

Musical Notations on Stamps, Part 15

By J. Posell

AUSTRIA

Scott 1417

Michel 1908

Austria issued a stamp in honor of perhaps the most famous of Christmas Hymns, "Silent Night, Holy Night". The stamp pictures Franz Gruber and Josef Mohr with notation of the hymn at the bottom. The history of this world famous song is well known but it bears repeating here. It was first heard in the little parish church at Oberndorf, Salzburg. The words were written by Pastor Josef Mohr and the music was composed by Franz Xaver Gruber, a village teacher, organist and choirmaster on Christmas eve in 1818. The beautiful melody was first set to a guitar accompaniment because mice and the inroads of time had eaten into the bellows of the old church organ and the guitar was the only instrument available. Eighteen years later an organ builder, while repairing the church organ, heard it and transcribed it for a Tyrolean family, singers of folk songs, who first sang it in public in Leipzig, Germany, in 1831. Previous stamps commemorating "Silent Night, Holy Night" were issued by Austria in 1948 (Scott 558; Michel 928) and in 1968 (Scott 823; Michel 1276).



AUSTRIA

Scott 1371

Michel 1866

Although this stamp commemorates the 175th anniversary of the birth of Hungary's famous composer, pianist, teacher and conductor, Franz Liszt (1811-1886), it could also honor the 100th anniversary of his death in 1886. The stamp contains a portrait of Liszt as a young man, the house in Raiding, Hungary, where he was born and an excerpt (four horns) from the score of his symphonic poem No. 3, "Les Préludes", composed in 1854 and based on "Méditations Poétiques" of Lamartine.



BRAZIL

Scott 2051

Michel 2175

A stamp was issued to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the birth of this Brazilian opera composer Gomes, Antonio Carlos, with notation from the opening of the overture to his most famous opera *Il Guarany*. Gomes was born July 11, 1836 in Campinas, Brazil, of Portuguese parents.

Il Guarany was written to a story by a Brazilian national writer, José Alencar who cultivated Indian folklore in his novels. The opera is Italian in musical idiom as well as in the language of the libretto and was first produced at La Scala in Italy before it was heard in Brazil. *Il Guarany* is the first significant operatic work by a Latin American composer and exemplifies the Italian influence in Brazilian music at that time. Gomes composed eight serious operas of which four were produced at La Scala. These were *Il Guarany* in 1870, *Fosca* in 1873, *Maria Tudor* in 1879 and *Condor* in 1891. He was known as the Brazilian Verdi and died in Para on Sept. 16, 1896.



BRAZIL

Scott 2095

Michel 2206

This stamp was issued to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the birth of famed composer Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959). Pictured with a portrait of Villa-Lobos as conductor are a violoncello, a guitar and a bassoon. The few notes at the bottom must be considered abstract and nothing authentic.



Addendum: Relative to the Heitor Villa-Lobos entry, Jacques Posell has written: "The few notes at the bottom must be considered abstract and nothing authentic"...

Chuichi Maeda suggested to Jacques that the few notes on this stamp might actually be a fragment from Villa-Lobos' famous "Bachianas Brasileiras" No.5 for soprano and eight celli. And seemingly such is the case. Upon closer examination writes Jacques, I must agree with him and I would say it is a reproduction of the last five notes in bar 4 of the first movement. This work consists of two sections. The celebrated *Aria* movement was composed in 1938 and was first performed 25 March 1939. The *Dansa* was composed seven years later and the complete work was first given in Paris on 10 Oct. 1947.

(FAP Journal June 1988)

COLUMBIA

Scott C766, 767

Michel 1678-1679

Two airmail stamps were issued by Columbia in a belated tribute to the Bach, Handel, Schütz anniversary year. The 70 stamp contains a computerized portrait of Bach and the 100 stamp contains the names of the three composers and a few notes of music which must be considered an abstract design.



FINLAND

Scott ???

Michel 1014

This stamp was issued Feb. 2, 1987 and commemorates the birth of Leevi Madetoja, Finnish composer and conductor, born in Oula (Uleaborg) Feb. 17, 1887. He studied in Helsinki at the university and at the music institute with Järnefelt and Sibelius (1906-1910), then in Paris with D'Indy (1910-1911) and with Robert Fuchs in Vienna (1911-1912). Upon his return to Finland he became conductor of the Helsinki Philharmonic Society (1912-14) and then of the orchestra in Viipuri (Vyborg) (1914-16). He taught at the Helsinki conservatory for 23 years and was also active as a music critic for Helsinki's leading newspaper for 16 years. As a composer Madetoja was a leading member of the Finnish national romantic school which followed Sibelius. In his compositions he made use of Finnish folk tunes and of church modes. He composed two operas, two symphonies and other orchestral works, a piano trio, violin sonata, vocal music, choruses, music for piano, etc. He died Oct. 6, 1947, in Helsinki.



Addendum: The notes in the background are from one of Madetoja's cradle songs (Finnish: "Kehtolaulu"). As far as I know, Madetoja has composed three works called "Kehtolaulu"

- Op. 8 Nr. 4: for male choir
- Op. 12 Nr. 5: for piano
- Op. 16 Nr. 3: for orchestra

I couldn't check the score on the stamp with any sheet music. However, since words are noted below the notes, I assume that the score is from OP 8 Nr. 4

(Peter Lang)

GERMANY FEDERAL REPUBLIC

Scott 1463

Michel 1284

Weber, Carl Maria von (1786-1826). For the 200th anniversary of the birth of this famed composer, the Federal Republic of Germany issued an 80 pf. stamp on June 30, 1986. Previous issues for Weber appeared in 1952 (Germany, East Zone, Scott 102, Michel 310), 1967 (Hungary, opera scène from *Der Freischütz*, Scott 1849, Michel 2356), and 1976 (Germany, Federal Republic, Scott 1214, Michel 894). Weber is considered the founder of the German romantic school. Although he began writing operas as early as 1800, it wasn't until 1821 with the appearance of *Der Freischütz* in Berlin that his success as an operatic composer was established. His other major works for the stage are *Euranthe* and *Oberon*. The music in the background of the current stamp is the first page of the Gloria from the mass in Eb composed in Dresden in 1818. This work was composed on a royal commission from the King of Saxony and some of the admonitions given the composer were that: "it must be short so as not to tire the King, the court liked galant style (but did not get it from Weber)... and not the least important, there must be a fine soprano solo for the favorite castrato Giovanni Sassaroli" (from John Warrack's biography courtesy Ethel Bloesch). The Mass was composed between Jan. 4 and Feb. 23, 1818 and was first performed in the Dresden Cathedral. Weber died in London on tuberculosis on June 5, 1826.



GERMANY FEDERAL REPUBLIC

Scott 1541

Michel 1343

Two stamps from Austria (Scott 1415, Michel 1905, Nov. 13, 1987) and from Germany were issued to honor the 200th anniversary of the death of the renowned composer Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714-1787). The Austrian stamp pictures a gamba and a harp while the stamp of Germany contains notation from his opera *Armida* first produced in Paris, Sept. 23, 1777. Gluck was born in the Upper Palatinate (Germany) July 2, 1714 and died in Vienna Nov. 15, 1787. He received his early education in the village schools in his area where he was also taught singing and instrumental playing. In 1732 he went to Prague and earned his living by playing the violin and the cello at rural dances. He went to Vienna in 1736 and became chamber musician to young Prince Lobkowitz. A year later he was taken to Milan where he became a pupil of Sammartini and acquired a solid technique of composition in the Italian style. Four years later he produced his first opera there with great success. Seven operas soon followed and in 1745 Gluck was invited to London where he was commissioned to write two operas for the Haymarket Theatre. He left London a year later to become conductor of a travelling Italian opera company. Gluck wrote approximately 100 dramatic works for the stage but his greatest successes are *Alceste*, *Orfeo ed Euridice*, *Iphigenie en Aulide*, and *Iphigenie en Tauride*. He also wrote several ballets, songs, trio sonatas, overtures, etc. Gluck was one of the most famous musicians of his time but during the last several years of his life he lived as an invalid suffering from apoplexy and paralysis. The notation is a facsimile of the composer's autograph manuscript from the orchestral beginning of Act III of *Armide* (courtesy Ethel Bloesch).



KOREA (South)

Scott 1432

Michel 1459

The second set of stamps in the Korean music series was issued June 25, 1986. The following information from the official postal bulletin was kindly sent by Chuichi Maeda. The music on the first stamp, *Half Moon* is a children's song with words and music by Yun Keuk-Young. Composed in 1924, it soon emerged from a simple children's song to a national song and is loved by Koreans young and old as a fine work of art that embodies the soul of the nation.



KOREA (South)

Scott 1435

Michel 1509

The first stamp of the third set of Korean folk song stamps issued in 1987 is *Barley Field* by Park Wha-Mok with words by Yun Yong-Ha.



KOREA (South)

Scott 1436

Michel 1510

The second stamp of the third set of Korean folk song stamps issued in 1987 is *Magnolia* by Cho Young-Shik and text by Kim Dong-Jiu.



NEW ZEALAND

Scott 857

Michel 974

On Nov. 5, 1986, a set of four stamps was issued to honor Music in New Zealand. The stamps illustrate classical music, brass bands, pipe bands and country music.

The earliest European settlers formed choral societies but the first symphony orchestra was formed only 40 years ago and was called the National Orchestra. Now known as the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, it has become a major influence in the musical life of the country, performing over 100 concerts yearly and is one of several symphony and radio orchestra in the North and South islands.

The music on this 30c stamp is from *Swan Lake* by Tchaikovsky.

(New Zealand Postal Service bulletins).



NEW ZEALAND

Scott 858

Michel 975

On Nov. 5, 1986, a set of four stamps was issued to honor Music in New Zealand. The stamps illustrate classical music, brass bands, pipe bands and country music.

The first band to arrive in New Zealand was the Regimental Band of the 58th Regiment, Imperial forces which arrived in April 1845. Brass bands soon became very popular and many garrison bands were formed by the settlers. By the turn of the century many of these bands were turned into town bands. Band competitions and marching bands have contributed greatly to the development of brass music.

The 60c stamp illustrates a cornet and the notation is from a march titled Invercargill by New Zealand composer Alex Lithgow.

(New Zealand Postal Service bulletins)



NEW ZEALAND

Scott 859

Michel 976

On Nov. 5, 1986, a set of four stamps was issued to honor Music in New Zealand. The stamps illustrate classical music, brass bands, pipe bands and country music.

Bagpipes, a Scottish tradition, were brought in by the Scottish settlers in the 19th century and these have developed into the present Pipe Band Movement. The City of Wellington Pipe Band has been the most successful pipe band for the past 30 years and in 1987 took part in the celebrated Edinburgh Tattoo for the second time. The first pipe band formed in New Zealand was the Caledonian Pipe Band of Southland which was formed in Invercargill in 1896. Many towns and cities and even some schools have their own pipe bands and competitions are held through the New Zealand Pipe Bands Association. The bag pipe was possibly the first European instrument to be heard in New Zealand when in 1773 Captain Cook instructed a Scottish sailor to play the pipes in order to attract the attention of the Maori natives at Dusky Sound.

The music in this 80c stamp is called *Kilworth Hills* composed by Pipe Major George Stewart McLennan (1883-1929).

(New Zealand Postal Service bulletins)



NEW ZEALAND

Scott 860

Michel 977

On Nov. 5, 1986, a set of four stamps was issued to honor Music in New Zealand. The stamps illustrate classical music, brass bands, pipe bands and country music.

Country music is a more recent development which in its present form looks mainly to the United States but which also has some roots in the folk music of New Zealand. Television and western movies have also helped to popularize this type of music and there are now over 100 amateur country music clubs in the country. A number of New Zealanders have achieved international fame as writers and performers of country music, and each year the best of these is recognized by the Professional Country Music Recording Industry awards.

The music on the \$1 stamp is *Beautiful Lady* by Patsy Rigger, one of the most popular country music figures today.

(New Zealand Postal Service bulletins)



PAKISTAN

Scott 680

Michel 692

To celebrate 40 years of independence, two stamps were issued in 1987, one with notation of the National Anthem of Pakistan. The anthem was composed by Ahmed Ghulamali Chagla (1902-1953) with text in Urdu by Abu-Al-Asar-Hafeez Jullandhuri and was officially accepted as the National Anthem in Dec. 1953. The Islamic Republic of Pakistan was established in 1947 when British India was divided into two countries in order to create a separate homeland for the Muslim population due to the agitation of the Muslim nationalists. The partition and the movement of refugees resulted in violence and in terrible massacres for which both sides were responsible.

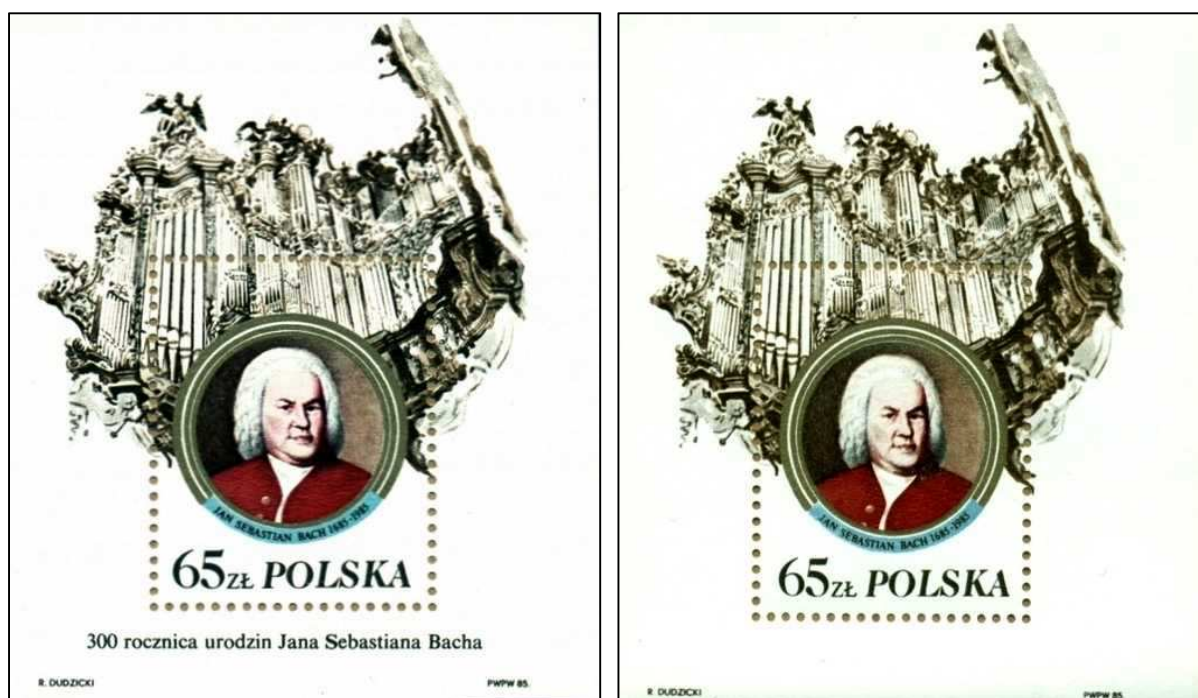


POLAND

Scott 2712

Michel 3012

On December 30, 1985, Poland belatedly issued two souvenir sheets for the Bach anniversary held that year. The sheets contain a portrait of Bach with the organ of St. Thomas church in, Leipzig in the background. One sheet is without inscription and one is inscribed at the bottom in Polish "300 Rocznica Urodzin Jana Sebastiana Bacha."



Addendum: the organ is probably not the organ in the St. Thomas Church in Leipzig

RUSSIA (Soviet Union)

Scott 5506

Michel 5655

The Russian composer Anatoli Grigoryevich Novikov was born in Skopino on Oct. 30, 1896. Simultaneously, while studying at the Moscow Conservatory, he also attended the historical philology faculty at the Moscow Teaching Institute. He later also worked with Glier in composition. Novikov composed many patriotic songs and choruses which have achieved great popularity in the USSR and abroad. He also wrote some lively musical comedies. From 1928 to 1938 he directed army amateur choirs and orchestras and he later became a deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. His most famous work is the "Hymn of the Democratic Youth of the World," composed about 1930. He died in 1984. The music on the stamp is from *Dorogi* or *The Road* a very popular song of the World War II period and still popular today.



SWITZERLAND

Scott 801

Michel 1329

This stamp was issued in 1986 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Berne convention for the protection of literary and artistic works. Originally started by 8 countries on Sept. 9, 1886, the group can be considered as the forerunner of the Universal Copyright Agreement of 1952 in which 76 countries participated. The Berne convention has been revised several times and now includes everything produced in the fields of literature, science, art works of all kinds such as painting, sculpture, architecture and photographs. The notation on the stamp is nothing authentic but it is the creation of the designer.

(Swiss post office, and THE BATON, Nov. 1986)



TRISTAN DA CUNHA

Scott 396

Michel 409

A set of three stamps and a souvenir sheet were issued June 2, 1986 in the second series of famous shipwrecks off the coasts of these South Atlantic islands. The souvenir sheet commemorates the barque *Italia* which ran ashore and sank in 1892 and also contains notation from the famous naval hymn, *Eternal Father, Strong to Save*. The hymn was composed in 1860 by William Whiting (1825-1878) a chorus master born in London. It was composed for travelers at sea and is known in the United States as the *Navy Hymn* and is sung regularly at the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis. It was the favorite hymn of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and was sung at his funeral on April 14, 1945, in Hyde Park, and it was also played at the funeral of John F. Kennedy in New York on Nov. 25, 1963. Whiting is chiefly remembered for this one hymn which has undergone several revisions including one by the composer himself in 1869. The text on the sheet are the words used in the last five bars of the first three stanzas.

(Information, Ethel Bloesch)



Addendum: William Whiting was the author of the words of the hymn *Eternal Father, Strong to Save*. The composer of the hymn tune Melita (Written specifically for these words) was John B. Dykes (1823-1876). Dykes, best known of the Victorian hymn tune writers and one of the most prolific, composed about 300 tunes. He was a graduate of Cambridge University in classics. Most of these tunes were composed while he was precentor of Durham Cathedral and later while vicar at St. Oswald's, also in Durham.

(FAP Journal June 1988)

TRISTAN DA CUNHA

Scott 415

Michel 424

The third set in the shipwreck series was issued April 2, 1987 and consists of three stamps and a souvenir sheet to commemorate the sinking of three ships off the coast of Inaccessible Island. The *Blanden Hall* sank off the coast of West Point in 1821. In 1883 the barque *Shakespeare* sank off the east coast of Pig Beach and in 1897 the barque *Helen S. Lea* sank off the north coast of Salt Beach. The notation illustrated is from a hymn *Hollingside* with music by John B. Dykes. The printed text, "When the gathering waters roll, while the tempest still is high" is taken from the first stanza and is by Charles Wesley

(from *Bay Psalm Book*, courtesy Ethel Bloesch)



Addendum: The title of the hymn shown on this sheet is *Jesu, Lover of My Soul*. The words were written by Charles Wesley (1707-1788), author of more than 6.500 hymns. The tune shown here is *Hollingside*, composed by John B. Dykes. Its association with this text is more common in England than in America. One source of the hymn is the *New English Hymnal* (not the *Bay Psalm Book*).

(FAP Journal June 1988)

U.S.A.

Scott 2371

Michel 1964

A stamp issued on Feb. 2, 1988 in the black heritage series. James Weldon Johnson was a man of many accomplishments; lawyer, diplomat, professor of English literature, civil rights activist and author. He was born June 17, 1871 in Jacksonville, Fla. He graduated from Atlanta University in 1894 and later received degrees from Talladega College in Atlanta and from Howard University. He also attended Columbia for three years. He was the first black attorney to be admitted to the Florida bar and was a professor of literature at Fisk University and a visiting professor at New York University. He played a leading role in the black movement and was the author of *The Autobiography of a Colored Man* and *God's Trombones*. Early in his career he collaborated with his brother on songs for musical comedies and it was during this time that *Lift Every Voice and Sing* was created. Johnson wrote the lyrics and the music was composed by his brother, John Rosamond. The song was once considered the black national anthem until *We Shall Overcome* supplanted it in the 1960s. In 1906 Johnson was named U.S. consul to Venezuela and later to Nicaragua. He died June 26, 1938, in an auto accident in Maine.



VENEZUELA

Scott 1390e

Michel 2434

Vicente Emilio Sojo. A set of five stamps in souvenir sheet form was issued to mark the 100th anniversary of the birth of this noted Venezuelan composer, conductor and pedagogue. The sheet is issued in a double strip of five stamps and pictures the conservatory in Caracas, a portrait of the composer, Sojo conducting a chorus and Sojo at the blackboard. Sojo was born in Guatire Dec. 8, 1887. He first studied in his native city and in 1910 studied at the Academia de Belles Artes in Caracas with Primo Moschini (composition). He was appointed professor of theory at the Escuela Nacional de Musica in 1921 and became its director in 1936. Almost all of the Venezuelan composers who came to maturity between 1930 and 1960 came under his tutelage. He co-founded and directed the choral ensemble Orfeón Lamas and the Venezuelan Symphony Orchestra and encouraged the production of new works for both ensembles. Sojo was active in national ethnomusicology and collected and harmonized several hundred folk songs and church hymns of the colonial period. His own compositions consist mainly of sacred music, motets and organ pieces. Sojo died in Caracas August 11, 1974.

The music on the stamp is the "Hymn to Bolivar" composed in 1883. It is of interest to note that on a previous Bolivar celebration in 1883, Venezuela's famous pianist, Teresa Carreña (Scott 343, Michel 291) also composed a "Himno a Bolivar" which was the official festival hymn on that occasion.



Addendum: The score on the second stamp don't show a particular work but are taken from a lecture on music theory or composition.

(Peter Lang)