

**"THE THINGS OF PEACE": THE COUNCIL FOR THE
ENCOURAGEMENT OF MUSIC AND THE ARTS AND THE
TRANSFORMATION OF THE BRITISH MUSICAL EXPERIENCE
1939-1945**

by

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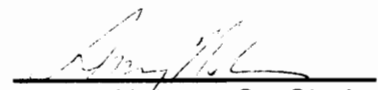
MASTER OF ARTS

in

History

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Dr. Thomas Howard and Dr. Amy Nelson, Co-Chairs

History

(ABSTRACT)

Examining developments in British musical life within the context of the Second World War, this thesis chronicles the emergence of the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA), the first body offering state-supported funding for art music activities in Great Britain. Focusing on Britain's musical life during the war demonstrates that the preservation of Britain's "cultural" heritage (of which music was a part) became a rationale for the beginnings of state-supported arts funding. By studying CEMA and its effect on Britain's musical life, we reexamine how art music experienced growth during this period. CEMA's work of providing concerts in factories, shelters, and the countryside, transformed the ways the British public experienced art music. This thesis examines the process by which the organization evolved into the Arts Council of Great Britain and set the future course of arts funding for most of the organization's history. CEMA's story offers insight concerning the function of arts funding, as well as illustrates the effects that public support of the arts can have on the artistic life of a modern Western society.

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illustrates that even in the most difficult situations, human relationships are of the utmost importance. *The lark ascends*, along the Thames ...

Introduction

The Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA), established in late 1939, was the precursor to the Arts Council of Great Britain, the first state-supported arts funding program in Great Britain. CEMA's work was extremely popular and effective, helping keep alive Britain's musical life ("the things of peace") during the Second World War. Public response to CEMA's activities illustrated that many Britons desired more exposure to art music and proved governmental support of the arts was worth the expense. The Second World War, with its many horrors, also created the possibilities for some positive changes. In the area of music, specifically, the war helped precipitate a livelier and more inclusive musical life for Great Britain. Whether listening to Myra Hess in the National Gallery, a famous singer in a factory canteen, or a pianist playing a run-down piano in a bomb shelter, the British public interacted and participated in art music activities in ways unaccustomed to them before the war.

Historians concerned with musical life in Great Britain during the twentieth

century maintain that music rose in prominence during the Second World War and a thirst for art music became apparent. Influential music critic Percy Scholes stated that the Second World War "saw an increase in musical appreciation. The public for orchestral concerts, in particular, was enormously enlarged [There was] a blaze of new interest in orchestral music."¹ Kenneth Morgan supports this idea in *The Oxford Illustrated History of Britain* stating, "... music was one art form given a powerful stimulus, especially through the patronage of the wartime creation of CEMA."² Other scholars echo this refrain, but rarely address how CEMA's work helped stimulate and illustrate the new interest.

Most traditional studies discussing art music, composers, and British musical life fail to even address CEMA at all.³ However, studies concerning the Arts Council and its predecessor do exist. Most recently, Andrew Sinclair's *Arts and Cultures: The History of the 50 Years of the Arts Council of Great Britain*,

¹ Percy Scholes, *The Mirror of Music 1844-1944: A Century of Musical Life in Britain as Reflected in the Pages of the Musical Times*, Vol. II (London: Novello and Oxford, 1947), 901.

² Kenneth O. Morgan, "The Twentieth Century 1914-1991" in *The Oxford Illustrated History of Britain*, Kenneth O. Morgan, ed., (Oxford and New York: Oxford, 1984), 564.

³ For instance, Henry Raynor's *Music in England* (London: Robert Hale, 1980) Peter Pirie's *The English Musical Renaissance* (London: Victor Gollanz, 1979) and Robert Stradling and Meirion Hughes' *The English Musical Renaissance 1860-1940: Construction and Deconstruction* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993) fail even to mention CEMA. E. D. Mackerness' *A Social History of English Music* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964) does discuss briefly CEMA's role. Though it can hardly be argued that the main focus of any of these studies was to address specifically musical life in the Second World War, it is surprising that so little was written about CEMA.

chronicles the Arts Council and includes a chapter on CEMA, but does not fully discuss how the council changed British musical life and helped make publicly funded arts programs a continuous reality after the war.⁴ Prominent theorist Raymond Williams wrote about the Arts Council as well.⁵ In his article "Politics and Policies: The Case of the Arts Council", Williams rightly explores, if only briefly, the differing visions and intentions plaguing CEMA and the Arts Council. He points out the effects of limiting funding to the "fine arts exclusively" and the exclusionary tactics of "standards".⁶ Williams stresses John Maynard Keynes' impact on the council, but fails to address how some of CEMA's earlier members opposed the ideals that eventually formed the crux of the Arts Council's work.

Music formed the largest portion of CEMA's work. In this thesis, I examine the story behind the perceived rise of serious music during the war by studying how the demand for it increased and by discussing the new opportunities CEMA offered the British public. The creation of concerts for the British people, most specifically Britons unaccustomed to experiencing art music, characterized CEMA's war-time work. The democratization of this music, in the form of factory concerts and musical activities supported and assisted by

⁴ Andrew Sinclair, *Arts and Cultures: The History of the 50 Years of the Arts Council of Great Britain* (London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1995).

⁵ See his "Politics and Policies: The Case of the Arts Council" in his *The Politics of Modernism: Against the New Conformists*, Tony Pinckney, ed., (London and New York: Verso, 1989) and "The Arts Council" in his *Resources of Hope: Culture, Democracy, Socialism*, Robin Gable, ed., (London and New York: Verso, 1989).

⁶ Williams, "Politics", 147.

roaming musical ambassadors, *The Music Travellers*, is also a legacy of the Council's musical activities.

I center my study around the musical activities of CEMA for two reasons. First, the majority of the Council's work dealt with supporting and funding musical activities. Secondly, CEMA's work transformed Britain's musical life more than it did the other artistic activities (art and theater) within the Council's scope in Great Britain. This thesis is therefore in no way a complete study of CEMA. I discuss CEMA's work in other areas besides music only when it is relevant to the overall work of the Council. For that matter, this study does not discuss all of CEMA's musical work. Little is said about the training college concerts given by Dr. Reginald Jacques early in the war, nor do I discuss CEMA's work providing music for Allied troops stationed in Britain during the latter part of the war. This study does discuss, however, the National Gallery concerts organized by Myra Hess. Though not a part of CEMA's work, their popularity helped convince the early organizers of CEMA that musical life needed and would be receptive to active support. They are, therefore, relevant to this study.

I concentrate on the areas I feel are the most significant portions of CEMA's work, areas which most altered Britain's musical life during the war and reflect a wider debate regarding the purpose of the state funding of music. During the war-time experiment of CEMA, a debate crystallized which to this day

plagues supporters of state-funded art in Great Britain, and in countries not addressed in this study. Should the government, through its funding, establish a "national" (but usually based in metropolitan centers) artistic heritage reflecting the highest standards or should the purpose of arts funding also include and support large groups of people by assisting and cultivating amateur arts projects? This debate can locate some of its modern origins in Great Britain's CEMA experiment.

A few words about terms used in this thesis will clarify my intentions to the reader. Throughout the work I use the term "art" music to describe what is normally known as Western orchestral, chamber, and vocal music often referred to, incorrectly, as "classical" music. Though harboring my own personal reservations about the term "art" music, I use it because it is the most common term in musicology, music history, and historical studies which examine these types of music. Occasionally, I interchange art music with the terms "serious" or "good" music. In this thesis, these terms are synonymous with art music and are used following a quote containing the term or for the sake of variety.

I consistently use the term "musical life" throughout the thesis as well. This term refers specifically to art music concert life and art music-making activities throughout Great Britain. This includes public concertizing in London and the countryside, broadcasting of concerts by the BBC over the wireless, and art music activities by amateurs in various choral societies and music clubs.

Since my work focuses on art music, I have not examined the role of other forms of music found in music halls, pubs, or other public places in Great Britain. When using the term musical life, I am specifically referring to changes and developments in Britain's art music realm.

I also use the word "amateur" to describe individual music-makers and consumers with little or no formal music training, in contrast with professional musicians. All musicians affiliated with CEMA, including members of the Council and the musicians hired (such as the Musical Travellers) were professional musicians. When using the word "amateur," I refer to those receiving more exposure to art music through the work of CEMA's professional musicians.

One final term used throughout portions of this study is the word "populist." I acknowledge I am borrowing from Andrew Sinclair's use of this word in his *Arts and Cultures*.⁷ I use the word to describe the intent and vision of certain members of CEMA who wished to spread the influence and outreach of art music to the British people, including the middle and lower class members who were not previously involved with art music. These members, though nearly all professional musicians and composers, believed the role of CEMA was to make music-making activities available to all people, not set up metropolitan musical powerhouses with the "highest" standards of performance. They believed in the importance and relevance of music in the everyday life of

⁷ Andrew Sinclair, *Arts and Cultures: The History of the 50 Years of the Arts Council of Great Britain* (London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1995).

"common" people and sought to further the greater population's experiences with art music, including interaction with professional musicians and with their own amateur music-making activities. Therefore, I feel populist is an appropriate term to describe their interpretations of the purposes of public arts funding.

To properly understand why CEMA's work was necessary as well as understand changes brought about by its musical activities, it is important to acquire some general information concerning the state of musical life at the outbreak of the Second World War. Chapter One serves as a general introduction to British musical life during the early part of the twentieth century before 1939. Chapter Two examines the effect of the war's outbreak on Great Britain's musical life and discusses the British music community's reaction to this event, with the creation of the National Gallery concerts and eventual creation of CEMA. Chapter Three discusses the vision of CEMA's early members as well as the specifics of CEMA's musical activities including the Music Travellers, factory concerts, and concerts in bomb and homeless shelters. This leads to Chapter Four, which analyzes internal shifts in CEMA's vision, created in part by the appointment of John Maynard Keynes to the chair. This event led to a change in CEMA's activities and directly affected the ethos of the newly created Arts Council in 1945.

CEMA's musical story is important because it sheds light on the further

acceptance of art music in twentieth-century Great Britain. It is also significant because the developments within CEMA during the war had a great deal to do with the evolution of the Arts Council of Great Britain and the course of state-supported arts funding throughout the second half of the twentieth century. As CEMA changed forever Britons' experiences with art music, the organization's direction, during its formative years, changed the course and nature of Great Britain's twentieth-century experiences with publicly funded art.

Chapter One
"... how rare was good music ... "
Emerging British Musical Life 1870-1939

Two concerts in London's St. James' Hall during May and June of 1899 serve as landmark events which ushered in twentieth-century British musical life. The concert on 30 May promoted the music of British composer Frederick Delius, who later established himself as a significant international composer. Less than a month later on 19 June 1899, Edward Elgar's *Enigma Variations* was first performed.¹ This concert premièred a work which became the first significant British contribution to the Western art music canon since the time of Henry Purcell. These events brought British art music into the twentieth century. In this century, Britons embraced what they previously considered a "foreign" art. As a result, Great Britain experienced a rise in concert life, performance opportunities, and significant native-born composers. By 1945, Great Britain initiated state-funded arts programs, subsidizing concert halls and individual orchestras. An activity once considered the property of elites became a part of the twentieth-century British historical and social experience.

¹ Lewis Foreman, *From Parry to Britten: British Music in Letters 1900-1945* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1987), 5.

Many scholars have chronicled the noticeable rise of art music in twentieth-century Great Britain.² While the nature of this renaissance is still open to debate, historians agree on a number of points. One of these is the emergence of art music as an acceptable activity for middle and upper class Britons.

British Victorians placed a low emphasis on art music and it remained for the first forty years of Victoria's reign a primarily "foreign" art associated with Germans.³ However, during the late 1870s, Britain's musical life witnessed a slow growth. This period saw the creation of leading musical institutions, most specifically the Royal College of Music (1883), Trinity College (1875), and the Guildhall School of Music (1880).⁴ The rise of these music schools prompted educated Victorians to gradually accept music as a proper university subject.⁵ The growth of music in university settings, led by late nineteenth-century British

² See Frank Howes' *The English Musical Renaissance* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1966), Peter Pirie's *The English Musical Renaissance* (London: Victor Gollanz, 1979), Michael Trend's *The Music Makers: The English Musical Renaissance from Elgar to Britten* (New York: Schirmer), 1985 and Beta Karoyli's *The Second English Musical Renaissance -- From Elgar to P. Maxwell Davies* (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1994). A more ambitious and controversial work offering a reappraisal of the renaissance is Robert Stradling and Meirion Hughes' *The English Musical Renaissance 1860-1940* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993).

³ Stradling and Hughes, 11-15.

⁴ E. D. Mackerness, *A Social History of English Music* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964), 196. For a good discussion on the Royal College of Music's origins, see Stradling and Hughes.

⁵ Jeremy Crump, "The Identity of English Music: The Reception of Elgar 1898-1935" in *Englishness: Politics and Culture 1880-1920*, eds. Robert Colls and Philip Dodd, (London: Croom Helm, 1986), 165.

academics and composers Sir Hubert Parry and Sir Charles Villiers Stanford, brought about what Jeremy Crump calls, "the establishment of music as a legitimated occupation for the English middle class."⁶ "The establishment of music" still had a long way to go, when considering Frederick Delius was strongly dissuaded by his wool-merchant father from pursuing a career in music during the 1880s. Only after his failure as a businessman did the young Delius secure his father's approval and set out composing full-time. On the whole, however, music made strides both as a profession and activity worthy of interest.

This growing acceptance of music led to the creation of more music-making opportunities, including the advent of new symphony orchestras. At the turn of the century, five orchestras existed in Great Britain. These included the Hallé in Manchester, the orchestra at the Crystal Palace under the direction of August Manns, the newly founded Queen's Hall Orchestra under the direction of Henry Wood, and the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Sir Dan Godfrey.⁷ In Scotland, Sir George Henschel conducted the Scottish Orchestra, begun in 1893 to provide art music for Scotland's two largest cities, Edinburgh and Glasgow.⁸ By the time war broke out in 1939, Britain's

⁶ "Ibid".

⁷ Reginald Nettel, *The Orchestra in England: A Social History* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1948), 190-216 and 230-42. In their work, Stradling and Hughes incorrectly assert only three orchestras (not including the Bournemouth) existed in England at the turn of the century.

⁸ Michael Kennedy, *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams* (Oxford: Clarendon, reprint 1992), 10.

musical scene was vastly changed from its Victorian state. Britons could now boast of new orchestras, including the London Symphony Orchestra, the London Philharmonic, Liverpool Philharmonic, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, and the Northern Philharmonic.⁹ These orchestras not only provided art music to Britons, but were also a tool for the growing group of British composers, including those who eventually took their place in the canon of important twentieth century British composers such as Edward Elgar, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Gustav Holst, William Walton, Michael Tippett, Arthur Bliss, Arnold Bax and Benjamin Britten.¹⁰ This growing group of composers, many educated at the new musical institutions, ushered in not only a new prominence for art music in Britain but for art music by British composers internationally.

Along with the growth of musical institutions and composers, Great Britain continued its tradition of music festivals during the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century. Composers attended these music festivals held in provincial cities. The festivals grew in popularity until the First World War's outbreak.¹¹ The most established of the festivals were the English cathedral festivals, held in various cathedrals throughout the country. The oldest and

⁹ Nettel, 243-92.

¹⁰ Trend, xv.

¹¹ Foreman, 8.

perhaps most prestigious, dating from 1729, was the Three Choirs Festival.¹² This festival rotated between the three cathedral cities of Gloucester, Worcester, and Hereford. The Three Choirs Festival served as a backdrop for much of Edward Elgar's music and it was here that his music was first performed as he launched his compositional career (Elgar was from Worcester).¹³ Other provincial cathedral festivals included those at Norwich, Chester, Peterborough, and Lincoln. Festivals also took place in commercial and industrial cities, such as Birmingham and Leeds.¹⁴

Besides being large social gatherings, these festivals served as places where Britons could hear and perform both sacred and secular art music. The festivals were important centers for British art music because the world premières of works by British composers were often performed. For instance, in 1907, the Leeds Festival launched the premières of Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Toward the Unknown Region*, Rutland Boughton's *Two Folk Songs with Variations*, and Granville Bantock's *Sea Wanderers*.¹⁵ Composers premiered these works at regional festivals before they brought them to London for performance by one of the capital's orchestras. In this way, the festivals helped

¹² Mackerness, 112.

¹³ Francis Routh, *Contemporary British Music: The Twenty-Five Years from 1945-1970* (London: Macdonald, 1972), 4-5 and Percy Scholes' *The Mirror of Music 1844-1944: A Century of Musical Life in Britain as Reflected in the Pages of the Musical Times*. Vol. 1 (London: Novello and Oxford, 1947), 120-6.

¹⁴ Scholes, 150-63.

¹⁵ Kennedy, 97.

introduce works by British composers and established their reputations as serious composers. Though the festivals suffered with the outbreak of the First World War and did not retain their previous luster, they still functioned as important centers of music-making throughout the first half of the twentieth century. One example of a festival making a significant contribution to Britain's musical life is the Norwich Festival of 1930 (see program note on p.15).

The Norwich Festival premièred two works now in the canon of twentieth-century British art music. On the night of October 22, British composer (and later Director of Music of the BBC) Arthur Bliss premièred his grand choral symphony, *Morning Heroes*.¹⁶ The "Great" War, of course, not only changed Britain's musical life but also the men who fought in the war. Bliss, who was wounded on the Somme and exposed to gas at Cambrai, wrote this extremely personal work dealing with the experience of war. He conducted (as did most of the composers at these festivals) the premiere of this epic work which utilized texts of Homer, Walt Whitman, Li-Tai Po, Wilfred Owen and others.

The very next night featured the première of Ralph Vaughan Williams' epic *Job*.¹⁷ This music, written to accompany a ballet (or as Vaughan Williams preferred "masque"), drew its inspiration from William Blake's *Illustrations of the Book of Job*. Vaughan Williams conducted this first performance of music which became known as one of his most inspired works, now often performed as a

¹⁶ Foreman, 140-1.

¹⁷ Kennedy, 201-4.

: NORFOLK AND NORWICH THIRTY-THIRD :
Triennial Musical Festival 1930

Wednesday Morning, October 22nd, at 11.30 a.m.

"GOD SAVE THE KING."

Audience, Chorus, Organ, and Orchestra.

1. APOSTLES Elgar

THE BLESSED VIRGIN.	}	...	MISS ELSIE SUDDABY
THE ANGEL			
MARY MAGDALENE	...		MISS MURIEL BRUNSKILL
ST. JOHN	...		MR. FRANCIS RUSSELL
ST. PETER	...		MR. FREDERICK WOODHOUSE
JUDAS	...		MR. HORACE STEVENS
JESUS	...		MR. ARTHUR CRANMER

2. SYMPHONY No. 3 in F Brahms

(Conducted by DR. HEATHCOTE STATHAM)

Wednesday Evening, October 22nd, at 8 p.m.

**1. SYMPHONY FOR MIXED CHORUS,
 ORCHESTRA, AND ORATOR Arthur Bliss**

"Morning Heroes"

ORATOR MR. BASIL MAINE.

(WRITTEN FOR THIS FESTIVAL AND CONDUCTED
 BY THE COMPOSER.)

2. CONCERTO in A Minor Saint-Saens

For Violoncello and Orchestra.

SIGNOR ARTURO BONUCCI.

3. SEA DRIFT Delius

For Baritone Solo, Chorus, and Orchestra.

SOLO BARITONE MR. ROY HENDERSON

4. CONCERTO No. 2 in C Minor Rachmaninoff

For Pianoforte and Orchestra.

MISS MYRA HESS.

5. THREE SPANISH DANCES Granados

Norwich Festival program from Arthur Bliss' première of *Morning Heroes*
 Myra Hess, future organizer of the National Gallery concerts and
 CEMA member, performed that evening.

from Lewis Foreman's *From Parry to Britten: British Music in Letters*
 1900-1945

concert-piece itself. Music festivals like this one provided and created musical experiences for Britons by utilizing Britain's leading composers and musicians. For instance, the Norwich program shows Myra Hess, future CEMA member and organizer of the National Gallery Concerts during the Second World War, performed the night of the Bliss première. Though they all did not last until the outbreak of the Second World War, these musical festivals were centers of musical activity outside of the capital. While people outside of London still found limited opportunities to hear and participate in art music, these festivals significantly added to their musical experiences.

Perhaps this period's most famous musical development occurred in London, the Henry Wood Promenade Concerts. On Saturday 10 August 1895, the twenty-six year old relatively unknown conductor Henry Wood stepped on the podium and conducted the Queen's Hall Orchestra in Richard Wagner's *Rienzi Overture*. Robert Newman, manager of the Queen's Hall, offered the young conductor the opportunity to conduct a ten-week season of concerts in which audience members could move around (hence "promenade") at an affordable price (between 1 and 5s.). For the price of just one shilling, concert-goers purchased standing tickets for a night full of music, much of it light orchestral pieces. A variety of Londoners participated in the musical opportunities offered by the "Proms". Various social orders enjoyed the musical experiences at the Queen's Hall (though more affluent Londoners sat in the

Balcony or Grand Circle).¹⁸ Little could the organizers have realized that the concerts would become an institution themselves, a significant and important part of Britain's musical life even today, over a century after their inception.

One important result of the Proms was that the concerts provided quality art music for a new public audience. Wood's conductorship of the Proms, lasting until his death in 1944, brought a higher level of performance to a country not known for its musical tradition. Wood intermingled light ballads and popular pieces with serious works. His diverse programs had the dual effect of both building a greater audience for art music and exposing this audience to the "latest" art music. By the turn of the century, Wood performed symphonies by Sibelius and Mahler before they were given on the continent, played the music of Schoenberg and Scriabin and presented the first all Bartok orchestral music concert.¹⁹ As Sacheverell Sitwell commented, "It is probably difficult for us to have any conception how rare was good music [in Britain] before Sir Henry Wood made it his business of his life to bring it before the public."²⁰

Though not a financial success, the Proms provided concerts for the first quarter of the new century. In 1927, the Proms' originator Robert Newman died but the concerts were saved by the intervention of the BBC. With the BBC's

¹⁸ Barrie Hall, *The Proms* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1980), 32 and Norman Lebrecht, *Music in London* (London: Aurum, 1992), 5-6.

¹⁹ Lebrecht, 6.

²⁰ *Ibid.*



Future CEMA member Ralph Vaughan Williams conducting
at the Proms.
from Peter Pirie's *The English Musical Renaissance*

support, Parliament ordered the Proms to assume an educational role and enlighten the public. Thus, less serious works were now shelved in favor of more "high-brow" music. Another prominent change to the Proms took place when the BBC took over financial backing and broadcast the concerts to the British public. Although many supporters of the Proms feared radio broadcasts would ruin concert attendance, the broadcasting of the concerts actually stimulated concert-going and British musical life in general.²¹ The Proms concerts continued as an active presence in British life until 1939, with the admission price staying constant for the nineteen years before the eruption of the Second World War.²² Offering a variety of art music to middle and upper class patrons, the Proms played an important role in the emergence of Great Britain's musical life throughout the first part of the twentieth century and beyond (see picture on p. 18).

The BBC played a role in bringing art music to a larger number of Britons. The British Broadcasting Company (as then known) first went on the air in November 1922.²³ Under the leadership of John Reith, director of the BBC until 1938, radio grew from a small phenomenon to a truly national one, with over nine million license-holders and its popularity rivaling that of film when Reith retired.²⁴ In 1923, Reith appointed the composer Percy Pitt as musical advisor.

²¹ Hall, 79.

²² *Ibid.*, 105.

²³ Stradling and Hughes, 84.

²⁴ D. L. LeMahieu, *A Culture for Democracy: Mass Communication and the*

From its beginning, the BBC reflected an upper-middle class cultural ethos, made the broadcasting of music a large part of its original mission and, according to D. L. LeMahieu, "constructed a flattering image of bourgeois cultural traditions and social identity."²⁵ The BBC disseminated art music to the growing British listening public and used their own cultural interpretations of what constituted "real" music.

To Reith, Pitt, and the BBC bureaucracy, real music did not include popular forms of music but typical forms of art music (symphonic, chamber, opera).²⁶ The BBC not only offered art music to the British public but presented these programs during prime-time listening hours, when they reached the largest audience. Attesting to their popularity, the BBC broadcast live the symphonic music from the Proms Concerts during its National Programme nightly from eight to ten-thirty for all seven weeks of the Proms season.²⁷ Without the financial support of the BBC, British musical life might not have flourished as it did. The BBC rescued the Proms from financial ruin and also subsidized English opera companies. With its backing, British art music found a larger audience.

When Adrian Boult assumed the position of BBC Music Director in May 1930, a new era in British musical history began. He helped create another

Cultivated Mind in Britain Between the Wars (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988), 142.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 184.

²⁶ Paddy Scannell, "Music for the Multitude? The Dilemmas of the BBC's Musical Policy, 1923-1946", *Media, Culture and Society* 3 (1981): 243.

²⁷ LeMahieu, 185.

important legacy of the BBC, the BBC Symphony Orchestra. Boult combined quickly the posts of conductor and Music Director and made his orchestra the first salaried one in British history.²⁸ He adopted a much praised philosophy of performing important music, which included according to Boult, "the great classics together with such novelties as we consider of prime importance."²⁹ Boult and his orchestra performed both "classics" and modern works by continental and British composers.

Boult's broad music tastes prompted him to introduce Britain to Alban Berg's opera *Wozzeck*, persuade Arturo Toscanini to record the Beethoven cycles of the 1930s with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, and champion the music of British composers, especially that of Elgar and Vaughan Williams.³⁰ Boult's performances and broadcasts with his orchestra presented art music to a larger number of Britons than thought possible before the advent of radio. Though art music was not a part of the daily lives of most Britons, its influence grew considerably during the first half of the century.

Thus, art music's position in British society changed dramatically during the first four decades of the new century. Serious music now occupied a more respectable, even "establishment" role (in the BBC's case) within the fabric of British life. Orchestras throughout the country offered music to a wider range of

²⁸ Stradling and Hughes, 87 and LeBrecht, 11.

²⁹ Michael Kennedy, *Adrian Boult* (London: Macmillan, 1987), 175.

³⁰ Lebrecht, 11-13, Stradling and Hughes, 87 and Foreman, 293.

people. But, outside the festival cities, main industrial areas and London, Britons still experienced limited opportunities to interact with art music. As Thomas Russell, secretary of the London Philharmonic Orchestra later wrote, "it has to be remembered before the war ... little was known of concert-giving in provincial towns outside the main centres."³¹ Opportunities to hear and create art music existed, but not on a wide scale and it still remained the province of the upper and upper-middle classes within British society. Concert life in London and at the provincial festivals offered art music to Britons in these areas.

By late summer of 1939, the various venues for art music in Britain offered typical fare. At the Proms, the first night of the season opened with Sir Henry Wood conducting Rachmaninoff's *Paganini's Variations*, Kodaly's *Hary Janos*, and Vivaldi's *Concerto for Four Violins in b minor*.³² The Three Choirs Festival was set for the first week of September, with Bach's *Mass in b minor*, Vaughan Williams' *Pastoral Symphony* and *Dona Nobis Pacem*, and Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* all scheduled for performance.³³ These institutions of British musical life soon felt the effects of the events of September 1939 which led to the outbreak of the Second World War. By 3 September, concert organizers canceled both the Proms and Three Choirs Festival. British musical life came to a stop, but only momentarily.

³¹ CEMA Bulletin, April 1944, No. 48, 2.

³² Hall, 105.

³³ Found in a letter from J. W. Lawrence to C. A. L. Cliffe describing the upcoming festival, found in Foreman, 220.

Similar events occurred at the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914. Musical life in Britain shut down with the war's advent, with that year's major choir festivals all canceled.³⁴ Though German influences in British musical life were very strong, anti-German feelings and a distrust of German musicians and music became apparent. A prime example of this was the substitution of Tchaikovsky's *Italian Caprice* for Strauss' *Don Juan* on the opening night of the 1914 Proms Season. Many British performers who had previously taken German professional names suddenly found themselves under suspicion and persecution by patriotic Britons.³⁵ Great Britain's musical life was still closely linked and subservient to Germanic influences. The exodus of German influence in Britain's musical life damaged its quality during the war. Many leading members of Britain's musical life, such as Hubert Parry, were greatly disturbed by the militaristic aggression of the country with a musical tradition he so valued and respected.³⁶ In 1939, reactions among Britain's musical elite illustrated they now felt their country's musical life was important enough to be saved, and set about securing financial support in order to do so.

While twenty five years later much of musical life suffered an initial turbulent period as it had during the First World War, this time Great Britain's musical life was used immediately as an example of a "cultural" heritage worth

³⁴ Foreman, 60.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 61.

saving. However, in 1939 exciting and transforming opportunities in Britain's musical life emerged from the smoke of a bombed-out metropolis and war-weary countryside. Great Britain's newly established musical life would play a vital role on the British war-time homefront.

Chapter Two
"Beauty is stirring ... good ... out of evil":
Forming CEMA

On the evening of 1 September 1939, Sir Henry Wood conducted the BBC Symphony Orchestra in a concert at the Queen's Hall. The concert that night was a part of the Proms Season, the most important summer musical institution in London. As on many previous nights, Wood conducted a Beethoven program, featuring Harriet Cohen as piano soloist in Beethoven's Second Concerto.¹ But this night was unlike the others. Following the concert's conclusion, Wood dramatically turned to the audience and broke forty-five years of silence from the podium with these words:

Owing to the special arrangements for broadcasting which are now in force, the BBC very much regrets that the Symphony Orchestra will no longer be available for these concerts in London. I am therefore very sorry to say that from tonight Promenade Concerts will close down until further notice.²

After the announcement, dazed concert-goers left the Queen's Hall to struggle through the darkness of "blacked-out" London, a defining characteristic of the British war-time experience. This announcement effectively ended -- at least for that season -- a British musical institution and signaled the new war-time

¹ Nicholas Kenyon, *The BBC Symphony Orchestra: The First Fifty Years 1930-1980* (London: BBC, 1981), 154.

² Barrie Hall, *The Proms* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981), 106.

reality for British musical life.

Britain's declaration of war on Germany two days later marked the "official" beginning of war-time, British style. Four million women and children started evacuating London. British officials instituted air-raid procedures, nightly blackouts, a restricted public transportation, building of public trenches, and the distribution of over thirty-eight million gas masks, all staples of war-time life. Londoners were soon adjusting to these new realities and learning to live with other typical wartime measures such as the rationing of food, oil, and clothing.³

The ever-present fear of German bombs both in London and the countryside disrupted many peace-time activities. In the words of Philip Zeigler, "[the] [s]hades of the prison house began to close."⁴ Fearing it aided German bombing attempts, the Government removed its television signal. In addition, the BBC restricted its radio programming to only one channel. The government immediately suspended what it called "entertainments" which included cinemas, theaters, sport, and orchestral concerts.⁵

These measures hit British concert life extremely hard. With nightly blackouts, evening concerts ceased. As previously mentioned, officials canceled the 1939 Proms season. Concert life in the countryside also

³ Kenneth O. Morgan, *The Oxford Illustrated History of Britain* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 555-6; Philip Zeigler, *London at War: 1939-1945* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), 34.

⁴ Zeigler, 33.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 33, 40-1.

immediately suffered. The first mainstay event stopped there because of the war was the Three Choirs Festival. Set to begin on 3 September 1939 in Hereford, the events of the day caused the immediate cancellation of this integral part of British musical life.⁶

In 1939, as twenty-five years earlier at the outbreak of the First World War, British musical opportunities diminished. The entire BBC musical organization fled from London, eventually establishing itself in Bedford. Concert organizers canceled their programs and musicians had fewer opportunities for work. Many musicians joined the British armed forces and orchestras suffered great losses in membership. The BBC Symphony alone lost over thirty of its members.⁷

In addition to closing concert halls, the BBC sharply altered its regular programming services. The Government ended most public entertainments and, besides pubs and churches, closed public gathering places.⁸ This action by the Government instigated what some Englishmen called the new "Bore" war and general public irritation with the situation. One Englishman lamented this "phoney" war period and commented, "Its [sic] boring me bloody well stiff. No football neither."⁹ Britons' dissatisfaction with the Government's overreaction led

⁶ Foreman, 220.

⁷ Zeigler, 50.

⁸ Susan Briggs, *The Home Front: War Years in Britain 1939-1945* (London: Weidenfield and Nicholson, 1975), 38.

⁹ *Ibid.*

by the winter of 1939-1940 to the general sense that: "The British people will win the war in spite of the Government." Football was, of course, not the only activity suffering during the early part of the "war of yawns."¹⁰

Along with the Government's action, the BBC added their own policy of stopping practically all broadcasts of art music. For nearly five days, theater organ music clogged the BBC's air waves, adding further gloom to the blackout.¹¹ This caused *The Times* music critic Ernest Newman to proclaim "with the musical life of the country virtually dead ... [the BBC] pours into the air day after day, an endless stream of trivialities and silliness, apparently labouring under the delusion that in any time of crisis the British public becomes one colossal moron, to whose sub-simian intelligence it must indulgently play down."¹² Indeed, press indignation at the BBC's decision continued throughout the month.¹³

The *Musical Times* joined in the criticism, temporarily ceasing their section entitled "Wireless Notes" due to a lack of music to describe and added with deep lament: "No emergency could justify such programme poverty. What use might have been made of music of heroic mould!"¹⁴ The BBC's decision to

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 39.

¹¹ Kenyon, 156.

¹² *The Sunday Times*, 17 September 1939.

¹³ For a short discussion of the press debate between the BBC and critics, see Kenyon, 156-8.

¹⁴ Percy Scholes, *The Mirror of Music: A Century of Musical Life in Britain as Reflected in the Pages of the Musical Times*, Vol. II (London: Novello and Oxford, 1947), 895.

pull art music from the airwaves illustrates an overreaction similar to the Government's ending of all public entertainments. As Nicholas Kenyon states, "it was a response to a crisis which did not exist."¹⁵ The choice of "safe" theater organ music suggests the BBC felt this music was appropriate (and art music was not) during a crisis period. Eventually, in response to public criticism and similar viewpoints from within the Corporation (most notably Music Director Sir Adrian Boult), limited art music programming returned as did their orchestra's public concerts.¹⁶ Nonetheless, Director-General of the BBC Basil Nicholls gloomily stated at the end of the month, "good music had been very badly hit, more even than the most extreme lowbrow would want."¹⁷ With the ending of concerts and radio broadcasts, Britain's musical life lay in ruins, the mere threat of the *Luftwaffe* inflicting a multitude of damage.

With musical opportunities limited and the general population bored, prominent members of the musical community attempted to rectify the situation. In a letter from early January 1940, Sir Henry Wood, deeply upset about the state of Great Britain's musical life, shared his ideas concerning ways to improve the situation caused by wartime. Sir Henry hoped to:

bring the subject of subsidy for music to the notice of the public, and later on [to the notice of] the Government. ... I honestly believe the time is ripe, in spite of the War, as people realize more than ever what a tremendously important part fine music plays in

¹⁵ Kenyon, 156.

¹⁶ For a discussion of the BBC's return to more "normal" programming, see Kenyon, 156-60.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 158.

our National well being, now that it is missing so much. Can't we think of something?'¹⁸

In fact, several people already had.

Soon after the outbreak of war, the famous British pianist Myra Hess originated an idea which would play a large role in London's war-time musical life. Abandoning a lucrative piano recital tour of the United States in order to stay in her native city of London, Hess began a series of lunch-time concerts for musically deprived Londoners.¹⁹ Hess proposed her idea to Sir Kenneth Clark, Director of the National Gallery, and hoped to perform the concerts in the National Gallery. Clark not only agreed, but enthusiastically responded Hess must play one every day.²⁰ The director, personally affected by the removal of most of the gallery's pictures to a quarry in North Wales from fear of bomb damage, reportedly "felt keenly the starvation of the spirit of the people ...," and quickly relayed the idea to the gallery's trustees.²¹ The planners worked quickly and just six weeks into the war Clark announced the National Gallery concerts to the public.²²

Hess assumed artistic control of the concerts which took place every weekday. The museum's concert schedule included Hess premiering the series

¹⁸ Foreman, 226.

¹⁹ *The Daily Telegraph*, 27 November 1965.

²⁰ As repeated in Zeigler's *London*, 51. Zeigler goes on to assert the first National Gallery concert was "little advertised". However, evidence suggests otherwise. *The Times* covered the announcement of the concerts and included not only an article about the upcoming concerts but an editorial discussion of them as well on 7 October 1939.

²¹ *The Times*, 7 October 1939.

²² *Ibid.*

with a piano concert on 10 October, followed later that week by violin and choral concerts.²³ The National Gallery set the admission price at an affordable one shilling or 2s. 6d. for the later afternoon concerts held on Tuesdays and Fridays. This inexpensive price allowed access for almost all Britons, and ensured the continuation of art music's democratization, much as the Proms did forty-five years earlier. Though that year's Proms concerts were canceled due to the war, The National Gallery concerts kept their spirit alive. With a lack of alternatives, some Londoners found concerts of art music one of their few choices for entertainment.

The concerts filled a need for entertainment and by the time the gallery's doors opened the first Tuesday afternoon, a line of war-weary Britons stretched along the north side of Trafalgar Square.²⁴ Playing a concert of Scarlatti, Bach, Beethoven, and Schubert, Hess delivered a much needed respite for citizens of the "prison house." The first concert was a huge success with Londoners. Clark himself commented, "I confess that in common with half the audience, I was in tears ... this was what we had been waiting for-- an assertion of eternal values."²⁵ Hess' performance was "packed out" and "several hundred people stood even as far back as the third gallery away and many failed to gain admission."²⁶ The lunch-time concerts appealed to a wide variety of people as well. An early

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Zeigler, 51.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *The Times*, 11 October 1939.

review described the diverse audience, commenting it included both a "leisured" and "work[ing]" class audience. Crowds were large for the early concerts. A few weeks later an audience of one thousand attended a similar concert. A wide spectrum of London's populace enjoyed the National Gallery concerts, from "City workers, shop assistants, shoppers, ARP workers, soldiers, Bloomsbury intellectuals and the Lord Chancellor, Lord Caldecote, [who] flocked to the National Gallery ... many were turned away."²⁷ In his concluding comments, the reviewer ironically stated: "Plainly the National Gallery, deserted by one Art, has found a new function in the service of another."²⁸ These early concerts proved to be just the beginning of a London musical institution that lasted throughout the war.

Musically impoverished Londoners welcomed the new concerts. They continued throughout the rest of the war and endured the dislocation and damage caused by life at war. The concerts were so popular and fulfilled such a need for a break from the realities of war that organizers held them even when conditions were at their worst. With the Battle of Britain raging in September 1940, concerts moved from under the dome on the main floor to the downstairs shelter area. On 15 October, Myra Hess found out, shortly after 11:00 in the morning, that a time-bomb had fallen on the National Gallery. Officials immediately evacuated, but they did not cancel the concert. Only thirty minutes

²⁷ Zeigler, 51.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

later, concert managers informed Hess that South Africa's High Commissioner offered the service of South Africa House across Trafalgar Square. This incident was the only time the concert series was not held in the gallery during the war.²⁹ The persistence of the concert managers and the cooperation of others in helping the concerts continue under great duress illustrates the special camaraderie the concerts fostered between a variety of Londoners.

When gallery officials reluctantly chose to end the concerts six and a half years after their inception, the National Gallery had served as host to 1,698 concerts. Over 800,000 people attended the concerts and musicians whose livelihood had been limited due to the war were able to earn a total of £15,000. Over £10,000 was raised for the Musician's Benevolent Fund, the original beneficiary of the concerts.

Hess' concerts are a main cornerstone in the historical memory of war-time Great Britain. The importance of the events in the national consciousness is evidenced by the lavish attention given to them at the time of then Dame Myra Hess' death in November 1965.³⁰ The concerts stand as an important legacy of Great Britain's war-time musical life. As *The Times* prophetically stated in its editorial section the day it announced the concerts, "Beauty is stirring in her sleep. Something is being done to satisfy the hunger for what the arts alone can give. ... If all goes well, these small stirrings should

²⁹ Scholes, 896.

³⁰ *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Times*, 27 November 1965

lead to a complete awakening."³¹

The "awakening " was well on its way. To one observer, the Myra Hess concert scheme illustrated the desire and need for a transformation in Great Britain's musical life. Earl De La Warr, President of the Board of Education, wrote to Dr. Thomas Jones that the National Galley concert series illustrated, "an almost pathetic hunger for such provision."³² The revitalization on a grander scale of Great Britain's musical life had its humble beginnings not in a letter but on the telephone. Deep in the midst of the "phoney war" period in which Great Britain experienced curtailment in entertainment and artistic activities (with the Hess concerts as a notable exception), the music scene began to revive. Lord De La Warr set plans into motion by calling Jones, the Secretary of the Pilgrim Trust, concerning a grant from the trust.³³

In 1930, American railway millionaire Edward Harkness established the Pilgrim Trust with an initial bequest of two million pounds. Harkness established this trust to maintain the cultural heritage of Great Britain in three major areas: intellectual, social, and material. Throughout the 1930s, the Pilgrim Trust provided financial support for various activities in Great Britain, including the arts.³⁴

³¹ *The Times*, 7 October 1939.

³² Public Record Office (PRO) ED/136/188D.

³³ The story of the origins of CEMA is from an article written by Jones printed in CEMA Bulletin, No.25, May 1942, 2-4.

³⁴ PRO, EL 1/1.

After hearing De La Warr's pitch and thinking it sounded promising, Jones arranged a meeting between De La Warr and the Chairman of the Pilgrim Trust, Lord Macmillan, at the University of London's Senate House on 14 December 1939. Jones was also present. When proposing his idea, Lord De La Warr was purportedly:

enthusiastic. ... [with] visions ... in which the Board of Education led the Arts in triumph from Whitehall to Greenwich in magnificent barges and gorgeous gondolas; orchestras, madrigal singers, Shakespeare from the Old Vic., ballet from Sadler's Wells [etc.].³⁵

Responsible for national morale in his post as Minister of Information, Macmillan, according to Jones, saw in De La Warr's idea the possibility of "employment for actors, singers, and painters and refreshment for the multitude of war workers for the duration." Jones reports that, "Supply and Demand kissed," and Macmillan immediately offered the sum of £25,000 to De La Warr.³⁶

This version of events was recently challenged by Andrew Sinclair in his book *Arts and Cultures*.³⁷ Citing both future CEMA secretary Mary Glasgow and William Emrys Williams, an original member of the committee and head of the popular "Arts for the People" exhibitions of the 1930s, Sinclair maintains Jones, not De La Warr, came up with the original idea. Jones then approached Macmillan to set up the meeting with De La Warr. Mary Glasgow is quoted as saying Jones' crediting of De La Warr was a cover for his own role as well as a

³⁵ CEMA Bulletin, No.25, May 1942 .

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Andrew Sinclair, *Arts and Cultures: The History of the Fifty Years of the Arts Council of Great Britain* (London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1995), 28.

"joke in the best Celtic tradition."³⁸ At the start of the article in which he put forward his version of CEMA's history, Jones issued the curious statement that his article, "Fifty years hence ... may save a student writing a thesis an few hours' research among the files of the Record Office."³⁹ While Jones' article did not save this student doing research on his own thesis much time fifty-four years hence, it does offer an intriguing incident in which it seems Jones was playing some sort of practical joke. The mere inclusion of his statement concerning saving "time" for a future "student" suggests his possible pleasure in knowing he was skewering the truth. This controversy is relevant and interesting because it forces the question why Jones might wish De La Warr and not himself to receive credit for the initiative. Perhaps Jones wished it to seem that a governmental agency lay at the source of the idea for a state funded arts program, if for no other reason than, as Sinclair points out, Jones was at the time working for CEMA. Whatever the true story behind the idea's origin, an informal and tentative meeting "to discuss in principle the problem of cultural activities in war-time" was set for 19 December 1939.⁴⁰

The Committee for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts formed and appointed Lord Macmillan its chairman. The committee met at the Offices of the Board of Education. Lord Macmillan and Lord De La Warr chose the members

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 28-9.

³⁹ CEMA Bulletin, May 1942, 2.

⁴⁰ PRO EL 1/1.

of the committee. Present at this early meeting besides Macmillan and De La Warr were noted composer Sir Walford Davies (see picture on p. 47), Sir Kenneth Clark, director of the National Gallery, and the previously mentioned William Emrys Williams. At this meeting, chairman Macmillan expressed his concern for both "the morale of the people [and] for the position of the arts in war-time."⁴¹

This joint partnership of the Pilgrim Trust and the Board of Education laid the groundwork for financial support of "cultural" activities so hampered by war-time conditions. The tentative plans laid out in the opening discussion of this committee illustrate the collaboration's intentions:

The partnership of the Pilgrim Trust and the Board may well lay the foundations for a significant extension of cultural education. ... above all, we may be able to make a more constructive contribution to the problems of the 'black-out' and identify the Government with leadership in this matter, ... the problem, therefore, goes beyond the mere subsidizing of the arts, ... [it is] to give leadership and inspiration to the many people who it is certain are only too anxious to take part in worth-while musical and artistic activities.⁴²

The partnership of the Pilgrim Trust and the Board of Education functioned to revive Britain's damaged artistic culture, with music at the forefront, as well as aid the war effort by maintaining public morale and boosting confidence in the work of the war-time government. As the committee later stated in its application to the Treasury for funding, "It should be part of the policy of the Government

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

when fighting for civilisation to prove its active concern for the highest human values."⁴³

The Pilgrim Trust set the plan in motion by disbursing the sum of £25,000 to the committee and members planned another meeting for the new year. On 19 January 1940, the committee met again and officially added members including Dr. Thomas Jones, previously mentioned Secretary of the Pilgrim Trustees, and Dr. Reginald Jacques, noted conductor of the Jacques String Orchestra. In its January meeting, the committee further laid out its plan of action to rescue the artistic life of Great Britain. The committee outlined its "terms of reference" to include the "preservation ... of the highest standards in war-time of the arts of music, drama, and painting and design."⁴⁴ The committee thus delineated what forms of art were worth subsidizing and it is interesting to note neither dramatic film or literature fell under its jurisdiction. They also stated their objective of providing access to "good music and ... enjoyment of the arts" for those who had been cut off from such activities due to the war.⁴⁵ They concluded their aims by stating their wish to stimulate the "music-making and play-acting of the people themselves," as well as supporting through "indirect assistance" of musicians, actors and other artists whose work opportunities were greatly curtailed by war-time conditions.⁴⁶

⁴³ PRO, EL 1/11.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

On 25 January, Lord Macmillan sent an extended letter to the editor of *The Times*, outlining the activities of the three different arts subsidized by the newly formed committee. The music section, headed by Dr. George Dyson (see picture on p. 47), the well-known composer, organist and director of the Royal College of Music, was to organize concerts outside of London both in concert halls and in war-time factories.

With the onset of war, workers packed the previously depressed factories. One observer remarked, "[n]ot since 1917 or 1918 has this area [Clydeside] been so full of work. Between the last war and this it has not been equaled." Workers filled the factories, with one person estimating that "six times as many people" worked in the Tyneside factory.⁴⁷ Although these workers enjoyed relief from unemployment, the circumstances of the "phoney war" did not provide opportunities for them to socialize. Members of CEMA found factories a perfect location for their services. Providing music in the factories, CEMA reached a large portion of the entertainment-starved population. The committee also extended its musical relief to other members of Britain's rural population and planned to fund regional musical groups, such as the Federation of Women's Institutes and the Rural Music Schools Council. CEMA's drama and art divisions also found an audience in the countryside. Lawrence du Garde Peach headed drama and planned to assist local drama societies' efforts. Art

⁴⁷ Briggs, 40.

exhibitions, under the direction of Williams and Sir Kenneth Clark, were to tour selected towns throughout the country. This general outline offered the public their first concrete knowledge of the workings of the committee.⁴⁸

By 10 April, the Pilgrim Trust had further "officialized" the committee by adding more members and clarifying duties. Macmillan assumed the job of chairman, with Thomas Jones the vice-chair. Added to the committee's membership were Sir Kenneth Barnes, conductor and professor at the Royal Academy of Music, Stanley Marchant, and Thelma Cazalet, a member of the House of Commons. The committee added Lewis Casson as an "honorary advisor" (taking his place next to du Garde Peach and Jacques) for the drama portion of its work. At this time, the committee changed its name and became known as the "Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts," its permanent name until the creation of the Arts Council of Great Britain.⁴⁹

At this April meeting, De La Warr announced he had written to the Treasury to secure a grant and called for "immediate action if the Government is to get any credit for the promotion of the scheme."⁵⁰ This letter illicited a response from Sir Alan Barlow of the Treasury who challenged, "Why should the Government get credit for the scheme when someone else is prepared to pay for it?"⁵¹ Barlow's comment evoked a furious response from the committee. This

⁴⁸ *The Times*, 25 January 1940.

⁴⁹ PRO EL 1/2.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

response is a crucial statement of the various political, cultural, and national rationales used in the justification of CEMA's work:

This point of view in the part of the Treasury ignores the main issue. It is not cynical but rather realistic in the true sense of the word to say ... it is essential to the whole idea of the Committee which the President has called into being that it should be a Government concern. It is of practical importance to show publicly and unmistakably that the Government cares about the cultural life of the country. This country is supposed to be fighting for civilisation and democracy and if these things mean anything they mean a way of life where people have liberty and opportunity to pursue the things of peace. It should be part of a national war policy to show that the Government is actively interested in these things. Such an assurance needs to be given equally for the sake of our own people and for the sake of British prestige abroad.⁵²

This long-winded exhortation clearly shows the political and nationalistic maneuvering behind calls to reinvigorate Great Britain's musical life. Like most war-time governments, British leaders used CEMA's potential work to highlight Britain's cause. The early work of Jones, De La Warr, and Macmillan, served as a rallying cry for the imperiled island's "civilisation." Ironically, Britain, not Germany, now held up music as a national treasure requiring protection. British leaders in the First World War would most likely have not evoked the image of music as one unique aspect of British cultural accomplishment. That Second World War leaders did attest to art music's continual development in Britain. *"Das land ohne Musik"* mobilized a plan to save and enrich its newly developed musical life, ensuring the continuation of the "things of peace."

On 10 April, Henry Ramsbotham, the new President of the Board of

⁵²

Ibid.

Education succeeding De La Warr, announced that the Chancellor of the Exchequer agreed to contribute up to £50,000 to supplement the grant of the Pilgrim Trust. The Carnegie United Kingdom Trust had also expressed interest in the plan and pledged £25,000 if the full grant could be secured from the Treasury. The council received the full fund and then set its first full meeting for 23 April 1940.⁵³

In the interim, the public announcement of state-funded arts program created a diverse reaction in the British press. An article on 13 April 1940 (two days after the announcement) in the *Daily Express* entitled "Win the War First" offered a stinging criticism of the Government action:

Here is the strange footnote to the stirring news of the week. The Government gives £50,000 to help wartime culture. What sort of madness is this? There is no such thing as culture in wartime. Wartime itself is the enemy of culture. And cultural activities, which brings so much benefit to the people in peace, must now be set aside.⁵⁴

This reaction suggests some in Britain shared the Government's early attitude to the war crisis. Some felt war was a serious matter and spending money on frivolous and inessential things (such as art) was inappropriate at best and seriously detrimental at worst. The technological innovations since the First World War, resulting in the likely possibility of an air attack on the island certainly struck fear and concern in some Britons like never before. To them, war in itself obliterated "cultural" life and the actions of the homefront would

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ *Daily Express*, 13 April 1940.

matter more in this conflict than any previous one.

This opinion, however, was not widespread. Just one week later, the *Daily Express* printed another article concerning CEMA's funding. This viewpoint countered with:

The whole point about giving £50,000 to wartime culture is that if we don't the culture may not be there when the war is over. And do you know how much £50,000 is ? It is one-hundred and twentieth part of our war-expenditure for one day. ... I cannot see that £50,000 ... is too much to spend as a nation upon the great entities of ennobling art.⁵⁵

One day earlier, *The Guardian* offered a similar critique of the first *Daily Express* article, unable to resist sarcastic ridicule:

We do not know which is more disturbing, the calculated distortion of a controlled Press, or the incalculable absurdities of a free Press ... We do not know by what calculus the *Daily Express* is in the habit of appraising wartime occupations, but it would be difficult to defend the extinction ... of [grants] which receive ... encouragement ... from the Pilgrim Trust. In any case, the grant is not more than the price of a few torpedoes.⁵⁶

While some maintained it was inappropriate to support the arts during war, others felt this was not the case. The public outcry for entertainments and activities during the "phoney war" highlight there was more than one typical reaction to the reality of wartime. The British public expected to be inconvenienced by the onset of war, but they must also have felt the importance of continuing on with their daily lives. Though not unanimous, the reaction of the Press, most likely reflecting popular opinion, was mostly favorable and war-time

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 20 April 1940.

⁵⁶ *The Guardian*, 19 April 1940.

public funding of the arts was on its way. The fact that public funding came into existence with such little controversy illustrates at least two possibilities. One, Britons felt the exceptional situation of the war created a need for this type of funding, or Britons on the whole now believed that Government funding was a positive and necessary addition to British life. Either way, Britain's musical life would never be the same.

The attendees of the first meeting of CEMA, held at the Offices of the Board of Education, no doubt could not imagine how large and important the work of this once small committee would become. CEMA's membership included a *Who's Who* of the British arts community's elite, powerful, and influential with Macmillan, Jones, Clark, and Davies serving on the regular council and Casson, Dyson, Jacques, du Garde Peach, and Williams as honorary directors. At the meeting, Ramsbotham read a letter from Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain stating , "I warmly approve the project which is excellent in every way."⁵⁷ With "approval" from the top, CEMA began logistical planning of state-supported arts funding.

The directors of the three areas acquired the freedom to develop projects for their own field, with approval from the entire council at each monthly meeting. The directors would be responsible between meetings for the allocation of their division's funds. From the beginning, music formed the largest portion of the

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PRO EL 1/6.

Council's work. It is interesting to note the title of the Council, with music being the first and only "art" mentioned specifically by name. At the very least, this suggests music was now considered important enough, both in its own right and for the entertainment opportunities it offered the British populace. Whatever the case, of the initial £25,000 grant by the Pilgrim Trust, over £18,000 had been spent by March of 1940. Of this £18,000, over £10,000 of it was spent on music alone, setting a precedent for the rest of CEMA's history.⁵⁸

By the end of CEMA's first official meeting, the Council's work quickly took shape. With state-supported arts funding established, CEMA set out to carry the arts to the people. As the chairman himself stated at the meeting, the opportunity given to CEMA "was an example of how on rare occasions good may come out of evil and help may be given through the pressure of tragic events to activities which, in addition to their war-time urgency, have permanent peace-time value."⁵⁹ This was most definitely shades of the idea of a permanent state-supported art program after the war.

When Neville Chamberlain declared Great Britain at war with Germany on that fateful Sunday morning in early September, all levels of British life changed dramatically. Great Britain's musical life was certainly not an exception. From the early cancellation of such national institutions as the Three Choirs Festival

⁵⁸ PRO EL 1/5. For the spending figures of CEMA during its last year of existence (1944-5), see the Annual Report of CEMA for that year.

⁵⁹ PRO EL 1/6.

and the Proms Concerts, to the temporary cessation of art music broadcast on the BBC, those seeking art music discovered the shades of the "prison house" had slammed shut. In 1914, musical life in Great Britain also came to a grinding halt with its own "drawing down of blinds,"⁶⁰ signaling the death of a generation and several promising young composers and musicians. Twenty five years later in 1939, war again suspended activities. Unlike the earlier conflict, however, a further developed and entrenched musical life resiliently and quickly bounced back. Within six weeks, a concert scheme in the National Gallery was re-energizing the musically deprived people of the capital. Within three months, plans were well underway to create a nationwide state-funded arts program. The musical portion of this program would instigate two major schemes which permanently altered Great Britain's experience with art music: the Music Travelers and widespread concerts in factories and air-raid shelters. For the remaining war years, these activities contributed much to the spread of Great Britain's artistic musical life.

⁶⁰ The last line of World War One poet Wilfred Owen's "Anthem for Doomed Youth". Taken from *The Collected Poems of Wilfred Owen*, Cecil Day-Lewis, ed., (New York: New Directions, 1963), 44.



Sir Henry Walford Davies



Dr. George Dyson

CEMA populists,
from Lewis Foreman's *From Parry to Britten: British Music in Letters 1900-1945*

Chapter Three
"... from the towns, from the shires, from the churches and from the factories;
'Give us more music' ":
CEMA at Work

On 22 February 1940, two men stepped on a canteen stage in Vauxhall Motor Works' Luton factory. These men, singer William Parsons and Hugh Fenn, his piano accompanist, gave the first factory concert supported by the Committee for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts.¹ The concert was a success, as both the management and workers agreed. Only two months after the first meeting between Macmillan and De La Warr, CEMA arranged the first of many events which eased the drab, distressing effects of the blackout.² Supporting Great Britain's war effort by boosting the home front's morale and assisting and shaping British musical life were two main functions of CEMA's concerts. These concerts, combined with the work of Sir Henry Walford Davies' "Music Travellers," formed the most significant portion of CEMA's music war-time work. During the course of CEMA's work, British musical life experienced

¹ "The Arts in War Time: A Report on the Work of C.E.M.A. 1942 and 1943", PRO EL 1/21, 25.

² "Memorandum in support of an Application to the Treasury for Financial Assistance", PRO EL 1/11.

profound change in an amazingly short period of time. Though both the Travellers and concerts were only wartime experiments, their presence altered musical experiences for a significant number of Britons.

Realizing the urgency of the situation, members of the committee did not wait for the official evolution into the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts. Three months before official Treasury approval of this state-funded arts program, music members worked feverishly to provide musical opportunities for the British people. In January 1940, musical schemes headed by Dr. George Dyson initiated orchestral concerts in industrial areas and smaller lunch-hour ensemble concerts in factories.³ Dyson developed the idea of utilizing the London Symphony and the London Philharmonic. These orchestras would each give ten concerts in industrial areas within a fifty mile radius of London. Eventually, concerts also included the Hallé, Scottish, and Wessex orchestras, as well as the Birmingham Municipal, Liverpool Philharmonic, and Northern Philharmonic,⁴ spreading significantly the national impact of the scheme.

While the committee formalized concert arrangements, Sir Walford Davies, Master of the Queen's Musick, developed a professional and artistic "aesthetic" for the concert's musical content and he took this task seriously.⁵

³ PRO EL 1/10.

⁴ PRO EL 1/15.

⁵ PRO EL 1/11.

Davies saw in these concerts both short and long-term benefits. He hoped the concerts would offer musical entertainment for people, who, due to the war, had none. He also envisioned the concerts as an educational enterprise offering "good" music to those previously unaccustomed to hearing it, stating, " it may be that the Orchestral concerts will not only fill a present need 'in drab areas', but may create a new and greater need elsewhere on a nation-wide scale."⁶

Obviously, some Britons were more well-acquainted with art music than others. Some possessed no previous experience with music-making or music listening. CEMA was well aware they could not barge in and replace popular music-making with Schoenberg. Regional skepticism for any centralized program coming from London was not a new phenomenon. As William Emrys Williams pointed out early on, "we have found it wise to disarm in advance the healthy regional tendency to look askance at any scheme imposed on the locality from the metropolis."⁷ With this warning, CEMA carefully monitored the concerts' content. Davies laid out his "aesthetic" as follows:

No clever or abstruse music nor long programmes will be wanted. Nor will cheap effect or showy music serve our aim. The simplest of the so-called "great music," superbly given, is clearly today's vital requirement.⁸

This foresight went a long way in helping CEMA's concerts schemes succeed.

This government organization actively researched appropriate music and

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ PRO EL 1/10.

⁸ PRO EL 1/11.

music-making activities for various regions and did not simply enforce elitist, musical ideas from metropolitan London. However, as Julian Onderdonk points out, artistic movements containing populist ideals at the same time possess "contradictions and ambiguities."⁹ As a member of Britain's musical elite, Davies' guidelines contained some elitist assumptions. At the same time, the guidelines reflect Davies' understanding of the value of many types of music and his attempts to broaden the reach of art music.

As Davies pondered what music was suitable for Dyson's factory concerts, he also developed a significant idea of his own. Cognizant of the war-time limitations imposed on Britain's rural musical life, Davies envisioned "pioneer travelers" roaming throughout Britain. These "pioneers," a group of professional musicians, would tour regional areas and offer both musical advice and assistance to various music-making groups. In Davies' own words, these Music Travellers (as they became known) must, "inspire, organize and sustain local amateur music-making."¹⁰ Means of doing this would include contacting local Music festivals, local Education agencies, as well as interested local ministers, organists and lay music enthusiasts to help stimulate musical activities and serve as hosts of visiting musicians.¹¹

⁹ Julian Onderdonk, "Review of *The English Musical Renaissance 1860-1940: Construction and Reconstruction*," in *Notes*, September 1995, 63-6.

¹⁰ PRO EL 1/11, Taken from Sir Walford Davies' "Memorandum to the Committee on Music Policy," 25 January 1940.

¹¹ PRO 1/11.

Fellow professional musicians (subsidized "limitedly" by CEMA) assisted the Music Traveller's fieldwork in order "to exemplify and stimulate the work of amateurs."¹² Davies' actions informally set up CEMA's artistic and educational platforms. In his own words, CEMA's musical work should include, "The two main policies ... of giving concerts and ... of encouraging amateurs to make music and understand it."¹³ Using these two policies, the Music Travellers (aided by other musicians) stimulated and invigorated British musical life on a personal level.

Davies quickly moved to put his ideas into place. One of the first groups receiving financial subsidy from the committee's Pilgrim Trust grant was the Rural Music Schools Council. Davies wanted a CEMA supported organization to aid the Music Travellers' work. He persuaded the committee to consider recruiting and appointing the Music Travellers to the Rural Music Schools Council. When he succeeded, he asked The Rural Music Schools Council (the first one of which was originated by Mary Ibberson in Hertfordshire in 1928) to sponsor his scheme.¹⁴ With Ibberson's persuading, the Rural Music Schools Council agreed. Davies then set out to recruit the Music Travellers themselves.¹⁵

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ CEMA Bulletin, No. 48, April 1944, 1. Mary Ibberson would later join CEMA as a member of the Council's Music Panel in 1944.

¹⁵ PRO EL 1/21, "The Arts in War Time", 13.

Davies approached the distinguished professional violinist Sybil Eaton and offered her the leadership of the Music Travellers. Eaton accepted and soon after five other travellers were recruited, including Imogen Holst, daughter of composer Gustav Holst.¹⁶ Although not discussed in this thesis, one important result of the Music Travellers' work was it provided women significant access to professional musical opportunities. With many British male musicians serving in the armed forces, women musicians secured more easily prominent positions in Britain's musical life. Though underrepresented on the council itself, British women actively forged new beginnings in Great Britain's musical life, whether as a Music Traveller (who were all women), in the National Gallery, or aiding a local church concert in a remote Northern village.

With many Britons cut off from musical activities and with no "Myra Hess concerts" in the countryside, the Travellers realized the importance of offering concerts for people outside metropolitan London. The Music Travellers successfully petitioned CEMA for increased grants to support concert giving opportunities in the countryside. CEMA approved the additional funds and the Travellers used them to pay professional musicians giving concerts in rural places where concert-life was greatly restricted. Travellers also organized a series of concerts in numerous churches throughout Great Britain, an initiative warmly received by the various clergy who quickly arranged for the use of their

¹⁶ CEMA Bulletin, No. 1, May 1940, 3.

churches.¹⁷ The Travellers realized the practicality of this concert venue and church concerts flourished for the rest of the war. A typical example of a Music Traveller-organized church concert was the concert on 11 July 1940 in Brighton Parish Church. On this particular night, Brightoners heard both string and vocal music of The Stratton String Quartet and soprano Elsie Suddaby.¹⁸ The Music Travellers benefited from the clergy's willingness to aid the war effort. These church concerts exemplify camaraderie, a lessening of distinctions and formality, and a willingness to work for the betterment of British musical life. It is important to remember in the Victorian period many "conservative" clergy were unwilling to allow art music performances in their churches and cathedrals. The entire clergy's overwhelming support for CEMA sponsored events during the Second World war illustrated the country's increased acceptance of art music as well as the necessary compromise and cooperation required on the homefront.

Davies also envisioned his Music Travellers bridging the gap between music professional and amateur and he believed their concert schemes could accomplish this. An example of this occurred at the London Philharmonic Orchestra's Kettering concert on 8 June 1940. Originally scheduled to take place in the Kettering Central Hall, war circumstances forced the War Office to occupy the building. This was not a novel experience in war-time Great Britain, but neither was the response. Concert organizers moved the event to a local

¹⁷ PRO EL 1/14.

¹⁸ CEMA Bulletin, No. 3, July 1940, 1.

school, where it proceeded as planned and many people attended. On that night, the Secretary of the orchestra attended and later retold the event:

... I met two members of the audience, both young working-class men who displayed the greatest enthusiasm over the visit of the orchestra. They explained how they had studied the programme at home with the piano and brought scores to the concert Had no-one else attended the concert, this would have justified the performance.¹⁹

Davies' idea succeeded in closely linking the work of professional and amateur musicians. This concert is an example of how professional music increased the diversity of its audience, which now included working-class men and women. The war-time interaction between professional musicians and their diverse audience strengthened Great Britain's musical life. However, as previously mentioned, concerts formed just one portion of the Music Travellers' work.

An even greater portion of their work was stimulating music-making opportunities for the British rural population. The Travellers, acting as musical ambassadors, worked to organize these activities-- sometimes reinstituting musical activities hurt by war-time conditions, and at other times creating music-making opportunities where previously none existed. The Music Travellers created new amateur organizations, including orchestral and choral groups. They also assisted in organizing music festivals, serving as a "catalyst" within local musical communities. The nature of their work comes across clearly in a Music Traveller's report:

¹⁹ The Secretary's account of the concert is printed in CEMA Bulletin, No. 3, July 1940.

Here there is a vicar whose choir sings plain song, a school-master who trains the choir and will probably conduct the Festival, a barber who plays the violin, ... a set of entertaining evacuee teachers, an innkeeper who plays the bass trombone, a solicitor who plays the piano, (sonatas with the barber) and a baker who sings [Ralph Vaughan Williams' art-song] 'Linden Lea'.²⁰

The Music Travellers helped organize and participate in community music-making. This example also illustrates the musical possibilities in smaller English villages. CEMA invigorated musical resources already in existence. London was not the only preserve of good music and the Travellers tapped many sources rich in musical talent, allowing these towns to bring music to the fore.

The Music Travellers organized community singing in Durham and a music festival in a small Essex town the day after the British air defense shot down a German bomber on the festival grounds. The Travellers also arranged a violin concert by a musician who afterwards bicycled over twenty miles to join another Traveller's organized orchestral concert the next day (the violinist did not accept a fee for the second performance).²¹ All of these events illustrate ways in which the Music Travellers significantly altered the face of British musical life. The results of only the first six months of their work is astounding. The Travellers assisted in the development of 244 choral groups and 37 new orchestral groups. In addition, they assisted in the staging of over 250 concerts and music festivals. All totaled, over 41,000 people took part in Travellers'

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

activities.²² Certainly this surpassed even Davies' wildest visions for his Travellers. Impressive as this is, the Travellers' work reached an even broader audience.

Early in the Travellers' work, the BBC offered their cooperation and started a radio show focused specifically on the Travellers. This show became known as "The Music Makers Half Hour".²³ Acting music director Dr. George Dyson immediately realized the vast opportunities provided by cooperation with the BBC. Dyson contacted the BBC's Music Director, famed conductor Sir Adrian Boult, who agreed the proposed series would create a greater public audience for the Music Travellers' work. In an internal memo, Dyson stated:

... in this series it is planned to give demonstrations at the microphone from time to time of the work done in the counties by the Travelling Leader. I have decided that they should bring their best product to the microphone ...²⁴

The "Music Maker Half Hour" was a successful musical outreach by the professional British music community in their democratizing efforts to increase the British populace's familiarity with art music. This comment also illustrates the Council's acknowledgment of the power of the wireless, as well as their desire to provide for the British public the highest possible standards of performance.

²² Ibid.

²³ "Memo ... Treasury ... ", PRO EL 1/11, 6.

²⁴ From "Interim Report from Dr. Dyson on the Concert Scheme", PRO EL 1/11. This report was written to Dr. Thomas Jones of the Pilgrim Trust by Dyson on 22 February 1940.

The work of the Music Travellers reached throughout the country, and affected the lives of a variety of Britons. In addition to reviving orchestral and choral groups threatened by the war, the Travellers organized small music festivals to replace the canceled large music festivals in the British countryside. The Travellers also brought their services to schools, in such diverse places as Wiltshire, Rutland, Yorkshire, and Essex, and provided musical opportunities for the country's children. These visits usually included "music" talks to the school children accompanied by gramophone record playing.²⁵ Ronald Bisse commented the success of these endeavors shows "the need, not only for [their] continuance but for [their] establishment on a permanent basis."²⁶

The Traveller's work continued successfully throughout 1940, 1941 and 1942. Diaries kept by the Travellers reflected the extending web of art music culture which included increasingly more art music-making opportunities for amateurs. No doubt their recollections of events placed their efforts in the best possible light while minimizing the least effective moments of their work. However, these diaries provide ample evidence that the Travellers' work created significant change. One Traveller reported her work setting up a concert was met with "a grand reception: the proposer of the vote of thanks mentioned the refreshing change of hearing "live music," also that most of them in their remote districts had never seen a flute or a harp."²⁷ The Travellers reached a

²⁵ PRO EL 1/11.

²⁶ Memo dated 16 April 1940 in PRO EL 1/11.

new music audience and provided positive experiences for a war-weary population.

The Music Travellers acted as facilitators of the British musical "national" community. Truly meeting their mission to provide music, "by the people and for the people,"²⁸ the Travellers worked in small villages throughout the country. A British soldier who sang bass at a community concert enjoyed participating. He originally expected to hear a "celebrity concert, but ... afterwards said that he'd got much more of a kick out of singing himself."²⁹ If there ever were a manifesto for the work of the Travellers, perhaps it is this account of a small village concert:

There was a little meeting called in a kitchen to discuss a C.E.M.A. concert. ... There was ... humble astonishment that the Government should want to bring them a concert, and actually send someone to talk to them about it. In the end, of course, we had the concert there and then- a song from 'Uncle,' Handel's Largo from me and a piano solo from 'young Emily.' It was, indeed, Sir Walford's sort of evening.³⁰

Working throughout the country, the Music Travellers organized and developed Great Britain's musical life in new and exciting ways, democratizing art music and assisting the music-making activities of a wide variety of Britons, including professional musicians and village performers.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ This quote comes from an article discussing the legacy of Sir Walford Davies after his sudden death in March 1941, found in CEMA Bulletin, No. 12, April 1941, 1.

²⁹ CEMA Bulletin, No. 21, January 1941, 2.

³⁰ Ibid.

The Travellers continued to create new audiences and music-making experiences as the war progressed. By the middle of 1943, controversy developed concerning their future role. With the creation of CEMA's Regional Offices, concerts originally coordinated by the Travellers became the province of newly created head "regional officers". These officers took control of the concerts' development, with close collaboration between the Regional Offices and CEMA's headquarters in London. If the Music Travellers wished to continue working with concerts in the countryside, their only avenue of involvement included assuming an office job pushing papers and bureaucratically setting up concerns from their regional office desk. These new changes provoked debate within the Council itself.³¹

This debate plagued the June 1943 meeting of CEMA. Davies' appeal for amateur involvement in CEMA-sponsored activities was echoed by his "spiritual" heir, noted British composer Ralph Vaughan Williams, who was appointed to the council upon Davies' death in 1941. In late 1939, the two composers had cooperated to promote amateur music-making across Great Britain by way of BBC radio broadcasts. An example of his populist beliefs, Davies promoted educational radio programming to assist amateur music making. Attesting to their similar philosophies regarding music's practical importance in everyday life,

³¹ CEMA Bulletin, No. 42, October 1943, 1. The fierce debate within CEMA is smoothed over with oblique reference to the Music Travellers' resignations and the new changes in this October bulletin.

Davies asked Vaughan Williams to give the first of these Sunday educational music broadcasts.³² At the June 1943 meeting, Vaughan Williams, in Davies' fashion, argued fiercely that the Music Travellers were now marginalized and CEMA bureaucrats, including its new chairman John Maynard Keynes, were responsible for obscuring their original mission.

Rather than associating themselves with this new scheme, three Music Travellers resigned in protest, including the first member and leader, Sybil Eaton. Realizing "the tap of the typewriter and the tinkle of the telephone bell can never make music,"³³ these Music Travellers left their positions to work exclusively as CEMA concert performers. CEMA officials also gave control of the Music Traveller's fieldwork to the Carnegie Trustees. The Carnegie Trust took over the Traveller's work by way of county music committees. By October 1944, CEMA announced the Music Travellers would be terminated in March of

³² Foreman, 225. Interestingly enough, Vaughan Williams strongly disliked Davies' compositional works. Thirty-five years earlier, another situation involving these composers significantly altered the course of British art music. In 1905, upon hearing that Davies would be offered the editorship of the new edition of the Anglican hymnal if he turned it down, Vaughan Williams quickly accepted the job, forever changing the course (through his fine arrangements and original tunes) of Protestant hymnody. Ironically, it was through this job that Vaughan Williams discovered the Thomas Tallis tune he later used in *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*, perhaps the best internationally known piece of twentieth-century British art music.

³³ This quote is from a letter entitled "C.E.M.A. and Rural Music," by Ralph Vaughan Williams. Found in PRO EL 1/17. The quote cited is actually Vaughan Williams paraphrasing a writer in *The Times*. The letter itself calls for a reinstatement of the Travellers, appointment of an ex-Traveller to the council, and argues for the importance of village music life within Great Britain's musical culture. Apparently, his suggestions were ignored or rejected.

the following owing year.³⁴ This inner debate will form a larger portion of the next chapter dealing with questions concerning the true purpose of CEMA (to support only professional artistic excellence, support musical activities for all Britons, or both?) Thus, the Music Travellers' demise signaled a rejection of Davies' vision. CEMA shifted slowly towards an emphasis on artistic excellence, a policy which would shape the direction of CEMA and eventually the Arts Council of Great Britain for many years to come.

The Music Travellers did not, however, meet the musical needs of Great Britain's entire wartime society. The Travellers organized their work in the rural countryside, but a newly dislocated portion of the British population found itself outside the realm of the capital and the countryside toured by the Musical Travellers. These groups of people included Britons whose wartime employment took them away from home. Some workers lived in temporary conditions near their places of employment. One CEMA official, Dr. George Dyson, saw this group as in need of the committee's services. At the same time that Davies developed his concert "aesthetic", Dyson used these principles to formulate another outreach program. He noticed the emergence of "large new industrial centres attached to war industries ... , " which created a group of people, "who are bored and depressed by the long dark evenings."³⁵ To remedy this, he developed the factory concert idea in early January 1940 stating: "There is a

³⁴ CEMA Bulletin, No. 42, October 1943.

³⁵ From "Paper 23" dated 25 January 1940 in PRO EL 1/10.

very promising and extensive field here."³⁶ Having discovered the existence of a large amount of canteens and stages within these factories, he envisioned CEMA offering music concerts to workers during their meal-time breaks. In formulating the factory concerts scheme, Dyson consulted Davies' aesthetic.

As previously mentioned, Davies realized after visiting factories that CEMA's intended audience was most familiar with popular music. However, he also realized that many Britons were unfamiliar with art music. Suspecting Britons would enjoy art music and realizing this opportunity for a "captive" audience, he included it as a part of CEMA's program. He understood that in order to make the concerts most effective:

extraordinary tact in choice, amount, and timing, of music is needed. ... The music chosen should ... be .. two well-differentiated types -- the clearly rhythmic invigorating type that needs no close attention and adds vitality and good cheer without damping a chat with one's neighbor; and the wholly different type of simply beautiful that is ... natural enough to command silence simultaneously, as for example Handel's "Largo ... or Schubert's "Serenade."³⁷

These guidelines for presenting art music in a non-threatening way to audiences unaccustomed to hearing it served as the guiding force for CEMA's factory concerts for the rest of their duration. Davies also wanted these concerts to provide both entertainment for Britons and a performance arena for displaced musicians. In wartime Britain, professional orchestral musicians had nowhere to

³⁶ From memo entitled "Paper 14" dated January 1940 in PRO EL 1/10.

³⁷ From "Paper 20," a memo written by Sir Walford Davies in PRO EL 1/10/



**Dr. Reginald Jaques leading CEMA performers
at a factory concert
from PRO EL 2/78**



Factory workers listening to a CEMA concert
from PRO EL 2/78

FACTORY CONCERTS.Statement of Progress.

- | | | |
|-------------------|--|---------------|
| 1. February 22nd. | <u>Vauxhall Motor Works.</u>
Lunch hour twice: 2500 and 3400. | LUTON. |
| 2. March 8th. | <u>A. Sanderson and Sons.</u>
Lunch hour: 300 | PERIVALE. |
| 3. March 13th. | <u>Lockheed Hydraulic Brakes.</u>
Lunch and Midnight: 750 and 300 | LEAMINGTON. |
| 4. March 13th. | <u>J. and E. Hall Limited.</u>
Evening: 300 | DARTFORD. |
| 5. March 13th. | <u>Glaxo Laboratories.</u>
Lunch: 400 | GREENFORD. |
| 6. March 14th. | <u>Kodak Limited.</u>
Evening: 900 | WEALDSTONE. |
| 7. March 20th. | <u>Dunlop Rubber Company.</u>
Lunch hour twice: 800 and 800 | ERDINGTON. |
| 8. March 27th. | <u>Glaxo Laboratories.</u>
Lunch hour: 400 | GREENFORD. |
| 9. April 3rd. | <u>Hoover Limited.</u>
Evening: 350 | PERIVALE. |
| 10. April 5th. | <u>Dagen Cables Sports Club.</u>
Lunch hour: 300 | DAGENHAM DOCK |
| 11. April 7th. | <u>Slough Social Centre.</u>
Evening 500 | SLOUGH. |
| 12. April 10th | <u>Murex Welding Processes.</u>
Lunch hour: 550 | WALTHAM CROSS |
| 13. April 10th. | <u>Glaxo Laboratories.</u>
Lunch hour: 400
(The firm paid for this concert themselves, and is paying for those on April 24th, May 8th and 22nd.) | GREENFORD. |
| 14. April 16th. | <u>Associated Portland Cement Manufacturers.</u>
Lunch hour: 150. | NORTHLEST. |
| 15. April 18th. | <u>Vauxhall Motor Works.</u>
Lunch hour twice: nearly 6000 | LUTON. |

FUTURE CONCERTS.

- | | | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| 16. April 24th. | <u>London Brick Company.</u> | STEWARTBY,
BEDFORD. |
| 17. April 26th. | <u>Horlicks Limited.</u> | SLOUGH. |
| 18. April 24th. | <u>Glaxo Laboratories.</u> | GREENFORD. |

M.

1.

Factory concert schedule (with attendance figures)

PRO EL 1/11

perform and Davies constructed carefully a concert scheme benefiting all parties, from Dr. Reginald Jacques (see picture on p. 64) to one of the nameless factory workers depicted listening to a concert in a factory (see picture on p. 65).

The committee initially considered sending orchestras to play the factory concerts. The cost, however, proved insurmountable and Dyson arranged for two vocalists and a pianist or instrumentalist, vocalist and pianist to give each concert. Occasionally, larger ensembles presented concerts. Furthering the committee's objectives, Dyson borrowed from the Music Travellers' program and planned to stimulate "practical music-making"³⁸ by the factory workers. Dyson believed, "there could be no more direct and immediate way of serving the cultural and recreational needs of these workers who are today most hardly pressed."³⁹ The concerts, like much of the Music Travellers' work, uplifted morale and also created and provided music and music-making activities for Britons. These concerts, along with the National Gallery concerts, further initiated Great Britain's democratization of art music, making factories a place where people unaccustomed to hearing art music heard and enjoyed it and interacted with the musicians who played the music.

CEMA followed the first successful Luton concert with twenty-five additional concerts, all which occurred before the beginning of June (see concert schedule on p. 66). Every factory at which CEMA's musicians played requested

³⁸ From "Interim Report from Dr. Dyson on the Concert Scheme" in PRO EL 1/11.

³⁹ Ibid.

a return visit. Dyson's venture fulfilled a need for entertainment and diversion among British factory workers weary from separation from their families and the drab conditions of the factories. CEMA officials responded by lifting the fifty mile radius limit, and concerts began in all areas of the country. The Lockheed Brake Company concert is an excellent example of a successful CEMA factory concert. Workers filled the factory to capacity, with many standing in the back for one particular afternoon concert. CEMA performer Trefor Jones received "great applause" after singing a variety of ballads, many well known by the workers. After his performance and during intervals, Jones and his wife mingled and interacted with the workers. An atmosphere of informality prevailed throughout the concert. An outside observer concluded the concert provided "emotional relief and refreshment to these factory workers as well as the experience, of good singing."⁴⁰ This concert illustrates positive results of Sir Walford Davies' planning. With the right music performed in the right atmosphere, a successful concert occurred, benefiting both workers and musicians.

CEMA's factory concerts proved so popular that soon their monopoly on the concerts evaporated. The Ministry of Labour observed the popularity of factory concerts and created the Factory Welfare Organization, which was responsible for entertainment in the factories.⁴¹ The Entertainments National Service Association (ENSA) already provided concerts of popular music to

⁴⁰ "Factory Concerts: Statement of Progress," 3, in PRO EL 1/11.

⁴¹ CEMA Bulletin, No. 3, July 1940.

military troops, and so they felt factory concerts should be part of their work. On the suggestion of the Factory Welfare Organization, CEMA acquiesced and agreed to give ENSA control of the factory concerts. ENSA used CEMA artists and grants to provide concerts while also providing their own popular music performances. With this action, ENSA acquired control of arrangements of the concerts, leaving CEMA to encourage music and musical activities outside factories.⁴²

This situation created a rivalry. Quite often, CEMA performers were not credited when they performed, and the public largely assumed ENSA provided the musicians and funding for the concerts. A letter from one CEMA performer discussed her frustration:

at each concert the audience was told C.E.M.A. was presenting this unit. This point should always be stressed because E.N.S.A. takes the credit, and why should they. I found out it is best to tell people who and what we are. This gives added interest, and we found that good music is appreciated by most people. All together a splendid town, leaving people in better heart and spirit, many telling us so.⁴³

With scheduling difficulties and uncertainties regarding who was performing at individual concerts, the Minister of Labour suggested both groups abandon the cooperation scheme. In January 1941, he instructed CEMA to resume control of organizing, funding, and creating their own set of factory concerts.⁴⁴ With

⁴² "Factory Concerts" in PRO EL 1/16.

⁴³ From a letter written to Mary Glasgow from Francis Russell in PRO EL 2/28, dated 10 November 1940. The letter describes concerts given in Southampton and Reading.

⁴⁴ "Factory Concerts" in PRO EL 1/16.

CEMA back in control of its own artists, factory concerts once again were a critical component of CEMA's war-time musical activities.

CEMA performers reaped unexpected benefits from wartime musical opportunities, one of which was knowledge of their native country. CEMA's activities served as a "great mixer"⁴⁵ and provided musicians with new experiences in many unfamiliar British regions. The informal nature of the concerts placed them in contact with a variety of Britons. Far away from the ivory towers of London's musical venues, CEMA musicians did not only provide learning experiences for the populace, they themselves learned a great deal from the people they met. As one artist wrote:

C.E.M.A. is one of the grandest things that have ever happened to musicians and gives such an eye-opener to both sides of the question that we must be of mutual amazement to each other, musicians and audience. I only hope that they get one iota of what we learn from them and that the friendly contact will be sealed for life and be one of the strongest links in the new conditions.⁴⁶

The interaction of musicians and "people" broke down barriers and stereotypes on "both sides of the question." CEMA's musical activities were going far beyond the maintenance of morale or the spreading of "good" music. The interactions of the artists and people in factories or in rural villages created a stage on which Britain's musical life might take a firm place. Eventually, however, CEMA's original vision was partially obscured. The "new conditions" never fully materialized. As the next chapter will show, when the war ended,

⁴⁵ CEMA Bulletin, No. 11, March 1940.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

attempts to broaden the appeal of art became less frequent as the institutions dedicated to the arts were centered in London, and administered by members with upper-middle class bourgeois attitudes, barely capable of concealing their contempt for CEMA's earlier policies.

CEMA's factory concerts continued throughout the war. Their popularity grew and each year brought an increase in funding. The original aspiration of providing "good" music to the populace and to discover "new audiences"⁴⁷ was not neglected. Reports from CEMA artists mention concerts where workers greeted "stuffy art" music with extreme enthusiasm. CEMA accomplished its efforts to broaden the appeal of "art" music. By mid 1942, Dr. Reginald Jacques, Honorary Director of Music (succeeding Dyson), described the spread of art music and its new followers:

The need of the people has become articulate. In the chorus of appeal, which grows in volume daily, there is sounding a deeper note People are demanding not only to hear music but to see it being performed. The churches have thrown open their doors to admit congregations who sit in quietness to listen to great music by our finest artists. A new experiment is being tried of [sic] taking a small symphony orchestra ... into some of our biggest factories Of the personal reactions of the factory workers, their wonder at the discovery of great music, their joy in seeing an orchestra in action ... it is impossible to write adequately. ... the masculine remark ... 'A bit of all right, that was,' ... the ... feminine ... , 'I loved them fiddles, all going up and down like Fantasia.' Tchaikowsky's Piano Concerto gets a full-throated roar of approval from thousands who have heard it in the more glamorous setting of a popular film. ... they breed impatience with things as they were (the murky cloud of pre-war muddle and unfairness in the

⁴⁷ "The Arts in Wartime: A Report on the Work of C.E.M.A. 1942 and 1943", PRO EL 1/21, 7.

distribution of artistic amenities) Everywhere, on every day, the tale is the same: ... from the towns, from the shires, from the churches and from the factories; 'Give us more music.'⁴⁸

While certainly Jacques' perspective must be considered when analyzing his statements, they do provide insight as to the effect of CEMA's work. It provided new opportunities, to be sure, but even Jacques appears surprised by the populace's reaction to the music. That workers demanded to hear live performances and join musical life is apparent in their reactions to the concerts. Perhaps this is due to a lack of other "entertainments" during the war, but the fact ENSA provided popular entertainment and CEMA's concerts and activities were still so successful illustrates the increased desire for experience with "good" music.

As the war grew to a close, CEMA decided, for practical and ideological purposes, that the factory concerts would end, but CEMA's legacy endured. In 1944, factory workers now interested in art music formed Factory Music Clubs. CEMA provided funds to contribute to these clubs' formation. Although no longer directly involved, CEMA partially subsidized the clubs' concert series'. Workers and management created their own concerts, which were held in "worthy conditions." Factory personnel were putting CEMA's wartime work to good use. The grand war-time experiment of factory concerts ended, replaced by Factory Music Clubs run by factories themselves.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ CEMA Bulletin, No. 26, June 1942, 2-3.

⁴⁹ "Factory Music Clubs," Paper 197, 5 May 1945, PRO EL 1/17 and "The Arts Council Annual Report 1945", 7, PRO EL 1/21.

With conditions returning to "normal", CEMA removed direct concert support for workers, and for Britons throughout the country. That the *ad hoc* conditions accepted under war were no longer tolerated seems understandable, but the active presence of CEMA in non-London areas and an ideological shift of the Council's vision when it evolved into the Arts Council of Great Britain resulted in lesser involvement for the "people." Great Britain's arts returned to its capital, detrimentally affecting art music's popular appeal. Though this was unfortunate, CEMA's work in the factories did significantly alter Great Britain's musical life, offering new experiences and opportunities for a wider range of people.

In addition to the factory concerts, CEMA provided musical activities to remedy another impact of war. In September 1940, German air-raids intensified as the Battle of Britain began. As a result, much of London's concert life, revived somewhat after the first panicky months of the war, was again brought to a standstill.⁵⁰ Circumstances forced many Londoners from their homes, either because of structural damage or from fear of air-raids. CEMA responded in typically quick fashion, mobilizing and organizing an "Emergency Music" scheme. However, while the previous years' concerts occurred in concert halls or in formal auditoriums, the "Emergency Music" concerts were performed in different areas. CEMA artists performed for the homeless in

⁵⁰ CEMA Bulletin, No. 6, October 1940.

London's many rest-centers and for those people who spent nights in air-raid shelters. The first concert occurred when the vicar of St. Martin's in the Fields, London's great landmark in Trafalgar Square, asked CEMA musician Murray Davies to give a concert in the church's crypt in September 1940.⁵¹

Britain's musicians responded heroically to besieged Londoners' needs for music and entertainment. Often traveling through bomb raids and perilous situations, CEMA's musicians offered concerts at all times of day to Londoners experiencing the immediate effects of the bombing. People enjoyed and demanded these concerts, and soon over 60 groups gave two or three concerts per day in London alone. By the beginning of 1941, the concerts spread to places in the countryside where people also experienced extensive bombing, such as Bristol, Sheffield, Manchester, Birmingham, and Coventry.⁵²

Individual accounts of the musicians' efforts tell of the dramatic nature of their work, their ability to overcome almost insurmountable conditions, and their effectiveness in providing music for bombed-out individuals:

At one air-raid shelter, the entrance was too narrow to admit a piano; therefore the pianist, one of the most famous in England, sat outside in the street, under the falling bombs, playing to those below and accompanying their singing. At another, an old man joined in the singing to everyone's surprise: they explained that he had not been able to utter a word since the death of his wife and the destruction of his home ten days before.⁵³

⁵¹ "Rest Centre and Shelter Concerts" in PRO EL 1/12.

⁵² "CEMA", 2, in PRO EL 2/7.

⁵³ Ibid.

Illustrating an extension of British musical life, these concerts provided entertainment to Britons who might never attend a concert. While also providing respite for individuals under duress, these bombing experiences also created a situation in which art music found a larger audience than ever previously possible in peace-time. As a CEMA report later commented, "At the beginning of this experiment it was realised that there was a great opening for encouraging the appreciation of serious music in the most unlikely surroundings."⁵⁴ These concerts functioned as another example of "good [created] ... out of evil."

Concerts precipitated and created music-making opportunities for people in shelters or centers. Besides joining in community singing, many shelter inhabitants volunteered to sing solos as part of the concerts. At a few shelters, people formed choral societies to create their own music. In addition to this, demand for serious music increased and many shelters requested "lecture-recitals" where CEMA musicians educated audiences with explanations about the composers whose music they were performing.⁵⁵

These activities demonstrate clearly the far-reaching educational effects of CEMA's work as well as their stimulation of a greater appreciation of art music. By performing both popular songs as well as Bach and Handel, CEMA created positive concert experiences appreciated greatly by inhabitants of

⁵⁴ "Emergency Music," 1, PRO EL 1/13. This memo is undated but must have been written sometime after January 1941, perhaps as late as 1944.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

shelters and rest centers. Concert organizers also discovered many people who were receptive to art music. CEMA's desire to create a greater appreciation of art music proved a realistic goal of their war-time experience.

Concerts at rest centers and air-raid shelters continued throughout the war whenever the larger developments of the war resulted in renewed German air-raid attacks on Great Britain. Throughout 1941, 1942, and 1943, CEMA continued providing concerts to areas in need of them. One CEMA employee remarked; concerts were not only needed, they were desired:

the enthusiasm and appreciation shown by the audiences invariably results in the question, 'When can we have another concert?' It is not therefore surprising that the demand is steadily increasing.⁵⁶

One unique concert illustrates this increased "demand." In 1941, a concert took place in the subterranean galleries of Chiselhurst Caves. An observer remarked ironically, "Some of the earliest experiments of mankind in art were made in caves Now, driven by hard necessity to be cavemen again, we follow in ancestral footsteps and make beauty our consolation in the dark."⁵⁷ Whether in London air-raid shelter's or historic caves in the country, these unlikely concert venues created a space in which music-making transcended class and station. Music provided solace and education for war-weary Britons of every variety. When air-raids ceased in 1945, these concerts stopped and an experiment in Great Britain's democratic musical and social life ended. Though class

⁵⁶ CEMA Bulletin, No. 19, November 1941, 2.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

boundaries were less defined after the war, the classless camaraderie between rich and poor, professional and amateur, would and could not be replicated in the emerging post-war Great Britain.

CEMA's musical work during the Second World War transformed Great Britain's musical life. The Music Travellers, musical ambassadors roaming the countryside, offered new music and musical experiences for Britons cut off from or never exposed to such activities. Concerts for factory workers and Britons displaced from home also provided new and exciting musical experiences for a wide range of the British populace. Forming and creating a new musical life, these experiences profoundly changed the face of a Great Britain involved in its greatest trial and also experiencing its "finest hour." However, as the war continued, it appeared this experiment in state-supported arts programs might evolve from its experimental stage into a reality of post-war Great Britain. As individuals within CEMA realized the council's future possibilities, an ideological battle for the soul of CEMA commenced. This battle pitted member against member, friend against friend, and eventually shaped the future course of Great Britain's musical life, as well as the history of state-supported art in a Western society.



John Maynard Keynes
Chairman of CEMA
from Andrew Sinclair's *Arts and Cultures*

Chapter Four
"... what an important thing has happened":
Enter Keynes: CEMA becomes the Arts Council

For the first three years of its existence, CEMA balanced the two roles stated in its original objectives: supporting the highest possible standard of performance of the arts while providing the opportunity for "hearing good music" and encouraging "music-making" activities for all Britons. CEMA's originators, Jones and Macmillan, and the organization's early music advisor Davies, balanced these objectives skillfully. From April 1941 to the following April, significant changes to the Council's membership marginalized its populist ideals. With the death of Sir Walford Davies and resignations of Lord Macmillan and Dr. Thomas Jones, CEMA slowly began to move its primary focus towards establishing powerhouse arts institutions in London. These institutions would receive the bulk of CEMA's funding and would establish British arts institutions rivaling those on the continent.

Foremost in this ideological shift was famed economist John Maynard Keynes (see picture on p. 78). Imposing his will and intellectual strength on the Council, Keynes guided CEMA through its evolution into the Arts Council of

Great Britain, warding off a challenge from a rival music council and securing the Arts Council a role in post-war British life. With his guidance, however, Keynes steered CEMA away from its mission of providing artistic opportunities and experiences for a wide range of Britons. Using his own ideas about what constituted art and "culture," Keynes left an enduring legacy on the Arts Council that he did not live to see come into official existence. Keynes' role and ideals are still discernible when looking at the present day Arts Council and his presence directly altered the British experiment with state-supported arts programs.

In March 1942, the Pilgrim Trust announced the removal of its financial support from CEMA. Its original intent was to fund CEMA's "good cause"¹ through the initial stages. With active financial support now coming from the Treasury, the Pilgrim Trust felt the time was right to turn over full responsibility of CEMA's financial support to them. The Trust also announced that the two instigators of CEMA, Lord Macmillan and Dr. Thomas Jones, would step down from their positions of chairman and vice-chairman. Jones later wrote his and Macmillan's resignations were instigated "before the Pilgrim Trust succumbed to a besetting sin and became a vested interest."² With this move, opportunities for new leadership arose.³

¹ CEMA Bulletin, No. 23, March 1942, 1.

² Ibid., May 1942, 3.

³ Ibid., March 1942, 1.

With Macmillan and Jones stepping down, officials made finding new leadership for CEMA a priority. R. A. Butler, new president of the Board of Education, suggested securing the services of the great economist, John Maynard Keynes. Keynes, whose previous experience with the arts dealt with plays at his foundation's Arts Theatre in Cambridge, was unsure if he could properly take over the role of chairman. "Properly" taking over for Keynes meant having complete control of any project he undertook. At Butler's prompting, Lord Macmillan wrote to Keynes, offering him the position of CEMA's chairman.⁴

Macmillan's offer discussed the original tenets of CEMA:

the response to CEMA has been almost overwhelming and I am becomingly [sic] in my conviction that the right way to interest people in the Arts is to maintain a high standard in the Arts, while at the same time making them readily accessible to all those who can appreciate them.⁵

Illustrating the ideals on which CEMA was founded, this letter shows how the originators of CEMA felt their work had lived up to the original goals of the organization and benefited an entire nation, not just a select few in metropolitan London. Jones also echoed Macmillan when discussing CEMA's earlier work, writing, "early in our proceedings it was agreed there should be a CEMA bias in favour of sending its services to the smaller centres normally denied the enjoyment of arts at their best. I hope this preferential treatment will

⁴ Sinclair, 36. Also from draft letter to Keynes from Macmillan in PRO EL 2/11.

⁵ PRO EL 2/11.

continue."⁶ However, the recipient of Macmillan's letter was not an individual who shared the populist views of the Council's originators.

Though already holding a prominent position within Great Britain's war-time treasury, from which he later negotiated loans successfully from the United States for Great Britain's severely damaged economy, Keynes accepted the position of chairman of CEMA and assumed office in April 1942.⁷ In one year's time, the three original visionaries, Davies, Macmillan, and Jones were removed, either through death or resignation, from membership on CEMA. Ralph Vaughan Williams replaced Davies after his death in 1941 and became a champion of the original populist tenets. Vaughan Williams would clash with the new CEMA leadership, specifically Keynes, during the coming years, but, regardless, the Council was now headed by two individuals (Butler and Keynes) who disliked its previous support of amateur activities. On taking office, Keynes wrote to Jones thanking him for getting the "ball rolling,"⁸ but quickly moved CEMA in new directions, most specifically away from its emphasis on providing art in educational ways by direct participation.

CEMA's "terms of reference" discussed in Chapter Two guided its activities through 1941. The preservation of the "highest standards," the first "term," was a part of the work of CEMA but due to the influence of Jones and

⁶ CEMA Bulletin, No. 25, May 1942, 3.

⁷ Taken from the introductory notes at the beginning of PRO EL 1 series.

⁸ Sinclair, 36.

Macmillan was not the highest priority. To them, the second and third "terms", providing musical "opportunities" in the form of good music for people cut off from these activities as well as "encouraging music-making" activities by the people themselves, took precedence. This was apparent both in Davies' Music Travellers and the factory and emergency center and homeless shelter concerts throughout the first part of the war. As previously mentioned, these activities were the backbone of CEMA's musical work. That the popular folk-song "Drink to Me Only With Thine Eyes" was a standard concert piece as well as that performers often played on severely damaged pianos in less than ideal settings are just two examples of how musical activity took precedence over "standards" during these early years.

The amateur emphasis of CEMA's originators did not endear them to all interested in music. Only a few months into CEMA's work, an editorial appeared in *The Times* concerning the Council's amateur emphasis. The piece questioned the appropriateness of the Travellers' work stating:

what has such musical propaganda to do with the war? ... However excellent it may be in itself it clearly will not help such major institutions as the leading orchestras. ... Is it in the case of music, to which its title gives special prominence, striving to uphold the existing institutions of the country by making them serviceable to new audiences, or has it an itch to discover a hitherto dormant musicality among the people, while it leaves the art of the musician to languish and die? If the latter, then the support of the Treasury may not have been so well bestowed as to deserve the paean with which it was greeted.⁹

⁹ *The Times*, 15 June 1940.

Those who felt the point of art funding was to create standards expected the public funding of music to be directed towards the creation of national musical institutions performing art for the people. Clearly, there were discrepancies between the initial vision of Jones, Macmillan, and Davies and some of the country's musical elite. To some, democratizing music was only a priority when it meant subsidizing major orchestras to provide music to the people, not providing "people active" involvement in musical opportunities. These differing positions existed within CEMA almost from the very beginning. At this early stage, the populists held the upper hand, and the Council offered a quick reply to *The Times'* criticism.

In their response two days later, CEMA carefully reminded the British public of its "terms of reference": providing good music and stimulating music-making activities. Its dual role allowed CEMA to accomplish a great deal. By June 1940, concert-giving and music-making involved over 32,000 people.¹⁰ The article goes on to assert strongly, "CEMA has been asked to bring the enjoyment of the arts to as many people as may be: not to bring opera and ballet ... to a few selected centres."¹¹ From the beginning, CEMA carefully carried out all parts of its guidelines, with the leanings of its leadership allowing more of its work to be focused on the amateur side of music. But, the writer from *The Times* was not CEMA's only critic.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 17 June 1940.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

Another person unhappy with the direction of CEMA was John Christie. A contemporary of Keynes who also went through the privileged public schools, Christie founded the private Glyndebourne Opera on his own estate in Sussex in 1934.¹² Glyndebourne became famous for its outstanding performances of opera at the highest professional standards then known to English opera. Christie, purveyor of his standards, greatly disagreed with CEMA's policies of providing art for people across Great Britain. Not long after the press exchange over CEMA's activities, Christie wrote a stinging letter to Mary Glasgow, the Council's secretary, in which he asserted Jones and Davies were squandering the funds provided by the Pilgrim Trust and the Treasury. Christie believed CEMA's efforts established professional music standards, "lagging ... in a sea of mediocrity."¹³

To counter perceived CEMA-imposed musical "mediocrity", Christie developed the idea of a National Council of Music. Christie hoped his National Council of Music would provide opportunities for the appreciation and performance of the "greatest" works of music. To him, state-funding of amateur efforts pandered to the lowest common denominator. He believed England was a "musical nation but [was] seldom given an opportunity to exercise [its] natural taste."¹⁴ Christie envisioned an English musical nation supporting world class musicians giving world class performances, and stated:

¹² Scholes, 263.

¹³ Letter dated 25 July 1940 in PRO EI 2/9.

if England finds ... the best performances in the world being given in England largely by British artists, England will then pay its respect and in consequence will think about music, write about music, talk about it and pay for it.¹⁵

Christie wanted to transform Great Britain into a "musical" nation, a nation far removed from *"das Land ohne Musik"* and instead a developing world center of "culture".

Christie wanted to push forward these ideas and planned to use his National Council of Music as the institution ushering in state-supported art in post-war Great Britain. He attempted to gain supporters for his proposed council, and acquired the support of noted *Times* music critic H. C. Colles. Christie offered membership to none other than John Maynard Keynes in 1940, two years before Keynes accepted his position with CEMA. However, realizing Christie controlled this council, Keynes declined membership, telling Christie about his inability to get involved with something unless he completely controlled it.¹⁶

Christie pushed forward his National Council of Music idea as the war continued into 1942 and attempted to secure CEMA's assistance in "surveying" music in Great Britain. In a memorandum, Christie's ideas for his National Council were presented to CEMA.¹⁷ The National Council's foremost activity

¹⁴ Memorandum from Christie to Ramsbotham in PRO EL 1/12.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ As discussed in Sinclair, 37.

¹⁷ Memorandum and letter entitled "C.E.M.A. and National Council of Music" from PRO EL 1/15. The memo was written by H. C. Colles.

would "be to stimulate the appreciation of first-rate performances of great works of art."¹⁸ Christie's contempt for the populist work of CEMA is barely concealed in the memo. In describing the role that amateur music would play in this future state-supported National Council, Christie's true feelings emerged when he described how amateur efforts would receive funding "if it [the performance] enables a higher standard of performance and achievement to be attained, and accepting this as the general principle, the inquiry satisfies this requirement."¹⁹ Amateur efforts were subject to the scrutiny of the National Council who would judge, under its own artistic aesthetic, what efforts were worthy of subsidy. This new council would "afford new and greater opportunities, but it will not just 'help or guarantee' any performance without consideration of achievement or standard."²⁰ If these ideas prevailed, the early principles of Jones, Macmillan, and Davies would certainly face a reduction in prominence and would be forced to justify their importance to a council primarily concerned with performance standard, regardless of how many people were cut off from musical influence if their endeavors were judged aesthetically unworthy by the National Council. This did not bode well for CEMA, as it was widely perceived Christie hoped his National Council would be the institution receiving state support after the war.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

Thus, not only did Christie's National Council pose a threat to CEMA's principles, it also threatened those who envisioned CEMA as an active organization in post-war Great Britain. In September 1941, R. S. Wood informed Jones of his desire that CEMA should continue after the war as the institution ushering in state-supported arts programs. Wood warned Jones of Christie's "stirring of the waters ... with his proposed Council of Music"²¹ and suggested warding off this threat by seriously considering CEMA's role after the war's completion.

Wood suggested CEMA maintain the Treasury's support to continue its efforts promoting British artistic life. He also suggested moving away from the amateur interests of earlier CEMA work and instead embracing "the best in Music and the Arts."²² Wood wanted some other agency (he imagined the Carnegie UK Trust) to assume control over amateur activities. It seems obvious Wood and others moved in this direction partly in response to the Christie challenge. Facing criticism that their efforts did not promote the best in artistic performance, CEMA slowly began shifting its emphasis towards a greater focus on standards as opposed to opportunities. The beginnings of these ideological shifts, apparent even before Jones and Macmillan left the Council, set the stage for greater changes to come. These came when a man arrived with a personal vision for CEMA's future. The man, of course, was John Maynard Keynes.

²¹ Letter from Wood to Jones in PRO El 2/9.

²² Ibid.

Keynes immediately wished to consolidate CEMA under the control of London, with himself at the helm. By gaining control of CEMA's direction, Keynes attempted to steer its course towards values he embraced. Possibly influenced by Christie's challenge,²³ Keynes moved CEMA's emphasis toward the creation of great arts centers in London and raising the standard of performances. As discussed in Chapter Three, one way of reducing the populist tone of the Council was eliminating the successful work of the Music Travellers. Though the creation of the Regional Offices did not fit into his consolidation plan, it did effectively eliminate the work of the Music Travellers and eventually moved much of their work to the Carnegie UK Trust. Ever realistic, Keynes knew this concession would pay off in the long run and later allow CEMA to relinquish its interests in amateur activities.

In another move to consolidate power in London, Keynes appointed three panels of music, art, and drama.²⁴ He also changed the "honorary" directors positions to paid positions. The paid directors would then preside over their newly founded panels. All of these panels would be responsible to Keynes, although he was not bound to any of their recommendations. Dr. Reginald Jacques, longtime "honorary" music director, assumed the position of paid director. In examining the membership of CEMA's music panel, the new

²³ Christie later accused Keynes of stealing his ideas about his National Council of Music and implementing them into CEMA.

²⁴ CEMA Bulletin, No. 33, January 1943, 1.

ideological emphasis ushered in by Keynes is readily apparent. The music panel's membership consisted of some of the greatest musicians, composers, and critics of twentieth-century British music. Included on the first panel was none other than noted pianist and National Gallery concert organizer Myra Hess and famous British composers Arthur Bliss and Constant Lambert.²⁵ The next year, the panel became even more illustrious with the addition of composers Benjamin Britten, Herbert Howells, Michael Tippett and influential music critic Frank Howes.

British disdain for Britten, who spent the majority of the first portion of the war in the United States with his companion Peter Pears and refused to fight due to his pacifist sympathies, as well as for Michael Tippett (recently released from imprisonment for his Communist sympathies and failure to meet the conditions of his conscientious objection status) did not deter their appointment to the music panel, nor did it impede their receiving of knighthoods at later dates.²⁶ The appointment of these "first-rate"²⁷ members illustrates the shift towards an emphasis on performance. By including the leading members of British musical life, many who had little experience with or sympathy for "art for the people", Keynes further emphasized creating high standards of artistic performance. To Keynes, CEMA's work for amateurs was misplaced and the Council need not

²⁵ Ibid., No. 34, February 1943, 1.

²⁶ The list of music panel members is taken from the frontispiece of the *Annual Report of the Arts Council of Great Britain 1945*, in PRO EL 4/1.

²⁷ C.E.M.A Bulletin, No. 34, February 1943, 1.

concern itself with these matters. Further professionalizing helped increase the effectiveness of CEMA's concern with the highest standards of performance, but this new emphasis resulted in a weakening of the Council's educational outreach.

Another Keynesian legacy appears when looking at the concerts presented after he took over at CEMA. Although originally most of CEMA's work was in the countryside (excluding the concerts in the centers and shelters) when London concerts returned to "normal" after the early crisis period, more of CEMA's work began to appear in metropolitan London. In May 1943, CEMA concerts presented in London included famed soprano Isobel Baillie and renowned mezzo Kathleen Ferrier. Peter Pears and Benjamin Britten also gave concerts that month in London.²⁸

In September 1944, CEMA presented concerts featuring another famous musician, violinist Yehudi Menuhin. Menuhin gave concerts in several venues, including a concert at Salisbury Cathedral, concerts in factories, and also concerts for American troops with the CEMA/British Council "Music for the Allies" scheme.²⁹ Performing eleven recitals, Menuhin played for more than 14,400 people during his tour of Great Britain.

Concerts such as these are significant for at least two reasons. One, they illustrate unique possibilities created in war-time. Great Britain's elite musicians

²⁸ Ibid., No. 37, May 1943, 5.

²⁹ Ibid., No. 53, October 1944, 1-2.

offered their services to CEMA for the betterment of British morale and for the state of the country's musical life. But, somewhat more ominously, these concerts also illustrate the Council's new emphasis on high performance standards and the offering of opportunities for Britain's greatest musicians to provide music for those in metropolitan London.

Other examples illustrate the Council's shift in emphasis. In July 1943, CEMA launched a new experiment at Keynes' own Arts Theatre in Cambridge. A series of events subsidized by CEMA called "Poetry and Music at the Arts Theatre" began in order "to [bring] the spirit of delight back to the daily lives of a people mobilized for total war."³⁰ At the first series of poetry and music, actress Peggy Ashcroft read the poetry of John Milton and W. H. Auden. Music of J. S. Bach and Maurice Ravel was also performed.³¹ Keynes' influence is apparent here not only because the theater he started hosted the events but he also (perhaps due to his early Bloomsbury influences) included poetry as an activity worthy of subsidy. Interestingly, when it came time to decide which arts were to be subsidized by the Arts Council in 1945, Keynes was not interested in subsidizing literature and poetry. Apparently, Keynes felt poetry was redeeming enough to be state-supported only when the venue was his own Cambridge theater.

³⁰ Ibid., No. 39, July 1943, 1-2.

³¹ Ibid.

Another example of the Council's shift is the instigation of Serenade Concerts at Hampton Court in the summer of 1944. Part of CEMA's support of string orchestras throughout Great Britain, these concerts were held in the William III Orangery at Hampton Court. Featuring the work of British composers Butterworth and Delius as well as Mozart and Wagner, these concerts ran four weeks through June and July.³² A far cry from small concerts in remote villages, CEMA's Serenade Concerts provided music under excellent conditions in "oak-panelled room[s] with great windows opening out to the gardens, with the river [Thames] beyond."³³ The move towards higher standards, with the Keynesian "aesthetic" prevailing, offered excellent concert opportunities for metropolitan Londoners, but at what expense?

Another CEMA action during the Keynes tenure was also significant in shaping its future course and that of the Arts Council. At the same meeting where it was announced there must be a "withdrawal" of CEMA from rural areas, the Council unveiled a new plan to completely subsidize the country's four major orchestras.³⁴ Early in the war, CEMA subsidized concerts given by these orchestras -- the Hallé, Liverpool Philharmonic, London Philharmonic, and London Symphony. This was later taken over by the Carnegie Trust. By 1943, CEMA resumed control over the concerts, basing their subsidy on a concert by

³² Ibid., No. 51, July 1944, 1.

³³ *Annual Report of CEMA 1944-1945*, 10, in PRO EL 1/21.

³⁴ Minutes from CEMA's 25th meeting, 25 January 1944, in PRO EL 1/7 and CEMA Bulletin, No. 48, April 1944, 1-3.

concert basis. At this March meeting of CEMA, the Council announced a new plan to completely subsidize "the whole" of these orchestras work. This new arrangement offered a grant not related to the number of concerts, but rather given to the orchestras for their continual needs. This is a clear example of the move towards state-supported arts not contingent on emergency situations but rather to enable the overall work of the orchestras. CEMA's monthly bulletin announced this plan would help the orchestras to continue regional touring as well as "to maintain the highest standard of performance."³⁵ The intention of this move becomes clear when examining an article written by Thomas Russell, secretary of the London Symphony Orchestra, printed in the April 1944 bulletin. Discussing the role of symphony orchestras in spreading art music around the country during the war as well as the new CEMA orchestral plan, Russell states:

England has at last the makings of a national symphonic tradition. Whether or not this tradition is to continue in a healthy manner depends on a number of circumstances. ... this year a new and more generous plan is to be adopted, and the principle of an annual guarantee has been accepted, involving the responsibility for maintaining the highest possible standard of music. We are, I think, entitled to hope that this is a red-letter date in the history of British symphonic music. We have as fine players as any in the world. Given good organisation and public recognition, the musical renaissance of the war-period can be consolidated in the years of peace.³⁶

This new orchestral plan offered an example of how a permanent peacetime arts body might support the musical life of the country. This move

³⁵ Ibid., CEMA Bulletin, 1.

³⁶ Ibid., 3.

also shows the Council's further emphasis on performance standard and creating a strong national orchestral tradition. This goal overtook CEMA's "rural" work and unfortunately, though London's orchestras were reaching great heights by the time the Arts Council came into existence, "rural" work suffered and was considered inessential to the nature and vision of the institution. With Keynes' ethic pushing the Council's vision, an outstanding "national culture" including orchestral performance of the highest possible rank, took precedence.

The new emphasis of CEMA resulted in a limitation of musical opportunities for many Britons and eventually a limitation of what was appropriately "arty" enough to be funded. Music, like any communication medium, can be used as a vehicle to push forward and instill values on the greater population. Keynes used his power as chairman to assert his values and his ideas on CEMA and through CEMA's work on the rest of the British population. John Christie also did this with his National Council of Music and with his actions moved Keynes to do the same. Changing a major original "reference term" of its mission, Keynes used music performance as a way to champion the things he valued. As Alan Peacock, an eventual chairman of the Scottish Arts Council remarked, "He [Keynes] felt the things he enjoyed everybody should enjoy."³⁷ In his quest to make the musical work of CEMA and the eventual Arts Council more elite, Keynes pushed forward his ideas of what

³⁷ Sinclair, 43.

was valuable. This included performances of a high standard, not music-making activities for more Britons. By asserting his ideas about what Britain's "cultural" life should include, Keynes limited experiences because some arts were not redeeming enough to receive funding. But, it was not always clear sailing for the chairman.

One opponent of Keynes' agenda was CEMA member and British composer Ralph Vaughan Williams. Though both upper-middle class men who received the benefits of their class with education at public schools and Cambridge, their outlooks concerning the arts and CEMA's role differed greatly. An example from early in Keynes' tenure as chairman foreshadows later conflicts caused by their differing visions. At the July 1943 meeting of CEMA, Keynes pushed forward an idea of utilizing CEMA funds to buy two theaters in Bedford and Luton. This idea incensed Vaughan Williams, who responded it was "not the function of the Council to provide a setting for the arts, but rather to foster the arts themselves." He objected strenuously and did not wish "to see money diverted from the provision of concerts in places starved of music to the acquisition of buildings."³⁸ Vaughan Williams' objections succeeded in killing the proposal. This early conflict illustrates Keynes' use of his agenda to set up subsidized theaters as powerhouse institutions of British drama as he moved

³⁸ From the minutes of CEMA Meeting No. 23 on 20 July 1943, found in PRO EL 1/7.

beyond the original intent of CEMA to the creation of a permanent peace-time state-supported institution.

This setback for Keynes was only temporary. His policies, as previously mentioned, led to the eradication of the Music Travellers and the removal of the populist work of the council and this time not even Vaughan Williams' protests could save this legacy of Sir Henry Walford Davies. By 1945, the Minister of Education, R. A. Butler, asked Keynes to draw up "some suggestions" concerning ways to reorganize CEMA into a permanent peace-time organization.³⁹ Vaughan Williams and Keynes again clashed ideologically. Keynes drew up his tentative proposals and CEMA's membership discussed them at their January 1945 meeting. In Keynes' fourth clause dealing with the future Arts' Council's "terms of reference," Vaughan Williams drew attention to the phrases, "to encourage the knowledge, understanding, and practice of the arts, and in particular ... to increase the accessibility of the arts to the public throughout the country."⁴⁰ Vaughan Williams argued that amateur music was within the scope of the new Arts Council. He further felt if the new Council was faithful to CEMA's original vision they would include amateur music and amateur music-making activities in the clause. Vaughan Williams' suggestions, like his

³⁹ Taken from Keynes' introductory remarks with his suggestions, dated 12 January 1945, in PRO EL 1/17.

⁴⁰ Minutes from the 32nd meeting of CEMA held on 30 January 1945, in PRO EL 1/7.

previous ones concerning the Music Travellers, were duly noted in the CEMA minutes, but were not implemented in the new Arts Council of Great Britain.

Vaughan Williams disagreed with Keynes on another issue concerning the future of the new Arts Council. In the same January meeting, Vaughan Williams proposed that the range of the future council include films.⁴¹ The British film industry was greatly revived during the war and British documentaries and films joined literature as the "greatest" British artistic contributions to the international arts.⁴² Unfortunately for film, Keynes did not share Vaughan Williams' enthusiasm for the medium and it was not one of the arts Keynes found significant and redeeming enough to fund. Once again, Vaughan Williams' suggestion fell on deaf ears, resulting in a limitation of the Council's work until its charter was revised some nineteen years later.

As the war came to an end, Keynes' presence on the Council secured a new emphasis for CEMA's musical work and he now made sure his ideas and interests would continue to shape the future Arts Council. One example of this was his "sleight of hand" in pushing ballet (his greatest love and wife's profession) under CEMA's umbrella. While film was not worthy, ballet definitely

⁴¹ Ibid. It should perhaps also be noted that Vaughan Williams' suggestion might have been related to the fact he was a frequent film composer during this period. His score for the film *Scott of the Antarctic* later became the basis for his seventh symphony, *Sinfonia Antartica*.

⁴² Andrew Sinclair discusses the rise and fall of British film in his *Arts and Cultures*, 42-3, 72-3.

was and Keynes eventually paved the way to include ballet and opera within the Council's subsidy and work.⁴³

As mentioned above, R. A. Butler requested Keynes to draft a proposed memorandum outlining the future of CEMA. Keynes outlined his ideas in his confidential memorandum to fellow members in January 1945. Butler had already seen the memorandum, and "had welcomed it and agreed to it in principle."⁴⁴ Despite the somewhat contentious discussion at the January meeting, Keynes' suggestions were accepted by the Council, except for one minor point. Various members of the Council objected to the monarchical title, The Royal Council of the Arts, suggested by Keynes.⁴⁵ Ever the political pragmatic and realizing what battles were worth fighting, Keynes acquiesced and agreed to call the new peace-time body the Arts Council of Great Britain.

By May 1945, Treasury deliberations had promising results, as Keynes was informed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir John Anderson, that CEMA was to continue in the post-war period and official announcement of this would occur in Parliament. On 12 June 1945 in the House of Commons, Anderson announced, in reply to a question by M.P. Henry Brooke, that the Treasury decided CEMA's war-time work illustrated an institution that could

⁴³ Sinclair, 40-5, 54-6.

⁴⁴ Minutes from the 30th meeting of C.E.M.A. on 28 September 1944 in PRO EL 1/7.

⁴⁵ Keynes informed R. A. Butler of this objection in a letter dated 1 March 1945, in PRO EL 1/78.

"encourage knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts,"⁴⁶ and the Government would retain it. The new council would bear the name The Arts Council of Great Britain and would shift to jurisdiction under the Treasury, literally and symbolically breaking its formal ties with the Ministry of Education. Thus, the Arts Council became "an autonomous body,"⁴⁷ separate from the Ministry of Education, receiving funding from the Treasury. One of the last acts of the British war-time Coalition Government brought state patronage of the arts officially into business.

Keynes accomplished his mission of securing CEMA a place in post-war Great Britain. As he said in his acceptance letter for the chairmanship of CEMA back in 1942, "Clearly it is after the war that the big opportunities will come,"⁴⁸ and the opportunities had come, no doubt partly through his own efforts. In his final speech concerning the Arts Council broadcast on the BBC, Keynes spoke of CEMA's work and the possibilities of the new Council:

At the start our aim was to replace what war had taken away; but we soon realized that we were providing what had never existed even in peace time. ... I do not believe it is yet realized what an important thing has happened. State patronage of the arts has crept in. It has happened in a very English, informal, unostentatious way At last the public exchequer has recognized the support and encouragement of the civilising arts of life as a part of their duty. But we do not intend to socialise this side of social endeavour. Whatever views may be held by the lately warring parties, whom you have been hearing every evening at this hour, about socialising industry, everyone, I fancy,

⁴⁶ CEMA Bulletin, No. 63, July 1945, 1.

⁴⁷ *Annual Report of the Arts Council of Great Britain 1945*, 1, in PRO EL 4/1.

⁴⁸ Letter from Keynes found in PRO EL 2/7.

recognizes that the work of the artist in all its aspects is, of its nature, individual and free... . The task of an official body is not to teach or censor, but to give courage, confidence and opportunity.⁴⁹

Keynes' leadership lead directly to the reality of state funded arts programs and his efforts helped ensure CEMA's war-time activities were not forever thought of as a war-time expedient. Though Keynes publicly stated that the Council would not "teach" or "censor," during his leadership he altered the earlier assisting and teaching done by CEMA. Also, Keynes limited certain arts from receiving funds, curtailing which arts would now receive funding. Keynes' strong prejudices altered the original vision of providing art for the people and led to a greater emphasis on standards and artistic performance in metropolitan London.

Unfortunately, Keynes did not live to see the benefits of his work. His death in April 1946 prevented him witnessing the Arts Council receive the royal charter for which he had long labored. The royal charter of incorporation for the Arts Council of Great Britain was signed by King George VI on 9 August 1946. Though Keynes was not there, his spirit pervaded the charter's preamble. The opening begins by stating that the Arts Council's purpose concerns "developing a greater knowledge, understanding and practice of the fine arts exclusively." This comes before the second purpose "to increase the accessibility of the fine arts to the public."⁵⁰ The third purpose again showed a direct Keynesian influence, stating, "to improve the standard of the execution of the fine arts."

⁴⁹ From Keynes' BBC speech, reprinted in *Annual Report of the Arts Council of Great Britain 1945*, Appendix A, found in PRO EL 4/1.

⁵⁰ *Third Annual Report of the Arts Council of Great Britain* in PRO EL 4/1.

With the new royal charter, the original ideas of Jones and Davies received a permanent back-seat to Keynes' ideas and preferences. As Andrew Sinclair points out, "The knowledge and understanding and practice of ... fine arts was placed above their accessibility to the British public."⁵¹

CEMA's evolution into the Arts Council of Great Britain offers various ways to consider the appropriate role of state-supported arts programs. In this case, the original functions of CEMA struggled for prominence until more elite ideas concerning the creation of great powerhouse institutions performing and playing in metropolitan London prevailed. Though the new Arts Council planned occasional forays outside London, they would not be a main focus. The Council's leadership ended up limiting what was funded and which arts were enjoyed. Andrew Sinclair points out that Keynes' attempts to "limit the scope" of the newly founded Council were prudent in that funds were small in debt ridden post-war Great Britain.⁵² While that is certainly plausible, what is not prudent is that while Keynes was excluding film and literature, he brought the expensive arts of ballet and opera under the Council's subsidy. Keynes' preferences altered significantly what was funded and low funds did not preclude the addition of these two arts which were special interests to him. Keynes' strong will, responsible for ushering in state-supported arts funding, also created less desirable outcomes for things which the chairman did not value, and it would

⁵¹ Sinclair, 51.

⁵² *Ibid.*

take twenty years before changes would begin to alter the lingering vestiges of the Keynes era.

Changes within CEMA altered the early guiding spirit of Jones and Davies. The result was a new emphasis and a different mission for the Arts Council of Great Britain. John Maynard Keynes offered a new conception for CEMA and, influenced by other national challenges, placed a heavier emphasis on providing high standards of performance for the British populace, as opposed to spreading the arts to a wider range of Britons. CEMA and the Arts Council left a large legacy for Great Britain's musical life and one need only travel to the South Bank in present-day London to observe this. During the Second World War, opportunities to hear and perform art music spread throughout Great Britain like never before. However, the eventual course taken by the Arts Council perhaps diminished the work of this institution which had spread music and music-making activities, involving both art and popular music, to a wide range of Britons.

Conclusion

Death, destruction, sacrifice, and loss are things rightly attributed to the British experience in the Second World War. Along with these, however, positive legacies arose from the deeply scarred but victorious island country. One of these was the invigoration of its musical life. The creation of CEMA and its work and accomplishments, precipitated by the war's outbreak, allowed art music's influence to reach a great many people previously unfamiliar with it. As Reginald Jacques confidently asserted towards the end of the war: "To many new audiences ... what was previously a high-brow mystery has become a gay and delightful experience."¹ CEMA's work shattered old class barriers, democratizing art music's consumers and creators. Whether it was in a London bomb shelter or remote small village, CEMA provided art music and music-making opportunities to many Britons. As Lord Macmillan stated early in the war, CEMA offered "help ... through the pressure of tragic events to activities which in addition to their war-time urgency, have permanent peace-time value."²

¹ CEMA Bulletin, No. 60, April 1945, 1.

² Statement made by Macmillan at the first meeting of the Council, 23 April 1940, in

CEMA's work was worthy of peace-time value as evidenced by the Coalition Government agreeing to continue funding for the arts with the newly established Arts Council of Great Britain. That the arts continued to receive funding when the country faced the gravest financial crisis in its history attested to the prominence the arts acquired in twentieth-century Great Britain. Perhaps foremost among these arts was the place art music secured in post-war British life. Since 1945, Britain's capital assumed prominence as the "music capital of the world".³ With more internationally renowned orchestras and opera companies than any other city, the center of the popular music record industry and a major home of music publishing, London's title seems appropriate.⁴ The Arts Council of Great Britain and its predecessor CEMA were strong catalysts in the creation of a vibrant art music life in modern Great Britain.

However, as Great Britain built its national treasures along the South Bank, where its great orchestras and theater companies now perform, the decentralized arts culture imagined by some associated with Great Britain's early experiments with state-supported arts funding was largely obscured. Not until the 1970s, when Sir Roy Shaw, an individual closely involved with adult education and an "heir" of the CEMA populists, assumed the chair of the Arts Council, did arts funding rediscover its more inclusive, educational role for a

PRO EL 1/6.

³ Norman Lebrecht, *Music in London* (London: Aurum, 1992), 2.

⁴ *Ibid.*

larger amount of Britons.⁵ The efforts of John Maynard Keynes and like-minded individuals ensured that CEMA's war-time legacy would not go for naught, but their efforts resulted in a limitation of post-war Britons' artistic experiences.

The British public and its leaders accepted the idea of state-supported art funding during a period that witnessed the general move to the left in British politics. After all, the Second World War was the period of the Beveridge Report and the Butler Education Act, two acts that epitomize Great Britain's move towards the "welfare" state. Great Britain's embracing of arts funding seems consistent with these developments. Ironically, the Arts Council's course, limiting the outreach of the arts in exchange for standards, illustrates how one body became more elitist in contrast to the general mood of 1945.

Not until the 1970s and 1980s did the Arts Council return to its emphasis on educational endeavors and amateur music-making activities. Unfortunately for the Arts Council, at the time it attempted to change its unfair emphasis on metropolitan London, the Thatcher and Major governments also decided the Arts Council would suffer funding losses like other programs in order to keep spending down.⁶ Thus, as the Arts Council attempted to return to some of its original emphases, political and economic realities impeded its ability to do so. The ambiguities of the true responsibility of state-support for arts (even the

⁵ David Jones, "The Arts Council" in *Culture, Education and the State* ed. by Michael Stephens (London: Routledge, 1988), 1-2.

⁶ T. O. Lloyd, *Empire to Welfare State: English History 1906-1985* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, third edition, 1986), 503.

question of its right to exist) make arts funding a focal point for political and cultural debates in late twentieth- century Western society. By studying CEMA, scholars witness the clear origins of the Arts Council of Great Britain's policies during its first fifty years of existence. CEMA's unique contribution to war-time life was an important component of the British Second World War experience. The story of the institution known as the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts allows scholars to consider ways arts funding has functioned in the past and how these experiences suggest appropriate roles for publicly-funded arts programs in a modern Western nation.

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