

Note-Worthy Music Stamps, Part 3

By Ethel Bloesch

BELIZE

Scott 1014

Michel 1113

One of four stamps issued August 11, 1993 to honor eminent Belizeans. The 60-cent stamp honors Selwyn Walford Young (1899-1977), composer of Belize's national anthem. A native Belizean, Young began his musical career at age six. All members of his family played musical instruments. After graduating from St. John's College, he moved to Chicago where he studied at the Chicago Musical College and earned a Ph.D. at De Paul University. He also studied at the Victoria College of Music in London. He taught music in Chicago for twenty years. Young returned to Belize, becoming concertmaster and eventually conductor of the British Honduras Concert Symphony Orchestra. He composed many songs, including "Land of the Gods", set to words by his friend Samuel Alfred Haynes (1898-1971). This stirring song became very popular and was adopted, with minor changes, as the national anthem of Belize when the country achieved its independence in 1981. The words of the title "Land of the Gods" were changed to "Land of the Free". The stamp shows the opening bars of the song's refrain along with a portrait of Young.

(Bulletin from the Belize Postal Service, provided by Chuichi Maeda.)



BRAZIL

Scott 2426

Michel 2551

One of two stamps issued October 19, 1993 to honor Brazilian composers. This stamp highlights a leading figure of Brazilian popular music: the instrumentalist, composer, and arranger Pixinguinha (Alfredo da Rocha Vianna, Jr.). He was born in 1897 in Piedade, in north Rio de Janeiro, and died in 1973 in the same city. He displayed musical talent as a child, composing music and playing the flute. In 1922 he went to Paris, where he achieved great success with a performing group he had organized in Rio de Janeiro. His recording career, which spanned several decades, began during World War I. He composed film music and approximately two thousand popular songs, including the song shown on this stamp, "Carinhoso". A master of the saxophone as well as the flute, Pixinguinha played a decisive role in integrating percussion instruments of African origin with those of European origin, thus making possible the popular music of Brazil today.

(Brazilian postal bulletin, provided by Chuichi Maeda.)



BULGARIA

Scott 3786

Michel 4072

Stamp issued September 30, 1993 for the 100th anniversary of the death of Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893). His portrait is shown on the stamp, along with a fragment of music, apparently from an autograph score but which one ? There are enough clues to make the search tantalizing, yet efforts to identify the music (including a search through the Tchaikovsky thematic catalog and an electronic appeal to music librarians on the Internet) have so far been unsuccessful.



CANADA

Scott 1491-1494

Michel 1385-1388

Set of four stamps issued se-tenant September 7, 1993 as the fourth and final set in Canada's folklore series. The stamps depict folk songs from various regions of the country, from Alberta to Newfoundland. In each case, the stamp shows the opening melody and words, along with an illustration of the song.

The Alberta Homesteader (Scott 1491), adapted from an American pioneer song, features distinctly Canadian lyrics about the difficulties of life on the Western frontier. Verse 5 is especially graphic: "How happy I feel when I roll into bed: The rattlesnake rattles a tune at my head, The little mosquito devoid of all fear Crawls over my face and into my ear". Finally, in the last verse, the homesteader gives up the hardships and loneliness and bids "farewell to Alberta, farewell to the west. It's backwards I'll go to the girl I love best".

Les Raftmans (Scott 1492) is a 19th century French-Canadian lumbering song. The lumberjacks of the Ottawa Valley had plenty to sing about, from their trek upriver into the pine forests in autumn, to their daredevil raft drives downriver in spring. This jolly song goes on for about 25 verses.

I's the B'y that Builds the Boat (Scott 1493) is a popular Newfoundland dance ditty. Because Newfoundlanders have lived for centuries in relatively isolated fishing villages, their songs are usually homegrown and contain many references to fishing and the sea. The harsh realities of their lives are described in their serious story songs, while their ditties are more playful.

Ohkwa: ritenhanonniakwe (Scott 1494) is a Mohawk lullaby. Like other native peoples, the Mohawks (members of the Iroquois Confederacy) made music an important part of their life. Singing was not mere entertainment, but a means of winning the help of the powers of nature. The words of this song in translation are: "Don't cry, my child. The bear will come to dance for you". They are repeated until the child falls asleep.

(Canadian postal bulletin, provided by Chuichi Maeda.)



CROATIA

Scott 171

Michel 252

Stamp issued August 7, 1993 for the 100th anniversary of the birth of Vlaho Paljetak(1893-1944), Croatian singer and songwriter. In the period between the two world wars, Paljetak was the most popular figure in Zagreb, performing in cabarets and in cinemas. Recordings and radio broadcasts spread his fame even further. Paljetak and his guitar won the hearts of all classes in society. The greatest compliment paid to him is the fact that many of his songs were considered to be original folk songs. One of his most popular songs, "*Fala*" (Thank You), is featured on this stamp, along with his picture. Paljetak was described by his contemporaries as an incorrigible bohemian, with a wide-brimmed hat, a melancholic look in his eyes behind horn-rimmed glasses, and a long scarf. His listeners were enchanted by his personality, as well as by his velvet-like voice. Paljetak also served as an opera prompter in the Croatian National Theatre from 1919 until his death.

(Muzicka Enciklopedija, v.3. Zagreb, 1977. Also, Croatian postal bulletin, provided by Chuichi Maeda.)



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Scott ???

Michel 1687

Stamp issued in 1994 for the National Philatelic Exhibition. It features a reproduction of two earlier stamps, one of which contains the first four bars of the melody of the national anthem. The original stamp was issued in 1946 in a set of five, each showing the same musical excerpt. The notes are still recognizable in this stamp on a stamp. Composed in 1883, "*Quisqueyanos valientes, alcemos*" was first sung as the national anthem in 1900. The words were written by Emilio Prud'homme (1856-1932) and the music by José Reyes (1835-1905).

(Reed, W.L, and Bristow, M.J.,eds. National Anthems of the World, 7th ed. London: Blandford Press, 1987.)



FINLAND

Scott 927

Michel 1229-1232

Miniature sheet of four stamps, issued October 8, 1993 for the inauguration of the new Opera House of the Finnish National Opera. The four stamps show scenes from two operas (*The Magic Flute*, by Mozart and *Ostrobothnians*, by the Finnish composer Leevi Madetoja) and from two ballets (*Giselle* by Adolphe Adam, and *Faun*, based on *L'Après midi d'un Faun*, by Claude Debussy). In addition, the sheet pictures the new Opera House, which is located on the Toolonlahti Bay in the heart of Helsinki, across from Finlandia Hall and the City Theatre. It is the first building in Finland designed especially for the performance of opera.

The sheet also contains five bars of music - a Finnish folk melody used by Leevi Madetoja (1887-1947) in his opera noted above. The opera, *Ostrobothnians* (original title: *Pohjalaisia*), was first performed in 1924. It is regarded as the national opera of Finland. The story, set in the west Finnish plains of Ostrobothnia, depicts the conflict between a proud peasantry and a brutal alien authority, thus symbolizing the nation's struggle for freedom. In this opera, as in his other works, Madetoja combines folk melodies with a very distinctive personal style. A student of Sibelius and d'Indy, Madetoja was an important member of the Finnish national romantic school. His two operas (*Pohjalaisia* and *Juha*) were both performed at the Finnish Opera in Helsinki. His other works include three symphonies and much vocal music.

(The New Grove Dictionary of Opera, v.3. New York: Macmillan, 1992. Also Finnish postal bulletin supplied by Chuichi Maeda, and music identification by Voitto Poikolainen, obtained by Arnold Poos.)



GERMANY

Scott 1832

Michel 1736

Stamp issued May 5, 1994 for the 125th anniversary of the birth of Hans Pfitzner (1869-1949), German composer, conductor, pianist, and teacher. Along with Richard Strauss and Max Reger, he was part of the movement that marked the end of the 19th century Romanticism. Pfitzner was born into a family of prominent musicians. The most successful stage of his musical career began in Strasbourg, where he was appointed director of the conservatory and conductor of the symphony orchestra, as well as director of the opera. It was also in Strasbourg that Pfitzner composed his most important work, the musical legend *Palestrina*, a large-scale dramatic work with lavish cast and large orchestra. Later, in Munich, he became a life member of the Munich Academy of Music. In 1934 he was relieved of his life post because of poor health; he continued, however, to compose and conduct. When his home was destroyed in an air raid in 1943, he moved to Vienna, then to a refugee camp in Garmisch, and finally in 1946 to an old people's home near Munich. Although he died with few possessions he was buried in a tomb of honor in the Vienna Zentralfriedhof. The stamp shows a portrait of Pfitzner based on a contemporary pencil drawing. In the background are several bars from the autograph manuscript for one of Pfitzner's songs, "*Zum Abschied meiner Tochter*", op.10, no.3. Pfitzner was a prolific song composer, and this song, set to a text by Joseph von Eichendorff was composed in 1901. The original manuscript is in the Bavarian State Library in Munich. Shown here is a portion of measures 20-26.

(Pfitzner, Hans. *Sämtliche Lieder mit Klavierbegleitung*. Mainz: Schott, 1979. Also, German postal bulletin provided by Chuichi Maeda.)



IRAN

Scott 2581

Michel 2572

Stamp issued April 1, 1993 for the 14th anniversary of the Islamic Republic of Iran. An open book contains music on the left page, reported to be the national anthem. The notes, however, do not match those of the current national anthem of Iran, adopted March 24, 1980, as given in the Standard source, National Anthems of the World, 7th ed., edited by W. L. Reed and N. J. Bristow. The mystery, therefore, continues.



IRELAND

Scott 904

Michel 834

Stamp issued September 2, 1993 for the 150th anniversary of the death of Edward Bunting (1773-1843). A prominent musician in Belfast in the early 1800s, Bunting is remembered today for his systematic collection of Irish folk melodies. This publication, "*A general Collection of the Ancient Irish Music*", came out in three volumes: in 1796, 1809, and 1840. In his preface to the first volume, Bunting describes the circumstances leading to the collection. He writes: "The rapid decrease of the number of itinerant performers on the Irish Harp, with the consequent decline of that tender and expressive instrument, gave the first idea of assembling the remaining harpers dispersed over the different provinces of Ireland. A meeting of them was accordingly procured at a considerable expense, by the Gentlemen of Belfast on the 12th of July 1792 The compiler of this volume was appointed to attend on that occasion, to take down the various airs played by the different harpers, and was particularly cautioned against adding a single note to the old melodies, which would seem ... to have been preserved pure and handed down unalloyed, through a long succession of ages. A principal motive ... was to procure, while yet attainable, the most approved copies of tunes already in the hands of practitioners, as well as to revive and perpetuate a variety of others extremely ancient of which there were no copies extant and which were therefore likely to become extinct". Bunting expanded his work by traveling throughout Ireland to gather other examples of this ancient art. His first collection, published in 1796, contained 66 airs. Three of these airs are reproduced, in part, on the stamp honoring Bunting, and are visible on the page of music that forms the background of the stamp. Shown at the top is the concluding bass line of No. 17, "*The Young Man's Dream*". The next six staves show No. 18, "*The Charmer with the Fair Lock*", and the bottom four staves are from No. 19, "*The Twisting of the Rope*".

(*The Ancient Music of Ireland: An Edition Comprising the Three Collections* by Edward Bunting, Originally Published in 1796, 1809 and 1840. Dublin, 1969)



KOREA, REPUBLIC OF

Scott 1701-1702

Michel 1755-1756

Music Series IX, issued September 13, 1993. These two stamps complete the Music Series, begun in 1985. Two folk songs are featured. The first, "*O-Dol-Ddo-Gi*", a folk song from the southern island province of Cheju, describes an old legend about a 16th century fisherman who was caught in a storm and drifted to Siam. He later married a Korean woman, who had also washed up ashore after a storm. Yet he could not forget his homeland and eventually found his way home.

The second stamp pictures "*Ong-He-Ya*", a folksong from the eastern province of Kyongsang, where paddy-field agriculture is predominant. "*Ong-He-Ya*" is sung by farmers while threshing barley. The duple meter (unusual in Korean folk song) allows two farmers to coordinate the movements of their work.

(Information from Korean Stamp Review, provided by Chuichi Maeda)



MONACO

Scott 1886

Michel 2151

Stamp issued December 10, 1993 for the 150th anniversary of the birth of Edvard Grieg (1843-1907). According to music historian Donald J. Grout, Grieg's best works are his short piano pieces, songs, and incidental music to plays. His essential nationalism is evident both in melody and harmony, yet Grieg has a highly personal idiom that is expressive and perennially fresh. His most extensive dramatic work is the incidental music to Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*, completed in 1875. The project proved to be more time-consuming than Grieg had first imagined when he accepted Ibsen's invitation to compose music for the five-act verse drama. The first performance took place at the Christiania Theater in Oslo in February 1876 and was a great success. In fact, *Peer Gynt* was the sensation of the season and was performed 36 times that spring. Today, the music is best known through two concert suites, which include only eight of the 23 numbers. The order also has been rearranged, and the suites do not convey the sustained dramatic impact of the original work. The stamp from Monaco features one of the most familiar numbers from *Peer Gynt*, "Solveig's Song" in Act IV, shown here in the original draft in Grieg's own hand. The stamp, however, gives us only the first four bars of the introduction, and not the lovely melody of the song itself. "Solveig's Song" has the character of a folk song, with its naturalness and simplicity. It conveys the essence of Solveig's character, the faithfulness and love that ultimately bring peace and redemption to Peer. This song is one of the most frequently transcribed of all of Grieg's songs; there are arrangements for solo piano, piano four hands, orchestra, women's chorus, oboe and piano, etc. Grieg once noted, to his dismay, that he had heard it played on a zither. Shown with the music is a portrait of Grieg and the designer's version of two Norwegian trolls, a supernatural creature of great significance to the *Peer Gynt* story.

(Benestad, Finn, and Schjelderup-Ebbe, Dag. *Edvard Grieg: The Man and the Artist*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988. Also, information from Rune Andersen, provided by Oddvar Sørbye)



NEVIS

Scott 807

Michel 767

One of two stamps issued September 19, 1993 for the 10th anniversary of the independence of St. Christopher (St. Kitts) and Nevis. Together, these islands form a federation that is an independent member of the Commonwealth of Nations. Interestingly, though, they issue stamps separately. The 25-cent stamp in this issue from Nevis features the national flag and the first six bars of the melody and words of the national anthem, "*O Land of Beauty*." Kenrick Anderson Georges (born in 1955) wrote both the words and the music, and the song was officially adopted as the national anthem of St. Kitts and Nevis in 1983. The song also appeared on a stamp from St. Kitts for the first anniversary of independence in 1984.

(National Anthems of the World, 7th edition. Also, postal bulletin, provided by Chuichi Maeda)



PHILIPPINES

Scott 2231

Michel 2272-2281

Sheet issued June 9, 1993, looking ahead to the centenary in 1998 of Philippine independence from Spain. Two labels and ten stamps show the Philippine flag and national symbols. At the bottom of the sheet are the first eight bars of the national anthem. The music was written in 1898 by Julian Felipe (1861 -1944) and first performed in June that year in connection with the proclamation of Philippine independence. The words, originally in Spanish, are by José Palma (1876-1903). Given here is the Tagalog version, beginning with the words "Bayang magiliw", written either by a Government Committee (so says *National Anthems of the World*) or by Felipe P. de León (so says *New Grove Dictionary*). An English translation also exists. The notation shown here has rhythmic errors. The second beat in measures 1, 3, 5, and 7 should be a dotted eighth note, and the first beat in measures 3 and 7 should be an eighth-note triplet.

(*National Anthems of the World*, 7th edition)

CENTENARY OF PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE
1898-1998

Series I PHILIPPINE FLAG WITH NATIONAL SYMBOLS

NATIONAL ANTHEM (Lupang Hinirang)

Ba - yang ma - gi - liw, Per - las ng Si - la - nga - nan,
MICHELA - lab ng pu - so Sa dib - dib mo'y bu - hay.

PHILIPPINES

Scott 2232

Michel 2420-2423

Sheet issued June 12, 1994. Second in an annual series to publicize the forthcoming centenary of Philippine independence. It features four stamps picturing national landmarks. Again, the bottom of the sheet contains the first eight bars of the national anthem, but this time with the words of stanza two. Also, most of the rhythmic errors that occurred on the first sheet have been corrected here. (Philippine postal bulletin, provided by Chuichi Maeda.)

CENTENARY OF PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE
1898-1998
Series 2 PHILIPPINE FLAG WITH NATIONAL LANDMARKS

NATIONAL ANTHEM (Lupang Hinirang) Part 2

Lu - pang hi - ni - rang, Du - yan ka ng ma - gi - ling

Sa man - lu - lu - pig, Di ka pa si - si - il. Sa da - gat

MICHEL

TURKEY

Scott 2577

Michel 2994

Two stamps issued August 4, 1993 in a set of five stamps commemorating famous Turks. The first stamp honors Hacı Arif Bey (1831 - 1884), a prolific Turkish composer of the 19th century. Born in Istanbul, Arif Bey drew musical attention as a child because of his extraordinary voice (already evident in primary school). Although he never learned to read music or play a musical instrument, he became a productive and intelligent composer by hearing and singing thousands of songs. He was appointed palace musician and served three sultans. He composed over a thousand songs, but fewer than four hundred have survived in written form. His music has been described as lively and light, yet conveying a feeling of melancholy. The music on the stamp is, characteristically, monodic, as shown here in Western notation.

(Reinhard, Kurt, and Reinhard, Ursula. *Turquie*. Paris: Buchet-Chastel, 1969. Also Turkish postal bulletin, provided by Chuichi Maeda)



TURKEY

Scott 2579

Michel 2996

Two stamps issued August 4, 1993 in a set of five stamps commemorating famous Turks. The second stamp honors Münir Nurettin Selçuk (1900 - 1981), who was also born in Istanbul. He studied for a time in Paris, later returning to Istanbul, where he gave many concerts. He composed 150 works in the old and newer Turkish style. This stamp does not contain actual music, but has a treble clef and two decorative notes.

(Reinhard, Kurt, and Reinhard, Ursula. Turquie. Paris: Buchet-Chastel, 1969. Also Turkish postal bulletin, provided by Chuichi Maeda)



TURKISH REPUBLIC OF NORTHERN CYPRUS

Scott 360

Michel 369

Stamp issued December 27, 1993 for the 100th anniversary of the death of Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893). It features Tchaikovsky's contribution to ballet. The foreground contains a picture of two dancers and a portrait of the composer. In the background is a musical excerpt from *Swan Lake*, Tchaikovsky's earliest ballet. He began composing it in August 1875 upon commission by the Imperial Theatres in Moscow. The first performance, at the Bolshoi in March 1877, was poor. Not only was the score heavily cut, but some light pieces by Cesare Pugni (a popular ballet composer) were interpolated to make the ballet more palatable to the audience and easier for the dancers. The work did not gain general approval until its revival in 1895, two years after Tchaikovsky's death and following the successes of *Sleeping Beauty* and *Nutcracker*. The stamp contains the famous Swan theme, but it is shown on two unaligned staves without bar lines. In the ballet this theme usually appears in B minor, but on the stamp it is in D minor. Also, the left-hand chords show little resemblance to the actual music in the ballet. The theme first occurs in the finale to Act I, as the swans make their appearance flying overhead. In this scene, the haunting oboe solo is accompanied by harp arpeggios and tremolo chords in the strings. The theme reappears in three later movements. At the end of the ballet, a throbbing triplet accompaniment in the brass and a subsequent shift to the major mode give the music a dramatic ending.

(Wiley, Roland John, *Tchaikovsky's Ballets*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985)

