

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

from ALAN POULTON

Enthusiasts of British Music may be interested to know that a *Dictionary of Modern British Composers, 1893-1923* is being compiled by Alan Poulton and Stewart Craggs. A total of 40 composers are surveyed and their complete output, including film and incidental music, is listed chronologically.

As well as including such data as first performance(s), the dictionary includes information on Dedictees, Instrumentation, Publishers, and MS location, plus a useful artist cross-reference index.

Thanks to the co-operation of the composers, their families and their publishers, as well as the BBC, British Library and the British Film Institute, some 6000 of the potential 10,000 entries have now been entered onto a word processor since compilation began in 1986.

The following is a typical example of one entry in the Lutyens catalogue:

*'The Ring of Bone'*\* for piano (with optional speaking voice) Op. 106 (1975)

Commissioned by the Manchester the Manchester New Music Forum for a concert celebrating the composer's 70th birthday.

Dur: 10'

f.p. Peter Lawson - Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, May 1976

f.Lon.p. Jeremy Brown - Wigmore Hall, 1 May 1977

f.broad.p. Peter Lawson - 20 July 1977

Pub: Olivan

(\* The title is taken from Samuel Beckett's novel *Imagination Dead Imagine* and the speaker's text consists of fragments by Elisabeth Lutyens)

It is expected to take a further four years to complete the survey and publication is anticipated in 1993.

The 40 featured composers are:

- |                       |                        |                          |
|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Eugene Goossens    | 15. Matyas Seiber      | 29. Humphrey Searle      |
| 2. Arthur Benjamin    | 16. Benjamin Frankel   | 30. Bernard Stevens      |
| 3. Gordon Jacob       | 17. Arnold Cooke       | 31. Dennis Aplvor        |
| 4. Roberto Gerhard    | 18. Elisabeth Lutyens  | 32. John Gardner         |
| 5. Alan Bush          | 19. Grace Williams     | 33. Richard Arnell       |
| 6. Edmund Rubbra      | 20. Eliabeth Maconchy  | 34. Peter Racine Fricker |
| 7. Lennox Berkeley    | 21. Howard Ferguson    | 35. John Addison         |
| 8. Priaulx Rainier    | 22. William Wordsworth | 36. Geoffrey Bush        |
| 9. William Alwyn      | 23. Franz Reizenstein  | 37. Robert Simpson       |
| 10. Francis Chagrin   | 24. Phyllis Tate       | 38. Ruth Gipps           |
| 11. Constant Lambert  | 25. Daniel Jones       | 39. Ian Hamilton         |
| 12. Christian Darnton | 26. George Lloyd       | 40. Don Banks            |
| 13. Walter Leigh      | 27. Harold Truscott    |                          |
| 14. Alan Rawsthorne   | 28. Andrzej Panufnik   |                          |

Any information which your readers have on file, such as work lists, programmes, press notices—anything in fact which could assist us in tracking down 'gaps' in our data base, particularly first performance details, would be much appreciated (and, of course, duly acknowledged).

Please write to me at the address below. I look forward to hearing from you.

2 Tudor Close  
Grayshott  
Hindhead  
Surrey GU26 6HP

from REGINA BUSCH

(*apropos Kathryn Bailey's article 'Willi Reich's Webern' in TEMPO No. 165; extracted from a longer letter to the Editor of TEMPO*)

I. First of all, when discussing the form of Webern's Variations in the light of his own analytical remarks, one should distinguish cautiously between primary sources (like letters), secondary sources (like notes from pupils, friends, or musicians who performed his music), and interpretations by musicologists and other music-lovers. Neither Reich or Webern can be blamed for the confusion (in Webern research) about Webern's op.27 and its relation to the traditional concepts of 'form' and 'variation'.

Furthermore, it is important to discuss a single source on the basis of all available ones, especially if, as in the case of Reich, it was transmitted to us through a third person and its authenticity is not completely guaranteed, not in every detail.

(\* The title is taken from Samuel Beckett's novel *Imagination Dead Imagine* and the speaker's text consists of fragments by Elisabeth Lutyens)

We know of Webern's own analytical comments on, for instance, op.21, op.24 (in the manuscript score\*), op.28, op.30—I am mentioning only some published ones. We know about Leopold Spinner's analyses of, among others, movements from op.24, op.31, and—in his *A Short Introduction to the Technique of Twelve-Tone Composition*—op.27; and we are well acquainted with the musical terms used in the Schoenberg–Berg–Webern circle, for instance from Schoenberg's writings, or from Ratz's *Formenlehre*. In the light of these Reich's notes don't sound completely wrong; in fact they even sound plausible. In Spinner's *Introduction* the first movement of op.27 is called Scherzo, and analysed as such: an ABA form with a contrasting middle section, the middle section having the character and function of an elaboration—as it were a sonata movement with only a single theme; whereas according to the musical thinking of the Schoenberg School, a three-part Andante is an ABA with *Seitensatz* (second theme group) but without an elaboration section.

The interpretation of the first movement of op.27 as 'Scherzo form' and 'Andante form' respectively does not represent a contradiction, but reflects compositional questions (such as those concerning ideas of form and formal functions) current at the beginning of the 20th century, and especially those of 12-tone music. Similar or comparable formal cases occur in the first movement of op.21 or in op.20—and are related, among other things, to the fact that Webern decided to have only two movements in opp.20, 21, and 22 (as I described in the article mentioned by Kathryn Bailey in her note 13).

With the third movement things are similar. As Kathryn Bailey mentions in her article, movements that are at the same time variations and of some other form are well known in Webern's music (the Variations for Orchestra, op.30, and the one in op.28 are the most famous ones—and, by the way, not mainly 'concerned with symmetry'). They are, among other things, examples of Webern's aiming at the combination, the unification of two formal ideas in the context of 'Synthese'—rather than for 'structural ambiguities and double meanings' (TEMPO 165, p.22).

As for 'Variations' as the title for the whole piece—Webern's description in the letter to Jone quoted by Kathryn Bailey (p.18) is quite clear: 'The completed part is a variations movement; the *whole* will be a kind of "Suite"' (my italics). This does not mean, as the author concludes in her next paragraph, that the *rest* of the work is 'a kind of "suite"', and it also does not exclude the first two movements being variations as well. The original German version does not have 'the whole...': however the sense is clear, as is the use of 'Variationen' for the whole work: 'Einen Teil meiner neuen Arbeit habe ich schon fertig gestellt. ... Das Fertige ist ein Variationen-Satz; es wird eine Art "Suite". Ich hoffe, mit den Variationen etwas schon seit Jahren Vorgestelltes fertiggestellt zu haben'.

II. There are three relevant sources of information about the form of op.27 which Kathryn Bailey does not mention (and I am sure the following list is not complete):

1) Peter Stadlen's edition of the work (Universal Edition, 1979) which is an edition (facsimile and transcription) of the score he used in studying the piece with Webern. In the last movement we can see the numbers I to V at the accepted places. This fits very well with Reich's notes: in Döhl's transcription he does not maintain that the 'verkürzte Reprise' (foreshortened reprise) is more than one or at most two variations. Also, his not mentioning a Coda section does not mean that there isn't one.

2) A manuscript of the third movement given by Webern to Rudolf Kurzmann (now in the Pierpoint Morgan Library, New York; brief description in *Musik-Konzepte*, Sonderband Anton Webern I, Munich 1983, p.43, footnote 103) which has the same numbers I to IV (I don't remember about V) in what looks like Webern's hand.

3) *Webern's own remarks* in his letter to Steuermann, dated 6.XII.1936 (published in the *Musik-Konzepte* volume mentioned above, p.32f) '... Ich schicke Dir mit gleicher Post meine "Variationen" ... sind sie in für sich abgeschlossene Sätze (drei) aufgeteilt. Ich stelle auch das "Thema" gar nicht ausdrücklich hinaus (etwa in früherem Sinne an die Spitze). Fast ist es mein Wunsch, es möge als solches unerkannt bleiben. ... Doch möge es lieber gleichsam dahinter stehen. (Es sind—Dir verrate ich es natürlich gleich—die ersten 11 Takte des 3. Satzes). ... Der erste Satz ist quasi ein Andante, der 2. ein Scherzo (er ist ein zweistimmiger "unendlicher" Canon, unendlich *innerhalb* seiner zwei Teile, aber auch in Bezug auf diese beiden selbst; man muss ihn als etwas Freundliches spielen d.h. trachten, trotz des schnellen Zeitmasses doch das *espressivo* der Gestalten (gleichsam 'cantabile') zu bringen. Der 3. Satz ist nun wirklich eine Variationen-Reihe, in seinem Bau. (Die vorletzte Variation im Sinne einer bewegten Melodie aufzufassen; der Charakter der anderen u. des Themas selbst ist ja wohl kaum verkennbar.)†

This explains nearly everything, only it doesn't say anything about the last movement as a Sonata.

The only really strange thing in Reich's notes is the number '12' or, more precisely: that the third movement is said to contain variations 5–12. From our knowledge of Webern's other variation movements (in op.21, 24, 28, or 30; op.30 is an interesting exception) we can conclude that *here also* the variations are of equal length, and so '5–12' cannot mean the number of variations. As the movement contains Theme and *five* variations, only the '12' needs an explanation (assuming for now that Döhl made no mistake in deciphering and transcribing Reich, and in typing his dissertation). I would like to propose the following explanation: In playing the whole piece from beginning to end, we have all in all:

\* Cf. Regina Busch's article 'Taktgruppen in Webern's Konzert op.24', in *Musica*, November–December 1986, pp.532–537. (Ed.)

† 'I am sending you, by the same post, my Variations ... it is divided into self-contained movements (three). Also I make the theme by no means expressively prominent (at the head, so to speak). I almost wish that it could remain unknown as such ... Nonetheless, it had better remain as it is, at the rear. (It is—naturally I can disclose it to you—the first 11 bars of the 3rd movement.) ... The first movement is quasi an Andante, the second a Scherzo (it is a 2-voice 'endless' canon, endless *within* its two parts, but also with regard to these two together; one must play it in an almost aimable way, viz. try, despite the fast tempo, nevertheless to bring through the *espressivo* of the structure (likewise the 'cantabile'). The third movement is indeed a variation-sequence, in its construction. (The penultimate variation stands out in the spirit of a restless melody; the character of the others and of the Theme itself is fairly difficult to misunderstand.)'

1st Movement:	3 variations (or: Theme + 2 variations)	= 3 variations of the THEME
2nd Movement:	2 variations, repeated (=2x2)	= 4 variations of the THEME
3rd Movement:	THEME + 5 variations	= 5 variations of the THEME
Making:	THEME	+ 12 Variations.

The remarks about the rows have to be taken differently. Usually Webern did not talk about his rows. Reich liked to count and calculate; we know that he discussed such things with Berg. It is possible, therefore, that he made the remarks about the rows independently of Webern. Moreover, so far nobody knows whether and how *Originalreihe*, *Grundreihe* were used by Webern. I insisted<sup>‡</sup> on taking the rows which Webern numbered '1' as the basis for analysing his works (in row-analyses and others), but as far as I know that approach has attracted little attention, and we cannot blame Reich for something which is unfortunately common practice in Webern research. Also it seems that Webern used to have different *Grundreihen* for the different movements of one work, just as a Beethoven Symphony 'in D minor' does not mean that every movement is in that key. Leopold Spinner, when asked about the idea of 'Grundreihe'—and about the fact that in the first movement of op.24 the first 10 measures are not the first theme, but introductory (the main theme beginning in m. 10/11, with the degree of the prime row)—answered: 'Die 'Grundreihe' ist jeweils mit dem Thema bestimmt,—nicht umgekehrt!!'

<sup>‡</sup> Especially in the *Musica* article on op.24 previously cited, and in 'Wie Berg der richtige Reihe fand' in *Musik-Konzepte*, Sonderband Anton Webern II (Munich, 1987). (Ed.)

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## Jonathan Lloyd

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### **Symphony No. 1 (1983)**

World première: January 1989, Birmingham, CBSO c.  
Simon Rattle

### **Symphony No. 2 (1983-4)**

World première: 12 February 1988, Baden-Baden, SW  
German Radio Orchestra c. Lothar Zagrosek

### **Symphony No. 3 (1987)**

World première: 27 June 1987, Bracknell, Grosvenor  
Ensemble c. Keith Burston

### **Symphony No. 4 (1987-8)**

World première: 26 July 1988, London, Royal Albert Hall  
Prom, BBC SO c. Sir John Pritchard

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