

45 Gray Path,  
Aldersburgh,  
Suffolk.

Sunday 21st  
K54.

Dear Tony, Thank you for saying that I might write to  
you about commercial T.V. I'll try & make it as short as  
possible.

For years & years I've been waiting to do something about  
making it possible for people to learn to read music: - such  
a lot is done for "musical appreciation" and very little  
about learning the musical alphabet. Schools are handicapped  
by too large numbers in their classes & by non-specialist  
teachers who've had training in the conventional methods  
but are unable to pass on what they've learnt in a  
40 minute singing class once a week. And so people leave  
school with inevitable muddles in their heads, not knowing  
why the five lines are not equidistant in sound  
and thinking that sharps & flats are utterly illogical. So that

2

a lot of time + energy is wasted while taking choir practices of St Nicolas or choral rehearsals of Gleasons.

At a conference a couple of years ago I met Roger Fiske who was then head of Schools broadcasting, & asked him if something could be done about televising singing, because film plus sound track is a unique opportunity for making it simple and entertaining in the real sense of the word. He was interested, but then he was moved to another department.

Recently several things have happened which have made us want to pursue the idea again. First of all there was the correspondence in the Observer about "Looking at Music" where no-one seemed to have an inkling of the many possibilities. Then there was a short paragraph in the Evening Standard saying that the Bedfordshire educational authorities had spent £800 on TV sets for schools, in preparation for the big educational drive in 1955 TV. So I went to Broadcasting House, only to learn that their experimental educational TV planned for the next



5

Six months has been cancelled!

Then Johnstons took me all over his workshop and I wondered if something could be done with films or television, on the "how it works" principle, so that people (groups as well as children) could realise that music is thoroughly practical and scientific and that the alphabet is as straightforward as any other alphabet. I thought out a good many possibilities for a very short weekly programme on commercial TV, on a "factory to consumer" basis, making everything pictorial and linking it to the appropriate sounds in such a way that it never seemed like imparting information but was rather in the tradition of the best documentaries. I can't give you more than a few details in a letter, but this is the

sort of idea:—

### Instrument making

Shaping of the brass —  
horn — the sound of the  
horn — then a close-up

A french horn:— the  
comparing it with a hunting  
open harmonics of the hunting  
of modern valves working, with

5

the size of a line =  $\frac{1}{2}$  semitone.

Also oboes — the sound of the reed being sucked before tuning up, followed by a close-up of an unclim sticking a blade of grass between his thumbs and blowing through it.

Also drum-making, with a demonstration of chromatic tings.

Acoustics could be approached through seeing how a ~~rough~~ granular record is made, with lots of points not taught at the royal schools of music (!) such as the illusion of the relative flattening of pitch with the increase of volume, illustrated by the solitary tuning-in note of the RBC which they could test for themselves.

Also some of the non-copyright information about killing unwanted sounds by electronic control, which would link up with architects + builders. (There are firms which advertise booklets about solving the problems of noise in blocks of flats — it might be worth their while to contribute to the cost of 3 mins on TV.)

Learning to read could begin with watching engravers at work. Then a glimpse of a 5th



5

the size of a line =  $\frac{1}{2}$  semitone.

Also oboes — the sound of the reed being sucked before tuning up, followed by a close-up of an unclim sticking a blade of grass between his thumbs and blowing through it.

Also drum-making, with a demonstration of chromatic tings.



Acoustics could be approached through seeing how a ~~rough~~ granular record is made, with lots of points not taught at the royal schools of music (!) such as the illusion of the relative flattening of pitch with the increase of volume, illustrated by the solitary tuning-in note of the BBC which they could test for themselves.


Also some of the non-copyright information about killing unwanted sounds by electronic control, which would link up with architects + builders. (There are firms which advertise booklets about solving the problems of noise in blocks of flats — it might be worth their while to contribute to the cost of 3 mins on TV.)

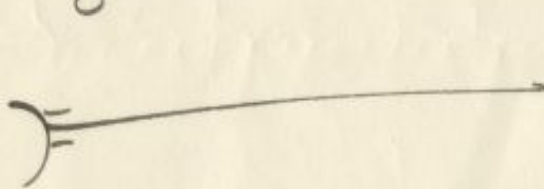
Learning to read could begin with watching engravers at work. Then a glimpse of a 5th

6

century manuscript of simple up-and-down neumes (with a fragment of a Solesmes record) followed by a singing class in a Walden school learning a tune by solfa (to get the idea of relationship to a tonic) and then back to the engravers, showing how

 and  can be reduced to

 "This line represents G"

 "This line represents F"

which is straight-forward + no numbo-jumbo about it.

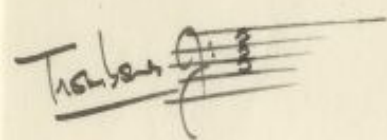
Counterpoint :- with a waving graph of curved lines following the shape of a 3 or 4 part round; - comparing this with the conflicting ripples in a pond that has had 2 stones thrown into it, and the patterns made by a flock of birds against the sky. (Great possibilities here, including singing rounds with the



7

listeners joining in.)

Janney: - the spacing of a chord + its inversions  
illustrated by graphs and moving cartoon figures,  
with the sound of vividly contrasted instruments, e.g.



Also listening to an inner part of a well-known chorale,  
with the mike nearest to that section of the choir, + the  
line printed twice as large in the score. (Further  
possibilities of the texture of chords: - melodramatic  
troubadour, the un-chord of a Viennese waltz,  
+ the serenading of a guitar, all with appropriate  
pictures.)

Back to instrument-making for equal temperament;  
watching an organ pipe being tuned, listening to  
a non-tempered scale - what happens to the octave.

8

Intervals : - the find with rows of intervals according to the increase of tension, with the sound, the mathematical formula  $\frac{1}{2}$   $\frac{1}{3}$   $\frac{1}{4}$  etc and human figures pulling a rope or lifting a heavy weight to illustrate the strain involved.

There are only a few of the possibilities. I am ~~hampered~~ by my ignorance of TV - my only experience of films was in Hollywood 20 years ago, & I don't know how costly it is to switch from one scene to another on TV. Then I'm ignorant of business firms, & don't know whether the Music Trade Association could ever pool their resources for such a ~~cause~~ <sup>cause</sup> as this. But I thought you'd know, and I thought you might agree that there would be something in it.

Yours ever,

Twaga.



# Musical Education on Television.

(Approx. 30 minutes per week.)  
Scheme for approx. 15 to 18 months.

## Introduction.

1. Musical Instruments. (How they work and how they are made.)
2. Active music making. (Singing and playing tunes.)
3. Harmony.
4. Technique. (Refresh courses for teachers.)
5. Traditional music.
6. Musical history.

## 1. Musical Instruments.

1. Clarinet (as suggested, with facts.)
2. Oboe & bassoon. Different kind of reed; - where it comes from: cutting reeds: trying them: player showing how reed is sucked and breath used sparingly (compare with flash-back to clarinet, a baguette, pupil asking expert why his notes make a bubbling sound: diagram of what happens when water gets in: (or Ayles, with idea of the longer the tube the lower the sound: Bassoon, with reason for extra bit for mouth piece (player trying to stretch full length without it) the idea of the different characteristics of the different levels of sound - sustained low notes - plaintive high notes, & staccato leaps all over the instrument, (always avoiding unfamiliar



technical terms) Short extract for 2 oboes and bassoon (e.g. Brandenburg)

3. Flute. Method of blowing. Show early instrument with holes instead of keys. Illustrate idea of blowing harder for upper octave. Primitive flutes - if possible an Indian bamboo flute being made, and played sideways - blow for a distance - Back to modern flute; - piccolos - flash-back to Young Person's Guide: - mention fife, and show childrens' fife band in procession; - mention recorder and show it being superbly played; back to orchestral flute and give short extract of cheerful woodwind quartet, with camera concentrating on each instrument and the player's hands.

4. Horn, (as suggested in y last letter to yr.)

5. Trumpet & Trombone. Show state trumpeters in full dress. Also coachman's trumpet. Then modern one, with valves. The note; how it is put in, and the sound it makes, pp and sfz.

Trombone :- the slides, how they work. A loud passage - (probably Wagner) then a quiet sustained one (e.g. Schuber's C.) Then bits of gramophone records with brass passages, for the audience to guess whether it's horns, trumpets or trombones. When the commentator says which instrument it is, there's a flash-back to the player in action.

6. Bass Band. Close-ups of Bb & Eb bombardons being played by grandfathers in a northern band. (They could tell of their band experiences.)



first of a concert platform.) A bit of a short movement of 5  
 a Haydn Quartet - a Serenade or Quintet + Trio, (with very  
 obvious characteristics of each instrument clearly coming out.)

String orchestra :- the difference. Illustrated by a bit of  
 a concerto grosso, alternating between soloists and tutti. The  
 conductor, and how he is the equivalent of the leader of the  
 quartet (flash back to leader bringing in Vn I, Vn II + VC after a silence)

11. Harp. A stringed instrument, yet different, because only  
 plucked w<sup>o</sup> bow. Why so many strings :- compare pizz. ~~of~~  
 open strings of violin & cello. How it is made. Compare early  
 small harps - division of wires between hands - the sound-board  
 and its ~~resonance~~ resonance - compare lute and guitar.

Back to wooden harp :- how the pedals work :- the big time  
 it takes to tune it. The arpeggio. The glissando. Harmonics. Then  
 close-up of harpist playing intalude for Ceremony of Carols.

12. The piano. Compare with harp, showing inside of concert grand.  
 Pull it to pieces, showing each detail of action. Why the ordinary  
 upright in the front sitting room doesn't sound as good as the concert  
 grand. Showing hammer felts worn down to the wood, protective  
 felts eaten by moths, action sticking owing to damp. Practical.  
 hints on looking after a piano. The piano in the orchestra - concerto.



Showing a very good craftsman with a half-made instrument.  
 Then fitting a sound-post to a finished violin. And adjusting  
 a bridge. Stringing it. Different materials for strings. The bow.  
 Re-hairing a bow. Posi:- How it comes from. The difference it  
 makes to the tone. The strain in lbs of a violin when strung.  
 How it is played. As in clarinet; - with player very slowly figuring  
 up and down a fret, showing tones + semitones. Different kinds  
 of bowing. Harmonics. Double stops. Pizzicato. The viola. A  
 short extract for one of the Mozart duos for violin + viola.  
 9. Cello and Double bass. Concentrate on the difference between the  
 violin + cello. A glimpse of early gambas + viols with carved heads  
 and frets:- the way the celloist manages without frets. A bit of  
 cheerful unaccompanied Bach played by someone who makes  
 it look + sound easy! Double bass:- difficulty of hearing low  
 notes - tuning by harmonics. Great ability of good players.  
 See virtuosos fireworks in solo C.B. and flash back to Young  
 Person's Guide.

10. String Quartet, + String Orchestra. First to string  
 quartet. The idea of chamber music and how they sit (have them  
 seated round an 18th cent. quality desk, then round  
 modern desks but in same position, show how impossible it would  
 be if they were spread out in a straight line along the



first of a concert platform.) A bit of a short movement of 5  
 a Haydn Quartet - a Serenade or Quintet + Trio, (with very  
 obvious characteristics of each instrument clearly coming out.)

String orchestra :- the difference. Illustrated by a bit of  
 a concerto grosso, alternating between soloists and tutti. The  
 conductor, and how he is the equivalent of the leader of the  
 quartet (flash back to leader bringing in Vn I, Vn II + VC after a silence)

11. Harp. A stringed instrument, yet different, because only  
 plucked w<sup>th</sup> bow. Why so many strings :- compare pizz. ~~of~~  
 open strings of violin & cello. How it is made. Compare early  
 small harps - division of wires between hands - the sound-board  
 and its ~~resonance~~ resonance - compare lute and guitar.

Back to wooden harp :- how the pedals work :- the big time  
 it takes to tune it. The arpeggio. The glissando. Harmonics. Then  
 close-up of harpist playing intrelude for Ceremony of Carols.

12. The piano. Compare with harp, showing inside of concert grand.  
 Pull it to pieces, showing each detail of action. Why the ordinary  
 upright in the front sitting room doesn't sound as good as the concert  
 grand. Showing hammer felts worn down to the wood, protective  
 felts eaten by moths, action sticking owing to damp. Practical.  
 hints on looking after a piano. The piano in the orchestra - concerto.



6.  
 In early music of keyboard & oboe, the harpsichord is used. Showing action and how the pedals work, with short passage illustrating tremolos resonance. But this would stay up to ff timbres - therefore back to oboe and modern piano.

13. Organ. How it is made. How it works. Close-up of student practicing slow pedal exercises. A Handel organ, and the difference in sound - compare with vast 19c cat. organ at full blast. Then Festival Organ which can give us both worlds, & suit our modern needs. How an organ pipe is tuned. Electronic organ. Compare electronic oboe stop with flash back to real instrument, ditto flute & trumpet. Acoustics. Back to real organ: - impossibility of hearing the note of a 64ft pedal. Sound waves, with some bits of figures and diagrams as suggested in my last letter.

14. Percussion, (1) From keyboard instruments, move to celesta. (bit of record, perhaps for Ballet Follet ballet) Xylophone (showing instrument from Malaya with huge gongs?) Cymbals - ancient instrument (showing small Asiatic cymbals?) Back to modern oboe and the way the clash collects all the other sounds and holds them. Triangle (its size compared with child's percussion band triangle) Gong (compared with dinner gong) bells (tubular.) Compare these with sound of church bells. Film of



church bells ringing, with Mike at foot of tree collecting all the overtones and differentials. Showing the casting of a bell & testing the surface for even note. Back to orchestral tubular bells which are the longest we could cope with in a concert hall. Notice the different lengths producing each note of the scale. Then change to tumblers of water on a kitchen table which the audience can try out for itself later on.

15. Percussion (cont.) Costumed (showing Spanish dance) tambourine

(ditto) the idea of a stretched skin - side-drum, timpani (compare Asiatic drums played with hands) The wooden chromatic timp. and how it works. A very short bit of Bartok or Stravinski for percussion, showing each instrument as it is played.

16. Play-back of Young Pussie Guido.

## 2. Music making.

1. Singing. Ordinary speech, street cries - a sailor hallooing at a distance across the water - what makes a note? picture of sound waves whisking, humming (audience doing both) Noise and music, showing first a sea glimpse of open (sit if possible audible words and obvious action!) then small children acting a singing game and dancing to the rhythm of their words.

2. Breathing. What happens. Diagrams. Push back to bellows of bagpipes.



Easy exercise they can do, trying at muscles. Lighted candles, etc.

Thinking the note: - learning a tune by imitation. Example of tune taught by note on screen, which audience can join in.

Things that go wrong: - 1) shouting (compare wild animal's roaring at Shippendale + football crowd.)

flash back to children singing well: idea of controlled excitement.

b) lack of excitement, flabby, close-up of bored female voices sounding flat and refined.

c) inaudible words - ex. of well-known song parodied by school choir without consonants.

Give examples of exercises including tongue-twisters (screen + audience)

Warning a example of ~~stutter~~ over-accented consonants which are meaningless.

Ex. of superb solo singer doing short folk song so that it makes sense.

3. Things that can go wrong, cont. Dragging and hurrying.

The conductor: - Shot he is for. Pendulum swinging, conductor's forearm

moving to & fro. Idea of pulse. Moving up & down. Glimpse of

Dancing feet, with sound of military band; - close-up of conductor's arm without the rest of him, superimposed on feet. Change to

skipping step, conductor as before.

Analyse down & up - lesson for children on screen with audience

joining in, of gestures for 2, 3 & 4 in a bar. The conductor has to control rubato & pauses (illustrate this by trial & error.)

4. Learning to sight-sing, (because one can't go on imitating only)



Music engraver: — quantity of sheet music being printed — 9.  
 page after page being held up for an instant. If this looks strange,  
 compare it with pages of any other unfamiliar language: hold up  
 page of Chinese, of Greek, of Arabic: — yet millions of  
 people read these without difficulty because it's their language.  
 Back to pages of music, and ~~see~~ see small boy sightreading  
 time for one of them. All that so needs to learn is: —

the high,	low	low
" short,	"	long
" thick,	"	slow
" led	"	soft.

Take high or low — (I've written out all these lessons in  
 detail, but obviously you can't cope with all the details now. They  
 are all pictorial and can be illustrated physically in the  
 audience's own room.) Tone, sentence, C to C with names of letters  
 written on screen, & even time units.

5. Reading, cont. Clef, staff, treble, bass, melodic intervals

within C to C.

6. Finding a tune too high to sing in C & therefore having to start  
 lower on G & the need for an F#  
 Ditto on F with " " a Bb.

7. Key signatures,

9. Time Scales — intervals (visual aids for semibreves in 2s, 6ts, <sup>10</sup>7ts)
9. Time. Long & short — flashback to marching + skipping feet, transform them into written notations or notations & quavers. Conductors beat: — bar-lines. Put time on store, (stop by step)
10. Quavers, Semiquavers. Rests. Children's percussion band sight-reading. Audience joining in with improvised instruments such as pencil tapped on wooden chair-leg, six pennies tied up in a handkerchief and shaken, etc.
11. Dotted notes and tied notes. Solo instrumentalist playing familiar tunes — notation on screen — audience conducts.
12.  $\frac{2}{4} + \frac{3}{4}$  Then  $\frac{5}{4}$ , alternating  $2+3 + 3+2$  — begins doing this on screen & audience joining in.
13. Speeds. Relation of tempi at change of time signature. Notation. Italian terms related to speed — the wood and name, with symbols: legato stacc,  $<$   $>$  accents pauses etc. Notation of time for solo instrument showing these symbols, with player observing them all. By now the audience wants to play instrument. Screen shows beginning records pupils. What their appetites very subtly so that they are determined to buy one before next week.
14. The records (audience with one in the hand.) Play ~~Music~~ Music on Screen for strips and records over a repeated ~~stand~~ of which audience plays. Ditto for G.A. + for G.A.B.



10. Continuation of previous work, adding new notes one by one. 11.  
 Starts about tonguing, slurring, holding etc. Make the point that  
 now they've begun they need a live teacher. Conclusion of this  
 whole series of practical music-making, reminding them  
 how much they've learnt, but pointing out that they need to go on  
 to play with other people better than themselves.

### 3. Harmony.

1. Combining with other people means listening to what you sound at a time  
 Scale up and down over held pedal. (With audience.)  
 Intervals. Discords + concords (as in my other letter to you, with visual  
 tension + relaxation.) Try this over on piano, so that solitary  
 listeners can learn them by themselves.
2. Similar notion. Organum. <sup>(parallel 4ths)</sup> Record of it, with film of interior of 12th  
 cent cathedral. Compare with parallel 3rds + 6ths sung on a boat  
 on a Swiss lake. Calm notion. 2pt canon with stepwise contrary  
 motion, an audience joining in.
3. 3pt canon, still ~~of~~ stepwise. Taking up short canons over a pedal note.  
 How to write them down. Use-ups of clefs being written, to right a  
 wayward of making notches and squares, practical hints on  
 ribs, spacing, blotting, turning over, etc. (Perhaps audience could  
 have been invited to stand in a canon to week before?)
4. Times with legs. The idea of a chord. Listening downwards  
 tonic + dominant triads. Spacing + increasing.

5. Harmonising a familiar single line with tonic & dominant. 12.  
First on guitar. Then with school violin class - children in two  
groups - one side plays tonic chord pizz, the other side dominant.  
Several times this way, all well known, the audience guessing in  
advance which chord it will be.

6. Chord of subdominant. Times as before. Starts about  
spacing the on piano (Very simple & common sense - not text-book rules.)

7. The other 3 triads. Chords which to use. Jan. 7th, ~~1971~~  
Different harmonisations of chords. Notation on screen (audience can sing)

8. Jan. 7th. Modulating (enough practical hints for the intelligent  
enthusiast to be able to explain: - NOT a complete course as for  
an exam.) Euharmonic change, a glimpse of modern harmonic  
possibilities.

4. Technique. Refresh lessons for teachers, & for learners  
who have already had some training.

1. Violin class.
2. Piano class.
3. Recorder class.
4. Singing class.



5. Traditional music. Sound films of foreign folk songs & dances. The idea of this at this particular moment is to be a change after the whole month of technique - to give something of interest to the experienced musician who is ignorant of folk music - and to give the beginner listener (especially grown-ups) a chance of getting rid of the idea that music has to do the conventional (i.e. 19th cent) things - thereby preparing for contemporary music later on.

1. Asiatic and Middle East.
2. Spain, American Indian, Rumanian & Yugoslav.
3. French, Scandinavian, and of Britain.
4. Africa.

[It should be remarkably easy to get material for these: Unesco at their last music conference talked of an international pool of records & films.]

## 6. Musical history.

This can extend to any lengths, as wanted. As pictorial as possible, with the modern equivalent: - i.e. music in the home, 16th century records played on wooden organs, followed by ~~the~~ 1954 instruments in small room playing Beethoven's records piece. Patrons in music - with modern Arts Council concert in hall with computer & iron roof (but bringing home the idea that the listening audience is the patron.) Extend this to opera.

1954  
Suffolk  
moral education

From

**BOOSEY & HAWKES**  
LIMITED

295 REGENT STREET · LONDON · W.1

Miss Imogen Holst,  
45, Crag Path,  
Aldeburgh  
Suffolk

Plus came to  
hobby because  
left by Sifford  
Bart

BOOSEY & HAWKES LIMITED  
295 REGENT STREET  
LONDON, W.1



1954 Suggested Series

I, V, Education

(to use Tony Gelfand's  
idea)