

Note-Worthy Music Stamps, Part 14

by Ethel Bloesch

(Note: Part 14 describes stamps with musical notation that were issued in 2004. The next installment will cover stamps issued in 2005.)

ANGUILLA

Scott 1140.

Michel 1167

One stamp in a set of four stamps and a souvenir sheet issued November for Christmas. Each stamp features Santa Claus in a tropical-island setting. The \$ 1.90 value, titled 'Santa's String Band,' shows Santa and two friends playing the instruments in front of a palm tree. Decorative eighth notes hover in the air above them.



ARUBA

Scott B73-B75

Michel 331-333

Three semi-postal stamps issued October 29, 2004 for Child Welfare. The stamps feature children playing percussion instruments - two maracas, a steel drum, a tambourine, and a wiri (or rasp). At the top of each stamp, a decorative banner shows a curving musical staff with four notes and the words "Voor Het Kind".



ARUBA

Scott 253

Michel 335

One stamp in a set of three issued December 1, 2004 for Christmas and New Year's Day. The 85-cent stamp pictures three children singing Christmas carols. A decorative musical note and a bell are shown on the cover of the girl's book. Above the child is the native Papiamentu greeting "Bon Pasco" and its English translation "Merry Christmas." In front of the children are three ayacas, traditional Christmas staple, and a stained glass window depicting the Madonna and Child behind a lit candle.



AUSTRIA

Scott 1964.

Michel 2493

A stamp issued September 10, 2004. The Austrian Post terms it a “message stamp” appropriate for all kinds of invitations. It is a follow-up to a 2003 “thank you stamp”. Both stamps were designed by the famous Austrian cartoonist Thomas Kostron. They feature the characters Tom Tom, a friendly little man in a bowler hat and bow tie, and his companion Schneckodemus. He is standing in a doorway, ready to welcome someone to a party, in the background we see Tom Tomette, Tom Tom's girlfriend. She is playing a trumpet, and decorative notes dance in the air around her.



BULGARIA

Scott 4299

Michel 4641

One stamp in a set of two issued March 25, 2004 to honor the centenary of two famous Bulgarians: the poet Atanas Dalchev (1904-1978) and the composer Lyubomir Pipkov (1904-1974). Son of the composer and musician Panayot Pipkov, Lyubomir Pipkov belonged to the second generation of Bulgarian composers. After graduating from the Sofia State Music Academy in 1926, he attended the École Normale de Musique in Paris, where he studied with Paul Dukas, Nadia Boulanger and others. He returned to Sofia in 1932 and followed his father at the National Opera, becoming director in 1944. In 1933 he co-founded the Contemporary Music Society, predecessor of the Union of Bulgarian Composers. He was a leading personality in the musical and intellectual life in Bulgaria in the decades from the 1930s to the 1970s. He composed music in a wide variety of genres. His three operas include Momchil, an excerpt of which appeared on an earlier Bulgarian stamp. The present stamp features a portrait of Pipkov and an excerpt from the second movement of his Concerto for Strings, Percussion and Piano.



CROATIA

Scott 542

Michel 670-671

Two stamps issued se-tenant on January 5, 2004. One stamp commemorates the 125th birth anniversary of the Croatian composer Josip Hatze, and the other honors the 50th anniversary of the Zagreb Soloists. Hatze was born in Split on March 29, 1879. After studying composition with Mascagni at the Liceo Musicale in Pesaro, he returned to Split, where he became a music teacher and choral conductor. As a composer, Hatze was one of the founders of a modern Croatian musical style, which brought a breath of fresh air into the rather conservative tradition then in vogue in Croatia. Hatze's creative works were mostly vocal and were popular in the best sense of the word. In addition to solo songs and cantatas, he composed two operas: *Povratak* (The Return), a musical drama in the Italian verismo style; and the lyrical *Adel i Mara* (Adel and Mara). Hatze died January 30, 1959. The first stamp shows a portrait of Hatze, with an unidentified musical fragment.

The second stamp, featuring the bridge of a violin, also has an unidentified musical fragment in the background. It commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Zagreb Soloists, an ensemble affiliated with the Zagreb Radio and Television under the artistic leadership of the renowned cellist Antonio Janigro. The twelve-member ensemble has become one of the world's top chamber orchestras. Performing without a conductor since 1968, the Zagreb Soloists have appeared in over 3100 concert performances and have made over seventy recordings. Their concerts, given with many guest soloists, encompass works of all stylistic periods, with special attention to Croatian composers, both past and contemporary.



ECUADOR

Scott 1715

Michel 2804

A stamp issued November 19, 2004 for the Symphony Orchestra of Guayaquil. The orchestra was founded in 1949 and it serves Guayaquil and the surrounding area. With a population of nearly two million, Guayaquil is Ecuador's largest city and the site of its main seaport. The city is more than five hundred years old, having been founded in 1531. The stamp features a large black decorative eighth note and a musical staff that forms a swirling ribbon. The background depicts two men, possibly musicians.



FINLAND

Scott 1204c, 1205c

Michel 1681 - 1683

Two stamps in a set of six coil stamps issued January 14, 2004. The set, first in a new series depicting great Finnish artists and their homes, consists of three first-class and three second-class stamps. It features composer Jean Sibelius (1865-1957) and Ainola, his residence in Järvenpää. The three first-class stamps show a sketch of Villa Ainola, the Sibelius house; portraits of Sibelius and his wife Aino; and a manuscript sketch for the composer's Quartet in D minor, titled "Voces Intimae". The quartet was completed in 1909, but the sketch shown on the stamp was included in a letter of December 15, 1908. This quartet is the best known of his chamber works. Somber in mood, it has five movements, linked together through themes and motifs that form an organic whole. The quartet derives its name from a marking "Voces Intimae" written alongside three hushed chords in the third movement. The portrait of Sibelius is from a 1908 drawing by Albert Edelfeit in the Sibelius Ainola. The gouache portrait of Aino Sibelius was done c. 1906-07 by her brother Eero Järnefelt, also there. Another brother was the noted conductor Armas Järnefelt.



The three second-class stamps show a fantasy landscape and watercolor portrait of Sibelius; a photograph of the composer's hand at a keyboard; and a photo of two swans, with music from his tone poem The Swan of Tuonela. The three measures shown contain the famous English horn solo at the beginning of the piece. The Swan of Tuonela is one of four tone poems from the Lemminkäinen Suite, which is based on tales from the Kalevala, the Finnish national epic. The suite was first performed in 1896, but the pieces underwent a number of revisions, and only two movements are still widely performed. The Swan of Tuonela depicts a majestic swan swimming on the black waters surrounding Tuonela, the land of death. The swan's mournful death song is sung by a haunting English horn solo.

The watercolor is a diptych titled *Jean Sibelius and Fantasy Landscape Inspired by "Satu"*, done in 1894 by Akseli Gallen-Kallela and exhibited at the Sibelius Ainola. Sibelius lived to age 91, but he did not write any major works during the last thirty years of his life. He completed his Seventh Symphony in 1924 and wrote *Tapiola* in 1925. It was reported that when he was 80, he destroyed a laundry basket of manuscripts, including materials for the Eighth Symphony, by throwing them into the fire in the dining room stove at Ainola. In the years following his death, Sibelius has had a greater following in Scandinavia and English-speaking countries than in Continental Europe.

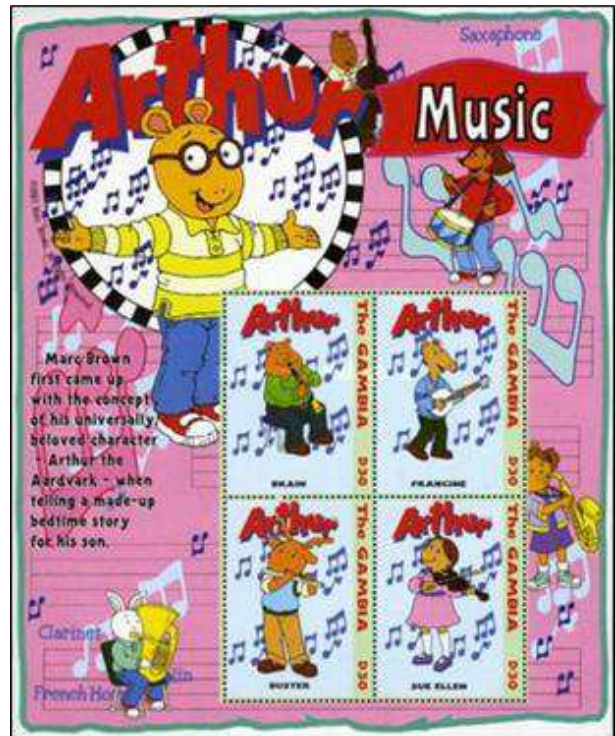
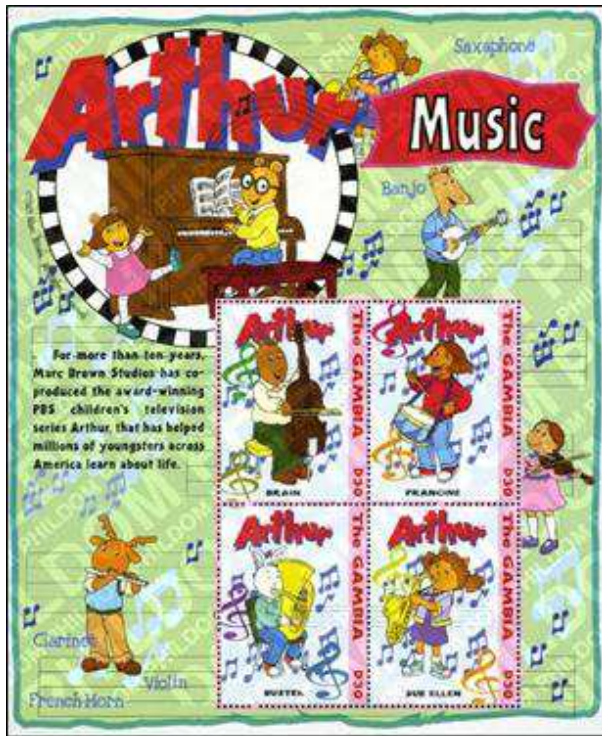


GAMBIA

Scott 1797-1798

Michel 5139 -5148

Two souvenir sheets issued February 16, 2004 in the omnibus series featuring Arthur the Aardvark and his friends - children's characters created by Marc Brown in his popular books and PBS television series. The music sheets show the characters playing various musical Instruments. Hovering in the air around them are dozens of decorative eighth notes, with and without musical staves. Other sheets in the omnibus series are devoted to Arthur and his friends enjoying baseball, winter fun, Valentine's Day, reading books and other activities.



GERMANY

Scott 2274.

Michel 2390

A stamp issued March 11, 2004 for the birth centenary of the Romanian tenor Joseph Schmidt (1904-1942). He was born in the village of Davidende. When he was a young boy, his family moved to Czernowitz, where he sang in the synagogue. It was here that his musical talent was discovered, and at age 20 he went to Berlin to study singing. Although he had a fine lyrical tenor voice, a career in opera was not possible because he was only five feet tall. Fortunately, the 1920s saw the rise of the wireless radio, a medium well suited for the diminutive Joseph Schmidt. He made his radio debut in Berlin in 1928 in a performance of Mozart's *Idomeneo*, and by 1933 he had sung in over thirty operas with the Berlin radio. A highly acclaimed singer in the 1930s, he was known as "The German Caruso". Recordings and concert appearances and even films followed. Forced to leave Germany in 1933, Schmidt moved to Vienna and from there embarked on long concert tours to the United States, Mexico, Cuba, the Netherlands, and Belgium. He attempted to return to Germany, but was forced to seek refuge in Belgium and France. In October 1942, he fled to Switzerland, where he died one month later in an internment camp at age 38.

The stamp features two pictures of the singer, one a close-up and the other a classical singing pose. In the background is the first page of the song "Ein Lied geht um die Welt" (A song goes around the world). The song is featured in a film of the same name, starring Joseph Schmidt in his life story. The film premiered in Germany in 1933 and was later remade in an English version. The lyrics of the song are by Ernst Neubach and the music is by Hans May (real name Johann Mayer), a Viennese-born composer who wrote for the screen and stage.



GERMANY

Scott 2284

Michel 2399

A stamp issued May 6, 2004 for the birth centenary of the German composer Reinhard Schwarz-Schilling. Born May 9, 1904, Schwarz-Schilling studied music in Munich and Cologne. Later he became a student of Heinrich Kaminski, who also taught Carl Orff. In 1938, Schwarz-Schilling began teaching at the Music Conservatory in Berlin. His chamber music, organ and choral works and solo songs display an affinity in tonal language to the works of J.S. Bach. One of Schwarz-Schilling's principal works is *Die Botschaft*, a cantata for mezzo-soprano, baritone, choir and orchestra, composed in 1982. He died December 9, 1985 in Berlin. The stamp shows his portrait and an unidentified manuscript score in the background.



GERMANY

Scott 2295

Michel 2420

A stamp issued September 9, 2004 for the 150th anniversary of birth of the composer Engelbert Humperdinck (1854-1921). He is best known for his fairy-tale opera *Hänsel und Gretel*, first staged in Weimar, Germany in 1893. Humperdinck wrote his first piece of music at age 7. Although his parents did not want him to become a musician, he enrolled in the Cologne Music Conservatory at age 18. He was a successful student there, winning a number of prizes. In 1877 he moved to Munich, where he came under the influence of Richard Wagner. Four years later he went to Bayreuth to help with the first production of Wagner's *Parsifal*. Humperdinck subsequently held various teaching positions and wrote incidental music for a number of Shakespeare productions in Berlin.

His operatic plans, however, came to nothing until he was asked by his sister to compose music for a play for her children. He set some sixteen folksongs for the Hansel and Gretel story. Realizing the work's potential, Humperdinck developed it into a full-scale opera, which has become a worldwide favorite. The opera successfully blends Wagnerian orchestral sonorities and techniques with simple German folk songs. Humperdinck suffered a severe stroke in 1912 but he continued composing music for the stage until a few years before his death in 1921. His later works, however, never matched the popularity and success of his first opera. The stamp features a portrait of the composer, scenes from *Hansel and Gretel*, and the first page of the manuscript score of the Vorspiel (Prelude) to the opera.



ITALY

Scott 2610

Michel 2977

A stamp issued May 28, 2004 for the 50th Puccini Festival. First held in 1930, the Festival is now an annual event in Torre del Lago, the town in which Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924) lived and where he is buried. Located near the beaches of the Tuscan Riviera, Torre del Lago is a favorite destination of opera lovers. An open-air theater in the fake harbor provides a scenic background for the performances taking place on the wide stage. Over the years, the Festival has hosted many of the most acclaimed opera singers, and the audience now numbers about 40.000 each year. The 2004 Festival presented the best known operas by Puccini: Madame Butterfly, Turandot, and Tosca. The stamp features a portrait of Puccini, with a background of two decorative notes. At the right is a detail of the "waiting scène" on a 1904 publicity poster for Madame Butterfly, by Leopoldo Metlicovitz.



KOREA, REPUBLIC OF

Scott 2152b

Michel 2414

One in a set of two stamps issued July 16, 2004 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Arts. Founded in 1944, the academies have a two-fold purpose: to honor scholars and artists of great achievement, and to support their research and creativity. The stamps depict symbols portraying the sciences and the arts. The second one shows an artist's palette and a stylized keyboard with three notes hovering in the air.



LEBANON

Scott 583

Michel 1445

A stamp issued in 2004 commemorating the Al Bustan International Festival of Music and the Arts. Founded in 1994, the winter festival has been a catalyst for reviving the cultural life of the country and improving Lebanon's foreign relations. The festival presents more than thirty performances over a five-week period at the Hotel Al Bustan in Beirut. The stamp contains an unidentified fragment of music.



LUXEMBOURG

Scott B440

Michel 1653

A semi-postal stamp issued December 7, 2004 for Christmas. The festive wintry scene features a group of young carolers (joined by a singing snowman). Behind them is the famous Clervaux Castle, built in the 12th century. The castle was destroyed during the Battle of the Bulge in 1944, but it has been restored to its pre-war condition. In the starry sky above is a banner with the first ten notes of "Silent Night" composed by Franz Gruber.



MALTA

Scott 1182

Michel 1363

One stamp in a set of four stamps and a sheet issued October 13, 2004 featuring Malta's contribution to the field of art. The set highlights achievements in five categories (painting, music, sculpture, literature and architecture), spanning nearly five centuries of national life. The 20-cent stamp features music. The top half of the vertical stamp shows the pipes of the Mdina Cathedral organ. The bottom half is a musical manuscript - the opening bars of a liturgical psalm setting, "Dixit Dominus," composed by Benigno Zerafa in 1755. This psalm (109 in the Latin Bible or 110 in the Hebrew Bible) is the first psalm of Vespers on Sundays and major feast days.

The early career of Benigno Zerafa (1726-1804) is reminiscent of his famous contemporary, Joseph Haydn. Zerafa began as a chorister in the musical cappella of the Mdina Cathedral. At age 12 he was sent to study music in Naples and six years later he returned to Mdina to become maestro di cappella. He held this post for over forty years, until poor health forced him to resign in 1787. During this time he composed a large number of sacred works in the late Baroque style. These works are housed in the Mdina Cathedral archives and are only now being rediscovered and appreciated.

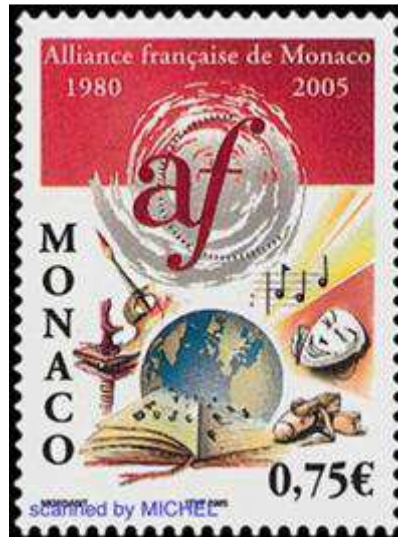


MONACO

Scott 2356

Michel 2725

A stamp issued 2004 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the French Alliance of Monaco. This is a chapter of the Alliance Française, a network of 1300 centers that promote French language and culture around the world. The stamp features a globe surrounded by various symbols of literature and the fine and performing arts. Music is represented by three decorative notes.



NEVIS

Scott 1413

Michel 2010

One in a set of four stamps and a sheet issued December 1, 2004, featuring paintings by Norman Rockwell. The 90-cent value shows the painting that appeared on the cover of the December 8, 1923 Saturday Evening Post. A trio of musicians - two men and a boy - are singing and playing lustily. Beneath them is a banner with decorative notes and the words "Christmas sing merrily".



PARAGUAY

Scott 2748

Michel 4934

A stamp issued August 24, 2004 for the birth centenary of José Asunción Flores (1904-1972). Flores, a well-known Paraguayan composer, was born in La Chacarita, a shantytown area of Asunción. He achieved fame in Buenos Aires, but came back to Paraguay to serve his country in the Chaco War, fought against Bolivia 1932-1935. Later, however, he was forced to go back to Argentina for political reasons and he was not repatriated until nineteen years after his death. He is credited with creating the musical form "guarania", so named because melodies and rhythms are based on the native music of the Guarani, an ancient Indian tribe in Paraguay, Argentina, and Bolivia. Guarani is also the name of one of the two official languages spoken today in Paraguay. The stamp shows a portrait of Flores writing in a book. In the background is a page of unidentified music, perhaps one of his guaranias. A previous stamp honoring Flores and showing the guarania "Nerendape Atu" was issued by Paraguay in 1991.



PERU

Scott 1441

Michel 1964-1968

A sheet of five stamps issued November 12, 2004, entitled *Músicos peruanos*. Each stamp has a portrait of a well-known Peruvian musician or music group. The background of the sheet shows lighter musical images and decorative musical notes. Those featured on the stamps are: the internationally known operatic tenor Juan Diego Flórez, the Afro-Peruvian singers Susana Baca and Eva Ayllón, the singer and songwriter Gian Marco, and the rock band Libido.



RUSSIA

Scott 6840

Michel 1174-1176

A se-tenant set of three stamps and a label issued May 20, 2004 for the birth bicentenary of the Russian composer Mikhail Glinka (1804-1857). Born into a noble family in Smolensk, Glinka grew up with access to contemporary Western music as well as to the peasant folksongs of his region. He drew on these influences as a composer, and his works were recognized by Europeans and Russians alike. He is best known for two operas: *A Life for the Tsar* and *Ruslan and Ludmila*. *A Life for the Tsar* borrows from Italian and French opera, but its melodic writing and recitatives have a distinctly Russian character. First produced in St. Petersburg in 1836, it is considered to be the first national opera in Russia. It tells the story of a Russian peasant Ivan Susanin, who in 1612 sacrifices his life to save Mikhail Romanov, the founder of the Romanov dynasty. The first eight bars of the closing chorus "Slavsyä" are shown on the label accompanying the three stamps in the set. This tune became popular throughout Russia, and after the 1917 Revolution it was seriously considered for adoption as the new national anthem. Two stamps in the set display scenes from *A Life for the Tsar* and *Ruslan and Ludmila*. The third stamp has a portrait of Glinka and title pages of his two famous operas.



SAN MARINO

Scott 1623

Michel 2175-2177

A souvenir sheet issued November 12, 2004 for the reopening of the La Scala Theater in Milan. The world's premier opera house formally reopened on December 7, 2004 after nearly three years of renovation. The opera chosen for the occasion was Antonio Salieri's long-forgotten opera *Europa Riconosciuta*, the work commissioned for the original opening of La Scala in 1778. It had not been performed in the intervening 226 years at La Scala - or anywhere else. This allowed the main attention to be focused on the theater itself. The New York Times reported: "The uncontested stars of the evening were La Scala's fully restored, resplendent auditorium and its brand-new technologically advanced stage."

The souvenir sheet features three large stamps. The top one shows the composer Antonio Salieri and an original view of the interior of the opera house with the opening scene set design of *Europa Riconosciuta*. It is 777e *Sea Tempest*, painted by Fabrizio G. Galliari (1709-1790). Salieri is from an 1810 oil painting by Natale Schiavoni (1777-1858). The middle stamp pictures the original facade (from a colored print), grafted on to a current photograph of the street on the right. The bottom stamp shows the inside of the theater as seen from the stage with Riccardo Muti conducting, with a detail of Muti's podium pose on the right. (Riccardo Muti, who had been the music director of La Scala for nineteen years, recently resigned after conflicts with the board). The background of the sheet shows the first page of the manuscript score of *Europa Riconosciuta*, the *Tempest* scene.

Antonio Salieri (1750-1825) was a well-known composer of his day and a prominent figure on the Viennese musical scene. He wrote over 40 Italian operas, which are characterized by fluent melodic expression and dramatic choral writing. In the 1790s his work began to seem old-fashioned, and he wrote very little music after 1804. Ironically, S. in 1786 he moved to the court of Joseph II in Vienna. Salieri is best known today as he was fictionally portrayed in the play and movie *Amadeus* - a mediocre composer who accuses God of favoring Mozart and who vows to destroy Mozart.



SOMALIA

Scott???

Michel ???

A souvenir sheet issued in 2004 entitled "25th Anniversary of My Way". The popular song My Way was a signature song of Frank Sinatra, who is shown on each of the four stamps. Also pictured is Claude Francois, who along with Jacques Revaux composed the song. It was originally titled Comme d'habitude. Paul Anka, the third person shown on the stamps, wrote the English adaptation two years later in 1969, so the sheet's reference to its 25th anniversary is unclear. The border is filled with a notated score that does not appear to represent actual music.



SPAIN

Scott 3297a

Michel 3956-3957

One stamp in a set of two stamps and a label issued May 23, 2004 for the España 2004 stamp exhibition in Valencia. The stamp commemorates the 250th birth anniversary of Vicente Martín y Soler, a Spanish opera composer who was a contemporary of Mozart. Born in Valencia in 1754, Martín y Soler settled first in Madrid, where he made his operatic debut. He then spent eight productive years in Italy (1777-1785), where he wrote and successfully staged ten Italian operas. In 1786 he moved to the court of Joseph II in Vienna, where he met Mozart and Lorenzo da Ponte, a leading librettist of the 18th century. His collaborations with Da Ponte overshadowed those of other composers of the day, including Mozart. Martín y Soler then moved to St. Petersburg, where he received a contract to compose Russian and Italian operas for the court. When the contract was completed, he went to London for two years, returning to St. Petersburg in 1796, where he taught in a school for noblemen until his death in 1806. His greatest successes were in the genre of the opera buffa, or comic opera.

The stamp features a portrait of Martín y Soler, painted in 1787 by Joseph Kreuzinger. The background shows the handwritten title page of his earliest work, a zarzuela entitled *La Madrilená, o Tutor burlado*, composed probably in 1776. The other stamp in the set shows two band instruments - a saxophone and a drum. The set-tenant label, which depicts a stylized bandsman with sousaphone, publicizes the 2004 City of Valencia International Musical Band Competition.



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