

Note-Worthy Music Stamps, Part 12

By Ethel Bloesch

[Note: Part 12 describes stamps with musical notation that were issued in 2002. The next installment will cover stamps issued in 2003.]

ARGENTINA

Scott 2212

Michel 2789

Two stamps in a set of four issued December 7, 2002, entitled Folcloristas Argentinos. The set commemorates Argentine musicians and writers who contributed to the folklore movement in Argentina. Two of the stamps include musical notation.

The first stamp honors Gustavo "Cuchi" Leguizamón (1917-2000). Leguizamón was born in the northwestern province of Salta, where he lived most of his life. During the 1960s his highly original and novel style revolutionized the rigidity that had become entrenched in the field of folklore composition, thus opening the doors for a musical renewal. He became popular around the country during the 1970s when his songs, such as "Balderrarna", "Zamba de los mineros", and "La Pomena" became instant hits. The stamp features a portrait of Leguizamón in front of a grand piano, with an unidentified keyboard score along his arm.



ARGENTINA

Scott 2214

Michel 2791

Two stamps in a set of four issued December 7, 2002, entitled *Folcloristas Argentinos*. The set commemorates Argentine musicians and writers who contributed to the folklore movement in Argentina. Two of the stamps include musical notation.

The second stamp honors Carlos Vega (1898-1966), a musicologist and folklorist who dedicated himself to the systematic study of South American traditional music, dances, and musical instruments. His scholarly publications span four decades. The National Institute of Musicology, which he founded and directed, bears his name. The stamp design has three elements: an unidentified instrumental score in the far background, a man on the left playing a bandoneón, and in front, a larger image of a man at a recording studio.



AZERBAIJAN

Scott 738

Michel 527

A stamp issued September 18, 2002 for the 80th birthday of composer Rauf Hacıyev [Rauf Gadjiyev]. The stamp shows a portrait of Hacıyev and a piano with an open score on the music rack. The notes are undecipherable, even when magnified. Rauf Hacıyev was born May 15, 1922 in Baku, the capital city of Azerbaijan. He studied at the Moscow Conservatory and later at the Azerbaijani Conservatory. In 1955 he became the organizer and artistic director of the State Pops Orchestra. From 1965-1971 he was minister of culture of the Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic, and in 1978 was named a "National Artist of the USSR". Hacıyev composed many musical comedies, as well as two ballets, oratorios, the "Youth Symphony", a concerto for violin and orchestra, and music for theater, shows, and film. He wrote more than eighty songs, one of which ("Sevgilim") has been sung on the Azeri stage for forty years. He died in Moscow in 1995.



BOLIVIA

Scott 1166a, 1166b

Michel 1508-1509

A set of two stamps issued January 29, 2002 for the centenary of the birth of Mauro Nunez. A musician and artist, Nunez was born in Brazil in 1902 and spent his early years in La Paz. He later settled in Lima, Peru and then in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He is best known for promoting the charango, a small fretted lute of the Andean regions of Bolivia, central and southern Peru and northern Argentina. According to the New Grove Dictionary of Music, the charango is one of the few hybrid Instruments resulting from contact between indigenous and European cultures. It is an adaptation of the Spanish vihuela (an ancestor of the guitar) and usually has five pairs of strings. Earlier charangos were made with armadillo shells, but the rounded sound box is now usually made of wood. Nylon strings have taken the place of the original gut strings. Nunez made charangos in four different sizes, on the model of the classical string quartet. Both stamps feature the charango. The Bs.6.00 stamp shows Nunez playing the charango. The music in the background is his "Danza de la Flecha." The Bs.1.00 value shows four different charangos. The background music on this stamp, also attributed to Mauro Nunez, is identified as a huayno (a social dance usually accompanied by a charango ensemble)



CZECH REPUBLIC

Scott 3166

Michel 315

A stamp issued March 6, 2002 for the birth centenaries of three Czech composers, who also conducted military bands or orchestras. Their portraits are shown on the stamp, along with several bars of music.

Jaromír Vejvoda (1902-1988) took over his father's band at the age of 24 and composed many polkas for the group. Most famous is his "Škoda lásky" (later to become known in English-speaking countries as the "Beer Barrel Polka"). Originally an instrumental work, it was composed in 1927 under the title "Modřanská polka". Czech lyrics were written seven years later by V. Zeman. In 1939 the song was published in New York with new words by Lew Brown, titled "Beer Barrel Polka". This version, with its famous chorus "Roll out the barrel", became a favorite of the Allied forces in World War II. The first three bars of the chorus are notated on the stamp.

The second composer to be pictured is Josef Poncar (1902-1986), who was a railwayman in Prague and a double bassist with the Prague Railwaymen's Symphony Orchestra for 29 years. He also led string and wind bands and composed polkas and waltzes, many of which are still popular today.

The third composer, Karel Vacek (1902-1982), played wind and stringed instruments in a military band and in several orchestras. In 1940 he founded his own orchestra, which he led until 1947. He composed popular dance and march songs. His song "Cikánka" (The Gypsy Girl) became a worldwide hit in the thirties and still played in Europe, the USA, and Japan.



GUERNSEY

Scott 767

Michel 924

One stamp on a sheet of six stamps issued February 6, 2002 for the birth bicentennial of the French author Victor Hugo (1802-1885). The sheet features the famous musical adaptation of Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*, an epic novel published in 1862 during Hugo's exile in Guernsey. The musical *Les Misérables* was created by the French team of Claude-Michel Schönberg (composer) and Alan Boublil (librettist). First produced in Paris in 1980, the musical opened in London in an English version in the fall of 1985, and is now in its 18th year at the Palace Theatre. The Broadway production, which opened in March 1987 and ran until May 2003, won many major awards. *Les Misérables* has been produced in 38 countries and has been seen by over 50 million people, making it the world's most popular musical. Major characters are shown on four of the stamps. There is also a stamp picturing Victor Hugo. The sixth stamp features music from one of the songs in the show, "Do You Hear the People Sing?" Claude-Michel Schönberg (b. 1944), has collaborated with Alain Boublil (b. 1941) in three other works, including *Miss Saigon*. He is a distant relative of the composer Arnold Schoenberg.



KOREA, DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF

Scott ???

Michel 4519

A souvenir sheet (one of four postal items) issued February 1, 2002 for the 60th birthday of Kim Jong Il, current leader of North Korea. His birthday, February 16, is a national holiday. Kim Jong Il became leader in 1994, following the death of his father Kim Il Sung. The 1.50 won sheet shows a photograph of Kim Jong Il among soldiers of the Panmunjom Mission of the Korean People's Army. The sheet also features the melody and words of the song "Where Are You, My Dear Leader?" *)



*) Other translation found on the Internet: "Where are you, Dear General?"

Lyrics written by the North Korean Leader Kim Jong Il in November 1971.

The song is from the opera "A true Daughter of the Party" (other title: "The Story of a Nurse"), one of the five revolutionary operas of Korea. The opera was produced under the direction of Kim Jong Il to equip people with a communist outlook. It tells the story of the nurse Kang Yon Ok, a woman fighter who devoted her youth and life without hesitation to the Party, the Leader and to the revolution during the Korean War.

According to Kim Jong Il's official biography, he composed six operas over two years and also enjoyed staging elaborate musicals. Hence, it is very likely that Kim Jong Il is also the composer of the opera – at least, he had great influence in the composition. In 1974 he wrote "The Art of Opera", in which he set out his principals that Korean opera to be full of "stanzaic songs, which can be understood easily and loved by the people." (Peter Lang, Dec. 2013)

KOREA, DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF

Scott ???

Michel 4532

Three souvenir sheets (in a set of five items) issued March 15, 2002 for the 90th birthday anniversary of Kim Il Sung (1912-1994) revered former leader of North Korea. He was the first premier of DPRK, ascending to power in 1948 and serving until his death in 1994. His birthday, April 15, is celebrated as the day of the sun and is a great national holiday. This sheet shows a photo (taken in 1941) of President Kim Il Sung and Mrs. Kim Jong Suk, his close comrade-in-arms, along with the words and melody to "Song of Nostalgia", composed by President Kim Il Sung.



KOREA, DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF

Scott ???

Michel 4533

Three souvenir sheets (in a set of five items) issued March 15, 2002 for the 90th birthday anniversary of Kim Il Sung (1912-1994) revered former leader of North Korea. He was the first premier of DPRK, ascending to power in 1948 and serving until his death in 1994. His birthday, April 15, is celebrated as the day of the sun and is a great national holiday. This sheet shows a 1927 photo of President Kim Il Sung and smaller vignettes of two revolutionary fighters. The music here is the song "Star of Korea," the first revolutionary hymn for the President, created by Kim Hyok in the fall of 1928.



KOREA, DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF

Scott ???

Michel 4534

Three souvenir sheets (in a set of five items) issued March 15, 2002 for the 90th birthday anniversary of Kim Il Sung (1912-1994) revered former leader of North Korea. He was the first premier of DPRK, ascending to power in 1948 and serving until his death in 1994. His birthday, April 15, is celebrated as the day of the sun and is a great national holiday. This sheet shows a photo of the President and Kim Chaek (another revolutionary fighter), taken in 1948. The music on this sheet is "Song of Comradeship," written in 1981 (words by Ri Jong Sun and music by Song Tong Chun).



KOREA, DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF

Scott ???

Michel 4537

A stamp issued March 25, 2002 to commemorate the 20th April Spring Friendship Art Festival. The 20th festival coincides with the 90th birthday of Kim Il Sung, which was commemorated in the set described above. The upper part of the stamp shows the festival badge, with doves flying in the air. Depicted below are Mangyong Hill and dancers from five continents celebrating the day of the sun. At the bottom are two bars of melody from "Song of Pyongyang Festival", written in 1982 by Ri Bom Su (words) and Om Ha Jin (music).



NEW CALEDONIA

Scott 908

Michel 1283

A stamp issued November 7, 2002 for Christmas. It features a jolly family of cartoon characters representing Caledonian tricots rayés. Tricot rayés are brightly colored sea snakes, usually with black and yellow stripes, as depicted here. Although their venom is highly poisonous, these small snakes are not aggressive. The cartoon family captures the cheerful mood of the southern summer in New Caledonia. They are proclaiming greetings of the holiday season. Decorative musical notes hover in the air as they sing "Joyeux Noël, Bonne année".



PORTUGAL

Scott 2464

Michel 2576

A stamp issued February 26, 2002 for the 500th anniversary of the birth of Damiao de Góis (1502-1574). A noted 16th-century Portuguese humanist, Damiao de Góis lived in Portugal, The Netherlands and Italy, and traveled extensively throughout Europe. As a chronicler, he wrote a large body of works in Latin and Portuguese. He was also highly regarded as a musician, and his 3-part polyphonic motet "Le laeteris" was included in Glarean's *Dodecachordon*. The first page of this motet was reproduced on a stamp issued by Portugal in 1974 for the 400th anniversary of Góis's death. The music on the present stamp, however, is more stylized and does not appear to be taken from an actual work. It is shown behind a portrait of Góis. Góis spent the last years of his life in prison, having been denounced as a heretic by the Inquisition for his earlier association with Protestant reformers.



SPAIN

Scott 3177

Michel 3773-3780

A booklet of eight stamps issued September 30, 2002, depicting a series of paintings entitled "La Música." The cover of the booklet also contains a painting — thus, there are nine paintings in all. They are the works of the contemporary Spanish artist, Goyo Domínguez. The series is unified thematically, in that all of the paintings depict musical instruments. Five stamps show musicians with their instruments, and four are still-life paintings with an instrument, flowers, fruit, and a sheet of music. The paintings, although contemporary, have an ancient look, particularly since the people are clothed in Renaissance attire and are holding instruments of that period.

The notation on the sheets of music in the still-life paintings appears to be decorative rather than representing actual music. Goya Dominguez was born in 1960 in Fuentecén (Burgos). Self-taught at first, he entered studies at the University of Madrid, where he received a license in 1987. He has exhibited internationally and has won several prizes.



TURKEY

Scott 2829

Michel 3304

One stamp in a set of five issued June 3, 2002 to commemorate famous Turks. The 100,000 lira stamp honours Muzaffer Sarisözen (1898-1963), a leading figure in the collection and dissemination of Turkish folk music. Sarisözen graduated from the Istanbul State Conservatory with a major in violin. In 1938 he was appointed director of the archives of the Ankara State Conservatory. He was also a major force in popularizing this music throughout the country. He established a group of singers called Yurtan Sesler (Voices from the Country), which performed over the Turkish Radio and later over television. His choir had a major impact on musical life in Turkey. The stamp shows a portrait of Sarisözen in the foreground, with a smaller picture of a folk musician and two Instruments. Four sheets of music appear in the background. Two of them are titled "Alli Durman" (Red Durman) and "Gesi Baglari" (Vineyards of Gesi), songs that Sarisözen popularized.



TURKEY

Scott 2838-2839

Michel 3321-3322

Two stamps issued October 10, 2002 on the theme of music. Each stamp depicts a stringed instrument with musical notes in the background. The 450,000 lira stamp shows a violin ("keman" in Turkish), with a wavy multi-colored score behind it. Musical notes are shown, but they seem to be decorative rather than representative of actual music. The 700,000 lira stamp shows a double bass ("kontrbas" in Turkish) with a shadowy figure playing the instrument. As in the previous stamp, there is a wavy multi-colored score in the background, this time in the bass clef.



UNITED STATES

Scott 3669

Michel 3643

A stamp issued September 15, 2002 to honor the Russian-born American songwriter Irving Berlin (1888-1989). Born as Israël Baline, he and his family came to the U.S. when he was five years old, settling in New York's Lower East Side. When his father died, "Izzy" worked first as a street singer, then as a singer waiter in Chinatown. At the age of 19 he wrote the lyrics of a song, "Marie from Sunny Italy". When it was published, his name appeared erroneously as Berlin, and a few years later he legally changed his name to Irving Berlin. He began writing music as well as lyrics, first achieving international success in 1911 with the song, "Alexander's Ragtime Band". In the ensuing years, Berlin wrote and published more than one thousand songs, many for Broadway shows and Hollywood musicals. They included such hits as "White Christmas", "There's No Business Like Show Business", and "Easter Parade". One of the most famous is "God Bless America", the song that appears on the Irving Berlin commemorative stamp. The stamp shows a colorized portrait of Berlin, taken from a 1932 black-and-white photo by Edward Steichen. The portrait is superimposed over his manuscript score of the song.

"God Bless America" has been called America's unofficial national anthem. The original version (chorus only) was written in 1918 for an army musical revue, but it was never used. In the fall of 1938, as war clouds again threatened Europe, Irving Berlin wanted to write a "peace" song. He turned to his song written some twenty years earlier, and the singer Kate Smith introduced the revised version of "God Bless America" on her radio broadcast on Armistice Day, 1938. The song was an immediate sensation. So many copies of the sheet music were sold that Berlin established the God Bless America Fund, dedicating the royalties to the Boy and Girl Scouts of America - an amount that had exceeded \$650,000 by 1978. Original materials relating to this song are found in the Irving Berlin Collection in the Library of Congress. During his lifetime, Irving Berlin received many honours, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom and the Congressional Gold Medal. He died at the age of 101 on September 22, 1989 in New York City.



[The author wishes to thank Chuichi Maeda of Tokyo, Japan, who has provided her with press releases from postal authorities.]