

Note-Worthy Music Stamps, Part 13

by Ethel Bloesch

(Note: Part 13 describes stamps with musical notation that were issued in 2003. The next installment will cover stamps issued in 2004.)

AZERBAIJAN

Scott 756.

Michel 557

A miniature sheet issued November 21, 2003 to mark the 90th anniversary of the musical comedy *Arshin Mal Alan*, composed by Uzeyir Hajibeyov (1885-1948). It was written while Hajibeyov was a student at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, and it was the last thing he wrote before the 1917 Revolution. The story of *Arshin Mal Alan* (The Cloth Peddler) is based on the dilemma of a young wealthy businessman, Asgar, who feels he has everything in life except the ability to choose his own bride. By posing as a cloth peddler, Asgar circumvents cultural traditions and finds a young woman with whom he falls in love and eventually is able to marry (in spite of the USSR). The ten stamps depict a scene featuring a textile merchant in the foreground. The borders of the sheet show fragments of the musical score.

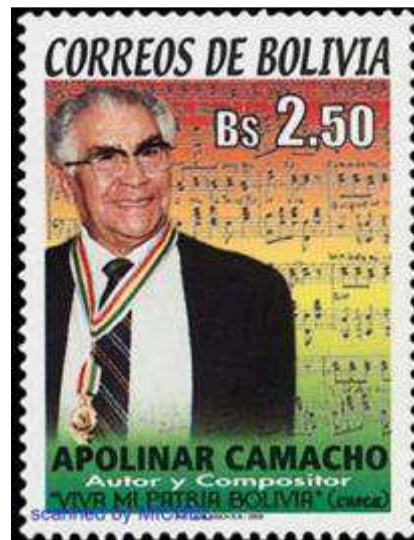


BOLIVIA

Scott 1204

Michel 1558

A stamp issued January 10, 2003 commemorating Apolinar Camacho (1917-2002), author and composer of "Viva mi Patria Bolivia". This song, sometimes called Bolivia's second national anthem, was composed in 1939 and was originally entitled "A Bolivia". The song achieved its greatest popularity in 1963, when Bolivia won the South American Football Championship. Camacho received some early musical training at the National Conservatory of Music, but financial difficulties forced him to leave the Conservatory and pursue a more general education. This led to a career in business. Although Camacho was not a professional musician, he composed more than one hundred works. He was the recipient of numerous civic and cultural honors, and less than a year after his death, Bolivia issued a stamp which features Camacho's portrait and the score of "Viva mi Patria Bolivia", his most famous song.



BRAZIL

Scott 2903

Michel 3335

A stamp issued November 7, 2003 for the 100th anniversary of the birth of Ary Barroso (1903-1964), a Brazilian composer and radio and television personality. As a composer, Barroso contributed to the establishment of the urban samba in the 1930s. His best known popular samba "Aquarela do Brasil", is sung worldwide. This song, which exalts the beauty and patriotic values of Brazil, was written in 1939. Walt Disney, on a goodwill trip to Brazil in 1941, asked to meet Barroso after hearing the song. It was recorded in the United States later that year as "Brazil". A Xavier Cugat version became a top ten hit in the U.S., and this song is now said to be one of the 20 most recorded songs in the world. Barroso subsequently wrote music for several movies, but decided not to pursue a career in Hollywood. Carmen Miranda was a famous interpreter of his music. The stamp design represents several facets of Barroso's life. In addition to his portrait we see a picture of the Maracana stadium in Rio de Janeiro (which was built when Barroso was a city councilman), a stylized piano keyboard he was a pianist in dance bands and cinemas), and several bars of his famous song "Aquarela do Brasil". The overall colors of the stamp suggest the Brazilian flag.



CHILE

Scott 1421

Michel 2094

A stamp issued June 9, 2003 for the 100th anniversary of the birth of Claudio Arrau (1903-1991), a renowned Chilean-born pianist who later became a naturalized American. Arrau was a child prodigy, and his principal musical study was at the Stern Conservatory in Berlin, where he was a pupil of Martin Krause from 1912-1918. Following extensive concert tours in Europe, South America, and the United States, Arrau joined the faculty of the Stern Conservatory in 1924, where he taught until 1940. A year later he settled in New York, but continued to travel extensively as he pursued an international career. The London music critic Sir Neville Cardus wrote: "Arrau is the complete pianist. He can revel in the keyboard for its own pianistic sake, representing to us the instrument's range and power, but he can also go beyond piano playing as we are led by his art to the secret chambers of the creative imagination." He was known for his profound interpretations of the 19th-century masters, particularly Beethoven. Highlights of Arrau's career included a number of complete performances of Beethoven's 32 piano sonatas. It is fitting, therefore, that Chile chose to include a Beethoven excerpt on its stamp honoring Arrau's 100th birthday. The stamp pictures a profile of the pianist, a piano keyboard, and two measures (4-5) of the first movement of the "Moonlight Sonata", op. 27, no. 2.



EGYPT

SCOTT 1842-1843

Michel 1594-1595

Two stamps issued January 28, 2003 for the 4th International Nile Song Festival for Children, held January 25 to February 3, 2003. Previous festivals were held in 1998, 1999, and 2001, all under the sponsorship of Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak. Twenty-five countries participated in the 2003 festival. Children in two age categories (5-8 and 9-14) were invited to submit recorded entries of original songs. Selected songs were then performed before the festival audiences, and prizes were awarded to the composer, lyricist, and singer of the winning songs. The stamps feature the festival emblem, which includes stylized figures of three children and three decorative notes. Hieroglyphics form the background.

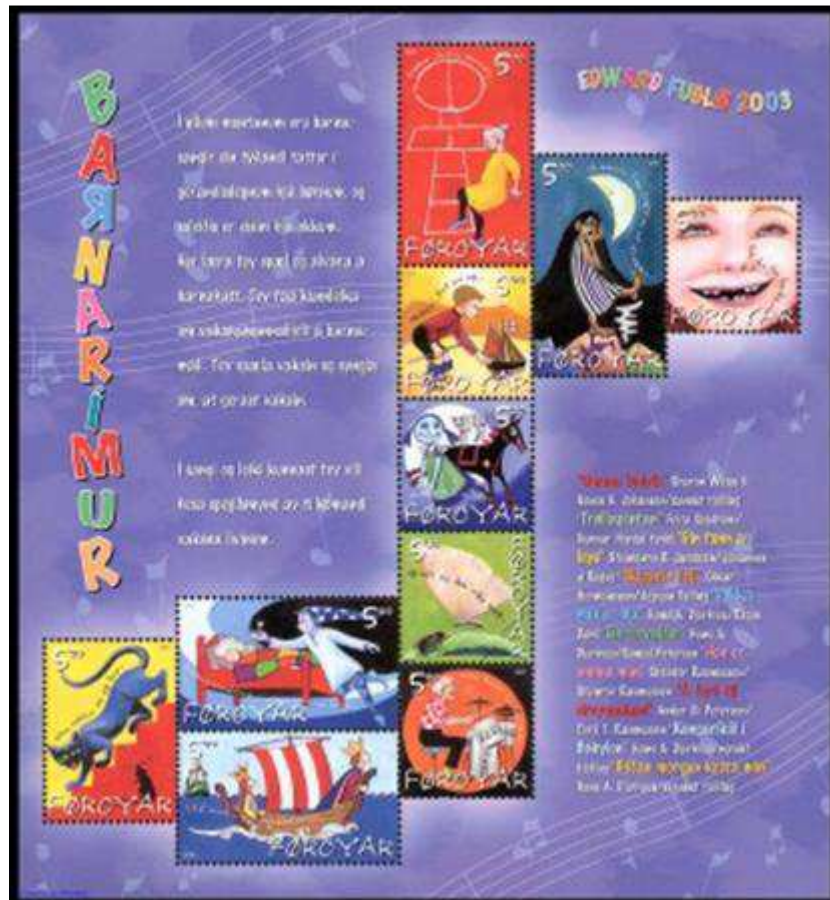


FAROE ISLANDS

Scott 432

Michel 450-459

A souvenir sheet issued April 14, 2003 featuring Faroese children's songs. This colorful sheet contains ten stamps, each of which illustrates a popular song for children. In the earliest schools, the children probably sang Danish songs. Songs specifically for children appeared in 1914 when the poet Hans Andrias Djurhuus published the first of his books containing rhymes for children. These were set to music and were the main songs sung in the Faroese schools for many years. In the mid-1970s, children's records appeared and new songbooks were published, signaling an era of renewed interest in Faroese children's songs. The background of the souvenir sheet contains several staves of decorative notes.



FINLAND

Scott 1185b

Michel 1637

One stamp in a booklet of six self-adhesive stamps issued January 15, 2003. Intended for Valentine greetings, the stamps feature the popular cartoon characters Viivi and Wagner. The characters are the creation of Jussi (Juba) Tuomola, and they appear regularly in a comic strip carried by twenty Finnish newspapers. The antics and friendship of the bright and environmentally conscious Viivi and the self-centered pig-like Wagner have captivated Finnish readers, young and old. The stamp show Viivi and Wagner in various fun filled activities. One stamp shows them dancing exuberantly to music that is represented by three pairs of decorative notes floating in the air around them.



GERMANY

Scott 2231

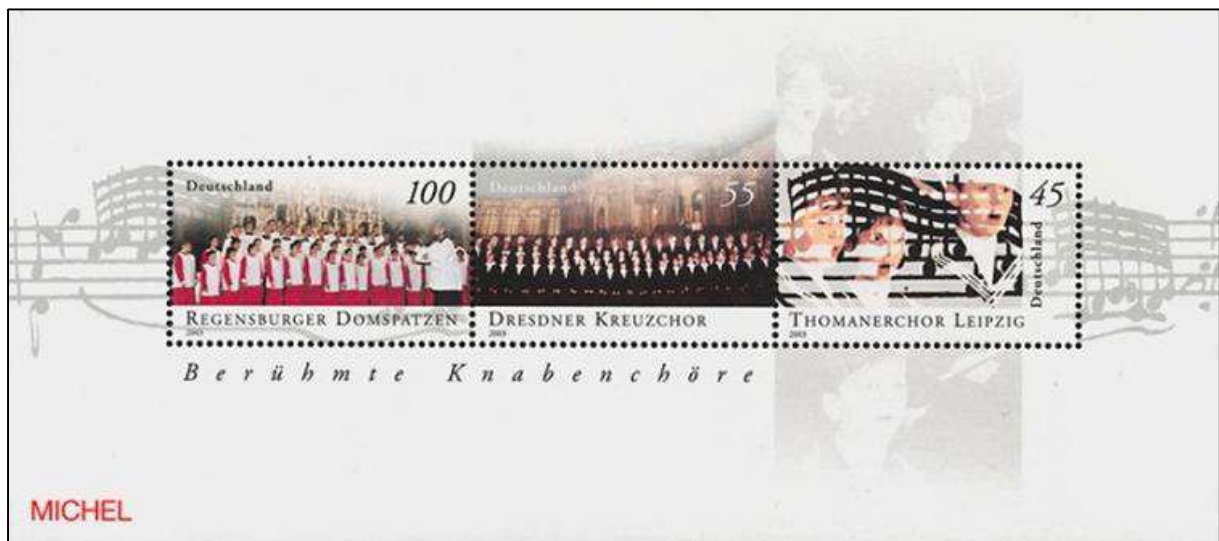
Michel 2318-2320

A miniature sheet of three se-tenant stamps issued February 13, 2003 to honor famous German boys' choirs.

The oldest of these - the "Regensburger Domspatzen" (the Regensburg Cathedral Choir) - celebrated its millennial anniversary in 1976. The choir's main task is to perform the musical accompaniment to the liturgy in St Peter's Cathedral in Regensburg, but it has also become well known through recordings and international concert tours. The choristers attend a boarding school affiliated with the institution.

Also pictured is the "Dresdner Kreuzchor" (the choir from the Holy Cross church in Dresden), founded in 1234. Through the centuries this choir has performed masterpieces of the choral literature, from Jacobus Gallus and Michael Praetorius to Heinrich Schütz (once director of music in Dresden), J. S. Bach, Mendelssohn, Brahms, Bruckner, and such contemporaries as Hugo Distler, Francis Poulenc, and Benjamin Britten. The Kreuzkirche and its academy, the Kreuzschule, fell victim to the Allied air raids in February 1945. The choir sang its first postwar vespers in the burnt-out Kreuzkirche a few months later, but was not able to take possession of its home again until some ten years later.

The third choir to be honored, the Thomanerchor Leipzig, was founded in 1212 by members of the Augustinian order. The best known cantor of the Thomaskirche was J. S. Bach, who served in this capacity from 1723 until his death in 1750. In the 19th century the choir of the Thomaskirche became the backbone of the Bach revival. The stamp for the Thomanerchor highlights notation that is representative of Bach's own handwriting.



GERMANY

Scott 2247

Michel 2346

A stamp issued June 12, 2003 for the 50th anniversary of the German Music Council. As an umbrella organization for music associations in Germany, the Council promotes the status of music in society through a number of activities, including young talent competitions, such as "Jugend musiziert" (Young People Play Music) and "Jugend jazzt" (Young People Play Jazz). Many of the past winners of "Jugend musiziert" have become members of the National Youth Orchestra of Germany. Founded in 1969, the Youth Orchestra serves as a cultural ambassador for Germany, through its international tours and recording activities. Other activities of the Music Council include the development of young conductors, the promotion of contemporary music, and the sponsorship of exchange programs and foreign concert tours. The stamp features a staff with stylized notes and music symbols.



GIBRALTAR

Scott 959

Michel 1063

A souvenir sheet issued November 17, 2003 for Christmas, based on the cartoon strip "Peanuts" by Charles Schulz. The stamp on the sheet shows eight of the Peanuts gang singing lustily around a Christmas tree, while Charlie Brown, Snoopy, and Woodstock listen adoringly. In the lower margin Snoopy represents the greeting "Joy to the World". Behind the greeting are two staves of music, which are too fragmentary to identify. The Peanuts comic strip was one of the most widely syndicated ever, appearing in 2500 newspaper around the world. It debuted October 2, 1950, and the last original strip was published February 13, 2000, one day after the death of Charles Schulz.



KOREA, DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF

Scott ???

Michel 4662

A souvenir sheet issued June 1, 2003 to promote the theme of national reunification (a historic north-south summit meeting was held in Pyongyang in 2000). The sheet features the song "We Are One", written and composed by Hwang Chin-yong. An outline map of the Korean Peninsula is superimposed on the song. At the top of the sheet is a picture of Lake Chon on Mt. Paekrok, and on the lower part Lake Paekrok on Mt. Halla is shown, representing North and South Korea, respectively.



KYRGYZSTAN

Scott ???

Michel 366

One of three stamps issued October 4, 2003 in a set featuring these state symbols: the national anthem, the flag, and the coat of arms. The complete text of the national anthem is presented in the Kyrgyz language in Cyrillic script. Shown lightly in the background is a page of the music. The national anthem was composed by Nasyr Davlesov and Kalyi Moldobasanov. The words were written by Djamil Sadykov and Eshmambet Kuluev. It was adopted as the official hymn of Kyrgyzstan on December 18, 1992. An English translation of the text begins: "High mountains, valleys and fields are our native, holy land". The chorus proclaims: "Come on, Kyrgyz people, come on to freedom! Stand up and flourish! Create your fortune!"



MONACO

Scott 2297

Michel 2654

A stamp issued July 21, 2003 for the 200th anniversary of the birth of the French composer Hector Berlioz (1803-1869). Much of the music of Berlioz is associated with images. His symphonies, for example, have descriptive or dramatic themes: *Symphonie fantastique*; *Harold en Italië*; *Romeo et Juliette*. The earliest of these, *Symphonie fantastique* (1830), has the subtitle "Episode in the Life of an Artist". It is a musical drama without words. A recurring theme (*idée fixe*) in a series of scenes represents the artist's beloved (an actual person whom Berlioz adored from afar and eventually married). He described these scenes in a letter to a friend: I imagine that an artist.... sees for the first time a woman who embodies the idea of beauty and fascination that his heart has long been seeking; he falls desperately in love with her. As the result of an odd whim, whenever the image of the loved one appears... it is accompanied by a musical thought... That is the reason for the appearance, in every movement of the symphony, of the chief melody of the first Allegro. Finding himself one day in the country, he hears in the distance two shepherds piping....This pastorale immerses him in delightful reverie. He goes to a ball, but... his *idée fixe* returns to trouble him, and the beloved melody makes his heart pound during a brilliant waltz. [Berlioz later reversed the order of these second and third movements.] In a fit of despair he poisons himself with opium; but instead of killing him, the narcotic induces a horrible vision... He believes he has killed his beloved, has been condemned to death, and witnesses his own execution. March to the scaffold. He sees himself surrounded by... sorcerers and devils, come together to celebrate the Sabbath.... At last the melody arrives... The ceremony begins. The bells ring... a chorus sings the plainchant sequence of the dead (*Dies irae*).... Then finally the Sabbath round-dance begins to whirl; in its most violent out-burst it mingles with the *Dies irae*, and the dream is over."

The Berlioz bicentenary stamp features a portrait of the composer and a short motif from the 4th movement (*March to the Gallows*), measures 124-125 of the flute part.



NETHERLANDS

Scott B739

Michel 2151-2156

A semi-postal sheet of six stamps issued November 4, 2003 for child welfare. Entitled "Kind & Culture", the stamps form a continuous design depicting items in a child's life. These include such things as a radio, ballet shoes, theater masks, a paintbrush, a television set, a soccer ball, several musical instruments, and a microphone with three decorative notes on a music staff.



NEW CALEDONIA

Scott 935

Michel 1317

A stamp issued November 6, 2003 for Christmas. It features the musical merrymaking of three characters from the popular cartoon series "La Brousse en Folie" (The Crazy Bush). Created by Bernard Berger in 1983, "La Brousse en Folie" is a good way to understand the New Caledonian culture and people. The characters are said to be prototypes of the diverse ethnic groups of the country, including Melanesians (Kanakaks), Europeans of French origin, Vietnamese, etc. The stamp shows the characters playing and singing, as they proclaim greetings of the holiday season: "Joyeux Noël, Bonne année". Decorative musical notes hover in the air around them.



NEW ZEALAND

Scott 1893

Michel 2126

One stamp in a set of five issued October 1, 2003 for Christmas. The issue also includes two booklet panes. One of the stamps pictures two bells, upon which fragmentary decorative notation is superimposed.



NORWAY

Scott 1363

Michel 1465

Two stamps issued May 22, 2003 for the 50th anniversary of the Bergen International Festival. The original festival in 1953 was devoted solely to music and featured such well-known performers as Kirsten Flagstad, Robert Riefling, and Leopold Stokowski. Through the years the Festival expanded and now includes the other performing arts as well. Bergen was the home town of Norway's most famous composer, Edvard Grieg (1843-1907), and his home at Troldhaugen is one of the featured concert sites, along with Bergen's theatre and concert hall.

One of the stamps pictures a musician's hand playing a violin. Musical notation is superimposed on both stamps. The excerpt shows the first three measures of Edvard Grieg's Piano Concerto in A minor, op. 16, one of two works that has made Grieg known throughout the world. As a concert pianist, Grieg championed the works of Robert Schumann, and he modeled his concerto after Schumann's Piano Concerto in A minor.



NORWAY

Scott 1364

Michel 1466

Two stamps issued May 22, 2003 for the 50th anniversary of the Bergen International Festival. The original festival in 1953 was devoted solely to music and featured such well-known performers as Kirsten Flagstad, Robert Riefing, and Leopold Stokowski. Through the years the Festival expanded and now includes the other performing arts as well. Bergen was the home town of Norway's most famous composer, Edvard Grieg (1843-1907), and his home at Troldhaugen is one of the featured concert sites, along with Bergen's theatre and concert hall.

One of the stamps shows children's faces and a brass instrument. Musical notation is superimposed on the stamp. This stamp shows Grieg's incidental music to Henry Ibsen's play Peer Gynt.



NORWAY

Scott 1379

Michel 1476

One stamp in a set of five special-occasion stamps issued September 19, 2003. They are intended for such uses as birth announcements and invitations to weddings, children's parties, and other celebrations. One of the stamps depicts a partying man and woman. Two decorative notes suggest a festive occasion.



PARAGUAY

Scott 2723

Michel 4908

One stamp in a set of three issued September 12, 2003 to honor Paraguayan folk artists. The 100g stamp commemorates Emiliano Rivarola Fernández (1894-1949), one of the most popular poets of Paraguay. His poems are rooted deeply in the Paraguayan folk culture, reflecting the feelings of the humblest people of his country. Most of the poems have been set to music and were popular during the War of the Chaco, a war in which Fernández fought and was wounded. The stamp depicts Fernández in military uniform, surrounded by musical notes and symbols.



PERU

Scott 1364

Michel 1860

A stamp issued December 18, 2003 to commemorate Peru's cultural heritage. An important element of this heritage Afro-Peruvian music, represented here with a picture of someone playing the cajón (a wooden-box drum). The cajón originated in Peru, but its popularity has spread worldwide - it is the percussion instrument of choice in Spanish flamenco music. The cajón is made of hardwood with a front cover of plywood and an open circle cut out in the back. A distinctive feature of the cajón is that the player sits on the drum and plays it with hand strokes, as the stamp shows in a very stylized way. The stamp also shows a swirling music staff with decorative notes emanating from the instrument. This actually is not a true representation of the sounds of the cajón, since it is an unpitched percussion instrument.



SAN MARINO

Scott 1592

Michel 2119

A stamp issued October 24, 2003 for the reopening of the Teatro La Fenice in Venice. La Fenice, Venice's beautiful and historic opera house was destroyed by fire January 29, 1996 while it was undergoing restoration. The facade survived the fire, but the interior was completely destroyed, and the building was in danger of collapse. There was an immediate decision to rebuild, but the project encountered many disputes and delays, and it was nearly eight years until the theatre finally reopened, on December 14, 2003. Originally built in 1792, the opera house was named "La Fenice" (The Phoenix) because it had replaced an earlier building destroyed by fire. In the 1800's La Fenice became a preeminent theatre in the Italian peninsula, featuring opera premières by Bellini and Rossini. The theatre burned to the ground in 1836 and, like a phoenix, rose once again from the ashes the following year. Five Verdi operas premiered there in the two succeeding decades. The inaugural concert on December 14, 2003, was conducted by Riccardo Muti, and featured *The Consecration of the House* by Beethoven and three works by composers with ties to Venice: Igor Stravinsky, Antonio Caldara, and Richard Wagner. The official reopening of the theatre occurred in November 2004 with a performance of Verdi's *La Traviata*, which debuted there in 1853.

The stamp features an emblem of the theatre (a phoenix) with an unidentified musical excerpt in the background.



SIERRA LEONE

Scott 2596

Michel 4406-4409

A sheet of four stamps issued July 1, 2003 for the 100th anniversary of Teddy Bears. The Teddy Bear is said to have been inspired by a 1902 political cartoon depicting President Theodore Roosevelt's refusal to shoot a helpless old bear while on a hunting expedition in Mississippi. The cartoon, which shows the bear as a cub, inspired Morris and Rose Michtom, immigrant shopkeepers and toymakers in Brooklyn, to produce a cuddly creature called Teddy's Bear (so named with the permission of Roosevelt). Now, one hundred years later, over thirty countries (including the United States) have celebrated the centenary of Teddy Bears with postage issues. The sheet from Sierra Leone is one of an omnibus issue from various countries in the IGPC (an international philatelic network). The sheet is titled "Teddy Bears of Germany" and features four stamps with bears in various costumes. One bear is holding a horn and a sheet of music. Larger notes (probably decorative as well) form the background for another bear, who is dancing.



Turks & Caicos Islands

Scott 1420

Michel 1764-1467

A sheet of four stamps issued August 25, 2003 for the 100th anniversary of Teddy Bears. The Teddy Bear is said to have been inspired by a 1902 political cartoon depicting President Theodore Roosevelt's refusal to shoot a helpless old bear while on a hunting expedition in Mississippi. The cartoon, which shows the bear as a cub, inspired Morris and Rose Michtom, immigrant shopkeepers and toymakers in Brooklyn, to produce a cuddly creature called Teddy's Bear (so named with the per-mission of Roosevelt). Now, one hundred years later, over thirty countries (including the United States) have celebrated the centenary of Teddy Bears with postage issues. The sheet from Sierra Leone is one of an omnibus issue from various countries in the IGPC (an international philatelic network). The sheet is titled "Teddy Bears of Germany" and features four stamps with bears in various costumes. One bear is holding a violin. Larger notes (probably decorative as well) form the background for this bear.



SWITZERLAND

Scott 1150

Michel 1842

One stamp in a block of four issued May 8, 2003. The set, which also includes a souvenir sheet is devoted to the art of the comic strip and is intended to appeal to "the streetwise younger generation" (according to the Swiss Post). Each stamp features a different comic-strip character, especially created for the postal set by the Genevan artist Torn Tirabosco. The sheet combines the four characters and also introduces a new one. Each character is holding an envelope, the contents of which are expressed by an illustration. One of these is a single musical note. This is the third issue by the Swiss Post on the topic of comics, the so-called "Ninth Art".



UKRAINE

Scott 497

Michel 558

A stamp issued February 21, 2003 for the 150th anniversary of the birth of Mikola Arkas (1853 - 1909). An active figure in Ukrainian culture and education, Arkas was a composer and an amateur historian. He established a Ukrainian-language school, which was closed by the authorities after only two years. He also was one of the founders of the Prosvita society in Mykolaïv and was author of a popular history of Ukraine. He collected and arranged over 80 Ukrainian folksongs and wrote a number of romances and songs for his students. His major musical work was the opera *Kateryna*, with his own libretto based on the poem by Taras Shevchenko. The opera was completed in 1891 and first performed in Moscow in 1899, staged by the Ukrainian actor, playwright and director Marko Kropyvnytsky. The stamp shows a portrait of the composer and an excerpt from *Kateryna*. It appears to be the opening page of the piano score.



UNITED STATES

Scott 3772d

Michel 3728

One stamp in a pane of 10 self-adhesive stamps issued February 25, 2003 to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. The issue is titled "American Filmmaking: Behind the Scenes". Each stamp features one of the activities involved in the making of movies: art direction, cinematography, costume design, directing, film editing, makeup, music, screenwriting, sound, and special effects. The gravure photographs show the hands of the creators at work.

The music stamp features the right hand of Max Steiner (1888 - 1971) and a draft of one of his musical scores. Steiner, a prolific and award-winning film composer, was born in Austria, where he displayed his musical talents at an early age. He moved to England in 1905 and then to America at the outbreak of World War I. He worked as conductor and arranger on Broadway until 1929, when he moved to Hollywood. There he pioneered the techniques of underscoring music for films, and during his 36-year film career completed over three hundred scores. Twenty of his film scores received Academy nominations for best score, and two - *Now, Voyager* and *Since You Went Away* - received Academy awards for best score of the year. Many consider his finest work to be the score for *Gone with the Wind* (1939), in which he refined his techniques of giving each major character his or her own separate musical motif.

In attempting to identify the score shown on the stamp, this writer enlisted the help of the firm in Los Angeles that designed the stamp, who then consulted the company in Washington D.C. that owns the photo, who in turn consulted the curator of Arts and Communications Archives at Brigham Young University. The caption on the back of the photo indicates that it was taken in 1954. If this date is correct, Steiner could have been working on the score for any one of these four films; *King Richard*, *Violent Men*, *Caine Mutiny*, or *Boys from Oklahoma*. The photo is probably a publicity shot taken at Steiner's home. The sketch (or "short score") shown in the photograph is cropped in such a way that an archivist would have to go through all of the bound volumes to match it up to the original sketch.



URUGUAY

Scott 2021

Michel 2756

A stamp issued September 19, 2003 to honor the Uruguayan musicologist Lauro Ayestarán (1913 - 1966). A professor at the University of Montevideo and head of the musicology section of the National Historical Museum, Ayestarán was interested both in music history (he wrote prolifically) and ethnomusicology (he made some 4000 recordings of Uruguayan folk music and published his studies of them). He was also a music critic for several newspapers and artistic director of the state broadcasting system. The stamp shows his portrait together with a page of the Uruguayan national anthem. The excerpt in manuscript form appears to be a lengthy introduction to the song itself. Like many other Latin American national anthems, it is operatic in nature. Adopted in 1845, it was composed by Francisco José Debali (1791-1859), a Hungarian-born composer, who emigrated to Montevideo in 1838.



Edited by Arnold van Berkel, November 2013