

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

from HANS WERNER HENZE

Having heard Peter Maxwell Davies's *Taverner* only once and not yet having studied the score, I read Joseph Kerman's review (TEMPO 102) with interest, and was glad that he sees some of the outstanding qualities of the music. But I can't follow his conclusion about the libretto being 'misdirected'; for one of the things that stirred me so much at that performance was precisely the sense of a dialectic mind working in a theatre of ideas. I can't imagine a better – in fact, another – librettist for what Maxwell Davies wanted to create. In that sense a work like Schoenberg's *Die glückliche Hand* seems to me the only conceivable kind of ancestor for *Taverner*. In listening to the music I was very deeply moved by the feeling that a major artist was revealing himself with an honesty for which words are hard to find; but Maxwell Davies manages to bring it off because he finds not only the words but also the images, the structures and the sounds.

I learnt very much that evening; and because I am so grateful for having been shaken by the experience, I do not envy listeners who felt differently or just got stuck as a result of what they thought were shortcomings.

Marino, Italy

from STEFAN BAUER-MENDELBERG

I am delighted that you published Elliott Carter's fine tribute to Stefan Wolpe (No. 102, pp. 17-18)—indeed a major figure, and unforgettable to those who had the opportunity of knowing and working with him. But the piece contains one speculation that must be laid to rest immediately, and can be by simple reference to the actual chronology of events. I am referring to Carter's remarks, concerning the New York Philharmonic's performance of Wolpe's Symphony, to the effect that 'it may have been as a result of the strain of preparing for this performance-ordeal and the shock of the actual happening that he began to show signs of . . . Parkinson's Disease'.

Contrary to Carter, the Symphony was revised not after acceptance by the Philharmonic, but before. The revisions, which in any case were merely notational in nature, were undertaken at a steady but leisurely pace early in 1962, and the revised score was accepted that autumn—about six years after the work was completed, rather than, as Carter says, 'almost ten'—for performance in the 1963-64 season. For that year Wolpe was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship, which freed him from his normal academic duties, and I remember him setting off for Europe at the beginning of the summer of 1963, in splendid health. It was in Europe that he had the parts for the Symphony extracted—incompetently, as it turned out, but not under any pressure of time, as Carter alleges.

Wolpe returned to the United States early in December 1963, for the rehearsals and performances of the Symphony, which were scheduled for January 1964. Immediately after his arrival we met at the home of Edward Downes, who was to write the notes for the program, and I remember how shattered I was by the change in Wolpe's appearance: in six months he had aged twenty years, and what was before a vibrant, indeed volcanic, human being had become a wreck. The fact that the orchestral parts of the Symphony were all but unusable—there were, for example, no cues!—became apparent only when they were delivered to the Philharmonic's librarians later in the month, and neither it nor

the difficulties that developed during the rehearsals some weeks later can be held responsible for Wolpe's illness, already in full progress at the time.

It has been great sport, these many years, to flay the Philharmonic for its practices regarding contemporary music. But whatever the merits of other charges, that of having set the stage for Wolpe's illness certainly goes too far. Indeed, even if the sequence of events had been otherwise, I would have found it difficult to accept Carter's etiology. I know of no evidence that the strain of preparing for performances and the shock of the actual happenings cause Parkinson's Disease; surely, if they did, the number of composers who suffer from that dread malady would be substantially higher than it is.

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from ERIC WALTER WHITE

For those of us who did not have the good fortune last summer to visit the Stravinsky Exhibition at the New York Public Library, it was a pleasure to partake of Professor Spies's conducted tour in *TEMPO* no. 102. I am sure he was right to lay special emphasis on the music and the musical exhibits as such, and one followed with fascination his references to music manuscript material of various kinds. Those who are anxious to correct errors in their copies of Stravinsky's scores will be grateful to him for the tip about bar 168 in *Movements*. But when he goes on to cast doubt on the authenticity of the second *Ch* in the piano part at bar 180, then one must beg leave to differ. As far as I can judge, Stravinsky's *Ch*, which according to Professor Spies appears both in Stravinsky's draft and in the published score, is patently correct.

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OBITUARY

Dr. Alfred A. Kalmus, the distinguished music publisher who died in London on 24 September 1972, at the age of 83, was a lifelong champion of new music. In 1909 he joined Universal Edition in Vienna. Thirteen years later he left to found the Philharmonia edition of pocket scores, but eventually returned bringing the Philharmonia series with him. In 1936 he came to England to found Universal Edition's London branch. During the war years, the London branch was given shelter by Boosey and Hawkes, and Dr. Kalmus was not only concerned with his own catalogue, but was also involved with two new enterprises: the Boosey & Hawkes concerts which featured important contemporary music of a kind that was largely neglected elsewhere, and the establishment of the Anglo-Soviet Press, through which the latest works of Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Kabalevsky and others were made available. In 1949 he was able to reopen his own Universal publishing firm in London, and embark on a programme that was to add to his catalogue some of the leading young British composers of the post-war years—among them, Bennett, Birtwistle, and Wood. On the occasion of his 80th birthday they and many other composers, including Berio, Boulez, and Stockhausen, presented him with a special token of their affection and esteem, in the form of a sequence of short compositions entitled *A Garland for Dr. K.*

Dr. Kalmus was a director of the Performing Right Society, and founder member and vice-chairman of the Anglo-Austrian Music Society. He is survived by his wife and two daughters.