet,” unpublished, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, Accession Number 1986–87/031 GAD, Vol 3, File “J. A. Productions (Current) - Opportunity Knocks, Marks.”

<sup>175</sup> “‘Opportunity Knocks’—With John Adaskin,” unpublished manuscript, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, Accession Number 1986–87/031 GAD, Vol 3, File “J. A. Productions (Current) - Opportunity Knocks, Publicity.”

<sup>176</sup> Kellogg, “Sounds in the Wilderness,” 254.

composers were dead.<sup>177</sup> Weinzweig echoed Freedman's sentiment, stating in a 1993 interview that "50s radio made our reputations. My generation owe their composition careers to the CBC. In those days radio was more of a music medium, and serious music on radio was a high-profile event—it had all the dignity and prestige of a concert hall."<sup>178</sup>

The procedure by which finalists for the compositional category were chosen is unclear. What is known is that each week a short composition was commissioned for broadcast performance by the *Opportunity Knocks* Orchestra, a twenty-five piece semi-permanent ensemble conducted by Adaskin.<sup>179</sup> The CBC paid each composer fifty dollars for their commissioned work, provided "copies [of] all the parts, and in time [returned] the original score to the composer, who [retained] full...rights and ownership."<sup>180</sup> The only restriction was the aforementioned length limitation; aesthetically, works were not subjected to "any rigid rules and [the program did] not hesitate to vary from 'Popular-modern' to 'Modern-progressive.'"<sup>181</sup> Some of the winning composers already had established professional music careers, or were well on their way to establishing their names in the Canadian music scene. One example was Weinzweig, who had written his first commissioned works for the CBC—specifically, incidental music for radio dramas—in 1941.<sup>182</sup> Another was Alexander Brott, who was already a faculty member of the School of Music at McGill University and a respected conductor in his own right. The question thus remains, by what criteria were the winning composers chosen? Was each

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid. *Opportunity Knocks* was discontinued in 1957.

<sup>178</sup> Roxanne Snider, "Violet Archer & John Weinzweig," *Canadian Composer* 4/2 (March 1993): 13.

<sup>179</sup> "'Opportunity Knocks'—With John Adaskin," unpublished manuscript, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, Accession Number 1986-87/031 GAD, Vol 3, File "J. A. Productions (Current) - Opportunity Knocks, Publicity."

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Carolyne Sumner, "John Weinzweig, Leftist Politics, and Radio Drama at the CBC During the Second World War" (Master's thesis, University of Ottawa, 2016), 34.

short piece written specifically for broadcast on *Opportunity Knocks*, or were composers simply offered a national hearing for music they had previously written, but not yet performed? Considering the dearth of performance opportunities for orchestral music by Canadian composers, it would be reasonable to surmise that Adaskin viewed *Opportunity Knocks* as a vehicle for aspiring young composers and established professionals to show what they could do with a chamber orchestra.

#### **4.4 Shaping CBC Music Commissioning Policy in the Early 1960s**

The CBC commissioned eighty-one works during the 1960s, marking a sixty per cent increase compared to the 1950s.<sup>183</sup> The CBC's practice of commissioning Canadian composers had gradually increased during the 1950s and the 1960s thanks in large part to the work of two respected Canadian conductors: Jean-Marie Beudet, who served CBC Radio's National Music Director from 1938–1947, and Geoffrey Waddington, who served as Director of Music for CBC's Radio's English Services Division from 1947–1964.<sup>184</sup> It was largely under the leadership of these two men that Canadian audiences finally became aware of Canadian composers and their music. Helmut Kallmann summarized Waddington's influence on Canadian music as follows:

In the late 1940s and 1950s, when Canada experienced a cultural expansion which embodied an upsurge of musical talent in performance and composition, Waddington—as the musician with greatest employment power and programming responsibility in Canada—was able to channel this talent into broadcasting and thus to

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<sup>183</sup> Kellogg, "Sounds in the Wilderness," 254.

<sup>184</sup> In a critical review of the current state of the CBC's musical affairs, Allan Sangster reported in 1953 that the recent appointment of Waddington as Director of Music was "excellent...for two reasons: the first that Mr. Waddington, both by temperament and training, is extremely well qualified for the post; the second that the Corporation has badly needed someone to pull together and co-ordinate its musical activities, which have been at loose ends since the resignation of Jean Beudet several years ago." See Allan Sangster, "On the Air," *Canadian Forum* 32 (January 1953): 230.

give it national and international exposure. During this period programme series organized by Waddington served as vehicles and outlets for performers and composers alike. Under his direction the CBC's policy of commissioning Canadian composers became a regular practice.<sup>185</sup>

Even though commissions were issued with greater frequency over the course of the 1950s, the practice remained ad hoc. To the best of my knowledge, it was not until the early 1960s that CBC Radio's English Network began to seriously focus on a formal policy and procedure for commissioning musical works on a regular basis. An internal audit of the CBC's music department done in 1960 by Peter Garvie indicated that while the CBC certainly did not ignore commissioning opportunities, they were not yet a priority. Instead, CBC Radio was focused on the *performance* of Canadian music, and particularly performances by Canadian musicians and orchestras:

There are perhaps forty or fifty serious composers in Canada, but not one with an international reputation—rightly or wrongly. We probably reach the average level of most other comparable countries, but without yet having thrown up the exceptional figure—the Sibelius from Finland, the Nielsen from Denmark, the Martin or Honegger from Switzerland. Yet it is from the encouragement of the average talent that the exceptional will emerge.

What encouragement can we give? Commissions, to some extent, but more important, performance. Up to now we have been well-meaning rather than purposeful. A good many works have been played; some have had two, three and four performances... What a worthy work needs is a steady record of performance over the years, and less in a context of all-Canadian composers than as part of the general repertory of our performers...<sup>186</sup>

A year after Garvie submitted his internal review, CBC Radio held its second

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<sup>185</sup> Helmut Kallmann, "Waddington, Geoffrey," in *The Encyclopedia of Music in Canada*, second edition, eds. Robin Elliott, Helmut Kallmann, Mark Miller, Gilles Potvin and Kenneth Winters (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 1380.

<sup>186</sup> Peter Garvie, "Music on C.B.C.," unpublished report, 23 November 1960, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, Volume 868, PG6-1-1, "Music Programmes - General Correspondence."



annual National Music Conference, on 12–13 January 1961 at the King Edward Hotel in Toronto. The two-day meeting was chaired by Waddington and attended by CBC music producers from stations across Canada, including John P.L. Roberts. Three topics ran through most of the meeting’s discussions. The first concerned the coordination and communication difficulties between regional stations and Toronto, as well as between the English and French networks. The second, perhaps not surprisingly, concerned the perpetual shortage of available funds for the development of musical programming on radio and television. The third, and most important for this chapter, regarded the expansion of twentieth-century music programming. A consensus emerged among the meeting’s delegates that it was “the responsibility of the CBC to expose people to contemporary music, [and] that our programming was not aggressive enough.”<sup>187</sup>

Louis Applebaum, who was a significant figure in the development of twentieth century Canadian cultural policy, recommended that “the CBC allocate a fund for the purpose of commissioning works for TV and radio—in all fields.”<sup>188</sup> Specifically, he suggested the fund should cover “a three year period. Works would be commissioned from Canadian composers and non-Canadian composers. The following conditions would apply to non-Canadians: in return for a commission to a foreign composer, the radio organization of that composer’s country would commission a Canadian composer.”<sup>189</sup> The remaining minutes from the meeting suggest, however, that there was not a great deal of time devoted directly to the issue of a commissioning policy; the delegates instead simply

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<sup>187</sup> CBC National Music Conference, meeting minutes, 12–13 January 1961, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, Volume 868, PG6–1–1, “Music Programmes - General Correspondence.”

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.* Applebaum did not provide a specific breakdown of how the funds were to be dispersed, nor from exactly where the funds would come.

resolved to investigate the issue further.

Exactly how much attention was given to the development of a formal commissioning policy during the rest of 1961 remains to be determined. At the start of the following year, however, four representatives from three different departments of CBC Radio's music division met to work out a plan for such a policy. During the meeting, which took place on 4 January 1962, CBC music librarians Erland Misener and Helmut Kallmann, copyright clearance officer Duncan Sandison, and producer Terence Gibbs drafted a procedure for commissions in which four primary issues were addressed: 1) initial contact with the composer, including negotiating the terms of the commission; 2) fee recommendations; 3) preliminary contractual arrangements; and 4) closing and distribution of final contracts. They also drafted a contract for composers that outlined the terms of the commission. A schedule of fees was also drawn up from which the Director of Music would forward fee recommendations for each commission to Duncan Sandison. Sandison, in turn, would serve as liaison between the composer, the Music Department and CBC's accounting department to ensure that formal terms and contracts were drawn up and executed in due process.<sup>190</sup>

The report of the meeting, which was prepared by Gibbs for approval by CBC management, reveals two important points. The first point concerned a perpetual shortage of funding for programming, and its hindrance on the Music Department's ability to engage in long-term planning for commissioned works. This is not surprising, as Kellogg explains. All CBC budgets were put under great strain by the creation of CBC Television

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<sup>190</sup> "Commissioned Works (Musical): Final Report," Terence Gibbs to Geoffrey Waddington, 4 January 1962, University of Calgary, Archives and Special Collections, John P.L. Roberts fonds, Accession 919/13.18, file 08.33.

in 1952, and it was not until the early 1960s—the period under examination here—that the budgetary situation for the Radio Music department began to stabilize.<sup>191</sup> The lack of an established budget for commissions also affected the CBC’s music library. Helmut Kallmann recommended that, in the event such a budget was established, fifty percent of the funds be earmarked for copying expenses. He “hoped that from time to time part of this fund will be redeemed through the selling of the orchestral material back to the composer or his publisher.”<sup>192</sup>

#### 4.5 Cataloguing the Emergence of Canadian Music

The second important point I have inferred from the meeting’s minutes is that CBC music commissions were neither centrally coordinated nor catalogued on a consistent basis.<sup>193</sup> Indeed, to the best of my knowledge only three catalogues were ever assembled by the CBC prior to 1986, and none were regularly maintained after their initial publication. Furthermore, only the last was specifically devoted to *commissioned* works. The first two, in 1947 and 1952, were instead more broadly focused on Canadian composers and their music—even if they inevitably included an increasing number of works commissioned by the Corporation. The first catalogue (the “Brown” Catalogue) was assembled from 1942–1947 by Jean-Josaphat Gagnier, a bassoonist, conductor and

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<sup>191</sup> Kellogg, “Sounds in the Wilderness,” 245. John Roberts notes that the challenges posed by the coast-to-coast presentation of television programming, and especially the financial costs associated with it, “became the preoccupation of the [CBC’s] general manager, the chairman, and the CBC board.” See Roberts, “Canadian Broadcast Policy,” 187.

<sup>192</sup> “Commissioned Works (Musical): Final Report,” Terence Gibbs to Geoffrey Waddington, 4 January 1962, University of Calgary, Archives and Special Collections, John P.L. Roberts fonds, Accession 919/13.18, file 08.33.

<sup>193</sup> This fact is gleaned from bullet-point (g) of the report, in which Gibbs states that “Mr. Erland has requested that he be notified as soon as possible of all outstanding commissions of musical works.”

well-known music educator.<sup>194</sup> Gagnier’s catalogue was updated three years later by Kallmann, who later recalled that the goal for the updated catalogue in 1952 (the “Green” Catalogue) was three-fold: first, to “take stock of exciting new creativity” among the younger generation of Canadian composers; second, to “enhance Canada’s music image” and to emphasize the fact Canada had “a century-old tradition of composing”; and third, to facilitate performances of and scholarship on the music of Canadian composers.<sup>195</sup> CBC administrators and producers certainly understood the cultural, nationalist and corporate value of maintaining such catalogues. In an internal memorandum in 1951, Charles Jennings, the CBC’s General Supervisor of Programs, declared that a new catalogue of Canadian composers “would not only make a very real contribution to the documentation of music in Canada but it would carry with it an enormous prestige value to the Corporation.”<sup>196</sup> In that same memo, however, Jennings made it clear that the CBC did not intend to serve as Canada’s compositional archivist in the long run. Instead, it was hoped that the 1952 catalogue would serve as the foundation and impetus for other organizations to assume the responsibility for documenting future Canadian compositional activity:

While such a catalogue does bear with it the implication that it will have to be kept up to date I do feel that the Corporation could very well avoid this responsibility by giving the historical background to its own contribution in the form of the earlier mimeographed catalogue stating the reasons why it has undertaken the publication of the present book, and pointing out that it is hoped that some

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<sup>194</sup> Cited in “Catalogue of Canadian Composers,” internal CBC memorandum, Charles Jennings to the Assistant General Manager, Ottawa, 28 May 1951, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, Volume 868, PG6–1–1, “Music Programmes - General Correspondence.”

<sup>195</sup> For a detailed discussion of the CBC catalogues and their legacies, see Helmut Kallmann, “Taking Stock of Canada’s Composers from the 1920s to the *Catalogue of Canadian Composers* (1952),” in *Mapping Canada’s Music: Selected Writings of Helmut Kallmann*, eds. John Beckwith and Robin Elliott (Waterloo, ON: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2013), 167–181.

<sup>196</sup> Charles Jennings, CBC internal memorandum, “Catalogue of Canadian Composers,” 29 May 1951, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, Volume 868, PG6–1–1, “Music Programmes - General Correspondence.”

other organization or group of organizations more directly responsible will carry on in the future now that the CBC has broken the back of the larger problem.<sup>197</sup>

Although the CBC never completely relinquished this role, responsibility for documenting Canadian composers and their work was ultimately assumed by more specialized organizations. The first was the Canadian League of Composers, which published its first *Catalogue of Orchestral Music* in 1957. The ground-breaking work done by the CBC and the Canadian League of Composers was then taken over by the Canadian Music Centre, which published the first of a series of Canadian music catalogues in 1963.<sup>198</sup>

According to Kellogg, the first catalogue issued by the CBC devoted specifically to its commissioned works appeared in 1958, prepared once again by Kallmann. The impetus for this catalogue came from Waddington, who was inspired by the recent publication of a brochure from the Koussevitzky Music Foundation, in which all of the Foundation's commissioned works were listed.<sup>199</sup> Musing that it would be "an interesting idea to have something along similar lines" for the CBC, Waddington's memorandum to Kallmann suggests that not only was there no equivalent record of CBC commissioned works, the merit of maintaining such a catalogue had not been seriously considered up to that point.<sup>200</sup> Moreover, Kallmann's catalogue would go nearly three decades before it

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<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

<sup>198</sup> The first catalogue published by the Canadian Music Centre was *Catalogue of Orchestral Music at the Canadian Music Centre* (Toronto: Canadian Music Centre, 1963).

<sup>199</sup> Kellogg, "Sounds in the Wilderness," 239. Waddington was likely referring to *The Koussevitzky Music Foundations: A Catalogue of Works Commissioned by the Koussevitzky Music Foundation and the Serge Koussevitzky Music Foundation in the Library of Congress* (New York: Boosey and Hawkes, 1958).

<sup>200</sup> Waddington's full memorandum reads: "I have just received a brochure put out by the Koussevitzky Music Foundation, in which they list all the works they have commissioned. It occurred to me that it would be an interesting idea to have something along similar lines published by the CBC, listing the works and information about them which we have commissioned over the years. I realize that this will take

was updated by Kellogg in 1986.<sup>201</sup> On the one hand, one could reasonably attribute this significant oversight as a by-product of CBC Radio's financial instability following the introduction of CBC Television in 1952.<sup>202</sup> On the other hand, however, it is indicative of the logistical challenges posed by the desire to preserve a certain level of autonomy for each of the CBC's regional stations, while simultaneously coordinating their activities from its central headquarters in Toronto.<sup>203</sup> Waddington was particularly critical of this lack of communication between regional stations and the network's Toronto headquarters. In an undated memo (likely written in 1966), he called for a "clarification of functional line of authority," explaining that unlike other departments, the Music Department has never been organized on a proper national basis.<sup>204</sup> Although Waddington does not address commissioning procedure directly, the CBC's lack of a centralized record of commissioned works could be partially explained by its decentralized administrative hierarchy. Citing the CBC's British Columbia regional office as an example, Waddington reported that "[any] responsibility in [BC Region] programming to the National office is almost completely ignored—even when such

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considerable research but think it is a worthwhile project we might get going on with a view to having something ready sometime next fall." Geoffrey Waddington to Helmut Kallmann, 20 March 1959, cited in Kellogg, "Sounds in the Wilderness," 239.

<sup>201</sup> I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to Denise Ball and Michael Juk of CBC Radio 2 Vancouver for providing me with digital copies of unpublished CBC commissions catalogues spanning 1939–2011.

<sup>202</sup> Kellogg, "Sounds in the Wilderness," 245.

<sup>203</sup> Following a meeting with the CBC Music Department in December 1962, program officer Robert Weaver reported to producer John Reeves that "it should be possible for commissions to be handled by producers as well as Program Organizers in the Music Department itself. However, no one has yet worked out a very clear policy on the whole matter and the policy seems likely to emerge to some extent from what happens in the next little while of practice." CBC inter-office memo, Robert Weaver to John Reeves, 20 October 1962, University of Calgary, Archives and Special Collections, John P.L. Roberts fonds, Accession 919/13.18, file 8.33.

<sup>204</sup> Geoffrey Waddington, CBC internal memorandum, "Music Department - Organization," undated, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, Volume 868, PG6–1–1, "Music Programmes - General Correspondence." I have approximated the date of this memo to 1966 based on its archival placement between chronologically ordered records from January of that year.

programmes are paid for out of the National Music Budget.”<sup>205</sup> Even though Waddington does not provide specific examples to support this claim, it does lend credence to the idea that works commissioned by regional branches were not centrally documented by the CBC’s English Services headquarters in Toronto.

#### **4.6 The 1964 Shakespeare Quadricentennial Commissions**

Internal CBC records held in the John P.L. Roberts fonds suggest that it was around 1961–1962 that Roberts took on a more assertive role in the development of CBC Radio’s commissioning policy. Roberts made his philosophy clear during the CBC’s National Music Conference in 1961, when he stated that “long-range programming should be a solution for developing imaginative programmes.”<sup>206</sup> He maintained this conviction two years later, when CBC Radio began planning the Canada Centenary celebrations in 1963. In a memorandum dated 4 September 1963 to Bruce Raymond, Program Director of CBC Radio Networks, Roberts decisively pushed for the establishment of a formal policy for music commissions:

I think, after so many years, most of us are in agreement we need to develop the field of CBC commissions into an overall plan. Recent proposals from Robert Turner concerning the Vancouver Chamber Orchestra, my CBC Sunday Night Commissioned works series, the lack of any development in television commissions since the demise of the Youth Concert Series, and the very major commissions needed for the 1967 Centenary all underline the fact clearly.”<sup>207</sup>

In Roberts’s view, the approaching 1967 Centenary celebrations provided CBC

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<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>206</sup> CBC National Music Conference, meeting minutes, 12–13 January 1961, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, Volume 868, PG6–1–1, “Music Programmes - General Correspondence.”

<sup>207</sup> Memorandum, John Roberts to Bruce Raymond, 4 September 1963, University of Calgary, Archives and Special Collections, John P.L. Roberts fonds, Accession 919/13.18, file 8.33.

Radio with an opportunity to establish both a permanent budget and procedure for dealing with commissions on a long-term basis. He therefore asked Raymond to establish an annual budget for commissions and provided a hypothetical breakdown of how those funds could be allocated. Roberts also revived the recommendation made by Louis Applebaum two years earlier during the 1961 National Music Conference about issuing commissions to renowned foreign composers. Like Applebaum, Roberts asserted that “Quite apart from their musical value, works composed by such men as Stravinsky, Hindemith, Britten, etc. . . . would focus international attention of Canada and the CBC in particular.”<sup>208</sup>

Roberts’s memorandum seems to have served, at least in part, as the much-needed impetus for CBC Radio’s music department to begin establishing annual budgets and long-term plans for commissions. Exactly two months later, Roberts announced the establishment of an annual budget for major commissions. “Concomitant with this was agreement on the necessity for advance planning and some concern because of lack of time to organize the first year.”<sup>209</sup> The “first year” was 1964, the Quadricentennial of Shakespeare’s birth. To celebrate the anniversary, Roberts and CBC Vancouver’s Program Director, Peter Garvie, formulated a plan for commissions roughly based on the outline Roberts had proposed two months earlier. They divided the proposed commissions into four major categories: a major orchestral work; a work for chamber orchestra; two choral works; and two chamber works. The total cost of the commissions was to be \$7000, which included \$1000 for copying expenses.

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<sup>208</sup> Ibid. It is also reasonable to assume that Roberts was also inspired by the success of Stravinsky’s recent performances in Toronto in September 1962.

<sup>209</sup> Memorandum, John Roberts to Laurence Wilson, 4 November 1963 University of Calgary, Archives and Special Collections, John P.L. Roberts fonds, Accession 919/13.18, file 8.33.



The first of the proposed commissions for the Shakespeare Quadricentennial was a large-scale orchestral work by the American composer Gunther Schuller to be performed by the CBC Symphony Orchestra. The second was a chamber orchestra work by François Morel for the CBC Vancouver Chamber Orchestra. The third commission went to John Beckwith, from whom a choral work for the Montreal Bach Choir was requested. The fourth commission, a choral work for the Festival Singers of Toronto, went to Violet Archer. Finally, the fifth and sixth commissions for voice and chamber ensembles were awarded to Robert Turner, then a producer at the CBC station in Vancouver, and to the British composer Peter Racine Fricker.<sup>210</sup>

Of these six planned commissions, at least four resulted in the creation of new works. Beckwith composed *The Trumpets of Summer* for conductor George Little and the Montreal Bach Choir. The work is a twelve-tone “choral-suite” in six movements for chorus, narrators and chamber ensemble on a libretto by Margaret Atwood, who shaped the work’s text to “[illuminate] the ways in which Shakespeare has become part of the Canadian experience.”<sup>211</sup> Archer composed *Sing, the Muse*, a four-movement choral cycle for mixed chorus based on four poems by Elizabethan poets: Shakespeare, John Marston, William Drummond and Walter Raleigh. Finally, Turner produced the *The Phoenix and the Turtle*, a setting of Shakespeare’s poem of the same name, and Schuller composed *Five Shakespearean Songs* for the CBC Symphony Orchestra—likely one of the final works performed by the orchestra before it was unceremoniously dismantled that

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<sup>210</sup> Fricker (1920–90) was born and trained in London but spent the greater part of his career teaching at the University of California in Santa Barbara.

<sup>211</sup> John Beckwith, *Unheard Of: Memoirs of a Canadian Composer* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2012), 279–280.

year.<sup>212</sup> Fricker had previously completed two CBC commissions—*Lemons and Hieroglyphs* (1959) and *Serenade No. 1, Opus 34* (1959)—but did not complete one for the Shakespeare celebration.<sup>213</sup> Morel’s commission was likely filled in a form different from that proposed by Roberts. Keith MacMillan reports in the *1964 Canadian Annual Review* that “an orchestral work by François Morel” was broadcast as part of the Shakespearean celebration but provides no title nor premiere date to substantiate his assertion.<sup>214</sup>

#### 4.7 Conclusion

The Shakespeare Quadricentennial commissions are exemplary of the proposed long-term policy for commissions envisioned by Garvie and Roberts. For one, they included two foreign commissions aimed at nurturing the relationship between Canadian composers and performers, the CBC and the international music community. More importantly, all except two of the works—those for voice and instrumental ensemble—were proposed with specific Canadian ensembles in mind. In this way, the proposed commissions married the long-standing policy of promoting Canadian performers with an equal support for Canada’s composers, situated within a musical context that allowed for, and actively encouraged, a wide spectrum of compositional opportunity and experimentation. Furthermore, the Quadricentennial commissions demonstrated the

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<sup>212</sup> Schuller conducted the CBC Symphony Orchestra in the premiere of *Five Shakespearean Songs* on 22 November 1964; see Linda I Solow and Boston Area Music Libraries, *The Boston Composers Project: A Bibliography of Contemporary Music* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1983), 487.

<sup>213</sup> See “Peter Racine Fricker Chronological Catalogue of Works,” UC Santa Barbara Library, accessed 16 June 2019, <https://www.library.ucsb.edu/special-collections/performing-arts/pamss17c>.

<sup>214</sup> I have not yet located any information to corroborate MacMillan’s report. See Keith MacMillan, “Music,” in *Canadian Annual Review for 1964*, ed. John Saywell (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), 476.

creative diversity which could be achieved with CBC resources. Each of the three Canadian works commissioned—those by Beckwith, Archer and Turner—reflect the creative space in which each composer had been currently engaged. For example, Beckwith received the Shakespeare commission shortly after finishing *Jonah* (1964), a work for soloists, chorus and chamber orchestra that had been commissioned by Elmer Iseler for the Festival Singers of Toronto. As Beckwith later recalled, “[the] spurt of energy stimulated by writing [*Jonah*] surprised me, and its reception was gratifying. Ready to tackle something more, I was fortunate to receive a commission from the CBC.”<sup>215</sup> By receiving the CBC’s commission for *The Trumpets of Summer*, a twelve-tone work that utilizes a unique combination of vocal and instrumental forces, Beckwith was availed the necessary resources and infrastructure with which he could continue developing his own unique musical voice.<sup>216</sup> In the following chapter, I will narrow my focus to the impact of the CBC’s commissioning policy on orchestral composition as seen through the lens of the CBC Symphony Orchestra in the 1950s and 1960s.

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<sup>215</sup> Beckwith, *Unheard Of*, 279.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, 280.

# Chapter 5

## The CBC Symphony Orchestra, 1952–1964

### 5.1 Introduction

In 1952, the CBC announced the creation of a new orchestra in Toronto, to be known simply as the CBC Symphony Orchestra (CBC SO). During its inaugural broadcast on 29 September 1952, it was proudly declared that the orchestra’s mandate was first and foremost to “provide a first-rate symphony orchestra which will play together throughout the year and bring to listeners across Canada the very best in the symphonic repertoire.”<sup>217</sup> The breadth of its repertoire would cover “symphonies, concerti, orchestral suites—in fact all the forms of symphonic music. This music will be chosen from the repertoire of all countries and will represent all historical periods.”<sup>218</sup> For one hour each week, there would be “old and new, Canadian and European, the criterion of choice being always the excellence of the music.”<sup>219</sup> Conductors from across Canada and the world would be brought in to direct the orchestra in lieu of a permanent director, and outstanding solo artists from Canada and abroad would be featured regularly. The audience had a responsibility in this new venture as well. Listeners were instructed that this new orchestra should be enjoyed with “close, attentive listening” by the “thousands

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<sup>217</sup> Telegram from W.C. Anderson to E.C. Hebert, 29 September 1952, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41–A–IV–2–C, vol. 213, file 11–21–9. It is unclear from this telegram whether the speech was ultimately given on-air during the CBC SO’s inaugural broadcast. However, I have included it here because it provides a clear statement from CBC administrators about the orchestra’s purpose.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

of listeners who are keenly interested in serious music.”<sup>220</sup> The message was clear: the CBC SO was to be the Canadian equivalent to the BBC Symphony Orchestra, an ensemble of international standards performing the world’s finest art music while showcasing the height of Canadian musical talent. In the eyes of its creators, the CBC SO would demonstrate to the world that Canadians—both its musicians *and* audiences—could now stand alongside the great art music cultures of Europe and the United States.

The creation of the CBC SO was opportune, as it coincided with the establishment of another major institution in Canadian music, the Canadian League of Composers (CLC), in late 1951. The CLC’s mandate was first and foremost to support, promote and lobby on behalf of all Canadian composers, regardless of aesthetic disposition or geographical location: “Despite their own allegiance to modernist styles and their shared Toronto location, the founders decided to aim for solidarity among all Canadian composers and commit themselves to stylistic and regional inclusiveness.”<sup>221</sup> As Benita Wolters-Fredlund points out, the appearance of Canadian music on independent concert programs was sporadic at best. In a much-debated article from 1950 on the state of Canadian music, Barbara Pentland lamented that, given the current state of affairs, there were

very few first-rate orchestral works by Canadians, works which could stand up favourably on a program anywhere. Certainly there is no encouragement to write them. After a fling or two in that direction, the serious composer turns to works for small orchestra, a field which has more possibilities since it is generally in the hands of younger conductors who are more in touch with current music.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> Benita Wolters-Fredlund, “A ‘League Against Willan’? The Early Years of the Canadian League of Composers, 1951–1960,” *Journal for the Society for American Music* 5, no. 4 (2011): 448.

<sup>222</sup> Barbara Pentland, “Canadian Music, 1950,” *Northern Review* 3/3 (February–March 1950): 169.

The Toronto Symphony Orchestra, for example, had performed a special concert of Canadian works in 1948, and in 1950 the First Symposium of Canadian Contemporary Music was held in Vancouver.<sup>223</sup> Moreover, smaller CBC orchestras such as its Vancouver Chamber Orchestra (established in 1938 with a membership of approximately 35) and Winnipeg Orchestra (established in 1947 as a medium sized orchestra of approximately fifty players) had been performing Canada works on their programs for years, albeit with smaller ensembles.<sup>224</sup> For large-scale works for full orchestra, however, the CBC SO (with a membership of approximately 80 players) offered the first major opportunity for Canadian composers to seriously engage with the genre and have their music heard on a regular basis.<sup>225</sup> The CLC certainly believed as much, declaring in 1964 that

Since its creation in 1952, the CBC Symphony has been the most important medium for the extended works by Canadian composers. The proof lies in the record of premieres, as well as in the substantial increase in Canadian symphonic repertoire during this period. The very existence of this orchestra offered our composers encouragement to write larger works, thereby developing both creative talent and professional stature.<sup>226</sup>

Several scholars have noted a distinct correlation between the CBC SO and growth of the modern Canadian symphonic repertoire in the 1950s.<sup>227</sup> Gordana

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<sup>223</sup> Wolters-Fredlund, “A ‘League Against Willan,” 448.

<sup>224</sup> Nancy McGregor and Tom Taylor, “CBC Winnipeg Orchestra,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, accessed 5 April 2022, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/cbc-winnipeg-orchestra-emc>; Bryan N.S. Gooch, Evan Ware and Max Wyman, “CBC Radio Orchestra,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, accessed 5 April 2022, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/cbc-radio-orchestra-emc>.

<sup>225</sup> Ross Parmenter, “Music: CBC Symphony; Canadian Orchestra Plays At Stratford,” *New York Times*, 22 August 1957, 24; Gordana Lazarevich, *The Musical World of Frances James and Murray Adaskin* (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 147.

<sup>226</sup> Letter from Jean Papineau-Couture and John Weinzweig on behalf of the Canadian League of Composers to Jean Marie-Beaudet, Vice-President of the CBC, 4 July 1964, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6-4-4, part 3, 1961-1967.

<sup>227</sup> George Proctor, for example, claims that “the formation of the CBC Symphony by Geoffrey Waddington, after he assumed the position of director of music for the government-owned radio network in

Lazarevich takes an assertive stance on the issue, stating that there was a “direct causal link between the number of symphonic works written by major composers during the 1950s and the existence of the CBC Symphony Orchestra.”<sup>228</sup> John Roberts, the CBC’s Head of Radio Music and Variety from 1970–1975, likewise wrote that stimulus provided by the CBC SO to write large-scale orchestral works effected a major development in Canadian symphonic output.<sup>229</sup> This narrative has also been reinforced by the testimonials of many participants who performed with or were commissioned by the CBC SO. In July 1957, after only four seasons, Harry Somers proclaimed that he had “nothing but admiration” for the orchestra, and that “without it, nothing would happen as far as major Canadian works are concerned. There would be no outlet.”<sup>230</sup> Murray Adaskin likewise identified the quick maturity of the orchestra as an indication of the “artistic potential of the magic land of ours.”<sup>231</sup> As a composer, Adaskin doubted

the Canadian composer could have developed so quickly without the encouragement given him by the Symphony Orchestra. Our composers have had the rare and valuable experience of hearing their music played superbly and intelligently. In fact, the Canadian Composer may look upon the CBC Symphony Orchestra as a kind of symphonic patron.<sup>232</sup>

Performers and conductors felt similarly. Conductor Victor Feldbrill, speaking around the same time, said the CBC SO’s lack of box-office dependency spawned a spirit

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1952, provided the necessary spark for the writing of works for full orchestra.” See George A. Proctor, *Canadian Music of the Twentieth Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980): 64.

<sup>228</sup> Lazarevich, *The Musical World*, 147–148.

<sup>229</sup> John Roberts, “Communications Media,” in *Aspects of Music in Canada*, ed. Arnold Walter (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 179.

<sup>230</sup> Helen McNamara, “The Unseen Symphony,” *Mayfair* (July 1957): np, newspaper clipping consulted LAC, Terence Gibbs fonds, R14460–0–7–F, MUS 36/1/3 - 1973–8, CBC Symphony Orchestra Scrapbook, part 2.

<sup>231</sup> Murray Adaskin, undated memo (circa November 1959), LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6–4–6, part 2, 1958–1961 (CBC Symphony Orchestra). [I have reasonably dated the memo to November 1959 based on its placement between other memos from that same month in the archival folder.]

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*

of adventure that was largely absent in the context of traditional concert programming.<sup>233</sup> Two years later, the American conductor Russell Stanger asserted that “what the CBC is doing culturally for the Canadian composer, performing artist, musician and Canada itself can never really be measured. A big investment in the present Canada is the most tangible asset to be realized (sic).”<sup>234</sup>

I will argue in this chapter that the CBC SO contributed to normalizing the commissioning and performance of large-scale works by Canadian composers, and that those facets served within a broader goal of internationalizing Canadian music culture. In other words, the CBC SO was to embody for the world what Canadian cultural leaders wished for the nation’s art music culture as a whole: a professional institution that would henceforth stand alongside, and not on the periphery to, the great musical institutions of Europe and the United States. The degree to which the Corporation was successful can be measured in the large body of Canadian works commissioned for and premiered by the CBC SO, many of which stand as landmarks of twentieth century Canadian music, as well as in the fruitful relationships cultivated with internationally renowned artists, such as Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, who produced recordings that enhanced the reputation of the orchestra (and the country) across the world.

## **5.2 Founders and Administrators: Ira Dilworth, Terence Gibbs and Geoffrey Waddington**

The documentary record surrounding the CBC SO’s creation is sparse. During multiple research trips at Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa, I uncovered

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<sup>233</sup> McNamara, “The Unseen Symphony,” np.

<sup>234</sup> Russell Stanger, undated memo circa November 1959, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6–4–6, part 2, 1958–1961 (CBC Symphony Orchestra).



approximately six centimetres of primary records, including inter-office correspondence, partial repertoire lists, journal entries and newspaper clippings. For a major orchestra which operated for twelve years, this is a small amount of remaining information. The available evidence makes it clear that from the outset the CBC saw its new Symphony Orchestra as much more than a utilitarian house orchestra. The Corporation's vision for its new premiere orchestra was refined to emphasize the new and unusual, though not to the exclusion of canonic works. As articulated in a promotional pamphlet from 1952, the CBC SO was to "give the CBC the opportunity of presenting symphonic music not usually found on regular programs as well as presenting some of the better-known works. It also provides Canadian artists with opportunities to play with a symphony orchestra and gain experience with outstanding conductors."<sup>235</sup>

The creation of the CBC SO was largely the undertaking of three important figures in CBC history: Ira Dilworth, Terence Gibbs and Geoffrey Waddington. Dilworth, the oldest of the three, was born near Winnipeg in 1894, but moved to Kelowna as a child and eventually relocated to Victoria in 1909. By 1950 Dilworth had an impressive list of professional accomplishments both as a musician and arts administrator. These many accomplishments included teaching English at the University of British Columbia (1934–1938), conducting the Vancouver Bach Choir from 1935–1940, becoming the first president of the Community Arts Council of Vancouver in 1946, and serving as the editor of the unpublished literary works of Emily Carr (1871–1945), with whom he had been a close friend.<sup>236</sup> Perhaps his most conspicuous achievement was

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<sup>235</sup> Pamphlet in LAC, Terence Gibbs fonds, R14460–0–7–F, MUS 36/1/3 - 1973–8, CBC Symphony Orchestra Scrapbook, part 1.

<sup>236</sup> Anonymous, "Ira Dilworth," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*,

the establishment of the CBC Vancouver Chamber Orchestra in 1938, the same year he was appointed as the CBC's regional director for British Columbia, a post he held until 1947. After four years in Montreal as the general manager of the Corporation's International Service, Dilworth finally landed in Toronto, where he became Director of Programming in 1951.<sup>237</sup>

It was in this last-named role that Dilworth oversaw the creation of the CBC SO, a project spearheaded by two British expatriates, Terence Gibbs and Geoffrey Waddington. Both men came to Canada at very different stages in their lives, but by 1952 both had extensive careers as both professional musicians and broadcasters. Gibbs was born in London in 1921, and after serving the British army in India during the Second World War he returned to his hometown where he studied piano and composition at the Guildhall School of Music. Upon completing his education, Gibbs was appointed assistant artist manager for Britain's Decca Records, a job which took him "on a period of continent-cruising with a recording unit [...] seeking and engaging the finest musicians and instrumental groups."<sup>238</sup> He travelled across the European continent and produced recordings of some of Europe's finest orchestras, including the Concertgebouw in Holland and the Vienna State Opera.<sup>239</sup> Gibbs was quick to make his influence felt at the CBC, where he promptly co-founded the CBC Opera Company shortly after joining the Corporation in 1948. The tone and substance of his character, as gleaned from extant correspondence, suggests that Gibbs was certainly not a meek personality. It was likely

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<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/ira-dilworth-emc>, accessed 15 July 2021; Robert Dale McIntosh, *A Documentary History of Music in Victoria, British Columbia*. Volume II: 1900–1950 (Victoria, BC: Beach Holme Publishers, 1994), 376.

<sup>237</sup> Anonymous, "Ira Dilworth," *Canadian Encyclopedia*.

<sup>238</sup> McNamara, "The Unseen Symphony," nd.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

this confidence, combined with his professional music training and his previous recording experience in Europe that made him a natural choice to oversee the CBC's most ambitious radio orchestra to date.

Unlike Gibbs, who came to Canada as an adult, Geoffrey Waddington arrived in Lethbridge, Alberta at the age of three. He was born in Leicester, England to musical parents; his father was an opera singer and his mother a pianist. At the age of seven he began studying violin, and he also demonstrated an early propensity for orchestral conducting.<sup>240</sup> Upon graduating from the Toronto Conservatory of Music in 1923, Waddington began his professional career in earnest, immediately joining the Conservatory's faculty as well as the Toronto Symphony Orchestra.<sup>241</sup> In 1927 Waddington left the Toronto Conservatory to begin his long career in broadcasting, first at CKNC in Toronto where he became one of Canada's youngest music radio directors and conducted hundreds of broadcasts for the next five years.<sup>242</sup> His success in that position evidently made him a natural choice for the musical directorship of Canada's first public broadcaster, the CRBC, a position he was given upon its creation in 1933.<sup>243</sup> From that point on he would remain in Canadian public broadcasting for the remainder of his life, including a five year stint as CBC Winnipeg's music director (1938–1943) before

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<sup>240</sup> An anecdote published by the *Edmonton Journal* in 1955 reports a quite unorthodox way in which the adolescent Waddington was introduced to the world of conducting. During a performance of the local theatre orchestra when he was an adolescent, its leader suddenly fell ill. For reasons not fully explained, Waddington was suddenly tasked with conducting the orchestra, and as a result he took over as the ensemble's permanent director for the next five years. See "Orchestra's Guest Conductor Wielded Baton at Age of 12," *Edmonton Journal*, 22 January 1955, np, newspaper clipping consulted in LAC, Geoffrey Waddington fonds, MUS 14 (2001–14) 151).

<sup>241</sup> This appointment is noted in a typewritten curriculum vitae, undated, LAC, Geoffrey Waddington fonds, MUS 14 (2001–14) 151. It should be noted that his position with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra is not mentioned by Richard S. Warren in his history of the orchestra, *Begins with the Oboe: A History of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press Incorporated, 2002).

<sup>242</sup> Helmut Kallmann, "Waddington, Geoffrey," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/geoffrey-waddington-emc>, accessed 20 May 2022.

<sup>243</sup> Typewritten curriculum vitae, undated, LAC, Geoffrey Waddington fonds, MUS 14 (2001–14) 151.

returning to Toronto and ultimately assuming the role of CBC Music Director in 1952.<sup>244</sup>

As Helmut Kallmann observes, Waddington's extensive experience in music broadcasting from a relatively young age had a decisive impact on his professional temperament:

He was thoroughly professional in his recognition of the practical demands of time slots and studio facilities and his subordination of personal taste to programming requirements. A shy person, he spoke little at rehearsals. Though he expressed few aesthetic preconceptions about the music at hand, he was able to establish with his players a rapport based on mutual respect and confidence.<sup>245</sup>

There are scant records written by Waddington remaining in the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation fonds, and none contradicting Kallmann's characterization of the conductor. In the correspondence it is Gibbs who comes across as the dominant force behind the orchestra's day-to-day operation and long-term planning. Programming, however, was a collaborative effort. According to a 1957 article in *Mayfair*, Gibbs would prepare the season's programs for approval by Waddington, taking "particular care to see there is an adequate representation of both established and new works, including as many worthy [sic] Canadian contributions as possible."<sup>246</sup> Gibbs was particularly concerned with ensuring that the CBC SO's repertoire steered a "musical course between the box-office concert and the ultra-modern attitude of 'grin and bear it'—or die."<sup>247</sup> Gibbs seems to have been less concerned with using the orchestra to nurture a single compositional style than he was with ensuring the orchestra was unique among its peers. "The programs

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<sup>244</sup> Kallmann, "Waddington, Geoffrey," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

<sup>246</sup> McNamara, "The Unseen Symphony," np.

<sup>247</sup> See Terence Gibbs, "The CBC Symphony's Special Role," *CBC Times* (6–12 November 1955), np, newspaper clipping consulted in LAC, Terence Gibbs fonds, R14460–0–7–F, MUS 36/1/6 - 1973–8, CBC Symphony Orchestra Scrapbook, part 1.

by this orchestra,” he wrote, “have rarely been duplicated by the permanent symphony orchestras in this country or those heard in the United States. At last there is an outlet for the vast amount of music being composed by Canadians.”<sup>248</sup>

An examination of Appendix A reveals how Gibbs’ programming philosophy was put into practice. It is a facsimile of a list of CBC SO’s performances during its first five seasons, itemized by composition and arranged alphabetically by composer. I found the list in Terrence Gibbs’ personal fonds held at LAC; it was included along with a series of scrapbooks he kept from his tenure as the orchestra’s chief administrator.<sup>249</sup> Covering 1952–1956, the list includes 312 performances in total and reflects the balance between traditional concert repertoire and modern music which Gibbs declared from the outset. Not surprisingly, Mozart and Beethoven received the most attention with 19 and 18 performances respectively, which together make up just under 12% of the total number of performances. The remainder of the list reflects a wide range of composers, from Purcell to Stravinsky. This list includes composers whose work was relatively new in the 1950s (Henri Dutilleux) and some recently composed music (Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 10, composed in 1953). However, the list also reveals the aesthetic limitations Gibbs placed on programming. For example, notably absent are composers of the Second Viennese School: the music of Schoenberg, Berg and Webern—which received considerable attention from the BBC Symphony in its early years—is all conspicuously absent. While numerous works by major international composers appeared on CBC SO programs, they all remained generally within the tonal realm. These included, for example, Ginastera’s *Variaciones Concertantes* (conducted by Heinz Unger on 29 December 1955), or

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<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

<sup>249</sup> LAC, Terence Gibbs fonds, MUS36/1/7 - 1973–8, CBC Symphony Orchestra Scrapbook, part 5.

Stravinsky's Symphony No. 3 (conducted by Roland Leduc on 3 November 1952—one of the CBC SO's earliest performances). Canadian works on the list of repertoire were clearly singled out with a pencil mark next to them. There are 23 performances of works by Canadian composers, which equates to a little more than 7.37% of the total repertoire. Many of these are major works in traditional formats—symphonies, in particular, but also concerti and other genres. I will discuss some of these pieces in further detail below.

### 5.3 The CBC SO's Programming Policy: An Overview

The CBC SO's performance on 17 April 1953 provides a representative example of the CBC SO's programming policy. On that evening Victor Feldbrill (1924–2020), who was a regular guest on the CBC SO's podium, conducted Mozart's Symphony No. 26 in E-flat (1773), followed by the premiere of Harry Somers' Symphony No. 1 (1951). Although on first consideration the pairing might seem unusual, musically the two works naturally complemented each other. Somers had begun sketching the symphony during a year-long tenure in Paris from 1949–1950, where he studied with Darius Milhaud and discovered inspiration in the arts beyond music.<sup>250</sup> In a *CBC Times* article published the week of the performance, Feldbrill identified a certain classical sensibility in Somers' thematic development, which in his view “has the same directness and economy of means as Mozart, with no superfluous orchestration or padding.”<sup>251</sup> Yet at the same time Symphony No. 1, constructed from twelve-tone rows, was very much a twentieth-century

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<sup>250</sup> As Somers later stated, “I believe the temperament of the work is strongly romantic, that is to say, emotive and dramatic. Subjectively I was responding strongly to literature at that time—the brilliant technical control of Joyce's *Ulysses*, and the the profound humanism of Dostoevsky, both of whom I was introduced to in Paris”; quoted in Brian Cherney, *Harry Somers* (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1975), 42–44, 52.

<sup>251</sup> As quoted in Cherney, *Harry Somers*, 52.

work. As Brian Cherney has shown, all of “the important elements of symphonic writing, at least in the twentieth century, are present in this work: distinctive thematic ideas, capable of further growth and manipulation, and extended, logically developed structure, effectively reinforced by a sense of on-going dramatic import.”<sup>252</sup> Listening to both works in sequence, however, the logic of pairing Somers’ Symphony with Mozart’s Symphony No. 26 becomes apparent: both works rely on a sparing use of orchestral texture and concise thematic ideas to imbue drama and establish structure. For listeners of the broadcast, and particularly uninitiated listeners (who likely would have made up the majority of the audience) the aesthetic differences would have certainly been apparent. Pre-concert discussions were thus implemented to highlight the similarities between the two works for those who may not have picked them out on their own. In this way, Dilworth, Gibbs, Waddington and other CBC producers sought to educate listeners not just about the existence of Canadian composers, but the *relevance* of their music. Canadian works, instead of opening concerts as special overtures or simply novel diversions before standard repertoire, were judiciously paired with more familiar works and placed appropriately within the context of each individual program. In this case, Somers’ Symphony—which is almost three times the length of Mozart’s—was logically placed as the evening’s featured work.

Proud as Gibbs was of CBC SO’s policy towards Canadian music, his elder colleague Waddington was responsible for performing it. Waddington was one in a line of high-ranking CBC music supervisors, including Harry Adaskin, Jean-Marie Beaudet and, later, John P.L. Roberts, who were adamant about using the Corporation’s resources

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<sup>252</sup> Ibid, 53.

to build a native compositional tradition in Canada. As John Roberts notes, “Canadian orchestral music underwent a major development as more and more Canadian works were broadcast under the direction of Canadian conductors. Geoffrey Waddington, in particular, is identified with very many first performances of Canadian works.”<sup>253</sup> Murray Adaskin likewise attributed to Waddington a significant degree of credit for the amount of Canadian music performed by the CBC SO. He recalled that Waddington

had a vision and he worked very hard for it, and this was the CBC Symphony. He formed it with the idea that it [the CBC] would have its own resident orchestra, and it was a marvellous orchestra with the best players in Toronto, which at that time, one could easily say, had the best musicians in Canada. Then he decided that it would be the orchestra to play new Canadian works.<sup>254</sup>

Formally, Gibbs and Waddington held the titles of Producer and Director, respectively. Although Waddington conducted more broadcasts of the CBC SO than any other conductor, it was a point of pride that the CBC SO never had a permanent conductor. This unusual policy drew both praise and criticism. An internal CBC program audit distributed in 1959 reported that

It is felt that we are not yet getting our full potential out of the orchestra. Standards of performance are variable; some excellent, others disappointing, and part of the reason must surely be the lack of a permanent and principle conductor. So too it is hard to see a real pattern in the series or sometimes a good balance in the individual programs; this again may reflect the lack of a single conductor to impress his style on the programs as on the orchestra.<sup>255</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> Roberts, “Communications Media,” 179.

<sup>254</sup> Lazarevich, *The Musical World*, 55.

<sup>255</sup> Internal CBC Review of CBC SO Series, Feb 1959, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6–4–6, part 2, 1958–1961 (CBC Symphony Orchestra).



## 5.4 On Canada's Stage: National Appearances

From 1952–1958, the CBC SO was heard performing from the CBC studio in Toronto on the Trans-Canada Network during a forty-five minute late evening Monday slot from 22:15–23:00 EST. On 26 October 1958, however, a number of scheduling changes moved the orchestra into a stronger position to reach a larger audience. First, its program length was doubled to one hour and a half to accommodate larger programs and longer works. Second, the broadcast was moved to a primetime Sunday evening slot, at 20:30–22:00 EST on the Trans-Canada Network. Lastly, the orchestra was moved out of the studio and into the Carlton Theatre on 509 Parliament Street where it was broadcast live in front of invited audiences.<sup>256</sup> Although the orchestra's broadcasts would be moved twice more (to Fridays in 1959, and back to Sundays in 1961), this change of venue and time was part of a larger effort to better situate the CBC SO into the public consciousness.

The orchestra's inaugural broadcast from the Carlton Theatre in 1957 was not the first public performance for the CBC SO: a concert at Massey Hall in Toronto on 16 May 1955 had already marked that occasion.<sup>257</sup> Conducted by Waddington with Albert Pratz presiding as concertmaster before an invited audience, the orchestra performed a markedly unadventurous program of late Romantic music, including *Joyeuse Marche* by Emmanuel Chabrier, Ottorino Respighi's tone poem *Fountains of Rome*, Brahms' Fourth

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<sup>256</sup> Internal memo from Ira Dilworth to Director of Music, 3 November 1958, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6–4–6, part 2, 1958–1961 (CBC Symphony Orchestra); Director for Ontario and English Networks, announcement in the *CBC Ontario Newsletter*, 23 October 1958, LAC, Terence Gibbs fonds, R14460–0–7–F, MUS 36/1/6 - 1973–8, CBC Symphony Orchestra Scrapbook, part 3.

<sup>257</sup> Letter from R.G. Gordon to A.K. Morrow, 29 April 1955, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6–4–4, part 1, 1954–1958 (CBC Symphony Orchestra).

Symphony and Wagner's *Siegfried's Rhine Journey*.<sup>258</sup> Three months later, the CBC SO travelled to Montreal, where they performed during a joint congress of Les Jeunes Musicales de Canada and Jeunesses Musicales International (now JM International), the latter of which was celebrating its tenth annual meeting.<sup>259</sup> Glenn Gould joined conductor Jean Marie-Beaudet on that occasion to perform Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4, preceding which they played Clermont Pepin's symphonic poem *Guernica*, Albert Roussel's Fourth Symphony, Samuel Barber's *Overture to The School for Scandal*, and Harry Somers' Passacaglia and Fugue.<sup>260</sup> A year later, there were discussions about the CBC SO embarking on a two-week tour of Western Canada in the summer of 1959 in order to solidify its reputation as Canada's premiere symphony orchestra. However, the estimated price tag of \$60 000 (without a guaranteed subsidy from the Canada Council), combined with unsurmountable scheduling conflicts during the summer months, prevented any such tour from happening.<sup>261</sup> A two- or three-week tour of Europe was proposed as an alternative endeavour, but the quoted \$140 000–\$180 000 price tag and insufficient time to make arrangements prevented it from becoming a reality as well.<sup>262</sup>

In the summer of 1957, the CBC SO was the featured ensemble on *Music from Stratford*, a Wednesday night feature on CBC Radio which presented live performances from the annual Stratford Shakespearean Festival. The CBC SO gave four concerts, one

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<sup>258</sup> John Kraglund noted in his review of the concert that, for an orchestra praised for its presentation of contemporary and otherwise uncommon works, the program was a disappointment. See John Kraglund, "Music in Toronto," *Globe and Mail*, 7 May 1955, 13.

<sup>259</sup> Press release, undated, LAC, Terence Gibbs fonds, R14460–0–7–F, MUS 36/1/6 - 1973–8, CBC Symphony Orchestra Scrapbook, part 1; JM International, "Our Story," accessed 4 May 2022, <https://jmi.net/about/our-story>.

<sup>260</sup> Press release, undated, LAC, Terence Gibbs fonds, R14460–0–7–F, MUS 36/1/6 - 1973–8, CBC Symphony Orchestra Scrapbook, part 1.

<sup>261</sup> See the chain of correspondence held in LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6–4–6, part 2, 1958–1961 (CBC Symphony Orchestra).

<sup>262</sup> *Ibid.*

per week, throughout the five-week festival (concerts on July 31, August 7, 14 and 21).<sup>263</sup>

As was typical for the CBC SO, each concert was led by a different conductor, and three of the four performances featured Canadian soloists as well:

**31 July 1957**

Conductor: Heinz Unger      *Fanfare and Passacaglia* (Violet Archer)  
Soloist: Lois Marshall      *Four Last Songs* (Richard Strauss)  
   *Death and Transfiguration* (Richard Strauss)  
   *Symphony No. 4* (Carl Nielsen)

**7 August 1957**

Conductor: Walter Susskind      *Overture to a Fairy Tale* (Oscar Morawetz)  
   *Symphony No. 4* (Antonín Dvořák)  
   *Concerto for Orchestra* (Béla Bartók)

**14 August 1957**

Conductor: Geoffrey      *Passacaglia and Fugue* (Harry Somers)  
   Waddington      *Symphony No. 2* (Johannes Brahms)  
Soloist: John Boyden      *Let Us Garlands Bring* (Gerald Finizi)  
   *Symphony in D* (Walter Geiser)

**21 August 1957**

Conductor: Thomas Mayer      *Chaconne for Strings* (Henry Purcell)  
Soloist: Betty-Jean Hagen      *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* (William Walton)  
   *Sinfonia da Requiem* (Benjamin Britten)  
   *Pantomime* (Pierre Mercure)  
   *Firebird Suite* (Igor Stravinsky)

It is worth pausing here to examine this set of performances as they offer insight not just into challenges of the orchestra's programming policy, but it also reveals how Canadian compositions were situated and received within that context. A press release from 27 May 1957 speaks to the first point; it announced "Each concert will feature a

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<sup>263</sup> Additionally, the 1957 festival also featured the first North American appearance of Britten's English Opera Group. The composer himself conducted performances of *The Turn of the Screw* (August 28) and gave two recitals with his long-time partner and accompanist Peter Pears (August 24, 31). See concert program in LAC, Terence Gibbs fonds, R14460-0-7-F, MUS 36/1/6 - 1973-8, CBC Symphony Orchestra Scrapbook, part 2.

major work as well as a composition by a Canadian composer.”<sup>264</sup> As discussed above, the CBC SO had already broken the mould which had generally relegated Canadian works (if they appeared at all) on traditional programs to the short opening slot. However, the rhetoric used in the press release—written by the Stratford Festival promoters, not the CBC—suggests that works by Canadians were still publicly perceived as peripheral to music from the United Kingdom, Europe and the United States. In other words, Canadian works were special features, standing on their Canadian status rather than their musical merit.

The fact that this perception still prevailed in the 1950s is not surprising. However, it is notable here that the CBC SO did not use the international festival as an opportunity to demonstrate that “major” and “Canadian” works were not mutually exclusive. Rather, the emphasis quite clearly was on the *performers*—the orchestra as a whole, the four conductors and the three soloists. While reviews of the four concerts generally glossed over the Canadian compositions, the performers received largely positive testimonies. In two reviews of the final concert on 21 August, for example, Betty-Jean Hagen’s performance of Walton’s Violin Concerto—composed less than twenty years earlier—took centre stage. Ross Parmenter wrote in the *New York Times* that Hagen’s interpretation was “both lyrical and expert, and she had all the bravura needed for the quick movements.”<sup>265</sup> Of Mercure’s *Pantomime*, he politely noted it a “well-knit piece, by turns songful and infectiously rhythmic. It’s underlying mood was

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<sup>264</sup> Stratford Shakespearean Festival, Music Release #8, 27 May 1957 LAC, Terence Gibbs fonds, R14460–0–7–F, MUS 36/1/6 - 1973–8, CBC Symphony Orchestra Scrapbook, part 2.

<sup>265</sup> Ross Parmenter, “Music: CBC Symphony: Canadian Orchestra Plays at Stratford,” *New York Times*, 22 August 1957, 24.

plaintive, but it also had a nice quality of wry and lively humour.”<sup>266</sup> Reviewing the same concert in the *Globe and Mail*, John Kraglund wrote wryly that “*Pantomime* was the pleasant title that represented Canadian music on this program. It is scored for winds and tympani with a sparse angularity that was reminiscent of the mime of Marcel Marceau.”<sup>267</sup> Conversely, Hagan’s performance impressed Kraglund, who said “her interpretation...was notable for its assurance, purity and richness of tone, penetration and technical virtuosity.”<sup>268</sup> However, as George Kidd pointed out in the *Toronto Telegram*, the CBC SO’s ambitious policies—particularly the effort to perform non-standard concert repertoire with a different conductor each performance—negatively impacted the overall result. Of the August 21 performance, he observed

Mr. Mayer’s conducting throughout was strong and sure, but the program in cold print was almost impossible, and with only seven hours of rehearsal time the orchestral side of the picture was dimmed. The bright Miss Hagan was heard in William Walton’s concerto, and it was her assurance that frequently carried an obviously nervous orchestra through the three movements.<sup>269</sup>

## **5.5 On the World’s Stage: The 1961 Inter-American Music Festival and the United Nations**

The immense challenge of cycling such challenging repertoire so rapidly made international headlines in 1961, when the CBC SO made its only appearance at the Inter-American Music Festival in Washington, D.C from 22–30 April.<sup>270</sup> The festival was one

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<sup>266</sup> Ibid.

<sup>267</sup> John Kraglund, “Music in Stratford,” *Globe and Mail*, 22 August 1957, 29.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid.

<sup>269</sup> George Kidd, “Stratford Music: Betty-Jean Hagen Provides Strength,” *Telegram* (Toronto), 22 August 1957, np, newspaper clipping consulted in LAC, Terence Gibbs fonds, R14460–0–7–F, MUS 36/1/6 - 1973–8, CBC Symphony Orchestra Scrapbook, part 2.

<sup>270</sup> According to a letter from John Weinzwieg to CBC President Alphonse Ouimet in May 1961, the invitation to perform at the Inter-American festival stemmed from the CBC SO’s performances during the 1960 International Conference of Composers, which was jointly held at Stratford with that year’s

of six held in Washington between 1958–1974 that were organized by the Pan American Union’s head of music, Guillermo Espinosa (1905–1990). Espinosa was a staunch and outspoken supporter of twentieth-century art music, and particularly avant-garde Latin American music. The first three Inter-American festivals (1958, 1961 and 1965) featured numerous serial works by living composers from across North and South America. According to Alison Payne, serial music in particular was praised as “emblematic of an inter-American sound, and...this avant-garde soundscape [was promoted] as a way to strengthen the bonds among the American Republics.”<sup>271</sup>

Representing Canada in its first engagement outside of the country, the CBC SO was one of four orchestras from North and South America which congregated in Washington for a total of twelve concerts between 22–30 April 1960.<sup>272</sup> In keeping with the collaborative spirit of the festival, the orchestra programmed two works by South American composers alongside four Canadian works:

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Shakespearean Festival. In Weinzwieg’s view, those performances “made a tremendous impression on the visiting composers from 20 countries...[and] one result of the conference was an invitation to the CBC and, consequently, a first presentation of a Canadian orchestra in Washington on April 23rd As I was present on this occasion for the performance of my “Wine of Peace”, I can attest to the excellent reception accorded the orchestra. Our reputation in the world of music was substantially increased. In fact, the trip was worth more than a dozen ambassadors!” See letter from John Weinzwieg to Alphone Ouimet, 12 May 1961, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6–4–6, part 2, 1958–1961 (CBC Symphony Orchestra).

<sup>271</sup> According to Alyson Payne, there was a conspicuous absence of works written in traditional folk idioms—happily, to many participants evidently, who observed the “total absence of the old, usual type of third-rate Latin-American music (so poignantly labeled as ‘music of Rum and Coca-Cola’) which for many years has been presented as the genuine representation of Latin-America’s national soul.” See Alyson Payne, “The 1964 Festival of Music of the Americas and Spain: A Critical Examination of Ibero-American Musical Relations in the Context of Cold War Politics” (PhD diss., University of California Riverside, 2012), 2, 113.

<sup>272</sup> CBC Radio Information Services, “Inter-American Music Festival: CBC Symphony to Play in Washington,” Press Release, Number 76, 12 April 1961, LAC, Terence Gibbs fonds, R14460–0–7–F, MUS 36/1/6 - 1973–8, CBC Symphony Orchestra Scrapbook, part 4. Other orchestras that performed included Washington’s National Symphony, the Eastman Philharmonic from Rochester and the Orquesta Sinfonia Nacional from Mexico City.

**Inter-American Music Festival**  
**Cramton Auditorium, Washington, D.C.**  
**23 April 1961**  
Conductor: Geoffrey Waddington

Antonio Tauriello - *Obertura Sinfonica* (First US Performance)  
Gustavo Becerra - Piano Concerto (soloist: Mario Miranda; World Premiere)  
Murray Adaskin - *Serenade concertante*  
Francois Morel - *Esquisse* (World Premiere)  
Harry Somers - *Passacaglia and Fugue* (First US Performance)  
———*Intermission*———  
John Weinzwieg - *Wine of Peace* (soloist: Mary Simmons; First US Performance)  
Harry Freedman - Symphony No. 1 (World Premiere)

On an ambitious program which included two world premieres and three United States premieres, the CBC SO inadvertently caused a public stir when it abridged the world premiere of Chilean composer Gustavo Becerra's Piano Concerto. Due either to the difficulty (or perhaps unviability) of the work, a lack of adequate rehearsal time or, more likely, a combination of both, Waddington elected to skip performing the Finale of the concerto and replaced it instead with Murray Adaskin's *Serenade concertante*. The orchestra immediately faced backlash for this decision. Espinosa, a fierce proponent of modernism, was reportedly furious by the substitution with what he reportedly dubbed "tea room music."<sup>273</sup> The *Washington Star* called the decision "an astonishing lapse of judgement" which "served the talented Chilean composer poorly. If the whole work was not ready for public presentation, it should have been wholly omitted. Leaving out the finale was perfectly absurd."<sup>274</sup> In truth, Waddington left the decision to soloist Mario Miranda, who "being a friend of and countryman of the composer...felt that two-thirds of

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<sup>273</sup> Ross Parmenter, "Music: New Latin Furor; Canadian Players Drop part of Chilean's Work," *New York Times*, 24 April 1961, 38.

<sup>274</sup> L.L., "Weinzweig Best of Canadians," *Washington Star*, 24 April 1961, np, newspaper clipping consulted in LAC, Terence Gibbs fonds, R14460-0-7-F, MUS 36/1/6 - 1973-8, CBC Symphony Orchestra Scrapbook, part 4.

a hearing would be better than none.”<sup>275</sup> Paul Hume, the *Washington Post*’s chief music critic, flatly declared that Adaskin’s *Serenade* “would have been better left out, since it is no more than a piece of shallow dinner music totally out of place in such a festival as this.”<sup>276</sup> Conversely, Ross Parmenter in the *New York Times* took a more conciliatory perspective, reporting that

The Canadian ensemble proved to be an excellent one, so no one took very seriously the whispered charges that the Chilean piano concerto was too difficult for it to master. On the one hand, there were rumours that the finale in question, marked *presto furioso*, was unplayable. Certainly the first two movements of the Bacarra work did not inspire confidence.<sup>277</sup>

While certainly not an unqualified success, the CBC SO’s first public international performance nevertheless impressed upon foreign audiences the ambitious music being produced in Canada. Despite panning Adaskin and Morel’s works—the latter of which he claimed was “hardly more noteworthy” than Adaskin’s—Paul Hume was impressed by Somers’ *Passacaglia*, Weinzwieg’s *Wine of Peace* and Freedman’s Symphony No. 1. In his opinion, “Some sense of the real strength of Canada’s composers emerged for the first time in a *Passacaglia* and *Fugue* by Somers. It is solidly devised, and while it has something of the turgidity that often muddies up a contemporary orchestral *fugue*, it also has a real sence [sic] of architecture that builds to an imposing climax.”<sup>278</sup> In the *Washington Star*, *Wine of Peace* was called “an imaginative and sensitive setting

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<sup>275</sup> Parmenter, “Music: New Latin Furor,” 38.

<sup>276</sup> Paul Hume, “Music of Canadian Glitters at Inter American Festival,” *Washington Post*, 24 April 1961, A16.

<sup>277</sup> Parmenter, “Music: New Latin Furor,” 38. Milton Berliner, in the *Washington Daily News*, was likewise equivocal towards Bacarra’s Concerto, which he “found rather fussing in a rambling sort of way.” See Milton Berliner, “More World Premieres,” *Washington Daily News*, 24 April 1961, np, newspaper clipping consulted in LAC, Terence Gibbs fonds, R14460–0–7–F, MUS 36/1/6 - 1973–8, CBC Symphony Orchestra Scrapbook, part 4.

<sup>278</sup> Hume, “Music of Canadian Glitters,” A16.



of two lovely poems, unrelated except in mood but united in a fascinating marriage through the sorcery of music.”<sup>279</sup> Hume’s colleague at the *Washington Post*, Milton Berliner, found Somers’ piece only “mildly interesting,” but Freedman’s Symphony in particular made a “strong impression .... [as the composer] writes with clarity and conservatism that restores melodic line to its proper place. The closing Soliloquy movement was particularly eloquent.”<sup>280</sup>

In addition to the two world premieres, all of the Canadian music on the program had been CBC premieres at one point or another. *Passacaglia and Fugue*, one of Somers’ most enduring orchestral works, was composed upon request by Gibbs for the CBC SO, who premiered it in 1954.<sup>281</sup> *Wine of Peace* was first performed by the CBC SO in Toronto on 24 March 1958, with Walter Susskind conducting and the American-born soprano Mary Simmons performing the solo voice part. Two years later, Susskind, Simmons and the CBC SO performed the work again during the International Conference of Composers held during the Stratford Shakespeare Festival in August 1960. Murray Adaskin’s *Serenade concertante* received its first performance by John Avison and the CBC Vancouver Chamber Orchestra in 1954. Despite the hostile reception of its neoclassic and tonal character at the Inter-American Festival, *Serenade concertante* became one of Adaskin’s most popular orchestral compositions. The CBC SO had previously performed it on 19 February 1960 with the composer at the helm. Prior to that, the Hungarian conductor Tibor Paul gave the work an international hearing in October 1959 when he performed it alongside Schubert’s Symphony in C Major with Ireland’s

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<sup>279</sup> L.L., “Weinzweig Best of Canadians,” np.

<sup>280</sup> Berliner, “More World Premieres,” np.

<sup>281</sup> Lee Alfred Hepner, “An Analytical Study of Selected Canadian Orchestral Compositions at the Mid-Twentieth Century” (PhD diss., New York University, 1971), 88.

Radio Éireen Symphony Orchestra (now the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra).<sup>282</sup>

Furthermore, according to research by Robert Fraser, *Serenade concertante* would eventually receive at least nine performances between 1980–2005—not an insignificant number considering the overall rarity of Canadian works on orchestral programs and the vast Canadian repertoire which existed by that time.<sup>283</sup>

Five months after the Inter-American Festival, the CBC SO returned to the United States, this time for consecutive performances in Washington, D.C., and New York City. Upon a joint invitation from President John F. Kennedy, First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy (neither of whom ultimately attended the performance) as well as Canadian Ambassador to the United States Arnold Heaney and his wife, the orchestra performed a benefit concert at the Department of State Auditorium for the United States Committee for the United Nations on 23 October. Among other benefits, Canadian diplomats in Washington viewed the CBC SO's return to Washington as an opportunity to rectify lingering feelings about the Baccara concerto controversy earlier that year, writing that “it would remove any doubts that might have been left following their performance at [the] InterAmerican Music Festival last April and clear up any misconceptions about [the] orchestra's ability.”<sup>284</sup> For the occasion Geoffrey Waddington conducted the orchestra, and the American pianist Van Cliburn was engaged to appear with the orchestra:

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<sup>282</sup> Canadian Embassy, Ireland, to the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, 29 Oct 1959, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6–4–6, part 2, 1958–1961 (CBC Symphony Orchestra).

<sup>283</sup> Robert John Fraser, “The Programming of Orchestral Music by Canadian Composers, 1980–2005” (M.A. thesis, University of Victoria, 2008), 18.

<sup>284</sup> Telegram of unclear origin distributed by the Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, 27 July 1961, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6–4–6, part 2, 1958–1961 (CBC Symphony Orchestra).

**23 October 1961**

**The Department of State Auditorium, Washington D.C.**

Conductor: Geoffrey Waddington

Soloist: Van Cliburn

*Prometheus Overture* (Beethoven)

*Marcia Funebre* from Symphony No. 3 in E-flat, “Eroica” (Beethoven)

Symphony No. 2 (Brahms)

—*Intermission*—

Solo selections (Selected by Van Cliburn)

*Don Juan* (Strauss)

Fanfare about the event in the local press was minimal; even the *Washington Post* spent most of its review discussing the evening attire of the event’s distinguished guests.<sup>285</sup> Moreover, there does not seem to have been any collaboration between the orchestra and their guest soloist. According to the *Windsor Star*, the CBC SO ended its set with Brahms’ Second Symphony, and following the intermission Van Cliburn performed Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto in its entirety, oddly, on his own.<sup>286</sup>

The following day, on 24 October 1961 the CBC SO travelled to New York City to perform for the General Assembly of the United Nations. Among CBC executives, the chance to perform before the UN’s General Assembly was an invaluable opportunity to solidify Canada’s cultural standard before the world. In 1954 it became an annual tradition to mark the 24<sup>th</sup> of October—the day the U.N Charter was ratified in 1945—with a concert (a tradition that continues to this day).<sup>287</sup> Charles Jennings pointed out that during the previous year’s ceremonies, the Boston Symphony’s performance was “an international affair linking three Continents [as the recording] is provided to U.N.

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<sup>285</sup> Dorothy McCardle, “Concert Salutes Hammarskjold,” *Washington Post*, 25 October 1961, C1.

<sup>286</sup> “U.N. Value Played by C.B.C. Orchestra,” *Windsor Star*, 24 October 1961, 11.

<sup>287</sup> United Nations, “United Nations Day, 24 October,” <https://www.un.org/en/observances/un-day>, accessed 4 July 2022.

Members on tape if they are not linked together during the live performance.”<sup>288</sup> The performance had been broadcast via UN Radio’s shortwave service—typically reserved for covering UN meetings—to Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America, and transcriptions were provided to other broadcasting organizations across the world.<sup>289</sup> For the occasion, CBC producers insisted that “if the concert is to be a picture fully representative of the musical life of Canada, it must be with a programme which contains both a sample of the music our composers write as well as a demonstration of the quality of our performers; members of the orchestra, soloists and conductor.”<sup>290</sup> Ernest MacMillan was flown to New York to lead the orchestra in a program which opened with *Fall Fair*, a short, jubilant piece for full orchestra commissioned from Godfrey Ridout specifically for the important day:

#### **24 October 1961**

**General Assembly Hall of the United Nations, New York City**

Conductor: Sir Ernest MacMillan

*Fall Fair* (Godfrey Ridout)

*Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* (Vaughan Williams)

*French Suite, after Rameau* (Werner Egk)

Symphony No. 1 (Brahms)

### **5.6 Renewed Commitment to New Music, 1961–1962**

During the CBC SO’s eighth season, in November 1960, the CBC commissioned an internal review of its content from Peter Garvie. After studying the Corporation’s

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<sup>288</sup> E.S. Hallman to Controller of Broadcasting, 24 April 1959, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6–4–6, part 2, 1958–1961 (CBC Symphony Orchestra).

<sup>289</sup> CBC Newsletter, “CBC Shines in U.N. Concerts,” *Inside* 3/3, 17 November 1961, consulted in LAC, Terence Gibbs fonds, R14460–0–7–F, MUS 36/1/6 - 1973–8, CBC Symphony Orchestra Scrapbook, part 4.

<sup>290</sup> Roy Royal to Charles Jennings, 27 Nov 1959, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6–4–6, part 2, 1958–1961 (CBC Symphony Orchestra).

musical schedule in detail, he concluded that “generally the repertoire on the air must be extended backward from Bach and forward from Debussy. More imaginative presentation is badly needed, and series must be more than the sum of their programs.”<sup>291</sup> On the CBC SO specifically, Garvie flatly stated that “I do not think its reputation is as high today as it was in the first two seasons. The repertoire has become dull and conventional.”<sup>292</sup> For example, from 20 November–20 December 1959 the CBC SO had presented a complete weekly cycle of Beethoven’s nine symphonies under the baton of the Russian-American conductor, Efrem Kurtz (1900–1995). Although the cycle was well received, Garvie believed that such projects had led the orchestra to stray from its mandate.<sup>293</sup> “Do not exclude Beethoven and Brahms,” he conceded, “but do not build monuments for the sake of having something big to show—and in this case we did not even have the excuse of the cycle being a Canadian’s Beethoven. By and large the community symphony orchestras will give us our standard 19<sup>th</sup> century repertoire. We should be aiming at something less standard, or the standard works only in performances that an outside orchestra cannot appeal.”<sup>294</sup> A catalogue of the repertoire performed by the orchestra from 1952–1956 is reproduced in Appendix A.

CBC producers evidently took this advice to heart, for when it came time to begin planning the CBC SO’s tenth season, Bruce Raymond reported that at a recent council meeting “it has been agreed that the CBC Symphony [should] concentrate upon Canadian

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<sup>291</sup> Peter Garvie, “Music on C.B.C.,” unpublished report, 23 November 1960, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 868, PG6–1–1, part 1, “Music Programs - General Correspondence, 1958–1968.”

<sup>292</sup> Ibid.

<sup>293</sup> John Beckwith called the final performance, of the Ninth Symphony, an “altogether ... engrossing musical experience well climaxing what seems to have been Toronto’s first integral presentation of the nine Beethoven symphonies.” See John Beckwith, “Ninth ‘Logically Complete’: Deserved Ovation for Symphony,” *Toronto Daily Star*, 21 Dec 1959.

<sup>294</sup> Peter Garvie, “Music on C.B.C.,” unpublished internal report, 23 November 1960, LAC, CBC fonds, Volume 868, PG6–1–1, “Music Programs - General Correspondence.”

music and composers and that body of symphonic music not found elsewhere in our [schedule].”<sup>295</sup> The 1961–1962 season, which was dubbed the “Festival of Contemporary Music,” included at least one twentieth century work on each program. Canadian composers were represented on approximately half of the programs.<sup>296</sup> In the face of criticism about the waning vitality of the orchestra’s repertoire, the season represented a clear reaffirmation by Gibbs and Waddington of the CBC SO’s original mandate. On 18 February 1962, for example, Geoffrey Waddington conducted an all-Canadian program which opened with the world premiere of Harry Somers’ *Five Concepts for Orchestra*, and concluded with Harry Freedman’s Symphony No. 1.<sup>297</sup> The latter received its Canadian performance debut following the orchestra’s premiere of it in Washington the previous year, a small but significant effort to ensure new Canadian works were not relegated to the archive after a single performance.

The 1961–62 season also included what was arguably the CBC SO’s most high-profile engagement to date: a public concert at Massey Hall in Toronto on 29 April 1962 featuring works by Schoenberg and Stravinsky, conducted by the Stravinsky himself and his protégé, Robert Craft:

**29 April 1962**

**Massey Hall, Toronto**

CBC Symphony Orchestra & The Festival Singers

First Half (cond. Robert Craft)

*God Save the Queen*

Prelude to ‘Genesis’ Suite (Schoenberg)

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<sup>295</sup> Telegram from B. Raymond to H. C. Walker, 19 April 1961, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6–4–6, part 2, 1958–1961 (CBC Symphony Orchestra).

<sup>296</sup> Unpublished CBC SO program schedule, issued by Terence R. Gibbs, 30 January 1962 LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6–4–6, part 2, 1958–1961 (CBC Symphony Orchestra).

<sup>297</sup> Gibbs’ typed season schedule from 30 January 1962 lists Somers’ work as titled *Essays for Orchestra*. See unpublished CBC SO program schedule, issued by Terence R. Gibbs, 30 January 1962 LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6–4–6, part 2, 1958–1961 (CBC Symphony Orchestra).

*A Survivor from Warsaw*, narrator John Horton (Schoenberg)  
– Canadian Premiere

Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, soloist Israel Baker (Schoenberg)  
– Canadian Premiere

—*Intermission*—

Second Half (cond. Igor Stravinsky)

*Eight Instrumental Miniatures* (Stravinsky)  
– World Premiere

*Anthem ‘The Dove Descending Breaks the Air’* (Stravinsky)  
– World Broadcast Premiere

*A Sermon, A Narrative, and a Prayer* (Stravinsky), alto soloist Shirley Verrett-Carter  
– North American Premiere

The concert was one of three parts of a project by the CBC to celebrate Stravinsky’s eightieth birthday, which also included a radio documentary, “Stravinsky: Inventor of Music,” and a television documentary entitled “Stravinsky at 80.”<sup>298</sup> As Kimberly Francis has shown, however, the Stravinsky venture was part of a broader attempt to demonstrate to the world that Toronto had become a vital centre for twentieth-century music:

For the CBC, the events of 1962 were as much about celebrating Stravinsky’s monumental importance to the field of twentieth-century music as they were about forging a specifically nationalistic narrative: one that touted the immense talent of Canadian performers and the quality of Toronto’s music-loving public. The purpose of this narrative was to raise the city’s reputation internationally.<sup>299</sup>

Stravinsky was so taken by the orchestra’s performances in both the television documentary and the public concert that he and Craft returned the following year to

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<sup>298</sup> There is regrettably no meaningful documentation in the CBC fonds at LAC pertaining specifically to the CBC SO’s role in the project.

<sup>299</sup> Kimberly Francis, “Stravinsky’s new world: John P.L. Roberts brings Stravinsky to Toronto, 1961–1962,” in *John P.L. Roberts, the CBC/Radio Canada, and Art Music*, eds. Friedemann Sallis and Regina Landwehr (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2020), 239. John Roberts describes his personal experience organizing the Stravinsky sessions in John P.L. Roberts, “Stravinsky and the CBC,” *The Canada Music Book/Les Cahiers canadiens de musique* 4 (Spring-Summer 1972): 33–56.

produce commercial recordings of his *Symphony of Psalms* and *Symphony in C*, which were released on Columbia Records in February 1964.<sup>300</sup>

## 5.7 A Troubled Policy: The Issue of a Permanent Conductor

The absence of a permanent conductor remained a point of discussion for much of the CBC SO's life. In February 1959, Ira Dilworth distributed an evaluation of the CBC SO's programs which he had completed the previous month. On the question of installing a permanent conductor, Dilworth agreed that "it would be difficult to find a man equal to the task who was willing to devote his whole time to it."<sup>301</sup> At the same time, however, he was adamant that using different conductors for nearly every program was not necessarily a hindrance, pointing out that "it can be argued that every new conductor that comes to the Symphony presents a fresh challenge to them."<sup>302</sup> Terence Gibbs expressed similar reservations about the question of a permanent conductor. In a five-year plan he proposed in November 1959, Gibbs noted that even if they wished to appoint a permanent conductor, there were no viable candidates to handle the intensive load put on by the orchestra's atypical programs:

Our most pressing problem is that of conductors. It is unfortunate, but nonetheless true, that although we have a number of good conductors available to us, we have none at the moment who have the very special qualifications required not only to bring out the finest qualities of the orchestra but to inspire the public and, at the same time, to contribute to the growth and development in technical skill of the orchestra itself.<sup>303</sup>

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<sup>300</sup> Igor Stravinsky, Stravinsky Conducts *Symphony of Psalms*, *Symphony in C*, Columbia Masterworks, MS 6548, LP.

<sup>301</sup> Ira Dilworth, "Program Evaluation - National - CBC Symphony - January 18," 6 February 1959, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6-4-6, part 2, 1958-1961 (CBC Symphony Orchestra).

<sup>302</sup> Ibid.

<sup>303</sup> Gibbs was not just concerned with a current lack of suitable conductors, but with the lack of prospective



One young conductor who was certainly up to the demands of the repertoire and appeared numerous times with the CBC SO was Victor Feldbrill.<sup>304</sup> On 6 January 1957 Feldbrill led the CBC SO in a rare public performance at the staff auditorium of the Confederation Life Association building in Toronto. The program featured two works composed in the late 1930s: Alan Hovhaness' First Symphony, "The Exile" (1936), and Paul Hindemith's *Symphonic Dances* (1937). In the words of the *Globe and Mail*'s chief music critic John Kraglund, the program "appeared more foreboding on paper than it proved to be in execution," with special attention paid to Hovhaness' work because the composer was in attendance. In his opinion, the "challenge of contemporary work brings out the [CBC Orchestra's] technical skill and musicianship to a remarkable degree." Although Kraglund felt that overall Feldbrill "occasionally lost sight of emotional content," this could "at least, in part, be forgiven, for he made an engrossing experience of the Hovhaness Symphony with its contrast of solo and full orchestral passages, and the many climaxes in the Hindemith Dances were skillfully realized."<sup>305</sup>

According to Walter Pitman, it was a performance with the CBC SO that created opportunity for Feldbrill in Great Britain and, consequently, a lasting relationship with the BBC. His talents were brought to the attention of David Cox, the BBC's head of

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young candidates for such a position in the future. "It is even more depressing to find," he wrote, "that there is little evidence of a younger generation of conductors developing who will be able to be called upon in the future." He suggested that the Canada Council might remedy the situation by making funds available to Symphony Societies in Canada to employ assistant conductors, thus "[encouraging] and [ensuring] a continuing supply of conductors." Internal memo from Terence Gibbs to undefined recipients, 27 Nov 1959, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6-4-6, part 2, 1958-1961 (CBC Symphony Orchestra).

<sup>304</sup> Feldbrill's first major conducting engagement took place when he was eighteen, after Ernest MacMillan invited him to lead the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. He later studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London upon a recommendation from Adrian Boult. See concert program, "Feldbrill Conducting CBCSO," 6 Jan 1957, LAC, Terence Gibbs fonds, R14460-0-7-F, MUS 36/1/6 - 1973-8, CBC Symphony Orchestra Scrapbook, part 3.

<sup>305</sup> John Kraglund, "Music in Toronto: CBC Symphony," *Globe and Mail*, 7 January 1958, 8.

serious music for its overseas division, after Cox heard the Canadian conduct Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra with the CBC SO. According to Pitman, Cox was "surprised to learn that in Canada Victor had prepared the orchestra in but three sessions, a fraction of the time that a BBC Orchestra had devoted to its rehearsal."<sup>306</sup> Due at least in part to this opportunity that the CBC SO had provided him, Feldbrill became an annual featured guest of the BBC from the 1950s to the 1980s with many of the BBC's orchestras.<sup>307</sup> More importantly, his opportunity with the CBC SO contributed to establishing Feldbrill as one of Canada's leading conductors, a position he would use for the rest of his career to champion Canadian music. For example, Feldbrill told me during a private interview in 2016 that, as conductor of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra from 1958–1968, he insisted on performing at least one twentieth-century work per concert, with at least half of them by Canadians.<sup>308</sup>

## **5.8 The Dismantling of the CBC SO in 1964**

In early 1964, the CBC announced that it would be suspending the CBC SO's performances for the upcoming 1964–1965 season, and the Corporation would instead use the TSO for future orchestral broadcasts. CBC Program Director Bruce Raymond laid out the complicated reasons for merger in a memo now held in the CBC fonds at LAC. In summary, the Corporation believed that the CBC SO had reached a performance level on par with the most respected North American orchestras. As such, the logical next step for the orchestra was an expansion of its repertoire and activities (extended tours abroad, for

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<sup>306</sup> Walter Pitman, *Victor Feldbrill: Canadian Conductor Extraordinaire* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2010), 157–158.

<sup>307</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>308</sup> Victor Feldbrill, private interview with author, 19 June 2016.

example). However, because eighty percent of the CBC SO was comprised of players from TSO, this would inevitably mean greater interference with TSO events.

Furthermore, the CBC was forbidden by the American Federation of Musicians' constitution from importing players to Toronto strictly for broadcasting purposes.<sup>309</sup> As such, Toronto was "in the anomalous position of having two very good orchestras, each inhibited from becoming truly first class through conflict of working schedules."<sup>310</sup> It was therefore decided to halt all CBC SO performances for one year with the hope that the TSO could collect all of the top symphonic instrumentalists in Toronto and elevate its capabilities beyond those of either orchestra at that current time.<sup>311</sup> For example, the CBC SO's concertmaster, Albert Pratz, was one of the players who did not perform in both orchestras. The TSO's director, Walter Susskin, had already made it clear in March 1960 that he considered Pratz one of the finest violinists in Toronto. The addition of Pratz and one or two of his CBC SO colleagues was, in Susskind's opinion, the solution to weaknesses in the TSO's string section.<sup>312</sup>

Looking back at the transition from a broader historical context, I would reasonably speculate that there were other contributing factors to the orchestra's demise. The lack of a permanent conductor certainly may have eased the pathway to dismantling the CBC SO. Bruce Raymond seems subtly to have implied as much in his above-cited memo when he wrote of expanding the orchestra's activities so that "its members would become increasingly proficient at playing in ensemble and therefore become a more

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<sup>309</sup> I was not able to locate a copy of the AFM's Constitution to verify Raymond's claim.

<sup>310</sup> Bruce Raymond to H.G. Walker, 3 March 1964, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6-4-4, part 3, 1961-1967 (CBC Symphony Orchestra).

<sup>311</sup> Ibid. In the event the "top flight orchestra" failed to materialize, the CBC SO would be then be reactivated.

<sup>312</sup> Warren, *Begins with Oboe*, 69.

cohesive unit.”<sup>313</sup> Raymond was undoubtedly referring to the close artistic relationship that an orchestra develops with a long-term director. From a different angle, however, the absence of firm leader to lobby on behalf of the orchestra perhaps left the CBC SO more vulnerable to corporate policies than an orchestra with a personally-invested leader.<sup>314</sup> Furthermore, there is also a question of how involved the orchestra’s founders—Gibbs and Waddington—remained in the 1960s. Gibbs’ name is absent from any correspondence pertaining to the orchestra after 1962, the year he was assigned to produce other CBC radio programs.<sup>315</sup> Of Waddington, I was personally told by John Peter Lee Roberts (who worked with him in the 1960s) that Waddington dealt with serious health and personal issues during his final years, which affected his ability to effectively direct the orchestra’s operations. If so, by 1964 the CBC SO was thus a ship without a captain, and the decision to suspend (and ultimately cancel) operations would have been met with no significant pushback from within its ranks.

However, another contributing factor may also have been the leadership change which took place within the TSO years earlier. At the end of the 1956 season, Ernest MacMillan, conductor of the TSO since 1931, retired from his position as principal conductor. Although Canadian works sporadically appeared on TSO programs during the 1940s, MacMillan’s programs were noted for their British conservatism. This was

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<sup>313</sup> Bruce Raymond to H.G. Walker, 3 March 1964, LAC, CBC fonds, RG41, vol. 870, PG6–4–4, part 3, 1961–1967 (CBC Symphony Orchestra).

<sup>314</sup> After all, the CBC Vancouver Chamber Orchestra (later known as the CBC Radio Orchestra), lasted seventy years under a succession of highly-respected conductors, beginning with Jon Avison in 1938.

<sup>315</sup> In his own fonds at LAC, the most recent artifact in Gibbs’ five scrapbooks on the CBC SO is a newspaper snippet from the Toronto Daily Star, dated 12 May 1962. The article was a review of Stravinsky’s performance with the orchestra two weeks earlier, on 29 April. See LAC, Terence Gibbs fonds, MUS36/1/7 - 1973–8, CBC Symphony Orchestra Scrapbook, part 5. See also “Terence Gibbs,” *Canadian Encyclopedia*, accessed 15 February 2022, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/terence-gibbs-emc>.

observed in a survey of Toronto's music scene published in Britain in 1950. A music writer named Joyce Atkins compared the TSO's repertoire to that which one might find in a "provincial town in England—Beethoven, Brahms and Mozart predominating, with compositions (not without interest) by modern Canadian composers, and occasionally modern British composers," but that "one rarely finds anything which might be called 'adventurous.'"<sup>316</sup> Atkins does not name specific modern composers, but one can reasonably speculate that they included MacMillan's colleagues in Toronto's musical leadership. These included Healey Willan, Leo Smith and Arnold Walter, who were in fact "openly hostile to the new music of the twentieth century and dismissed the young modernists [such as Weinzwieg and Pentland] as ultra-radicals."<sup>317</sup>

Conversely, MacMillan's successor, Walter Susskind, was receptive to modern music. In nine seasons with the TSO (1956–1965), Susskind introduced no less than twenty-seven new or uncommon works to the TSO's repertoire.<sup>318</sup> This included music by Schoenberg, Webern and Luciano Berio, as well as the Toronto premiere of *Sacre du printemps*.<sup>319</sup> Furthermore, Susskind was well-known to the CBC, as he appeared numerous times at the helm of the CBC SO and in other radio productions. It is therefore possible that by 1964 the CBC realized the need for a second orchestra in Toronto had become less urgent, if not exactly redundant. The TSO's ambitious Canadian premiere of Messiaen's *Turangalîa-Symphony* on November 8, 1964 offers evidence of this new

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<sup>316</sup> Joyce Atkins, "Music in Toronto," in *Music 1950*, ed. Ralph Hill (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1950), 135.

<sup>317</sup> Regina Landwehr and Friedemann Sallis, "Introduction," in *John P.L. Roberts, the CBC/Radio Canada, and Art Music*, eds. Friedemann Sallis and Regina Landwehr (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2020), 8.

<sup>318</sup> Toronto Symphony Orchestra, "Meet the Maestros: A 100-Year TSO Timeline," accessed 23 May 2023, <https://www.tso.ca/concerts-and-events/meet-the-maestros-a-100-year-tso-timeline>.

<sup>319</sup> John Beckwith and Clifford Ford, "Susskind, Walter," *Canadian Encyclopedia*, accessed 23 May 2023, <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/toronto-symphony-orchestra-emc>.

collaboration. The concert, which featured Jean-Marie Beaudet conducting and Gilles Tremblay on Ondes Martenot, was commissioned by John P.L. Roberts for a CBC broadcast presentation entitled *Concerts from two Worlds*.<sup>320</sup>

## 5.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have attempted to show how the CBC SO functioned as a vehicle for the performance of new music, as well as the attempts made by its producers to normalize the performance of Canadian music within the context of traditional orchestral programs. Further research is sorely needed to delve into the ultimate legacy of these policies. Within the limitations of this dissertation, I have instead outlined an evolution of the orchestra's policies over its twelve-year lifespan in order to provide the framework for a better understanding of how the Corporation's vision of a national orchestra would serve both Canadian musicians and Canadian music culture on an international scale. The CBC SO began ostensibly as the Corporation's response to the BBC Symphony Orchestra—a national orchestra of the highest order to showcase to the world the talent which Canada had cultivated. To a large extent, that ambition never waned. The idea that the CBC SO would actively patronize the production of new works by Canadian composers was not explicitly discussed nor even mentioned in early promotional literature. The emphasis was instead on performers and their ability to tackle music of all periods—and particularly music not usually found on the programs of traditional orchestras—under the novel direction of a new leader each week. As I have shown,

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<sup>320</sup> José Beaudet, “L’amour des ondes: Jean-Marie Beaudet and CBC/SRC,” in *John P.L. Roberts, the CBC/Radio Canada and Art Music*, eds. Friedemann Sallis and Regina Landwehr (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing), 63–64.

however, Terence Gibbs, Geoffrey Waddington and their colleagues quickly turned their attention to Canadian composers and the importance of building an audience for them. As

Waddington told Thomas Brown in 1961,

Many concert-goers in North America simply won't buy tickets to hear [contemporary or otherwise-unfamiliar] works performed. Yet, for any music to grow and develop, it must be played—in fact, it doesn't really exist until it *is* played. Today, as in the past, much worthwhile music is being written, both in Canada and elsewhere, and the CBC feels it has duty to present this music to the public.<sup>321</sup>

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<sup>321</sup> Thomas Brown, "The CBC Symphony Orchestra," *Performing Arts in Canada* 1/1 (March 1961): 30.

# Chapter 6

## Conclusion

### 6.1 Reprise: Why Radio Orchestras?

In this dissertation, I examined the historical origins of radio symphony orchestras and the context within which they developed. I identified the unique characteristics which distinguished them from traditional symphony orchestras. I also investigated their relationship with twentieth-century music, both as vehicles for its performance as well as commissioning agents for its creation. To establish a historical framework for my analysis, I selected three early radio symphony orchestras from three different countries, all of which were founded before the Second World War and have been the subject of published scholarship: the NBC Symphony Orchestra in the United States, the Frankfurter-Rundfunk-Sinfonie-Orchestra in Germany and the BBC Symphony Orchestra in Britain. My primary object of study, the CBC Symphony Orchestra in Toronto, presented a compelling research opportunity: it has been cited numerous times in passing as one of the most important conduits for orchestral composition in Canada during the twentieth century, but had not yet received in-depth scholarly attention.<sup>322</sup> In order to

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<sup>322</sup> See, for examples, George A. Proctor, *Canadian Music of the Twentieth Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980): 64; Gordana Lazarevich, *The Musical World of Frances James and Murray Adaskin* (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 147–148; John Roberts, “Communications Media,” in *Aspects of Music in Canada*, ed. Arnold Walter (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 179.



properly situate my analysis of the CBC SO within a broader historical scope, I first detailed the emergence of radio symphony orchestras in Canada, as well as the development of the CBC's commissioning policy up to the 1960s.

In the course of my research, I discovered that the aspects and features of radio symphony orchestras and utilitarian ensembles (such as ad hoc orchestras assembled to accompany dramatic presentations) were often hard to distinguish. The common denominator was of course a need for live music on broadcasts. However, different broadcasters had different motivations for forming symphony orchestras for the radio. The NBC Symphony Orchestra, for example, was created by a private corporation, and was from its inception a commercial enterprise. It was formed for the express purpose of enticing Arturo Toscanini to work for NBC, and was dismantled upon his retirement. In Germany, the state-funded Frankfurt-Rundfunk-Sinfonie began as a small, informal ensemble created out of a practical need for broadcast content, performing a wide range of music. Over the course of the 1920s, however, collaborations with composers such as Hindemith and Weill led the orchestra to engage with musical modernism before the aesthetic was condemned by the Nazis in 1933. In England, from the beginning of the 1920s BBC administrators believed it to be a matter of duty to build the finest symphony orchestra in London. For most of the 1920s, musician turnover and a lack of central direction led to inconsistent performance quality. This prevented the orchestra from achieving a firm identity and from achieving the goals that the administration had set for it. This changed in 1930, when the BBC Symphony Orchestra was formally established under the leadership of Adrian Boult.

As I discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, it is difficult to make blanket conclusions about early radio orchestras. From performing light music and art music, to accompanying theatrical productions and documentaries, radio orchestras were an indispensable part of radio programming in the 1920s and 1930s. While numerous orchestras continued to serve these various roles for the rest of the twentieth century, in the early 1930s the notion of a radio symphony orchestra—that is, a concert orchestra whose performance venue was the broadcasting studio—began to emerge. As the BBC Symphony Orchestra exemplified, these orchestras assumed an identity similar to their traditional counterparts, with similar instrumental configurations. Radio symphony orchestras were usually permanent ensembles with stable rosters, as opposed ad hoc orchestras assembled as needed from a pool of contracted musicians for individual performances. Ensembles with large memberships, such as the BBC Symphony, had the luxury of breaking themselves into smaller sub-ensembles depending on the work being performed. However, not all radio symphony orchestras were full-sized (approximately 70-plus members, according to traditional orchestral rosters). In fact, to the best of my knowledge, the only two full-sized North American radio symphony orchestras were the CBC SO and the NBC Symphony.

Performances by radio symphony orchestras were presented in traditional concert formats, if abbreviated to accommodate broadcast schedules. In adopting this format, broadcast administrators and their political masters were attempting to make the experience of the orchestral concert available to a much broader audience. Political motivations formed one distinguishing element behind the broadcasts of radio symphony orchestras, and indeed art music in general. Political and cultural leaders imbued these

performances with lofty educational value; to teach the general population the inherent beauty and sophistication of art music was to improve the moral and intellectual sophistication of that population. In an effort to make art music accessible to the general listener, programs were punctuated by professional commentary that described the music in terms which the layperson could understand.

By the 1950s, however, many radio symphony orchestras had carved out a unique place for themselves through the repertoire that they performed. This was particularly the case for the orchestras run by public broadcasting companies, such as those in Britain, Canada and Germany. Unlike most traditional symphony orchestras, these radio symphony orchestras were not required to rely on ticket sales, seat subscriptions or other traditional means of funding. As a result, those in charge of programs had more freedom to explore repertoire which might not otherwise attract a paying audience. As early as the 1930s, the BBC Symphony made twentieth-century music the exclusive focus of its Friday night concert series. Additionally, works by Stravinsky, Schoenberg and others were included in the orchestra's Wednesday night public performances, given live in front of an audience from Queen's Hall. In Germany, the technology of radio influenced the creation of music specifically composed for radio broadcast, of which *Der Lindberghflug* was a significant example.

In Canada, the CBC SO was established to be Canada's response to the BBC Symphony Orchestra: a world-class symphony orchestra which would demonstrate to the world the extent of Canada's growth and achievement in the genre. It was not created explicitly to be a catalyst for orchestral compositions by Canadian composers. As I discussed in Chapter 4, a speech drafted by a CBC administrator before its inaugural

broadcast makes no specific mention of Canadian music at all. CBC SO programs were tailored to complement rather than compete with the programs of established orchestras, notably the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. However, twentieth-century repertoire quickly became a regular component of the CBC SO's programs (see the list of repertoire in Appendix A, for example). Not only did this policy introduce modern composition to Canadian listeners, it provided Canadian composers with regular opportunities to write for large orchestras—opportunities which had previously been few and far between, if present at all.

When the CBC SO was first announced in 1952, the Corporation set an ambitious goal for the orchestra: Under the direction of conductors from across Canada and the rest of the world, the orchestra was to perform the finest symphonic music of all genres and historical periods, both old and new. As stated above, I have attempted to address this broad mandate from a number of perspectives, with particular attention paid to audience engagement (through regular radio broadcasts and in-person concerts) and its policy towards twentieth-century music, especially works by Canadians. Given that this is (to the best of my knowledge) the first scholarly study on CBC SO, the data I was able to uncover does not allow me to draw a definitive judgement concerning the goal defined above.

On the one hand, much work remains to be done before empirical evidence can either support or refute Gordana Lazarevich's claim of a "direct causal link between the number of symphonic works written by major composers during the 1950s and the existence of the CBC Symphony Orchestra."<sup>323</sup> Archival documents have revealed a partial record of

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<sup>323</sup> Lazarevich, *The Musical World*, 147–148.

the CBC SO's programs (see Appendix A, for example), but a comprehensive catalogue of the orchestra's repertoire from its twelve seasons has yet to be compiled. This information would provide opportunities for further study from multiple perspectives. Such data would, for example, be mutually-beneficial for those investigating the CBC SO as well as individual composers: by examining orchestral commissions and performances within the context of a specific composer's career, one could weigh the impact those opportunities had on their artistic trajectories. A comparison should also be made of the repertoire performed by the CBC SO and the TSO during the same period. Such a comparison would show how orchestral repertoire performed in Toronto evolved during the 1950s.

On the other hand, the information available to me currently suggests that the CBC SO was indeed a catalyst for the composition of an increased number of large-scale orchestral works in Canada. Before public funding organizations such as the Canada Council for the Arts were established, the CBC SO provided the necessary funds (in the form of commissions) and the vehicle (the orchestra itself) for many major orchestral compositions, such as Freedman's Symphony No. 1, Weinzwieg's *Wine of Peace* and Somers' *Passacaglia and Fugue*. However, numerous questions remain about exactly how CBC determined who would receive this patronage, such as: Who determined which composers would receive commissions (or, in the case of existing works, performances)? Were CBC music administrators swayed by aesthetic criteria for commissioned works? Did female composers receive the same consideration as their male counterparts? Likewise, were composers from outside Ontario given fair consideration?

## 6.2 Unresolved Questions and Points of Departure

My study of the CBC SO has had to rely on primary source material, because this orchestra has not received the same attention as the three international radio orchestras mentioned above. The data gleaned from extensive archival research at Library and Archives Canada, combined with records from smaller archives and other published sources, provided considerable evidence of the CBC SO's role in stimulating orchestral composition in Canada. Yet one of the biggest challenges I encountered taking on this research project has been finding primary source material. The Canadian Music Centre has preserved countless historical recordings of Canadian music broadcast by the CBC, and there are still several commercial recordings of the CBC SO available for purchase or to stream on the internet. The CBC itself has retained recordings, but after conferring with CBC music archivists in both Vancouver and Toronto, I discovered there remains a large portion of the historical record unaccounted for.<sup>324</sup> My experience researching at LAC similarly indicates that many of these documents have either not survived or may have ended up in the private collections of musicians, composers and retired administrators. In addition to further scholarship on the CBC SO, there is also an urgent need for research on its sister orchestras: the CBC Vancouver Chamber Orchestra (later the CBC Radio Orchestra; 1938–2008); the CBC Winnipeg Orchestra (1947–1984); and Les Petites symphonies in Montreal (1948–1965). This project suggests that further

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<sup>324</sup> Email from Alan Morris to author, 29 January 2016. Morris generously offered to investigate any inquiries on a case-by-case basis, but he informed me that very few documents—such as Geoffrey Waddington's papers—were still held CBC's Toronto music archive. Many documents were of course deposited at LAC. However, as I discussed in Chapter 1, there remains a significant portion of the historical record on the CBC's radio symphony orchestras missing from either archive. I would like to additionally thank Morris, Brenda Kilpatrick and Colin Preston for their generous assistance with my research.

research in smaller public and private archives across the country will likely uncover information which will enable the stories of these important orchestras to be told.

In this dissertation I have provided a broad overview of the emergence of specific radio orchestras internationally, as well as a detailed account of the CBC SO within the context of Canadian music history. I certainly do not claim either of these analyses to be complete, and numerous questions have remained unanswered here. For example, what is the legacy of the CBC SO? The repertoire it performed no doubt had a strong impact on how musical modernism was defined in Canada, but how does this compare with other centres (Montreal, for example, which arguably had a greater impact on art and culture than Toronto during the 1950s) and other CBC orchestras (the CBC Vancouver Chamber Orchestra, for example, which lasted for seventy years)? Did the CBC SO's engagement with twentieth-century composers influence future programming strategies of independent Canadian orchestras such as the TSO? Furthermore, I discussed how commissions from the orchestra benefited composers who wished to explore modernism within the context of large-scale symphonic music. More work on who these composers were and who was left out of the commissioning process is necessary. What was the public reception of these works? In what ways did the CBC SO's performances affect the musical experiences of everyday Canadians? There are numerous threads of inquiry remaining to be pursued on the CBC SO and other radio symphony orchestras across the world. It is my hope that this dissertation will open the door to further research on music and media in Canada and provide the basis for deepening our understanding about our evolving culture.

# Appendix A

## Catalogue of Works Performed, 1952–1956

Appendix A is a list of all the performances by the CBC Symphony from 1952–1956, organized alphabetically by composer. This unpublished catalogue is held in the Terence Gibbs fonds at Library and Archives Canada.<sup>325</sup> It was likely prepared by Gibbs or an assistant in the early 1960s. Its pages have been reproduced here in the exact order in which they appear in the archival file. There are, however, problems with its organization. Notably, pages 5–6 fall out of alphabetical order. As a result, composers with surnames beginning with the letter ‘C’ are missing from the catalogue. Furthermore, there are two pages numbered 16, each with different information.

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<sup>325</sup> LAC, Terence Gibbs fonds, MUS36/1/7 - 1973–8, CBC Symphony Orchestra Scrapbook, part 5.



Appendix A (continued)

1

C. B. C. SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA 1952 - 1956

Catalogue of Works performed  
during the first five seasons  
Listed alphabetically by Composers

Appendix A (continued)

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"A"

<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMPOSER</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CONDUCTOR</u>
Mar. 12, 1956	ABEL	Symphony in E flat	Feldbrill
Jan. 5, 1953	ADASKIN	Ballet Symphony	Crum
Apr. 30, 1956	ADASKIN	Coronation Overture	Adaskin
Apr. 30, 1956	ADASKIN	Violin Concerto	Totenburg
Apr. 30, 1956	ADASKIN	Serenade Concertante	Totenburg
May. 14, 1956	ARCHER	Fanfare & Passacaglia	Waddington
Nov. 8, 1954	ARNE	Artaxerxes Overture	Mazzoleni
Mar. 8, 1954	ARNELL	Piano Concerto No. 1	Feldbrill
Apr. 26, 1953	ARNOLD	Symphony No. 2	Avison
Nov. 22, 1954	ARNOLD	Suite of English Dances	Hurst
Apr. 30, 1956	ARNELL	Lord Byron Suite	Mazzoleni

5

[Jean Michel Damase]

## Appendix A (continued)

3

<u>DATE:</u>	<u>COMPOSER</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CONDUCTOR</u>
Dec. 29 1952	BACH	Fervent is my Longing	Mazzoleni
Mar. 30 1953	BACH	Overture in B flat	Leduc
Nov. 15 1954	BACH	Passaglia & Fugue	Mazzoleni
May. 23 1955	BACH J. C.	Symphony in D	Boydell
Jan. 31, 1955	Bach - Stoke	G Minor Fugue	Scherman
Apr. 27 1953	BACH-STOK	G Minor Fugue (Little)	Feldbrill
Apr. 9, 1956	BACH-MACLEAN	St. Anne Prelude & Fugue	Pratz
Dec. 28 1953	BARBER	Essay No. 1	Hurst
Mar. 1, 1954	BARBER	School for Scandal	Feldbrill
Mar. 22 1954	BARBER	Symphony No. 1	Scherman
Jun. 26 1953	BARTOK	Concerto for Orchestra	Feldbrill
Sept. 27 1954	BARTOK	Mikrokosmos	Leduc
Oct. 10 1955	BARTOK	Violin Concerto (Brass)	Brott
Mar. 9, 1956	BARTOK	Miraculous Marilorin	Feldbrill
May. 18 1953	BATES	Essay for Strings	Mazzoleni
Dec. 20 1954	BATES	Symphony No. 3	Waddington
June 6, 1955	BARTOK	Concerto for Orchestra	Rimanoćzy
June 26 1953	BARTOK	Roumanian Dances	Feldbrill
Dec. 15 1953	BEETHOVEN	Concerto No. 5 E flat	Heinze
Nov. 9, 1953	BEETHOVEN	Leonora No. 3	Scherman
Feb. 22 1954	BEETHOVEN	Symphony No. 1	Waddington
Nov. 1 1954	BEETHOVEN	Symphony No. 4	Scherman
Oct. 4 1954	BEETHOVEN	Piano Concerto #4 (Chotem	Leduc
Dec. 6 1954	BEETHOVEN	Symphony No. 6	Unger
Dec. 27 1954	BEETHOVEN	Piano Concerto #2 (Lewis	Brott
Jan. 31 1955	BEETHOVEN	Piano Concerto #1	Scherman
Feb. 21 1955	BEETHOVEN	Piano Concerto #3 (Gould	Unger
Mar. 7 1955	BEETHOVEN	Violin Concerto (Pratz	Waddington
Mar. 7 1955	BEETHOVEN	Ov. Leonora 3	Waddington
May 9 1955	BEETHOVEN	Symphony No. 5	Pratz
Oct. 24 1955	BEETHOVEN	Symphony No. 8	Mazzoleni
Feb. 13 1956	BEETHOVEN	Piano Concerto No. 3	Lacharite
Feb. 20 1956	BEETHOVEN	Symphony No. 2	Leduc
Mar. 26 1956	BEETHOVEN	Piano Concerto No. 5	Mayer [Thomas]
Apr. 23 1956	BEETHOVEN	Symphony No. 7	Beaudry [Jacqu]
May. 14 1956	BEETHOVEN	Symphony No. 2	Waddington

2

## Appendix A (continued)

4

"2B"

<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMPOSER</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CONDUCTOR</u>
Feb. 28 1955	DENJAMIN	Symphony No. 1	Neel
Oct. 11 1954	BERTIOZ	Hungarian March	MacMillan
Oct. 11 1954	BERTIOZ	Symphonie Fantastique	MacMillan
Feb. 28 1955	BERTIOZ	Venven: Allini Over.	Neel
Nov. 7 1955	BERTIOZ	Symphonie Fantastique	Houdret
Dec. 29 1956	BERTIOZ	Nuits d'Ete (Benson	Unger
May 28 1956	BERTIOZ	Corsair Ov.	MacMillan
Nov. 28 1955	BLOCH	Concerto Grosso No. 2	Susskind
Nov. 30 1953	BOCCERHINI	Ov: D Major	Leduc
May 31 1954	BOYCE	Symphony No. 1 1st Mvmt.	Waddington
May 30 1955	BORODIN	Symphony No. 2	Mazzoleni
May 23 1955	BOYDELL	In Memoriam	Boydell
Oct. 13 1952	BRAHMS	Symphony No. 4	Unger
Dec. 22 1952	BRAHMS	Tragic Ov.	Waddington
Mar. 9 1953	BRAHMS	Variations (Hayden)	Beaudet
Apr. 6 1953	BRAHMS	Double Concerto	Waddington
June 8 1953	BRAHMS	Violin Concerto (Hagen)	Kouffman
Oct. 12 1953	BRAHMS	Symphony No. 1	Waddington
Nov. 2 1953	BRAHMS	Symphony No. 2	Scherman
Dec. 21 1953	BRAHMS	Four Serious Songs	Beaudet
Jan. 25 1954	BRAHMS	Piano Concerto No. 1	Neel
Mar. 1 1954	BRAHMS	Symphony No. 3	Feldbrill
May 31 1954	BRAHMS	Symphony No. 4	Waddington
Feb. 21 1955	BRAHMS	Variations (Hayden)	Unger
May 16 1955	BRAHMS	Symphony No. 4	Waddington
June 27 1955	BRAHMS	Academic Festival	Waddington
Feb. 27 1956	BRAHMS	Serenade No. 2	Leduc
Apr. 13 1953	BRITTEN	Pass. Storm Interlude	Leduc
Apr. 13 1953	BRITTEN	Embroidery Aria	
		from Peter Grims	Leduc
Apr. 20 1953	BRITTEN	Sinfonia da Requiem	Scherman
Feb. 22 1954	BRITTEN	Matinees Musicales	Waddington

Appendix A (continued)

"R"

<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMPOSER</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CONDUCTOR</u>
July 2, 1956	ROSSINI	Sonata in D	Mazzoleni
Sept. 3, 1956	RIDOUT G. ✓	Two Etudes	Mazzoleni
Dec. 17, 1956	RESPIGHI	The Birds	MacMillan
Dec. 24, 1956	ROSSINI	Ov. William Tell	Susskind
Apr. 22, 1957	RAVEL	Concerto in D major	Susskind
Apr. 22, 1957	RAVEL	Pavane	

"S"

June 18, 1956	SCHULTZ	Serenade	
Aug. 27, 1956	SCHOENBERG	Transfigured Night	
Oct. 1, 1956	SALVIUCCI	Italianna	
Oct. 15, 1956	SCHUMANN	Rhenish Symphony	
Oct. 22, 1956	SAINT-SAENS	Symphony #3 in C minor	
Oct. 29, 1956	SCHMIDT	Tragedy of Salome	
Sept. 10, 1956	STRAWINSKY	Appolon Musagetes	Crum
Dec. 3, 1956	SCHREKER	Prelude to a Tragedy	Mayer
Dec. 17, 1956	SOMMERS ✓	Five Songs for Dark Voice	Mazzoleni
Dec. 24, 1956	STRAUSS R.	Aus Italien	MacMillan
Jan 14, 1957	SCHUMANN	Symphony #2	Scherman
Jan 14, 1957	STRAUSS	Ov. & Dance from Ariadne on Naxos	
Jan. 21, 1957	SYMONDS N. ✓	Concerto for Orchestra	Feldbrill
Jan. 26, 1957	SIBELIUS	Symphony #4	Boydell
Nov. 26, 1956	SIMPSON R.	Symphony #1	Avison
Feb. 18, 1957	SCHUBERT	Symphony #5	Waddington
Mar. 4, 1957	STRAUSS	Til Eulenspiegel	Feldbrill
Apr. 8, 1957	STRAWINSKY	Pulcinello	Beaudet
Apr. 22, 1957	STRAUSS	Munchen	Susskind
Apr. 22, 1957	STRAUSS	Berlesque	Susskind
Apr. 22, 1957	STRAUSS	Dance of the 7 Veils	Meyer
May 13, 1957	STRAUSS	Final Scene from Salome	Meyer
May 13, 1957	STRAUSS	Symphony #6	Waddington
May 27, 1957	SIBELIUS		

"T"

Oct. 15, 1956	TURINA	Fantasia Dances	
Aug. 27, 1956	TANSMAN	Tryptich	
Sept. 10, 1956	TCHAIKOWSKY	Serenade for Strings	Crum
Jan. 7, 1957	TARTINI	Cello Concerto in A maj.	Scherman
Mar. 18, 1957	TIPPETT	Dances from Midsummer Marriage	Neel

## Appendix A (continued)

6

<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMPOSER</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CONDUCTOR</u>
June 11, 1956	V-WILLIAMS	Tallis Fantasia	
June 4, 1956	VIVALDI	Concerto in B flat for Four Violins	
July 2, 1956	VIVALDI	Concerto Grosso in A major	
Oct. 15, 1956	VALEN	Silent Island	
Dec. 31, 1956	VERDI	Cortigiani	MacMillan
Dec. 31, 1956	VERDI	Per Me Quinto	MacMillan
Dec. 31, 1956	VERDI	Prelude & Entracte music La Traviata	MacMillan
Dec. 31, 1956	VERDI	Era La Notte	MacMillan
December 31/56	VERDI	Ballet Music from Otello	MacMillan
Dec. 31, 1956	VERDI	Credo	MacMillan
Mar. 25, 1957	VIOTTI	Concerto #22 A minor	Waddington

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June 13, 1956	WOLF-FERRARI	Serenade for Strings	
Oct. 22, 1956	WISSMER	Divertimento in 3 mvts.	
Nov. 19, 1956	WEBER	Freichutz	
Dec. 31, 1957	WAGNER	Ov. Flvint Dutchman	MacMillan
Dec. 31, 1957	WAGNER	Ov. Die Meistersinger	MacMillan
Jan 7, 1957	WISSMER	La Manderellina	Scherman
Mar. 4, 1957	WEINZWEIG ✓	Rhapsody for Orch.	Feldbrill
Mar. 18, 1957	WALTON-BACH	The Wise Virgins	Neel

Appendix A (continued)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMPOSER</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CONDUCTOR</u>
Mar. 30, 1953	DEBUSSY	Nuoyes Fetes	Leduc
Mar. 30, 1953	DEBUSSY	La Mer	Leduc
Apr. 13, 1953	DEBUSSY	Chanson de Belitis (James)	Leduc
Jan. 31, 1955	DEBUSSY	Iberia	Scherman
Mar. 28, 1955	DEBUSSY	L'apnes ?Miedi?	Lacharite
Mar. 28, 1955	DEBUSSY	Fetes	Lacharite
Feb. 16, 1953	DE FALLA	Three Cornered Hat	Brott
Jan. 24, 1955	DE FALLA	Homenajes	Scherman
Feb. 1, 1954	BELLO JOIO	Triumph of St. Joan	Goldsmidt
Jan. 19 1953	DELIUS	On Learning First Cuckoo	MacMillan
May 25, 1953	DELIUS	On Learning First Cuckoo	Brott
Apr. 16, 1956	DELIUS	Brigg Fair	Mazzoleni
Feb. 8, 1954	DUKAS	Symphony in C Major	Beaudet
Jan. 16, 1956	DUKAS	La Peri	Beaudet
Feb. 27, 1956	DUTILLEUX	Symphony	Leduc
June 22, 1953	DVORAK	Symphony No. 4	Unger
Jan. 11, 1954	DVORAK	Cello Concerto (Nelson)	Leduc
Feb. 1, 1954	DVORAK	Notturmo (Strings)	Goldsmidt
Nov. 22, 1954	DVORAK	Symphony No. 1 in D	Hurst
May 9, 1955	DVORAK	Golden Spinning Wheel	Pratz
Apr. 9, 1956	DVORAK	Violin Concerto (Hagen)	Pratz
Apr. 9, 1956	DVORAK	Slovonic Dance G Minor	Pratz
May 21, 1956	DVORAK	Symphony No. 2	MacMillan

Appendix A (continued)

	<u>CO POSER</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CONDU TOR</u>
1, 1952	ELGAR	Enigma Variations	Neel
22, 1952	ELGAR	Cello Concerto (Nelson)	Waddington
May 4, 1953	ELGAR	Cockaigne Ov.	Bowles
Mar 18, 1953	ELGAR	Falstaff	Mazzoleni
June 1, 1953	ELGAR	Nursery Suite	Mazzoleni
1, 1954	ELGAR	Sospiri	Scherman
18, 28, 1955	ELGAR	Bavarian Dance	Neel
Jan 23, 1956	ELGAR	In the South	Neel
Feb 28, 1956	ELGAR	Symphony No. 2 E flat	MacMillan



## Appendix A (continued)

9

<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMPOSER</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CONDUCTOR</u>
Feb. 15, 1954	FINZI	Notturmo (New Years Day)	Mazzoleni
May 23, 1955	FLEISCHMANN	Four Masters Ov.	Boydell
Jan. 18, 1954	FRANCK	La Chassun Moudit	Neel
Oct. 25, 1954	FRANCK	Symphony in D Minor	Houdret
Apr. 25, 1955	FREEDMAN ←	Nocturne	Graber
Mar. 21, 1955	FRICKER	Symphony No. 1	Mazzoleni

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## Appendix A (continued)

10

<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMPOSER</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CONDUCTOR</u>
May 11, 1953	GARDNER	Symphony No. 1	Bowles
May 10, 1954	GELRUD	Interludes from Riel	Wild
Jan. 24, 1955	GHEDEINI	Architecturn	Scherman
Dec. 29, 1955	GINASTERA	Var. Concertantes	Unger
Feb. 7, 1955	GLINKA	Kamarinskaja	Waddington
Apr. 11, 1955	GLUCK	Orpheus (excerpts)	Goldsmidt
Mar. 19, 1956	GLUCK	Ov. Alceste	Feldbrill
Apr. 26, 1954	GRAENER	Floete von Sansouci	Avison
Nov. 14, 1955	GRIEG	Piano Concerto (Mould)	Houdret

Appendix A (continued)

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<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMPOSER</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CONDUCTOR</u>
June 1 1953	HANDEL	Zadok the Priest	Mazzoleni
June 8 1953	HANDEL	Faithful Shepherd	Kauffman
Oct. 9 1953	HANDEL	Ov. in D Minor	Unger
Apr. 2 1956	HANDEL	Concerto Gorsso #1 in G	Iseler
Dec. 29 1952	HANSEN	Symphony #3	Mazzoleni
Mar. 23 1953	HANSEN	Symphony #2	Hansen
Mar. 23 1953	HANSEN	Merry Mount Suite	Hansen
Nov. 8 1954	HANSEN	Symphony #4	Mazzoleni
Oct. 4 1954	HAYDEN	Symphony #97 C Major	Leduc
Jan. 24 1955	HAYDEN	Symphony #93	Scherman
May 2 1955	HAYDEN	Symphony #103	Feldbrill
Oct. 10 1955	HAYDEN	Symphony #99	Brott
Dec. 1 1952	<del>HERTST</del> HOLST	Perfect Fowl	Neel
Jan. 3 1955	HINDENITH	Nobitissima Viscone	Beaudet
May 2 1955	HINDENITH	Mates der Mabler	Feldbrill
Dec. 5 1955	HIND MITH	Symphony in E flat	Stewart
May 25 1953	HOLST	Planets (Mars-Venus-Jup)	Brott
Dec. 8 1952	HONNEGGER	Symphony Liturgique	Heinze
Apr. 1 1953	HONNEGGER	Pastoral d' Ete	Leduc
Apr. 4 1955	HONNEGGER	Symphony # 5	Scherman
Jan. 2 1953	HURST ✓	Sinfonia in D	Hurst

Appendix A (continued)

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<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMPOSER</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CONDUCTOR</u>
Feb. 9, 1953	IRELAND	Piano Concerto in E flat	Mazzoleni
Nov. 20, 1954	JOHNSTON	Symphony #1	Mazzoleni
Mar. 5, 1956	JOLIVET	Trumpet Concerto	Beaudet
Apr. 14, 1954	KABALEWSKY	Colas Breugnon Ov.	Pelletier
June 6, 1955	KODALY	Galanta Dances	de Rimanczy
Apr. 20, 1956	LISZT	Piano Concerto #1 E flat	Beaudry

## Appendix A (continued)

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<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMPOSER</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CONDUCTOR</u>
Oct. 6, 1952	MAHLER	Symphony No. 2	Unger
Oct. 6, 1952	MAHLER	Songs of a Wayfarer	Unger
Dec. 13, 1954	MAHLER	Symphony No. 4	MacMillan
May 23, 1955	MAY	Spring Nocturne	Boydell
Apr. 6, 1953	MENDELSSOHN	Ov. Ray Blas.	Waddington
Mar. 24, 1954	MENDELSSOHN	Son & Stranger Ov.	Neel
Mar. 24, 1954	MENDELSSOHN	Scotch Symphony	Neel
Dec. 20, 1954	MENDELSSOHN	Ov. Ray Blas.	Waddington
Apr. 10, 1955	MENDELSSOHN	Symphony No. 5	Mazzoleni
Mar. 22, 1954	MILHAUD	2nd Symphonic Suite	Scherman
Mar. 28, 1955	MILHAUD	Suite Francaire	Lacharite
Apr. 30, 1956	MILHAUD	Carnival of London	Adaskin
May 14, 1953	MOERAN	Whythorne's Shadow	Bowles
Mar. 15, 1954	MOREL ✓	Antiphonie	Scherman
Apr. 21, 1955	MOROVETZ ✓	Carnival Overture	Gruber
Mar. 5, 1956	MOROVETZ ✓	Symphony No. 1	Beaudet
Feb. 1, 1953	MOUSSORGSKY	Pictures at an Exhibition	Brott
Jun. 2, 1955	MOUSSORGSKY	" " " " "	Scherman
Jan. 2, 1956	MOUSSORGSKY	Khovantchina	Scherman
Dec. 1, 1952	MOZART	Ov. Impressario	Heinze
Feb. 2, 1953	MOZART	Symph. No. 41 in C	Wild
Apr. 2, 1953	MOZART	Symph. No. 26 in E flat	Feldbrill
Oct. 2, 1953	MOZART	Prague Symphony	Unger
Nov. 2, 1953	MOZART	King Thamos Entracte	Scherman
Nov. 9, 1953	MOZART	Mentre ti. Luscio K513	Scherman
" " "	MOZART	Un Bacio de Mano K541	&
" " "	MOZART	Cosi Dungle Tradisa K432	Rubes
Dec. 28, 1953	MOZART	Symphony No. 34	Hurst
Oct. 18, 1954	MOZART	Fugue in C Minor	MacMillan
Oct. 10, 1954	MOZART	Piano Concerto F K459	MacMillan
Nov. 22, 1954	MOZART	Symph. No. 32 in G	Hurst
Jan. 10, 1955	MOZART	Ov. Magic Flute	Neel
" " "	MOZART	Hoffman Serenade excerpts	"
" " "	MOZART	Symphony No. 39	"
Apr. 25, 1955	MOZART	Prague Symphony	Gruber
Jan. 30, 1956	MOZART	Symphony No. 40	Neel
" " "	MOZART	" " 41	"
Feb. 20, 1956	MOZART	" " 39	Leduc

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Appendix A (continued)

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"L"

<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMPOSER</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CONDUCTOR</u>
Oct. 19, 1953	NIELSON	Symphony No. 4	Unger

"P"

Feb. 9, 1953	PENTLAND ✓	Symphony No. 2	Mazzoleni
APR. 12, 1954	PEPIN ✓	Ov. Guernica	Pelletier
Oct. 24, 1955	PETRASSI	Concerto for Orchestra	Mazzoleni
Nov. 10, 1952	POULENC	Concerto Chamfetre	Leduc
Dec. 27, 1954	PROKOFFIER	Romeo & Juliet Suite	Brott
APR. 13, 1953	PURCELL	Overture Dido	Leduc
APR. 13, 1953	PURCELL	When I am laid	Leduc
May 23, 1956	PURCELL	Fantasy on One Note	MacMillan

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Appendix A (continued)

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<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMPOSER</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CONDUCTOR</u>
Apr. 18, 1955	RACHMANINOFF	Paganini Rhapsody	Mazzoleni
May 7, 1956	RACHMANINOFF	Paganini Rhapsody	Kash
Dec. 8, 1952	RAVEL	Ma Mere l'Ocpe	Heinze
Nov. 9, 1953	RAVEL	Tombeau de Couperin	Scherman
Nov. 23, 1953	RAVEL	Concerto for Left Hand	Mazzoleni
Mar. 29, 1954	RAVEL	Alborado del grazioso	Scherman
Apr. 5, 1954	RAVEL	Rhapsodie Espagnote	Hoffman
Oct. 25, 1954	RAVEL	Ma Mere l'Ocpe Ste.	Houdret
Nov. 14, 1955	RAVEL	Pavane pour un inf	Houdret
Jan. 16, 1956	RAVEL	Tombeau de Conperin	Beaudet
Mar. 21, 1955	RESPIGHI	Fountains at Rome	Mazzoleni
May 16, 1955	RESPIGHI	Rome Fountains	Waddington
June 1, 1955	RESPIGHI-ROSINI	Bout Fant	MacMillan
June 20, 1955	RESPIGHI	Impressione Brasil	Scherman
Mar. 7, 1956	RESPIGHI	Belfagor Ov.	Kash
Feb. 1, 1956	RIVIER	Symphony No. 4	Leduc
Feb. 11, 1955	ROSENBERG	Orpheus in Town	Drott
Sep. 29, 1952	ROSSINI	La Cenerentold Ov.	Waddington
Apr. 20, 1953	ROSSINI	La Scala di Seta Ov.	Scherman
Mar. 5, 1956	ROSSINI	Semiramide Ov.	Beaudet
Jan. 3, 1955	ROUSSEL	Symphony No. 4	Beaudet
Mar. 1, 1955	ROUSSEL	Le Festin d'Araignee	Houdret

Appendix A (continued)

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<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMPOSER</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CONDUCTOR</u>
Sept. 26, 1955	SALVIMCCI	Into, Pass., Finals	Waddington
May 14, 1956	SALVIMCCI	Sinfonia Italiana	Waddington
Oct. 13, 1953	SCARLATTI	Good Humoured Ladies Andante	Unger
May. 7, 1956	SCHREKER	Birthday of the Infanta	Kash
June 15, 1953	SCHUBERT	C Major Symph. No. 9	Kaufman
Jan. 18, 1954	SCHUBERT	Symphony No. 2	Neel
Dec. 12, 1955	SCHUBERT	Symphony No. 5	Stewart
May 10, 1954	SCHUMANN	Symphony No. 1	Wild
Nov. 1, 1954	SCHUMANN	Manfred Ov.	Scherman
Sept. 27, 1954	SCHUMANN	Symph. No. 3 E flat	Leduc
Feb. 21, 1955	SCHUMANN	Geneveva Ov.	Unger
Sept 29, 1952	SIBELIUS	Symphony #3	Waddington
Nov. 17, 1952	SIBELIUS	Swan of Tuonela	Scherman
" "	SIBELIUS	Symphony No. 4	Scherman
Feb. 23, 1953	SIBELIUS	Symphony No. 1	Beaudet
" "	SIBELIUS	En Saga	Brott
Dec. 7, 1953	SIBELIUS	Symph. No. 7 Op 66	MacMillan
" "	SIBELIUS	Scenes Wittoriques	MacMillan
Mar. 29, 1954	SIBELIUS	Violin Concerto	Scherman
Sept. 27, 1955	SIBELIUS	Symphony #2	Waddington
Sept. 26, 1955	SIBELIUS	Symphony #1	Waddington
May 21, 1956	SIBELIUS	Tapiola	MacMillan
Apr 27, 1953	SOMERS	Symphony No. 1	Feldbrill
Nov. 15, 1954	SOMERS	Pass. & Fugue	Mazzoleni
Mar 12, 1956	SOMERS	Piano Concerto	Feldbrill
May 28, 1956	SOMERS	Pass. & Fugue	MacMillan
May 17, 1954	STOSTAKORICH	Symphony No. 5	Gruber
Nov. 28, 1955	STOSTAKORICH	Symphony No. 1	Susskind
Jan. 2, 1956	STOSTAKORICH	Symphony No. 10	Scherman

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Appendix A (continued)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMPOSER</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CONDUCTOR</u>
Oct. 6, 1952	STRAUSS	Till Eulenspieg	Unger
Jan. 9, 1953	STRAUSS	Rosenkavalier Ste.	Beaudet
Apr. 20, 1953	STRAUSS	Don Juan	Scherman
May 4, 1953	STRAUSS	Duo Concertino	Bowles
Oct. 26, 1953	STRAUSS	Four Last Songs	Unger
Apr. 5, 1954	STRAUSS	Death & Transfiguration	
Mar. 26, 1956	STRAUSS	Don Juan	Meyer
Nov. 3, 1952	STRAWINSKY	Symphony No. 3	Leduc
Nov. 24, 1952	STRAWINSKY	Firebird Ste.	Scherman
Mar. 15, 1954	STRAWINSKY	Chant du Rossignol	Brott
Jan. 12, 1955	STRAWINSKY	Symphony in C	Stewart
Apr. 2, 1956	STRAWINSKY	Symphony of Palms	Iseler F.C.
Nov. 24, 1952	ST. SAENS	Cello Concerto	Scherman
Mar. 12, 1956	SYMONDS ✓	Overture	Feldbrill

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Appendix A (continued)

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<u>D</u>	<u>COMPOSER</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CONDUCTOR</u>
N 16, 1953	TSCHAIKOWSKY	Symphony No. 6	Mazz
Feb. 7, 1955	TSCHAIKOWSKY	Symphony No. 5	Wadd
Mar. 14, 1955	TSCHAIKOWSKY	Piano Concerto No. 1	Houdret(MOULD)
Apr. 4, 1955	TSCHAIKOWSKY	Romeo & Juliet Overture	Scherman
Oct. 31, 1955	TSCHAIKOWSKY	Manfred	Pratz
JAN. 9, 1956	TSCHAIKOWSKY	Violin Concerto	Sherman(PRATZ)
Jan. 4, 1954	TURCHI	Five Comments on Baccha	Wadd (PRATZ)
Dec. 20, 1954	TURCHI	Cingue Commenti	Wadd
Apr 16, 1956	TURNER ✓	Opening Nite Overture.	Mazz

Appendix A (continued)

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<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMPOSER</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CONDUCTOR</u>
Oct. 20, 1952	V-WILLIAMS	Norfolk Rhapsody 1	Mazz
Oct. 20, 1952	V-WILLIAMS	Symphony No. 4	Mazz
June 1, 1953	V-WILLIAMS	Flourish For A Coronation	Mazz & CBC Opera
Apr. 2, 1956	V-WILLIAMS	Serenade to Music	Iseler Fest Chorus
Jan. 4, 1954	V-WILLIAMS	Violin Concerto F Minor	Wadd (PRATZ)

Appendix A (continued)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMPOSER</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CONDUCTOR</u>
Feb. 2, 1953	WAGNER	Tannhaeuser Overture	Wild
Dec. 6, 1954	WAGNER	Siegfried Idyll	Unger
Jan. 17, 1955	WAGNER	Flying Dutchman Ov.	
		Lohengrin Elsa's	
		Walkure Sieglinde's War.	
		Meistersinger Prelude Act 3	
		2 Sachs Monologues	
		Meistersinger Ov.	Neel
Apr. 4, 1955	WAGNER	Faust Ov.	Scherman
Apr. 11, 1955	WAGNER	Parsifal Exerpts	Goldsmidt
May 16, 1955	WAGNER	Rhine Journey	Waddington
Feb. 6, 1956	WAGNER	Walkure Act. 1	Goldsmidt
Jan. 12, 1953	WALTON	Symphony	Macmillan
Nov. 21, 1955	WALTON	Symphony	Waddington
Apr. 2, 1956	WARLOCK	Capriol Suite	Iseler Fest.
June 22, 1953	WEBER-MAHLER	Entre-act 3 Intos	Unger
Feb. 1, 1954	WEBER	Freischuetz Ov.	Goldschmidt
Apr. 12, 1954	WEBER	Passacaglia	Relletier
Feb. 14, 1955	WEINBERGER	3 Preludes	Brott
May 30, 1955	WEINZWEIG *	Violin Concerto	Mazzoleni
Oct. 27, 1952	WILLAN ←	Coronation March	Mazzoleni
Oct. 27, 1952	WILLAN ←	Piano Concerto	Mazzoleni
Oct. 27, 1952	WILLAN ←	Nativity Pastorale	Mazzoleni
Dec. 14, 1953	WILLAN ←	Symphony No. 2	Macmillan
Apr. 16, 1956	ZAPFED	Symphony No. 4	Mazzoleni

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# Appendix B

## List of Archival Sources

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Ottawa, Library and Archives Canada, Terence Gibbs fonds, R14460-0-7-F, MUS 36.

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