Subject: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Ithilien on Sat, 06 Dec 2008 01:38:52 GMT
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Blog entry here

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Black Bear on Sat, 06 Dec 2008 01:45:26 GMT
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Bartok is one of the composers I favor as background music for Call of Cthulhu, you know. :) I may have to pick up some Messiaen--though from that clip it sounds like it might not stay firmly in the background...

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by hedgehog on Sat, 06 Dec 2008 02:00:57 GMT
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Quote:On my trusty Kawasaki A7, if you’re trying to keep track. –Trusty? What am I saying? LOL! ROFLMAO! Ow, ow, OW! Rotary valves! Points-&-coil! OW!

By way of a nomination for Most Polarizing Piece Of Music Ever, how about Four Organs by Steve Reich? It has a structure, but certainly no tune -- and perhaps I am all alone in liking it? :)

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by jmeadows on Sat, 06 Dec 2008 02:19:40 GMT
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Quote:Click on ‘Daniel plays Messiaen’ on the right, and . . . sit back. You may want to hang onto your chair.

No kidding! That's some intense music. Pretty awesome, though. Thanks!

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten

Posted by Susan from Athens on Sat, 06 Dec 2008 02:58:23 GMT
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Well I haven't heard Four Organs, but I like quite a bit of Steve Reich, especially in live performance, because his pieces have a really choreographic quality. I love Different Trains, and how simple things add up to this massive confluence of emotion and turbulence, I enjoy Triple Quartet and Music for 18 Musicians. And most particularly clapping music, which is all, well clapping.

Bartok, yes please, Messiaen, not yet. And no Kancheli, either. I did hear a rather lovely atonal piece by Boulez played by some of the Mahler Chamber Orchestra last month. I found it fascinating, but not music I would listen to at home. I do find it fascinating and stimulating in the concert hall however.

It's funny how you write music in a medium or soundscape that you wouldn't have chosen if anyone had waved a magic wand and said choose. I'm bilingual from birth, and read almost exclusively English language books and poetry (with odd bits of French here and there), but when I write poetry - mostly nonsense verse and none of it any good, I write in Greek. You wonder what comes wandering out of your subconscious, don't you?

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by blondviolinist on Sat, 06 Dec 2008 05:15:12 GMT
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As soon as I saw the title of this blog post, I squealed in glee. I love these composers! (Britten, unfortunately, I am not as familiar with as I would like, but I have played several of his pieces before, including the Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings.)

My first experience with Messiaen was the Quator pour la fin du Temps. It was an incredible faculty performance in a room completely darkened except for the musicians' stand lights. I felt like I'd stepped into an entirely different universe. He really does manage to create a seemingly timeless space within that piece. (It doesn't hurt that the closing movement is an incredibly gorgeous violin solo.)

And Bartok... Bartok is one of the composers I could never, ever, live without. (He's also one of the composers that I probably would not have understood at all when I was in high school. Fortunately for me, I wasn't introduced to his music until my ears were ready to listen.) I had the opportunity to take an incredible theory class on Bartok with one of the rising stars of Bartok scholarship. Wow! A whole semester on his music, and I came out of it more in love with his music than ever. What's more, I halfway understood what he was doing compositionally, which considering how complicated and brilliant he is, is saying something. (My browser's spellchecker

doesn't like the word "compositionally." It obviously needs to hang out with more musicians.)

Ok, must stop before I spiral off into the heaven of twentieth-century music.

P.S. I don't particularly care for Schoenberg, either, but Hindemith I love. His viola works...

OK, I really must stop.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Diane in MN on Sat, 06 Dec 2008 07:08:56 GMT
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Line blondviolinist, the first Messiaen I heard was the Quatuor pour la fin du temps, and I liked it very much. I like Vingt regards sur l'enfant-Jesus also. After reading an essay on Messiaen's opera Saint Francois d'Assise, I tracked down a recording; I wanted to listen to it in peace and quiet in the car, but I found that I need the libretto. (I also need something like five undisturbed hours--this is why a car trip seemed like the perfect venue--so this is a so-far uncompleted project.) The public radio program Pipedreams (organ music) had an all-Messiaen show a couple of weeks ago in honor of his centenary--the link to the web page is
http://pipedreams.publicradio.org

Have you come across or read Alex Ross's book The Rest Is Noise? Ross is classical music critic for The New Yorker and this book is a history of 20th century music. It recently came out in paper and is on my to-be-read pile right now. I'm feeling about ready for a spell of non-fiction.

In the meantime, the Met is broadcasting Tristan tomorrow afternoon, and if it doesn't snow I'll be listening in the van while taking Teddy to St. Cloud to meet our handlers. Listening with *no interruptions*. Car trips do have plusses. :)

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by L.R.K. on Sat, 06 Dec 2008 10:14:24 GMT
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It must have been - oh, twenty-five years ago or so - when I heard this awful racket; I rushed into the living-room, desperately trying to figure out where it came from - it was all banging as if someone was doing construction - and then my gaze fell on the radio and I saw it was on - I stared at it for a while longer before I realised - it was supposed to be music! Ugh!

Just apropos modern composers - about which I know absolutely nothing at all... :)

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by kmallon2002 on Sat, 06 Dec 2008 10:44:45 GMT
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I was recently given a piano and am working my way back into playing something resembling music. I like the following websites for sheet music:
http://imslp.org/wiki/Main_Page
http://choralwiki.net/wiki/index.php/Main_Page
(I like the choralwiki page mostly because my primary music outlet at this point is vocal...and I found Monteverdi's "Beatus Vir" on this website...which I am determined to perform some day before I die!)
Those two websites are for public domain pieces.
I also like 8notes.com: they have a good variety of sheet music for a lot of different instruments, many of which you can download for free...although I have found that some of the pieces are not transcribed correctly....but you get what you pay for, right?
I am still looking for a copy of Anton Rubinstein's "The Advent",though.

I know whtat you mean about the music suddenly making sense: my husband is a jazz freak and I am not. I remember going with him to see Bill Frisell and Wayne Horwitz, and it was like spending an evening at a dinner party where nobody spoke English, and then there was one song that ended with a straight-ahead rock and roll riff and I "got it". I call that my "light bulb going on" moment. After that, I started to catch a word or two of what was going on in the musical conversation. I'm still learning the vocabulary and grammar, but I can almost get around on my own now.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Guest on Sat, 06 Dec 2008 16:37:10 GMT
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Oh this brings back memories.

My piano teacher informed me one year that, to compete in the competitions the following spring, I would have to learn a modern piece. I almost _died_. I was a Bach fan through and through and found modern music to be a mockery of Bach's clean work.

I learned Bartok's Bagatelle No.2. I hated every phrase of it and my teacher let me change to

'Blue' and "Orange" from Robert Starer's "Sketches in Color". I can't remember if I placed in the competition but I do remember my hate of Bartok.

I've mellowed in over the years and have come to appreciate modern music. With all this talk about Britten, I think I'm going to have to check him out. My obsession at the moment is Irish Folk so the jump to Britten shouldn't be too hard. (I think)

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by ssshunt on Sat, 06 Dec 2008 17:38:49 GMT
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I know you love classical music and opera, Robin, but what about good solid REAL rock?

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Robin on Sat, 06 Dec 2008 23:02:21 GMT
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Radio Three played St Francis not too long ago and as a result I have it on my list (although nothing much *happens* in a funny way. I've listened to too much Verdi and Mozart. I'm not to be trusted about this either however--I have a similar reaction to Tristan. You have love, death, betrayal, murder, etc--certainly enough going on--but listening to it it still sounds like several people standing around moaning. I seem to be having a slight retrogression on my increased understanding of Wagner.) I haven't even checked to see if there's more than one recording--please let us know if yours is a good one.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Ithilien on Sat, 06 Dec 2008 23:04:38 GMT
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My favourite piece of modern music was the piece I played for Grade 8 piano. It was so full of dissonances that the examiner couldn't hear the mistakes...

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Black Bear on Sat, 06 Dec 2008 23:06:28 GMT

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Ithilien wrote on Sat, 06 December 2008 18:04My favourite piece of modern music was the piece I played for Grade 8 piano. It was so full of dissonances that the examiner couldn't hear the mistakes...

Ah god, that's great! :) I should have made a play for doing more modern pieces when I took viola, could have saved me a lot of grief...

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Robin on Sat, 06 Dec 2008 23:06:45 GMT
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Rebecca WinkleBeam wrote on Sat, 06 December 2008 11:37Oh this brings back memories.

My piano teacher informed me one year that, to compete in the competitions the following spring, I would have to learn a modern piece. I almost _died_. I was a Bach fan through and through and found modern music to be a mockery of Bach's clean work.

I learned Bartok's Bagatelle No.2. I hated every phrase of it and my teacher let me change to 'Blue' and "Orange" from Robert Starer's "Sketches in Color". I can't remember if I placed in the competition but I do remember my hate of Bartok.

I've mellowed in over the years and have come to appreciate modern music. With all this talk about Britten, I think I'm going to have to check him out. My obsession at the moment is Irish Folk so the jump to Britten shouldn't be too hard. (I think)

(Okay, why isn't the box thing working? THIS IS ROBIN TALKING) Then start with Britten's folk song arrangements. I'm completely blown away by his Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard. **Completely** blown away although the recording of it I have is not satisfactory. Warning: it's not in the standard collections. But all his folk song arrangements are interesting. I also love his cabaret songs--Auden's Tell Me the Truth About Love is another big favourite.

And do look at poor Bartok again--he used a lot of folk music you know!!

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Robin on Sat, 06 Dec 2008 23:11:29 GMT
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What's the emphasis on REAL? It's all REAL, depending on your point of view.

Part me from my more-or-less-complete-barring-obsessive-collecting-of-pirate -stuff Led Zep at your peril. And I'm still collecting Plant (although I thought the recent duet one was disappointing).

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by hedgehog on Sun, 07 Dec 2008 01:18:44 GMT
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Quote:It's all REAL, depending on your point of view.
Does anyone here listen to Afro Celt Sound System? How about Gjallarhorn?

And -- speaking of REAL -- I've counted *at least three* bagpipers who are members of this forum :)

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by judith on Sun, 07 Dec 2008 01:56:16 GMT
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Quote:I don’t do twelve-tone, I don’t do atonal, I don’t do Hindemith or Schoenberg and I seriously don’t do Webern.
Hmmm. I don't know that it's QUITE fair to put Hindemith in the same category with "twelve-tone" and "atonal" and Schoenberg and Webern. Hindemith I can hum. Once I get the ballet "The Four Temperaments" in my head, it's stuck there (as it is now, thanks to you bringing him up -- sigh). The other two -- noise as far as I'm concerned. I had to learn stuff by them for college choir. It certainly challenges you as a musician, especially when your director mixes people up and you don't even stand next to people singing your part. But I pity the poor parents having to listen to it. Cats fighting is more interesting.

Quote:But Messiaen . . . don’t make me laugh. No way I’m going to engage with him.

. . .

I went in today planning to ask Oisin–who is also a sheet music source, I think I’ve told you–if he could find sheet music for the Woodlark from Messiaen’s catalogue d’oiseaux and Vingt regards sur l’enfant-Jesus.
The one piece by Messiaen that I've really liked was the first one I heard -- on the radio, which was "Vingt regards sur l’enfant-Jesus". I've never managed to get a recording. Considering that I first heard it on the radio as an undergraduate, there must be one out there somewhere by now. His other stuff would probably grow on me if I gave it a chance. I do like the other 20th century French guys quite a lot. Durufle, Widor, etc. I'm particularly fond of the Widor Sixth Organ Symphony. If you want your socks blown off, give it a try.

Quote:And in case you’d like to try a little thrilling Messiaen organ music for yourself, http://www.danielmoult.com/index.php Click on ‘Daniel plays Messiaen’ on the right, and . . . sit back. You may want to hang onto your chair.
Yup. Right up my alley! I DO like having my socks blown off.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Reading Angel on Sun, 07 Dec 2008 04:29:25 GMT
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Now I know why Shelley likes hanging out in the fibercrafting thread - I'm not a musician and most of the stuff goes over my head, but it sure does sound pretty when you talk about it...

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Black Bear on Sun, 07 Dec 2008 04:40:43 GMT
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Robin wrote on Sat, 06 December 2008 18:11
Part me from my more-or-less-complete-barring-obsessive-collecting-of-pirate -stuff Led Zep at your peril. And I'm still collecting Plant (although I thought the recent duet one was disappointing).

What're your feelings on Pink Floyd? :)

The only band I'm even remotely a completist on is Jethro Tull; I'm still toiling my way through replacing my old LP collection with CD's and/or digital versions... There's still a few I don't have in either form, and I've not been aggressive about picking up Ian Anderson's solo stuff. Some day, though.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Black Bear on Sun, 07 Dec 2008 04:51:38 GMT
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And incidentally, anyone who's interested--check out the Pandora Radio website. It lets you tap into a thing called the Music Genome Project; they've got an audio library of thousands of artists, tagged with various attributes, and if you sign up for an account (free!) you can "create" a online radio station based on something you know you like. Pandora will then stream for you music that's been tagged with those same attributes--so if I create the "Jethro Tull Station" for myself, Pandora plays in my browser a mix of Tull, Zeppelin, Steeleye Span, Floyd, Yes, etc.... Very interesting, very cool, and a neat way of hearing more artists that I might not have encountered before, but I'm inclined to like. It's not perfect (my "Gregorian Chant" station has been playing me a lot of acoustic folky stuff that is not what I'm looking for when I'm in a Gregorian mood) but it's pretty good. I've been using it a lot at work, just keep one of my browser windows open with it and I've got music to work by all day.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by blondviolinist on Sun, 07 Dec 2008 05:26:57 GMT
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Quote: I don't know that it's QUITE fair to put Hindemith in the same category with "twelve-tone" and "atonal" and Schoenberg and Webern.

Hindemith isn't atonal or twelve-tone, but he doesn't use "common-practice period" tonality, either. (In other words, he doesn't use standard major/minor keys.) He actually came up with his own rather complicated tonal system about the same time Schoenberg was developing twelve-tone, but Schoenberg got the press and the academic popularity, and Hindemith got the historical footnote status. It's all about who had students who went on to teach at prestigious universities and conservatories.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten

Posted by Diane in MN on Sun, 07 Dec 2008 05:37:45 GMT
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judith wrote on Sat, 06 December 2008 19:56
The one piece by Messiaen that I've really liked was the first one I heard -- on the radio, which was "Vingt regards sur l’enfant-Jesus". I've never managed to get a recording. Considering that I first heard it on the radio as an undergraduate, there must be one out there somewhere by now. His other stuff would probably grow on me if I gave it a chance. I do like the other 20th century French guys quite a lot. Durufle, Widor, etc. I'm particularly fond of the Widor Sixth Organ Symphony. If you want your socks blown off, give it a try.

My recording of Vingt regards is by Joanna MacGregor and put out by Collins Classics, a British label; the copyright is 1996 by Lambourne Productions Ltd. I've never seen another recording, but the classical sections of what passes for record/CD stores these days don't run to much Messiaen, and since I don't need another copy I've never checked out the web.

The only Durufle I know is the requiem, which I love. And of course I also love the Widor toccata but that seems to be the only piece of his that gets air time--and I don't remember which symphony it's from. Now that we are in the TWENTY-FIRST century, you'd think the 20th-century guys would get played more, but so far that hasn't happened.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Diane in MN on Sun, 07 Dec 2008 05:54:33 GMT
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Robin wrote on Sat, 06 December 2008 17:02Radio Three played St Francis not too long ago and as a result I have it on my list (although nothing much *happens* in a funny way. I've listened to too much Verdi and Mozart. I'm not to be trusted about this either however--I have a similar reaction to Tristan. You have love, death, betrayal, murder, etc--certainly enough going on--but listening to it it still sounds like several people standing around moaning. I seem to be having a slight retrogression on my increased understanding of Wagner.) I haven't even checked to see if there's more than one recording--please let us know if yours is a good one.

The quick skim of notes and libretto I did when I regretfully unloaded Saint-francois from the car CD player seemed to suggest that the piece is more like a series of tableaux than continuous action, each one preceded by either a fast or a slow musical introduction. The recording I have is by Nagano and I *think* the Paris opera. I suspect that there has not been a rush to make more recordings. I will report back.

Don't you think that in Tristan the action is secondary to the characters' reflections about it?

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by cgbookcat1 on Sun, 07 Dec 2008 06:31:26 GMT
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kmallon2002 said: Quote:and I found Monteverdi's "Beatus Vir" on this website...which I am determined to perform some day before I die!

Do you need a 1st or 2nd soprano? I'll volunteer! I can convince my boyfriend to take on the tenor part if need be.

I have an aversion to organ music and haven't heard much Messiaen, but I love Bartok.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Guest on Sun, 07 Dec 2008 09:57:15 GMT
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Does anyone use this book? Amazon Germany won't let me look inside it. Currently I play the Celtic harp more than the piano, problem being that accidentals are difficult on a non-pedal harp. If someone has this book would it be possible to throw a glance inside and see if there are major key changes? Occasional sharps and flats aren't a problem. (Yes I could order it and see ... however then I would keep it and, as I don't like playing on my keyboard, I won't use it.)

I looked for Britten in my normal on-line harp music shop. It was a quick search. Anytime I spend more than 5 minutes there I end up with a full shopping basket and an empty bank account.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Guest on Sun, 07 Dec 2008 09:59:47 GMT
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cgbookcat1 wrote on Sun, 07 December 2008 07:31kmallon2002 said: Quote:and I found Monteverdi's "Beatus Vir" on this website...which I am determined to perform some day before I die!

Do you need a 1st or 2nd soprano? I'll volunteer! I can convince my boyfriend to take on the tenor part if need be.

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Let me know when the performance will be! :)

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Susan from Athens on Sun, 07 Dec 2008 13:54:35 GMT
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judith wrote on Sun, 07 December 2008 03:56The one piece by Messiaen that I've really liked was the first one I heard -- on the radio, which was "Vingt regards sur l’enfant-Jesus". I've never managed to get a recording. Considering that I first heard it on the radio as an undergraduate, there must be one out there somewhere by now.

Here's three with excerpts for you: by Madeleine Forte, Alberto Rosado, and http://www.emusic.com/album/Various-Artists-LISZT-Weihnachts baum-REGER-Maria-Wiegenlied-MP3-Download/10911734.html, the last of which is Christmas piano music of a not entirely traditional but classical type.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by ssshunt on Sun, 07 Dec 2008 18:58:14 GMT
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Robin, I guess I emphasized real the way I did so you wouldn't think I was talking about bubblegum heavy metal, pop-rock, etc. Led Zep--oh yes, yes. Metallica. I like Pink Floyd too, but not all their stuff. I like rock with real guts--oh, Robin Trower is wonderful, and I saw them live, and I got the vapors when they did "Bridge of Sighs." Music needs to be a little raw to grab me. Does that make sense?

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Robin on Mon, 08 Dec 2008 00:36:40 GMT
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Black Bear wrote on Sat, 06 December 2008 23:51And incidentally, anyone who's interested--check out the Pandora Radio website. It lets you tap into a thing called the Music Genome Project; they've got an audio library of thousands of artists, tagged with various attributes, and if you sign up for an account (free!) you can "create" a online radio station based on something you know you like. Pandora will then stream for you music that's been tagged with those same attributes--so if I create the "Jethro Tull Station" for myself, Pandora plays in my browser a mix of Tull, Zeppelin, Steeleye Span, Floyd, Yes, etc.... Very interesting, very cool, and a neat way of hearing more artists that I might not have encountered before, but I'm inclined to like. It's not perfect (my "Gregorian Chant" station has been playing me a lot of acoustic folky stuff that is not what I'm looking for when I'm in a Gregorian mood) but it's pretty good. I've been using it a lot at work, just keep one of my browser windows open with it and I've got music to work by all

day.

Yes. Except it doesn't work in England. Grrrrr.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
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What're your feelings on Pink Floyd? :)

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I have mixed feelings about the Floyd; I loved them in the day but feel now they were perhaps trying for effect a little hard. And I'm not a big fan of gloomy for the sake of being gloomy.

I do have a considerable weakness for Jethro Tull however. :)

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Robin on Mon, 08 Dec 2008 00:44:17 GMT
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Diane in MN wrote on Sun, 07 December 2008 00:54Robin wrote on Sat, 06 December 2008 17:02Radio Three played St Francis not too long ago and as a result I have it on my list (although nothing much *happens* in a funny way. I've listened to too much Verdi and Mozart. I'm not to be trusted about this either however--I have a similar reaction to Tristan. You have love, death, betrayal, murder, etc--certainly enough going on--but listening to it it still sounds like several people standing around moaning. I seem to be having a slight retrogression on my increased

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Don't you think that in Tristan the action is secondary to the characters' reflections about it?

Series of tableaux--yes, I think you're right. I think I feel a faint stir of memory that Radio Three said something similar. Yes, absolutely, about Tristan, which is I think what I'm having trouble with. I have an upper limit to people standing around clutching themselves and agonising. Doooooo get on with it. You know, make a decision! ANY decision, just MAKE one! Although Isolde's self-willed demise is pretty impressive.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Black Bear on Mon, 08 Dec 2008 01:06:57 GMT
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Robin wrote on Sun, 07 December 2008 19:36
Yes. Except it doesn't work in England. Grrrrr.

Oh bugger, seriously??

Argh, now I see it in the FAQ--licensing issues. They do say they're working on international permissions, but--drat. Well, you can use my ZIP code to register, if you like... but it may yet not work if you're on a UK internet provider.

Quote:And I'm not a big fan of gloomy for the sake of being gloomy.

Yes, I have a rule I can't listen to Floyd when I'm depressed, it encourages the downward spiral. :)

Quote:I do have a considerable weakness for Jethro Tull however. :)

We'll have to compare favorite tracks sometime. :) I woke up this morning with part of "Thick as a

Brick" stuck in my head, don't know what was up with that...

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Susan from Athens on Mon, 08 Dec 2008 08:55:25 GMT
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I listen to Pandora very occasionally. It's only for the US but I used the one zip code I could remember 90210. Pandora thinks I'm Susan from Beverly Hills (No I didn't watch the show). Naughty me.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by judith on Mon, 08 Dec 2008 18:52:31 GMT
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Diane in MN wrote on Sun, 07 December 2008 00:37My recording of Vingt regards is by Joanna MacGregor and put out by Collins Classics, a British label; the copyright is 1996 by Lambourne Productions Ltd. I've never seen another recording, but the classical sections of what passes for record/CD stores these days don't run to much Messiaen, and since I don't need another copy I've never checked out the web.

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Thanks, ladies! You inspired me to listen to excerpts and go out and find a copy. Amazon had some fine recordings and I picked one out and ordered it. (And all, of course, done since the stone age when I was an undergrad.) I do love internet shopping. More precisely, I hate shopping in person.

Diane in MN wrote on Sun, 07 December 2008 00:37The only Durufle I know is the requiem, which I love. And of course I also love the Widor toccata but that seems to be the only piece of his that gets air time--and I don't remember which symphony it's from. Now that we are in the TWENTY-FIRST century, you'd think the 20th-century guys would get played more, but so far that hasn't happened.
The Requiem is magnificent. The ending makes my hair stand on end, no matter how many times I sing it or hear it.

The Widor toccata is, I believe, from his Fifth Organ Symphony -- the last movement. That one's pretty good too, but I do love the Sixth.

Another HUGE favorite of mine is Charles Tournemire's "Improvisations sur la Te Deum". It used to open a radio program I listened to in college, and I couldn't for the life of me figure out what it was, because no one ever said what it was. And once it was played on the radio, and I couldn't make out the name of the composer or the name of the work. After many, many years, I FINALLY caught it on the radio and managed to find a copy of a CD while visiting the bookstore at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in NYC. LOVE that piece! I can't find an excerpt to post, but if anyone else can, it's well worth your while.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Mrs Redboots on Mon, 08 Dec 2008 19:18:51 GMT
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Robin wrote on Mon, 08 December 2008 00:36Black Bear wrote on Sat, 06 December 2008 23:51And incidentally, anyone who's interested--check out the Pandora Radio website.

Yes. Except it doesn't work in England. Grrrrr.

I made it work for me by putting in a friend's zip code (she didn't mind) from her USA address! Which is probably illegal, but there are similar projects over here. Even Classic FM's "My Classic FM" is quite good, but if you tell it you like too many things, it plays nothing but those things when what you wanted was stuff _like_ that. Sigh....

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Diane in MN on Tue, 09 Dec 2008 05:35:39 GMT
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judith wrote on Mon, 08 December 2008 12:52
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Thanks, Judith. I kind of thought that the Widor toccata was from the 5th. I will have to make a note of the Tournemire and see if I can find a copy.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Susan from Athens on Tue, 09 Dec 2008 08:02:57 GMT
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judith wrote on Mon, 08 December 2008 20:52
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Here is one excerpt :)

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Grinkler on Tue, 09 Dec 2008 21:22:55 GMT
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Robin wrote:...And Bach, who was quite extraordinarily a rebel and a pioneer: a cliché I know but I’m only just learning it for myself...
Don't worry about it - it takes even most people who study music for their whole lives (including, of course, those who waver off and on for their whole lives) much longer than it took you (you've been studying music hardcore like this only for a few years, right? Or is it even less than that?) to come to appreciate how innovative people like Bach were. I was in the middle of the prelude to one of his cello suites last month when I thought to myself, "Geez, this is actually kind of atonal..." and suddenly had a lot more respect for him than I had two minutes before. XD

And speaking of Bartok, you should hear his Romanian Folk Dances, it RULES! I don't remember if it started out as an orchestral suite or if it was originally for cello and piano - I've played both

versions - but it's just so awesome! I think you'd love it. Now I've gotta go find Mikrokosmos!

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Grinkler on Tue, 09 Dec 2008 21:32:35 GMT
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blondviolinist wrote on Sat, 06 December 2008 00:15Bartok is one of the composers I could never, ever, live without...Ok, must stop before I spiral off into the heaven of twentieth-century music.

P.S. I don't particularly care for Schoenberg, either, but Hindemith I love. His viola works...

OK, I really must stop.
AAAHHH I AGREE COMPLETELY!!! Well, I've actually never heard Messiaen, but I agree with everything about Bartok - and Hindemith!! I could curl up and listen to Symphonic Metamorphoses all day long...I heard one of my friends perform a viola piece by Hindemith, and I was totally enthralled the whole time.

And yes, the heaven of twentieth-century music...Shostakovich is the composer I could never live without. I become a complete basket case whenever I listen to his fifth...And then there's Vaughan Williams...Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis...Okay, now I have to stop too.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Julia on Tue, 09 Dec 2008 23:40:06 GMT
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Speaking of music...
Have you read THIS book?

[Bach, Beethoven and The Boys: Music History as it Ought to be Taught]

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Robin on Tue, 09 Dec 2008 23:41:21 GMT
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Grinkler wrote on Tue, 09 December 2008 16:22Robin wrote:...And Bach, who was quite extraordinarily a rebel and a pioneer: a cliché I know but I’m only just learning it for myself...

Don't worry about it - it takes even most people who study music for their whole lives (including, of course, those who waver off and on for their whole lives) much longer than it took you (you've been studying music hardcore like this only for a few years, right? Or is it even less than that?) to come to appreciate how innovative people like Bach were. I was in the middle of the prelude to one of his cello suites last month when I thought to myself, "Geez, this is actually kind of atonal..." and suddenly had a lot more respect for him than I had two minutes before. XD

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I'd had bits of those Simple Little Pieces for Beginners that Bach liked to throw off in my ear somehow, thinking uneasily that they didn't really sound all that simple even though I couldn't exactly tell you why . . . and then Oisin sat down and played a few bits for me from various things (not the Simple Littles) and I thought . . . oh! :)

I LOVE the Romanian Folk Dance stuff! But I think I only know it/them orchestrally. . . .

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Robin on Tue, 09 Dec 2008 23:43:56 GMT
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Oh, listen to Vaughan Williams' symphonies!!

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Robin on Tue, 09 Dec 2008 23:49:31 GMT
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No. I assume you're recommending it? :)

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Julia on Tue, 09 Dec 2008 23:52:30 GMT
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Mhm.
Well, I like it.

I've had it forever... I think I got it as a present quite a few years ago. But it is really interesting and amusing too. Hmm... I think it is time for a reread. But that'll have to wait till I am home again in a week and a bit. sigh. Oh, finals. What fun.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by b_twin_1 on Tue, 09 Dec 2008 23:54:41 GMT
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Grinkler wrote on Tue, 09 December 2008 16:32...And then there's Vaughan Williams...Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis...Okay, now I have to stop too.

Oh! I just looked that up and found one version on youtube. Thank you! :)

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by blondviolinist on Wed, 10 Dec 2008 02:02:42 GMT
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Oh, FYI, the Roumanian Folk Dances were originally for piano, then Bartok arranged them for string orchestra. Zoltan Szekely did the arrangement for violin and piano, so he and Bartok could play the dances in their joint recitals. I don't know who did the cello and piano version.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Grinkler on Wed, 10 Dec 2008 02:04:46 GMT
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Robin wrote on Tue, 09 December 2008 18:43Oh, listen to Vaughan Williams' symphonies!! AAAHH YOU'RE RIGHT!!! *runs off to find them*

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Diane in MN on Wed, 10 Dec 2008 06:21:23 GMT
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Thanks for posting the Tournemire excerpt, Susan. Are you doing OK amidst the rioting? ::sends good wishes::

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Susan from Athens on Wed, 10 Dec 2008 19:30:53 GMT
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Diane in MN wrote on Wed, 10 December 2008 08:21Thanks for posting the Tournemire excerpt, Susan. Are you doing OK amidst the rioting? ::sends good wishes::

You're welcome Diane. Thanks for the good wishes. Yes there were some incidents today, but so far tonight it is far quieter. Everybody is somewhat shell-shocked as you might imagine. A friend sent me a marvellous quotation that struck me as entirely apropos (and which I will translate somewhat hastily here):

"Our Democracy is self-destructing because the right of freedom and equality has been embezzled; because it has taught its citizens to consider insolence to be a right; wrongdoing to be liberty; impertinence in speech to be equality; and anarchy to be bliss."

This was written by Isocrates in the fourth century BC. Could hardly be more appropriate for these last few days, could it?

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by L.R.K. on Wed, 10 Dec 2008 19:39:49 GMT
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It's brilliant.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by ssshunt on Wed, 10 Dec 2008 20:17:10 GMT
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Take extra care, Susan.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Susan from Athens on Wed, 10 Dec 2008 20:37:11 GMT
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I am, Shelley. Hyper aware of surroundings, walking purposefully instead of meandering around, checking out noises and all that. Also getting hourly reports from my mother and aunt about what

is going on.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by ssshunt on Wed, 10 Dec 2008 20:46:36 GMT
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Good. Thinking of you.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by shalea on Wed, 10 Dec 2008 21:16:05 GMT
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Definitely lots of folks thinking about you! Stay as safe as possible.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Erika in Colorado on Wed, 10 Dec 2008 21:41:45 GMT
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Susan, I love the quote! I've been thinking about you and praying for your safety. I either have bad timing or our news just sucks, because I haven't seen anything about Athens lately. Hope it's all over soon.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Susan from Athens on Wed, 10 Dec 2008 22:41:48 GMT
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Thanks everyone for your kind thoughts and prayers. They are very much appreciated.

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Robin on Wed, 10 Dec 2008 23:12:08 GMT
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Okay. Must look up piano version. :) (I am terribly ignorant. I've loved music all my life, and listened to it all my life, but having early declared myself Clearly Not Musical, I've never paid

proper attention and now I'm suddenly trying to catch up. Ak.)

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by blondviolinist on Thu, 11 Dec 2008 04:21:35 GMT
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:d I wouldn't have known about the many versions of the Roumanian Folk Dances if I hadn't had to write program notes on them at one point in time. (I played the violin version on an undergrad recital.)

The original name is "Román népi táncok," if that helps your search :)

(I think I stick to my silly version of the English spelling b/c that's how my Boosey&Hawkes edition spells it.)

Oh, BTW, I get to play in the pit orchestra for Madama Butterfly in a month. Hurrah!

Subject: Re: Messiaen, Bartok and Britten
Posted by Diane in MN on Thu, 11 Dec 2008 07:14:32 GMT
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Susan from Athens wrote on Wed, 10 December 2008 13:30
This was written by Isocrates in the fourth century BC. Could hardly be more appropriate for these last few days, could it?

No; as is so often the case with those old guys, he spoke in universals. People should place more value on a classical education. Although from the description I've heard of how the boy was killed, there was genuine grievance and not simply insolence and impertinence behind the crowd's reaction.