

Note-Worthy Music Stamps, Part 6

By Ethel Bloesch

[Note: This installment completes the listening of music notation stamps issued in 1996. Sets issued in 1997 will be described in the next installment.]

ÅLAND

Scott 128

Michel 115

A stamp issued June 7, 1996 to highlight a Swedish-Finnish music festival that takes place every five years. In 1996 it was held in Åland. More than four thousand singers and players participated in the four-day event. The song festival dates back more than one hundred years and was last held in Åland in 1966. The stamp shows a conductor and group of singers with some musical notes in the background.



AUSTRIA

Scott 1700

Michel 2184

A stamp issued April 26, 1996 for the 100th anniversary of the death of the Austrian composer Anton Bruckner (1824-1896). Composer of nine symphonies of monumental proportions and a number of choral works, Bruckner won true recognition only after his death. A solitary, simple, profoundly religious person, Bruckner united the technical resources of the 19th-century symphony with a reverent and liturgical approach to sacred texts. It can be said that his two major forms of creative output - masses and symphonies - have many qualities in common. And both, interesting to note, are represented in philatelic tributes, Austria choosing a mass and Germany a symphony. The Austrian stamp is particularly elegant. The design has two elements: a portrayal of the famous Bruckner organ at the St. Florian Monastery near Linz, and the opening bars of the Kyrie from the autograph manuscript score of the *Missa Solemnis* in B-flat minor. Bruckner composed this Mass while organist at St. Florian. It was written for the installation of a new Dean and was first performed at the ceremony on September 14, 1854. The *Missa Solemnis* is Bruckner's first major work for chorus and orchestra. Though he was already 30 years old, Bruckner up to this time had been largely self-taught. The opening theme of the Kyrie is a motif that crops up again over 40 years later as the beginning of his Ninth Symphony.



CAYMAN ISLANDS

Scott 722

Michel 756

One of 12 stamps issued September 26, 1996, portraying symbols of national identity. This stamp shows a guitar with a portion of the score "Beloved Isle Cayman". Written in 1930 by Leila Ross-Shire, this song was adopted as the national anthem in 1993. A native of Grand Cayman, Leila Ross-Shire was born November 16, 1886. She studied music locally and by correspondence from a school of music in New York. Over the years she wrote the words and music of many songs. In 1965 she was awarded a Certificate and Badge of Honour in recognition of her contribution to the art of music and her service as a social worker. She died on September 26, 1968.



CHRISTMAS ISLAND

Scott 401-403

Michel 423-425

A set of three stamps issued September 12, 1996 for Christmas. The set features the popular English carol "I Saw Three Ships", with illustrations of Mary and Jesus and the ships, in a Christmas Island setting. The notes continue from stamp to stamp to form the closing four bars of the melody.



COLOMBIA

Scott 1124

Michel 2023

A stamp issued August 17, 1996 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Society of Authors and Composers of Colombia (SAYCO). Founded in 1946, SAYCO represents the rights of composers and authors nationally and internationally. Currently, some 2500 Colombian composers are members. The stamp shows a guitar alongside an angular staff and six multicolored notes.



CROATIA

Scott 291a

Michel 371

One stamp in a strip of four issued March 28, 1996 to commemorate the history of Croatian music. If we judge from philatelic output, music must be an important part of Croatian life. For the third successive year, the history of Croatian music has been featured on its stamps. All four stamps in this set commemorate a specific musical anniversary, but only the first one shows actual music notation. This stamp honors the 400th anniversary of the birth of Vinko Jelić (1596-1636). The original form of his surname was Jeličić, which he simplified into Jelić. He lived and worked abroad, first in Graz, Austria, and then at Zabern near Strasbourg in Alsace, as a court musician and later a parish priest. Zabern was completely destroyed in 1636 during the Thirty Years War, and it is presumed that Jelić died at this time. In the history of early Baroque music, Vinko Jelić is a link between the new Italian music and the Central European tradition. His first published work was *Parnassia Militia*, a collection of 24 church concertos for 1-4 voices and organ. These pieces reflect the Baroque principle of contrasts of texture, volume, and tempo. Individual words are treated expressively. Two other collections were also published in Strasbourg during his lifetime. The stamp shows one measure of music in 17th-century notation, probably a facsimile of the original notation from one of his published works.



GERMANY

Scott 1947

Michel 1888

A stamp issued October 9, 1996 for the 100th anniversary of the death of Anton Bruckner. As noted earlier, Bruckner's native Austria also issued a philatelic tribute in 1996 to the composer. Bruckner is best known for his nine symphonies, which have secured a place in musical history between the symphonies of Beethoven and Mahler. The Third Symphony of 1873, featured on the German stamp, is a conspicuous landmark in Bruckner's works. Not only is it his longest symphony, but it exists in three manuscript versions, plus two additional printed versions. The work was dedicated to Richard Wagner. Wagner's acceptance of the dedication gave Bruckner great satisfaction, but resulted in the bitter enmity of the influential Viennese critic Hanslick. The premiere by the Vienna Philharmonic under Bruckner's direction on December 16, 1877 was a fiasco, with most of the audience leaving the hall before the end of the performance. The square stamp shows the opening bars of the autograph manuscript of the Adagio movement (1876 version) behind a portrait of Bruckner. The music also appears in the margins of a sheetlet of 10 stamps.



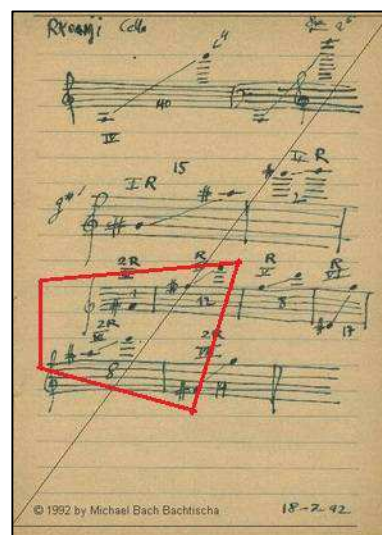
GERMANY

Scott 1948

Michel 1890

A stamp issued October 18, 1996 to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Donaueschinger Music Festival. Founded in 1921, it is the oldest festival in the world devoted exclusively to contemporary music. Early programs were organized by Joseph Haas and Paul Hindemith. Originally concentrating on chamber music, the festival expanded in 1926 to include theatre music. Historical circumstances caused several interruptions. The festival was revived in 1950, this time with a broader range of music, and many works were commissioned for the festival by the South-West German Radio. Composers whose careers were launched at Donaueschinger include Pierre Boulez, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Iannis Xenakis, Krzysztof Penderecki, and György Ligeti.

According to German postal authorities, the music on the stamp is a sketch from John Cage's "Ryoanji". This identification is puzzling, however, since the series of Ryoanji pieces, written between 1983 and 1985, use graphic rather than conventional staff notation as shown here. In the Ryoanji pieces, named after a Zen temple in Kyoto and inspired by its famous rock garden, John Cage has created a "garden" of sounds by tracing around the rocks to form pitch contours for the solo instrument (variously oboe, flute, contrabass, voice or trombone). The accompanying percussion part, completely irregular in pattern, represents the raked sand around the stones. In a sense, then, John Cage has actually transformed the garden into music.



Addendum / Correction: Following the issuance of the stamp and the publication that the notation on the stamp originates of John Cage, the German composer and cellist Michael Bach-Bachtischa (born 17.4.1958 in Worms) has been suing the German Post for breach of copyright. The process ended in 2002 with the finding that the notes are not written by John Cage, but clearly an autograph from the work "18-7-92" by Michael Bach-Bachtischa. The autograph dates from July 18, 1992 (hence the title "18-7-92") when John Cage and Michael Bach-Bachtischa worked together on the Ryoanji pieces. John Cage was then staying in Germany with Michael Bach-Bachtischa to advise on the development of the "Bach-Bogen", a curved bow for stringed instruments, which emphasize the simultaneous playing of multiple strings. Details of the composition can be found on the Internet at the following address (in German):

<http://www.michael-bach-bachtischa.de/sonderbriefmarke-donaueschinger-musiktage.html>

(Peter Lang, 4/2014)

ISRAËL

Scott 1724

Michel 1393

A stamp issued June 25, 1996, one in a series of six stamps honoring Jewish musicians. It pictures Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) and an engraving that portrays the prophet Elijah's ascent to heaven in a chariot of fire. The engraving is by Gustave Doré, a 19th-century illustrator, and not by Dürer as stated in other articles. In fact, all six engravings on the stamps in the Jewish musicians series are taken from Doré's Bible, first published in France in 1865 and widely republished throughout Europe. Above the engraving is a musical excerpt from Mendelssohn's oratorio *Elijah*. The phrase comes from the chorus (No. 38) near the end of the work that describes the same event as the engraving. An ascending musical line is sung to these words: "He went by a whirlwind to heaven". *Elijah* was Mendelssohn's second great oratorio, written after the very successful St. Paul. Describing events in the life of Elijah, the oratorio abounds in powerful dramatic episodes as well as rich lyrical passages. It, too, was highly successful. At the first performance (Birmingham, England) in 1846, there was hushed stillness in the large audience, followed by so much cheering that a number of choruses and a whole scene had to be repeated.

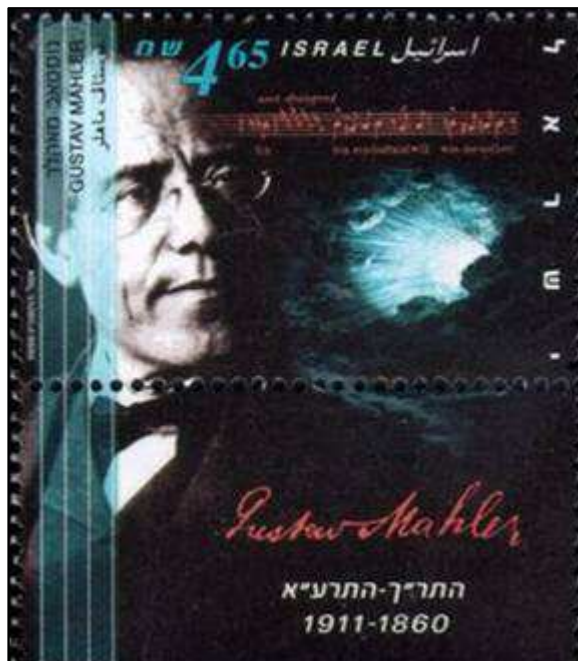


ISRAËL

Scott 1725

Michel 1365

A stamp issued April 17, 1996, one in a series of six stamps honoring Jewish musicians. It features the great Austrian composer and conductor Gustav Mahler (1860-1911). Although Mahler's chief fame as a conductor was in opera, his compositional energies were directed primarily to symphony and song, with the two forms sometimes merging. The massive Symphony No. 2 in C minor ("Resurrection") begins as a purely instrumental work, but by the 4th movement Mahler turns to words sung by a contralto to bear his musical idea. Using the poem "Urlicht" (Primeval Light), this movement contains the words "Ich bin von Gott und will wieder zu Gott" (I am of God and will return to God). This is the musical phrase shown on the Mahler stamp. Below it is a vignette from the Doré engraving, "The Creation of Light", the first of his Bible illustrations. In the final movement of the symphony, the chorus sings the sublime "Auferstehung" (Resurrection).



KOREA-DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

Scott 3530

Michel 3818

A sheet issued March 5, 1996 for the 50th anniversary of the proclamation of the Agrarian Reform Law, a movement in March 1946 that confiscated land from the landlords and distributed it to the peasants. The sheet contains five identical stamps (showing a Korean peasant woman and a group in the background) and a label (music only). The music, entitled "Song of Ploughing" (in translation), appears to contain the entire melody. According to Mr. Jang Hong-je of the Korea Stamp Corporation in Pyongyang, both the music and the words (which are not given) are by Ham Hong-kun.



KOREA-DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

Scott ???

Michel 3850

A sheet issued July 8, 1996 in a set of one stamp and three sheets for the second anniversary of the death of Kim Il-Sung. One sheet shows the Kumsusan Memorial Palace where the body of Kim Il-Sung lies in state. Below the picture is the song (words and melody) "The Leader Will Always Be With Us". Both words and music are by Chon Jong-do.



KOREA-DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

Scott ???

Michel 3857

One of four stamps issued July 19, 1996 for the opening of the 26th Olympic Games in Atlanta. It shows a woman tennis player. Pictured in the background is a Greek stamp commemorating the first Olympic games, superimposed upon a partial score of the Olympic Hymn, composed by Spyridon Samaras(1863-1917) for the opening of the 1st Olympiad in 1896. The words are by the national poet Kostis Palamas.



LITHUANIA

Scott 553

Michel 619-620

A souvenir sheet issued September 21, 1996 to honor the Lithuanian painter and composer M. K. Čiurlionis. Born in southern Lithuania September 22, 1875, Mikolajus Konstantinas Čiurlionis studied music at an early age. At age 26 he entered the Leipzig Conservatory- where he studied with Jadassohn and Reinicke. A year later he entered the Warsaw Drawing School. He gained success as a performer, composer, and painter. The romantic character of his music connects it to other art forms and reveals his interest in space and color. At the same time, his paintings seem to suggest time and movement. The sheet contains two stamps, with these paintings: Sonata of the Stars: Andante (1908) and Sonata of the Stars: Allegro (1908). A manuscript score fills the sheet's background. It is the first page of "Sanctus", an unaccompanied choral Mass movement, composed in 1902. Čiurlionis died April 10, 1911.



MONACO

Scott 2016-2017

Michel 2321-2322

A set of two stamps issued in 1996 for Christmas. The first stamp shows unidentified notes in plainchant notation (square notes on a 4-line staff) under the heading "In nocte Nativitatis Domini". An angel and star complete the design. The second stamp shows three angels playing and singing, with decorative notes hovering in the air around them.



NETHERLANDS ANTILLES

Scott 773

Michel 873

One in a set of four stamps issued August 21, 1996 to honor famous persons in the Dutch Antillean community. It features Dr. Christiaan J.H. Engels. "Dr. Chris." as he was called, was born November 19, 1907 in Rotterdam, Holland. After completing medical studies at the University of Leiden in 1936, he went to Curaçao, where he established himself as a physician. He had many interests and talents. He was a pianist in the Curaçao Symphony Orchestra and wrote several works for the piano. In addition, he was a gifted expressionist painter, a poet, and a member of the Curaçao Fencing Team. He died December 20, 1980 in a car accident. The stamp features a sketch of Engels, along with symbols of his work, including two musical notes on a staff.



NEW ZEALAND

Scott 1372-1373

Michel 1531-1532

A set of two stamps issued July 10, 1996 for the 50th anniversary of the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. The NZSO performs over 100 concerts annually throughout New Zealand and is a major participant in the biennial New Zealand Festival of the Arts. The stamps feature two Instruments: the violin on the 40-cent stamp and the French horn on the 80-cent stamp. The musical score appearing in the background is "Lilith's Dream of Ecstasy" by Gareth Farr, a work commissioned for the orchestra's anniversary and performed during the recent International Festival of the Arts. Gareth Fair. composer, pianist, and percussionist, was born in Wellington on Leap Year Day 1968. He studied composition at Auckland University, Victoria University, and the Eastman School in Rochester, New York, and is recognized today as an important young composer in New Zealand.



PALAU

Scott 385-386

Michel 982-987

Two sheets issued February 2, 1996 for the Lunar New Year (Year of the Rat). The first sheet contains two strips of stamps separated by a strip of labels. The other contains two large stamps. Each strip has a continuous design of stylized rats in a parade. (The strip of labels and the two large stamps are alternating mirror images of the design). Several decorative musical notes float in the air above the musicians. Several decorative musical notes float in the air above the musicians.



PHILIPPINES

Scott 2234

Michel 2696-2699

A sheet issued June 12, 1996, the fourth in an annual series publicizing the forthcoming centenary (1998) of Philippine independence. It contains four stamps that portray events relating to the 1896 Philippine revolution: the Cry of Pugadlawin that launched the revolution, the Battle of Pinaglabanan, the Cry of Nueva Ecija, and the Battle of Binakayan. The bottom of the sheet continues the music of the national anthem (m. 25-32) with the words for verse 4 (which actually begins in m. 24). Once again there are numerous errors in the notation, mostly the omission of dots in the dotted rhythms and missing flags for several of the 16th notes. The music was written in 1898 by Julian Felipe (1861-1994), and the original Spanish words are by José Palma (1876-1903). The Tagalog version shown on the sheets is by Felipe P. de Leon, and begins with the words "Byang magiliw".

CENTENARY OF PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE
1898-1998
SERIES 4: 1896 PHILIPPINE REVOLUTION



NATIONAL ANTHEM (Ang Lupang Hinirang) Part 4

ng wa - ta - wat mo'y ta - gum - pay na nag - ni - ning - ning Ang bi - tu

MICHEL in at a - raw niya Kai - lan pa ma'y di mag - di - di - lim

ROMANIA

Scott 4123

Michel 5210

One in a set of six stamps depicting wildlife, issued September 12, 1996. It shows a skylark (*Alauda arvensis*) and fragments of an unidentified work for violin(?) and piano.



Addendum: As visible from the sheet music below, the fragment is from “Pacsirta - L’Alouette” (The Lark) by Romanian composer Grigoras Dinicu (1889-1949). (Peter Lang, 4/2014)

4

PACSIRTA — L'ALOUETTE

Grigoras DINICU
(1889-1949)

Tempo de mărță (♩=108)

Violino

Pianoforte

f

dim.

6

mf dim.

mf dim.

10

cresc.

f

cresc.

f

SWITZERLAND

Scott 978-981

Michel 1585-1588

A set of four stamps issued September 10, 1996, featuring music boxes and automata. The Swiss music box, based on the principle of plucking strips of metal to produce sounds, was invented in 1796 by the Genevan clockmaker Antoine Favre-Salomon. To commemorate the bicentenary of this event, major exhibitions were mounted in Zürich and Sainte-Croix, and a set of stamps was issued. Four different devices are pictured: a ring with mechanical figures and a musical movement made by Isaac-Daniel Pituet of Geneva; a "basso-piccolo mandolin" cylinder music box made by Eduard Jaccard from Sainte-Croix; a station automaton made by Paillard and Co., Sainte-Croix; and a kalliopie disk music box. The same musical excerpts (at this time unidentified) provide a common background for the stamps.



URUGUAY

Scott 1607

Michel 2149-2152

A sheet issued March 8, 1996, with four stamps honoring famous people (Uruguayan Cardinal Barbieri, Nobel Peace Prize winner Yitzhak Rabin, Viennese composer and conductor Robert Stolz) and an event (Uruguay's Football World Cup win in 1930).

Robert Stolz (1880-1975) was a prolific composer of operettas, songs, and film scores. He was a philatelist as well. His "Philatelist Waltz" (shown on a 1980 San Marino stamp) is dedicated to all philatelists in the world. The Uruguayan stamp contains three bars of music, which seem to be a piano version of his song "Im Prater blühen wieder die Baume". This song, written in 1916, was published in many languages and also used in two film scores. The autograph manuscript of the song is shown on stamps issued by Austria and North Korea for Stolz's birth centenary in 1980.



Addendum

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Scott ???

Michel Block 17

A sheet issued December 2, 1996, together with four stamps, honoring 25 years National Holyday. The sheet contains the score of the national anthem of the United Arab Emirates. The anthem is titled "Arabic Emirati Tahiat Alalam". The text was written by Arif Al Sheikh Abdullah Al Hassan and the music was composed by Saad Abdel Wahab, who also composed anthems for others countries, including Libya. (Arnold van Berkel, 3/2014)

