

THE LISZT SOCIETY LTD

Spring Newsletter — April 1996 No 60

EDITORIAL

While the annual *Journal* is the main provider of information to members of the Society, the *Newsletter* is the more ready means of communication between members of the Society. As you will see, we have in a few places in this issue invited you to respond to us or other members. We hope you will use these columns to air your views or raise questions about Liszt or about the Society.

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

The Council of Management has been pleased to confer on **Margaret Ellaway** the status of Honorary Life Membership. Margaret has been a member since 1970 and has made many significant contributions to the work of the Society. Those who have copies of the Centenary *Journal* will recall with the pleasure the artwork she provided for the title page, and other examples of her contributions and dedication to the Society have been manifest over the years.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Three Liszt works are in a recital to be given by member **Alasdair Cameron** at St John's Smith Square, 19:30 on Sunday 21 April 1996. They are: *Nuages gris*, *La lugubre gondola no 2*, and *Les jeux d'eaux à la Villa d'Este*. The programme also includes works by Schubert, Beethoven and Debussy. A flyer is enclosed for those nearest the venue; others should contact the Secretary for details.

Member **David Buechner** will be visiting this country from the States in the Autumn to perform at the Leeds Film Festival! He writes: "I do indeed have a performance coming up, but a most unusual one; apparently it will be given as part of the Leeds Film Festival (12 October 1996). It is a young person's concert which is a blend of live performance and animated cartoons, entitled *Cartoons in Concert*. And it does in fact include two performances of the Liszt *Hungarian Rhapsody* No 2, played by myself as well as Tom and Jerry".

David tells us there is a great demand in the States for this kind of family programme. Such performances are in addition to the more usual recitals and concertos which he gives, as well as teaching at the Manhattan School of Music.

We wonder how many youngsters will directly or indirectly become interested in the music of Liszt as a result of this performance. How did *you* first become interested? Were you taught about Liszt, did you happen to buy a recording of his music, or, like a member of Council, did you first encounter his music as theme music for a children's film serial? Drop us a line and let us know.

New member **Mark Tanner**, Assistant Director of Music, Taunton School, frequently features Liszt in his piano recitals. Liszt is also the subject of his PhD thesis. Mark's recent tour of Southern England and Wales was devoted to works by Liszt only: *Sonata in B minor*, *Dante sonata*, *Nuages gris*, *Liebstraum No 3* and three of the *Consolations*. Mark's CD, *Carnival of Venice*, is on the Collonade label, VAN201. Together with Michael Langdon-Davies he has recorded lesser-known gems from the French clarinet and piano repertoire.

Leslie Howard's volume 38 in Hyperion's *Complete Solo Piano Music of Liszt* has now been released (CDA 67015). It includes *Les Préludes* (S551a); *Trois Etudes de Concert* (S 144); *Ab Irato* (S143); *Zwei Konzertetüden* (S 145); *Zwei Episoden aus Lenaus Faust*. The Faust legend preoccupied Liszt for much of his life, and among works inspired by Lenau's poem are the episodes in volume 38.

MEMBERSHIP

DONATIONS

We are grateful to the following members who have kindly sent a donation with their subscription:

Steven Barber, J Brennand, Christopher Dyell, Cecil Ewing, Awa Hiroshi, Jan Hoare, Jean-Louis Jaminet, Arthur Mason, David McConnell, Franz Moltzer, John Nees, Dudley Newton, Peter Roberts, Harriet Sergeant, James Ward, William Wright.

The Society has also benefited from members who in renewing their current subscriptions have generously included back payments for years they missed.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members who have joined us since 1 July 1995:

David Aspinall, Peter Brindley, Geoffrey Brock, Albert Brussee, Paul Capaccio, Julian Clayton, Simon Crawford-Phillips, Reinout de Smet, Philip Ensor, Veronica Fagan, Conor Farrington, Richard Francsics, Peter Grove, Helena Holden, Victor Ledin, David Meacock, Philip Moore, Benjamin Nabarro, Anthony Norton, Norman Olsfanger, Mikael Rasmusson, Frederic Shone, Nicholas Starling, Steve Smythe, Mark Tanner, John Walker, Mary Whitaker, Pamela Zaluski, Mark Zurowski.

RENEWAL DATE

Several members have paid their subscriptions late under the mistaken impression that the renewal date was 1 January instead of 1 July. Subject to confirmation at its next meeting in June, Council is therefore proposing to move the renewal date from 1 July to 1 January *by extending* current subscriptions.

If you pay by Standing Order you may wish to take steps now to change the next payment date to 1 January 1997. Remember that our bank is now: Yorkshire Bank plc, 48 Oxford Street, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP11 2XQ (Sort code: 050470).

UK members only: If you would like to pay by Standing Order, a form to give to your bank may be obtained from the Secretary. You may at the same time care to ask for a Deed of Covenant form (minimum period 3 years). The Society is a registered charity, so if you are a UK tax payer you can help it to benefit financially by deciding to subscribe by covenant.

If you pay direct, you may wish to hold back your subscription until you receive confirmation of the new renewal date with the next *Newsletter*. As the current membership year is thus being extended by 6 months, you may care to send a donation at least to cover the extra period.

Receipt of all subscriptions and donations will be acknowledged. Please note that membership will lapse if subscriptions are not renewed promptly by the renewal date and we cannot promise to send separate individual reminders after that date.

Overseas members are reminded that when renewing for their 1996/67 membership (due 1 June 1996) they may wish to take advantage of the airmail service which will ensure publications and other communications are sent to them by air mail instead of surface mail. The overseas rates are £18 (surface mail) and £25 (airmail) (payable in sterling please).

ADDITIONAL SCHEMES

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

For a minimum donation of £250 made through GiftAid you would be accorded the status of Life Member. This would ensure your membership of the Society without having to pay a further subscription. Furthermore, if you are a UK tax payer (standard rate) the Society is able to claim back tax rebate (currently £75) from the Inland Revenue. GiftAid forms are available from the Secretary.

EVENTS INCLUDED

Council has under active consideration a modification to the existing membership scheme. It has agreed in principle that for an additional £10 per annum, say, members should be entitled to free admission to all events sponsored by the Society. Other members would continue to be charged, as at present, £5 for admission to each event. Life members will, of course, receive all privileges of membership without further charge.

NEW POSTAL CHARGES

There are no proposals under consideration to increase the standard membership subscription in spite of the forthcoming increase in postal charges. The additional cost of postage will be kept under review, but at the moment it appears this could be met if the present growth in membership is maintained.

CD LIBRARY

We are pleased to acknowledge the generous donation of two CDs to the Society's modest collection:

Member **Steven Isserlis** has donated a copy of the CD 'Forgotten Romance' he has made with Stephen Hough of piano and cello music by Liszt, Grieg and Rubinstein. The Liszt works are: *Romance Oubliée* (S132), *Elégies* Nos 1 & 2 (S130 /131), *Die Zelle in Nonnenwerth* (S382) and *La Lugubre gondola* (S134) (RCA Victor Red Seal 09026 68290 2). The reviewer in *Gramophone* wrote "With Steven Isserlis and Stephen Hough an inspired duo, natural recording artists both, this is one of the most enjoyable new cello discs I have heard in years."

Mrs Edna Hallas has kindly donated to the Society in memory of her late husband, member **Jack Hallas**, Steven Mayer's recording entitled "Liszt vs Thalberg" subtitled "An historical re-enactment of their musical 'DUEL' of 1837". The works include: Liszt: *Divertissement sur la cavatine 'I tuoi palpiti' "*(S419) (from *Niobe* by Pacini), transcription of *Konzertstück in F minor* Op 79 by Weber, *Bénédiction de Dieu dans la solitude* No 3 (S173) from *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* and Thalberg: *Fantaisie sur des motifs de 'Moïse'* (Rossini) Op 33, *Fantasia on 'God Save The Queen'* Op 27. The CD is Academy Sound and Vision (ASV) CD DCA 783.

It is sign of the development of greater acceptance of Liszt's music that member **Keith Fagan**, for many years on Council and compiler of successive Liszt discographies, advises that it would be a gargantuan task nowadays to compile and maintain a Liszt discography. We are looking into this and examining the possibility of at least producing a list of new issues or re-issues.

In the meantime, members may find the recently published first edition (November 1995) of R.E.D. Classical Collector Catalogue invaluable. This is a complete listing of currently available CD recordings reviewed in *Gramophone*. It has had to devote over 9 pages to works by Liszt—and not *all* the recordings are by our President!

SURFING FOR LISZT

Liszt does figure on the Internet, but be careful if you search for references; you may find yourself collecting information about a search tool called by the same name! Another hazard is to find a firm which has nothing to do with music but whose address is in Liszt Street.

Among items currently accessible on the net are: the American Liszt Society and Hyperion's site which provides a list of their CDs and a feature on **Leslie Howard**.

Further details are available from the Secretary who would also welcome suggestions about the Society going 'on line' and information about any other sites relating to Liszt which others have visited. Forums look as if they might provide a source of useful exchange on matters to do with Liszt. We have in fact to thank one of these for indirectly recruiting a new member.

The attention of members is drawn to the e-mail address of the Secretary given at the end of this *Newsletter* and also to the possibility of sending correspondence by fax. The former is a particularly inexpensive way for those outside the UK to contact us.

QUESTION (AND ANSWER?)

Member **Karl Kreipl** of Amselleite 31, D-91807 Solnhofen, Germany, has written to suggest a *Questions and answers* section in the *Newsletter*.

Karl starts the section off by asking: What was the route taken by Liszt's manuscript of the *B minor sonata* from Europe to the USA?

Any answers and further questions to the Editor, please.

STALWARTS OF THE SOCIETY

The Secretary has been pleased to visit **Eunice Norton-Mistarz**, former Secretary of the Society, and **Vernon and Elsie Harrison**. It was Vernon who was primarily responsible for bringing the Society into being when he wrote to the *Radio Times* in 1960 deploring the lack of attention then given to the music of Liszt.

The Society owes a great deal to these and other stalwarts who helped create and maintain the Society through its formative years. It is hoped to arrange a reunion, in the late Spring or early Summer, as a tribute to their work. Any member wishing to attend is asked to contact the Secretary.

RECRUITMENT

The Council is setting up a small group to review and revise the current brochure which has not been updated for a number of years. At the same time it will look at how best to respond to enquirers and new members. The group will not in its initial discussions be inhibited by the restriction of cost, but that will in due course have to be a most significant factor in what can be produced and when. Suggestions from members, particularly those who have joined us recently, will be most welcome.

Membership of the group will not be confined to members of Council; any member wishing to join in the discussions is welcome to let the Secretary know.

Very few ideas are new. The Society has in the past received suggestions for the production of a discreet membership badge which could be displayed (by either sex!) at recitals, for example, and for membership cards, which were in fact issued for a period. This form of proof of membership is likely to be reinstated partly to acknowledge receipt of subscriptions and possibly to obtain any discounts we can negotiate for members. It will also facilitate admission to events of the Society under the new membership scheme referred to above.

The idea of a badge will also be reconsidered. A temporary version, using the Society's logo, was worn for identification by some members of Council at the recent all-Liszt recital given by **Leslie Howard**. We would welcome comments on the suggestion.

BOOKS

GEORGES CZIFFRA

Member **Alan Thorpe Albeson** of the 'Friends of Cziffra' has written to inform Liszt Society members of the publication in a limited edition of *Guns and Doves*, Georges Cziffra's memoirs, in English translation (long-awaited). The work, known in France as *Des Canons et des Fleurs*, is accompanied by a CD (not available separately) of live recordings from 1948-1977, not previously released, and includes Liszt's *The Nightingale* and *Feux Follets*. To order a copy of the memoir and CD send a cheque for £21 (inclusive of p & p) to: Bryan Crimp, APR, P O Box 1, Wark, Hexham, Northumberland NE48 3EW. Please mention this *Newsletter* when placing an order.

Cziffra's *Transcriptions pour piano*, Alan adds, is published by Edition Peters, 10-12 Baches Street, London N1 6DN. Tel: 0171-253-1638, price £39 + £3.90 p & p.

ALAN WALKER

We understand that the third and final volume of Alan Walker's biography of Liszt is unlikely to appear in this country for some time. The London office of the publishers tell us that it does not yet appear in their schedules which take them into next year.

HELP WANTED

We hope to prepare a selected bibliography, particularly as a guide to newcomers to the music of Liszt, and would welcome suggestions from members as to which books should be included and with what guidance.

THE LISZT SOCIETY UNLIMITED?

Council has for some time believed that the fact that the Society is a registered company (as well as a registered charity) and has the title 'Ltd' attached to its name may in some way give the wrong impression of who we are, what we do and how we do it.

We are not profit-making (except to produce income for the Society), we do not have a set of offices (our registered office is currently the home of Audrey Ellison and will shortly move to the home of Jan and Peggy Hoare). Members of Council are either retired or have full time jobs (including being a student); we are amateurs, but hope our efforts are nonetheless not seen as 'amateurish'. Much of the equipment used by those doing the work is owned (and repaired) personally and not all expenses are claimed for reimbursement.

You do not really need to know all this; we are not dropping hints! We do, however, believe that the attachment of 'Ltd' to our title puts off some potential members and volunteers to join the Council. Changes in the rules governing limited companies now allow us to drop this appendage to our title and we are proposing to do so.

Whether we should continue to operate as a company is not currently under active consideration, but should perhaps also be reviewed in due course. We intend, of course, to continue as a registered charity.

FUTURE EVENTS

FORTHCOMING LISZT SOCIETY EVENTS

We are pleased to announce future events:

Recital by Leslie Howard: Our President will be giving a recital dedicated to the memory of former Patron **Geoffrey Parsons**. This will be at the Royal College of Music on 28, 29 or 30 May 1996 (date to be confirmed). Please contact the Secretary (phone or letter) nearer the time for further details.

Soirée: at the home of John C Davies in Hook, Hampshire on Sunday 28 July 1996. Further details from John Davies, 388-394 Staines Road, Bedfont, TW14 8BT.

Annual General Meeting 1996 and recital: Sunday 20 October 1996 subject to confirmation and location. Further details will be given in a later *Newsletter*.

LISZT AT THE BARBICAN

On Monday 22 April 1996 at 19:30, the Budapest Festival Orchestra under Ivan Fischer will be giving a performance of Liszt's *Tasso: lamento e trionfo* at the Barbican. The other work in the programme is Mahler's *Symphony No 6 in A minor*. Prices are: £30, £25, £18.50, £14, £10 but members of the Liszt Society, on quoting their membership to the Box Office (Tel: 0171-638-8891), may purchase seats corresponding to the first four of these prices at the next price down. A flyer is enclosed for those nearer the venue; others are invited to contact the Secretary for further details.

PAST EVENTS

MASTERCLASS

We hope to include a report on the Masterclass given by **Leslie Howard** on Sunday 31 March 1996 at his home in the next *Newsletter*.

LISZT AT THE WIGMORE HALL

Lithuanian pianist, Mūza Rubackytė, devoted the second half of her recital on 11 March 1996 to works by Liszt: *Schubert/ Liszt—five Lieder: Wohin?, Die Junge Nonne, Gretchen am Spinnrade, Die Stadt, Erlkönig*.

The Transcriptions were followed by the complete *Grandes Etudes de Concert d'Après Paganini*. Ms Rubackytė, winner of the Liszt-Bartok competition in Budapest, is currently recording the complete Liszt *Etudes* for Lyrinx, France.

LISZT AT ST JAMES'

Neil Crossland, piano, included *Chapelle de Guillaume Tell* and *Vallée d'Obermann* from Book 1 of Liszt's *Années de Pèlerinage* in his recital at St James's Piccadilly on 26 January 1996.

CONFERENCES

The recent conference in Budapest took place too recently to include a report in this issue. We hope **Leslie Howard** or **Michael Short** who attended it will let us have a report for the next issue.

Further details of the American Liszt Society 3-day conference in Canada in October and announced in our last issue are available from the Secretary.

International Liszt Symposium in Stockholm, 9-12 May 1996. Registration forms are available from the *Newsletter Editor*.

MEMBERS' DIRECTORY

Replies to the invitation for addresses and telephone numbers to be included in the proposed directory are still being received and publication has therefore been postponed. If you do not want your address and possibly your telephone number to be included, you will be listed as a member but without identification of locality. If you have not already done so, but wish your details included, **please let the Secretary know straight away—and in any case by the end of April**. Many members have responded in the affirmative—the majority also agreeing for their telephone number to be included—but some have written explicitly asking to retain their privacy and this of course we will respect.

LISZT - THE MAN 2

Count Géza Zichy recalled of Liszt:

On one occasion I found him composing at his desk. Outside the window an organ grinder was playing. 'For heaven's sake, why don't you drive the man away?' I asked the Master impatiently. Liszt said with a smile, 'He has been playing for two hours, but I don't want to offend him.'

At which he rose to his feet, opened the window, threw out a silver florin and said, 'My dear colleague, I like your music very much, you have a real sense of rhythm, and you turn the handle with feeling; but I'm just composing a tune which can't be combined with yours—would you mind not playing until I've finished? Next time you're here I'll play you the piece, and if you like it I'll let you make a new cylinder from it.'

Source: Franz Liszt by Ernest Burger
translated by Stewart Spencer.
Princeton University Press 1989.

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The Secretary's address will, subject to registration with Companies House, become the Registered Office of the Society from 15 April 1996.

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