

Musical Notations on Stamps, Part 16

By J. Posell

BRAZIL

Scott 2125

Michel 2242

This stamp was issued January 5, 1988, to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Brazil National Archives which was established by an Imperial Degree dated January 2, 1938. The stamp consists of two images. On the left is a page from a book of Gregorian chants; on the right is a stylized computer system which represents the modernization of the new National Archives.



COLOMBIA

Scott 974

Michel 1724

This stamp was issued on 25 May 1988. The National Anthem of Colombia was composed by Orestes Sindici (1837-1904) an Italian tenor who arrived in Bogota with an Italian opera company and decided to settle in that country. The text is by Rafael Nunez (1825-1894) a statesman who served four terms as president of Colombia. The anthem was first sung in public in about 1905. The stamp commemorates the 150th anniversary of the birth of the composer.

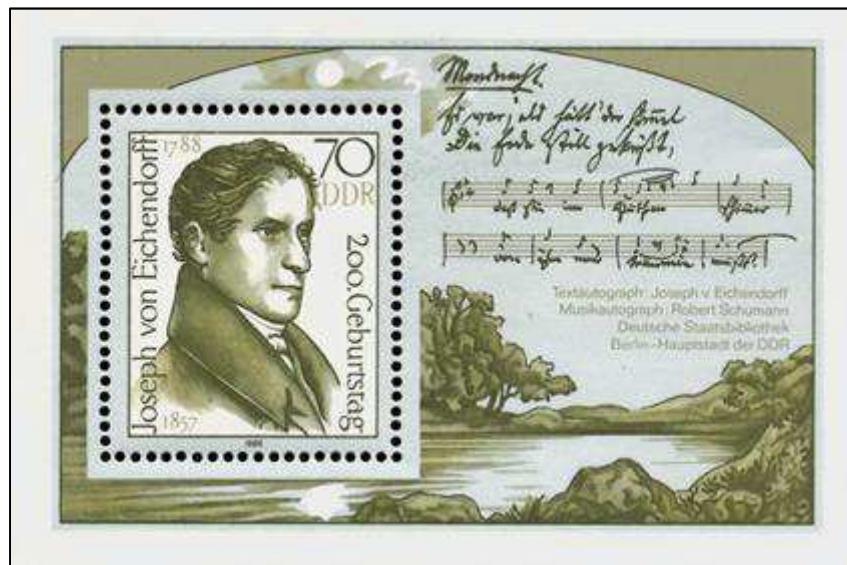


GERMANY (DDR)

Scott 2662

Michel 3155

Joseph von Eichendorff, German poet, was born March 10, 1788, and died Nov. 26, 1857. His first published work was a novel but he is probably the most noteworthy German romantic lyricist of his time. A great many of his poems were set to music and among the many composers who have utilized his works in songs are Brahms, Robert Franz, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Hugo Wolf, Nicolai, Medtner, Reger, Schoeck, Dame Ethel Smyth and Richard Strauss. Operas to his texts were composed by Paumgartner and Schoeck. The musical quotation is from the autographed manuscripts of Robert Schumann's "Mondnacht" No. 5 of the Liederkreis op. 39. The original is in the German State Library in Berlin.



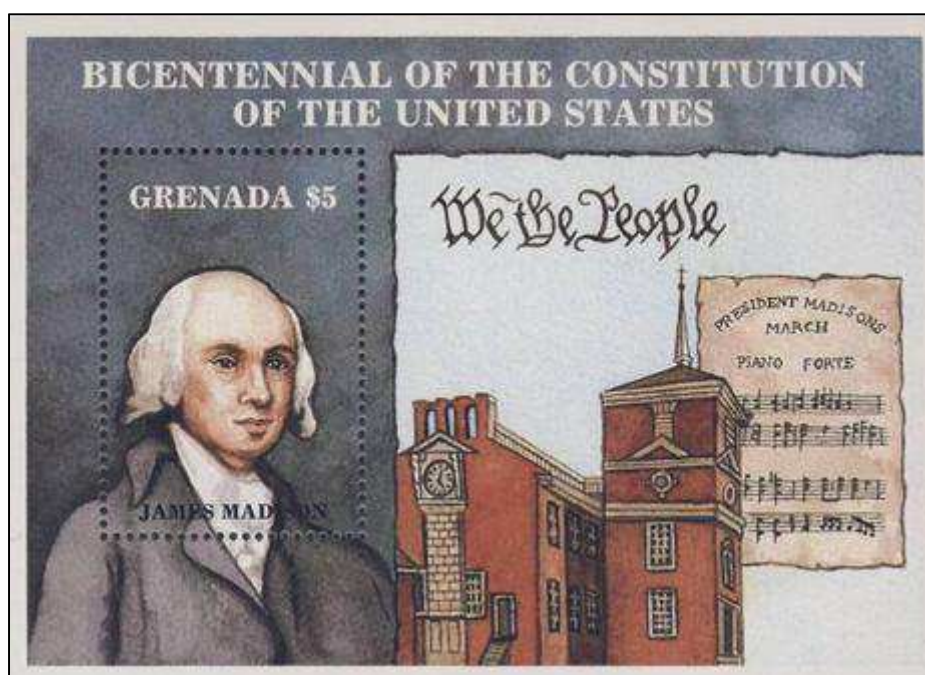
GRENADA

Scott ???

Michel 1701

A souvenir sheet was issued by Grenada to commemorate the bicentennial of the Constitution of the United States in 1789. Illustrated are a portrait of James Madison on the left and a fragment of the "President Madison's March". After a long and diligent search by the redoubtable Ethel Bloesch, a photostat copy of the original printed march published in 1809 was obtained from the Library of Congress. There are a few minor errors in notation which might be attributed to the differences from the original to the designer, but there is no doubt that the copy we now have served as the model for the notation on the sheet. Richard J. Wolf's bibliography *Secular Music in America 1801 - 1825* lists six marches for President James Madison. Two are entitled "President Madison's March" and the other four have the title "Madison's March". The march used on the sheet was composed by Peter (Pedro) Weldon who was active in New York from about 1797 to 1810 after which date nothing is known of him. He was possibly of Spanish, Portuguese or Brazilian origin and was in Jamaica before coming to the United States. Pianist, violinist, music publisher and composer, he supposedly was a music teacher to Thomas Jefferson's daughter. Besides the "President Madison's March" he composed the "New York Serenading Waltz", "La Battalla de Baylen" (The battle of Baylen and the surrender of General Dupont to the patriotic Spanish army under the command of General Castanos and Reding), "Favorita waltz brazillense", "Marcha del Gen. Palafox" and "The siege of Gerona". Some of his works were printed in several different editions and were composed for small combinations of instruments (piano, violin, flute, etc.). It is not known whether a presidential march was actually played at the inauguration of President Madison.

(Information from the *New Grove Dictionary of American Music* and Wolf's *Secular Music in America*)



KOREA (North)

Scott ???

Michel 2802

On Jan. 29, 1987, a souvenir sheet was issued to mark the death anniversaries of Maurice Ravel (50th) and other composers. Each stamp pictures the composer, a musical instrument and notation from one of his works. Ethel Bloesch has been able to identify the music. The music on the Ravel stamp is from his famous ballet "Bolero" which was commissioned by Ida Rubinstein and was first performed by her in Paris Nov. 22, 1928. In the margins of the whole sheet are also commemorative dates for Verdi's "Otello" which was first produced at La Scala Feb. 5, 1887 and Mozart's "Don Giovanni" first produced at the National Theatre in Prague Oct. 29, 1787.



KOREA (North)

Scott ???

Michel 2802

On Jan. 29, 1987, a souvenir sheet was issued with several composers. Each stamp pictures the composer, a musical instrument and notation from one of his works. This stamp pictures the Korean composer Kim Og Song (1916-1965). Ethel Bloesch has been able to identify the music with the exception of Kim Og Song. Kim Og Song, composer of communist and patriotic songs, is noted mainly for his revolutionary song "To a Decisive Battle" composed in 1951 during the war between North Korea and the United Nations forces (called the Fatherland Liberation War). In the margins of the whole sheet are also commemorative dates for Verdi's "Otello" which was first produced at La Scala Feb. 5, 1887 and Mozart's "Don Giovanni" first produced at the National Theatre in Prague Oct. 29, 1787.



KOREA (North)

Scott ???

Michel 2804

On Jan. 29, 1987, a souvenir sheet was issued to mark the death anniversary of J.B. Lully (300th) and other composers. Each stamp pictures the composer, a musical instrument and notation from one of his works. Ethel Bloesch has been able to identify the music with the exception of Lully. In the margins of the whole sheet are also commemorative dates for Verdi's "Otello" which was first produced at La Scala Feb. 5, 1887 and Mozart's "Don Giovanni" first produced at the National Theatre in Prague Oct. 29, 1787.

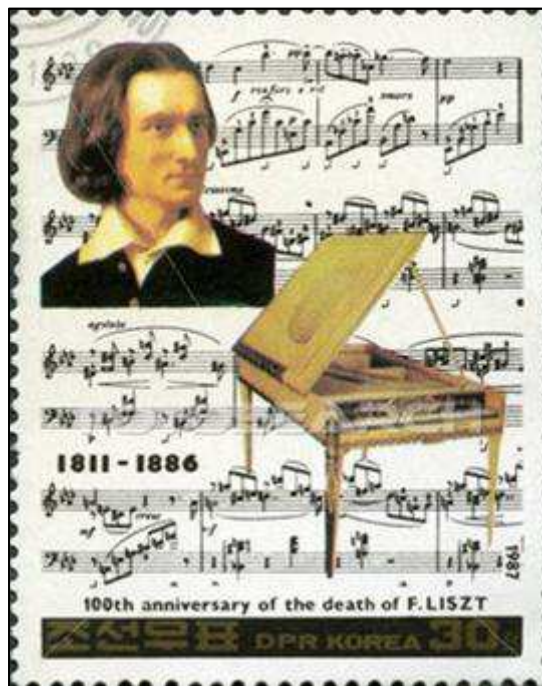


KOREA (North)

Scott ???

Michel 2802

On Jan. 29, 1987, a souvenir sheet was issued to mark the death anniversary of Franz Liszt (100th) and other composers. Each stamp pictures the composer, a musical instrument and notation from one of his works. Ethel Bloesch has been able to identify the music. The music on the Liszt stamp is taken from "Harmonies poetiques et Religieuses No. 7 Funerailles" for piano. In the margins of the whole sheet are also commemorative dates for Verdi's "Otello" which was first produced at La Scala Feb. 5, 1887 and Mozart's "Don Giovanni" first produced at the National Theatre in Prague Oct. 29, 1787.

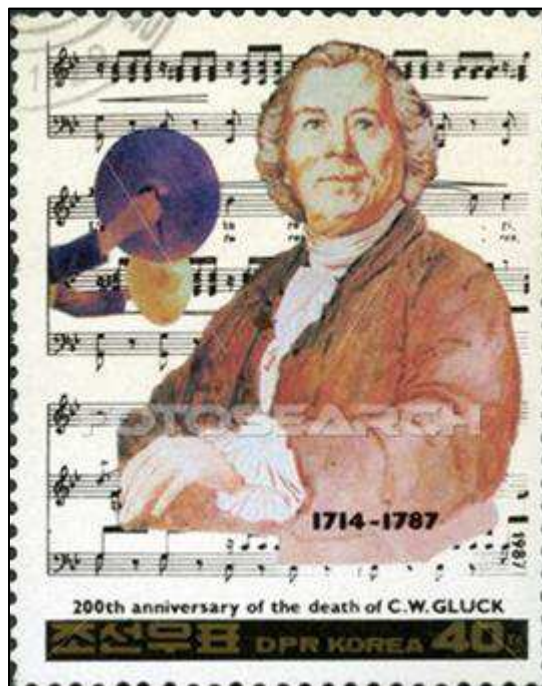


KOREA (North)

Scott ???

Michel 2807

On Jan. 29, 1987, a souvenir sheet was issued to mark the death anniversaries of, Christoph W. Gluck (200th) and other composers. Each stamp pictures the composer, a musical instrument and notation from one of his works. Ethel Bloesch has been able to identify the music. The music on the Gluck stamp is from his opera "Parade ed Elena" first produced in Vienna Nov. 30, 1770. In the margins of the whole sheet are also commemorative dates for Verdi's "Otello" which was first produced at La Scala Feb. 5, 1887 and Mozart's "Don Giovanni" first produced at the National Theatre in Prague Oct. 29, 1787.



KOREA (South)

Scott 869

Michel 1575

Two stamps were issued Nov.15, 1988, the fourth set in the popular music series first begun in 1985. The first in 4/4 time entitled "Homesick" with the music composed by Hong Nan Parr. This song is very popular both with children and with adults.



KOREA (South)

Scott 870

Michel 1576

Two stamps were issued Nov.15, 1988, the fourth set in the popular music series first begun in 1985. The second, in 6/8 time, is entitled "The Pioneer" and was composed by Cho Doo-nam with words by Yun Nae-yong. This song is very popular both with children and with adults.



LIECHTENSTEIN

Scott 903

Michel 963

Josef Gabriel Rheinberger was a pedagogue, composer and choral conductor. Rheinberger was born in Vaduz, Liechtenstein, March 17, 1839. A musical prodigy, he played piano at the age of 5 and was a good organist at 7. He entered the Munich Conservatory in 1851 and, after graduating with the highest honors, he earned his livelihood giving private lessons and as accompanist of the Munich Gesangverein, of which he became conductor in 1864. For six years he served as organist at St. Michael's cathedral and in 1859 he succeeded his teacher as professor of piano at the conservatory. He also soon became professor of composition and of organ. Rheinberger's reputation as a teacher was unsurpassed and pupils came to him from all parts of the world. As a composer his technical mastery compels respect and admiration. His greatest accomplishments are his 20 organ sonatas which rank among the greatest works in organ literature. He died in Munich Nov. 25, 1901, and the stamp commemorates the 150th anniversary of his birth. The musical notation in the background is the opening of the second movement, Cantilene, from the organ sonata No. 11 in d minor op. 148. The autograph manuscript is found in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich. Although a prolific composer of almost 200 works including comic operas, symphonies, oratorios, cantatas, masses, solo and instrumental works, his music is no longer performed with the exception of his 20 organ sonatas which are unsurpassed and are in a class of their own.



MADAGASCAR (Malagasy Republic)

Scott 973

Michel 1146

A set of six stamps and a souvenir sheet honoring the birth or death anniversaries of famous composers and including Elvis Presley (how did he get in here ?) was issued in October 1988. The George Gershwin stamp was very likely issued for the 90th anniversary of his birth in 1898 though there are no anniversary dates mentioned. The stamp is inscribed "Rhapsody in Blue" and pictures Gershwin writing at the piano. The notation is indecipherable and does not resemble anything like the "Rhapsody". It must therefore be assumed that the designer merely intended us to know that the "Rhapsody in Blue" was composed by George Gershwin.

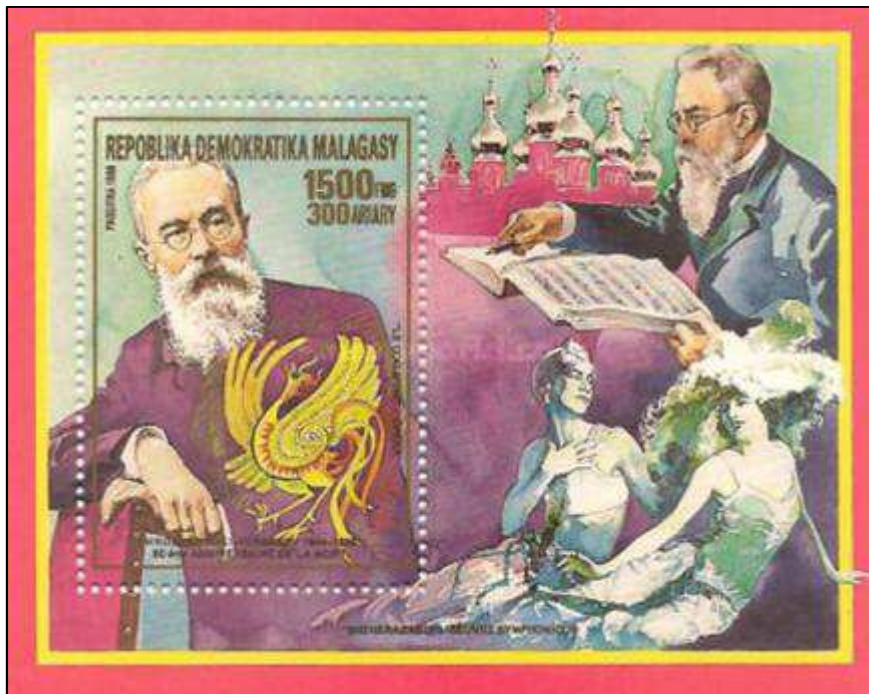


MADAGASCAR (Malagasy Republic)

Scott 975

Michel 1148

A set of six stamps and a souvenir sheet honoring the birth or death anniversaries of famous composers and including Elvis Presley (how did he get in here?) was issued in October 1988. The souvenir sheet commemorates the 80th anniversary of the death of Nikolai Andreyevich Rimsky-Korsakov. The portrait on the left is taken from a photograph of the composer. Inserted is a drawing portraying the "Golden Cockerel", title of his last and most famous opera (at least here in America). The portrait on the right is taken from the painting by Valentin Alexandrovich Serov, one of Russian's famous portrait painters and the son of composer Alexander N. Serov (The portrait of Shaliapin, Russia 3508, is also by Serov). The allegorical drawing is of Sheherazade spinning her tales to the Sultan Sharhriar. The structure at the top is not the St. Petersburg Conservatory as is reported in Scott Stamp Monthly but a poor replica of St. Basil's Cathedral in Moscow. Here again, the notation pictured on the musical score is nothing authentic but must be considered the artist's conception.



MALTA

Scott B60-62

Michel 779-781

A set of three stamps was issued for Christmas 1987. The set reproduces three illuminated initial letters from choral books once owned by the Veneranda Assembla (chaplains) of the Knights of Malta and preserved in their church of St. John in Valetta. Part of the Latin text and ancient musical notation is shown on the stamps. I quote verbatim from the official bulletin which was kindly sent by Chuichi Maeda explaining in greater detail the history of these choral books.

"Although formerly thought to have been brought from Rhodes - evacuated by the Knights of the Order of St. John in January 1523 - it now seems more probable that the set of choral books was a gift of Grand Master Philippe Villers de l'Isle Adam (died 1534) which was then serving as the Conventual Church of the Order, prior to the foundation of Valletta and the subsequent move to it of all the administrative organs. In the early months of the Order's rule in Malta, a fire had gutted the choir of St. Lawrence Church, necessitating a renewal of most appurtenances connected with the liturgical services of the Veneranda Assembla. The occasion gave the Grand Master the opportunity of commissioning a splendid set of choral books, so that many of the illuminations, as well as the often profusely decorated borders, frequently carry the coat-of-arms of the French Grand Master."

Ethel Bloesch clarifies further by saying "The Veneranda Assembla refers to the Veneral Assembly of chaplains, the arm of the Knights of Malta that furnished the ecclesiastical personnel (not the military or the sailors). They were the ones who would need the choir books, apparently."

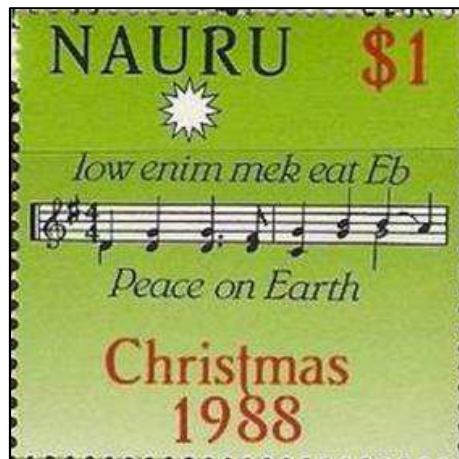


NAURU

Scott 355-57

Michel 354-356

This island in the South Pacific issued a set of three stamps for Christmas 1988 containing notation of the famous hymn "Hark the herald angels sing". The music was composed by Felix Mendelssohn in 1840 and the words are by Charles Wesley, famous preacher and hymn writer and brother of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism.



PERU

Scott 943

Michel 1384

Alfonso de Silva, composer, was born Dec. 22, 1903 in Callao, Peru, and began his studies at the Academia Alcedo where he studied violin and piano. None of his teachers could appreciate or recognize the undeniable creative talent that he possessed and discouraged any possibility of a professional music career because he could not play scales perfectly. His first recognition came from outside the music world. The Spanish consul in Lima (A. Pinilla Rambard), enthusiastic over Silva's first "Lieders", obtained a scholarship for him at the Madrid Conservatory where he was admitted without an entrance examination. There, Silva completed three years of harmony, but his Bohemian nature caused him to abandon the Conservatory and go to Paris and later to Berlin. By then his career was spent. Silva composed most of his works when he was about twenty years of age. Afterwards, without a solid technique, his inspiration waned as his health declined, and he only managed to revise sketches and to repeat himself. With his purely European training, Silva showed almost no Peruvian themes with the exception of "Cancion India" for violin and piano. In spite of his short life, the catalogue of his works published by R. Holzman in the Bibliographic Bulletin of the University of San Marcos (Dec. 1943) shows a considerable amount of works: 16 manuscripts for piano, one for two pianos, 18 for voice and piano, 9 for violin and piano, 3 for string quartet, and some arrangements for orchestra. The illustrated song, "Espléndidos de flores", was published in Lima in 1920. Silva died May 7, 1937, in Lima at the age of 34.

(Information supplied by Ethel Bloesch. Translated from the Spanish by Scott Haigh).



URUGUAY

Scott ???

Michel 1791

Gerardo Hernan Matos Rodriguez was a composer of popular dance tunes of which the most famous is his tango, "La cumparsita". Whatever meager information is contained in this article is due to the never-ceasing efforts of Ethel Bloesch to unearth the impossible. There are some slight discrepancies in the various sources she consulted, but generally a composite picture of the composer can be drawn. On the stamp his name is spelled Matos; some of the sources consulted spell it Mattos. He was born in Montevideo, Uruguay, in either 1896 or 1897 and died of a paralytic stroke there in April 1948 at the age of 51. He composed "La cumparsita" in 1916 (or 1917) while an architecture student at the University of Uruguay. He lived in Buenos Aires for many years and most of his works were known as Argentine tangos. When it first appeared, the Argentine tango scandalized all respectable people. It was condemned by the German Kaiser, the King of Italy, the Queen of England, the Pope, the Archbishop of Lyon, who were all in agreement; they detested the tango. Dr. Campbell Morgan, at an Atlanta, Ga., Bible conference, declared that the tango was a reversion to the ape, etc., etc. It finally became fashionable in Parisian society after 1907 and in England from 1912. After World War I, it became the most popular ballroom dance. It should be noted that when the waltz was first introduced to Vienna it was met with the same moral condemnation. The few sources quoted are from an obituary in the N.Y. Times, a reference to the composer's death in Time and a reference to "La cumparsita" in the article on "Tango" in the New Grove Dictionary. No references were found in any biographical dictionary, even those devoted to Latin American composers.

