

## Musical Notations on Stamps: Part 11

By J. Posell

### CHINA

Scott 1858

Michel 1878

A stamp was issued June 6, 1983, in a two stamp set for the 6th National People's Congress. The stamp pictures that national anthem of the Peoples Republic and the music is identical with that on the stamp issued on 1979 (Scott 1501; Michel 1511). The inscriptions, the denomination and the design in the upper left corner have been changed (see FAP Journal 7, June 1980). The composer, Nie Erh (Scott 1773; Michel 1791) was extensively described in the last installment, FAP Journal 10, March 1983).



## GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

Scott 2313

Michel 2764

A souvenir sheet issued Jan. 11, 1983, for the 150th anniversary of the birth of this great German composer Johannes Brahms (born in Hamburg May 7, 1833) contains the notation in original manuscript of a melody he sent in a letter to Clara Schumann dated Sept. 12, 1868. Brahms, then vacationing in the mountains, had sent Clara a birthday gift and in the letter 8 bars of a notation which he incorporated eight years later as the famous horn motive of the fourth movement of his first symphony in C minor. Above the melody he inscribed "Also blus das Alphorn heut" (Thus blew the Alpine horn today) which would indicate that he had heard the melody played on an Alpine horn and then transmitted it to paper with a fragment of sentimental verse below. It is unlikely that the words and the melody belong together as variants are to be found in collections of German folk poetry. Brahms did not use this melody in any of his other works and it is only to be found in this symphony composed in 1876. As stated on the sheet, the original autograph is found in the German State Library in Berlin, East Germany. Clara Schumann, 14 years older than Brahms and widow of Robert Schumann who had died in 1856, was greatly admired by Brahms with whom she had a life-long warm friendship. Brahms, one of the great masters of music, was a prolific composer whose works are too numerous to mention here. His most noted and popular compositions are the four symphonies, four concertos (two for piano, one for violin, double concerto for violin and cello) the German Requiem, the Alto Rhapsody, plus chamber music, sonatas, songs, etc., etc. He died in Vienna April 3, 1897, of cancer of the liver. It is of interest to note that in 1972 upon the 75th anniversary of his death, the only countries which issued stamps in his memory were Niger and Dahomey whose areas Brahms had never visited and Ras Al Khaima which did not even exist in his day. Germany and Austria, the two countries closest to him, had evidently forgotten the anniversary.



## GREECE

Scott 1466

Michel 1525

A stamp was issued July 11, 1983, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Manolis Kalomiris an eminent Greek composer. Kalomiris was born in Smyrna, Turkey, Dec. 26, 1883. He studied at the Vienna Conservatory from 1901 to 1906, then accepted a post in Russia as piano teacher at the Oblensky Lyceum in Kharkov where he remained until 1910. He then returned to Greece and became instructor at the Athens School of Music from 1911 to 1919. In 1919 he founded the Hellenic Conservatory of Athens where he remained until 1926. In that year he founded the present National Conservatory of Athens and remained its director until 1948. Kalomiris was a highly esteemed music educator and was responsible for two generations of Greek composers. He was a protagonist of Greek nationalism in music and almost all of his works are based on Greek folksong patterns or are inspired by Hellenic subjects. He was a very active composer with 222 opus numbers to his credit including operas, ballets, orchestral music, songs, chamber music, etc. He died in Athens April 3, 1962. The music on the stamp is from the first of two Rhapsodies for piano both written in 1921, with a slight rearrangement of notation indulged in by the designer.



## HUNGARY

Scott 2775

Michel 3593

Souvenir sheets both perforate and imperforate were issued Dec. 6, 1982, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Zoltán Kodály, the outstanding composer and ethnomusicologist (born Dec. 16, 1882, in Kecskemét). The notation at the bottom is the opening of the folk song, "Fölszállott a Páva" (Fly, Peacock Fly). The "peacock" had a special significance for Kodály. It was originally a folk song which expresses all the bitterness of the down-trodden peasantry. That it flew to the top of the roof of the County House to liberate prisoners is symbolic. The County House represents both the administration and authority. "Shadowing the prison, peacocks upward flying, brought to silent captives, hope when hope was dying". In 1937, for the 30th anniversary of the Socialist Workers Chorus, Kodály composed a forceful musical setting of the song with a text of revolutionary import by Endre Ady, famous Hungarian poet.


At this time Hungary's official policy was already allied with Nazi Germany and several performances of the "peacock" were banned by the police because of its revolutionary words and its stirring music, Kodály remained in Hungary during the war choosing "internal emigration", suffering deprivations with the rest of the population and expressing his protest in other ways. In 1939 he was commissioned by the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam to compose a work celebrating its 50th anniversary. He used the "peacock" which had already been banned in Hungary, and composed a set of orchestral variations which was first performed in Amsterdam on Nov. 23, 1939, with Willem Mengelberg conducting. "The Peacock Variations" has since become one of his best known compositions.

An indefatigable researcher in Hungarian folk music, Kodály worked for many years alone and later with Béla Bartók, travelling the countryside in small villages, equipped with notebooks and with phonograph and wax cylinder, recording thousands of old native peasant songs many of which he later used in his own compositions. These efforts resulted in many books, collections and lectures to scientific and historical bodies. Their researches also took them beyond the borders of Hungary into neighboring countries where, to their great surprise they found basic similarities and an ancient musical relationship between the music of these various peoples and the native Hungarian melodies. Such is the variant version of the second line as sung by the Mari or Cheremis peoples of the Volga regions, although this particular melody was gathered in a collection formed by Robert Lach of Vienna from prisoners of World War I.

Kodály was the teacher of several generations of Hungarian composers and was also interested in the teaching of music in the schools and in the development of choral singing in the nation. Other works for which he is famous are the opera "Háry Janos", the "Psalmus Hungaricus", "Dances of Galanta", "Concerto for Orchestra"; also chamber music, songs, choruses, sonatas, concertos, etc. He died in Budapest March 6, 1967



**Pariando**



Le- szál- lott a pá- va      Vár- me- gye- há- zá- ra.

De nem ám a ra- bok      Sta- ba- du- lá- ná- ra.

NB      NB

Example 10. 'Le szállott a páva', folksong compared to a Mari folksong.

## KOREA (South)

Scott ???

Michel 1319

Issued May 15, 1983. Teacher's Day was proclaimed on Sept. 21, 1963, by the Junior Red Cross of Chungnam Province as the day designated for the students to show their gratitude and indebtedness to their teachers. In 1965 the date was changed to May 15 and in 1973 Teacher's Day was abolished by the government. It was revived in 1982 and May 15 was again officially declared Teacher's Day. The stamp was issued to help recognize national respect for teachers who are responsible for the very core of national development. "Song of Teacher's Day" was composed by Kim, Tae-hyung, with words by Yung, Seok-jung. The notation is taken from the last four bars of the song.  
(From information bulletin, Chuichi Maeda)



## MONACO

Scott 1389

Michel 1594

Issued Nov. 9, 1983, to mark the 125th anniversary of the birth of Giacomo Puccini. Giacomo Puccini, celebrated operatic composer, was born in Luca Dec. 22, 1858, and died in Brussels Nov. 29, 1924. Although he came from a long musical family, he did not show great interest in music as a child but, after persuasive and untiring patience from his teacher at the Instituto Musical of Luca, his enthusiasm was aroused and Puccini soon became a good pianist and organist. He was first a church organist but soon turned to composition. The years 1880 to 1883 were spent at the Milan Conservatory in serious study and in 1884 his first stage work "Le Ville" was produced with only moderate success. However, when "Manon Lescaut" appeared in 1894 Puccini achieved a veritable triumph. This was soon followed by "La Bohème", "Tosca" and "Madame Butterfly", his three greatest achievements. "Butterfly" was hissed at its premiere at La Scala on Feb. 17, 1904. Puccini then withdrew the score, made some changes and the revised version was greeted with frenzied applause in Brescia on May 28 of the same year. These four operas established him as the foremost Italian operatic composer of the day even rivaling Verdi in the number of performances and they have retained their popularity and appeal to this day. Other operas followed "Butterfly" but they have never achieved the popularity of his earlier works. This is the fifth postal issue honoring Puccini but the only one containing notation. Previous issues are: Italy (Scott 746; Michel 1012) marking the centenary of his birth with a stage scene of the first act of "La Bohème". The other three all portray a scene or are symbolic of "Madame Butterfly": Ras Al Khaima in 1969 (Scott T225; Michel 284), Italy (Scott 1168; Michel 1461) for the 50th anniversary of his death and a local issue from Bernera Islands in 1978. The fragmentary notation on this stamp is a very important theme in the opera and first occurs in Act 1 at the end of the dialogue between Pinkerton and Sharpless and just before the entrance of Butterfly and the wedding party. It is next heard briefly during Butterfly's recitative in the same act. It appears again in Act 2 during the scene between Butterfly and Yamadori and finally it is used as the opening theme of the long orchestral interlude before the opening of Act 3.



## MONACO

Scott 1390

Michel 1593

A stamp, issued Nov. 9, 1983 pictured Johannes Brahms. The life of a philatelic tune detective does not always run smoothly. We are often confronted with unfamiliar musical quotations, some very difficult to identify: notations with which the designer has taken liberties and notation which is merely symbolic of music and which has no relation to the composer on the stamp. But the most serious errors are the use of one composer's music on another composer's stamp. This occurred in the now famous use of a Schubert song on a stamp for Schumann issued in East Germany in 1956. And now another such mishap has luckily been averted. The original illustrated announcement of the two stamps to be issued in Monaco for the anniversaries of Johannes Brahms and Giacomo Puccini contained correct notation for Puccini but an unknown and puzzling bar of music for Brahms. The postal authorities in Monaco were approached for an explanation and word finally came that the designer had erroneously used a quotation from Cesar Franck and that the correction would be made before the stamp was issued on Nov. 9<sup>th</sup> and that Brahms would be properly honored with Brahms. Pictured is the projected original design of the stamp plus the bar of music which was taken from the oratorio "The Beatitudes" (the eighth Beatitude) by Cesar Franck and which was researched and sent by the ever resourceful Ethel Bloesch. The new music on the revised stamp is taken from "Ein deutsches Requiem", op. 45, of Brahms; section six using the soprano voice of the choral part, the corresponding text which is "Hölle, wo is dein Sieg".





## NORWAY

Scott 823

Michel 885

A stamp was issued May 8, 1983 for Norway's famous composer and pianist Edvard Hagerup Grieg. He was born in Bergen June 15, 1843, and died there Sept. 4, 1907. His great-grandfather Alexander Greig of Scotland emigrated to Norway about 1765 and changed his name to Grieg. One of the most famous of Scandinavian composers, Grieg's importance lies in the fact that he did not shrink from imbuing his works with a strong strain of Scandinavian tonality to which is due most of their charm. He was married to his cousin the singer Nina Hagerup for whom he composed his songs. A prolific composer, he is best known today for his piano concerto in a-minor, the Peer Gynt music, his chamber music, orchestral suites, sonatas and songs. Previous stamps issued for Grieg are a set of four issued in 1943 in Norway (Scott 255-258; Michel 287-290), to commemorate the centenary of his birth and a single stamp from Russia (Scott 2023; Michel 2034) to commemorate the 50th anniversary of his death. The music on this stamp is the opening of the piano concerto in a-minor op. 16 composed in 1868, and one of the most popular concertos in the repertoire.



## RUSSIA (Soviet Union)

Scott 5128

Michel 5258

Issued to honor the 100th anniversary of Alexander Vasilievich Alexandrov, Soviet composer, conductor and composer of the national anthem of the Soviet Union. Alexandrov was born April 1, 1883, in Plakhino (Riazan Govt.) (Groves erroneously states he was born in St. Petersburg) and died in Berlin while on a concert tour July 8, 1946 (Groves erroneously states he died in Moscow). He was well trained having studied with Glazunov and Liadov at the St. Petersburg Conservatory and with Vasilenko at the Moscow Conservatory. A leading figure in Soviet music, he taught at the Moscow Conservatory from 1918 and was made head of the choral department in 1925. Choral music became his specialty and he composed many works for the Soviet Army Song and Dance Ensemble which he founded in 1928 and which he led to great success both at home and abroad. From 1929 to 1936 he was assistant dean of the conducting faculty of the armed forces. In 1937 he was awarded the title of People's Artist of the Soviet Union and in 1943 he became a major general and a Doctor of Art History. Besides many choral works Alexandrov also composed about 60 other songs, about 70 folk song arrangements, operas and instrumental pieces. Some of the works for which he is noted and which achieved great popularity in their time are the "Cantata about Stalin", "Sacred War", the excellent choral arrangements of Russian folk songs, "The Vorobyovy Hills", "Rustle Not, O Green Oak Copse", "White Snows", the Ukrainian song "Unsaddle Your Horses, Lads" as well as marching songs of the Civil War. His song "Hymn to the Bolshevik Party" with a new set of words, was proclaimed as the new Soviet national anthem on March 15, 1944, replacing the "International". The notation on the stamp is printed in 2/4 time however; in most editions, including an official edition printed by Amrus, N.Y., the music is in 4/4 time. The version in National Anthems of the World, Arco Publishing Co. 1978, contains the anthem in 2/4 time. Source: Great Soviet Encyclopedia, Macmillan 1973.



## RUSSIA (Soviet Union)

Scott 5144

Michel 5274

Aram Ilyich Khachaturian, brilliant Russian composer of Armenian extraction, was born in Tiflis (Tbilisi) June 6, 1903. As a youth he showed an early love of music but no precocious gifts. He played tenor horn in the school band and taught himself to play the piano. After the Civil War in 1922 his family moved to Moscow and he enrolled in the Gnessin Academy as a cello student. Here his creative gifts developed and in 1925 he entered the composition class of Gnessin himself. His early works were performed successfully and in 1929 he entered the Moscow Conservatory in the composition class of Nikolai Miaskovsky. He graduated in 1934 but continued with post graduate studies until 1937 by which time he was already an established composer. His accepted works at this time were the Trio for Clarinet, Violin and Piano, his 1st Symphony and the Piano Concerto which brought him international acclaim. He became active in the newly formed Union of Soviet Composers in 1937 first as a deputy chairman and later as a vice president but when the Union came under attack by the Central Committee of the Communist Party in 1948, Khachaturian was one of the major composers along with Shostakovich and Prokofiev who were accused of 'formalism' and modern tendencies. Khachaturian admitted his deviations and apologized and for the next two years he concentrated on writing for film scores. After Stalin's death in 1953 he was the first among prominent musicians to plead publicly for fewer government restraints and greater artistic freedom. His most noted compositions are the ballets "Gayane" with its famous Sabre Dance and "Spartacus", the violin and piano concertos, the Masquerade Suite, the sonatas for violin and piano and many other works. His music is tinged with Armenian and Oriental flavor but governed by classical Russian discipline. He died in Moscow May 1, 1978. The notation on the stamp is taken from the "Sonata-Monologue" for violin solo published in 1976.

