

**University of York Music Press**

It is clear that the world of music publishing is undergoing a radical change. Houses of great fame and distinguished histories are being consumed by larger conglomerates with the result that diversity of artistic and commercial approach diminishes and the number of composers published and retained by these remaining houses decreases. The future would seem to be bleak for all but a very few young composers and not easy for those maturer ones who, because of the present financial and commercial climate, have been jettisoned. There seems no reason to believe that trends will be reversed. Attitudes must change and new strategies for the promotion and dissemination of new music must be devised.

Within the University of York Music Department

therefore, a new publishing venture has been established under the administration of David Blake, Richard Orton and John Paynter. The consultant director and head of promotions is William Colleran, formerly director of Universal Edition UK whose experience and expertise will be invaluable and crucial. In addition, the venture has the support of four advisers – Sir Harrison Birtwistle, Lionel Friend, Nicola LeFanu and Sir John Tooley.

A first catalogue is being compiled and activities will commence in May 1995. Composers who have already accepted invitations to be involved are: David Blake, Vic Hoyland, David Kershaw, Gordon McPherson, Tony Myatt, George Nicholson, Richard Orton, John Paynter, David Sawyer and Trevor Wishart. All enquiries should be made to the address above.

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## Letters to the Editor

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From Robin Holloway

Lawrence Hughes is right to chide me (*Tempo* 191) for using yet again the in-every-sense vile cliché that characterizes the background levels of English interwar music as 'the cowpat school'. The image has entirely the wrong flavour, suggesting a pungency which is the opposite of what is meant. 'Watercress', equally clichéd, remains appropriate. But the point was not to knock this innocuous style so much as to emphasize how little use the young Britten had for it – holding it in contempt until the turn towards explicit Englishness (because of the subject and occasion) in *Gloriana* gave him opportunity for its development.

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From Christopher Fox

I enjoyed Elke Hockings' *Nachdenken über Darmstadt 1994* and was pleased to find my 'substantial criticism' of the Adorno-Symposium there placed on record. I wonder if I could amplify a couple of points and so avoid the full wrath of aggrieved Adorno-ites?

I took part in the Adorno-Symposium because, while I recognize Adorno's importance in the

development of the critical discourse around music, I am not convinced that Adorno's work presents us with a general model for that discourse. So my criticism of Adorno was not, as Ms Hockings implied, that his language is intolerant (it is, but why not?) but that many of his judgements foundered on an attempt to use a culturally specific set of criteria (particularly those of post-Expressionist Europe) on material that is alien to those criteria. My complaint was not of Adorno's 'failure to consider mass culture' (after all, he wrote a book about it) or 'his dislike of Stravinsky', but that he (and the disciples who collected in Darmstadt last summer) failed to recognize that the theoretical approach which yielded such telling insights into the work of Mahler and Schoenberg was of ultimately limited use in other situations.

I also feel that Ms Hockings' categorization of my philosophical position as 'English positivism' is a little too simplistic; not only is half the blood in my veins Prussian blue, but I am very conscious (like Stravinsky) that we exist *within* language and that everything we say is both conditioned and made conditional by the language within which it is said. Perhaps not such a 'positivist' outlook?

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footnote from p.63

\* In fact they market another performance of Roger Smalley's piece (TP 020) by Daniel Herscovitch.. After Michael Oliver's review (*Tempo* 190) of the recent NMC disc of Smalley's *Pulses*, which he averred was the only Smalley on record, the composer faxed us a healthy discography, ranging from the

Auracle LP of the 2-piano work *Accord* (CD reissue is prevented by a missing master tape) to the Vox Australis disc of his Symphony and Piano Concerto, which is probably available in the UK through specialist dealers.