

Review: Views of Stravinsky

Reviewed Work(s): *Confronting Stravinsky* by Jann Pasler

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of manuscripts. Prefacing the catalogue is a foreword by Sir Charles Groves, a thoughtful appreciation (with musical illustrations) by Hugo Cole, a chronology and a classified list of works. A general bibliography and an excellent and detailed discography follow, together with an alphabetical list of Arnold's works and a general index.

I have only two small reservations, the first concerning the layout. The film music, including music for radio, television and the stage, together with Arnold's arrangements of other composers' music, should perhaps not have been treated separately but interpolated chronologically into the main catalogue. That would have shown where those works stand in relation to Arnold's serious output and would have made it easier to see in detail the pattern of the composer's work over a number of years. My other reservation relates to the bibliography. I feel that a thorough search would have revealed many more articles about Arnold; and why has material about the music not been included to indicate important critical reaction? Perhaps this omission will be rectified in a future edition. Nevertheless the value of this volume is considerable and it makes a most useful companion to lovers of Arnold's music.

STEWART R. CRAGGS

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## Views of Stravinsky

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**Confronting Stravinsky** edited by Jann Pasler  
California UP (Berkeley, 1986); xix, 380pp.;  
£40.75. ISBN 0 520 05403 2

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The title suggests the steady gaze, but what we have here is more evidence of the mad centrifugality in Stravinsky studies. Milton Babbitt and Charles Wuorinen have their eyes on pitch-class manipulations in the late works, with Babbitt setting out nobly to reconstruct a foray into *Movements* that the composer had made with him and Claudio Spies. Pieter van den Toorn and Allen Forte are playing familiar tunes in their octatonic and set-theoretical modes. David Hockney is painting pictures (four are reproduced, not well). Louis Cyr soberingly sets out the evidence that there is no such thing as *The Rite of Spring* but only a plethora of variants carrying with them different quantities of compositorial authority (and who was he to know, being only the vessel . . .?). Jonathan D. Kramer persuasively argues for a master durational scheme in *Agon* whereby the sections mesh together in ratios of 1.19:1. Simon Karlinsky tartly and Richard Taruskin more enthusiastically draw our attention to what we have been missing through lack of familiarity with the Russian background. Rex Lawson goes rattling on about the pianola, and Elmer Schönberger and Louis Andriessen make a looking-glass inspection of problems one had not realized were there. It is all a bit like the outer tableaux of *Petrushka*; and I suppose the sensitive subject at the middle, who of course could never be Stravinsky himself,

might have to be played by Edwin Allen, who gives an intensely touching account, ten years after, of how he glowed in the Beatific Vision of Igor and Vera while serving as their librarian.

The occasion for this performance was the International Stravinsky Symposium held at San Diego at the time of the centenary, in September 1982. Jann Pasler, who organized the conference, is the volume's conductor; she also contributes a piece on Stravinsky's collaboration with his designers, choreographers and dancers in *Petrushka* and *The Rite* (whichever one it was on that occasion). I might have concluded that the problem here is the ephemerality of dance, which is so poorly recorded by literary, pictorial or notational means. But Stravinsky's music seems no less hard to pin down.

PAUL GRIFFITHS

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## A Pole apart

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**Composing Myself** by Andrzej Panufnik  
Methuen (London, 1987); xi, 350pp.; £19.95.  
ISBN 0 413 58850 7

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Panufnik believes that the process of composition belongs to his 'intimate, private musical kitchen', and his autobiography only rarely touches on technical problems of musical creativity. Fortunately his editor persuaded him to describe the evolution of a method of composition based on the manipulation of three-note cells, first evident in the piano piece *Reflections* (1968). He also provides diagrams of the symmetries underlying some of the later works (*Universal Prayer*, *Triangles*, *Sinfonia di sfera*, *Sinfonia mistica* and *Arbor cosmica*), so demonstrating his conviction that, in any viable work of art, 'Order is Heav'n's first law'.

This absorbing book, with its wealth of information about Polish life and music before, during and after the last war, makes it clear that it has only been in recent times, in the perfect environment created for him by his wife, that Panufnik has become a truly prolific composer. At the outset of his career, it was his misfortune to live through a series of tragic events which all but blighted his growth as a creative artist, namely the Nazi occupation of Poland, in the course of which all his early works were destroyed, and the postwar 'socio-realistic' era, when the composer was condemned for his failure to express 'the joyful life under socialism'. Eventually *Sinfonia rustica*, his first major new work, 'ceased to exist', as the Minister of Culture put it, and for Poles Panufnik himself became a 'non-person' for two decades after his escape to England in 1954.

Panufnik might reasonably have expected to lead a life free from institutional and establishment malice once he had settled in this country, and so it is impossible not to feel indignation against the ban arbitrarily imposed on performances of his music by BBC music department 'extremists' in the early 1960s (Panufnik blames Glock and Keller). Even the first per-

formance of the prizewinning *Sinfonia sacra* was 'censored' from an otherwise complete live relay from Monaco on the grounds that it was 'unsuitable for broadcasting on any wave-length': an ironic twist in the career of a composer fanatical only in his opposition to all forms of fanaticism.

ALISTAIR WIGHTMAN

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## Records of records

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**Music Makers on Record** by Suvi Raj Grubb  
Hamish Hamilton (London, 1986); xi, 244pp.;  
£14.95. ISBN 0 241 11872 7

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Since the record companies began to acknowledge the record 'producer' by name as a new species of craftsman, part artist and part technician, the frequent credit from EMI to Suvi Raj Grubb has been an assurance of auditive quality on a consistently high level. In that context he has an unusual story to tell, for although there are now even 'Tonmeister' degrees to be obtained in the technological process of record production, the author of these memoirs had no formal training in music and was first guided almost entirely by instinct.

He was born into a Christian family in South India, and began to work for All-India Radio writing children's programmes and looking after the record library to feed the presenters (thereby discovering that Toscanini's record of the *Semiramide* overture began with 17½ blank grooves). There were hymns and other songs in the household, and Mr Grubb developed a strong singing voice, which led to his founder-membership of the Philharmonia Chorus soon after moving to London.

Luck rather than design brought him to the attention of Walter Legge, who gave him his first studio job as a production assistant during the great series of recordings with Klemperer in the 1960s. Mr Grubb has his share of Klemperer anecdotes: the comment to his daughter when the technique of patching from different 'takes' had been explained: 'Lotte! Ein Schwindel!', or the conductor's dismay at the recording schedule for the *Missa solennis*: 'You cannot "resurrexit" before you "sepultus est"'. I have great sorrow'.

Barenboim's advent brought the writer one of his happiest professional associations. But his adulation is untempered by the discrimination he shows in relation to other artists. The circumstances by which Barenboim was able to learn his craft of conducting opera at the expense of the Edinburgh Festival and its audiences remain enigmatic; the *Don Giovanni* album it produced caused all manner of studio complications, but no doubts whether the product was worth the effort are admitted. For a time Mr Grubb was specially noted for piano recordings, and his observations on the technical problems of keyboard sound and its reproduction are of much interest. He inveighs against the 'exclusivity clauses' in artists' contracts that have consigned more than one outstanding recording

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