

used to imply obscene rhyme-endings which are always left incomplete. The form of these poems is that usually associated with the intertextually significant genre of the *chastushka*, popular in playgrounds, vodka shops and public lavatories.

I cannot of course assert with any authority which, if any, of these particular *chastushki* Shostakovich might have had in mind when he quoted this tune. And I should also add that I have only the charming Mr. Abliakimov's assurance that these are indeed the usual words that the tune suggests. (As a caution it must be added that Mr. Abliakimov's own surname, which he reluctantly gave to me when I said that I was concerned to credit him for his research, sounds more than a little, er, fragrant in Russian, although no doubt it is quite respectable in Uzbek.)

P.S. I would like to acknowledge the help of my friend, the pianist Anya Alexeyev, in the elucidation of some of the more elusive meanings hidden in these interesting texts.

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From Robin Freeman

I thought *Tempo* readers might be interested by a recent chat I had with Anthony Gilbert about his *Nine or Ten Osannas* excellently reviewed by Patrick Ozzard-Low (NMC-DO14) in *Tempo* 188. The piece was written after his first trip to America, to Tanglewood in the event. His head was full of that and full as well of Cummings and Stevens, their exquisite dandyism. The music was quickly composed, some of it in the upstairs of buses. There are five or six motifs which, along with a sort of cantus firmus, appear in all of the pieces. The obligatory arrangement of six or seven of them within fixed poles is not so much

an essay in open form as in alternate versions. Each may be analyzed as if the others did not exist. Those with initials are affectionate parodies of composers Tony Gilbert would not disclose but willingly leaves for the rest of us to riddle out. This is, as it were, the 'enigma' side to his 'Variations'. The ghost ones have to do with a dream he had of a UFO pottering about his house with a sort of 'hum', a 'hum' he woke to write down. The iceman hints at what a certain school of composition, when taken too far, can do to one spontaneous talent, or, as Balzac has it, *Là où la forme domine, le sentiment disparaît*.

Tony Gilbert has always admired Britten's *Les illuminations*. The horn writing in the *Serenade* (the natural thirteenth in the opening solo, the arabesques that accompany the Lyke Wake Dirge) has sent its wild echoes flying into more than one of the *Osannas*.

I agree with P. O-L that programming tracks will not produce satisfactory 'performances' of the alternate versions, the more so here where there are some 'liaisons dangereuses' due to careless tracking plus the incorrect division of 'Osanna for the colours about some people and for the 9 lost colour years' into two parts. Beyond that, conductors need to shape the end of each osanna in accordance with what is to follow. Still one can get a satisfactory idea of the overall tone of such performances. I suggest that readers send their own favourite version to the composer care of *Tempo* so he can choose the five most successful, the results to be published as 'The Best of *Nine or Ten Osannas*'. My favourite version is 17, 23, 21, 29, 8, 18, 26, 27, 33.

P.S. The choice of the painting by Colin Rose of 'Amongst Drifting Tides Refrain' for the CD booklet was a splendid one. This sort of thing should happen more often in the world of contemporary music CDs.

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News Section

Composers

JOHN ADAMS. Violin concerto (European première)—23 June/London, Barbican/Gidon Kremer (vln), LSO c. Kent Nagano.

JULIAN ANDERSON has been commissioned to compose three large-scale works for London Musici, including a new ballet and choral-orchestral piece.

LOUIS ANDRIESEN. *De Materie* (UK première of complete work)—3 July/London, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Meltdown Festival/Askö-Schoenberg Ensemble c. Reinbert de Leeuw.

SIMON BAINBRIDGE. *Herbsttag* (première)—16 April/London, All Hallows Church NW3/Crouch End Festival Chorus c. David Temple.

- LUCIANO BERIO. *Twice Upon* (première)—29 April/London, Royal Festival Hall/Halle Orchestra c. composer.
- GAVIN BRYARS is working on an opera, *Doctor Ox's Experiment*, co-commissioned by the English National Opera and Opera de Lyon for the 1996/7 season.
- ALLAN BULLARD. *Lamentations* (première)—21 May/Long Melford, Suffolk/Langdon Chamber Players c. Roger Heaton. Bullard has won the Royal School of Church Music 1994 Harold Smart Memorial Award for his anthem *Come, let us join our cheerful songs*.
- MARTIN BUTLER. *Craig's Progress* (première)—28 June/London, Purcell Room, Meltdown Festival/Mecklenburgh Opera.
- ELLIOTT CARTER. *Partita* (UK première)—4 June/London, Royal Festival Hall/Chicago SO c. Daniel Barenboim.
- HENRY COWELL (d.1965). *Sinfonietta* (UK première)—22 May/London, Barbican/London Sinfonietta c. Elgar Howarth.
- BRIAN DENNIS. *Winter Holiday Snapshots* (première)—5 May/London, St James's Piccadilly/Sounds Positive c. David Sutton-Anderson.
- JAMES DILLON. *Viriditas* (première)—12 March/Brussels, Ars Musica Festival/BBC Singers c. Simon Joly.
- BRIAN FERNEYHOUGH is composing a work entitled *On Stellar Magnitudes* for the Ensemble Contrechamps, scheduled for its première in Royaumont near Paris in September. Contrechamps has also commissioned a String Trio, to be performed next year.
- ELENA FIRSOVA. *Homage to Ireland* (première)—13 May/London, Wigmore Hall/Markus Stocker (vlc), Victor Yampolsky (pno). *Lagrimgoso* for string quartet (première)—21 June/Aldeburgh Festival/Britten Quartet. *The Nightingale and the Rose* (première)—8 July/London, Almeida Theatre/Almeida Opera. *Insomnia* (UK première)—27 July/Cambridge/Hilliard Ensemble.
- BEAT FURRER. Piano Trio (UK première)—9 May/London, St John's Smith Square/Beethoven Trio of Vienna.
- PHILIP GLASS. Violin Concerto (UK première)—9 April/London, Royal Festival Hall/Gidon Kremer (vln), Philharmonia c. Leonard Slatkin.
- BERTOLD GOLDSCHMIDT. Violin Concerto (French première)—15 July/Montpellier/Chantal Juillet (vln), Orchestre National de France c. Charles Dutoit. *Beatrice Cenci* (German première)—30 August/Berlin Festival; (stage première)—10 September/Magdeburg. *Der gewaltige Hahnrei* (first staging since 1932)—16 September/Berlin, Komische Oper/prod. Harry Kupfer, c. Yakov Kreizberg.
- MORTON GOULD. String Music (première)—10 March/Washington DC/National SO c. Mstislav Rostropovich.
- HK GRUBER has completed his new stage work *Gloria von Jaxberg* to a libretto by Rudolf Herfurter; the world première will take place at the Huddersfield Festival in November.
- SOFIA GUBAIDULINA. String Quartet No.4 (UK première)—22 July/London, Barbican/Kronos Quartet.
- FRANCISCO GUERRERO. *Zayin IV* (première)—10 April/London, Almeida Spanish Festival/Arditti Quartet.
- HAFLLIDI HALLGRIMSSON. Piano Trio (première)—15 March/Edinburgh, Queen's Hall/Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio.
- ALICE HO has written an orchestral work, *Under the Quavering Moon*, for the Hamilton Philharmonic.
- ROBIN HOLLOWAY. Trio for clarinet, viola and piano (première)—27 May/Malvern Festival/Emma Johnson (cl).
- EDWARD DUDLEY HUGHES. *Third Orchid* (première)—21 May/Brighton Festival/Cambridge New Music Players.
- JOHANNES KALITZKE. *Bericht üden Tod des Musikers Jack Tiergarten* (première)—3 May/Munich Biennale/Musicktheaters im Revier, Musikfabrik NRW c. composer.
- NIKOLAI KORNDORF. *MR - Marina und Rainer* (première)—20 May/Munich Biennale/Ulm Theater production c. Samuel Bachli.
- GYORGY KURTAG. *Ligature - Message to Frances-Marie* (UK première)—1 September/London, Royal Albert Hall/London Sinfonietta c. Markus Stenz.
- BENJAMIN LEES. *Mirrors* (European première: first performance of complete cycle)—8 July/London, Wigmore Hall/Ian Hobson (pno).
- JONATHAN LLOYD. *Marching to a Different Song* (London première)—22 May/Barbican/London Sinfonietta c. Elgar Howarth.
- JAMES MACMILLAN. *Kiss on Wood* (première)—6 August/Harrogate Festival/Madeleine Mitchell (vln).
- BENEDICT MASON. *Playing Away* (première)—19 May/Munich Biennale/Opera North c. Paul Daniel; (Dutch première)—23 May/Rotterdam; (UK première)—31 May/Leeds/Opera North c. Paul Daniel.
- SIR PETER MAXWELL DAVIES. *Chat Moss, A Hoy Calendar* (première)—15 March/Liverpool, St Edward's College/Pupils c. Terence Duffy. *Symphony No.5* (première)—9 August/London, Royal Albert Hall/Philharmonia c. composer.
- PER NORGARD. *Night Symphonies, Day Breaks* (UK première)—22 May/London, Barbican/London Sinfonietta c. Elgar Howarth.
- MICHAEL NYMAN. *Out of the Ruins* (first public performance)—29 May/Bath Festival/Bath Camerata c. Nigel Perrin.
- KEVIN OLDHAM (d.1993). *Adagio* from Piano Concerto (European première)—8 July/London, Wigmore Hall/Ian Hobson (pno).
- LUIS DE PABLO. *Caligrafia Serena* (UK première)—10 April/London, Almeida Spanish Festival/Arditti Quartet.
- GEOFFREY POOLE. *Blackbird* (première)—23 April/Sheffield/Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus, BBC Philharmonic c. Sachio Fujioka.
- ROGER REYNOLDS. *Fiery Wind* (UK première)—9 April/London, Maida Vale Studios/BBC Symphony Orchestra c.

Lukas Foss. Reynolds has recently completed an 8-channel computer-processed score for a multi-lingual production of Chekhov's *Ivanov*, and is working on a work for voice, computer processed sound and piano to a text by John Ashbery.

POUL RUDERS. Cello Concerto No.2. *Anima* (première)—9 May/Coventry/Northern Sinfonia c. Heinrich Schiff (vlc).

FEDERICO RUIZ. *Tropical Triptique* (première)—27 April/London, Purcell Room/Clara Rodriguez (pno).

ROBERT SAXTON. Fantazia for string quartet (première)—5 April/London, Goldsmiths' Hall (test piece for London International String Quartet Competition).

ALFRED SCHNITTKE has completed his Sixth Symphony. His opera *Faust* will be produced at the Hamburg State Opera in June 1995, and he is working on an opera *Gesualdo* for the Vienna Hofoper, to be premiered the preceding month.

KURT SCHWERTSIK. *Nietzsche*, ballet for tape (première)—21 April/Bremen. *The Fox and the Magpie*, divertissement for 2 singers (première)—19 July/Sydney, Australia.

HOWARD SKEMPTON. Concerto for percussion and hurdy-gurdy (première)—14 May/Basingstoke/Evelyn Glennie (perc), Nigel Eaton (hurdy-gurdy), Bournemouth Sinfonietta c. Martyn Brabbins.

TORU TAKEMITSU has been awarded the 1994 Grawemeyer Award for his work *Fantasma/Cantos*.

VLADIMIR TARNOPOLSKY. *Der Atem der erschopfen Zeit* (première)—9 May/Munich Biennale/Bavarian Radio chorus and SO c. Alexander Lazarev.

JOHN TAVENER. *The World is Burning* (première)—28 March/London/Monteverdi Choir c. John Eliot Gardiner. *The Apocalypse* (première)—14 August/London, Royal Albert Hall Prom/Thomas Randle (ten), Patrizia Rozario (sop), Stephen Richardson (bass), Ruby Philogene (mezzo), Christopher Robson (counter-ten), New London Children's Chorus, City of London Sinfonia and Chorus c. Richard Hickox.

MARK-ANTHONY TURNAGE. *Blood on the Floor* (première)—1 May/Frankfurt/Ensemble Modern c. Ingo Metzner.

JUDITH WEIR. *Blond Eckbert* (première)—20 April/London, Coliseum/ENO. Weir has recently written music for Caryl Churchill's play *The Skriker* at the National Theatre. She has been awarded the 1994 award of the Music Section of the Critics' Circle.

PHILIP WILBY. *Oratory* (première)—20 March/Blackpool/London Brass.

Books received

(A listing in this column does not preclude a review in a future issue of Tempo.)

The Music of John Cage by James Pritchett. Cambridge University Press, £30.00.

Cosima Wagner's Diaries - An Abridgement edited and introduced by Geoffrey Skelton. Pimlico, £14.00.

Peter Warlock: The Life of Philip Heseltine by Barry Smith. Oxford University Press, £25.00.

Early Modernism: Literature, Music and Painting in Europe 1900-1916 by Christopher Butler. Oxford University Press, £27.50 (hardback), £12.95 (paperback).

Fenomenologia della musica sperimentale by Angelo Orcalli. Sonus Edizioni Musicali, Potenza, L.28000.

Minimalism: Origins by Edward Strickland. Indiana University Press, £27.50.

American Composers: Dialogues on Contemporary Music with Edward Strickland. Indiana University Press, £13.99 (paperback).

Kéleütha. Ecrits by Iannis Xenakis. Editions L'Arche, Paris, 90F.