



**THE COLLECTED WRITINGS
OF THE GERMAN MUSICOLOGIST MAX CHOP
ON THE COMPOSER FREDERICK DELIUS**

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Introduction

The German journalist, writer, composer and critic Max Chop is one of those influential, if little discussed figures who played a crucial role in furthering Frederick Delius's career in Germany during the early years of the twentieth century. His chief claim to fame is being the author of the first study of the composer, published by Harmonie Verlag, Berlin in 1907. In fact that year he wrote several substantial articles about Delius for some of the many music journals to which he regularly contributed, as well as reviews of the important performances of Delius's works being given in Germany at that time.¹ His enthusiasm for Delius, which had been developing for at least the two previous years, comes through clearly in all his writing.

¹ Chop lists his major articles on Delius in his letter to the composer of 3 November 1907 (see *Delius: A Life in Letters, Vol. 1, 1862-1908* by L. Carley, p 309) as follows:

1. *Frederick Delius: eine biographische Studie* (Musikalisches Wochenblatt, Leipzig, Nos 35-37, 1907)
2. *Der Fall Delius in Berlin (Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe)* (Part 10 of *Kritik der Kritik* 1907, Berlin, S.Schottlaender, Schlesische Verlags-Anstalt)
3. *Frederick Delius: Biographie* (In the collection *Monographien moderne Musiker*, Vol 2, 1907 with portrait, C F Kahnt Nachf., Leipzig)
4. *Frederick Delius: extensive single-volume biography* (60 pages) with portrait and two score-facsimiles (In the series *Moderne Musiker*, Verlag Harmonie, Berlin)
5. *Frederick Delius: Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe; Uraufführung an der Berliner Komischen Oper (21 Febr. 1907)* (Nos. 10-13 of the *Deutsche Musikdir.-Zeitung*, Hanover, Verlag Lehne & Komp.) [This article is missing from the one extant source, the Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Göttingen]

He published a further article on Delius in 1910:

6. *Tonsetzer der Gegenwart. Fréderick Delius. Sein Leben und Schaffen* (*Neue Musik-Zeitung*, Vol 31, Verlag von Carl Grüninger, Stuttgart-Leipzig)

Chop was born on 17 May, 1862 in Greussen in the Schwarzburg-Sondershausen region of Thüringen (some 30 km north of Erfurt), the son of Albert Chop, a district court judge, and was brought up in Sondershausen where he started his music education. Although his musical ability was apparent from an early age, his subsequent career developed in a somewhat circuitous way.

During his teens he had regular lessons in violin, piano and theory in Sondershausen with members of the Court Kapelle but eventually decided to follow in his family's footsteps and studied Law and Finance at the Universities of Jena and Leipzig between 1882 and 1885. In 1883, however, Chop became one of Liszt's many distinguished piano pupils at Weimar during the last few years of the composer's life. He was deeply attracted to the rich traditions of German art and culture and the music of Liszt and Wagner made a life-long impression on him.

After taking preliminary legal exams he moved to Berlin in 1886 and began what became a prolific career as a music critic and author of a large number of scholarly works on music, although his earliest publications date from 1885. Between 1886 and 1888 he completed his first major work, the three-volume *Contemporary Composers: studies and sketches* (*Zeitgenössische Tondichter, Studien und Skizzen*) published by Rossberg in Leipzig between 1888 and 1891.

In the Summer of 1888 he moved to Neuruppin in Brandenburg, some 40 miles north-west of Berlin, where he joined the *Märkische Zeitung*, editing and publishing it until 1902. That year he returned to Berlin and worked as a staff writer for the *Berliner Tageblatt* and for a number of music journals including the *Journal for German Army Musicians* (*Deutsche Armee Musiker Zeitung*), which he edited between 1903 and 1906, and the *Journal for German Conductors*

(*Deutsche Musikdirigenten Zeitung*) from 1906 until the outbreak of World War I. In the Winter semester of 1914/15 he gave a successful series of lectures at the Royal Conservatory of Music at Sondershausen and was subsequently appointed a Professor by His Highness The Prince von Schwarzburg.

Other important publications of the period include the *Handbook for Wagnerites* (*Vademecum die Wagnerfreunde* - 1893), the *Handbook for the Concert Hall* (*Vademecum für der Konzertsaal* - 1904), the *Guide to Opera Music* (*Führer durch die Oper Musik* - 1912) and the *Guide to Music History* (*Führer durch die Musikgeschichte* - 1912). He also published studies of the music of Liszt, Wagner and Bizet as well as several composer biographies including those of Verdi, Delius and Reznicek. Between 1905 and 1925 he wrote no fewer than 36 *Commentaries on Masterpieces of Music* (*Erläuterungen zu Meisterwerken der Tonkunst*) for the Universal-Bibliothek published by Reclam in Leipzig (see Appendix 4).

In 1920 he became the chief editor of the distinguished Leipzig-based music journal *Die Signale für die Musikalische Welt*² (*The Signal for the Musical World*), established in 1842, and in 1923 became an adviser to the new public radio stations being set up at that time in Berlin. Significant publications during the 1920s included a *History of German Military Music* (1926) and in 1929 an edition of the *General Survey of the History of Music for Teacher-Training Colleges and Music Lovers* (*Abriss der allgemeine Musikgeschichte für Lehrerseminare und Dilettanten*) by Bernhard Kothe which was particularly well received.

² *Die Signale für die Musikalische Welt*: a weekly music journal published in Leipzig between 1843 and 1941 which contained articles and short notes on day-to-day events in the musical world. It is particularly valuable as a chronicle of the minutiae of operatic and concert life for almost a century but it published little on music theory, aesthetics or historical perspective. Each edition carried many advertisements from the music trade and details of job opportunities for musicians.

Alongside his scholarly activities Chop was quite well respected as a composer with a number of published works to his credit including three piano concertos, an orchestral suite, a cantata *The Mermaid (Die Seejungfrau)* for ladies' choir, soloists and orchestra, as well as a large number of songs and piano pieces (see Appendix 4).

Chop died suddenly and unexpectedly on 20 December 1929, aged 67 and was survived by his second wife, the American-born pianist Celeste Chop-Groenevelt and his second son Walter (his first son, Herbert, pre-deceased his father in 1915 and may have been a war casualty).

His work was much appreciated in its time. An obituary, published in *Die Signale* on 8 January 1930, stated "... everything he wrote was a reflection of his personality and character, marked by a strong sense of idealism and enthusiasm for everything he did. He was a passionate advocate of justice and truth throughout his life and was widely respected as a distinguished, honourable and extremely kind-hearted person."

As an advocate of German life and culture he was dismayed by the terrible ravages inflicted by World War I, yet the optimism which characterised his whole outlook on life never deserted him. Although he was not in sympathy with, and was even hostile towards many of the more radical developments in German music in the early years of the twentieth century, feeling that it was in serious decline, he nevertheless believed it had a future. He was a tireless champion of those composers he felt were progressing their art with complete sincerity, promoting them as well as he could in a spirited and lively manner.

Chop possessed a great sense of humour which often belied his tremendous breadth of knowledge; the wide range of his education and learning characterised everything he wrote. He was always concerned to extend the

influence of music and to place it in the broader context of the history of civilisation. Consequently, he always sought to elucidate themes linking the present with the past. His style was a model of clarity and simplicity, hallmarks of Chop's own nature.

Early encounters with Delius

Chop was an exact contemporary of Delius and must have been increasingly aware of the composer's progress in Germany in the late 1890s and early 1900s. In November 1902 Delius's music was performed in Berlin for the first time when Busoni gave one of the earliest performances of *Paris* with the Berlin Philharmonic. At that time Chop had recently returned to the city from Neuruppin and probably did not hear it which was perhaps just as well given its poor performance on that occasion;³ he certainly makes no reference to it in any of his writings on Delius.

In fact, on the evidence of one of Chop's articles, a study of Delius published in the series *Studies of Contemporary Musicians* by the Leipzig publisher C F Kahnt and possibly the first of the articles to be written, it is unlikely that Chop had heard any work by Delius before 1906. In the intervening years Delius made great strides in Germany due initially to the advocacy of the conductors Hans Haym at Elberfeld and Julius Butts at Düsseldorf before others

³ See *Frederick Delius*, Sir Thomas Beecham, publ Hutchinson, London 1959, p 125. Busoni himself was aware of the work's difficulties when he wrote to Ida Gerhardt from Berlin in July of that year before his performance the following November, "I am a novice at conducting, the work is difficult and unknown, so I must not take too many risks." (See Carley, *A Life in Letters*, I, p 208, fn 1.)

joined their ranks. In February 1903 Buths performed *Paris* at Düsseldorf and both he and Haym, who had given its first performance at Elberfeld in 1901, began to lay plans for a significant promotional campaign on Delius's behalf the following year.

1904 produced a wave of performances. The year got off to a flourishing start with the first performance of the first version of *Lebenstanz* given by Buths at Düsseldorf on 21 January. At Elberfeld, meanwhile, the municipal opera company were rehearsing the opera *Koanga* under their new music director, the young, progressive Fritz Cassirer who had been introduced to Delius's music by Haym and Buths and who gave the first of a very short run of performances on 30 March. Later in the year, the previous year's planning by Delius's two stalwart champions bore fruit; Haym gave the first performance of *Appalachia* at Elberfeld in the middle of October followed just over a week later by an evening-long concert of works by Delius when further performances of *Paris* and *Lebenstanz* were given alongside the first performance of the first version of the *Piano Concerto*, with Haym conducting and Buths as soloist.

1905 was less hectic, but Delius was now making rapid progress with *A Mass of Life* following his productive discussions on it with Cassirer in Brittany the previous summer. *Paris* was performed in Frankfurt and at the June meeting of the Lower Rhine Music Festival held in Düsseldorf, Buths presented *Appalachia*. Not wishing to diminish the impact of Buths's performance, Delius withdrew it from the programme of the Graz meeting of the Tonkünstlerfest that summer where it was to have been performed at the annual festival of the Allgemeine Deutsche Musikverein.

And so to 1906 and Chop's first encounter with Delius. It took place on 5 February at a concert given by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra and the Stern

Choral Union at which Oskar Fried conducted a performance of *Appalachia* in the same programme as his own cantata *Das Trunkene Lied*. Fried was an exact contemporary of Cassirer (both born in 1871) and became acquainted with Delius, possibly through Cassirer, around 1905.⁴ He contacted Delius very early in the New Year of 1906 to seek his help in putting the orchestral parts into some sort of reasonable shape as he was clearly perturbed to find 'No signatures! No dynamic markings - or very deficient ones! Whether flute or piccolo is not clear! With the two bassoons one never knows whether tenor or bass clef!' ⁵ Fried was subsequently indebted to Delius for his help as his performance went well.⁶ Chop was clearly so impressed and convinced of Delius's originality that after only one hearing of *Appalachia* he began his first substantial article on the composer incorporating a review of the performance.

He begins his article by acknowledging the pioneering work of Haym and Buths but in fact completely overlooks their achievements, and in a manner that reflects, perhaps, more on his own limited awareness of Delius's immediate past than anything else, observes that he would have remained in obscurity had it not been for the dynamic intervention of the youthful Fried.⁷

Chop's critique of *Appalachia* is highly perceptive and appreciative for its time and conveys with immediacy the impact the work made on its audience.

⁴ Fried was in the company of the Deliuses and Haym at the Lower Rhine Festival performance (see photograph in Carley, op cit plate 47).

⁵ See Carley, op cit, p 261: letter from Fried to Delius of 5 January, 1906.

⁶ Letter from Delius to Edvard Munch of 23 February, 1906; quoted in Carley, op cit, p 262, although the audience managed only a luke-warm response (see p 8).

⁷ At that time, it seems Chop knew little of Delius's Elberfeld connections with Cassirer or of the emerging discussions about a production of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* with Hans Gregor, intendant at Elberfeld in 1904 at the time of *Koanga* but by now established in Berlin as Director of the new Komische Oper.

He reports that 'It created quite a sensation, as the audience could hardly escape the extraordinary power of the music which, at first hearing, affected them in an unusual way.'⁸ From this point on, Chop is hooked. He notes the performance of *Appalachia* was not that enthusiastically received by the audience but points out that this was usually the case 'when a new work, arguably of great stature, seems to threaten the status quo.' His enthusiasm for Delius is obvious, however, and his generosity in promoting him through his writing at this crucial time in the composer's development was clearly appreciated by the composer, but not without some impatience.⁹

In the Spring of 1906 the annual meeting of the Tonkünstlerfest was held at Essen where the first performance of *Sea Drift* was given on 24 May. This work and its performance are Chop's next discussion points in his article. He reports that the critics were generally positive but refutes their view that Delius was strongly influenced by the modern French composers of the day, particularly Debussy, and proceeds to provide a concise account of Delius's musical philosophy. He continues by adding a brief biographical note and a work-list to date. Chop almost certainly received this information directly from the composer himself while drafting the article, probably towards the end of 1906.

By early October 1906, Chop had clearly made contact with Fritz Cassirer in Berlin. Cassirer had moved there in 1905 to join his colleague from the Elberfeld theatre, the director Hans Gregor, who had set up a new opera company, the Komische Oper, along the lines of the Opéra Comique in Paris, which opened in mid-November. The experience of producing *Koanga* at Elberfeld had made

such a deep impression on both of them that they were determined to include Delius's most recent opera, *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, in the repertoire of their new company as soon as possible. As it turned out, it proved impossible to produce it as quickly as they had hoped; cash-flow was a problem and the box office needed the regular income guaranteed by playing the crowd-pullers. Finance was not the only consideration; there were the customary sceptics and detractors, not least Gregor himself, who had to be brought on-side and convinced of the merits, dramatic and musical, of such an unusual and distinctive work and there is no doubt that Chop played a key role in the process.

Chop had by now achieved a position of some stature and influence in German musical circles, particularly in Berlin. He was already an enthusiastic admirer of Delius and his meeting with Cassirer was fortuitous for the composer. In early October Cassirer wrote to Delius about their meeting telling him how he had introduced Chop to *A Village Romeo and Juliet* by playing the whole opera through to him; in turn, Chop gave Cassirer a copy of the recently published vocal score of *Sea Drift* at which the conductor 'howled with delight', believing Delius was now 'glorious in [his] maturity' and that he was 'sitting comfortably and plucking the fruits from the tree! Round and ripe and sweet, it says everything that one simply forgets the artist.'¹⁰

The prognosis of the general financial health of the Komische Oper was not favourable in the short term to the extent that as a privately run house without patronage or subsidy of any sort it became increasingly dependent for its survival on guaranteed box-office successes. There was a growing awareness on the part of the artistic directors, Cassirer included, that *A Village Romeo and Juliet* would

⁸ See translation of article from *Monographien moderne Musiker*, p 20.

⁹ Letter from Chop to Delius quoted in Carley, op cit, letter 235 (see note 1 above).

¹⁰ Letter from Cassirer to Delius quoted in Carley, op cit, letter 200. The last line in this letter is echoed by Chop in the *Moderne Musiker* article: *Etwaige Längen der Form vergass man über das, was der Tondichter an Neuem zu sagen und zu gestalten wusste* (At times, one could overlook the originality of what the composer was saying and doing).

never achieve that status and therefore its viability was in question; at one time Gregor even proposed that it should be performed as an oratorio!¹¹ The uncertainty of the situation prompted a brain-storming session on 15 November at which Cassirer played and sang his way through the score to the entire production team in a last-minute attempt to convince them of its merits. He wisely hauled in Chop to assist in the debate, a good move given their acquaintanceship which had developed during the preceding twelve months entirely through their mutual admiration for Delius and Chop's undoubted position of influence in Berlin's musical circles.¹²

The discussion, evidently heated at times, lasted well into the early hours and broke up without a decision. Cassirer reports how 'Gregor sat together with Chop and established the points where, in any event, the libretto would have to be altered. Then they all left, Chop accompanied Gregor through the Tiergarten, talking and talking. For a change he would rave over his sweet angel, his wife, and then Delius would become the subject again.' But the following day they realised they had all heard a masterpiece. A second meeting took place on 17 November without Chop; the première was scheduled for the New Year.

The core articles

It was only natural that sooner or later Chop would put pen to paper concerning *A Village Romeo and Juliet*. It was the first performances of this one opera and the preparations leading up to them that helped Chop crystallise his feelings about Delius and provided the focus for several of the articles on the

¹¹ Letter from Cassirer to Delius quoted in Carley, op cit, letter 203. Gregor was well-known for his radical approach to stage direction.

¹² At this time Chop was the editor of the widely read *Deutsche Musikdirigenten Zeitung* (Journal of German Music Directors).

composer he subsequently published. Chop's writings could be viewed as being complementary to Edward J Dent's review of the opera published in April 1907¹³ but they serve a different purpose. Dent's article is a one-off and concentrates for the most part on the substance of Keller's original novella and the differences between it and Delius's libretto. Chop, on the other hand, includes substantial references to the opera in four of his five articles, with far more detail about the actual performance, but the slant of each is different, depending on the journal in which it appeared and audience for which it was intended.

In all of his writings on Delius Chop more or less sticks to a basic formula. He usually begins with an introduction exploring an aspect of interest to contemporary music critics, often controversial and idiosyncratic in tone. He includes the composer's biographical details, a current work-list and a note on the important performances of his music and conductors involved. These serve as a preface to an appraisal of Delius's character and personality, an assessment of his style and a concluding summary.

In the *Monographien moderne Musiker* article, quite a wide-ranging piece as might be expected as part of a series on contemporary composers, *A Village Romeo and Juliet* is only briefly covered. Chop reports that the opera 'caused a great stir; it was extraordinarily and immensely successful with the audience, but the critics were divided, as is often the case.' He goes on to question the suitability of the Komische Oper as a platform for the opera suggesting that the house, which usually produced such works as *Tales of Hoffmann* and *La Vie Parisienne*, might not have been the ideal place for 'a profound work of such

¹³ *English Opera in Berlin: A Review of the World Première of Delius's "A Village Romeo and Juliet"* by Edward J Dent, publ The Monthly Musical Record, London, April 1907 reprinted in *A Delius Companion* by C Redwood, publ John Calder, London, 1976, pp 25 – 30. Dent reserves his comments on the performance to the perfunctory final paragraph of his article where he describes it as being 'on the whole, a worthy one'.

dramatic and musical value as *A Village Romeo and Juliet*.' He adds that although the scenery and staging were quite well done, apart from Cassirer's conducting, the rest of the musicians were 'quite hopeless ... , hardly up to the requirements of their tasks.' Further points of interest include a review of the February 1906 performance of *Appalachia* in Berlin by Oskar Fried with the Sternsche Gesangverein and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, the reception of *Sea Drift* at the Essen Tonkünstlerfest that summer and his closing remarks in which he sees Delius as a link between Wagner and a new, as yet undefined, form of musical expression.

Chop's second article, published in the series *Critics on the Critics*, goes into much greater detail about the first performance of the opera. At one level, it is a passionate response to the generally negative reviews and in the lengthy opening Chop condemns the poor quality of many contemporary music critics whom he sees as being incapable 'of judging anything new objectively as the product of a continuously evolving culture.' He berates his colleagues for their lack of qualifications for the job in hand, for the blatant bias evident in their writings and for their jealousy and petty rivalries as composers themselves who 'praise anything that is not up to the level of their own work but tear apart anything better.' 'Fortunately', he writes, 'such critics are in most cases stupid enough to expose themselves to ridicule. - Their reviews are remarkable for their inept style and technical incompetence and they attempt to compensate for lack of skill with bitterness, scathing or cheap remarks and because they pander to a general, uncritical readership, their words are lapped up. - Only a few critics manage to retain their objectivity and judicious clear-headedness without taking sides; only a few can reconcile contemporary trends in art, and their drive for progress, with artistic traditions or can explain how these developments fit into the general overview, or can compare and judge what is on offer, or can articulate in general terms not only the genre of a work but also its contents, or can recognise it as worthwhile or not by using a set of cultural values.'

His next targets, although he is not quite as hostile, are newspaper editors and publishers whom he describes as being stupid as well as 'mean and tight-fisted and at whose hands 'a critic suffers much humiliation, disrespect and injustice.' Editors, he writes, 'require their musical representatives to attend three or four performances or more an evening [extracts of course] then ... write a review as quickly as they would file a report about a murder or a parliamentary or diplomatic scandal. ... They downgrade critics to mere reporters and try to convince their readers that they are getting sound, mature views but in reality they are abusing artists.' A composer, he feels, 'who after years of effort and sacrifice, presents his works in a one-off concert and engages his audience with important questions concerning his merits, a composer who hands over to the public the products of his heart and soul to find out whether they are acceptable' deserves better treatment from his reviewers and their editors.

Chop then turns to the general reception of Delius's work by his fellow critics and, basing his observations on the recent performances of *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, explains why their views are 'rash and misguided.' As in the *moderne Musiker* article, he questions the appropriateness of producing it at the Komische Oper when the Berlin Oper would have been much more suitable had it not been too busy 'making one mistake after another by putting on Ritter's *faulem Hans*¹⁴ and Tchaikovsky's *Pique Dame*.' He continues by explaining the background to the performances, the central role played by Gregor and then teases out reasons for the work's failure to find favour among the critics, given the undoubted success of the first night.¹⁵ They generally admired Gregor's production but felt all concerned had approached the work in a heavy-handed

¹⁴ *Der faule Hans* (1885) first opera by Alexander Ritter performed for the first time in Berlin by the Royal Opera on 8 March, 1907 conducted by Richard Strauss who had previously championed it at Meiningen.

¹⁵ Delius received two curtain calls at the end of Act II and a dozen calls, along with the principals, at the end of the whole work.

way, missing many of the finer points of artistic detail: the staging was more fitted for *Carmen* or *Tosca* than Delius; the simple, touching story was turned into a play with all the trappings of modern drama; the Black Fiddler was caricatured as a boozy, ham-fisted lout, lurching from one side of the stage to the other; the final scene was almost unintelligible as the doomed lovers' barge was completely missing. In short, the production had been distorted and vulgarised. As for the performers, the critics judged the singing to be accurate, although they had 'such a thankless task', but the orchestral playing was uninspired and even Cassirer generally came in for some harsh treatment. Chop's own view is that Cassirer did his best given the indifferent forces at his command adding that their superficial and ill-informed approach was painful to the cognoscenti. Eventually, Chop turns to his hobbyhorse and complains bitterly once again about the working conditions and practices of music critics having to produce their reviews between 11 pm and the early hours and questions their ability to do justice to the demands of such a profound work after only one hearing. He did, of course, have the advantage here in having a much deeper knowledge of the work than his colleagues. Chop ends this section of his article by citing exceptions to the rule, quoting from the reviews of two unnamed professional musicians who also worked as journalists, in distinct contrast to the 'part-time whingers', published in the *Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung*¹⁶ and the *Schlesische Zeitung*; in his view, their writings display an unusual understanding of Delius's idiom and present a balanced assessment of both Delius the musician and both the work in question and its performance.

Finally, Chop refutes a number of the familiar criticisms of Delius's setting, its lack of drama, its failure to capture the poetic atmosphere of Keller's novella and develops yet another attack on the critics while pondering rather

¹⁶ The *Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung* review was almost certainly written by the critic Otto Lessmann (1844-1918), proprietor of the journal from 1881 to 1907. See Chop's letter to Delius of 8 March, 1907 (Letter 6).

negatively the nature of Modernism in music. Recalling the many critical jibes at Wagner he closes by reflecting on Hans Sachs's memorable outpourings on the role and nature of critics in Acts I and II of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*:

*Wollt ihr nach Regeln messen,
was nicht nach eurer Regeln Lauf,
der eigen Spur vergessen,
sucht davon erst die Regeln auf!*¹⁷

Chop published a third article, probably the last of the three to be produced in 1907, in the August edition of the *Musikalisches Wochenblatt* which by that time had merged with the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*;¹⁸ it has much in common with the two previous articles. Like the study in the *Monographien moderne Musiker* series, it is discursive and general in style. Following a brief introduction, Chop paints a picture of Delius as a pioneer, pointing to the complete originality of his sound-world. He then discusses Delius's life and artistic philosophy, describes his method of working and updates the roster of present-day conductors promoting the composer's work, including the Swiss Hermann Suter and the influential Hungarian Artur Nikisch. Chop completes the article with a work-list and assessment of Delius's music.

As in the *Kritik der Kritik* article, Chop does not flinch from controversy. In his introduction, in what seems like an attack on Richard Strauss and Mahler,

¹⁷ 'If you want to judge something that does not fit your criteria, forget them and first find out what it's all about.'

¹⁸ The *Musikalisches Wochenblatt* was founded in 1870. In 1906 it merged with the *Neue Zeitschrift*, founded by Schumann in 1834 and now published by Schott in Mainz. The *Wochenblatt* maintained its own identity and scholarly editorial approach, not least by featuring its title alongside that of the *Neue Zeitschrift* as the masthead on the title-page. It continued in this two-fold format until 1910 when it was completely absorbed by the *Neue Zeitschrift*.

he is highly critical of the state of contemporary composition which, he believes, does not appeal to the concert-going public. With quite a degree of insight he feels it must be rethought to find new ways of satisfying artistically the expansionist tendencies of a number of composers if it is not to lose its way and fail to 'progress the art itself, as exemplified by Wagner and Liszt.' The fact that he sees Delius fulfilling such a role is, of course, highly flattering but as time would prove, it was a misjudged view.

It is a matter of some regret that what promised to be an important article, dedicated exclusively to the circumstances surrounding the first performance of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* in Berlin, is missing from the only library holding a complete run of the journal in which Chop originally published it.¹⁹

The Monograph

At a little over 11,000 words, the Monograph is Chop's most substantial piece of writing on Delius. In 1907, Chop was one of those rare animals, a passionate Delian, but he was similarly enthusiastic about a number of his contemporaries, including, for example, the now-forgotten composer August Bungert. The Monograph was published by Harmonie Verlag, Berlin, in their series *Moderne Musiker*.²⁰

¹⁹ See Note 1/5

²⁰ A series which to date comprised studies of 15 musicians, both executants and composers, such as Artur Nikisch, Richard Strauss, Carl Reinecke, Mahler, Tchaikovsky, Oskar Fried and Siegfried Wagner. Harmonie was a general publisher of literature and material relating to the Arts. The Verlag Harmonie was also Delius's first major publisher and between 1906 and 1910 brought out several important works including *Appalachia*, *Sea Drift* and a set of five *Danish Songs* in 1906, *A Mass of Life* in 1907 and *A Village Romeo and Juliet* and the *Three Unaccompanied Part-Songs* in 1910. Delius's association with the publisher came to an end that year as he was obliged to undertake a legal action against them for failing to act for him in a fully professional manner (see *Delius*, Alan Jefferson, London, 1972, p 65).

Unsurprisingly, perhaps, Chop shies away from controversy in the Monograph and presents a straightforward, factual account of the composer with a supportive, perceptive but uncritical introduction to his major works to date. Although it is divided into three distinct parts, *Background*, *Biographical notes* and *Frederick Delius the composer*, it follows the familiar pattern of his other articles in terms of content, sequencing and overall style, particularly the study published in the C F Kahnt series (Volume 2 of *Monographien moderne Musiker*). In the final section Chop's inclusion of extracts from favourable reviews by three of his colleagues, Paul Hiller (*Koanga* – Elberfeld première), Otto Neitzel (*Appalachia* – Lower Rhine Music Festival, Düsseldorf, June 1905) and Ferdinand Pfohl (*Sea Drift* – Essen Tonkünstlerfest, 1906), completes a very supportive account of Delius's achievements up to the time of writing.

Coda

Finally, in 1910 Chop produced his last piece on Delius for the Stuttgart-based *Neue Musik-Zeitung* following a very successful year for the composer. 1909 had seen the first complete performance of *A Mass of Life* by Beecham in London, Delius's own first performance of *A Dance Rhapsody* at the Three Choirs Festival in Hereford, the first festival of the Musical League held in Liverpool towards the end of September, of which Delius was one of the instigators and at which four of his songs with orchestral accompaniment were performed, Hans Haym's performance of *A Mass of Life* in Elberfeld and the first performance of a Delius work in the United States when *Paris* was performed in Boston by the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

True to form, Chop follows his by now well-established format when writing on Delius. Here he returns to his polemical opening section and goes on

the attack yet again, as he had previously in his *Critics on the Critics* article, against those prepared to go to any lengths to achieve recognition, however short-lived. 'Anyone who can gather around him an influential group of supporters will make progress and convince the media of his questionable talent but woe betide he who declines to play the game. He will be forgotten for the rest of his life, unless he is discovered by chance or backed by someone of high artistic repute who stands above the factions.' The usual subsections are covered as in his previous pieces; Delius's biography, work-list, the reception history of his works to date, the musical characteristics of Delius's style and commentary on individual works. Chop closes with a reference to Delius's involvement in the recently established Musical League.

Perhaps the final word should go to Karl Lenzen whose entry on Chop in the *Neue Deutsche Biographie*²¹ describes him as 'a not unscholarly, erudite and prolific writer in the best sense whose main strength lay in popular scholarship. It is true that for the most part he inclined towards to an entirely emotional description of works of art, he was nevertheless sympathetic to the so-called phenomenological method which prioritises the phenomenon of the work of art before virtual biography or even anecdote, and so he held a position half-way between the conversational tone of 18th and 19th century biographies and contemporary factual criticism. Chop, who was also a composer, is at least to be credited with having further opened up the great works to the musical layman.'

After 1910, Delius's contact with Chop appears to have come to an end; nor, it seems, did Chop ever again put pen to paper on the composer's behalf. It is tempting to ponder why this happened. Did Chop suddenly lose interest in him? Did Delius distance himself from an over-enthusiastic champion who might have

compromised his future progress in Germany with his often outspoken views? Whatever the reasons behind this apparent abrupt change of course, there is no documented evidence to support any tentative interpretation. The outbreak of the Great War a few years later changed for ever the remarkable run of good fortune Delius had experienced in Germany during the early part of his career, but a new creative era was developing in England with a fresh roster of champions on the concert platform and commentators well-endowed to spread his message. Following the War, Chop entered perhaps the most successful phase of his career with his editorship of *Die Signale*, his pioneering contributions to the development of German public broadcasting and his general writing on music, all of which he continued vigorously until his unexpected death in 1929.

A note on Chop's style

Chop's written style, though typical of German scholarly writers of the turn of the twentieth century, is hard going even for native speakers. There are many instances of long, seemingly rambling sentences, with numerous subsidiary ideas, frequently filling a whole paragraph without a break; often an entire page of tightly packed text flows by without even a full stop. Never short for words, Chop characteristically resorts to flowery, sometimes pompous language which in his letters can appear indulgent and ingratiating. Such a technique places considerable demands on the non-native reader and the translations attempt to capture the highly idiosyncratic nature of the original text while smoothing some of its more unwieldy aspects.

The sequence of letters from Chop to Delius in Appendix 3, provides a context for the articles and a glimpse of their growing friendship and mutual respect, albeit one-sided, as well as an insight into the to-and-fro of the contemporary professional musical world.

²¹ *Neue Deutsche Bibliographie*, publ Bavian Academy of Sciences, Duncker & Humblot, Berlin, 1966, Vol 7, p 214

Appendix 1 contains biographical information of the main individuals and organisations mentioned in the text.

THE ARTICLES AND MONOGRAPH IN TRANSLATION

I

FREDERICK DELIUS

by

Max Chop

Studies of Contemporary Musicians Vol 2

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Until 1906 Frederick Delius was little known in the musical world. In Germany particularly, he was known almost exclusively as a result of performances of his works by two conductors, Prof Julius Butts in Düsseldorf and Dr Hans Haym in Elberfeld, both recognised for their progressive ideas and skill in spotting rising talent. These two men were great admirers of Delius and gradually developed a following for him in the western part of the country, but not without a struggle and strong opposition. This area was, and still is, however,

quite unpretentious, and as this excellent and important composer is one of those who would not lift a finger to promote themselves or their work, he would still remain unknown today, working away on his own, had it not been for the young, dynamic director of the Stern Choral Union in Berlin, Oskar Fried. In February 1906 he included the big choral and orchestral work *Appalachia* in the programme of one of his concerts and introduced it in Berlin along with his own *Trunkene Lied*. It created quite a stir as the audience could hardly escape the extraordinary power of the music which, at first hearing, affected them in a remarkable way, and because it was quite difficult to pin down as the composer and subject matter were at that time completely unknown. Who was this composer Delius? What was *Appalachia* about? What should one make of the lush style, the lavish orchestration and the voluptuous harmony? All these questions baffled everyone, just like Mephisto's Pentagram.²² Although parts of the piece show signs of models and influences, the composer nevertheless follows his own path which leads him up steep slopes to soaring heights. So one was faced with the

²² *Mephisto's Pentagram*: see Goethe's *Faust*, Part I: Faust's Study (ii):

Mephistopheles: I must admit my exit from the scene is
inconvenienced by this trifling thing;
the devil-charm above your door, I mean.

Faust: You find my pentagram embarrassing? If that
prevents you, say how you came in, you child of hell?
And how is such a spirit caught or cheated?

Quoted from the translation of *Faust* by Philip Wayne, publ Penguin Books, London, 1949 repr 1978, p 77.



The pentagram is a five-pointed symbol in the shape of a star, drawn with a single stroke, and from whichever angle it is studied the outline of the letter A can clearly be seen; this design gives rise to its alternative name, the Pentalpha. Oriental in origin, the Pythagoreans used it as a symbol of health and it later became a favourite tavern sign and a symbol for beer. In German mythology it signified the footprint of web-footed Norns and benevolent witches known as Druden until Christian opinion transformed them into malevolent beings from which time the symbol was used, in addition to the sign of the cross, as a mark on doors to ward off evil spirits.

extremely difficult problem of how to categorise this musical poet in the context of his famous colleagues, this genius previously unknown and with no track-record, on the basis of a single hearing of an extensive set of variations which introduce an original musical style and a completely new musical aesthetic which require evaluation. In contrast to Oskar Fried's "philosophical" music, *Appalachia* is a sort of ethnographic music. Set in the form of a large-scale set of orchestral variations, which includes a choir towards the end, it depicts those regions of America linked by the Allegheny Mountains (or Appalachian system), Alabama, the mid-Atlantic States and Massachusetts up to the mouth of the St Lawrence River. Delius the musician confirmed himself as a mature artist of extraordinary individuality and character. Even if one felt uneasy in forming a musical judgment about such an unusual work, one might have wanted to criticise here and there - the idiosyncratic harmonic idiom, the form and the way the material is developed, the use of augmented intervals, of chords of the ninth, the unprecedented nature of the transitional passages and the unsettling effect of the awkward juxtaposition of unconventional modulations - no-one could deny the existence of a really important creative force in composition. Sound effects and harmonic variety are present in abundance, whether the composer is portraying the rich tropical landscape of the Mississippi, the primeval swamps of Florida in the midday heat or the Negroes' folk-songs with their characteristic rhythms and chord sequences. Delius has proved himself to be an impressionist. Except for its a capella variation, the choir had little to do, and was more-or-less fully integrated within the overall texture. And strangely enough, despite the restless chordal sequences and the unusual sound patterns, there is present an underlying objectivity, indicative of a master in complete control, who carefully calculates the artistic effect of his work. At times, one could lose sight of the originality of what the composer had accomplished. So it was that Delius arrived in the capital with one of his most recent works. It was not particularly enthusiastically received, as is usually the case when a new work, arguably of great stature, seems to threaten the status quo.

Had audiences been so little prepared for it by the works of Richard Strauss and others? Did they actually feel alienated by Delius's challenge to their preconceived views? Or was it simply a case of human resentment at being forced to face up to the fact that their false idols were being ousted by the real thing? For the most part, the frosty reception of this northern audience was in stark contrast to the glowing colours of the depiction of southern climes in *Appalachia*.

In the summer of 1906, the programme of the Essen Tonkünstlerfest included Delius's new work *Sea Drift* for solo baritone, choir and large orchestra, and by this time the critics had become somewhat more familiar with the composer's style. They discussed his highly original, imaginative and fulfilling music, his consummate skill and the Pre-Raphaelite traits and understated energy in his work. But they were completely mistaken in talking of any French influence, especially Debussy, of a Germanic approach originating in Romanticism or of music tinged in delicate shades; they also claimed to have discovered the Impressionist who outwardly seems emotionally unstable, yet in whose underlying personality, sometimes pessimistic, other times uncontrollably sad, Man and Nature become one: Nature's ruthless superiority, with Man's deep compassion. In general, the critics agreed that the composition was highly significant, unique in style and original in terms of its aesthetic stance. The accusation that Delius was influenced by modern French composers, particularly by Debussy, can be rejected once and for all. Despite the fact that Delius has been living in France for many years, he knows very little French music and is even less familiar with French composers and, moreover, knows neither Debussy nor Charpentier. Delius wrote his large orchestral Nocturne *Paris* before hearing Charpentier's *Louise*.²³ The music of these two composers, Delius and

²³ *Louise*: 4-Act opera by Gustave Charpentier (1860-1956) first performed in Paris in 1900. The opera is French verismo and is set in working-class Paris at the turn of the century. The city itself could be described as the chief protagonist in the opera as it acts as the backdrop for the entire action in the drama; it is the home of the two main characters, Louise and Julien, and at the end the colourful and liberal attitudes to life, so

Charpentier, is as different as it could possibly be; while Charpentier is superficial, Delius is profound. The similarity between the two does not go beyond the use of the *cris de Paris*.²⁴ Nor is there any trace of Debussy in *Sea Drift*, not even superficially. This misconception could possibly be explained by the fact that modern French composers, especially Debussy and his school, were influenced by Edvard Grieg and the modern Russians. Delius himself was under their influence in his early years, but emerged from it very quickly. He was a close friend of Grieg whom he had met while studying at the music conservatoire in Leipzig. At that time, Delius also got to know and love Norway's natural beauty on his long, solitary expeditions into the mountains. He showed no sign of being influenced by the young Russians, his strongest musical inspiration coming from Bach, Wagner and Chopin. But not content to remain a clone, like some weaker individuals, he developed a strongly independent style which, when completely fused with his Nature imagery, gives Delius's music its characteristic ambience and is the absolute essence of its emotional individuality.

Frederick Delius is in his prime. He was born in 1863²⁵ in Bradford (Yorkshire, England), the son of German parents who had settled in England. During his childhood his love of music became apparent when he took

prevalent in fin-de-siècle Paris, are blamed by her father as being the cause of her leaving home for her lover. The beginning of Act II is particularly relevant to Delius as Charpentier composed a prelude depicting the awakening city at day-break; a late-night reveller in full evening dress, described as the Noctambulist, wends his way home, identifying himself as the spirit of the Pleasure of Paris.

²⁴ *cris de Paris*: Delius noted in a letter written in December 1910 that in *Paris* he was recording his "impressions of night and early dawn with its peculiar street cries and Pan's goatherd, etc. These cries are very characteristic of *Paris* and the piece begins and closes with them."

²⁵ Actually 1862; this slip is found in several of the early biographies and doubtless originated with Delius himself.

up the violin. This passion, which grew stronger every year, contrasted strongly with his parents' wish for him to take up a career in business. When Delius reached the age of 20, he emigrated to Florida, whose rich natural beauty was destined to exert a powerful influence on the musician and composer of later years. Here, in the tropical South, while working as a planter on a remote orange plantation, he observed Nature and was content to be at one with his enriched and mellowed inner being. There, he needed no companions, his luxuriant environment provided him with an abundance of wonderful experiences. With hard work he cultivated the seed, which a scant musical education had planted in him during his childhood and youth, and taught himself to be independent in thought, word and deed. This aspect of his make-up can be seen clearly, running throughout the course of his life. After a few years in Florida, his longing for his true home-land led him to Germany, the land of music. At the Leipzig Conservatoire he was taught by Carl Reinecke and Jadassohn, and concluded his formal education. For about the last 16 years he has been living in France, part of the time in Paris, the rest in a suburb of the French capital; since 1897 he has lived in Grez sur Loing, where he has composed nearly all of his successfully performed works. Delius was composing well before 1897. His rigorous and ruthless self-criticism, however, made him reject everything which did not live up in every respect to the demands of his exacting artistic judgment. The following list gives details of his major works (in chronological order):

1. *A Legend* for Violin and orchestra (1892)
2. The Fantasy-Overture *Over the Hills and Far Away* (1893): the first of Delius's compositions to be performed in Germany at Elberfeld in 1897, by the Director of Music Dr Haym
3. *Piano Concerto in C minor* with orchestral accompaniment (1897), completely re-written during the winter of 1906-7, performed by Prof. Julius Butths under Dr Haym in the autumn of 1904 at Elberfeld, Düsseldorf and other cities

4. *Norwegian Suite*: incidental music to G Heiberg's satirical drama *Folkeraadet* (1897 - performed in Christiania provoking strong opposition and spirited demonstrations, caused by the use and somewhat satirical adaptation of the Norwegian national anthem)
5. The music-drama *Koanga* (1896/1897), introduced at the Elberfeld Municipal Theatre in 1904
6. *Lebenstanz* (1898) a symphonic poem for large orchestra (first performed in Düsseldorf in January 1904 by Prof. Butths)
7. *Paris a Nocturne (Impressions de Nuit, 1899-1900)* for large orchestra (first performed in Elberfeld by Dr Haym, later repeated in Berlin, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt and Brussels)
8. The music-drama *A Village Romeo and Juliet* (1900-1902), based on Gottfried Keller, but with Delius's own libretto (the composition was first performed in Berlin at the Komische Oper on 21 February 1907 conducted by Kapellmeister Cassirer, one of Delius's most enthusiastic champions)
9. *Margot La Rouge (A Night in Paris, 1902)*, a music tragedy in one act
10. *Appalachia* (1903), a symphonic poem for large orchestra and choir (first performed in Elberfeld by Dr Haym, followed by a performance by Prof. Butths at the Lower Rhine Music Festival in 1905 and by Oskar Fried in Berlin in February 1906)
11. *Sea Drift* (1904) for solo baritone, choir and large orchestra (first performed at the Essen Tonkünstlerfest in Summer 1906)

and finally *A Mass of Life* for soloists, choir and large orchestra which is his most recent substantial composition.

Only two of the works listed above, *Appalachia* and *Sea Drift*, have so far been published by Harmonie ²⁶ in Berlin (as well as five atmospheric songs with Danish texts); the rest should follow soon. The composer does nothing whatever to promote his own works; modern publicity methods are alien to him. He believes that as long as a work of art is of value and significance, it will generate its own success. This attitude might explain why the world knows so little about Delius, despite the fact that he has been composing for the last 14 years. Music Director Dr Haym was the first to give Delius's music a hearing in Germany. It was he who actually discovered Delius and made his compositions known, despite the constant objections of the Elberfelders and his bitter struggles with the directors of the concert series. He invited colleagues from far and wide to introduce them to this unusual new music. But only the excellent, forward-looking Professor Buths in Düsseldorf recognised their worth and also took up Delius's cause. As a result of the Elberfeld concerts, the local opera-house ordered the material for the Negro-opera *Koanga*, which never came off, however, as the music director at that time showed no interest in the music. ²⁷ Even before submitting *Koanga* Delius had organised a large orchestral concert in London, ²⁸ conducted by Hertz, which was highly acclaimed by both the audience and press,

²⁶ The music dealer and publisher Harmonie Verlag was certainly established in Berlin between 1903 and 1920 although there is evidence that it was in business in 1901. It operated from premises in the Linkstrasse, off the Schöneberger Ufer to the Georg Wilhelm Strasse in Halensee.

²⁷ Chop is possibly mistaken here and is in fact referring to *The Magic Fountain*, not *Koanga*, and to either of the two Elberfeld Stadttheater Intendants who were in post at the same time as Hertz, Ernst Gettke who was there from 1888 to 1896 and Richard Balder from 1896 to 1898. Alfred Hertz (see below) was Kapellmeister at the Stadttheater from 1895 to 1899 and in post at the time of Delius's first success with *Over the Hills* and the Elberfelder Konzertgesellschaft in 1897. Having recently revised the work, Delius tried to interest Hertz in *The Magic Fountain* in the Spring of 1898. Hertz eventually declined as he felt the Intendant would not be prepared to allocate sufficient funds for the lavish staging he felt it needed if the unknown Delius's growing reputation was not to be harmed by an indifferent production (see letter in Carley: *Delius: A Life in Letters 1862-1908*, p. 129). No references to *Koanga* in this context can be traced.

²⁸ The concert of his own works, which Delius paid for out of his own pocket, was given at St James's Hall on 30 May, 1899.

and included the second act of the stage drama. This made the world take notice of *Koanga*. Fritz Cassirer, the current music director of the Komische Oper in Berlin, who was at Elberfeld at that time, discovered the score of *Koanga* and was so impressed by its attractiveness that he gave a brilliant performance of this difficult work in March 1904 at Elberfeld, and is now staging *A Village Romeo and Juliet* in Berlin. Cassirer kindly introduced me to every detail of the new composition and I regard him as the foremost interpreter of Delius, as, due to his intimate knowledge of the artist and the man, he is able to bring out completely the meaning of the music and emphasise its qualities in a completely natural way without departing from the overall artistic plan. When the piece was first performed at the Komische Oper, it caused a great stir; it was unusually highly successful with the audience, but the critics were divided, as is often the case. One has to bear in mind, however, that the Komische Oper in Berlin, where *Tales of Hoffmann*, *La Vie Parisienne* and so on are so successful, might not be the ideal place for a profound work of such dramatic and musical value as *A Village Romeo and Juliet*. The scenery and staging were quite well handled by the production team, but they were quite hopeless as far as the performance as a whole was concerned, so much so that, despite Cassirer's inspired conducting, singers, chorus and orchestra were barely up to the requirements of their tasks. As the work made such a moving impression, it is not difficult to reach a conclusion about its high intrinsic merit. The second act, in which the lovers' dream contains a wealth of delightful and stunning material, portrays Delius as a dramatic and symphonic artist in such a strong light that hardly anyone would be able to deny the touch of a musical genius. Nor could they say that the technical aspects or the individuality of the music are as difficult as they first appear. The entire composition sounds well, despite its unusual harmonic language, and is compelling in its manner of expression, in its depiction of life in its prime. There is, however, one condition, that Delius's orchestral works should never be judged by piano reductions as none

of them does justice. They were all devised with a full orchestra in mind, and it is impossible to reduce the complex musical and descriptive power of a talent such as Delius to the limitations of two hands. - At this point it should be noted that the maestro's wife, Frau Jelka Delius, née Rosen, a well-known painter, is the translator of her husband's work, as he hates the conventional approach of professional translators with their pedestrian rhymes and naturally prefers the work of his wife who understands the nature of his ideas and adapts the texts of his music in a sympathetic way.

Before I comment on Delius's music, I would like to say a few words about the man inside the artist. As I have already mentioned, Frederick Delius has had few influences, although he certainly makes an impact on his own surroundings. He speaks his mind freely and with the openness of an honourable human being, without hurting or alienating anyone. He finds it impossible to be deceitful or dishonest. As a unique individual, he has two sides, one, the city dweller, the other, the creative spirit who seeks to work in peace. One can only really get to know him when he is away in the countryside, far from the noisy hustle and bustle; he is frequently drawn away from the big city by the peace of the countryside where he can be creative. If he is working, he likes to live a solitary existence, and his involvement with Grez sur Loing, which, in any case, is not very strong, then completely ceases. He needs solitude. By nature, he is not at all pushy, and so spends only a little time in big cities and could never be encouraged to take the initiative in promoting his work, or in furthering the success of his compositions. He feels happiest when surrounded by nature, out in the countryside; if his profession forced him to stay in the city, his prolific creativity would cease. It was for this reason that he left London immediately after his orchestral concert which created such interest. He was not bothered about anything, he did not want to know about anything, because he felt he had achieved what he wanted, in having heard an orchestra perform his works for the first time. On the other hand, hardly any other composer has had to face as many obstacles

put in his way by the reactionaries as Delius. As with anything new and inspired, he was bitterly attacked, without much discrimination in the methods chosen. At the same time, however, this opposition provided some consolation by emphasising his importance; no-one calls up all the reserves to the battlefield to beat a harmless enemy. Delius often wondered whether he had lost his creative urge as a result of the heated debates about the merits or significance of his works. To him this was merely trivial; his sense of destiny was far too strong to be destroyed. It was easy for him to adopt such a sensible attitude, as the public debate about the value of his work started when he was already a grown man and a fully developed artist, not one trying to find his way. He is an optimist, and as such loves to live a healthy, happy life. There is nothing introspective in his make-up, despite the fact that from time to time he is often accused of being so by his critics. This inner strength and outer confidence also helped him cope easily with the problems he had with the public at the time, which he always regarded as being an anomaly and not a normal response. The lasting impressions on his creative impulses came from his stay in Florida and the southern states of North America; they are there to be heard in *Koanga*, *Appalachia*, in *Sea Drift* and in his glorious orchestral style. There, in solitude, he acquired the basic outlook on life of an artist completely at one with himself, and thus a well-rounded character, robust on the outside, but inwardly always ready to respond imaginatively and creatively.

This assessment of Delius as a musician cannot, with hindsight, go into much detail within the limited scope of an essay. Instead I shall concentrate on those matters which represent the true Delius. Delius stands on the shoulders of Richard Wagner and Sebastian Bach; and so the fundamental question as far as his creative work is concerned is whether it is of any significance for the present and future. We know that Edvard Grieg was influential in shaping Delius's style in his youth as well as Chopin for his transparent, fluid approach to form. By the time we get to *Appalachia*, however, it is quite clear that Grieg's influence

has disappeared; there is no trace of it in his recent works. Delius's significance lies in his unusual and absolutely original harmonic language, which is so compelling, for example, in *Appalachia*, yet does not blur the overall artistic conception. On the contrary, it is closely linked with and derived from this element. This composer conceives all his impressions and ideas in these terms, and the process of transformation is so natural that the musical listener would never think anything of it. The source of this rich harmonic language can be found in the life of this deeply spiritual and sensitive artist, who is motivated by the thrill of inspiration and produces works of great beauty which appeal to the ear, just like the eye is attracted by a tropical landscape saturated with colour, by the sparkling wonders in the depths of the sea. Delius follows his own path, as in his extraordinarily subtle orchestration, which has led him far from the multitude of composers who follow Wagner and Strauss, to a distant land, accessible only to himself. Such distinctive harmonies, unlike those of Richard Strauss, are not the result of counterpoint, and give his works quite an intoxicating feel, something no-one can avoid without being detached from his soul or by having to indulge in self-denial. His melodic invention overflows in abundance, but his thematic material is so modestly developed that it could not really be described as a significant characteristic. Delius believes all this is obvious. His *Mass of Life* is his only composition to use formal structures, as in the setting of the words "This is a dance over stick and stone ..." to an eight-part double fugue for choir and soloists. It cries out to the pedant: 'Look at this if you want to award a pass to the contrapuntalist, and see how he measures up.' On the other hand, this is only relevant to someone who looks for signs of counterpoint in rigid formal structures, as it cannot be found in anything open and free-flowing. In this respect, the second act of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* with its dream music also leads to unusual discoveries.²⁹ The reason lies in Delius's indifference to questions of

²⁹ It is not clear to what Chop is referring. There is no counterpoint in a traditional sense in *The Dream of Sali and Vrenchen* although he might mean the *ostinato* technique Delius uses to underpin the tolling bell sequence at the opening (between figures 30 and 31 in

form, as he is able to handle it with ease. He only uses modest resources, however; it would be impossible to omit or add anything as far as the orchestration is concerned. Unlike Richard Strauss, who, in one score gives the option of adding four saxophones, in another leaves it to the conductor to use either a full or reduced orchestra, Delius's music rejects any experimental approach. His music is the finished work of art of a master, just like a painting which needs no more brush-strokes or a sculpture which cannot be improved. An absolutely precise analysis of his methods naturally leads to the conclusion that Delius sets down his thoughts with a detached, analytical eye. The struggle between conflicting emotions, his compassion manifested at the moment of inspiration, at the birth of a piece of music, all this lies accomplished behind him. When he gives tangible shape to the fruit of his inner world, he analyses his work like a real master, calmly and dispassionately; he struggles with his material, fashions it as he sees fit. His great gift is in depicting atmosphere, not sound-painting. But whenever he is enveloped by a particular mood and begins to weave sounds around it, he is nevertheless astute, with the sureness of a genius, and inspiration comes flooding to him. Herein lies the big difference between Frederick Delius and Richard Strauss; the latter is often ruled by intellect, humour and wit. Despite the fact that Delius is of German origin, and has been influenced by important German masters, there is hardly any trace in his music of what would be described as being typical of the solid, through-composed German style. This deficiency is made up for, however, by his imagination, which never ceases, conjuring up image after image in glorious sound. Exquisite soundscapes are crystallised in such indulgent moods of melancholy as, for example, by the gull abandoned by his mate in *Sea Drift*, by the Negroes who are about to be separated in *Appalachia*, and similarly in *Koanga*. There he describes the love of Koanga, the African Negro prince who had been sold into slavery, for the slave

the full score), in the *alla marcia solenne* development (between figures 31 and 36), and in the pealing bells section at the end of the reverie (from before figure 40 to 41).

girl Palmyra, and all the consequent distress, caused by human cruelty and the death of the two lovers. Scenes of plantation life, of the dense forest and wild Negro dances provide an unusually potent backdrop to the vivid story line. Another excellent atmospheric piece is the Nocturne *Paris* with its portrayal of the curious sounds of a big city at night - mysterious, sumptuous, exuberant, passionate, wild, as implied by this striking poem:

Mysterious city!
Asleep while the crowds hurry by
to their many pursuits and pleasures
Awakening as the twilight deepens.

City of pleasures!
of strange sensations,
of brazen music and dancing,
of painted and beautiful women.

Secret city,
unveiling but to those
who ever shunning day
return home in the pale blue light
of scarcely breaking dawn
and fall asleep to the song of the awakening streets
*and the rising dawn.*³⁰

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This translation was written on the reverse side of the flyleaf of the autograph full score of *Paris* and is quoted on page 199 of *Frederick Delius - A Supplementary Catalogue* by Robert Threlfall (publ The Delius Trust, London 1986). On the autograph it is followed by a note in German, to the effect that the poem is only meant to set the mood and on no account should be considered a programme, and a German translation (see also Plate 9, p 80, *ibid*).

The *Mass of Life* expresses the heroic and the contemplative, melancholic emotions in Friedrich Nietzsche's *Also sprach Zarathustra*. It is one of the most important and most original pieces of music for choir, soloists and orchestra.

What Delius has so far presented to the public has been rich fare. He has always managed to prove his artistic worth whenever he has introduced the fruit of his heart and mind to an audience - sometimes with negative results. Occasionally, however, such results are often much more telling than the positive ones, especially with the experience of hindsight. The fact that his works have not yet been taken up by the general public might be due to their nature and to their unusual approach to form, as well as to the personality of their composer who does not promote himself and so deliberately sets himself apart from the majority of the trend-setters and all their machinations. His sincere, other-worldly manner with its characteristics of indulgent modesty and restraint, the magnitude of his sense of tragedy, the consummate accomplishment of his works, his striking, often dazzling fusions of colour, his handling of the orchestra - all these follow untrodden paths. He is original, yet at the same time, immediately appealing and compelling. I firmly believe I recognise in Delius's compositions the important signpost pointing from Richard Wagner to the future. They act as a bridge across the yawning chasm which engulfed Wagner's imitators and followers, and which still separates us from the wonderland of a new art.

II

DELIUS IN BERLIN

by

Max Chop

Critics on the Critics

pp 212 - 220 (part 10)

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One only has to be present at the meeting of an academy, faculty or similar body which consists of men who, although not geniuses themselves are nevertheless quite well educated, to realise immediately that their main feelings about a man who is blessed with all or even a few qualities of a genius, are contempt and hate. *Lombroso*

Mozart and Beethoven, Richard Wagner, Bizet and Delius, all belong to that group to which Lombroso's observation applies. That is to say, they are all fallible as far as the critics are concerned, while these high priests of public opinion, with only a few exceptions, regard themselves as infallible. This could be the result of ignorance and misinterpretation, but also of deliberate

misunderstanding; if nothing else, it proves how little today's critics are capable of judging anything new objectively or as the product of a continuously evolving culture. Despite the fact that for most of those mentioned above, posterity itself was the judge and fortunately greatly ridiculed those pathetically repressed pundits, the phenomenon itself has remained. It passes from generation to generation like a malignant disease. Virgil's warning falls on deaf ears: 'Discite justitiam moniti!' ³¹ It seems as if we need a sensational scandal from time to time to inform future generations about their predecessors' lack of judgement.

I recall that some Berlin critics summed-up their first encounter with Beethoven's sunny D-major symphony merely as 'forty-five minutes of hardship', of the Beckmessers in Vienna who discovered the *Eroica* at one of Würth's concerts in 1804 at the same time as Anton Eberl's symphony in E flat was performed. They praised good old Eberl to the skies in order to show their contempt for the *Eroica* as an 'extremely long and difficult work indicative of a wild imagination which degenerates into chaos.' In 1876, the Bayreuth music festival came into being, and thousands gathered in the small town on the Roter Main ³² to hear the new musical revelations. Even then, Richard Wagner had to put up with the so-called distinguished critics of the day who called him an 'audacious musical charlatan', a 'brutal musical futurist', a 'great scrounger' and an 'ignoramus par excellence'. They accused him of going soft in the head, of being a rat and of being mad and emphatically exclaimed: 'No, no, and for a third time, no, the German people have nothing in common with this pitiful music

³¹ 'Be warned, learn justice!' from Virgil's *Aeneid*, Book VI, line 620; strong words of reprimand with which the spirits of sinners were harangued in the Underworld.

³² The *Roter Main* (the Red Main) is one of the two small tributaries of the River Main, the other being the *Weisser Main* (the White Main), each about thirty to forty kilometers in length; they converge and form the main river at Kulmbach which joins the Rhine at Mainz. The *Roter Main* rises in the *Fränkische Alb* below Bayreuth through which it flows towards its confluence.

drama. And if they were to find pleasure in this fake gold of the Ring Cycle, the German people, by this fact alone, should be ejected from the ranks of western cultures!' Such comments could be read in the Austrian and German papers of thirty years ago.³³ Ill-considered and spiteful comments can so quickly discredit their authors! George Bizet died a young man because the Parisian critics failed to recognise *Carmen*. When the Gipsy Girl returned in triumph from Germany to the City on the Seine for a second visit, and was enthusiastically received there (if only after some revision), her creator had already been resting for seven years in the Père Lachaise Cemetery³⁴ at the end of a short life full of disappointment and hardship.³⁵

I have already suggested how such a thoroughly disgraceful lack of judgement is possible. There are many reasons. They are mostly the result of a lack of qualifications on the part of music critics, which are absolutely essential in a purely objective and technical sense, as well as of their chauvinism which encourages them to promote favoured causes while fighting all opposition in a highly personalised way, without any objectivity which no public critic should be without; and finally, and this is perhaps to do with the times we live in, judgement these days, is impaired by the easy availability of what is on offer, by hostility and by the fact that it is impossible to come to a conclusion about something within a few hours; this results in a lack of enthusiasm, not to mention

³³ That is, the 1870s.

³⁴ The *Père Lachaise Cemetery*, also known as the Eastern Cemetery, can be found in east Paris on the Boulevard de Ménilmontant and is the largest and most famous of the three Paris cemeteries. It was established in 1804 and named after Louis XIV's confessor. Its graves are of more historical than artistic interest. In addition to Bizet, famous composers buried there include Cherubini and Chopin.

³⁵ Chop here writes in a characteristically flowery style. The first production of *Carmen* in 1875 was a failure. Its subsequent performance in Vienna in 1875 was a huge success and led to world-wide triumph, but it was not revived successfully in Paris until 1883.

the petty jealousies of reviewers who are also composers and praise anything that is not up to the level of their own work but tear apart anything better. Fortunately, such critics are stupid enough for the most part to expose themselves to ridicule. Anyone who assesses the artistic work of others must be an expert in the subject. A while ago, some bright spark commented that music critics should be able to prove that they were vaguely familiar with scales, key signatures, intervals and time and also know 'a bit' about musical form in general. I feel these requirements are rather modest; the irony of this comment however, highlights the actual extent and prevailing attitude towards "part-time critics". Their reviews are notable for their inept style and technical incompetence, they attempt to compensate for lack of skill with bitterness, with scathing or cheap remarks and as they pander to a general, uncritical readership, their words are lapped up. There are certain articles in which the authors regard it as their journalistic duty to 'pull a composer to pieces at all costs'. Such an objective is extremely attractive to those who can hide their lack of knowledge behind words, mockery, and even cynicism while pretending to be clever. It is acknowledged to be much more difficult to communicate the worth of a work of art than to cast it aside and cynically condemn it to oblivion. The most frightening tendency among critics, however, is their prejudice, one-sidedness and belief in their own convictions. In Wagner's day, it was the fanatical belief in Classicism which raged against anything modern in order to pull it apart. Bearing in mind the scandal in connection with Bayreuth, today's so-called conservative critics are faced by the progressives who scorn the past with equal venom, and their enthusiasm for anything new makes them look ridiculous. There is bigotry and trendiness everywhere! Only a few critics manage to retain their objectivity and judicious level-headedness without taking sides; only a few can reconcile contemporary artistic trends, and their drive for progress, with artistic traditions or can explain them and construct a generally acceptable aesthetic from them; few can explain how these developments fit into a general overview, or can compare and judge what is on offer, or can articulate in general terms not only the genre of a work but

also its contents, or can recognise it as worthy or not by using a set of cultural values. There can be little surprise that the extent of this biased approach pushes broad opinion increasingly towards the purely superficial, towards technical pretence and loss of integrity.

Only the greatest genius is able to withstand the spirit of the times; everyone else follows fashion, especially when it is supported in the press and loudly advocated everywhere. When it is fashionable to comment on just the basic structure of a work, as it was at the time of *Salome*³⁶ and the *Symphonia Domestica*³⁷, hardly any attention is paid to the substance of the ideas, to the deeper issues of art, so it is a mixed blessing to be born at a time when hypocrisy and superficiality abound, which aligns its real values with the average ability of those who pass judgement on what we do.

As far as duplication of material and the concomitant need for speed and pressure on time for critical reflection are concerned, I have already discussed at length this contemporary problem and the stupidity of publishers on several occasions. A critic suffers much humiliation, disrespect and injustice. Publishers are mean and tight-fisted when it comes to paying their staff; they require their music critics to attend three or four performances or more an evening (in part, of course). They then have to write a review as quickly as they would file a report on a murder or on a parliamentary or diplomatic scandal. The editor imagines a piece of music criticism takes no more time than a report, and does not seem to have the slightest idea that assessing a work of art - regardless of whether it is small or large-scale - requires creativity which cannot be translated into a fixed number of working hours. So night critics came into being. They expect their

³⁶ *Salome*: one-act opera by Richard Strauss; first performed at Dresden in December, 1905.

³⁷ *Symphonia Domestica*: orchestral tone-poem by Richard Strauss; first performed at Carnegie Hall, New York in 1904.

musical wage-earners to rush eagerly back to the office with their first impressions, and there, weary and exhausted, get down on paper their barely-formed views during the night. If art critics were like ordinary reporters, and only had to provide facts and figures, such human cruelty would be just about acceptable. But music criticism is concerned with assessing the intrinsic worth of works which demands a markedly different approach in every respect and has absolutely nothing in common with the outright commercial and short-term interests of publishing houses. An artist who, after years of effort and sacrifice, presents his works in a one-off concert, and engages his audience with important questions concerning his merits, a composer who hands over to the public the products of his heart and soul to find out whether they are acceptable - they are the missionaries of our culture. One cannot sum up a work of art between 11 and 1 at night after only one hearing, at the end of a long day when one is tired and one's brain and spirit are flagging. Measuring aesthetics in feet and inches has not yet been invented, and never will. If publishers claim to produce newspapers, they commit injustice against critics, artists and their readers. They downgrade critics to mere reporters and try to convince their readers they are getting sound, mature views but in reality they are just using artists.

I have introduced my account of "The Case of Delius" with these observations, firstly to provide a general statement about him and secondly because I intend to draw some objective conclusions about the way he is generally viewed which, without going into detail or mentioning names, I confidently believe, will be regarded in future as rash and misguided.

On 21 February a new music-drama was performed at the Komische Oper in Berlin, *A Village Romeo and Juliet* (adapted from Gottfried Keller's novella

The People from Seldwyla) by Frederick Delius. Those who know Delius as a serious and highly important musician, those who had come across his symphonic choral and orchestral works *Appalachia* and *Sea Drift* and had been affected by the unusual nature of this highly atmospheric music had to ask themselves in astonishment, 'Why is this work being performed in such an experimental theatre as the Komische Oper on the Weidendammer Bridge?'³⁸ Is there a place for the most intimate poetry of a man like Gottfried Keller on the stage where *La Vie Parisienne*, *Tales of Hoffmann* and *Tosca* are regular attractions, where the whole atmosphere in the auditorium (especially on first nights), on stage and behind the scenes is diametrically opposed to such delicate subject-matter?³⁹ Why was the Berlin Opera,⁴⁰ the only place worthy of Delius's works, not able to offer us *A Village Romeo and Juliet* rather than making one mistake after another by putting on Ritter's *faulem Hans*⁴¹ and Tchaikovsky's *Pique Dame*? The explanation is quite simple; ever since director Gregor from Elberfeld produced Delius's Negro opera *Koanga* (on 30 March, 1904), conducted by Fritz Cassirer, who is the finest Delius interpreter, he had kept all the material for *Romeo and Juliet* (written in 1900/1902) and took it to Berlin when he became director at the Komische Oper. As the composer failed to have his material returned, he eventually gave his ultimatum: either produce the work or return the parts. So Gregor, strongly

³⁸ The Weidendammer Bridge, situated just behind the Friedrichstrasse S-bahn station, carries the Friedrichstrasse across the River Spree. At the turn of the century, the area surrounding the central part of Berlin, bordered by the Pariser Platz (Brandenburger Tor), the Museumsinsel and the north bank of the River Spree, supported a variety of cultural organisations, which it continues to do today. At that time, the Komische Oper was housed in a theatre, originally known as the Neue Theater, located in the Schiffbauerdamm, on the north bank of the Spree adjacent to the bridge (see plate 9).

³⁹ Despite having a reputation as a progressive house, financial necessity obliged the Komische Oper to mount regular productions of guaranteed crowd-pullers.

⁴⁰ At that time, the Berlin Opera (the Royal Opera House) was located at 7 Unter den Linden, the site now occupied by the Deutsche Staatsoper, opposite Humboldt University.

⁴¹ See under *Ritter* in list of individuals and organisations.

supported by Cassirer, chose the first option. The timing of the production was fortuitous in so far as Delius's *Appalachia* had been performed in February 1906 in Berlin by Oscar Fried and *Sea Drift* at the Tonkünstlerfest in Essen in the summer of 1906. Both had caused an extraordinary sensation so Delius's name was held in high regard. Although his music had attracted some criticism (as far as *Sea Drift* is concerned, however, I have only seen positive, even enthusiastic reviews in the German daily papers), experience teaches us that the public are attracted to those who have been strongly attacked and criticised by the press. Anyway, it is not worth kicking up a fuss over nothing.

So, director Gregor arranged the dress-rehearsal of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* for 20 February, and the first public performance for the 21st, which was followed by two further performances. Afterwards, the wonderful stage-sets for the music-drama, designed by the talented Swiss painter Walser, were put in storage. Since then nobody has ever mentioned Delius again. Why? Was the work a disaster? Not at all! The first performance was highly successful. The composer was called on stage twice after the second act, and at the end he received a dozen curtain calls along with the main actors, Cassirer and Gregor. It was at that point that the critics began their farce; Gregor's production was enthusiastically received for its sensitivity, the principal artists were warmly praised but, at the same time regret was expressed that they had been forced to undertake such a thankless task. They had all approached the work in a really heavy-handed way. Gregor is a man of the theatre, not a musician; he took hardly any notice of the finer points of artistic detail, especially as far as the music was concerned. He conceived the staging of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* in exactly the same way as he would have done for *Carmen*, *Tosca* and so on. His main objective was to create big, sensational effects, despite the fact that he often achieved them by going into details which seemed to have more to do with psychology. And so, the simple, touching story of the two farmers' children from Seldwyla, whose pure love for each other had been destroyed by their fathers' mutual hatred compelling

them to die in each other's arms, was turned into a play with all the trappings of modern drama in which actors strike a pose instead of acting naturally. How can a producer be so tasteless as to turn the almost demonic Dark Fiddler, the personification of Fate in this short tragedy of hopeless love, into a common tramp and tippler with his red nose, always lurching around the stage! He must at least have some musical and aesthetic judgement, and certainly be familiar with Keller's novella and be able to relate it to Delius's music. How can the revelries of the drunken vagabonds in the final scene (The Paradise Garden) be so crudely exaggerated, and with such complacency, that the atmosphere of the rest of it, which should be dominated by the two lovers' feelings of tenderness, completely disappears! There is no place for this Dark Fiddler, with his boozy guffawing and ham-fisted gestures, to be so prominent when the two lovers have begun their final journey! The libretto clearly states: 'The Dark Fiddler appears on the veranda of the inn playing wildly on his fiddle.' The stage direction has only to be compared with what happens in this high-handed and distorted production to realise that everything has been vulgarised. The wholesale alteration at the end of the final scene is significant in this respect; there is no barge with hay onto which Sali lifts his Vrenchen before joining her. It should slowly glide downstream, sinking deeper and deeper! In this production it is merely suggested by the lovers' actions. If the words are unclear, no-one will understand what is meant to be happening at the end.

Not even a distant provincial theatre would distort its material as blatantly as the production team at the Komische Oper has done in Delius's case. Nevertheless this skilful production has been highly praised by many critics. - As for the artists, the singers? Well, they sang the notes, and, for the most part, accurately; - their preparation, therefore, deserves full recognition. However, there is hardly a trace of any stylistic and artistic understanding or any real musical awareness and sense of unity! None of the people involved, with the exception of Cassirer, showed any understanding of the fact that Delius's style is not artificial

but thoroughly spiritual in content, that it is a completely new, previously unheard musical idiom. One has only to imagine *Tristan* being performed by a group of singers and an orchestra who are completely unfamiliar with Wagner's dramatic style and who merely play the notes, in order to realise that such a superficial and ill-informed approach by the singers, and uninspired playing by the orchestra, is painful for the cognoscenti and an injustice to the composer. The newspapers had a lot of sympathy for the singers, however, who had to use their sound musical judgement and talent to grapple with such a thankless task. Fritz Cassirer was also badly treated. The critics associated him with his orchestra, but forgot that even the best of intentions are bound to be beaten by an incompetent bunch of musicians who are used to completely different, more conventional and much easier tasks, and were here confronted for once with a piece which was far beyond their ability. If the management of a theatre takes on a work, the musical director must try to do his best with all the resources available to him. Cassirer did precisely that, despite the disturbing lack of understanding on the part of the orchestra and the producer; such an achievement deserves wholehearted praise.

As far as Delius's music is concerned, everything that was written about it was done immediately after that first performance, between 11 and 1 o'clock at night, perhaps even later! It is full of contradictions, some of which are even comical! Those things that are special to Delius, the innovative, distinctive and inventive handling of the orchestra, the striking sound textures - could all this possibly be assimilated after just one hearing of such a profound work which makes far greater demands on the critical faculties? One must firstly be familiar with its technique, style and language before one can judge its intrinsic worth. It is amusing to read in some of the reports, 'Delius may well be an excellent and capable composer but he lacks any dramatic talent.' Only a year ago, when *Appalachia* was introduced, these very people denied Delius any recognition as a gifted composer. So, overnight, he has become a great composer, while his

dramatic ability is denied. When his great concert-length choral work *A Mass of Life* (based on Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*), is performed for the first time later this season,⁴² his gifts for choral composition will be brought into question so that his talent as a dramatist can be emphasised; thus Delius's genius in all aspects of his art will be recognised - right up to the present. Is this not an indication of the pathetic lack of present-day critical ability?

However, there are some critics today who are the exception to the rule. That these exceptions can be found among professional musicians who also work as journalists, is both gratifying and symptomatic; every one of these critics is ten times better than the part-time whingers. It is impossible, however, to go into detail here. Nevertheless, I would like to draw attention to two reviews, as they make a positive case for Delius. The first extract is from an article in the *Allgemeine Musik-Zeitung* (Charlottenburg on 1 March):⁴³

In this music there are so many striking and moving moments that one must admit that Delius is an unusual and deeply sincere artist who should not be condemned because of the nature of his artistic creed, as critics have done publicly many times. Delius is obviously a contemporary composer, perhaps the most modern of them all, and I have to confess that I am personally not always in sympathy with his unfettered harmonic freedom and with the lack of any melodic shaping in his setting of text which far too often degenerates into interminable recitative with the most awkward of intervals. His music, however, and in particular the orchestra with its brilliantly handled, colourful and gripping textures, reveals so much genuine and heartfelt emotion that one has to listen to this sound above all else. It is the orchestra which displays such astonishing powers of expression in the substantial symphonic interludes which connect the different scenes.

⁴² *A Mass of Life* was given its first performance, with cuts, at the Tonkünstlerfest in Munich on 4 June 1908. Chop's note here may indicate the article dates from towards the end of 1907.

⁴³ Published in Charlottenburg, a district of central Berlin, in 1907. The journal was owned and edited by Otto Lessmann (1844-1918) (see letter 6, p 246).

Here praise and criticism are expressed in equal measure and, reading between the lines, an unequivocal recognition of something important which can only be enhanced by greater awareness and more intimate understanding.

On 21 February, the *Schlesische Zeitung* (Breslau),⁴⁴ published the frank attempt of another professional musician from Berlin to find the reason for and the psychological background to the public's prejudice:

And now the music! A fight broke out after the performance between those who applauded and those who hissed. The supporters departed victoriously despite the fact that they were spitefully described as 'friends of the composer', as if the foreign musician had a personal following here. I cannot understand, however, why people booed; one may agree or disagree with a new and unusual style, but this work of art shows so much expertise and skill that respect alone for such a creative artist should have made it impossible to behave in this inappropriate manner. There is another reason, however, for the hostility, which could be felt in the theatre, as well as for the negative views in a section of the press; Delius is close to those who follow Richard Strauss. An attack on the disciple is really aimed at the master. His style may, to an extent, have a cosmopolitan flavour but the principal influences one can detect are German with elements which might be described as exotic; sometimes unusual chords can be heard from the orchestra, like the scent of gloriously fragrant flowers. In general, however, the essence of the new French School prevails, strongly influenced by Strauss, but which endeavours to soften the hard edges of the great German pioneer as far as melody and harmony are concerned and thereby accommodates elements of romance quite naturally. It has surpassed the best of Wagner, but not quite yet reached the heights of *Salome*. The old bickering and silly talk started up again, as usual on such occasions, complaining about the lack of melody and inventiveness, and whatever catch-phrases editors fancy at this particular moment in time. The very thought of the two jealous farmers, of the Dark Fiddler, even of the two lovers giving their all in set-piece arias

⁴⁴ *Schlesische Zeitung*: German daily newspaper with semi-official Prussian status, published from 1742 in *Breslau*, now *Wrocław* in Poland. It was predominantly conservative in orientation but from 1918 adopted a more nationalist stance. After 1933 it was forced to adapt to the prevailing political trend and in 1944 amalgamated with several other newspapers; it ceased publication in 1945.

and duets is completely inconceivable to me. One answer to the problem lies simply in the sort of free declamation Delius writes, underpinned by a richly flowing orchestral texture, which never loses sight of the melodic line even during the dramatic climaxes on stage. Another solution would have been to use the old textbook formula of the novella, which would crudely rhyme *Liebe* with *Triebe* and *Lust* with *Brust*.⁴⁵ Delius uses huge forces, not for their own sake, however, but to create colour. And one can only praise the way in which he sets various instruments against each other, blends quadruple woodwind with divisi strings and creates unusual chord progressions; in a word, he puts every aspect of the modern orchestra at the service of his inspiration. In my view, the deeper meaning of the whole work can be found in the feeling of dignity and exquisite artistic aura which emanates from this idyll of love.

Every word of this is true, not only because the review is based on a considered and knowledgeable evaluation of aesthetic values, and deals fairly with an extremely gifted and creative musician, but also because the assessment demonstrates objectivity in its reasoning and highlights the bigotry which has become unbearable in Berlin of late. The reader should consider these extracts alongside what I have written above in order to reach the right conclusion concerning the incompetence, prejudice and lack of musical knowledge and objectivity.

Delius has been severely criticised for reducing Keller's novella to a prelude and five scenes. The somewhat unsophisticated style of the dialogue, which was taken directly from Keller's own text, has also been ridiculed whereas the literal setting of Wilde's drama *Salome* was considered absolutely natural. Some critics stated that Delius had no talent for dramatic action, despite the fact that the farmers' squabble in the Prelude, the struggle between Sali and Marti in the second scene,⁴⁶ the dream scene and the end of the last scene are virtually permeated with strongly characterised and dramatic music. Some wrote that the

⁴⁵ Loosely translated: *love, longing, desire and breast*.

⁴⁶ Actually Scene III, but the second scene of Act I as presented at the first performance.

deeply poignant atmosphere of Keller's original was hardly noticeable while we musicians had a clear view of the balance between emotional and musical narrative. I am thoroughly familiar with both Keller's novella and Delius's music and have identified and empathised with the work from beginning to end, a work whose consistency and homogeneity spring directly from its aesthetic concept. They are seeking drama in the lyrical parts and lyricism where it is dramatic; one minute they argue about this, another that. They praise what they should be criticising, and criticise what they should be praising. They contradict themselves, and have to be critical at any cost without even familiarising themselves with their subject matter or having explored the depths beneath its surface. They treat art which is destined to open up new paths in the same way that Burlesques parody serious theatre - in fact, they appreciate the second-rate⁴⁷ far more than real art - and then expect their views to be taken seriously! Or, as the Silesian article suggests, is there perhaps concern in some quarters that the darlings of the fashionable circles are in danger of being usurped by the real icons of culture? Is it that, at our present point in the so-called Modernist phase, we have reached rock bottom in everything that affects the essence of Music and become aesthetically bankrupt?

I do not want to summon up ghosts from the recent and distant past; extreme caution must be taken with things which cannot be treated as everyday events, which question future cultural developments such as structure and which may heavily criticise what is in fact poor judgement. The *Meistersinger von Nürnberg* contains much uplifting material and a lot of good advice for these

⁴⁷ Chop uses the German colloquialism *Tingling* here. The German verb *tingeln* roughly translates as *to appear in small night-clubs/theatres*; the German *Tingeltangel* as *a second-rate night-club* or, in a more modern sense, perhaps, *honky-tonk*.

public adjudicators. The words of Hans Sachs are directed at those overly prejudiced and free-wheeling individuals, 'If you want to judge something that does not fit your criteria, forget them and first find out what it's all about.'⁴⁸ The cobbler bard from Nürnberg makes the following observation for the benefit of those who are malicious and want to belittle everything, 'The marker shall be so disposed that neither hatred nor love should cloud his judgement. Since he is going courting, why should he not satisfy his desire to disgrace a rival in the chair in front of the whole School?'⁴⁹ Most of the critics of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* do not praise Delius at all as a creative artist and prodigious master. His time will come, however, and then this lack of appreciation will be put down to short-sighted critics. The few who do not follow this well-trodden path and have learned to love and respect the 'brave, new artist', may also agree with the following lines by Hans Sachs; the old poet sang them under the fragrant lilac tree on Midsummer's Eve, recalling events at the Song School,

*It seemed so old, yet new did it ring,
like morning song of birds in spring ...*

*The bird that sang today,
From Mother Nature learned his singing;
Masters may show dismay,
Hans Sachs will ever hear it ringing!*⁵⁰

⁴⁸ *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*: Act I, Scene III. Hans Sachs springs to the defence of Walther von Stolzing against the assembled Meistersinger after their criticism of Walther's trial-song performed as a test piece for entry into their guild.

⁴⁹ *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*: Act I, Scene III. A reference to the stipulation that all candidates for entry to the Guild must perform their test-piece seated in the Singer's Chair, not unlike the Chair awarded to the winning poet, or Bard, in the annual competition for Welsh poetry at the National Eisteddfod of Wales.

⁵⁰ *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*: Act II, Scene III from Sachs's monologue in which he ponders the beauty and magic of Walther's song (translated by Frederick Jameson, rev Norman Feasey and Gordon Kember, publ ENO & ROH Opera Guides, 1983).

III

FREDERICK DELIUS

A Biography

by

Max Chop

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For a person to be at the centre of controversy is not necessarily a sign of his or her lack of worth as far as the public is concerned. The greater the controversy, the greater the value put on the object of the controversy. In fact, in this day and age, only something of extraordinary significance could possibly stir an indifferent public to take notice. I would even go one step further and state that formal composition, which today has reached a technical peak, is hardly able to offer anything that might still attract the so-called public. It must rethink its objectives and review the processes with which it will fulfil the needs of its substantially enlarged forms in a way that can be considered as true art and focus

on the dimensions of its structures as well as progressing the art itself, as exemplified by Wagner and Liszt. For both the historian and the art lover such endeavours will also mark the beginning of a new stage in cultural development. Only form and content, never one without the other, define a work of art of lasting value, depending on the level of their accomplishment.

Frederick Delius is a pioneer; he is one of the few living independent composers who has succeeded in bringing to music, which has been extended considerably since the time of Wagner and Liszt, a really new sound-world. His approach to harmony, counterpoint and melody is so original that it surprised not only the conservatives, who cling to routine and tradition, but also the most ardent radicals⁵¹ and provoked quite a strong reaction. At the moment Delius's following is still quite small. It is also fairly easy to understand the reasons behind this apparent indifference. It lies in the fact that musical radicalism, like any other kind of radicalism, becomes formulaic and in time stifles ideas and tries to compensate for these shortcomings with superficial mannerisms and exaggeration. At the same time, however, it seems that dogmatic attitudes are at an end, as in this quotation from *Faust*, 'If feeling fails you, vain will be your course.'⁵² Delius's style is full of poetry; he has proved that technique plays a secondary role

⁵¹ *Sezessionisten* in the original German. The Secessionists were members of an avant-garde group of artists working in Vienna in the 1890s in the Art Nouveau idiom, including the architects Otto Wagner, Josef Hoffmann and Joseph Maria Olbrich, who designed the building that housed the exhibitions of the Secession (1898-99). Mainly found in architecture and the applied arts, the idiom was greatly influenced by the geometric style of the Scottish architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh.

⁵² See Goethe's *Faust*, Part I: Night - Faust's Study (i). Faust to Wagner:

Faust: If feeling fails you, vain will be your course,
And idle what you plan unless your art
Springs from the soul with elemental force
To hold its sway in every listening heart. ...

in composition to inspiration itself, which is essential. And as he threatened the whole house of cards of modern factionalism and radicalism with this principle, which is as old as art itself but which in recent times had indeed been forgotten since there was a lack of sympathetic minds, these debasers of form felt themselves shaken out of the cozy complacency of their homunculus-belief.⁵³ So Delius was warmly welcomed by neither the old nor the very young but by those for whom our modern culture ended with Wagner and who watch suspiciously from afar the furore with which their heroes have been promoted in recent times; they believe these new developments could never in the end be direct, but only indirect influences on important cultural issues.

As far as Frederick Delius is concerned, it is impossible to make a distinction between his life and his artistic make-up. I will therefore start with a brief biography which considers both the composer's personal development as well as a critical assessment.

Delius was born in 1863⁵⁴ in Bradford (Yorkshire, England), the son of German parents. His talent for music, which prompted him to devote his entire life to it, manifested itself at an early age, but met with strong opposition. His father wanted him to take up a "useful" profession. The young man obeyed but he clung on to his deeply-held passion which grew in commitment and intensity when he went into business at the age of 20. His early career was unconventional.

⁵³ *Homunculus*: see Goethe's *Faust*, Part II, Act II (Wagner's Laboratory). The Swiss alchemist Paracelsus (1493-1541) defined the homunculus as an attempt to create life by scientific synthesis, a creature in human form with a transparent body and great insight which would mindlessly acquiesce to human control yet longed for organic life and structured development. In using the analogy of the homunculus, Chop is being critical of those who believe in their ability to create music within their own powers and without reference to established traditions.

⁵⁴ See note 25 in *Studies of Contemporary Musicians*.

He gradually gained experience which led him to the goal on which he had set his heart and which was so very rich that he was able to bypass the "professors"⁵⁵ and "music schools" as a means of preparing him to express his striking artistic originality. So he set sail for the Gulf of Mexico, bought an orange-grove in Florida, the management and upkeep of which he entrusted to loyal Negroes and, as a planter, communed with nature in the luxuriant splendour of the subtropical South. There he acquired his artistic creativity, mediated by a host of sensations; far from civilisation, he learned how to capture his impressions of nature in glowing colours, the direct translation of his experiences into musical form. Herein lies the key to Delius's make-up! The St. Johns River, the Mississippi, the vast plains in the mid-day heat, the primeval forests of Florida and Alabama, the fertile seashore with its vistas of blue, foam-capped surf; the mild nights beneath blooming magnolias, beneath the cypresses and myrtle-trees of his plantation, where he discovered fire-flies flitting through the still air and the improvised four-part singing of the Negroes wafting over from their nearby huts, incredibly strange yet clear in melody and intonation; plantation life during the harvesting of sugar cane, cotton and oranges, the despondent mood of Negro tales - all these things had a really fascinating, captivating effect on Delius. He struggled to create an appropriate sound-world which could express the voluptuous colours and the radiance, the moods and poetry. His prolific imagination gave him the means, his enthusiasm provided the mechanism; and the flow of sound was equally as enthralling as his experiences, always rich and compelling, always soaring and striking in its completely enlightened approach to form. Just like the Franconian squire von Stolzing,⁵⁶ longing to be admitted to the Mastersingers' Guild, Delius could say of himself, 'It was there in the woods on

⁵⁵ "maestros" in Chop's text.

⁵⁶ *Walther von Stolzing*, the young Franconian knight and hero of Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

the Vogelweide that I learned to sing.' The old book, bequeathed by the forefathers' was written by none other than our German choir-master in the Thomaskirche, Sebastian Bach; ⁵⁷ Richard Wagner was another Delius studied with enthusiasm and delight and immersed himself in again and again as a source of inspiration.

Three solitary years passed by and a longing for his true home land, for Germany, the land of music, overwhelmed the young maestro, - together with the realisation that it might be advisable to be able to answer the question: 'With whom did you study?' 'more precisely', and to be familiar with the pettiness of assessors and rules and regulations, ⁵⁸ so Delius made his way to Leipzig and studied with Reinecke and Jadassohn at its Conservatoire. This chapter in his career meant little for he was already a capable musician and had also shown such a strong artistic personality that all their efforts there to bring about a profound and lasting change in him were doomed to fail completely. His period in Leipzig, however, brought him into contact with Edvard Grieg with whom he soon developed a deep friendship. Delius had experienced the sweltering heat of the warm South, Grieg brought with him the redolence of the sombre, passionate North. The close contact between the two toned down the garish elements but livened up the more serious aspects which tend to be more sombre. Later Delius got to know Norway and its fjords, and went off by himself on walks in the mountains among the craggy rocks and streams, surging through the valleys and gushing from giddy heights to the depths below. The cold, forbidding North was good for him. This, his natural habitat, at long last opened up to him its distant

⁵⁷ Both quotations are from Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* Act I, Scene III: Walther's test-piece.

⁵⁸ Chop continues to refer to Act I, Scene III of *Die Meistersinger*; here he quotes from Fritz Kothner's (baker and Meistersinger) questioning of Walther von Stolzing.

vistas of rolling hills, where the horizon seems to meet the sky, the pleasure of delightful wooded valleys, peaceful villages and hamlets; eagerly he breathed in the smell of freshly ploughed fields. - These are the varied influences which have shaped Delius the composer; now we know what he is all about.

For about the last sixteen years Frederick Delius has been living in France; partly in Paris and at other times nearby. In 1897 he settled in Grez-sur-Loing, a small town in the charming countryside of the Department of Seine-et-Marne. His favourite abode is his pretty country house next to the river, with its large garden and colourful display of flowers which during the summer always reminds him of Florida. He lives there like a recluse, as he did in the far West, together with his wife, the painter Jelka Rosen, who is also the translator of the texts her husband sets. Only very few people are allowed to enter the inner sanctuary;⁵⁹ social life has been cut down to a minimum and stops completely when Delius is working. This does not mean the composer is something of a shy eccentric. He loves big cities and having to deal with all his associates to keep up with the demands of life today; these distractions, however, soak up his creative energies. If Delius had to live in Paris, London or Berlin, it would be the end of the source of his inspiration. Peace and solitude are absolute prerequisites for him when he is working. This is a description of the lifestyle of this very promising artist.

I would also like to point out a few more of Delius's characteristics, as they are closely linked with his artistic work. He loves everything to be healthy and natural and hates anything unwholesome and dishonourable; there is nothing in his make-up that might hint at any of the social diseases we see around us. Even in this respect, nature is a universal model. As an obvious consequence of

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Referred to as *Tuskulum* in Chop's text. Tuskulum was a village in the hills ten miles south-east of ancient Rome where wealthy Romans built magnificent villas and flocked there in the summer to escape from the city's heat.

his admirable character, Delius is his own toughest critic, in stark contrast to the narcissism and inflated self-esteem prevalent today. Nothing which fails to pass his almost objective and detached critical scrutiny is allowed to leave the dedicated environment of his workplace at Grez-sur-Loing. This is why the number of his works is small. One has to bear in mind, however, that everything Delius has composed so far, is, without exception, of the very highest quality. Furthermore, Delius does not bother about promoting his works, either by publication, performance, or self-projection. As soon as he has written the last note of a piece, he puts it behind him. As a result, Delius's works are only now starting to appear in print as he is becoming known in the World. The actual discoverer of Delius is the Royal Director of Music in Elberfeld, Dr Hans Haym, who gave the first performance of a Delius composition in Germany, the Fantasy-Overture *Over the Hills and Far Away* in 1897⁶⁰ and continued to promote Delius's works with all the tenacity that characterises his own artistic beliefs, despite opposition from the local audience and music critics. He was followed by his friend, the Royal Director of Music in Düsseldorf, Professor Julius Butts, who was an enthusiastic champion of Delius, in his capacity as both conductor and pianist. The third member of this group was the excellent Delius specialist, the conductor Fritz Cassirer, who staged the Negro-opera *Koanga* at the municipal theatre in Elberfeld and the music drama *A Village Romeo and Juliet* at the Komische Oper in Berlin and bravely contended with the occasional display of strong opposition. Finally, the pioneers Professor Suter in Basle, the young Oscar Fried in Berlin and Professor Arthur Nikisch in Leipzig should be mentioned in this context.

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The first performance of *Over the Hills and Far Away* was given in the Town Hall, Elberfeld by the Elberfelder Konzert-Gesellschaft on 13 November, 1897.

So far Delius has produced the following works: *Legend*, a piece for violin and orchestra, composed in 1892 and first performed at a concert by Hertz in London - the already mentioned Fantasy-Overture *Over the Hills* (Dr Haym, Elberfeld 1897) - a *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra in C-minor*, composed in 1897 which was first performed in 1904 by Prof. Butths in Elberfeld and Düsseldorf, completely rewritten by the composer during the winter of 1906/1907 and which is due to be published any moment ⁶¹ - *Norwegian Suite* for large orchestra, based on Gunnar Heiberg's drama *Folkeraadet*, a grim satire about the self-importance of the Norwegian National Assembly and gullibility of the Norwegian people. Because Delius had parodied the Norwegian national anthem in the piece in an ironic manner, (exactly in keeping with its dramatic intentions), its first performance in Christiania in 1897 provoked a huge public outcry and extremely lively demonstrations - The Negro drama *Koanga*, recounts the passionate tale of the Voodoo prince Koanga and the half-caste Palmyra. It was first performed on 30 March 1904 at the municipal theatre in Elberfeld; the work was composed in 1896/97 - from 1898: *Lebenstanz*, a tone-poem for large orchestra (Düsseldorf, January 1904 conducted by Prof. Butths) - from 1899/1900 the Nocturne *Paris (Impressions de nuit)* for large orchestra (Elberfeld 1905, under Dr. Haym, repeated later in Düsseldorf, Berlin and Brussels) - *A Village Romeo and Juliet* (1900/1902), a music drama based on Gottfried Keller's novella of the same name from his tales *The People of Seldwyla* (first performance 21 February 1907, Berlin, Komische Oper, conducted by Fritz Cassirer) - *Margot la Rouge (A night in Paris)* a music drama in one act, composed in 1902 for the Sonzogno Competition, ⁶² not yet performed, exists only in manuscript, while the

⁶¹ It was published in 1907 in Berlin by Harmonie Verlag.

⁶² *Margot La Rouge* was originally composed for and entered in the Concorso Melodrammatico Internazionale of 1904, a competition for one-act operas sponsored by the Milan publisher Sonzogno. The Sonzogno competition of 1899 had been won famously by Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana*.

publication of *Romeo and Juliet* is imminent ⁶³ - from 1903: *Appalachia*, a tone-poem for large orchestra and choir. The work consists of impressions of the American Mid-West, Louisiana, Alabama and Florida in a large-scale set of orchestral variations. It was first performed by Dr Haym in Elberfeld, ⁶⁴ then by Prof. Butths at the Lower Rhine music festival in 1905 and by Oscar Fried with the Philharmonic Orchestra and the Stern Choir in Berlin in 1906 ⁶⁵ - from 1904: *Sea Drift (Im Meerestreiben)* for large orchestra, baritone soloist and choir based on a moving poem by Walt Whitman. On Paumanok's shore, ⁶⁶ lapped by the ceaseless motion of the waves, a pair of sea-gulls are nesting in some brambles; one day the female disappears, the male weeps plaintively and reflects on his happy past. *Sea Drift* was the first work to be universally welcomed, greatly praised in fact, when it was first performed at the 1906 Tonkünstlerfest in Essen. *Appalachia* and *Sea Drift* are both published by Harmonie ⁶⁷ in Berlin. His most recent composition is the concert-length work for soloists, choir and full orchestra *A Mass of Life*, the text of which was selected from Friedrich Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* by Fritz Cassirer (in publication). ⁶⁸ It is bound to be performed at one of the meetings of the Tonkünstlerfest. ⁶⁹

Classifying Delius's works is not particularly easy. One can occasionally detect the influence of Bach, Wagner, and from time to time Chopin, in as much

⁶³ The full score was eventually published by the Verlag Harmonie in Berlin in 1910. Vocal scores existed from around 1906/07.

⁶⁴ First performed at the Town Hall, Elberfeld on 15 October, 1904.

⁶⁵ Given in Berlin on 5 February, 1906.

⁶⁶ *Paumanok*: an ancient Indian name for North America.

⁶⁷ See note 5 in *Studies of Contemporary Musicians*.

⁶⁸ It was also published in 1907 by Harmonie.

⁶⁹ It was performed on 4 June, 1908 at the Munich Tonkünstlerfest; only No. 2 ('Erhebt eure Herzen') from Part I and the whole of Part II, with cuts, were given.

as one can speak of a musical identity as far as the latter is concerned, but nowhere, however, do they appear to such an extent that one might talk in terms of a "school"; in any case, the form and content of Delius's compositions are too distinctive to bear any comparison with any of his predecessors. One might be able to find a trace of *Tristan* in the general mood of the music, for example the hopeless love between Sali and Vrenchen (*A Village Romeo and Juliet*), but it is, perhaps, its romantic subject which creates the similarity rather than the style of the music. The composer has also severed the connection with Grieg who had threatened to gain a hold on Delius in his early years. One can also play down the influence of the young Frenchmen, although it is mentioned from time to time. Delius knows neither Charpentier, Debussy nor Vincent d'Indy. He had written his *Impressions de Nuit: Paris* long before Charpentier had even thought about *Louise*.⁷⁰ Besides, the style and content, orchestral technique and emotional focus of Delius's work is quite different from those of the young Frenchmen; people with open minds and a clear understanding would therefore never consider making such a comparison. There are also fundamental differences between this composer and Richard Strauss. They are both technically accomplished but whereas in Strauss's works wit, whim, intellect, mood and often sheer rhetoric and tone-painting predominate, Delius always gives complete priority to mood. He is a past master at creating atmosphere in music, and in the process has discovered a completely new sound-world. In place of leitmotifs he uses harmony in a motivic way, in which striking juxtapositions surprise and excite. To a certain extent, his musical language is completely new; it must be understood before its inner meaning can be considered in the same way that the symphonic and dramatic orchestral technique of a Richard Strauss makes completely different demands on the listener. But one has basically understood what Strauss is all about as soon as his technique is mastered, whereas at this juncture Delius

highlights his visionary objectives. In art, as in life, he is an idealist lost in his dreams. Whoever can follow this mystical poet will be rewarded in many ways, as his guide will introduce him to fabulous riches; nature's most colourful images reflected in a human spirit which is completely at one with each new experience; as we look out from the summit of a mountain over extensive hills and secluded valleys stretching into the distance (*Over the Hills*); life passes in front of our eyes in a sequence of dance-like pictures (*Life's Dance*); we feel the breath of a city with millions of inhabitants from the moment the stars begin to sparkle until they fade away (*Paris*). How perfectly *A Village Romeo and Juliet* captures the expression of young love set in the rustic atmosphere of country life! How brilliantly and faithfully *Koanga* depicts the vivid colours of the plantation, the primeval forest, the fiery passions of the Black people and their suffering under the yoke of slavery! *Appalachia* is based on the theme of an old Negro spiritual, and recreates in an increasingly striking set of variations the ever-changing scenery of the vast, subtropical marshes of the huge Mississippi river, so strongly linked to the fate of the Black slaves. Its main themes are dejection and yearning, love of nature, childlike merriment and the innate desire to dance and sing. Anyone who wants to learn about Delius the poet of everyday experience at its most concentrated should immerse themselves in *Sea Drift*, which, apart from *A Mass of Life*, is the composer's most characteristic work. Alongside the heaving waves that break in regular intervals on the beaches of Paumanok and the mild Southerly wind that blows across the expanse of salty water, rustling in the tops of ancient trees, is the heart-rending mourning of the lonely, forsaken sea-bird which comforts itself with its memories of a blissful past filled with happiness and love! - This wealth of musical poetry in music is bound to make an impact if an effort is made to study the work in order to familiarise oneself with such a new musical language. So one can welcome Delius as a phenomenon who, for the first time in ages, stands independently, far from all that is conventional, narrow-minded or prejudiced, with his own artistic and technical individuality, giving equal weight

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See note 2 in *Studies of Contemporary Musicians*.

to structure, which has tended to predominate, and to content, relegating technical issues to a subsidiary position where they well and truly belong.

IV

FREDERICK DELIUS

by

Max Chop

Contemporary Musicians

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I. Background

Frederick Delius has only come into prominence relatively recently in Germany as a composer, despite having produced his first composition, a *Legend* for Violin and Orchestra, in 1892. The reason for this curious situation can be found in the composer's personality, an unusual combination of natural self-esteem and exceptional modesty. In times such as these, when the nature of publicity and presentation is increasingly up-beat, Delius has had the courage to remain a serious creative artist who works with integrity, far from the hustle and bustle, and staying aloof from those who constantly seek public recognition, he has patiently waited for a breakthrough. This attitude is reminiscent of times gone by; it is not at all typical of the present, yet if considered from a subjective point of view, it reveals the sensitive spirit of an extraordinary man; everything he has produced in a divine flash of inspiration comes from the bottom of his heart and is

far too precious to be put on display in a shop window with a hundred other things. He is no businessman, and has no intention of becoming one, as the idealism of a creative artist like him could never be reconciled with the extremely sophisticated methods of publicity and promotion which are such a feature of contemporary life, ... in any case, he is dedicated to his art and does not waste his time on distractions. He believes composure and concentration are essential for his creative work; consequently he relishes a peaceful, solitary environment which enables him to develop the visions of his highly fertile mind, visions with which he has brought his surroundings to life and which have inspired him to turn into sound every spiritual impulse and passion he has nurtured. Whenever he has an idea for a piece, it emerges as a completely formed product of his imagination; once it is finished, he tries to find fresh inspiration rather than concentrate on publicising or promoting his work as this would interfere with his main creative activities. ... As Germans have little to complain about in terms of the accessibility and public awareness of high-quality compositions, it is something of a miracle that only five years after he had completed his first work Delius had already produced a number of major works, and as a result had made his mark. He was discovered by the art-loving Royal Director of Music Dr Haym of Elberfeld. It was he who recognised the importance of Delius's works and, not put off by his lack of recognition, gave the first performance of Frederick Delius's 1893 Fantasy-Overture *Over the Hills* in 1897 at one of his concerts. This was the first time a work by our maestro was transformed from mere notes on paper into actual sound in Germany; it aroused the interest of the public as well as the critics and focused it on the highly gifted newcomer.

Others followed in Dr Haym's footsteps. Professor Julius Buths of Düsseldorf, who has contributed so much to the musical life of the Rheinland, also became acquainted with Delius and strongly supported the efforts to make his works more widely known. These two men were joined by a third, the music

director Fritz Cassirer who at that time was employed in the Elberfeld theatre and who later moved with the director Gregor to the Komische Oper in Berlin after it had opened. In the Autumn of 1904 Professor Buths played Delius's *Piano Concerto* of 1897 in Elberfeld under the direction of Dr Haym;⁷¹ the Concerto had been completely revised by the composer during the Winter of 1906/07. Buths had already performed *Life's Dance*, a symphonic poem for large orchestra of 1898, in Düsseldorf in January 1904.⁷² Dr Haym gave the first performance of the Nocturne *Paris*,⁷³ followed by further performances in Düsseldorf, Brussels and Berlin⁷⁴ and so his name became more widely known. Cassirer also managed to produce the Negro opera *Koanga* (1896/97) at the Elberfeld theatre in 1904.⁷⁵ In 1905 the Lower Rhine Music Festival⁷⁶ introduced *Appalachia*, a work for choir and orchestra, conducted by Buths. It received another highly successful performance in February 1906 by Oscar Fried with the Stern Gesangverein and the Philharmonic Orchestra in the capital. At the 1906 Tonkünstlerfest⁷⁷ in Essen, the international audience was introduced to *Sea Drift* of 1904, a work for baritone solo, choir and large orchestra which Professor Suter repeated in Basle in 1907. On 21 February that year, the Komische Oper in Berlin presented the music-drama *A Village Romeo and Juliet* of 1901/02 under Fritz Cassirer, an adaptation of the heart-rending novella of the same name from

⁷¹ Given at the Elberfeld Town Hall by the Elberfelder Konzertgesellschaft on 24 October, 1904.

⁷² Given on 21 January, 1904.

⁷³ Given in Elberfeld on 14 December, 1901.

⁷⁴ Given in Berlin on 15 November, 1902 (Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under Busoni in the Beethoven-Saal), in Düsseldorf on 12 February, 1903 (by Buths) and in Brussels on 3 December, 1905 (at the Concerts Populaires, conducted by Sylvain Dupuis).

⁷⁵ Given on 30 March, 1904.

⁷⁶ See note in list of individuals and organisations.

⁷⁷ See note in list of individuals and organisations.

Gottfried Keller's narrative cycle *The People of Seldwyla*. All this demonstrates that after such a good start, Delius's prospects were extremely promising and it also proves that even in such materialistically-minded times as these, it is still possible for an idealist, who relies on his works to fend for themselves without any sort of publicity, to make progress.

Delius's rise was greatly enhanced by Fried's performance of *Appalachia* in Berlin. The work surprised both the critics and the audience as there had been no publicity whatever beforehand, and it proved extremely difficult to form an opinion about such a large-scale piece after only one hearing. *Appalachia* was performed with Fried's *Trunkene Lied*; at the time, I wrote a short article about Fried's piece which was already familiar in Berlin,

But what about Delius! Who is he? This is a difficult question for anybody to answer, not unlike Mephisto's Pentagram.⁷⁸ Nowadays it is virtually impossible to form an artistic judgment about a piece without providing a detailed analysis of the work and its composer. As in Homer, the old visitor is questioned about his origins, his background, his life and his experiences.⁷⁹ In fact, in some respects, the German capital is behind the times, despite the wealth of activities on offer. I remember the revelations of Liszt's Symphonic Poems to which the Berliners responded in an extremely unsophisticated way although they were over 40 years old and had been performed everywhere (even in the capital by Hans von Bülow and others). In the Rhineland, where things are a bit livelier, Delius and *Appalachia* are already known. There the gifted Anglo-German composer's cause has been taken up enthusiastically by Professor Julius Butts in Düsseldorf and by Dr Hans Haym in Elberfeld. In contrast with Fried's "philosophical" approach, *Appalachia* is a sort of "ethnographic" music, cast in the form of a large-scale set of orchestral variations with a choral section at the end, it has as a backdrop the region of Central

⁷⁸ See note 1 in *Studies of Contemporary Musicians*.

⁷⁹ A reference to Odysseus in Homer's *Odyssey*. See particularly Book VII, line 235 ff (Odysseus is received by Arete and Alkinoös, leader of the Phaiakians), Book XIV, line 185 ff (Odysseus tells the false story of his life to the swineherd Eumaios) and Book XV, line 260 ff (Theoklymenus questions Telemachos about his origins).

America which contains the Allegheny mountains (the Appalachian System), Alabama, the central Atlantic States, Massachusetts and on up to the mouth of the St Lawrence River. Delius proves himself to be a mature artist of exceptional individuality. A wonderful array of sounds and contrasts of colour are present in abundance, whether he is depicting the rich tropical landscape of the Mississippi, the primeval forest, the midday heat or incorporating folk songs with their distinctive rhythms. Although the choir does not play a major part, apart from one a cappella variation, it blends in with the overall sound texture. The work may be a bit on the long side, and it is easy to forget how original the composer is in his music. This northern audience's comparatively cool response stood in clear contrast to the glorious sounds of the radiant South. Was it too much to expect of an audience? Strauss's *Don Quixote*⁸⁰ and *Domestica*⁸¹ made even greater demands! Or were they just more attuned to the 'philosophical' rather than the 'ethnological' approach? It seems that the taste of the Berlin audience could be likened to the erratic behaviour of the barometer in April. Its mercury seems to be affected more positively by the regular composers of the Metropole Theatre⁸² than by those high-minded individuals who expect their audience to listen attentively and to make informed judgements rather than just sit back and enjoy themselves...⁸³

The reaction of the press was generally the opposite to that of the public and they wrote about *Appalachia* in an engaging and positive manner, at least in so far as it is possible to comment on the deeper qualities of such an important work as this after only one hearing.

⁸⁰ *Don Quixote*: Symphonic Poem by Richard Strauss, Op 35 of 1897-98.

⁸¹ See note 36 in *Critics on the Critics*.

⁸² At the turn of the century (and to this day), the area surrounding the central area of Berlin, bordered by the Pariser Platz and the Brandenburger Tor, the Museumsinsel and the north bank of the River Spree, supported a variety of cultural organisations. At that time, the Metropol-Theater, which was the home of operetta and music-hall, was located in a theatre in the Behrenstrasse which had been opened as the Theater Unter den Linden in 1892. Today, it houses the Komische Oper.

⁸³ It has not been possible to pinpoint the publication in which this review appeared. At the time of Fried's performance of *Appalachia* in Berlin, February 1906, Chop was writing for the *Berliner Tageblatt* as well as for a number of music journals cited in the introduction. He certainly recycled much of this extract in the more substantial articles on Delius he subsequently produced.

The audience response, however, was as would have been expected for Delius. In fact, he is a completely new and original talent, who sets his own terms of reference so that neither his general approach nor his specific style provide any points of comparison. With his new technique, new harmonic language, new way of handling both musical and literary aspects and completely different starting points and goals, it all proved too much for those used to forming their opinions about new works by referring to previously acquired knowledge. Given this approach, the audience's reaction was consistent with received opinion; as it was not able to come to terms with such an original and unusual work, it remained silent. The history of music, from Beethoven and Mozart right up to Wagner and Liszt, is full of parallels to that of Delius in Berlin.⁸⁴

Delius's most striking effects, which are particularly apparent in *Appalachia*, are derived from his distinctive and highly original harmonic language, not unlike, for example, that of Edvard Grieg's earliest and undoubtedly best works in which his Nordic temperament is moderated by a southern influence. As far as Delius is concerned, however, it is more subtle and free from what in Grieg's case could be described as national colouring, or, perhaps, a somewhat artificial approach. Delius follows absolutely his own instinct in harmony and in his idiosyncratic approach to instrumentation which set him apart from the hordes of Strauss and Wagner followers and which lead him to his own, private mystical world. His unique harmonic language, which is not contrapuntally derived as in Richard Strauss, adds an intoxicating dimension to *Appalachia* as well as to his other works. He also inspires those listeners with sensitive and musical natures to experience complete emotional

⁸⁴ See Chop's article *Delius in Berlin*.

fulfilment, even when they are not fully aware of the potential effect of this spiritual process. His main strength lies in the glorious breadth of his vision which cannot be measured. His works fall apart if any attempt is made to dissect them in an analytical way. The overall impression of total unity remains the absolute *sine qua non*. In Delius's works, for example, harmony is as important as melodic and thematic invention. No attempt should be made, however, to look for counterpoint as it was practised in the past; it is generally present in his works but quite restrained in nature so that coherence of form, without any mannerisms, is paramount. His *Mass of Life* contains a splendid double fugue for eight-part choir to the words, "Das ist ein Tanz über Stock und Stein"⁸⁵ which could not be bettered by any theorist of the old school and is presented, without any pretence, as something quite natural and not as an artificial demonstration of contrapuntal skill. - The fundamental difference between Frederick Delius and Richard Strauss lies in the fact that the former has chosen to depict atmosphere whereas Strauss's works are characterised by intellect, humour, spirit, often just by purely instrumental turns of phrase and the reproduction of sounds of the natural world. Herein lies the reason why our Master craves a secluded working environment. He needs peaceful, undisturbed surroundings to create the right context for work. - The main inspiration for our German music is the human spirit;⁸⁶ the main inspiration for Delius's music is the imagination. Imagination also reflects the emotions but it does not prevail and consequently this typically German

⁸⁵ "Das ist ein Tanz über Stock und Stein" (Now for a dance over hill and dale) ; see *A Mass of Life*, Part I, No. 3, figure 23.

⁸⁶ Chop uses the German word *Gemüt* which does not really have a concise English equivalent in this context. It can perhaps be considered as an understanding of the world experienced with heart and soul but not necessarily requiring a rational or logical response. Imagination (*Fantasie*), on the other hand, occurs in the human mind and does not need to involve the heart and soul. Chop is of the opinion that Delius uses the imagination of his mind but, at the same time, reaches and moves the imagination of the heart.

characteristic is not so prevalent in his music. Overarching everything is Delius's detached creative skill and sense of atmosphere. Delius revels in them and puts them to the service of his distinctive harmonic language and musical style. Strauss's bold sound-world, his orchestration, in short his technical skill, are admirable. With Delius, however, it is constant spiritual renewal which is paramount, particularly as it relates to musical style and sound, not in conceptual terms as such but in its impact on the soul of the artist with all its consequent impulses. Delius is without doubt, therefore, the deeper of the two. He does not display his feelings as openly as German composers, and he completely lacks any philistine or pedantic tendencies. Whatever his instincts and imagination motivate him to do, is carried out with absolute freedom and confidence. In Delius's works chord sequences can be found which, taken out of context, would sound quite outrageous, but within the course of a complete composition and with the wonderful sound of the rest of the work, they are completely normal and logical so that as soon as they are familiar, his whole style seems completely natural and intelligible. He appears to be far more successful in achieving his artistic goals and philosophy than all those modern composers with their more elaborate techniques; so he is yet another living example of the old saying that it is content rather than style that leaves the most striking and significant impression. Of course, Delius was influenced by the great masters; he is as familiar with Bach and Beethoven as with the more recent Romantics and he has also studied Wagner, Liszt, Reger and Strauss. Yet, at the same time he has maintained his individuality, and there is no hint of any other influences which he might have left behind once he had reached the goal of being able to develop his own ideas, his own style and of being able to support them with his own forms of expression. In his works he prefers subtly coloured landscapes, moods which revel in introspection, such as the male bird yearning for his departed mate in *Sea Drift*,

the downtrodden, fated Negroes in *Appalachia* and *Koanga* or, as in *Paris*, the depiction of the comings and goings of a large city at night, while others lie in a deep sleep until the stars fade as the dawn of a new day approaches. The *Mass of Life* develops the epic, the elegiac and contemplative moods in Nietzsche's *Also Sprach Zarathustra* at times in a most beguiling manner. In this work, Delius has created one of the most original and important compositions for choir, soloists and orchestra. Its strength lies in the fact that he does not translate strictly the philosophical elements into sound, but actually turns its lyrical descriptions and moods into musical portraits and in this process of distillation he avoids a literal treatment. Similarly, in *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, it is also the undiluted, reflective mood with its slightly elegiac feeling that inspired Delius to set it to music. He is a real master of this style. He prefers a gradual deepening of an individual mood to one of constant change, out of which he can create human interaction by illuminating the many sides of the principal characters in a wonderful way. As an example, the futile, poignant love of the young couple (Sali and Vrenchen) is developed against a background of acute bitterness, unrelenting hatred, selfish indifference and blinkered introspection but with a certain resolve that has no fear of death and inevitably leads to catastrophe. Delius describes all this in music of unsurpassed mastery. - In the process, the observant student will gradually discover in every work, a deeper level of artistic maturity seen most clearly in *A Village Romeo* as well as in *Sea Drift* and *A Mass of Life*. Here Delius's uniquely profound musical style can be seen in its purest form and is worthy of the highest praise, living proof of the fact that we are dealing here with an original, visionary creative force.

2. Biographical notes

As is the case with so many of the very best, Delius followed his deepest convictions in becoming a musician, going against his parents' quite different intentions for their son's future. Frederick Delius was born in 1863⁸⁷ in Bradford (Yorkshire, England) the son of German parents who had settled in England. At an early age his musical leanings were already apparent; he was taught the violin by good teachers and could play quite well. His parents did not want their son to concentrate on music as they intended he would take up a business career. At the age of 20, however, Delius went his own way as he did not show the slightest inclination towards that profession. He left his own country for Florida to set up and run an orange plantation in a remote and quite isolated location.⁸⁸ In this setting, which gave him plenty of time for leisure, he was able to devote himself to his beloved art with the dedication of someone searching for life's inner meanings. The experiences of his tropical surroundings with their wonderful colours and glorious scenery had a beneficial and inspirational effect upon his innate talent. He studied here by himself, relying purely on his own resources, with very few study aids and without the help of a teacher. Such a method of learning might have been harmful for people with less talent or strength of character. It equipped Delius, however, with the originality and individuality of a future composer. He learned about form by studying theoretical text-books as well as full scores and general books on music; but to achieve something constructive with form he had on hand and in abundance spiritual inspiration, imagination, atmosphere and the means of expression, even though it was naturally undeveloped as yet. The inspiration of Florida and its isolation was quite

⁸⁷ See note 25 in *Studies of Contemporary Musicians*.

⁸⁸ He actually left for Florida on 2 March 1884 sailing from Liverpool to New York. At that time he was a little over 22 years old.

sufficient. And so nature provided the stimulus and the source of his musical language, it became his teacher and lent its notions of beauty to its most industrious pupil. Those who experience such teaching will be safe from any kind of prejudice and intrigue. Not for him 'will the ancient manuscript be the respected source which quenches his thirst for ever';⁸⁹ his own spirit alone will provide eternal renewal.

After having worked quietly by himself in Florida for a few years, Delius returned to the world which the entranced poet had almost forgotten. He wanted to compare its ways with those he had acquired in Florida, to correct any possibly bad habits and at the same time benefit from some suitable courses of study so he spent some time at the Conservatory in Leipzig where he was taught by Jadassohn and Carl Reinecke. Since about 1890 he has been living in France, partly in Paris, the rest of the time in the country and since 1897 Delius has been living in the tranquillity of the pretty little town of Grez sur Loing (Department of Seine et Loire) where he has composed most of his works which have been performed. Since then, he has not stopped working as a composer. His rigorous self-criticism has caused him to reject some of his earlier works. When reflecting on work in hand he considers it from the important viewpoint of his experience of personal growth. Only those early works he believed matched his view of his own development were allowed to survive. Everything else had to go. In this respect he is very like Georges Bizet who, with complete lack of vanity, left to posterity only those works he felt were of value and not those he revised in the

⁸⁹ See Goethe's *Faust*, Part I: Night - Faust's Study (i). Faust to Wagner:

Is parchment, then, your well of living water,
Where whosoever drinks shall be made whole?
Look not to stem your craving in that quarter:
The spring is vain that flows not from the soul.

Quoted from the translation of *Faust* by Philip Wayne, publ Penguin Books, London, 1949 repr 1978, p 50.

light of his musical development in later years. More creative people should adopt this practice. At least when publishing posthumous works someone with knowledge should look through them and select those pieces worth publishing. This would serve the artistic reputation of a composer to better effect as there were often good reasons why certain works were held back as they would hardly have survived harsh exposure to public criticism. Where it was clear that a composer did not have the necessary foresight to destroy whatever was lacking in quality, it should be done by respectful future generations!

The following is a chronological list of Delius's major works to date in order of composition:

1. *Legend* for Violin and Orchestra (1892).
2. *Over the Hills* Fantasy-Overture for large orchestra (1893), the first Delius composition performed in Germany by the musical director Dr Haym at Elberfeld in 1897.⁹⁰
3. *Piano Concerto in C minor* with orchestral accompaniment (1897), performed in Elberfeld in the Autumn of 1904 by Professor Julius Butths of Düsseldorf, subsequently repeated in Düsseldorf.⁹¹ The work was completely rewritten during the Winter of 1906/07, omitting the whole of the first section.
4. *Norwegian Suite* for large orchestra (1897): incidental music to G. Heiberg's satirical drama *Folkeraadet*. The first performance took place in 1897 in Christiania against a background of lively protests which escalated into terrible riots, as the composer, prompted by the playwright, had parodied the Norwegian national anthem.

⁹⁰ See note 59 in *Frederick Delius; A Biography*.

⁹¹ See note 70 above.

5. *Koanga*, a music drama (1896/97), first performed in 1904 under the conductor Fritz Cassirer in the municipal theatre at Elberfeld.⁹² The work received two further performances.
6. *Life's Dance*, a symphonic poem for large orchestra (1898), first performed in Düsseldorf in January 1904, under Professor Julius Butths at the concerts of the town's Musikverein.⁹³
7. *Paris*, a Nocturne for large orchestra (1899/1900), first performed by Dr Haym in Elberfeld, followed by performances in Berlin, Düsseldorf, Brussels and Frankfurt.⁹⁴
8. *A Village Romeo and Juliet* (1900/02), a music drama, after Gottfried Keller's novella of the same name. The libretto was adapted by the composer. First performed at the Komische Oper in Berlin under Cassirer on 21 February, 1907. The drama was given two further performances.
9. *Margot la Rouge (A Night in Paris)*, a music tragedy in one act (1902).
10. *Appalachia*, a symphonic poem for large orchestra and choir (1903). First performed in Elberfeld (Dr Haym), later by Prof. Butths at the Lower Rhine Music Festival in 1906, followed by Oskar Fried at the Berlin Philharmonie (February 1906).⁹⁵

⁹² See note 74 above.

⁹³ See note 71 above.

⁹⁴ Given at Elberfeld on 14 December 1901, in Berlin (Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under Busoni in the Beethoven-Saal) on 15 November, 1902, in Düsseldorf (under Butths) on 12 February, 1903, in Brussels (at the Concerts Populaires under Sylvain Dupuis) on 3 December, 1905. A performance had been scheduled by the Tonkünstlerfest for the May 1904 meeting at Frankfurt, but it fell through.

⁹⁵ Fried's performance was given with the Berlin Philharmonie and the Stern Gesangverein in Berlin on 5 February, 1906.

11. *Sea Drift*, for baritone solo, large orchestra and mixed choir (1904). First performed at the Essen Tonkünstler Festival in the Summer of 1906.⁹⁶
12. *A Mass of Life* (adapted from Friedrich Nietzsche's *Also Sprach Zarathustra*) for soloists, choir and large orchestra (1905), the most recent concert-length work.

This list should also include a number of songs which have been written at various times and performed on several occasions and which have been received quite favourably.

From this marvellous collection of works which concentrate on the most serious genres of composition, only *Appalachia*, *Sea Drift* and a volume of distinctive songs have been published by Harmonie Verlag⁹⁷ in Berlin. The remaining works are still in manuscript. This is due to the already mentioned idiosyncrasy of the composer who does not believe in publicising his works and considers them finished once they are on paper. 'They have to speak for themselves and survive on their own merits,' he says, which is yet another sign of his uncompromising self-criticism in the face of public opinion.

This is a superficial account of Delius's biography, in that it is purely factual, but the spiritual development of such an extraordinary man and the struggle for his artistic beliefs in the face of the philistines is extremely interesting. Like many other celebrated idealists who introduced new ideas to the world and had to face criticism, Delius has experienced plenty of unpleasantness and, like a leader who has to be surrounded and boosted by his supporters to fight

⁹⁶ The performance of *Sea Drift* was given at the 1906 Essen festival on 24 May, 1906; it was conducted by Georg Witte with the baritone soloist Josef Loritz.

⁹⁷ See note 26 in *Studies of Contemporary Musicians*.

off strong attacks, those who promoted Delius suffered strong opposition. Firstly, the loyal pioneer, Music Director Dr Haym of Elberfeld, who achieved some success for Delius's works, and thereby for his own artistic convictions, in the face of constant opposition from the public, the press and the directors of his concerts society. Professor Butts from Düsseldorf was the only one of his colleagues to take up his challenge to promote these new works; he was overwhelmed and so impressed by Delius's music that he became his second champion in the Rhineland. Fritz Cassirer, Music Director of the Elberfeld Municipal Theatre was so influenced by Haym's concerts that he became the third disciple. At the Theatre, the directors approved a production of the music drama *Koanga* but it was not performed, as the music director at that time showed no interest in the work.⁹⁸ Later Cassirer discovered the manuscript, delved into its musical and dramatic glories and produced the novelty towards the end of March 1904 with an excellent cast. Incidentally, even before the score of *Koanga* had been offered to the Municipal Theatre in Elberfeld, its second scene had already been performed at a Delius concert in London, conducted by Hertz. The first performance in Berlin of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* was also due to Fritz Cassirer's energetic drive. He is an outstanding authority on Delius who completely understands his intentions and who is able to merge his own personality with a work of art in an unassuming way so that it communicates naturally.

Delius initially responded to the extremely unpleasant hostility he encountered with the most admirable composure, which could only be explained by his detached attitude in artistic matters. Many others would have completely lost their creative urge in the face of such animosity, and deflated with self-doubt, would have given up. For him, however, this was quite an insignificant issue. He was absolutely convinced of his own artistic mission, yet also knew that his acquiescence would have implied the ultimate success of the increasingly fierce

⁹⁸ See note 27 in *Studies of Contemporary Musicians*.

attacks on him, and that this public outcry did not at all indicate any possible worthlessness as far as his compositions were concerned. Overall, Delius is an optimist. He enjoys good health, happiness and life itself. There is not the slightest trace of pessimism in his nature, as some critics claim or would like to suggest. So Delius merely concluded from this first rebuff that he had not yet been understood; his unshakable optimism strengthened his view that his time would come when audiences and critics would be more well-informed. The performances of *Appalachia* and *Sea Drift* in Berlin and Essen proved that he was right. As Impressionism progressed in music and developed a tendency for exaggeration and composition degenerated into mannerism, pure orchestral technique and contrapuntal artifice without substance, the more intelligible the style of one such as Delius became, as his music communicated despite all its modern ways and impressionistic form, and stood in clear contrast to the prevailing trend. It was also necessary to give the unresponsive public time to catch up with the genius who was now forging ahead and making his music more accessible to them. - In this respect it was also fortuitous that at the time Delius was quite mistakenly regarded as being the very opposite of a pushy modernist. He only stays in a town for a brief visit and, as previously mentioned, never gets involved in promoting himself. His only aim in life is to have the freedom to be creative; he can only be happy when he is surrounded by the natural world, in the countryside. If he were to settle in a large town it would mean for him the drying up of all the inspiration which is the source of his creativity. And so he left London immediately after his sensational concert for his rural retreat and did not bother about anything as he did not want to know the public's response, his only aim in organising the performance having been to hear his works played by outstanding musicians. He had had an opportunity of assessing his own works. When one is a ruthless critic of one's own work and knows one is on the right track, why bother about the acclaim or rejection of the public when it depends on so many other aspects which have nothing to do with art or style?

It would be completely wrong to accuse Delius of being arrogant or vain because of his views. There is nothing in his make-up which indicates that he has an inflated opinion of himself. He is a modest, quiet person who hates nothing more than self-importance. He sees himself purely as a servant of an art ruled by imagination and inspiration. Consequently he thinks almost objectively about his own work; the world of his creativity and of his dreams lies far away and cannot be turned on at will. Whenever he encounters narrow-mindedness he reacts like someone whose descriptions of the wonders of a tropical paradise are met with disbelief by ignoramuses from the North - he smiles forgivingly. But this does not at all mean that modern life is alien to him; in the city he lives like a city-dweller. One only really gets to know him when he is at one with nature in the countryside. He needs complete isolation and peace for work; he does not want to see a soul, and his already limited contact with the outside world is then reduced to an absolute minimum. The sensitive commentator carefully avoids giving any impression which might stand between him and his poetic imagination. Such a distraction would damage the integrity and the credibility of his musical vision.

Delius only achieved his first 'complete victory' at the Tonkünstler Festival in Essen in the Summer of 1906 with his composition *Sea Drift*. The work was played alongside those by such newcomers as Hermann Bischoff (Symphony), Rudolf Siegel (epic composition), Richard Mors (symphonic poem *Give Pain its Due*), Braunsfels, Neitzel and Humperdinck - in a monumental four-hour-long concert, in highly unfavourable conditions for a work which makes completely new demands on an audience. Nevertheless, the critics unanimously considered *Sea Drift* a most sensitive composition and its composer inspired. As a result of this general acclaim, the guerrilla warfare waged on various occasions recently against Delius should have come to an end. There has also been some misunderstanding in categorizing the composer. As we have recently moved away from the practice of viewing composers as independent figures, one naturally tries

to identify a "school" to chart Delius's development and in the process this has thrown up some crazy notions. The fact that the composer has been living in France for several years led to the assumption that Delius was part of the modern French movement. This is pure conjecture which has no foundation in fact. Delius has not been influenced at all by modern French composers; he knows very little about them, neither Charpentier, for example, nor Debussy. His composition *Paris* was already finished by the time he encountered Charpentier's *Louise*.⁹⁹ Apart from superficial differences between composers like Delius and Charpentier there are also fundamental differences as far as style and content are concerned. Charpentier's music lies on the surface; it is quite superficial, while Delius is profound. The similarity between *Paris* and *Louise* lies in the simple fact that both make use of the "cris de Paris".¹⁰⁰ One might prefer to speak of the influence of Grieg or of the Russians on modern French composers, particularly Debussy. Initially, Delius was also influenced in some respects by Edvard Grieg with whom he had developed a deep friendship during his period at the Konservatorium in Leipzig. Delius also got to know Norway at that time. He was deeply moved by its scenic natural beauty during his long, solitary expeditions in the mountains. Such resonances can also be found in Grieg's compositions. Although the influence is only superficial here, in his later works particularly, however, in which harmony and modulation are almost like a cliché due to their constant use, Delius has distilled it into a lyrical musical language and style. None of his compositions shows any affinity with the new Russian movement. If one could identify any influence on his completely original style, it would be that of the German masters Sebastian Bach and Richard Wagner who provided him with the depth and sincerity of his poetic imagination. In this respect, Delius never renounces his German ancestry as it constantly drives him on to even greater depths of feeling. It is possible that he adopted something of Chopin's style in the

⁹⁹ See note 23 in *Studies of Contemporary Musicians*.

¹⁰⁰ See note 24 in *Studies of Contemporary Musicians*.

elegance of his approach to form and in the serenity of his expression. These observations only concern techniques which are hardly noticeable and then only after detailed study.

I would like to use this opportunity to mention that Delius hardly ever allows anyone to influence him, as he is an extraordinarily strong and completely balanced artist who, on the contrary, tends to strongly influence others. However, his distinctive and unusually gripping style is completely influenced by the wonders of nature by which he is completely absorbed. *Over the Hills* is the result of the atmospheric inspiration of his home county, of Yorkshire, as well as of Norway. *Koanga*, *Appalachia* and *Sea Drift* are a musical expression of his visits to Florida, Louisiana, to the Mississippi and the Gulf of Mexico. It was during this time that Delius put down the roots of what became his most fruitful creative period. The extremely fertile landscapes of these subtropical regions, their richly colourful flora and fauna, the extraordinary scenario of the coloured people and their peaceful, open struggle against the whites - all of these experiences were critical for the artist who came to full maturity during these few years' stay in the South. The robust combination of his German background with the unpredictable imagination of the South might explain many of those aspects which seem unusual but also fascinating when encountering Delius for the first time.

An unusually generous nature and an absolute sureness of judgement are basic character traits. He is never deliberately deceitful and can find himself in an embarrassing situation on the rare occasion when he is in company or with colleagues and is unable to be complimentary without a good reason. Yet, no-one is ever offended by his direct manner. It is so much a part of his character that its absence would be like a distortion of his true self. And as he applies the same uncompromising rigour and passion for the truth to himself, his consistent

application of these principles towards others does not cause any offence as such openness precludes more deplorable behaviour in human relationships.

Frederick Delius is married to the painter Jelka Rosen. His wife displays an artistic understanding towards his work. She also translates his works with great skill, especially as she has adopted her husband's impressionistic style and thus avoids the conventional and unimaginative approach of professional translators.

3. Frederick Delius the composer

The opening sections dealing with preliminary material and artistic characteristics have concentrated on biographical information and general observations. From what has been previously noted, it can be concluded that Delius's particular gift, his great aptitude as a composer, is for breaking down the barriers between composers of instrumental music and dramatic music. As far as he is concerned, he does not see himself as belonging exclusively in either of these particular spheres, but as he has complete technical mastery he works in both genres. Like nearly every other composer, he began with instrumental pieces but the magnificent and strikingly varied material in his *Legend* for Violin and Orchestra reveals his preference for large-scale works. This lyrical and colourful piece threatens almost to break out of its confined framework. It was first performed in London at a concert conducted by Hertz in 1899. - The *Legend* is far removed from the Fantasy-Overture *Over the Hills and Far Away* for large orchestra. In fact, by using a more elaborate form, Delius merely wanted to increase the scope for his creative ideas. Here, he is on home ground, and there is hardly anyone better qualified in this area, the depiction of nature, the open-air, an impressionistic style of composition. He portrays Yorkshire, his home county, and was probably inspired, in part, by views from the tops of its distant hills of far-off mountain ranges and peaceful wooded valleys. But he does not just restrict

himself to a specific programme as, for example, in Liszt's symphonic poem *Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne*; ¹⁰¹ he outlines the general mood and then creates moods in a loosely shaped structure with a wonderful blend of themes and harmonies. ¹⁰² Despite the fact that the work is thematically based, it already points unmistakably towards the later Delius (*Sea Drift*) in its harmonic richness and its impressive orchestration. The orchestra uses double woodwind and four horns.

As already mentioned, the *Concerto in C minor for Piano and Orchestra* of 1897 is a second version which is a complete reworking and as his most recent composition (1906/07) shows Delius at the height of his powers. In this single-movement work in which its compact sections are put together in a concentrated way, the composer strikes a heroic note which, with a confident touch, he combines with a gentle, almost elegiac mood, to create a memorable contrast. After a quiet six-bar orchestral introduction the concerto's solo part, which uses modern instrumental technique in a gratifying way, opens in a titanically defiant manner with a striking variant of the octave theme; it proceeds from the dominant to the tonic of C minor and with its expansive harmonisation displays its enormous potential. A brief, almost recitative-like phrase, is followed by a striking passage, with fortissimo accents in the orchestra, in which tremendous strength is needed to capture the great brilliance of the solo part. The cantabile pianissimo from the piano provides a wonderful contrast. The heart of the piece lies in this effective juxtaposition of brilliant and gentle passages, this

¹⁰¹ *Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne*: Symphonic Poem by Liszt, composed between 1847 and 1857.

¹⁰² The form of *Over the Hills and Far Away* is by no means as loose as Chop states and traditional musical structures are much in evidence, not least the overarching ABA form and the episodic nature of the central B section complete with its repeated theme and "changing orchestral backgrounds" technique, a favourite procedure of several of the late nineteenth-century Russian composers.

remarkable diversity. Passages such as the triumphant chords covering the whole range of the piano and the rubato build-up in the orchestra, are among the most memorable in the whole concerto repertoire. Later, towards the end, the difficult double-octave passages put the soloist in the spotlight - but the structure is never compromised; quite the opposite, in fact, structural integrity is always preserved throughout. And when the climax comes, a gentle, almost pastoral sounding melody in the sonorous middle-register invites the more technically minded to pay closer attention to the music. One only has to look further on at the chordal string accompaniment and the sequence of trills for flute, oboe and clarinet in the C minor fortissimo *deciso* section to recognise the variety of techniques used to express the heroic and the epic. This work, which has not so far been edited and which the author of this article has only studied in the recently completed handwritten manuscript, is very welcome at a time when the piano repertoire has to rely on a small number of modern concertos (Tchaikovsky, Liszt, Grieg, Saint-Saëns). It is particularly the case here as neither artistic objectives nor musical integrity have been compromised, not even in the bravura passages.

The unusual circumstances surrounding the *Norwegian Suite* for large orchestra, have already been mentioned in the list of Delius's compositions. Gunnar Heiberg, the author of the satirical drama *Folkeraadet* on which the composition is based, is a close friend of Delius. His play is an attack on nationalistic jingoism. Parliament is debating the imminent danger posed by a foreign enemy which is threatening to declare war on the country, but comes up against internal difficulties before any decision can be made; a decision which is ultimately taken from their hands. Parliament had realised that as the guardians of national sovereignty it was the sole responsibility of the peoples' representatives in this difficult situation to take up the struggle against the enemy on the battlefield, to either win or die. Their sense of the drama of the situation, inspired by the example of ancient Greece and its heroes, really aroused them; they set off buoyed up with tremendous confidence and enthusiasm. Out on the battlefield,

however, before they had even seen the enemy, the bold parliamentarians began to quarrel about politics and battered each other to death. But as the enemy were rebuffed and began their retreat, the people imagined their spokesmen had died defending the honour of their country; they started to organise state funerals. At that moment an eye-witness appeared and told the people what had actually happened, opening their eyes to the truth; it transpired that an insignificant hotel waiter had destroyed the enemy by letting off an explosion at the crucial moment, while the members of parliament found dead on the "Field of Honour" had in fact died as a result of their own political squabbling. The real champion was brought home in triumph. - It was to be expected that such a take-off of patriotic hypocrisy and the exaggerations caused by mass hysteria would cause bad blood in Norway, particularly as Delius had included a parody of the Norwegian national anthem in the score to make the point. It provoked extremely rowdy protest marches when it was first performed in Christiania. Those of us, like the composer, who are above petty party politics and judge works solely on their artistic merits, find in it the perceptive characterisation typical of Delius the dramatist. Of the four movements, the first one brilliantly depicts the confused atmosphere in parliament with a superb fugato. Each speaker tries to outdo the other; no one can be heard. The second movement reflects the positive reaction of the people to the events in Parliament and exuberantly celebrates deeds of patriotism. It is a lively display which effectively depicts the general mood of the people, and also includes some popular tunes. The third movement vigorously portrays the general exodus; everyone still believes in the sincerity of their views. The fourth movement starts with a funeral march. The dead must be given a decent burial. The sudden change of mood to a delirious dance reveals, meanwhile, that the truth has emerged, and pokes fun at the gullibility of the masses.

In the music drama *Koanga* (first performed at the municipal theatre in Elberfeld on 30 March 1904), with its portrayal of Negro life, Delius depicts

in music for the first time the landscape and people of the American mid-west. Here he evokes with great delight the impressions of his life on the remote orange plantation in Florida. The day-to-day lives and fortunes of the Negroes are set against the backdrop of this location and the wonderful tropical luxuriance of its natural environment. Delius loves them. He still cherishes with deep affection the memories of those times and recalls his daily contact with the black people, the evenings when their almost unique improvisatory style of four-part singing drifted to him through the still air, while fire flies flitted among the long fronds of the palm trees and the night breeze gently wafted through the tops of the magnolia trees. Such evocative images are so much a part of his means of expression. For the opera, however, the colourful scenery had to be interwoven with a suitable plot. The writer C F Keary adapted the novel by the American writer G W Cable and placed at its heart the issue of slavery in the southern states of North America at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries. The barrier between Blacks and Whites provides the conflict in the drama. Even now, as in the days when slavery gave Whites complete rights of ownership over the Blacks and often led to quite unimaginable acts of cruelty, the hatred amongst coloured people for the fair-skinned, as the guardians of culture, has very deep roots; the differences between the two races is cultivated with great care, even amongst those of mixed blood (quadroons, octoroons, mulattos) who hardly display any of the characteristics of their heritage as far as their appearance is concerned. Marriage between Black and White, or between people of mixed blood is regarded as completely impossible, - at the very least, someone who ignores such conventions will be derided by the white people and excluded from their circles. The following summary will give the reader an idea of how it works in practice.

In the Prelude, several young girls, daughters of rich Louisiana plantation owners, are spending a glorious balmy Spring evening playing and dancing. They

soon tire and settle down to a good chat. The Negroes are wonderful story tellers with their vivid imaginations so they send for old "Uncle Joe" who starts telling the excited and attentive girls an old epic tale handed down through the generations, a story about the miseries of slavery and of longing for freedom, the story of Koanga and Palmyra. A light mist descends, the clouds become thicker and thicker, fantasy turns into reality and in front of the spectators' eyes the fate of Koanga, prince of the Jaloff tribe and Voodoo priest begins to unfold. Voodoo is the religion of the African Negroes; belief in it is still prevalent in the Negro population of all countries, even in those who have outwardly converted to Christianity, so that they can hold on to the old ways deep in their hearts with the doggedness of their race. This explains why the Voodoo curse cast by Koanga over all the plantation's inhabitants at the end of the second act turns into reality as a result of the Negroes' susceptibility to the powers of hypnosis and auto-suggestion. - At the beginning of the first act we are introduced to life on the plantation of the wealthy Don José Martinez at daybreak. Male and female Negro slaves are being herded to their work in the sugar cane and indigo fields under the whip of the overseer Perez, an octoroon. We are also introduced to Palmyra, the beautiful mulatto, who as the half-sister of Martinez's wife enjoys a special position in the household and is pestered with amorous advances by Perez. A new slave is brought in, bound in chains ... Koanga, who, as the descendent of a noble tribe of Sudanese refuses to work and cannot even be whipped into submission. And so Martinez tries to gain influence over the defiant man by using Palmyra's beauty. Koanga, deep in thought of his distant home, recognises Palmyra, whose mother was from his own tribe, as a fellow country woman. Deeply moved by the meeting, he promises to be obedient on condition that the mulatto becomes his wife. Martinez agrees but his concession not only provokes Perez, who also loves Palmyra, but also his wife Clotilde who considers the marriage between the Negro and a Christian Mulatto an insult to her half-sister. Nevertheless, Martinez stands firm in his decision. Koanga and Palmyra are overwhelmed by their sudden declaration of love and by the happy prospect of

their imminent union. - The second act presents the wedding preparations and the characteristic ambiance of the southern States. Clotilde and Perez are making plans to prevent the loathsome marriage. Perez resolves to use violence in case conventional means will not succeed. He approaches Palmyra again only to be rejected by her for a second time and in his anger he orders some white servants to take her away, right in front of Koanga, who has been revelling in his good fortune. Koanga, aroused both by the strong wine he has drunk and by this terrible act, demands satisfaction from Martinez who is offended by the arrogant behaviour of the slave and wants him punished. At that moment, Koanga strikes his master a fatal blow and knocks him to the ground - dead. The onlookers are terrified by such a dreadful act and run away. Before he escapes into the jungle, Koanga casts one of the most potent Voodoo curses on Martinez's plantation: 'Teach the white man the secret power, the vow of fate, the magic that is strong enough to put a three-fold curse on land, air and water! From the depths rises hideous death, from the soil famine and deadly fever that rots the blood. Send these three, O Lord, as your messengers attended by your thunder-bolts.' With that, Koanga vanishes in a blaze of thunder and lightening. - The beginning of the third act is set in a clearing in the jungle where Negroes perform a frenzied dance around the soaring flames of a sacrificial pyre. Koanga is the leader of these poor runaway slaves; he makes a pact with them, sanctified by magic rituals, a covenant which under his leadership promises them freedom and repatriation. In the middle of his voodoo invocation he sees Palmyra in a vision, sick with longing for him. Nothing can hold him back; he leaves his followers and rushes off to be near his loved one. - A change of scene once again reveals Martinez's plantation. The Voodoo curse has worked and the superstitious Negroes have been struck down with fever; the sick and the dying lie on the ground as the hard-hearted Perez tries in vain to make them work, ignoring the warnings of the dying to make his peace with Koanga and lift the curse of the Gods. His hatred cannot be reconciled. He announces the arrival of a group on horseback to hunt down the

fugitive, then approaches Palmyra and tries to take her by force as she steps out of a hut but, sick and tired, she still turns him away. At that moment Koanga appears, armed with a spear and kills Perez who is trying to escape only to be caught himself and beaten to death by the white men. Bleeding profusely and with smashed knee caps he is dragged in front of Palmyra; racked with pain, he expires as he blesses his homeland and curses his persecutors. Palmyra takes her own life at his side. - Mists once again envelop the scene and, as in the Prelude, we see the narrator "Uncle Joe" and the group of eagerly attentive and deeply moved girls lamenting the bitter fate of Koanga and Palmyra.

This work, which has ample variety, will leave a lasting impression on sympathetic listeners and generate an enthusiastic response, for which Delius has produced an impressive score particularly in terms of the exoticisms and its dramatic content, which is crucially enhanced by the psychological aspects. One cannot fail to notice that the composer has put his whole heart into the narrative and articulates it through his music, describing things he has experienced and observed himself. How well he succeeds in the first act in depicting the atmosphere of daybreak with the sound of cow-bells, the off-stage chorus and the group of blacks approaching sleepily, all skilfully portrayed in striking sounds. Koanga's entrance, with its melancholy lilt reminiscent of his distant African homeland, which immediately inspires growing sympathy for the character, and Palmyra's memories of her childhood, could also be considered supremely successful. The raising of tension then leads to the quintet and the altercation, undoubtedly one of the finest passages in the whole piece. It is interspersed with the chorus of Negro slaves, summoned back from the fields by the breakfast bell. On a musical level, wonderfully effective passages with strong characterisation follow one after the other. A particularly impressive section of the work can be found at the beginning of the second act where intrigue and devious scheming are set against a backdrop of a joyful wedding ceremony taking place under a canopy. Palmyra's forceful abduction by Perez leads to a gripping climax, the

confrontation between Koanga and Martinez which ends in tragedy and the Voodoo curse. - One hardly needs to mention that the atmosphere of the jungle and the wild Negro-dances has been portrayed splendidly. It should be noted that although Delius has set the drama to music in a sumptuous and rich way, he is always concise and to the point and avoids any longwindedness. In this respect the end of the second act will serve as an example. Even the influential critics were in agreement about this after the Elberfeld première. Paul Hiller-Köln wrote,

It is almost as if the colourful and stunningly prolific tropical flora have enriched Delius's musical style in a marvellous way; he presents himself as an excellent colourist and takes every opportunity to depict in his music the atmosphere, customs, incantatory chanting and spirited ritual dances as well as the semi-mystic sacrificial dance of the runaway Negroes. This is one of Delius's hallmarks but he also possesses a strong dramatic sense which allows him to satisfy the demands of the subject matter. The tragedy of the young lovers is portrayed in a very moving way and justice could only be done to it by a contemporary composer who is familiar with the potential of the modern orchestra and readily uses it but at the same time employs traditional forms to create wonderfully lyrical structures and impressive ensembles. This is evident in the admirable facility for melodic invention, which on the whole, of course, is not intended to fall lightly or easily on the ear, but is meant to be a more serious attempt at mediating between the contrasting elements.

It is rare for a composer to be so successful at his first attempt as a dramatist.¹⁰³

Life's Dance, a work for large orchestra, is in the form of a symphonic poem. Its content is self-evident in its title: life is like a colourful swirling dance, a fusion of images and moods, joyful and solemn, impressions that fly past the listener in a general sweep linked by a common element, strict rhythm. Although

¹⁰³ It was not, of course, Delius's first attempt as a dramatist. His earlier operas *Irmelin* (1890-92) and *The Magic Fountain* (1893-94) were not performed in his lifetime; *Koanga* was his first opera to be performed. It is surprising Chop did not refer to the other two works but in all probability Delius never mentioned them to him.

Delius prefers to integrate his material in other works, here he depicts distinct images as a sequence of the stages of life, portraying them in a musically imaginative way with even more sharply defined themes and a radiant sense of colour. At the same time it becomes clear that there is no intention to constrain the listener's imagination with a rigid programme; on the contrary, the composer wants everyone to identify their own experiences with the aims of the composer and by engaging the listener in this way Delius creates a much more powerful image.

The Nocturne *Paris* is a similar case and could be considered as "the song of a great city", as "impressions de nuit", and although the composer was undoubtedly inspired by the atmosphere of a specific place, as the title suggests, it should obviously be interpreted as a general portrait of a great city at night, which emerges from the shimmerings and murmurings of dawn into an expansive impression which, in its subsequent passages, and despite being based on a unified set of thematic motives, boldly stirs the imagination to take flight. Delius's orchestral technique is at the same level of accomplishment as the handling of his material, the variety of his ideas, the intensity of his expression, his stringent sense of rhythm and his skilful use of colour.

His second music drama *A Village Romeo and Juliet* is quite different. Because of its subject-matter and style of composition, it has a special place among the other dramas *Koanga* and *Margot la Rouge*. It could be described as a dramatic idyll if there were not some reservations with this description at certain places in the work where there are moments of great tragedy. If Delius's progress and development are studied carefully, one can easily understand why Keller's novella was bound to attract a man of his deeply emotional make-up. There are obvious similarities between the treatment of the subject matter and the composition *Over the Hills*. Although Keller places Seldwyla and its inhabitants

in Switzerland on the banks of a navigable river and surrounds it with old town walls which had already been in use for 300 years, Delius could well have transferred the scene to his own northern home. In the same way that he had looked down from mountain peaks onto the long ranges of distant hills and valleys, as far as the horizon where they merge with the blue-tinted twilight, here he depicts the inhabitants of a remote village, situated in a valley near a town, and its lively characters, their petty problems and narrow-minded ways, their loves and hates, the futility of their efforts to overcome animosity and the inevitability of death as a result of their helplessness. This state of affairs is not unlike that of *Tristan*. The careful observer will notice similarities to *Koanga* as well as to *Margot* - no matter how dissimilar the subject matter. *Koanga* is concerned with the conflict between the trials and tribulations of southern love and deep-seated prejudice, with hatred and a tragic set of circumstances; *Margot* is given a realistic setting in a city with millions of inhabitants, and depicts a futile relationship, in which love is hampered by the terrible stigma of immorality. The themes and content of *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, however, are based on entirely different assumptions. It will be up to the readers to draw their own conclusions about Keller's indictment in his novella.¹⁰⁴ They will, of course, discover there a deeper and more detailed portrayal of the characters than is offered by the much more concentrated music-drama, which consists of three short acts and a prelude.¹⁰⁵ As far as resources are concerned, however, it is fortuitous that there are only two main protagonists, while the other characters remain in the background. In such a

¹⁰⁴ In *A Village Romeo and Juliet* Keller portrays a graphic account of the consequences of the sins of the fathers being visited upon their offspring. The futility of love in this opera, as Chop suggests, is indeed based on entirely different assumptions from those in *Margot la Rouge*.

¹⁰⁵ The opera is well-known today in its form as a 'lyric drama in six scenes...' but early commentators describe it as being in three acts and a prologue and the earliest surviving score, a copyist's vocal score of around 1906, describes it precisely in these terms. By the time of the publication of the Lindemann vocal score and the full orchestral score, by Harmonie in 1910, the work has been given its familiar subtitle.

way, it was possible for the dramatist to portray the protagonists' personalities in affectionate detail, emphasising psychological details and tracing threads of character development and actions right down to the smallest detail. While Delius, in contrast to Keller, sometimes just hints at and loosely sketches the general setting, discerning listeners can draw their own conclusions, without relying on details which might be of little importance to the overall plan of the drama. In so doing, Delius was able to concentrate fully on developing the story of the couple and their love for each other.

In preparing the text, Delius has demonstrated great skill in handling Keller's quite substantial material and sound judgement in extracting its essential features. He has fitted the whole of the author's lengthy introduction into the Prologue. Here we meet Marti and Manz in their fields which are separated by a plot of land belonging to the homeless Dark Fiddler. We are introduced to the two farmers' children, Sali and Vrenchen, who are taking food to their fathers; as they play and chatter we can already see indications of the momentous events which will later play such a critical part in the fate of the two lovers. We can also sympathize with the important function in the drama of the part of the Dark Fiddler, the owner of the apparently abandoned plot of land which the two farmers have illegally acquired. It is he who embodies the fate of the children as well as that of their fathers. The Prelude concludes with the vicious dispute between Marti and Manz, a dispute which also affects Sali and Vrenchen. It is extremely realistic and graphically portrays the stubbornness of the two adversaries. It is this intransigence which intrudes upon the lives of their children as a legacy and as a result of their actions and pig-headedness. The first act covers Sali and Vrenchen's subsequent reunion, years later, as adults, the beginning of their adolescent love and the conflict with Vrenchen's father, whom Sali knocks to the ground in a sudden burst of fury to prevent him abusing his daughter, his beloved. Delius also retains this scene which creates a barrier between the hopes of the lovers and their fulfilment. Vrenchen's father is taken to an asylum, senseless, while Sali is made

out to be the cause of the catastrophe, his feelings of guilt become increasingly disturbing and threaten their prospects of life together. The scene where Keller shows the lovers falling asleep 'gently and quietly like two children in a cradle' beside the fire in a derelict cottage, dreaming about their wedding and the fulfilment of their deepest wishes, is used by the composer to introduce a dream sequence in which he portrays with the most wonderful music a paradise which is the object of all human longing yet remains forever out of reach. As a result, he creates a stark contrast with the third act and its despair and ultimate longing for death. Psychologically it is very beautifully and effectively controlled and adds a touch of reality to the flow of the drama. - The final act is divided into two parts: the fair-ground scene and the closing scene in the Paradise Garden. The exquisite handling of the dramatic pacing and unfolding of the action is worthy of the highest praise. Omitting the less important material, Delius synthesises and condenses the material Keller spread over several different scenes in his novella and revealed bit by bit to his readers. The ecstasy of spending a whole day together without being separated, with no-one asking what they are doing and with everything under the spell of the pervasive mood of love - the innocence of these feelings is intensified by the contrast with the sleaziness which permeates their surroundings and with a heightened sense of despair of ever achieving their ultimate and longed-for destiny in this context. And so the last act offers a wealth of contrasts which are effective in terms of both their sensitivity and clarity of definition: the hustle and bustle of the fair, the two adolescents' pleasure in watching the world go by and buying odds and ends, the crowd gossiping about the young couple's intentions; finally the Dark Fiddler's flamboyant exhortation to follow him through woods and dales and live a life of freedom and love, with Vrenchen's gentle and chaste reply: 'No, I have no desire to follow, that's not for me!' (Keller), climaxing in their decision to take their own lives after such a blissful day: 'There is only one answer for us, Vrenchen, we shall marry this very day, and then we leave this world - look, there is the deep water; nobody can part us there.' Delius develops this pact sequence out of the passage in which the

bargees call to each other as they sail past the Paradise Garden: how wonderful it would be, to be able to float down the river, unrecognised! Arm in arm, they walk towards the river bank, Sali lifts Vrenchen onto a hay barge and joins her. The flowing river bears their weight as it glides by; 'on a frosty Autumn morning two pale figures entwined in each other's arms drift by in the dark waters of the river.' The bargees' singing fades in the distance. It is clear that the work has been put together with a great flare for dramatic effect and a very high degree of skill. As far as the music is concerned, it shows Delius at the height of his powers. His exceptional gift for depiction has already been discussed in various contexts, ranging from his interests in the customs of the Tropics to the soft-grained hues of northern Europe or the atmosphere of a big city by night which have been separately explored in an intensive way. The second act dream sequence with its ringing bells (organ) and wedding hymns is a glorious high-point; wonderfully glowing sounds portray the blossoming of young love; in the third act the chorus depicts the colourful hustle and bustle, while the ending concludes with heartbreaking introspection and sublime pathos. There is nothing despondent or futile in the whole work; everything is steeped in poetry, even the demise of the young couple. For them, as for Isolde, in death they are together in holy union, a final fulfilment of a burning desire which could never be consummated in this life. And so, the song of the passing bargees becomes not only a symbol of the mysteries of death but in retrospect bathes everything in beauty and illusion. - Although the quick scene changes and use of garish colours in *Koanga* sometimes detract from the music, here the gradual process of evolution depends purely on the music and on the composer's creativity at all levels to develop and intensify his ideas in the most effective way. In this respect he is extremely successful so that in *A Village Romeo and Juliet* we have a music drama which is reminiscent of Wagner's masterpiece *Tristan und Isolde*, not only in terms of its musical technique but also in terms of its quality, the originality of its style, its harmonic language, its characterisation and psychological clarity. Because Delius's language makes completely new demands on his audience, especially its striking

harmony, it will take some time to become familiar. Works of such importance and uniqueness as this are bound to be received at first with some bewilderment, as they are not at all typical of the times, but they will overcome this, however, and encourage people to focus on their deeper qualities instead of their superficial features. As soon as their intrinsic worth and musical language are understood, these compositions will not fail to make a strong impact and will be recognised and valued as works of the highest significance.

Margot la Rouge is a lyrical drama in one act with music to a text by Rosenval which was originally intended for the Sonzogno¹⁰⁶ competition and is set in the low life of bohemian society, in a bar in the suburban Parisian boulevards. After setting the scene in the sort of run-down neighbourhood so common in big cities, a poignant human drama unfolds: *Margot la Rouge*, who, a while ago as the demure Margaret, completely captured the heart of the young farmer, Thibault, back in her home village, has now been overwhelmed by the sleaze of the big city. She has become a whore, and meets up again with the love of her youth, now Sergeant Thibault, in the dubious inn where he is sheltering during a thunderstorm. Their old love stirs in him after they recognise each other, although he is well aware of Margot's fall from grace. He wants to rescue her, to make her his own and take her away with him, far from Paris into the countryside - she is overjoyed, elated with the prospect of her impending release from such unbearable degradation. Just at the crucial moment, however, Margot's lover intrudes, a painter who had been tipped off by the jealous Lili Béguin. They fight and Thibault sustains a fatal blow in the chest meant for Margot; in front of his corpse Margot stabs the murderer to death and calmly surrenders to the police when they arrive. - Delius has tackled the realistic subject matter with great sensitivity. Having portrayed the atmosphere with graphic detail, he focuses

particularly on the scene between Thibault and Margot to emphasise the stark contrast between the woman who longs to escape her immoral life and his generous desire to help. Here the short, sharp depiction of the action is as effective and masterly in its execution as is the setting of the text.

Appalachia has already been discussed in the first part. The score is subtitled "Variations on an old Slave Song with final chorus for large orchestra", and adds a brief note for a concert programme: 'Appalachia is the old Indian name for North America. The composition mirrors the moods of tropical nature in the great swamps bordering on the Mississippi River, which is intimately associated with the life of the old Negro slave population. Longing melancholy, an intense love of Nature, childlike humour and an innate delight in singing and dancing are still the most characteristic qualities of this race.' Here the composer's music is almost intoxicating as it is based on one of his most colourful subjects and uses a simple Negro tune (which incidentally is reminiscent of the Quartet in Verdi's *Rigoletto*) which, at the same time, offers plenty of scope for the imagination. In this music one can sense that Delius is still clinging with passion and longing to his memories of the distant southern States and is revelling in them, the wide flowing river, the Savannah cypresses, the magnolia trees and orange groves, the remote plantations, the extraordinary tranquillity and then the river steamers passing by filled with carefree people. Night falls; we can hear the call of the whip-poor-will, the Negroes singing in the distance which delighted Delius so much when he was in Florida. - Dr Otto Neitzel, who first heard *Appalachia* at the 82nd Lower Rhine Music Festival in Düsseldorf,¹⁰⁷ wrote about the work as follows,

We are cruising up the Mississippi watching the scenery as it passes by. Delius bases the work on a simple, traditional Negro melody which permeates the whole of *Appalachia*. One minute it can be heard as if in the

distance, wafted to us by the wind, the next it overwhelms us at close quarters, sung by the choir. It speaks to us of the joys and sorrows of the American Blacks, of their bravery and of their feuds with each other. Throughout we are frequently moved by the strange desolation of the American plains and by the Sun as it sinks deeper and deeper in the mist of the emerald green sky. Delius has a great gift for depicting nature as well as the sincerity to help us experience the feelings aroused by constant panoramic shifts ... he revels in creating impressions of nature ...

Sea Drift, however, is probably Delius's most perfect work to date, as an unusual and imaginative creation as well as in terms of its form and content and is by far his most mature composition. Walt Whitman's poem, which has been sensitively translated by Jelka Rosen, the composer's wife, transports us to the North American coast. Two hibernating birds from Alabama are nesting on the beach in some brambles warbling their songs. One day the male bird cannot find his mate in the nest; she has disappeared - perhaps she is dead. The solitary guest from Alabama flits from branch to branch and weeps while the waves crash and the winds whistle over Paumanok's shores. Day after day he waits in vain for his lost companion to return. Sweet memories and his present wretched existence melt into a moving lament with which the tone-poem ends. - In setting the poem to music (for baritone solo, mixed choir and large orchestra) Delius demonstrates his absolute mastery of this sublime art and Pre-Raphaelite sensitivity. The whole work is underpinned by the regular motion of the sea, its endless waves rolling along and gentle swell convey its latent force. The choir describes and narrates the action, the baritone portrays the deeply distressing sorrow which every now and then becomes an intense longing for lost happiness.

In addition to this heavenly music, the choir seems like a collage of the sounds of nature; in this transcendental work all these elements transform themselves into a single chord, shimmering like a dream with hardly a similarity to anything of this world. Never before has such music been heard; it carries us away and we float on it like the current in the sea as it flows towards unknown shores.

So wrote Ferdinand Pfohl after the first performance of the work at the Tonkünstlerfest in Essen in 1906. Here Delius was enthusiastically received as the composer of *Sea Drift*. The other critics agreed with him. One will certainly look in vain through the entire musical literature to find anything so well crafted and exceptionally beautiful (in such passages as: "Blow up winds", or further on "O rising stars" and "O past, O happy life!" and so on).

A Mass of Life is a concert-length choral work which has not yet been performed. Fritz Cassirer has done a good job in selecting and arranging its text which is taken from Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*, including the *trunkene Lied*.¹⁰⁸ It is an impossible task to deal in this limited space with such an imposing work which can be regarded as a sort of philosophical creed from Delius's point of view and shows him at the height of his powers. It reinforces all previous impressions and opinions of this artist, as far as its aesthetic nature and wonderful demonstration of musical technique are concerned. And so I can only draw attention to its importance which will be confirmed by its forthcoming first performance.¹⁰⁹ This work will place Delius among the greatest of all times, those whose works and deeds represent the consummate peaks of our cultural and artistic heritage.

¹⁰⁸ See Part IV, *Also Sprach Zarathustra* (1883-84), by Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900).

¹⁰⁹ At the Munich meeting of the Tonkünstlerfest on 4 June 1908, the *Mass of Life* was given, with cuts, by the Münchener Hofkapelle, choir and soloists conducted by Ludwig Hess.

COMPOSERS OF OUR TIME

FREDERICK DELIUS

His life and work

by

MAX CHOP (Berlin)

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THE world we live in, with all its hullabaloo, its cliquishness and pushiness is characterised by something an experienced banker once associated with the sudden growth of Americanisation on the other side of the "big pond": we are also living "in the land of endless opportunity", even at the heart of

historic Europe which for thousands of years has been steeped in culture. These days nothing comes as a surprise — not even the most ridiculous nonsense, the harshest injustice, the most outrageous farce or absurdity. Even in the Arts, where anyone and everyone tries to 'make a mark' as best he can, imitating the 'modest young man' in the Munich *Fliegenden*,¹¹⁰ and — assuming he has the talent to do so — will quickly find at least a few of his most trusted friends and accomplices who will stick with him through thick and thin, — he will be convinced of his genius; furthermore, however, deep down in his heart he will secretly be hoping to succeed — *mutatis mutandis*¹¹¹ — gradually to achieve the status of a 'headline maker' and adopt the halo of a genius, however short-lived. As the saying goes, this will only succeed if everyone pulls together according to the laws of mechanics. Anyone who has been disgusted by the actions of any clique and who will not go along with it or even bravely opposes it, will be pushed ruthlessly into some forsaken corner by those who, as Fulda calls it, 'seize the moment', even if he has much to offer. He will be forgotten for the rest of his life, unless he is discovered by chance or backed by someone of high artistic repute who stands above the factions. Even this will take time, as the clique will obstruct his access to the general public, it influences a large section of the press, knows every Tom, Dick and Harry; its treacherous efforts to undermine an annoying enemy will be even more vigorous if this person possesses in Lombroso's words 'all or at least some of the qualities of a genius', which will always invoke 'contempt and hatred' in others.

¹¹⁰ A reference to an article published in *Fliegende Blätter*, a popular middle-class illustrated magazine published in several German cities throughout the nineteenth century. This particular version was published in Munich by Braun & Schneider between 1844 and 1944.

¹¹¹ *mutatis mutandis*: having changed the things which need to be changed (ie with appropriate adjustments).

Frederick Delius is a distinguished composer who slowly but surely is making an impact here in Germany and is one of those geniuses who are unable to make even the slightest effort to promote their work,¹¹² who live far away from the hurly-burly of modern life and who have managed to preserve in their lives an ideal conception of their mission as composers. "I find it impossible" - replies Delius, in response to the author's comments concerning the pushy publicity with which even the youngest of the modern generation do so well for themselves - 'to promote my works myself after creating, developing and completing them. I am completely opposed to so-called advertising. Promotion is for other people! Once an artist has completed his work, his task is finished. Whatever the world wants to do with it, is its business. Apart from my abhorrence in the face of such publicity, by getting involved I would cut myself off completely from the realm of my imagination. It would paralyse my creativity and isolate me from the true purpose of my existence. I cannot do that! Once I have finished a work, that part of my life is over. I don't care what happens to the piece, whether it gets performed, how often, or what the critics and public think of it. This is just smug self-gratification which is a distraction. A creative person has no time for such vanity; on the other hand he must have the unshakeable conviction, achieved through the most rigorous self-criticism, that he has something important to say, that he has a message, the innate need to communicate must be the ceaseless, driving source of all his creativity. Any association with his own work beyond this process endangers the self-sufficiency and integrity of his inspiration, it becomes a disease of the inner self and leads to vanity and triviality!' - Whoever reads these golden words must wonder instinctively how an artist with such sound principles could

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This statement is misleading. In his thirties Delius made every effort to have his works performed before his wife-to-be Jelka and her close friend Ida Gerhardt came to his aid. Delius must have misled Chop himself as the following quotation makes clear. Chop, after all, was reporting the status quo.

ever be discovered. And indeed, it took Frederick Delius a very long time before the solitary performance of one of his works became a series, one after the other. He wanted to be discovered, just like Sleeping Beauty in her enchanted castle. In this day and age, this was problematic. And yet, someone did find their way to him, the excellent and art-loving Music Director Dr Hans Haym of Elberfeld, who in 1897 performed the first composition by Delius in Germany, the Fantasy-Overture *Over the Hills*. This composition had been written four years previously as Delius's second work (the first being the *Legend* for Violin and Orchestra written in 1892). It caused a stir, but like anything new and unusual it also provoked antagonism. And so the first step was taken in introducing Delius to the world. The Royal Music Director Prof. Julius Butts in Düsseldorf followed Dr Haym and, like his colleague from Elberfeld, took up our maestro's works most enthusiastically. It sparked a friendly local rivalry between Düsseldorf and Elberfeld in the nurture and propagation of the cult surrounding Delius. Both musicians promoted the works with all their artistic might, not without a hard, exhausting struggle during the early years against a strong, aggressive clique. They had to use all their powers of persuasion, and won the battle. This can be demonstrated by the splendid reception of Delius's most important composition, the evening-long *Mass of Life* (for soloists, choir and orchestra) which Dr Haym carefully prepared and performed with extraordinary enthusiasm in December 1909 at Elberfeld as the very first complete performance of the work in Germany. Inspired by Haym's performances, a third Delius disciple emerged in Elberfeld, the conductor Fritz Cassirer, who was in charge of the local opera and in 1904 he brought off the Negro drama *Koanga* in Elberfeld and in 1907 the music drama *A Village Romeo and Juliet* (after Gottfr. Keller) at the Komische Oper in Berlin, and also achieved great distinction by performing other works by Delius in the concert hall. These three pioneers were joined by General Music Director Max Schillings whose initiative was mainly responsible for the performance of *Sea Drift* and of excerpts from the *Mass of Life* in concerts of the Tonkünstlerfest. Right from his first encounter with the composer Delius, he was his sincerely

enthusiastic and absolutely selfless advocate. Finally one must mention Oskar Fried from Berlin who surprised the musical world of the German capital with an excellent performance of the great composition for orchestra and choir *Appalachia*. - It was these five musicians who introduced Delius to the world within a period of twelve years and helped his works achieve victory in a struggle against bitter opposition. -

As far as basic biographical details are concerned, Frederick Delius was born on 29 January 1863¹¹³ in Bradford (Yorkshire), the son of German parents now resident in England. His love of music had developed at an early age, but the deeper it became the less it met with his parents' approval who intended that their son would become a businessman and who must now have realised that his idealistic passion threatened their plans. Having been taught well (especially the violin), at the age of twenty Delius resolved the dilemma between the career his parents wished him to follow and his own inner aspirations by pursuing his own path. He set off for Florida where he acquired an orange plantation and, placing its management in the hands of trusted black workers, he took advantage of the tranquillity and complete isolation to commune intimately with his art. During this period of solitude the composer developed the distinctive elements of his talent and his artistic nature. He had none of the usual support; on the other hand, the tropical splendour of his surroundings, the eternal beauty of the primeval forest, the sea, the atmosphere by day and night of the glorious South stimulated the stirrings of his innermost soul to flow even more profusely. Nature became his teacher just as as she had once taught Walter von Stolzing.¹¹⁴ He became an imitator of nature, relentlessly feasting on her, transforming from real life the sometimes glowing, sometimes muted colours of the landscape and its varied moods into the sensitive musical setting of a poet and by letting his imagination

¹¹³ See note 25 in *Studies of Contemporary Musicians*.

¹¹⁴ See note 56 in *Frederick Delius: A Biography*.

indulge in a wide range of expression. Without any guidance, he could rely on only limited outside help as far as theory was concerned, and so he discovered his own musical language, the nature of its artistic expression in this paradise at the end of the world, its style. We can also now recognise Delius's reserved and highly sensitive nature, a being who recoils from any form of worldly callousness who even today, without being antisocial, longs to escape public or commercial life as soon as he can, for he is drawn irresistibly to the rural isolation of his home ... and is unable to be creative when overwhelmed by the hurly-burly of everyday-life. "There in the woods on the Vogelweid, was where he learnt to sing";¹¹⁵ and this longing for solitude has remained with him all his life - even today Delius still clings with all his heart to his memories of his stay in Florida. He loves to talk with close friends about his experiences; of the evenings and clear nights under the orange and palm trees, with large glow worms flitting by and the pervasive sound of the Negroes' improvised singing - of the magnificence and stillness of the primeval forest, the swelling of the ceaselessly surging sea, of the vast prairies of Alabama, the immense Mississippi river. And later, he transformed these memories *monumentum aere perenius*¹¹⁶ into his *Appalachia*, *Sea-Drift* and the moving Negro-drama *Koanga* which in the depiction of its sub-tropical setting creates the most unusual effect.

Delius stayed in Florida and the neighbouring Southern states for a few years in quiet contemplation, as to the dreamer the real world seemed to have completely vanished. Gradually, however, he saw the necessity to renew contact with the world. Although it must have been hard for him, he tore himself away from his surroundings with all his energy and moved to - Leipzig in order to

¹¹⁵ A reference to Wagner's *Die Meistersinger* Act I, Scene III.

¹¹⁶ *monumentum aere perenius*: a monument more enduring than bronze (Horace: Odes 3/30).

gain formal musical qualifications at the Conservatory under the guidance of Karl Reinecke and Jadassohn without which one does not count in the eyes of the whingers in this trade. Anyone who casts even the most cursory glance at a Delius score will realise that his time at the Leipzig Conservatory did not leave the slightest trace.

Since 1890 Delius has been living in France. The idyllic little village of Grez-sur-Loing in the Department of Seine et Marne with its charming intimate and rural setting, has become his home. There he owns a beautiful property - Grez became his treasured retreat where he could recover from the taxing demands of concert life and compose in his cherished peace and quiet and where he expanded his somewhat small number of works. He only composes when inspiration dictates. As a ruthless self-critic he appraises all his works with a rigorous detachment, he destroys anything he believes is not yet completely polished and only produces a new work when he feels all the faults and blemishes of the creative process have been eliminated. His wife Jelka, née Rosen, is a gifted painter and supports him with an intimate understanding of his artistic nature, the serene companion in his great journey through life.

Frederick Delius's principal compositions are listed below according to their date (they do not have opus numbers), as follows:

- 1892: *Legend* for Violin and Orchestra
- 1893: the Fantasy-Overture *Over the Hills and Far Away* for large orchestra, already mentioned, the first Delius composition to be performed in Germany by Dr Hans Haym in Elberfeld in 1897.

- 1896/97: the Music Drama *Koanga* which was performed three times at the municipal theatre in Elberfeld under the conductor Fritz Cassirer.
- 1897: the *Piano Concerto in C minor* performed for the first time by Prof. Julius Buths (Düsseldorf) as soloist (Autumn 1904) at one of the Haym concerts in Elberfeld and later repeated in Düsseldorf. During the winter of 1906/1907 the composition was completely revised after the first version had been abandoned. It was given its first performance by Theodor Szanto on 22 October, 1907 in a London Promenade Concert under Wood, and later in 1909 in Halle, Leipzig, Budapest and Berlin (there under Oskar Fried). Prof. Schmid-Lindner performed the work on 8 January, 1908 in Munich with Felix Mottl and subsequently in Berlin with Max Schillings.
- 1897: the *Norwegian Suite* for large orchestra as incidental music to G. Heiberg's satirical drama *Folkeraadet*. In the same year, the first performance in Kristiania took place against a background of terrible riots and demonstrations, which were provoked by the inflammatory nature of the subject matter as well as by the musical parody of the Norwegian national anthem.
- 1898: the symphonic poem *Life's Dance* for large orchestra. Prof. Julius Buths presented it for the first time in 1904 in Düsseldorf at one of his concerts.
- 1899/1900: The Nocturne *Paris* for large orchestra, which began its triumphant tour of Berlin, Düsseldorf, Brussels and Frankfurt am Main in Elberfeld (Dr Haym). More recently,

performances in Liverpool (1908) by Bantock, in London (March 1908 with repeats in April) by Beecham and in Boston (26 November, 1909) by Max Fiedler, as the first performance of one of Delius's works in America, must be mentioned.

- 1900/02: The music drama *A Village Romeo and Juliet* (based on Gottfried Keller's novella of the same name from his cycle *Leute von Seldwyla*, with a libretto adapted by the composer. Fritz Cassirer performed the drama at the Komische Oper in Berlin on 27 February 1907 with two further performances. More recently, this Spring three performances of the drama are scheduled at Covent Garden in London.¹¹⁷
- 1902: the one-act music tragedy *Margot la Rouge*, which has not yet been performed.
- 1903: the symphonic poem *Appalachia* for choir and large orchestra. Dr Haym from Elberfeld was also the first to introduce this work to the public (1904), Professor Buths repeated it at the Rhine Music Festival (Düsseldorf) in 1905, Oskar Fried in the Philharmonie (Berlin, February 1906), Fritz Cassirer at a London orchestral concert on (22 November, 1907). On 3 April 1908 Delius himself conducted it at a concert of the North Staffordshire Choral Society in Hanley. Beecham brought *Appalachia* to London at the end of May 1908, in the Autumn of 1908 Schillings performed it in Stuttgart and Suter in Basle. An impressive performance in Prague in April 1909 must be mentioned.

¹¹⁷ Première on 22 February, 1910. This production proved disappointing and not a critical success. Delius returned to Grez earlier than expected.

- 1904: *Sea Drift* for baritone solo, mixed choir and large orchestra, based on a poem by Walt Whitman. The first performance was given at the Essen Tonkünstlerfest (Summer 1906), followed by Hermann Suter's masterly performance in Basle (2 March, 1907) and in Sheffield (Autumn 1908) whilst Beecham championed the work in Hanley, Manchester and London (February 1909).
- 1905: *A Mass of Life* for soloists, choir and orchestra, taken from Fr. Nietzsche's *Also Sprach Zarathustra* (the text adapted by Fritz Cassirer). The second part of this evening-long composition was heard for the first time at the Tonkünstlerfest in Munich (4 June 1908) under Ludwig Hess, the first complete performance in Germany being given by Dr Hans Haym - Elberfeld (December 1909), then by Beecham in London (7 June 1909).
- 1906: the Dowson cycle, adapted from poems by the expressive English poet Ernest Dowson who had died young, for soloists, choir and orchestra.
- 1907: *Brigg Fair*, a Rhapsody based on an old English folk song for large orchestra, performed for the first time in Birmingham under Landon Ronald and then in London by Beecham in April 1908.
- 1908: *In a Summer Garden*, a symphonic poem for large orchestra. Given its first performance by the Philharmonic Society in London (December 1908) conducted by the composer.
- 1908: Three English a cappella songs for choir.

1909: *Dance Rhapsody* for large orchestra. First performed at the music festival in Hereford (September 1909), conducted by the composer.

In addition to these compositions can be added a few volumes of songs for solo voice with piano accompaniment.

The dates alongside the individual compositions clearly illustrate the development, the progress in Frederick Delius's works. At the same time, they generally prove just how much patience was needed in the length of time between a work's completion and its first public performance, and how much time elapsed between the first performance and a repeat. This is not unusual, however, as it is virtually unavoidable in the career of a genius who introduces something new to an apathetic everyday world. Only someone who wants to address the average person can be certain of being accepted without encountering opposition, although his success will also be very short-lived, but Delius, however, had to face a good deal of derogatory, spiteful and malicious criticism. So did his promoters, particularly Dr Haym at Elberfeld, who, in the beginning, not only had to struggle against the critics and the public but also against apathy within his own circle of supporters and more than once felt it necessary to call for a vote of confidence. Professor Buths in Düsseldorf did not fare any better. For Delius himself, the experience of all those years of developing and asserting himself gave him a wonderful composure. Sure of his artistic mission and destiny, the increasingly severe attacks could only strengthen this conviction – in as much as the maestro allowed the views of newspapers to affect him or even bothered to read them. He was accused of having a decadent and extremely morbid nature, of a pessimistic outlook on life whereas he is himself a self-confessed optimist who hates anything unwholesome and who regards Nature as the only source of his artistic inspiration. It was the sensitivity, the language, the glowing style of something absolutely new and previously unimagined which appealed first of all to the

musically privileged. Immersing oneself in such an emotive style does not appeal to everyone especially when it is associated with spiritual endeavour and the hard-hearted culture of the Individual. Despite the fact that he describes himself to a certain degree as an Impressionist, Delius's style is incompatible with the extreme Impressionism of decadence; though modern through and through, he is still against pernicious elements in modern music. All this fades into the background as Delius is a brilliant master of all techniques, using a range of resources and forms of expression with the highest demands on interpretation. To him content, not structure, is crucial, for which he is constantly able to provide new ideas. Such an abundance of sheer imagination also filled him with the sure knowledge of his mission as an artist, which made him immune to any opposition without overrating himself or his abilities.

Our journalists tend to paint things in black and white. Whenever they see the chance to spot resonances or similarities in a new publication, even if they prove to be slight or sporadic, they try to pigeon-hole them, as they always find it difficult to interpret something new, just like Mephisto's pentagram.¹¹⁸ Such a process is bound to cause misunderstandings. It is possible that Delius's early work was somewhat influenced by Edvard Grieg; he knew the Norwegian master, particularly his surroundings which had provided Grieg with his best ideas, the people and folk-song of Norway, its beautiful scenery, the austere character and poetry of the North with its inclination to melancholy. But there is no need to discuss whether the *causa movens*¹¹⁹ for such similarities in the musical styles should be sought in the influence of Grieg or his habitat. Anyway, any similarity between the two masters soon disappeared in Delius's mature works, which articulate his absolute individuality. What a blow to this new craze for pigeon-

¹¹⁸ See note 1 in *Studies of Contemporary Musicians*.

¹¹⁹ *causa movens*: the "efficient cause" as defined by Aristotle in *Metaphysics* (? 60 BC) as one of the four constituents of his new notion of causality: the source of motion, generation or change.

holing! This bewilderment was encouraged by the composer's stay in France, by his nocturne *Paris*. All of a sudden he was supposed to have imitated French models and to have followed in the footsteps of Debussy, even of Charpentier. Again, this is a complete misconception, which came about because Delius had used the same "cris de Paris" in his symphonic orchestral work as Charpentier in *Louise*.¹²⁰ The score of *Paris*, however, had already been completed before Delius set an eye on a note of *Louise*. And on closer examination any real musician will notice the huge difference between Charpentier and Delius. In the case of the former, everything is superficial with the clear intention of creating an effect through its sophistication and polish ... the latter delves deep, inspiration directs and determines the form of expression, and structure dutifully takes a subordinate role. Delius does not know Debussy at all. Their styles show such fundamental differences that a comparison would uncover their differences but never their similarities.

Delius's hallmarks cannot be found in terms of overall structure and shape nor in the treatment of instruments or voices, but in the completely original harmony which does not have its roots in any nationalistic leanings (as with Grieg), but emanates from a free, expressive imagination which has created a quite new and radiant style. Looking into the past to consider those who had a stimulating effect on this absolutely original musical language, Richard Wagner is prominent, followed by Johann Sebastian Bach; it is also possible that the flowing style of Frederic Chopin was influential in a very general way. Such conclusions, however, can only be drawn indirectly; one could speak of such influences in the case of Verdi (*Falstaff*) and Wagner. It is more a question of an independent approach acquired through a subtle process of give and take. And so the above-mentioned harmonic language, characteristic of Delius, moves far away from the

"models", far from the worlds of Richard Strauss, Max Reger, Debussy and Edvard Grieg to an imaginary wonderland, set in a sea of melody, accessible only to our master. It is all to do with single-minded self-sufficiency, has nothing in common with the styles of Strauss or Reger, which are mainly generated and shaped by counterpoint, and displays a unity, a balance, which the slightest attempt to organise or dissect in a clinical way would lead to the destruction of a beautiful piece of art. This bold self-confidence goes hand in hand with melodic inventiveness, which constantly streams out of Delius, so he is obliged to control it although he will never exhaust it. The internal mechanisms, particularly the distinctive contrapuntal facility, play a secondary role within the overall scope of the music, as it is never the ultimate aim of a work of art but more a means to an end, a tool in the hands of a modern composer. Unintended, and not prompted in any way, contrapuntal structures occur during a composition (see the double fugue for eight-part choir and soloists "Das ist ein Tanz über Stock und Stein" from the *Mass of Life*) whose form should never be analysed according to any antiquated theory. Frederick Delius creates atmosphere, melodic invention and harmony unequivocally derive from the prevailing poetic mood, moments of pure emotion are crucial, without their flow being disrupted by anything to do with reason, humour, irony or satire, or without having to make concessions for considerations of sound or instrumental expression. And so a work of art comes into being which is finished and balanced in every respect, which with its emotional intensity completely exhausts its subject and does not bother with anything peripheral. The imagination, indulging in the most colourful images, is its sole mistress, and a rich, inner sense of emotion adds a compelling intensity, an astonishingly wide range of expression and variety. In the same way that Strauss's extremely superficial technical proficiency is able to conceal an inner void with his clever approach and sophisticated facility for caricature, so with Delius a revelatory spiritual quality is fundamental. He does not portray realism in a calculating manner, but as a poet he lays bare his soul with all its experiences of spiritual rapture and now takes them further, sometimes dreamlike, sometimes

¹²⁰ See note 23 in *Studies of Contemporary Musicians*.

melancholic, sometimes ecstatic or deeply sad, into the realms of fluctuating, passionate imagination. As a result Delius is completely free and confident in his manner of expression. This confidence can also be seen in his practice of concentrating on harmony not melody. This naturally results in a complexity of structure in many of his works as well as in the distinctiveness of much of his writing which right from the start is immediately striking, especially if one attempts to pick out and analyse particular chordal progressions from the steady flow. Whoever delves into the pervasive web of sound to examine its components, puts aside for a moment the artistry of the overall effect and every now and then confronts 'unexplainable dissonances' which in the overall scheme blend imperceptibly with each other, like distinct moods within the human emotions; only by fusing the individual elements with unfettered freedom can the artistry of the poetic intentions represent a moving, shifting and compelling force. - Finally it is necessary to say a few words about the choice of subject matter which is significant for the composer and for the impact of his works. At the heart of his works are none of the modern concerns of a sexual or even perverse nature, nothing sensual or sensational, nothing bizarre, pathological or morbid. He is a healthy man who has also preserved a purity, in the truest sense of the word, in his spiritual detachment which he protects with a religious fervour, a man who would lose his ability to communicate if his art had to serve the decadence of ultra-modern fashion. He is worlds apart from these "issues", as can be seen in his most recent creative phase, which to a large extent is already in the past and for which he has no sympathy. His hypersensitive nature would be repulsed by such things, he would shut himself off completely and cease to function. This is not due to any narrow-mindedness, however. Delius is a man of the world in all ways, a keen observer and psychologist. However, he is only able to *portray the beautiful in his music*, whilst he regards the depiction of the ugly as debasing his art. His favourite themes are exquisitely etched landscapes and their changing moods at various times of day, nature in its varied forms as a background for mankind's pursuits. This can be seen in *Appalachia* in which he depicts the vast plains at daybreak,

during the midday heat and at sunset, the dense forests, the waters of the majestic river surging towards its estuary; and set against this landscape the people of the prairie and the forests and their music. *Sea Drift*, one of the most beautiful musical settings of all time, opens up a panorama of sea-shore and endless salt flats, of undulating waves splashing onto the sand, and in the bushes the nest of the two birds, from which the female disappears, leaving the yearning male behind. *Koanga* deals with the doomed Negroes, their joys and sorrows, their longing for freedom and their painful suffering under the yoke of slavery. The plantation and the primeval forest provide an impressive backdrop, their ancient traditions of a glorious past of bygone power and might bestow a particular significance on the work. In the Nocturne *Paris* the composer is inspired by the hustle and bustle of the big city from dusk to dawn; the portrayal of the nocturnal scenes sometimes blurred, sometimes in bright lights and colours, reveals a gift for observation and imaginative depiction. *A Village Romeo and Juliet* also displays a distinctly elegiac feeling: two young lovers, rejected by the world, wander helplessly and find solace for all the misery of their existence in the pure and innocent poetry of mutual affection until they are pushed towards the brink of disaster and realise there is nothing left but death. - The *Mass of Life* contains the most compelling epic and idyllically poignant moments of Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* in a gripping blaze of colour. - It could be said that in all of Delius's works a pronounced ethnographic quality can be detected as far as their subject-matter is concerned as well as a tendency to depict life with all its impulses and emotional turmoil. From the overture *Over the Hills* to the English Rhapsody,¹²¹ the *Dance Rhapsody* and *In a Summer Garden*, there are throughout moments of universal significance which transcend objectivity. In contrast to contemporary thinking about subject-matter, its evaluation and consequent variable subjectivity, Delius clearly displays his intention to return to values of generally

recognised importance, full of beauty, and so completely sublimates himself in his works.¹²² The distinctive aspects of his output derive entirely from the emotional character of each work. Nowhere can any hint of explanation be found, nowhere any comments which might deviate from the concept of beauty or conflict with this principle, there is no personal enthusiasm which might distract the attention from the topic of the composition. Our requirements that a work of art should be balanced in form are completely fulfilled. And in the current climate of inartistic aberration, it is particularly attractive to be confronted with the revelations of the finely balanced, contemplative and pure nature of a poet.

Having discussed the important characteristics of Frederick Delius, the rest of this paper deals with the composer's main works.

The title of the Fantasy-Overture *Over the Hills and Far Away* gives an indication of its general programme: a panoramic view from lofty summits over distant mountains. Delius himself admits he had in mind the gently contoured hills and peaceful wooded valleys of the English countryside. Although thematic structure predominates, a wealth of striking material and unusual modulations is clearly evident, the impressionistic nature of the emotional content is particularly noticeable. The instrumentation requires modest resources, double woodwind and four horns. There is a big jump to the symphonic poem *Life's Dance*, which already fully displays the composer's characteristics (it should not be forgotten, however, that there is a gap of five years between those two works, containing the music drama *Koanga*, the first version of the C Minor Piano Concerto and the *Norwegian Suite*). Its programme is as follows: life is like a dance, a sequence of mood sketches of a happy and serious nature, linked by their homogeneous,

rhythmic and musical qualities. The concept of an apotheosis of the dance with its incessant allusion to Life and its constantly changing nature is familiar from Beethoven's Seventh Symphony. Delius avoids straightjacketing the listener with a rigid conception; he allows plenty of scope for the imagination to blend individual experience with the music, weaving the threads of personal involvement to and fro. The whole point of the piece is the extremely intense effect of its brilliant colours, heightened by the rhythmic energy. ... In this respect *Lebenstanz* provides a contrast with *Paris*, a "song of a great city" and an array of "impressions de nuits". It paints the picture of a big city at night with a sequence of atmospheric images, which materialise from the shadows at dawn only to fade away once again, - it is based throughout on a unified sequence of themes and brought to life in such a way that demonstrates in every respect the highest quality in the handling of all its material. Particularly impressive are the wealth of ideas, the skill in the colouring as well as the clear articulation and tight rhythms.

However, it is *Appalachia* and *Sea Drift* that have for the most part been responsible for introducing Delius's particular style and talent. *Appalachia* consists of a set of variations on an old slave melody for large orchestra with a closing choral section. The score includes an explanation of the name: "Appalachia is the old Indian name for North America. The work mirrors the moods of tropical nature in the great swamps bordering on the Mississippi River, which is so intimately associated with the life of the old negro slave population. Longing melancholy, an intense love of Nature, childlike humour and an innate delight in singing and dancing are still the most characteristic qualities of this race." - The Negro melody itself, which is reminiscent of the quartet from Verdi's *Rigoletto*, acts as a solid backbone for the whole work; it thus provides the

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ie. most contemporary composers are completely subjective in their choice of subject-matter regardless of its effect on their audience.

artistic ethos, against which all the individual details are reflected: the huge river, the cypress groves of the savannah, the clumps of olive and magnolia trees, isolated plantations, the great stillness, steam boats floating downstream filled with happy people, the monotonous call of the Whip-poor-will, the singing of the Negroes as evening approaches, the enigmatic melancholy of the vast prairie. An almost intoxicating and highly imaginative musical style transports the artist on its wings to distant heights. – Next that most intimate and refined work *Sea Drift* based on a poem by Whitman, skilfully translated into German by the composer's wife. In a bush on Paumanok's shores a couple of birds from Alabama have built their nest and pour out their rapture in sweet songs of love while the waves ebb and flow on the beach. One morning the male returns to an empty nest, his mate has vanished. In despair, he flies from bush to bush, day by day he waits for his beloved companion to return – but in vain! Their joyous past with all its many memories surfaces and intensifies the feelings of loneliness, until past and present merge in the heartbreaking lament with which the music ends. Here with sublime skill Delius paints with touches of Pre-Raphaelite exquisiteness, the orchestra supplies the backdrop (the swelling of the sea), the choir has the task of creating the atmosphere while the baritone conveys the grief, the overwhelming yearning for past happiness. The dreamy, barely mortal sounds that strike the ear are almost transcendental. Passages such as "Saust dahin, ihr Meereswinde" (Blow up sea-winds), "Ihr blassen Sterne" (O rising stars) and "Ach, früher sel'ges Lebe" (O past! O happy life) are of such captivating beauty and yet so unusual in their harmonies, melody and rhythm, that one might dare to say (as have already, incidentally, many well-known critics) that nothing like it has ever been heard. *Sea Drift* is indeed the most harrowing musical poem in the entire literature of modern music. At its first performance at the Essen Music Festival (1906) it was received with unprecedented enthusiasm.

Brigg Fair, *In a Summer Garden* and *Dance Rhapsody* are all similar in nature to the previously mentioned works which as the titles indicate, are written

in a rhapsodic style, but always lean towards the Impressionistic in terms of their distinctive outlook. All Delius's works are emotionally intense. This is also the case with his Piano Concerto which, even in the second version (somewhat more so than in the first), does not make any concessions to virtuosity nor outwardly acknowledges a performer's innate talents. It is and will remain a rhapsody for piano and orchestra, a sequence of moving and lyrical episodes full of seductive moods, which nevertheless has no elements of normal concert practice in the context of our public musical life.

Delius's most important composition is the evening-long *A Mass of Life* for soloists, choir and orchestra. After the first German performance in Elberfeld under Dr Haym in December 1909 his critics agreed that the composition was not only one of the most exceptional works of recent times but also a work which has opened up new territory in the world of music. An unbroken tremendous intensification develops from beginning to end by means of the contrasting and alternating individual movements right up to the rapturous culmination. The scope of the resources to hand together with the contrasts of mood make monotony an impossibility; despite a deep spiritual affinity, the range of expression is so great that it never seems to cease to interest or excite the listener; on the contrary, it gradually pushes him to a higher level, to an even stronger involvement. What a wealth of colours our master has on his palette! Similarly the colours and impressions are never applied for their own purpose and always remain no more than the means to express sentiments in a spiritual way. Passages such as the opening double chorus, the great noon-day with its wonderful orchestral prelude, the dance-like double fugue and the baritone solo "O Mensch, gib acht!" ("O Man, mark well!") with the accompanying male vocal parts which is part of the phenomenally powerful final chorus, are all master pieces which stand beyond the test of time as the revelation of a genius who amongst the living has a right to be acknowledged like no other.

As far as his dramatic works are concerned, pride of place must go to the moving episode *A Village Romeo and Juliet*.¹²³ It is a dramatic idyll with an elegiac aura and a tragic ending. At its first performance at the Komische Oper in Berlin, the critics found it difficult to decide how to categorise the work (this is of such little importance but has always been exaggerated as a matter of utmost importance);¹²⁴ we do not intend to reopen this discussion or even mention how very "inappropriate" such an intimate and profound composition was for the stage in Berlin's Friedrichstrasse. - Delius, who had constructed the script from Keller's novella himself, demonstrated his shrewd judgement concerning the psychologically important aspects in its development and also showed skill in bringing together several episodes which had been dislocated in the original. The drama ends in the Paradise Garden after Sali and Vrenchen have decided to end their lives together at the end of a happy day with each other. "There is only one thing left to do, Vrenchen, let's get married right now and then depart this world; over there is deep water - no one can keep us apart there." And so he lifts her onto the hay barge, loosens the anchor, joins her and lets the boat drift away, while in the distance boatmen can be heard singing and the still night with its shadowy images engages our attentions once more. - The music of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* is the epitome of poetry in sound. Throughout the struggle against constraints can be sensed, the lovers' growing awareness of a general universal condition, the brief intimate relationship of these two children with love's joy and pain in a world which is constantly prepared to intrude and destroy, a world full of hatred and brutality. Here again stands Delius the harmonist and melodist in the world of his fantasy, whose beauties he describes in almost dreamlike rapture and pastoral hues as a constant reminder of the real world, which brings about a premature end to the illusions of the two lovers.

¹²³ An episode, that is, from Keller's *Die Leute von Sedwyla*.

¹²⁴ See Chop's article *Frederick Delius in Berlin* (No. 10 of *Kritik der Kritik*, 1907).

The high point is the dream sequence in the second scene, the episode where Sali and Vrenchen fall asleep on the hearth in the farmhouse, 'like two children gently and quietly in their cradle', dreaming of the fulfilment of their deepest wishes, their wedding, church bells, hymns and the priest's blessing. - To get an idea of the remarkable variety of Delius's musical expression, one must now add to this unusual music with all its radiant passion and character of willing sacrifice the Negro drama *Koanga* with its brightly-coloured and powerful portrayal of the South and *Margot la Rouge* with its realistic depiction of the Latin Quarter in Paris and its oppressive atmosphere of bars. Delius is least at home in the world of *Margot* - it is noticeable in nearly every bar; but even out of this setting, which is too nasty for his own sensitive soul, he weaves the threads of a profoundly tragic conflict. In *Koanga* he divides his interest between dramatic development and colourful description. The masterly painter uses the opportunity to depict in the most fascinating way the customs, chanting, rituals and semi-mystical sacrificial dances of the Negroes in the jungle; at the same time, his instinctive strongly developed dramatic skill enables him to do justice to the subject matter, he captures the heart-rending tragedy of the lovers' fate, yet he is firmly rooted in Modernism and already knows (even here in his first drama) how to make the most of the resources of the full orchestra. Alongside lyrical passages of such beauty can be found riveting large-scale ensembles, which provide links in the tightly woven structure, his melodic inventiveness is never-ending.

What has been said so far demonstrates very clearly the undiscovered treasures still to be found in Delius's compositions to date. It has been the aim of this article to refocus public attention on the composer. Hopefully, it will also help him achieve the merit due to him, despite vested interests! - In England, Delius has already established himself through repeated performances of his greatest and best compositions in an appropriate and artistically accomplished way. There, more and more young musicians are gathering around him; Delius has done his utmost to set up a permanent association of his colleagues in order to

foster good practice even at a socio-artistic level. He decided to found the Musical League which, like the Allgemeine Deutsche Musikverein sees its task as the promotion of young composers and their works, the encouragement of a decentralisation of music in England, a consideration of provincial towns for important musical events and the establishment there of choirs and orchestras which are able to achieve the highest musical standards. Despite a few pessimistic responses, he succeeded in forming this organisation. It held its first music festival in Liverpool from 23 to 25 September 1909 with great success. The League is led by Elgar, Delius is Vice-President and Norman O'Neill was elected Secretary.



Plate 1: Frederick Delius in 1908

APPENDICES

*Appendix 1***Biographies and information of prominent individuals and organisations mentioned in Chop's texts**

Bischoff, Hermann (1868-1936): German composer based in Berlin. Studied in Leipzig and early acquaintance of Richard Strauss. Works include symphonic poem *Pan*, 2 symphonies, an *Introduction and Rondo* for orchestra, songs and a book *Das Deutsche Lied* in the collection *Die Musik* (ed R Strauss, 1906).

Braunfels, Walter (1882-1954): German composer. Studied in Frankfurt, Vienna and Munich. From 1925 to 1933 worked as co-director of the Conservatoire in Cologne and as President from 1945-50; performances of his music were proscribed during the Third Reich. He wrote several operas, sacred choral works, orchestral works including several sets of symphonic variations, a symphony and a clarinet concerto and chamber music.

Bülow, Hans von (1830-1894): German conductor and pianist. Studied piano with Friedrich Wieck and later in Dresden and Leipzig, studying law as well as music. By 1849 he had established himself as a champion of the New German School (Liszt, Wagner etc) and with Wagner's help established himself as a conductor in the 1850s. At the same time he studied piano with Liszt at Weimar and undertook concert tours as a pianist and wrote a number of articles on politics as well as music. He conducted the first performances of Wagner's "Tristan und Isolde" and "Die Meistersinger" at the Munich Court Opera in the 1860s. In the 1870s among other things as a pianist he gave the first performance of Tchaikovsky's 1st Piano Concerto and was appointed Director of Music to the Duke of Meiningen whose orchestra he built up into one of the finest in Germany. He was, arguably, the most significant conductor in Germany in the nineteenth century.

Bungert, August (1845-1915): German composer. Born Mühlheim, studied in Cologne and Paris. Worked as Director of Music in Kreuznach and then in Karlsruhe, Berlin and northern Italy. Wrote chamber music, piano pieces and songs, orchestral music and opera. His operatic tetralogy *The Homeric World*

– *Kirke* (1898), *Nausikaa* (1901), *Odysseus' Heimkehr* (1896) and *Odysseus' Tod* (1903), intended to be a Hellenic counterpart to Wagner's Ring-cycle, was performed in Berlin, Dresden, Cologne and Hamburg but received a cool reception. Chop wrote commentaries on *Kirke* and *Odysseus' Heimkehr*, wrote a critical study on the composer, not unlike that on Delius, and edited the Bungert fan-club journal between 1911 and 1915.

Buths, Julius (1851-1920): German conductor and composer. Born Wiesbaden, studied at the Cologne Konservatorium from 1860-1870; received bursary from the Meyerbeer Foundation for study in Kiel and Berlin followed by study visits to Italy and Paris (1872-75). Worked as pianist and choral conductor in Breslau (1875-79) and as conductor of the Elberfeld Concert Society from 1879-90. From 1890 to 1908 he held the post of Director of Music for the municipality of Düsseldorf; he received a Professorship in 1895 and became the Director of the newly established Konservatorium in 1902; he was the director of a number of the Lower Rhine Music Festivals. His best-known compositions are a piano concerto, a piano quintet and a string quartet; he also translated the texts of Elgar's *The Apostles* and *The Dream of Gerontius* for performances at the Festivals.

Cable, George Washington (1844 -1925): American writer from New Orleans. Cable remained a committed Southerner all his life; he served in the Confederate army, studied Engineering and worked as a warehouse clerk before dedicating himself to writing. All his writings are set in Louisiana and the Deep South of North America. His stories depicting the attractions of New Orleans society life, are considered slight in narrative value but are distinguished in style and rich in local colour. His most well-known novel is *The Grandissimes* (1880) on which the libretto of Delius's *Koanga* is based.

Cassirer, Fritz (1871-1926): German conductor and writer on music. Studied Philosophy in Berlin and Freiburg from 1889 to 1892 but changed to Music in 1894 and studied in Munich. In 1897/98 he studied at the Stern Konservatorium in Berlin, specialising in composition, under Pfitzner, and conducting. In Berlin he formed his own orchestra and subsequently worked as a conductor in the opera houses of Lübeck, Posen, Saarbrücken, Elberfeld (1903-05) and at the Komische Oper in Berlin under Hans Gregor with whom he travelled to London. He stayed in London for two years, between 1905 and 1907 conducting orchestral concerts but withdrew from public life to study Philosophy once again. He settled in Munich where he made the occasional appearance as a conductor. His writings on music include *Beethovens Briefe. Ein Essay* (1909) and *Beethoven und die Gestalt. Ein Kommentar* (1925).

Eberl, Anton (1765 - 1807): Viennese composer and pianist; friend of Mozart and undertook German concert-tour with his widow. Composed operas, symphonies, piano concertos, solo piano works, chamber music etc.

Fried, Oskar (1871-1942): German conductor and composer. Studied with Humperdinck and Scharwenka. From 1904 to 1910 he conducted the Stern Gesangverein in Berlin to which he added the directorship of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde; in 1925 he became the conductor of the Berlin Symphony Orchestra. In 1934 he emigrated to Tiflis (present-day Tbilisi, Georgia) where he worked as principal conductor of the opera finally settling in Moscow where he died in July 1942. He composed a number of choral works including *Das trunkene Lied* (Op 11) and a setting of *Verklärte Nacht*, as well as orchestral works and pieces for piano duet.

Fulda, Adam von (c1445-1503): German composer and music theorist; publ *De Musica* in 1490.

Gregor, Hans (1866-1919): studied Engineering in Berlin but then turned to drama and was subsequently employed as a character actor in several German theatres (Detmold, Lübeck, Görlitz and Berlin). In 1894, he acted in and also directed his first production at Königsberg (Kaliningrad) and in 1895 returned in this capacity to Berlin to work at the Deutsches Theater. The following year he took over the directorship of the Municipal Theatre in Görlitz. In 1898 he left for a similar post at the Vereinigtes Theater of Elberfeld-Barmen and subsequently founded the Komische Oper in Berlin where he staged operetta and operas by such composers as Massenet, Puccini, Wolf and Debussy as well as Delius. Between 1911 and 1918 he was Director of the Vienna Court Opera and went on to work in Switzerland and America before settling in Berlin. He published *Mein Anfang* in 1910 and *Die Welt der Oper – die Oper der Welt* was published posthumously in 1931.

Haym, Hans (1860-1921): German conductor, pianist and composer. Born Halle, studied Philosophy and Classical Philology at the Universities of Jena and Tübingen and took his PhD in 1883; then studied Music at Munich with Rheinberger, among others. He taught for a while at Giessen before moving to Elberfeld in 1890 as director of the town's Choral Society and was subsequently awarded the title of Royal Music Director in 1900. He spent the rest of his professional life in Elberfeld where he was additionally conductor of a ladies' choir (the Liedertafel) and a male-voice choir (the Lehrergesang-verein) as well as being a director of the local Concert Society. There he championed the music of Peter Cornelius and, of course, of Delius, whom he had met for the first time in 1896. Between 1897 and 1914 Haym gave the first performances of, or performed very shortly after their first performances, no fewer than nine of Delius's major works including *Over the Hills and Far Away* (1897), *Paris* (1901), *Das trunkene Lied* [the *Mitternachtslied*] (1902), *Lebenstanz* (1904), *Appalachia* (1904), the *Piano Concerto* (1904), *A Mass of Life* (1909), *Sea Drift* (1910) and *Songs of Sunset* (1914). During the 1911/12 season, which marked the centenary of the Choral Society, Haym again performed *A Mass of Life*; shortly beforehand, the title of Professor was conferred upon him by the State of Prussia, apparently for

his work with the Choral Society and particularly in the context of its centenary. Haym was highly respected and almost worshipped by his friends and colleagues in Elberfeld; not only was he admired for his outstanding musical gifts but also for the interest he took in other cultural organisations in Elberfeld notably the municipal library, the museum and the school for arts and crafts. Haym was a dedicated family man; he was broken-hearted by the death of two of his sons in France towards the end of the Great War in 1918 and became seriously ill shortly thereafter. He recovered enough to resume some of his duties and conducted a memorable performance of Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*. Elberfeld's concert life suffered during 1919/20, a period which saw tremendous political upheaval nationwide in the aftermath of Germany's defeat and the establishment of the Weimar Republic. Haym could take no more and retired from his 40-year-long appointment with the Choral Society in 1920. He survived only a few more months and passed away on 15 February, 1921.

Heiberg, Gunnar (1857-1929): Norwegian dramatist and writer. Active as a director, particularly in Bergen and Christiania. As Paris correspondent of the Norwegian daily newspaper *Verdens Gang* and being acquainted with members of the Molard circle, he probably met Delius there sometime in 1897 and asked him to write the incidental music to his new play *Folkeraadet* (*The Peoples' Parliament*).

Hertz, Alfred (1872-1942): German conductor. Studied in Frankfurt and conducted widely in Europe in the 1890s including the opera houses at Halle, Altenburg, Elberfeld (1895-99) and Breslau. Between 1902 and 1915 he was Music Director at the Metropolitan Opera in New York where he conducted the first performance of *Parsifal* to have been given outside Bayreuth and the American première of Strauss's *Salome*. He also conducted at Covent Garden and from 1915 to 1929 was conductor of the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra. He conducted the Delius Orchestral Concert at St James's Hall on 30 May, 1899.

Hiller, Paul (1853-1934): German music critic. Born in Paris, the son of the distinguished German Romantic composer, Ferdinand Hiller (1811-1885). Initially worked as a principal operatic baritone and theatre director before serving as music critic of *Rheinischen Zeitung* from 1903 to 1927 in Cologne. He published editions of Verdi's operas *Ernani* and *Rigoletto* as well as several scholarly books.

Humperdinck, Engelbert (1854-1921): German composer. Studied in Cologne & Munich and assisted Wagner at Bayreuth in 1879. Taught at Barcelona and Frankfurt conservatoires and worked as critic of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* and as director of the Akademische Meisterschule in Berlin. Composer of operas, of which *Hänsel und Gretel* (1893) is the most well-known, incidental music and songs. He wrote enthusiastically to Delius in March 1907 after the Berlin

production of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* adding that he felt that Delius's scoring for some of the off-stage singing was somewhat too heavy.

Jadassohn, Salomon (1831-1902): German teacher, conductor and composer. Studied in Breslau and in Leipzig and with Liszt at Weimar. He taught in Leipzig before joining the Konservatorium staff in 1871. A prolific composer, he wrote much chamber, vocal, choral and orchestral music. His text books on composition, harmony, counterpoint, form and orchestration were all well known and were translated into English, French and Italian. Delius studied music theory with Jadassohn during his second year at the Konservatorium (1887-88).

Keary, Charles F (1848-1917): English writer and author of several novels and of philosophical and historical works. Delius asked him to produce a libretto for *Koanga*. He was also a professional numismatist and shared with Delius a love of Norway.

Keller, Gottfried (1819-1890): Swiss writer. He came from a farming background, growing up in a provincial, small-town environment and as a child he painted alongside his first attempts as a writer. After studying Art in Munich between 1840 and 1842 he embarked on a career as a painter but eventually turned to writing, publishing his first *Gedichte* in 1846. Its success earned him a stipendium from the Zürich Council enabling him to study in Heidelberg and Berlin between 1848 and 1855. On his return to Zürich he held the post of *Ersten Staatsschreibers* between 1861 and 1876. His early writings naturally concerned themselves with his youth and with the transition from Late Romanticism to Realism manifested in the conflict between artistic talent and the constraints of family dependence. Other characteristic themes in his work include irony and nostalgia, cheerfulness and humour and their other side in tragedy; also present are his sense of the grotesque and his inclination to parody. In his collection *The People from Seldwyla* (1856 rev. 1873/74), Seldwyla is a symbol of provincialism in which people live out their day-to-day lives which Keller depicts in stories with both contemporary and historical settings. Similar concerns can be found in many of his works, perhaps most pointedly in the *Züricher Novellen* of 1878. In 1883 Keller produced his *Gesammelten Gedichte*, a collection of poems characterised by their tender and sublime style. His works for the stage met with no success.

Kothe, Bernhard (1821-1897): German church musician. Studied for a while with Adolf Marx and at the Royal Institute for Church Music in Berlin. Worked as school teacher and training college lecturer in Oppeln and Breslau. He was a founder of the Cäcilien Verein and wrote numerous choral and organ works as well as text-books for intending church musicians and teachers.

Lombroso, Cesare (1835-1909): Psychiatrist and Criminal Anthropologist specialising in the minds of men of genius and of criminals. He initially trained in medicine and became Professor of Legal Medicine at the University of Turin in

1876 taking up the Chair in Psychiatry and Criminal Anthropology there in 1905. He produced over 400 works in his specialist fields, many of which were influential throughout turn-of-the-century Europe. German translations of many of his works appeared soon after their initial publication.

Lower Rhine Music Festival: The founding and development of the festival paralleled that of the nineteenth-century Festival movement in England. In German-speaking countries the oratorios of Handel and Haydn prompted the formation of choirs and related activities. The first German festival in this sense, organised by G.F. Bischoff, was held in 1810 at Frankenhäusen. After further successful festivals during the next few years, Bischoff's example was followed by J Schornstein, music director at Elberfeld, who in 1817 combined singers from that town and from Düsseldorf for a Whitsuntide festival. From these beginnings the Lower Rhine Festival developed and was held in turn at Düsseldorf, Aachen and Cologne at which Mendelssohn, many of whose works fuelled the Festival movement in Germany and England, conducted from 1833 until his death in 1847. It began very much as a gathering of amateur musicians but by the end of the 1830s had become fully professional with the exception of the members of the chorus. From roughly the middle of the century the festival programmes were themed, often marking anniversaries of important German composers. The First World War brought about substantial change. Music societies and festivals lost their influence and shrank to the peripheries of public life as more specialist organisations came to the fore in the 1920s such as the Bonn chamber music festival and the Donaueschingen festival of contemporary music. The role of the Lower Rhine Festival in Germany's musical life was increasingly questioned; the annual alternation between Aachen, Düsseldorf and Cologne stopped completely after 1930 but was revived after World War II for one cycle. Wuppertal joined as a fourth host city in 1948 and in 1950 it was decided to reduce the scope of the festival by giving a concert in each of the four cities involved on successive days and devote the programme to concerts of contemporary music; at this point, audience support virtually collapsed. In 1954 Duisburg took Cologne's place and a new concept for the Festival emerged whereby far greater emphasis was placed on the involvement of young musicians and amateurs in which context Paul Hindemith played a major part in 1955. After much criticism of this approach, particularly by the conductor Herbert Eimert, the Festival came to an abrupt end. Since then, there have been several attempts to revive the concept of the Festival under the wing of the Rheinisches Musikfest and the Westdeutscher Rundfunk with programmes of contemporary, sacred, rock, folk and world musics in addition to the traditional concert repertoire but with only modest success as it gradually came to be accepted that it was no longer possible to shore up meaningfully a past tradition in a contemporary context. During the 1990s, the Musikfest has taken place as before on a yearly basis in a different city of Nordrhein-Westfalen. Each May, a ten-day-long festival presents about 100 concerts programming music of all styles and periods.

Mors, Richard (1873-1946): German composer and conductor. Studied in Munich then worked in the theatre in various centres; became conductor of the Bach Society in Nürnberg before settling in Munich as a composer, teacher and critic. Works include 2 symphonic poems, a string quartet, violin sonata, Requiem and many songs.

Musical League: an ill-fated organisation loosely modelled on the German Allgemeine Deutsche Musikverein (see above). It came into being in March 1908, with Elgar as President and Delius as Vice-President, after several years' gestation from around the turn of the century. In October 1900 Ernest Newman proposed the gradual reorientation of British music away from London to the industrial North and the Midlands in his 'A Case for Decentralisation' published in the *Quarterly Review*. The theme was eventually picked up by Elgar in his first lecture as Peyton Professor of Music at Birmingham University in 1905. Granville Bantock quickly joined the cause as did Delius in 1907. They eventually formed the League in 1908 and published a manifesto in which the organisation's chief aim was to hold an annual festival mainly of contemporary music and to encourage decentralisation by holding regular festivals in different regions of the country. The League's first committee meeting took place in April but soon became caught up in internal politics. Delius eventually turned out to be scathing about the enterprise, even as early as the Summer of 1908, as he felt England wanted no more than "another 20 years of Oratorio and religious dead music. ..." In fact, a number of the participants ended up bickering about each other in some way or another but they managed to organise a festival in Liverpool towards the end of September 1909 at which four of Delius's songs with orchestral accompaniment were performed ('Wine Roses', 'In the Garden of the Seraglio', 'Through long, long years' and 'Let Springtime come then'). The League's attempts to secure funding from English municipalities, as in the Musikverein, was doomed to failure. It did, however, succeed in mounting a second festival in Birmingham in 1912 but it proved to be its final fling and by that time Delius had long ceased to have anything to do with it. A letter to Bantock of April 1911 makes his views clear: "The Musical League I suppose is dead ... I am afraid artistic undertakings are impossible in England – the country is not yet artistically civilized. There is something hopeless about English people in a musical and artistic way; to be frank, I have entirely lost my interest. ..."

Neitzel, Otto (1852-1920): German pianist, composer and writer on music. Studied in Berlin and from 1885 taught at the Cologne Conservatoire becoming critic of the *Kölnischen Zeitung* in 1887; in the Winter of 1906-07 he undertook a concert and lecture tour in the USA. Works include operas, a piano concerto and pieces for piano; he also wrote several music reference books including introductions to contemporary opera (1890-98, rev 1920) and to Beethoven symphonies (1924).

Nikisch, Artur (1855-1922): Austro-Hungarian conductor. Studied Vienna and joined Vienna Court Orchestra as violinist in 1874. Became second conductor at the Leipzig Opera in 1878 and chief conductor in 1879. Subsequently worked in Boston and Budapest before succeeding simultaneously to the posts of chief conductor of the Leipzig Gewandhaus and Berlin Philharmonic in 1895. He was subsequently Director of the Leipzig Opera and the Leipzig Konservatorium where he taught a celebrated conducting class. He conducted throughout Europe and America. Although Suter was active in furthering Delius's cause, particularly in the case of his performance of *Sea Drift* at Basle on 2 March 1907, there is no evidence that Nikisch was an active supporter at this time. Ida Gerhardt lobbied hard for Delius while she was painting the conductor's portrait in Leipzig in December 1899 but he did not immediately oblige, despite Delius's best efforts to persuade him otherwise. In fact it was not until 1911 that Nikisch conducted *Brigg Fair* in Berlin and subsequently gave the first performance of *On hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* and *Summer Night on the River* at Leipzig in October 1913.

Pfohl, Ferdinand [not *Pfehl*, as Chop states] (1862-1949): German writer on music. Born in Elbogen (Bohemia) and subsequently worked as Editor of the *Hamburger Nachrichten* as well as lecturing in Theory, Music History, Performance and Style at the Vogt Konservatorium from 1908. He received a PhD from the University of Rostock in 1923. He wrote a number of scholarly books, mostly concerned with opera, and composed choral and orchestral works as well as songs and chamber music.

Reinecke, Carl (1824-1910): German composer, teacher, administrator, pianist and conductor. Trained by his father, J P Rudolf Reinecke, he worked in Copenhagen and was befriended by Mendelssohn, Schumann and Liszt. Worked at Cologne, Barmen and Breslau before joining staff at Leipzig Konservatorium in 1860, becoming Director in 1897 which he completely transformed into the premier European conservatory and where he was a guardian of its musical traditions. He was also chief conductor of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra until 1895. Composed operas, vocal and choral works, orchestral music in several different genres and chamber music including many piano pieces for which he is, perhaps, most well known. Delius studied music theory with Reinecke during his first year at the Konservatorium (1886-87) plus composition and ensembles during his second year (1887-88).

Ritter, Alexander (1833-1896): German violinist, composer and conductor. Studied Leipzig and was disciple of Liszt and Wagner. Mentor of Richard Strauss while associate leader of Meiningen Court Orchestra under von Bülow; later predecessor of Hans Sitt as Kapellmeister at Chemnitz in 1873 but gave up after only two months in the job in frustration at the indifference he encountered in trying to set up a worthwhile artistic programme. Composed 2 operas, 6

symphonic poems, string quartet etc. His first opera *Der faule Hans* of 1885 was performed for the first time by the company of the Royal Opera, Berlin on 8 March, 1907 conducted by Richard Strauss who had previously championed it at Meiningen.

Rosen, Helene ("Jelka") Sophie Emilie (1868-1935): German painter and wife of Frederick Delius; born in Belgrade of German parents, a well-known family in legal and diplomatic circles. Her mother Serena was the daughter of the pianist composer Ignaz Moscheles (1794-1870) and was living with Jelka in Paris at the time she met Delius. In May, 1897 she purchased, with her mother's help, the property at Grez-sur-Loing where she had been painting every summer for a number of years and where Delius joined her shortly thereafter.

Rosenval: pen-name of Berthe Kahn-Rosenwald, wife of Armand Blocq, both French writers of German-Jewish extraction from Alsace-Lorraine. Blocq, using the pen-name of Gaston Danville, wrote a number of books on experimental psychology particularly exploring the occult, such as *Magnétisme et Spiritisme* (1908), *Le Mystère Psychique* (Paris, 1925) as well as *La psychologie de l'amour*, which by 1929 had run to 7 editions; given the volatile nature of France in the wake of the Franco-Prussian War and the Dreyfus Affair, there can be little surprise that Blocq and his wife should wish to use more French-sounding pseudonyms. Rosenval also wrote the libretto to *L'heure du Berger*, an opéra-comique by Claude Terrasse (1867-1923) produced in Paris in 1900.

Siegel, Rudolf (1878-1948): German conductor and composer. Studied with Humperdinck and worked as conductor in Munich, Berlin, Königsberg, Mannheim and Krefeld; later moved back to Berlin, then via Bamberg to Munich. Works include opera, orchestral, choral and vocal compositions.

Stern Choral Union: the *Sternscher Gesangverein* established by the German violinist, composer and teacher Julius Stern (1820-1883) in Berlin in 1847; it was disbanded in 1912. Stern also founded the eponymous conservatoire in Berlin in 1850.

Suter, Hermann (1870-1926): Swiss composer. Studied in Zürich and Basle and later at the Conservatoires in Stuttgart and Leipzig. Between 1892 and 1902 he was a music teacher, organist and choral conductor in Zürich but in 1902 he became conductor of the symphony concerts of the Allgemeinen Musikgesellschaft, of the Choral Society and male-voice choir where he stayed until 1925. He received a doctorate from the University of Basle in 1913 and took over the Directorship of the Basle Konservatorium from 1918 to 1921. He embodied music in Basle in that era and he is one of the most important German Swiss composers at that time. He composed orchestral, chamber and incidental music as well as a number of important choral works.

Tonkünstlerfest (Composers' Festival): held annually in a different German-speaking city. It was an offshoot of the Allgemeine Deutsche Musikverein, a national music association founded by Liszt at Weimar in August 1861. The Association's aims were to foster and encourage the development of German musical life, to nurture and promote the professional interests of composers and to support needy composers and their dependents. One of the Association's objectives was the promotion of a peripatetic annual festival of contemporary music, the Tonkünstlerfest; meetings were held predominantly in Germany but also in Switzerland and Austria. A feature of the Festival's programming policy from its inception was the promotion of contemporary music-drama, such as the performance of Carl Ehrenburg's *Annelise*, conducted by Erich Kleiber, at the Düsseldorf festival in June, 1922. A number of Delius works were performed at the Festivals as follows: *Nachtlid Zarathustras* (1903 – Basle), *Sea Drift* (1906 – Essen), Parts I/2 and II (with cuts) of *Eine Messe des Lebens* (1908 – München), *Brigg Fair* (1910 – Zürich) and *In a Summer Garden* (1913 – Jena). During this period Richard Strauss and Max von Schillings were the Chairmen of the Festival Committee; Strauss became Honorary President in 1909. In 1933 the nature of the Festivals came under the close scrutiny of the National Socialist Party; its programmes were attacked as being “musical bolshevism and degenerate music”. The first Festival of the new political era at Wiesbaden in 1934 now featured such approved activities as community singing involving choirs of Hitler Youth, the Federation of German Girls and the Sturmabteilung (Storm Troopers). In 1935, the Allgemeine Deutsche Musikverein incorporated the notorious Arierparagraph in its statutes yet at Weimar in 1936 the Festival managed to programme works by the “Verbotener” (the “Forbidden Ones”). The Association now came under increasing pressure from the Nazis and Goebbels advised the incumbent Chairman Peter Raabe (1872-1945) to disband it in the face of great opposition from its members. In his 1936 address to the Association Raabe painted a bleak picture of the Tonkünstler festivals of the future as he saw them, the equivalent of a musical Nuremberg rally, funded by the Führer and by the Reich Minister for Social Education and Propaganda. The last festival took place at Darmstadt and Frankfurt am Main in 1937 at which the most important first performance was Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*; the festival closed almost where it began with an all-Liszt concert including *Orpheus*, the *E flat major Piano Concerto* and the *Faust Symphony*. At Düsseldorf in 1938 the Reichsmusiktagen were inaugurated and featured an exhibition entitled *Entartete Musik* (Degenerate Music) initiated and designed by the Weimar General Intendant Hans Severus Ziegler as a reaction to the 1936 Weimar Tonkünstler Festival.

Walser, Karl (1877-1943): Swiss painter, illustrator and designer. Worked in Berlin from 1899 and collaborated with Max Reinhardt as a theatre designer in 1904. He turned to opera in 1905, joining Gregor's production team at the Komische Oper at its inauguration in late 1905, remaining until his last design project there in 1907, Delius's *A Village Romeo and Juliet*.

Whitman, Walt: (born Long Island 1819, died Camden, New Jersey, 1892); American writer. After 1841 he was associated with at least 10 newspapers and magazines in New York and Brooklyn and after a brief period in New Orleans in 1848 where he edited the New Orleans *Crescent* he returned to Brooklyn as editor of the Brooklyn *Times*. He was a passionate advocate of democratic equality yet believed in the supremacy of the individual against society's restrictions. Primary forces in his poetry are an unusual degree of sensitivity and extreme sensuousness. Other influences included Goethe's autobiography, which shows him as an individual contemplating the Universe in terms of himself; Hegel's philosophy contributed the concept of a cosmic consciousness evolving through conflict and contradiction; Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero Worship* suggesting that a superior individual is above man-made laws and above all the Transcendentalists, particularly Emerson, and the view that the individual is an impersonal visionary at one with Nature. Whitman's use of words is unique deriving from such diverse sources as George Sand and the American Indians and his poetry is often in a simple style without recourse to rhyme and metre which he himself compared with 'liquid, billowy waves'. It was his collection *Leaves of Grass* (1855) from which Delius extracted the text for *Sea Drift*.

Würth and **Fellner** were Viennese bankers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. They made their premises available for one of the earliest, private performances of the *Eroica* Symphony on 13 February, 1805 two months prior to its first public performance at the Theater an der Wien on 7 April, 1805.

Bibliography

The following list is by no means comprehensive but attempts to draw together a selection of articles, books and scores covering the life and work of Frederick Delius. The official Delius website, www.delius.org.uk/index.html, is an excellent initial point of reference.

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