famous Adagio is an instrum[illegible] reflection of the true Barber of *Dover Bea[illegible]* But the tonal and lyrical style of his early m[illegible] can equally well be appreciated in the early [illegible]n Concerto of 1940, first performed by Albe[illegible]balding and Ormandy in 1941. This work, sco[illegible]for small orchestra with piano, shows Barbe[illegible]istinctive mastery of traditional structure co[illegible]d with his characteristically fresh and inventiv[illegible]e of the simplest material.

The lyrical na[illegible]e of the work is immediately apparent in th[illegible] major melody which the violin sings at the [illegible]et, a melody of great length and apparent fre[illegible]m, which however derives its unity from an e[illegible]ordinary concentration on a limited number [illegible]ntervallic and rhythmic shapes. This melody [illegible]s a short cadence motive, and a dancing secon[illegible]bject (scherzando), persists throughout a mo[illegible]ent which, though it has the outward trappi[illegible]of exposition, discussion and recapitulation, is [illegible] a continuous flow of melody, charming in its [illegible]mparative simplicity and freedom from intellectual [illegible]rocedure.

The slow movement contains the most 'American' music in the work. There is a brief disturbed and cadenza-like middle section, but for the most part the movement consists of a single tune, vocal in contour, and similar in many ways to the folk-like melodies of Harris, and Copland's more 'popular' works. Modal style is predominant in both harmony and melody, yet the music is distinctly personal with its telling use of the dissonant diatonic subdominant against the tonic chord. The warm and bright E major mode is exploited with great effect.

The Finale is a moto perpetuo in 12-8 time, less interesting that the previous movements, but showing a considerable rhythmic bravura and foreshadowing brilliant virtuoso movements in Barber's maturer works. K.L.

Next concert: Thursday 12 November

Evelyn Saren
Clifford Hughes
Audrey Innes

Dvorák
Biblical Songs, opus 99

Britten
A Charm of Lullabies, opus 41

Janácek
The Diary of One Who Vanished

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University of Edinburgh Concerts

1970-71

THE REID ORCHESTRA
leader Miles Baster

EDWARD HARPER conductor

COLIN KINGSLEY piano

Thursday 19 November

Reid School of Music

Mozart

Serenade in D, *Serenata Notturna*, K.239

Marcia
Menuetto
Rondo : Allegretto

Mozart

Symphony no. 41 in C, *Jupiter*

Allegro vivace
Andante cantabile
Menuetto : Allegretto
Finale : Molto Allegro

Interval

Copland

Short Symphony, no. 2

Messiaen

Oiseaux exotiques

The **Serenata Notturna** was written early in 1776 though it is not known for what particular occasion. It has only three movements, a small number for the divertimento type of work. The scoring is unusual, with a concertino group consisting of two violins, viola and double-bass being set against the rest of the strings with tympani. The interplay between these groups contributes much to the engaging and attractive qualities of the work.

Between the jazz-inspired works of the late 1920's and the popular ballets of the late 1930's there is a period in **Copland's** long and varied career sometimes known as his 'abstract' period. The best-known work from this time is the Piano Variations (1930); this **Short Symphony** was started in the following year and finished in 1933. During this phase Copland seemed concerned with concentrated development of short motifs; all the characteristics of the modern musical scene are present—as one would expect in the sophisticated former pupil of Nadia Boulanger: irregular, Stravinskian rhythms, bitonality, brilliant and pungent orchestration and, Copland's particular delight, jazz-inspired rhythms and melodic shapes. But all these elements are presented in textures of uncompromising economy and austerity. The work proved difficult both to play and to listen to. After its first performance in Mexico under Carlos Chavez (to whom it is dedicated) its appearances on concert programmes were few. Indeed, in 1937, Copland made an arrangement of the Symphony for clarinet, string quartet and piano, presumably to encourage performances.

This is not intended to be too daunting a picture of Copland's 2nd Symphony. It is still difficult to play but it is hard to resist the incredible energy of the first and last movements and the quiet beauty of the middle one. The outer movements have a youthful excitement and exuberance. They are vigorous, athletic, boisterous and, at times, brash and vulgar, always dominated by the lively, irregular rhythms and wide-leaping phrases.

The gentle, lyrical Copland is revealed in the second movement, with its simple, slow-moving lines, and again at the very end of the whole work. Here the opening idea of the first movement is heard, very slow and distant, before the final bangs. The three movements are played without a break.

They sing . . . 'to express their sentiments of love . . . to defend their territory . . . above all out of joy, for birds are in every way the opposite of mechanical; they are artists.' Thus **Messiaen** expresses something of his feelings towards the feathered inspirers of some of his most individual music. Years of patient observation and notation of birdsong culminated in a series of works based on the huge repertory of melodies thus collected: *Le Merle Noir*, 1952; *Réveil des Oiseaux*, 1953; *Catalogue d'Oiseaux*, 1956-8 (some of which are to be played here next February); and this work, written in 1955 for Pierre Boulez and the 'Domaine musical' concerts. It is designed for performance in a small hall and besides the solo piano there are eight wood-wind instruments, two horns, one trumpet and a variety of percussion—including a particularly virtuoso xylophone part.

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It is important to notice that birdsong is not here prettily imitated for decorative or programmatic effect, but is the basic material for the whole work. As the title implies, Messiaen does not confine himself to France in choosing his source-material—birdsongs from India, China, Malaysia and North and South America are used. In their stylised form these generate ideas of great variety, characterised by repetition of single notes and phrases and extremely rapid, florid embellishments.

Oiseaux exotiques is in six sections, each separated by a cadenza for solo piano. The first section is very short, and serves as an introduction and also as coda. The next two instrumental sections are also short, the second being an expanded version of the first, and, after the third piano cadenza, gongs, tam-tam and low wind chords herald the central and most extended section. Here the percussion instruments have recurring patterns based on Greek and Hindu rhythms—another important feature of Messiaen's music. Above it innumerable birdsongs are contrasted and combined to form a spectacular counterpoint of colours and rhythms. Eventually the low sounds return and the piano has its most extended cadenza. There is yet one more colourful outburst, before the short, final cadenza and coda. E.J.H.

Next concert: Thursday 26 November

THE JOHN CURRIE SINGERS

Bach

Cantata no. 10, Meine Seel' erhebt den Herren

Messiaen

Cinq rechants

Mozart

Litaniae Lauretanae, K.195

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University of Edinburgh

Concerts

1970-71

THE REID ORCHESTRA

leader Miles Baster

KENNETH LEIGHTON *conductor*

JOHN McCABE *piano*

Thursday 3 December

Reid School of Music

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