

A DICTIONARY *of*
MUSICAL THEMES

REVISED EDITION

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of
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REVISED EDITION

by
HAROLD BARLOW and SAM MORGENSTERN

Introduction by
JOHN ERSKINE

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* *Bach's Fugue in G Minor, Organ "The Little Fugue" appears on page xiv.*

Elgar's Symphony No. 2 in E flat (Op. 63) appears on page xiv.

Tschaikowsky Melodie, Op. 42, No. 3 from Souvenir D'Un Lieu Cher, Vn. & Pft. appears on page xiv.

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INTRODUCTION

By JOHN ERSKINE

THIS dictionary of musical themes, by Harold Barlow and Sam Morgenstern, supplies an aid which students of music have long needed. When the authors showed me the plan of it a year ago, or somewhat earlier, I applauded at once, and agreed to write a word of preface. We should now have something in musical literature to parallel Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations*. Whenever a musical theme haunted us, but refused to identify itself no matter how much we scraped our memory, all we should have to do would be to look up the tune in Barlow and Morgenstern, where those ingenious dictionary-makers would assemble some ten thousand musical themes, with a notation-index or theme-finder, to locate the name of the composition from which the haunting fragment came, and the name of the composer.

After a brief but exciting conversation, Mr. Barlow and Mr. Morgenstern went off with my promise of a preface, as it were, in their pocket, leaving me very thoughtful—and inclined to become more thoughtful with each passing hour. I knew there had already been attempts to index music, and I was fairly familiar with the difficulties which had in the past tripped up bold experimenters. A dictionary such as Bartlett's can classify quotations according to the subject with which they deal, and can arrange them in the usual index method by the letter-order of the opening words. But no method has been hit on to index musical sounds, nor the variations in pitch by which a theme is articulated. No method, that is, which permits the musical material of a theme to remain strictly musical.

I understood what Mr. Barlow and Mr. Morgenstern would try to do; since letters can easily be indexed, and musical notes cannot be, they would try to translate the notes into letters. After much thought I feared this would prove a task far beyond even their enthusiasm, and the result might be less useful than they hoped. But they put an end to my doubts by bringing to my study

one day a section of the theme index, and challenging me to give them a theme they couldn't speedily locate. My conversion was prompt. I am glad to record here my confidence in the theory of this book, and my admiration for the manner in which the theory has been worked out.

As the authors are more than ready to admit, the ten thousand themes, more or less, which can be identified quickly and easily with the help of this book, do not encompass the entire literature of music, but they do include practically all the themes which can be found in compositions that have been recorded. It is hardly likely that a music student will be haunted by a theme from a composition not yet considered worthy of recording.

The authors believe, and I agree with them, that their dictionary of musical themes will be useful to the trained musician, even to the professional performer, who is more likely than the beginner or the amateur to have a firm grasp of the musical material which has gone into well-known masterpieces.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part contains ten thousand or more musical themes arranged by composers. The second part is the notation-index or theme-finder. If we consult the dictionary in order to locate a theme, we shall begin with the second part of the book, and conclude with the passage in the first part which gives the answer we have been looking for. But there are many occasions when a musician needs to refresh his memory about the themes in a given composition. Though he knows the name of the composition and of the composer, he may need to remind himself of the theme in the first movement, or the second, or the third. Of course he can go to his music shelves and consult his copy of the complete work. That is, if his music shelves are large enough to contain the scores of ten thousand sonatas or symphonies. I suspect that the convenience of the Barlow-Morgenstern dictionary will soon be recognized by serious students of musical literature.

How enormous that body of literature is, and how rapidly it increases, we sometimes forget. It is well within the truth to say that no pianist, no violinist, and no singer, pretends to have in his repertoire all the important compositions for piano, violin, or voice. Each musician has probably read over hundreds of pieces

he would gladly include in his repertoire if life were long enough. A pianist who keeps in his repertoire, and in condition for performance, a thousand pieces of respectable length and difficulty, is an unusual artist. If his repertoire were three times as large, he would still be something of a specialist; the piano repertory has long since grown beyond human capacity to master completely. If recital programs do not seem more repetitious than they sometimes are, it is because of the helpful capacity of audiences to forget music which they themselves do not play. Sometimes they wish to recall at least a theme or two of what they have forgotten. From now on they will probably consult the Barlow and Morgenstern dictionary of themes.

The present volume does not contain themes from vocal music. To cover vocal as well as instrumental compositions, another volume would be needed as large as this.*

I have been speaking of trained musicians as well as of the average music lover. Both can use this dictionary without difficulty. The theme index is ingenious and, as I now believe, simple. If a theme or a tune is running through your head, and if your musical ear is good enough, you will be able to play it in the key of C major or C minor. Then if you write down the letters by which the notes are named, and find the resulting letter sequence in the index, you will be directed at once to the name of the original work and the name of its composer.

It is this process of identifying the theme when it is played by ear that seemed to me at first complicated and likely to discourage those who consult the dictionary. But I am confident now that once we have tried the method for ourselves, we shall find it extraordinarily simple.

Like any other dictionary of quotations, this book will perhaps be most useful to the young. Music is now a well-established subject in American education. Though many children in our schools are fortunately taught to play and sing, all of them — and this is equally their good fortune — are put in the way of listening to recorded music, to great masterpieces performed by great artists of yesterday and today. Not so long ago school children

* *A Dictionary of Opera and Song Themes.*

used to go along the street humming a snatch of ragtime or jazz. Nowadays the youngsters are just as likely to hum a passage from Schubert or Tchaikovsky, or whoever was the composer who last spoke to them from the disc in the music class.

"What is that you are humming?"

Sometimes the children remember, but more often, like the elders, they forget. But when they have learned to consult this dictionary, they will place the passage at once.

I believe this book is destined to a wide and increasing usefulness, both to mature music lovers now and to the army of children whom our schools are training to be the music lovers of tomorrow.

PREFACE

WHEN we began the research for this book, we both felt like the Sorcerer's Apprentice, for each theme that we found seemed to loose a crowd of others waiting for us. It looked as if this one book might stretch into volumes. However, the limits we set ourselves made the completion of the work seem possible within a lifetime.

This work contains about 10,000 themes. They have been chosen primarily from recorded, instrumental pieces. No vocal works, excepting those which in instrumental arrangement have become better known than their originals, have been included. We feel that the book contains almost all the themes the average and even the more erudite listener might want to look up.

Certain works we omitted because the scores were unavailable in libraries, and publishers who were more than helpful could not supply them. A few other works we left out because we could not, after great effort, secure copyrights. Though the book does not exhaust the subject, by far, we feel that we have compiled a fairly complete index of themes, not only first themes, but every important theme, introduction, and salient rememberable phrase of the works included. In certain modern works where a number of varied phrases could be construed as thematic, we tried to present them all. Naturally, in the development of a work certain phrases occur which are as rememberable as the themes themselves. To include these would amount to reprinting the pieces in their entirety. A few ultra-modern works we left out. We felt that anyone likely to remember their themes, or more aptly their combinations of notes, would in all probability know their source. Consequently, these works would hardly fit into the scope of this volume.

Careful search through so many hundreds of works by different composers living in different eras in divers countries leads the research student to rather interesting generalizations. Permeating

the work of many of the great and prolific composers we find certain combinations of notes, a certain "melos." This "melos" or melodic line seems to be a strong ingredient of their style. Schubert, Beethoven, Mozart, each has his ever-recurring theme song, but so disguised that it makes for artistic variety rather than monotony.

Many themes in compositions of the same period seem to possess similar melodic lines. In our notation key we had to carry some themes to seven or eight letters before their lines began to diverge. It is not that the composers were necessarily imitative. Melodic thinking of the period simply took on certain characteristics, rhythm and harmonic background giving these almost identical lines their variety.

Since the folk tune plays such an integral part in serious composition, one finds special national characteristics in the melodic lines of composers of various lands. Certain interval as well as rhythmic combinations make for Spanish, Russian, German, and French themes, and those of other countries too, of course. Identical motives are used again and again by composers, both consciously and unconsciously. The famous Mannheim motive (G C Eb G C Eb D C B C) as found in Beethoven's First Piano Sonata, Mozart's G Minor Symphony, and Mendelssohn's E Minor String Quartet, is probably the most obvious example of this. We found a rather wry footnote to the first page of one of Clementi's Bb Major Piano Sonatas, stating that when he played this piece for Kaiser Franz Joseph, Mozart was in the audience. The theme of the Sonata is identical with the overture of *The Magic Flute*, which appeared a few years later. Mozart was famous for his phenomenal memory.

Parody quotations of themes, such as the *Tristan Prelude* in Debussy's *Golliwogg's Cake Walk*, are both plentiful and amusing. The *Lullaby* in Strauss's *Domestic Symphony* is a steal from a *Venetian Boat Song* by Mendelssohn, and whether Prokofieff knows it or not, the last half of the second theme in the second movement of his *Sixth Piano Sonata* bears more than a sneaking resemblance to Mendelssohn's *Spring Song*.

And so the research student becomes a tone sleuth.

The book should prove useful not only to those who are bothered

by a theme and can't remember its source, but also to those who know the source but can't remember the theme. We ourselves shall certainly use it in both capacities.

A book of these dimensions could never have appeared without the aid and encouragement of a great many interested people. We owe a debt of deep and sincere gratitude first to Miss Gladys Chamberlain, Director of the 58th St. Music Library of New York City, who turned over the entire resources of that splendid organization to us, and gave us unreservedly of her time and advice. We want to thank the members of her staff, Miss Mary Lee Daniels, Miss Eleanor Chasan, Miss Lilly Goldberg, Mrs. Hilda Stolov, Mrs. Leah Silton, Mrs. Elsa Hollister, who were more than helpful.

In the music division of the main library of New York City, we wish to thank Mr. Philip Miller, and two of his indefatigable pages, George Klinger and Noel Schwartz.

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S. M.

New York, N. Y.
April, 1948

Fugue in G Minor, Organ
"The Little Fugue" Bach



B99.

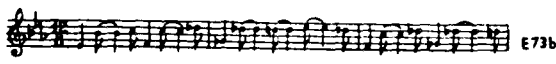
Symphony No. 2, Op. 63
Elgar
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1st Movement
1st Theme.
A



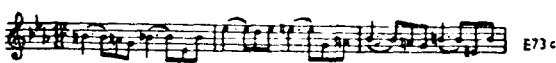
E73a

1st Movement
1st Theme.
B



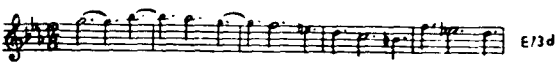
E73b

1st Movement
2nd Theme.
A



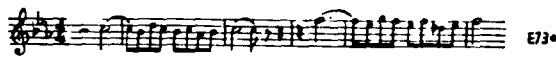
E73c

1st Movement
2nd Theme
B



E73d

2nd Movement
Intro.



E73e

2nd Movement
1st Theme



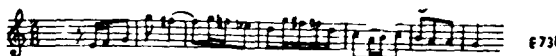
E73f

2nd Movement
2nd Theme



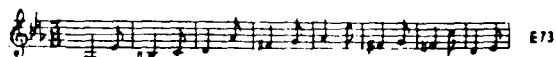
E73g

3rd Movement
1st Theme



E73h

3rd Movement
2nd Theme



E73i

4th Movement
1st Theme



E73j

4th Movement
2nd Theme



E73k

Mélodie, Op. 42, No. 3
from Souvenir d'Un Lieu
Cher. Vn. & Pfl.
Tchaikovsky

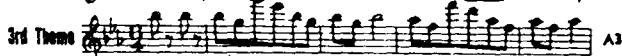
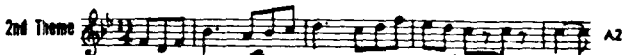


T153a

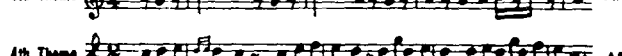
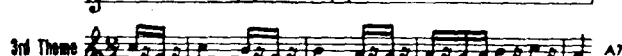
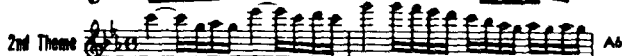
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ADAM, Adolphe (1803-1856)

La Poupée de Nuremberg
(The Nuremberg Doll)
Overture



Si J'étais Roi
Overture



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Cuba



Seguidillas



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