

“An Impulse to Transfigure and Render New”—The Anglo-Austrian Music Society in Wartime and Early Post-War Britain

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Abstract

The Anglo-Austrian Music Society was founded in London in 1942 by Ferdinand Rauter—an Austrian-born musician who had made his name arranging and performing songs from various folk traditions with soprano Engel Lund. Rauter spent much of 1940 interned on the Isle of Man as an ‘enemy alien,’ a designation visited upon some 70,000 refugees and other foreign-born residents in the United Kingdom during the Second World War. In the wake of that internment, he founded and co-founded a series of musically oriented organizations culminating with the Anglo-Austrian Music Society. The Society was born out of and embodied a particular constellation of mobility—an entanglement of patterns of movement, mobile practices, and representations of mobility—that owed its existence to Britain’s geopolitical situation in the years leading up to and comprising the war. Drawing on work by human geographers, this article examines the intertwined elements of this constellation—including migratory movements from Nazi occupied Europe to Britain; ideas about mobility, nation, and musical creativity; and practices of regulating the movements of migrant musicians. Making sense of these entanglements is essential to understanding both the genesis of the Society and the creative successes of the mobile, contingent community its key participants cultivated in Britain.

The Anglo-Austrian Music Society was founded in London in 1942 by Ferdinand Rauter, an Austrian-born musician, pedagogue, and amateur mycologist who had made his name arranging and performing songs from various folk traditions with polyglot soprano Engel Lund. Rauter spent much of 1940 interned on the Isle of Man as an “enemy alien,” a designation visited upon some 70,000 German, Austrian, Italian, Japanese, and Finnish refugees and residents in the United Kingdom during the Second World War. In the wake of that internment, he founded and co-founded a series of musically oriented organizations—the Refugee Musicians Committee, the Austrian Musicians Group, and, ultimately, the Anglo-Austrian Music Society (AAMS). The pragmatic aims of those organizations were to allow musicians who had migrated to Britain (either by force or choice, or some combination thereof) the freedom to pursue their musical activities, and to help ensure that those musicians could support themselves financially and participate fully in musical life.

The Society, which was in existence until 2021, was born out of and responded to a particular constellation of mobility—an entanglement of patterns of movement, mobile practices, and representations of mobility—that owed its existence to Britain’s geopolitical situation in the years leading up to and comprising the war. An exploration of this constellation—including migratory movements from Nazi-occupied Europe to Britain; ideas about mobility, nation, and musical creativity; and practices both of

regulating migrant movements and those of musicians from the Continent¹ habitually moving through Britain’s musical spaces—is essential to understanding the genesis of the Anglo-Austrian Music Society and to making sense of its activities during roughly the first decade and a half of its existence, 1942–1958.²

This research on the Society—an organization founded and populated by musicians who had migrated to Britain—joins a vital conversation led by scholars such as Brigid Cohen, Florian Scheduling, and Nils Grosch about the impact that individual migratory journeys and migrations of peoples have had on musical creativity in the twentieth century, impacts that reverberate through contemporary practice.³ Research on the AAMS complements and expands upon that work by considering the creativity of musicians who migrated to Britain via frameworks developed in mobilities studies by human geographers and social

¹ No single term unproblematically describes this group of musicians who migrated from continental Europe to Britain in the 1930s and 1940s. An individual’s reasons for leaving the Continent may have been multiple and varied according to one’s racial background, political convictions, professional networks, personal relationships, and job prospects. Similarly, reasons for migrating to Great Britain (and not elsewhere) may have been similarly complex. Thus, when taking these musicians as a group, I seek to avoid descriptors that might only apply to some individuals, like “refugee” or “exile.” A broader term like “émigré” or “migrant” may be more accurate. The former recognizes the privileged social and/or economic position of many of these musicians. Yet, the term may also, perhaps inadvertently, reinforce a problematic discomfort in describing European peoples as “migrants,” reserving that latter term for non-European and non-white groups. For that reason, I display a slight preference throughout for the term “migrant.” That term may, however, be problematic in another sense: it implies a degree of agency that does not accord or contend with many Jewish individuals’ experiences of displacement. Therefore, unless necessary for clarification purposes, I attempt to limit descriptors altogether.

² The Anglo-Austrian Music Society, like many musical organizations, shuttered during the current pandemic. During its existence it came to serve as one of Britain’s most significant musical societies until 2002, when decisions were made to scale back operations. Indeed, the Society’s stature in British musical culture grew steadily from the period of 1960–1990. I choose to focus on the early years of the Society, not because these represent the Society at its apogee, but because the eclecticism in programming and artist engagement so essential to its early activities recedes after this time. As the Society became increasingly professionalized and profitable (after roughly 1959), the executive board streamlined activities to focus primarily on the granting of a singing prize—the Richard Tauber Memorial Scholarship—as well as the arranging of British tours and London engagements of a few Austrian musical institutions—the Vienna Boys Choir, the Gay Tyrolese (discussed in the penultimate section of this article), and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.

³ There is a wealth of exemplary work being done in the past few decades on the migration, in particular, of individuals and groups of musicians from Nazi-occupied Europe to other sites. See, especially: Brigid Cohen, *Stefan Wolpe and the Avant-Garde Diaspora* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); and Brigid Cohen, *Musical Migration and Imperial New York: Early Cold War Scenes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226818023.001.0001>; as well as Florian Scheduling, *Musical Journeys: Performing Migration in Twentieth-Century Music* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781787446601>; and Nils Grosch, “Exil und kulturelle Mobilität: Ernst Krenek und Kurt Weill,” in *Zeitgenossenschaft: Ernst Krenek und Kurt Weill im Netzwerk der Moderne*, ed. Matthias Henke (Schliengen, Germany: Edition Argus, 2019), 175–82. Scheduling’s monograph joins ground-breaking work done by Erik Levi exploring the reception of Austrian- and German-born musicians in twentieth-century Britain. See Erik Levi, “The Reception of Austro-German Émigré Musicians in the UK, 1933–1945,” in . . . und werde in allen Lexika als ‘British’ aufgeführt, ed. Gerold Gruber (Neumünster, Germany: von Böckel Verlag, 2015), 15–26; Erik Levi, “A Composer under Surveillance: Hanns Eisler and England, 1925–1962” in *Eisler in England: Proceedings of the International Hanns Eisler Conference, London 2010*, eds. Erik Levi and Oliver Dahin (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 2014), 9–32; and Erik Levi, “‘Those damn foreigners’: Xenophobia and British Musical Life during the First Half of the Twentieth Century,” in *Twentieth-Century Music and Politics: Essays in Memory of Neil Edmunds*, ed. Pauline Fairclough (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2013), 81–96. Two additional volumes lay essential groundwork in the study of migrant musicians from the Nazi period: Reinhold Brinkmann and Christoph Wolff, eds., *Driven into Paradise: The Musical Migration from Nazi Germany to the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); and Hanns-Werner Heister, Claudia Maurer-Zenck and Peter Petersen, eds., *Musik im Exil: Folgen des Nazismus für die internationale Musikkultur* (Frankfurt: S. Fischer Verlag, 1993).

scientists, such as Tim Cresswell, Peter Adey, and Doreen Massey.⁴ I employ concepts such as constellations of mobility, politics of mobility, and power geometry, in order to animate a particular understanding of the Anglo-Austrian Music Society. That is, I use these concepts to demonstrate how essential the mobilities and immobilities of the Society’s founder and participants were to its inception. I also explore how those individuals ingeniously responded to pervasive and restrictive ideologies about music and migratory mobilities in programming and carrying out the Society’s early activities.

In order to fully appreciate how the Society arose out of and responded to the constellation of mobility that characterized wartime Britain, one must first get a sense of what is meant by this term. The first section of this article thus involves examining Cresswell’s notion as he develops it in the context of a politics of mobility. The second section sets out some of the patterns of movement as well as the modes of control and regulation that sought to shape the mobilities of musicians moving both to and through Britain in the 1930s and 1940s. These practices of mobility provide essential context for the ensuing discussion of the foundation of the Anglo-Austrian Music Society and its precursor organizations. A fourth section acts as a segue between examination of the genesis of the Society and exploration of the activities pursued in its name in the 1940s and 1950s—an analysis of discourse about music, migratory mobilities, and nation that proliferated in Britain prior to and during the Second World War. Interrogating discourses and public and private debates about music and mobility will bring into focus the ideological landscape that musicians were forced to navigate upon their arrival on British shores, as well as the stakes for doing so successfully. In the final section of the article, attention will shift to the early activities of the AAMS, and I will suggest how we might read those activities, when taken as a whole, as a kind of creative response to the constraints imposed upon the Society’s participants by the constellation of mobility in which they were enmeshed. Key to that reading is the quasi-utopian vision of a contingent and mobile musical community offered by composer Egon Wellesz that we will encounter in the analysis of discourse.

Constellations of Mobility

According to human geographer Tim Cresswell, the notion of a constellation of mobility allows us to give a nuanced account of how mobilities were constituted in a given time and place by drawing our attention

⁴ The emergence of a “new mobilities paradigm” has been marked by ground-breaking work across the social sciences that foregrounds mobility in considerations of humanistic enterprise. Peter Adey’s mobilities handbook elegantly and concisely surveys issues preoccupying scholars of mobilities studies: Peter Adey, *Mobility*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315669298>. Both Tim Cresswell and Jason King have explored ideological strategies in relation to place and movement, including the weaponization of mobilities in relation to Black Americans: Tim Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place: Geography, Ideology, and Transgression* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996); and Jason King, “Which Way Is Down? Improvisations on Black Mobility,” *Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* 14, no. 1 (2004): 25–45, <https://doi.org/10.1080/07407700408571439>. Of particular interest to scholars of migration and creative practice is Arjun Appadurai’s notion of translocality, which may help to trouble static notions of place that fail to account for the permeability and extensiveness of sites frequented by migrant musicians: Arjun Appadurai, “The Production of Locality,” in *Counterworks: Managing the Diversity of Knowledge*, ed. Richard Fardon (London: Routledge, 1995), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203450994-10>. Further, Deirdre McKay’s work on migrant subjectivities helpfully interrogates the role played by ‘fixing/placing’ in constructions of migrant identities: Deirdre McKay, “Translocal Circulation: Place and Subjectivity in an Extended Filipino Community,” *Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology* 7, no. 3 (2006): 265–78, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14442210600979357>. Finally, Tim Cresswell’s and Doreen Massey’s work on the political dimensions of mobility and the ways in which mobility is differentially accessed help to contend with the ways that mobility is always, in some sense, political in the ways it is practiced and understood: Tim Cresswell, “Towards a Politics of Mobility,” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28, no. 1 (2010): 17–31, <https://doi.org/10.1068/d11407>; and Doreen Massey, “Power-Geometry and Progressive Sense of Place,” in *Mapping the Futures: Local Cultures, Global Change*, ed. J. Bird (Milton Park: Routledge, 1993).

to “movement, represented meaning, and practice.”⁵ These dimensions of mobility—discursive, aural, and visual representations of movement, patterns of movement, and ways of practicing movement—constellate in the sense that in particular historical moments and sites, they cohere in ways that are (in practice if not in theory) inextricable and that make sense together. Representations of movement can be multiple and diverse, and Cresswell’s work explores mobility as it has been coded as inauthentic and aimless as well as transgressive and freeing.⁶ Patterns of movement, as Cresswell envisions them, are also diverse and might involve quite small-scale movements and timespans like daily commutes, but also—as is particularly relevant to the story of the Anglo-Austrian Music Society—larger-scale patterns of migration and state-coordinated mobilities and immobilities of mass internment. Practices of movement may be similarly wide-ranging. Cresswell points to a kind of practice involving mobility “that is enacted and experienced through the body,” habitualized in the sense developed by sociologist Pierre Bourdieu.⁷ Fellow sociologist Andreas Reckwitz helpfully explains that this Bourdieuan notion of practice entails patterns of behavior comprised of distinct types of activity and knowledge, claiming that such practice is a:

routinized type of behavior which consists of several elements, interconnected to one another: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, “things” and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge.⁸

This kind of practice, while essential to a robust understanding of a particular constellation of mobility like the one we find in wartime Britain, can be notoriously difficult to evidence in the archive. But Cresswell points, as well, to a second sense in which movement is practiced, one more accessible to historians—the modes by which habits of movement are controlled and regulated by laws, institutional policies, and social customs.

It is this focus—on the regulation of movement—that, perhaps, makes most explicit that a constellation of mobility entails, in Cresswell’s term, a particular “politics of mobility.” He defines such a politics in the following manner:

By politics I mean social relations that involve the production and distribution of power. By a politics of mobility I mean the ways in which mobilities are both productive of such social relations and produced by them. Social relations are of course complicated and diverse. They include relations between classes, genders, ethnicities, nationalities, and religious groups as well as a host of other forms of group identity.⁹

Cresswell’s colleague, human geographer Peter Adey, helps to further develop the relations Cresswell points to here between mobility and politics in his own study, identifying four fundamental intersections: (1) the ways that our mobilities are constituted by but can also shape political processes (including one’s rights regarding and access to particular modes of travel and transportation); (2) the ways that our mobilities shape our capacity to engage with political processes like deliberation, affirmation, and contestation (including one’s access to the mechanisms of voting); (3) drawing on Massey’s notion of a “power geometry,” the ways in which mobilities are *differentially* accessed (including one’s ability to move through public spaces without

⁵ Cresswell, “Towards a Politics,” 26.

⁶ Tim Cresswell, “The Production of Mobilities,” *New Formations* 43 (Spring 2001): 3–25.

⁷ Cresswell, “Towards a Politics,” 20. Also see Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511812507>.

⁸ Andreas Reckwitz, “Toward a Theory of Social Practices: A Development in Culturalist Theorizing,” *European Journal of Social Theory* 5, no. 2 (2002): 249–50, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1368431022225432>.

⁹ Cresswell, “Towards a Politics,” 21.

harassment from private citizens or law enforcement); and (4) relatedly, how our differing mobilities fundamentally shape our chances of survival and flourishing (including our ability to move in response to threat).¹⁰

Thus, any attempt to account for a particular constellation of mobility—which, in Cresswell’s estimation, is a conceptual tool for contending with what he refers to as “the constitution of *kinetic hierarchies* in particular times and places”¹¹—must necessarily engage directly with the ways that mobility is politicized in speech and action and the ways that politicization differentially impacts the lives of individuals enmeshed in that web of practices, ideas, and movements.

Constellating Mobility in Wartime Britain

Much has been written about patterns of migration to Great Britain from continental Europe in the years preceding and comprising the Second World War, most of it, quite reasonably, focusing on the forced and coerced migrations of Jewish refugees and others suffering persecution under Nazi, fascist, and authoritarian regimes. Comprehensive work, for instance, has been done by historian Daniel Snowman on European artists (including musicians) who brought their cultural practices with them to Britain.¹² General consensus abounds in the research into this group of individuals—which Snowman refers to as the “Hitler émigrés”—that patterns of migration from continental Europe to Britain might be understood as forming two broadly defined waves: the first from 1933–1937, and the second much larger migration in 1938 and 1939 following the annexation of Austria¹³ and the Kristallnacht.¹⁴ I would add a third wave (or trickle) to this: those individuals—like cellist Anita Lasker-Wallfisch, who was a member of the Auschwitz Women’s Orchestra,¹⁵ and Laura Sarti, a Jewish, Italian-born singer exiled to Egypt during the war¹⁶—who survived the Second World War in concentration camps or exile outside of Europe and settled in Britain soon after the war’s end.

What emerges when we look within these general patterns to the specific stories of individual musicians is how varied were their migratory journeys and how distinct were the forces pushing them out of continental Europe and/or pulling them to British shores. Some individuals, like Ferdinand Rauter and his creative partner Engel Lund, who was of Icelandic heritage and Danish citizenship, were not in fact refugees of fascism, but rather arrived in Britain thanks to their far-ranging professional networks connecting

¹⁰ Adey, *Mobility*, 106.

¹¹ Cresswell, “Towards a Politics,” 29 (emphasis mine).

¹² See Daniel Snowman, *The Hitler Émigrés: The Cultural Impact on Britain of Refugees from Nazism* (London: Pimlico, 2002); and Bernard Wasserstein, *Britain and the Jews of Europe, 1939–1945* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1979), <https://doi.org/10.2307/20040551>.

¹³ Because the term *Anschluß* may retain the residue of Nazi propaganda (of a freely and popularly chosen unification or enjoining of two states), I will use the English term “annexation” throughout. The latter more accurately reflects the political reality in 1939 (forcible acquisition), even as it has been well-documented that the German occupation of Austria was embraced by numerous Austrian residents.

¹⁴ Rachel Pistol, “Refugees from National Socialism Arriving in Great Britain, 1933–1945,” in *Refugees, Relief, and Resettlement* (Farmington Hills, MI: Gale Publishing, 2020), <https://www.gale.com/intl/essays/rachel-pistol-refugees-national-socialism-great-britain-1933-1945>.

¹⁵ See Anita Lasker-Wallfisch, *Inherit the Truth, 1939–1945: The Documented Experiences of a Survivor of Auschwitz and Belsen* (London: Giles de la Mare Publishers, 2012), for an astonishing and devastating account of Lasker-Wallfisch’s experiences in Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen; and Anita Lasker-Wallfisch, “Interview with Anita Lasker-Wallfisch,” interview by Norbert Meyn, Royal College of Music, September 18, 2014, video, <https://rcm.ac.uk/singingasong/oralhistorycategory2/anitalasker-wallfisch/>.

¹⁶ For more information, please see Laura Sarti, “Interview with Laura Sarti,” interview by Norbert Meyn, Royal College of Music, July 30, 2014, video, <https://rcm.ac.uk/singingasong/oralhistorycategory3/laurasarti/>.

them to British musical life. Others, like the aforementioned composer Egon Wellesz, whose music was often programmed in AAMS concerts, were compelled to leave Austria because of their Jewish heritage but also had established connections to British musical circles via institutions (in Wellesz's case, the International Society of Contemporary Music (ISCM) that he had helped found with Cambridge academic Edward J. Dent in 1922).¹⁷ Still others, like musicologist and pianist Georg Knepler, who was an active participant in the AAMS during wartime before settling in East Berlin after the war, were forced to emigrate not only because of Jewish heritage but also because of their political beliefs. Knepler, for instance, had been arrested for his involvement with the banned Communist Party of Austria in 1934 and emigrated soon after his release from prison.¹⁸ Yet others, like Siegmund Nissel—second violinist with the famed Amadeus Quartet (from 1947), which performed one of its first concerts under the auspices of the AAMS—fled their homes, suffering separation from their parents, as one of nearly 10,000 children who traveled to Britain as part of the Kindertransport scheme.¹⁹ These broader waves of migratory movement as well as the “little stories” of individual musicians form part of the wider constellation of mobility that characterized Britain in the 1930s and 1940s.²⁰

Just as significant a dimension of this constellation were the mechanisms by which the British government and establishment figures in British musical life regulated the movement of musicians into and then within Britain. Whereas musicians like Rauter and Knepler—who were not major figures in the musical life of continental Europe in the 1930s—could move fairly freely to and around Britain when they arrived during the first wave of migration (Rauter around 1935 and Knepler in 1934), this changed in April 1938. In the wake of the annexation of Austria, the British Foreign Office decreed “minor musicians and commercial artists of all kinds . . . as prima facie unsuitable for entry.”²¹ This decree would not have impacted the mobilities of young musicians like Nissel and his future Amadeus Quartet colleague Norbert Brainin, who arrived via the Kindertransport. But it would have had repercussions for many female musicians. Viennese violinist Alma Rosé, leader of the Wiener Walzermädeln, for example, would have been denied entry were it not for the support and connections of her father, Arnold. The elder Rosé had served as concertmaster of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and Vienna State Opera Orchestra for 57 years until being ousted from

¹⁷ Indeed, Wellesz's connections to Britain long pre-date his emigration in 1938, and were to academic institutions as well as musical ones. He first visited Cambridge in 1906, where he attended lectures. He also presented research in 1910 at a conference in London. Most significantly, he was awarded an honorary doctorate from Oxford University in 1932, the first Austrian to receive the honor since Haydn. For more information on Wellesz in pre-war and wartime Britain, please see Erik Levi, “Egon Wellesz und Grossbritannien in den Jahren 1906–1946,” in *Geächtet, verboten, vertrieben: österreichischer Musiker 1934–1938–1945*, ed. Hartmut Krones (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2014): 401–12, <https://doi.org/10.7767/boehlau.9783205793168.401>.

¹⁸ For more information on Knepler, his exile in Britain, and his postwar activities in East Germany, please see Anne C. Shreffler, “Berlin Walls: Dahlhaus, Knepler, and Ideologies of Music History,” *Journal of Musicology*, 20, no. 4 (Autumn 2003): 498–525, <https://doi.org/10.1525/jm.2003.20.4.498>; Golan Gur, “The Other Marxism: Georg Knepler and the Anthropology of Music,” *Musikologia Austriaca* (May 2016), <https://musau.org/parts/neue-article-page/view/28>; and Gerhard Scheit, “Also Raunzen können die Engländer überhaupt nicht,” *Zwischenheit: Zeitschrift für Kultur des Exils und des Widerstands*, 19, no. 4 (February 2003): 27–28.

¹⁹ For more information on the Kindertransport, please see Pistol, “Refugees from National Socialism”; Vera K. Fast, *Children's Exodus: A History of the Kindertransport* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010), <https://doi.org/10.5040/9780755625604>; and Jennifer Craig-Norton, *The Kindertransport: Contesting Memory* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvj7wnmc>.

²⁰ The strategy of foregrounding little stories as a means to interrogate grand narratives is one I pursue throughout the article. I wish to thank Florian Scheduling for bringing to my attention Jim Samson's development of this notion in Jim Samson, “Little Stories from the Balkans,” in *Music and Displacement: Diasporas, Mobilities, and Dislocations in Europe and Beyond*, eds. Erik Levi and Florian Scheduling (Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, 2010): 181–95.

²¹ “Circular of the Foreign Office,” quoted in: Scheduling, *Musical Journeys*, 95.

his posts for his Jewish heritage. With the help of BBC Director of Music Programming and conductor Adrian Boult, the two fled Vienna, migrating to London in 1938.

Other modes of control served to regulate the geographical and institutional mobilities of musicians once they were permitted entry into the country. Florian Scheduling has written movingly on the infamous 1940 BBC ban, whereby in the wake of a contentious debate (discussed below) between the BBC’s Adrian Boult and a group of British composers, the broadcaster banned the airing of works copyrighted in Germany or Austria. According to Scheduling, Boult ultimately conceded that “no sums of money, considerable or inconsiderable, are passing out of this country as copyright royalties to anyone in enemy countries or in countries occupied by the enemy.”²² The fact that exceptions were made for British composers whose music was copyrighted abroad, and yet no exceptions were made for composers persecuted by the Nazis (including Wellesz and Mátyás Seiber, who had migrated to Britain), point quite clearly to ideological as well as fiscal motivations.

While this ban impacted the financial stability of migrant composers in Britain, like Wellesz and Seiber, severe restrictions on the issuance of work permits had an even farther-reaching impact on the community of musicians from the Continent. Such permits were required for the pursuance of most kinds of musical employment, including public performance, but also teaching. One frequent, but insufficiently remunerative, alternative was the private house concert, which could garner one exposure to British patrons and audiences, a free meal, and some money, but not generally enough on which to survive. Obtaining an official and legal right to work as a musician during wartime was exceedingly difficult, particularly in the first years of the war, due to policies developed in conjunction with the Incorporated Society of Musicians (ISM) led, at the time, by George Dyson, Director of the Royal College of Music. Under the guise of pursuing “the complete equality of treatment as between British and foreign musicians,”²³ official and unofficial policies were put in place that (while sometimes understandable) had a deleterious effect on migrant musicians’ possibilities for gainful employment in Britain. One such policy recognized that many non-British subjects were barred from “war work,” while also ensuring that:

a foreigner should not be permitted to exercise his profession as a musician if, *were he a British subject*, he would be required to undertake some form of service in the Armed Forces or in civilian employment connected with the war effort.²⁴

Even individuals like the elderly Arnold Rosé—who had acted as longtime head of perhaps the most well-respected Continental orchestra of its ilk as well as leading his own world-famous quartet—required the support of well-connected individuals such as Boult in order to obtain permission to perform (and then in only limited capacity). And permission to take on students often took even longer, coming months after an earlier performance permit was issued. Rosé’s daughter Alma, for instance, was only allowed to pursue performances as part of her father’s quartet. When she deemed that she could not support herself and her father with the proceeds of those performances, she chose to return to the Continent—to the Netherlands—

²² Scheduling, *Musical Journeys*, 93. For a discussion of the ban and the persistence of black-listing foreign composers into the 1970s (!), see Scheduling, *Musical Journeys*, 92–94. It is also worth noting that this 1940 ban was modeled on a similar ban on the performance of music copyrighted in Germany that originated during the First World War.

²³ “Foreign Musicians: Policy in regard to permission to take professional engagements,” undated, c. 1940, Box 6, Folder 1, Ferdinand Rauter Archive, Salzburg Music and Migration Collections, University of Salzburg.

²⁴ “Foreign Musicians.”

where opportunities for performance were more available. She was ultimately captured and deported to Auschwitz, where she led the Auschwitz Women's Orchestra before dying in the camp in 1944.²⁵

A further mode of control that deeply impacted many migrant musicians in Britain was the mass internment of male Austrian, German, Italian, Japanese, and Finnish nationals that took place in the summer of 1940. With Britain's declaration of war on Germany on September 3, 1939, all German and Austrian nationals regardless of gender were deemed "enemy aliens." Once tribunals were established to assess the relative threats posed by these individuals, the vast majority were assigned the designation "Class C" (a "genuine refugee from Nazi oppression").²⁶ Yet, after the fall of the Netherlands and France in 1940, and in the wake of incendiary articles in the tabloid press about foreigners in Britain, a policy of mass internment was hastily pursued; all male "enemy aliens" between the ages of sixteen and sixty and all "Class B" women (and many of their children) were interned, first in temporary camps, and then in more permanent camps on the Isle of Man. Accounts of Jewish refugees being housed alongside Nazi sympathizers abound. And conditions, particularly in the temporary camps, were quite poor, largely a result of the haphazard nature of the processes of such a hasty and large-scale operation. With fears of insufficient capacity growing, transports were also arranged to Canada and Australia. These were initially intended to remove "Class A" individuals deemed a threat to national security. Yet, in an attempt to fill the ships in order to meet the quota of internees offered by the Canadian government, many individuals assigned "Class B" and even "Class C" status were also transported. Among them was Jewish refugee and pianist Peter Stadlen, who would become an integral part of the AAMS after his transport and release. One of these transports, the *Arandora Star*, was torpedoed on its way to Canada with massive casualties, and the tragedy helped to turn public sentiment against the practice of mass internment. Plans to release internees quickly followed, but the mechanisms by which release was granted and arranged were predictably (and perhaps understandably) uneven and slow, with many musicians still interned well into 1942.

Ferdinand Rauter and the Foundation of the Anglo-Austrian Music Society

Understanding the genesis of the AAMS and its precursor organizations requires taking seriously the constellation of mobility that Society founder Rauter and his fellow migrant musicians were forced to navigate. Yet, it also requires attending to the ways that Rauter's movements were somewhat eased by the fact that he was not a refugee and had been active in British musical life for many years. Rauter had been born in Klagenfurt in 1902 and spent his adolescence in Ústí nad Labem (in what is now Czechia), where his father led a school for the blind. A musically gifted child, he performed often at events at his father's school. Later, Rauter was accepted to university in Dresden, where he studied both music and chemistry. It was there, in 1929, that he first met singer Engel Lund, with whom he would form an enduring creative partnership, arranging and performing folk songs from a variety of traditions.²⁷ Rauter recalled this meeting rather eloquently in an interview, remembering:

²⁵ For an account of Alma and Arnold's migration to Britain and Alma's subsequent persecution by the Nazis, please see Richard Newman and Karen Kirtley, *Alma Rosé: Vienna to Auschwitz* (Cleckheaton, UK: Amadeus Press, 2000). Reflections on Alma's leadership of the Auschwitz Women's Orchestra can be found in: Lasker-Wallfisch, *Inherit the Truth*.

²⁶ Pistol, "Refugees from National Socialism."

²⁷ Ferdinand Rauter's diaries, generously shared by his daughter Andrea Rauter, have been invaluable in establishing a timeline for Rauter's activities after his migration to Britain. Also of tremendous value are: Carolin Stahrenberg, "Ferdinand Rauter," last modified July 3, 2018, https://www.lexm.uni-hamburg.de/object/lexm_lexmperson_00006054; and Andrea Rauter, "Interview with Andrea Rauter," interview by Norbert Meyn, January 15, 2015, video, <https://rcm.ac.uk/singingasong/oralhistorycategory3/andrearauter/>.

I would never have thought when I walked through a wood in 1929 where mushrooms grew . . . that I would meet a lady who was called Engel Lund. . . . She came with Ravel’s Jewish songs, and I had never heard them. When she stood there and sang, something happened which was quite new to me. She transformed herself; she became a rabbi. I heard God’s voice through her. It was so strong and so immense that I said to her: “I think we should stay together for our life.”²⁸



Figure 1: Engel Lund and Ferdinand Rauter at the piano, 1934 (photograph by Howard Coster)²⁹

Lund’s ability to inhabit the musical traditions and languages in which she sang was spoken of with awe in many corners of the press, with special notice taken of her “deep insight into the spiritual culture of the Jewish people.”³⁰ In actuality, though, neither Rauter nor Lund had Jewish heritage. And, so, initially, they were able to continue concertizing activities in Germany uninterrupted by Hitler’s ascent to power. Both, however, were staunch critics of the Nazi regime. They continued to perform Jewish folk songs even to audiences with Nazi officers in attendance and cheekily (and daringly) rejected Reich Minister of Propaganda Joseph Goebbels’ invitation to perform in Dresden in 1933 with the rejoinder: “Sorry, Herr

²⁸ Ferdinand Rauter and Engel Lund, “Ferdinand Rauter and Engel Lund,” YouTube video, 9:46, posted by the Royal College of Music, May 9, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VuMNHNSUdSM>.

²⁹ “Photograph of Engel Lund and Ferdinand Rauter,” Ferdinand Rauter Archive, Box 5, Folder 10, Salzburg Music and Migration Collections, University of Salzburg. Published with permission from Andrea Rauter.

³⁰ “Engel Lund,” undated, in *The Jewish Chronicle*, Box 4, Folder 9, Ferdinand Rauter Archive, Salzburg Music and Migration Collections, University of Salzburg. This folder also contains a number of other reviews of Lund and Rauter’s activities with reflections on her remarkable talents as a kind of musical and linguistic chameleon.

Goebbels, but we are all booked up until the end of the Third Reich.”³¹ In the wake of that pronouncement, Rauter and Lund decided it prudent to relocate their base of operations from Germany after 1933—first moving to Copenhagen, where Lund’s family was living, and, in 1935, to London, where the duo’s management agency, Ibbs & Tillett, was located. Little apparent difficulty attended these moves, and they continued from 1933 until the spring of 1939 to tour Britain, North America, and non-Nazi-occupied lands in Europe; they learned of the annexation of Austria while on tour in the United States.

With the declaration of war, Rauter, who was assessed as “Class C,” was initially exempted from internment and restrictions on his movements. But with increasing fears of a “fifth column” in Britain, Rauter was interned in May of 1940. During his time at the camps, he met and made music with a number of musicians—including Norbert Brainin and Peter Schidlof (who would later become half of the Amadeus Quartet)³²—and was accorded a great degree of movement within the camps in order to arrange music and organize performances and lectures.

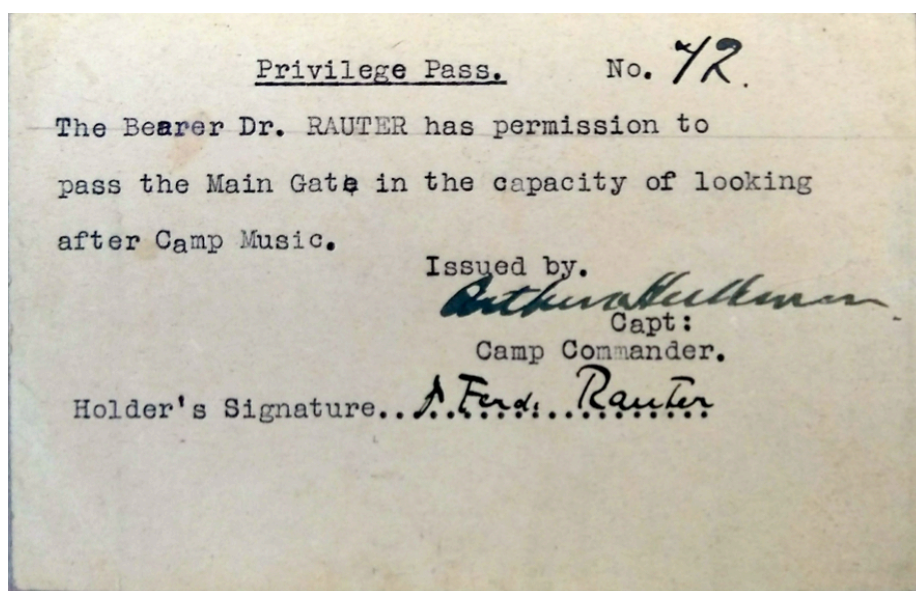


Figure 2: Pass issued to Ferdinand Rauter allowing greater freedom of movement in Camp Mooragh, 1940³³

Due to the tireless efforts of Lund, the support of luminaries of British musical life like Ralph Vaughan Williams, and a White Paper issued by the Home Office allowing for the release of eminent artists, Rauter became one of the first musicians to be released from the camps (in December 1940) after twenty-three weeks of internment.

³¹ This anecdote is recounted in numerous sources. One such is: Nicolas Soames, “Sorry Herr Goebbels, we’re too busy,” *Express & News*, June 16, 1972, 25, Box 3, Folder 6, Ferdinand Rauter Archive, Salzburg Music and Migration Collections, University of Salzburg.

³² Rauter recounts, for instance, in a letter to Lund dated July 29, 1940, that: “We have two boys of eighteen in our camp who are really very good fiddlers. One called Brainin is a pupil of [Carl] Flesch and [Max] Rostal. He played the Mozart A major Concerto for me today and I was deeply moved” (“Letter from Prees Heath Camp,” July 29, 1940, Box 3, Folder 13, Ferdinand Rauter Archive, Salzburg Music and Migration Collections, University of Salzburg). In his diary entry from Monday, July 29, 1940, he recounts: “A young violinist from ‘C’ Camp called Norbert Brainin comes over and plays me the last movement of Mozart’s A major Concerto. I am often moved to hear music again after such a long time. He plays incredibly well, and I bring him together with Hans [Peter] Schidlof, who more than swoons over him.” Unpublished Ferdinand Rauter diary, quoted with permission of Andrea Rauter.

³³ “Pass issued to Ferdinand Rauter at Camp Mooragh,” Box 5, Folder 9, Ferdinand Rauter Archive, Salzburg Music and Migration Collections, University of Salzburg. Published with permission from Andrea Rauter.

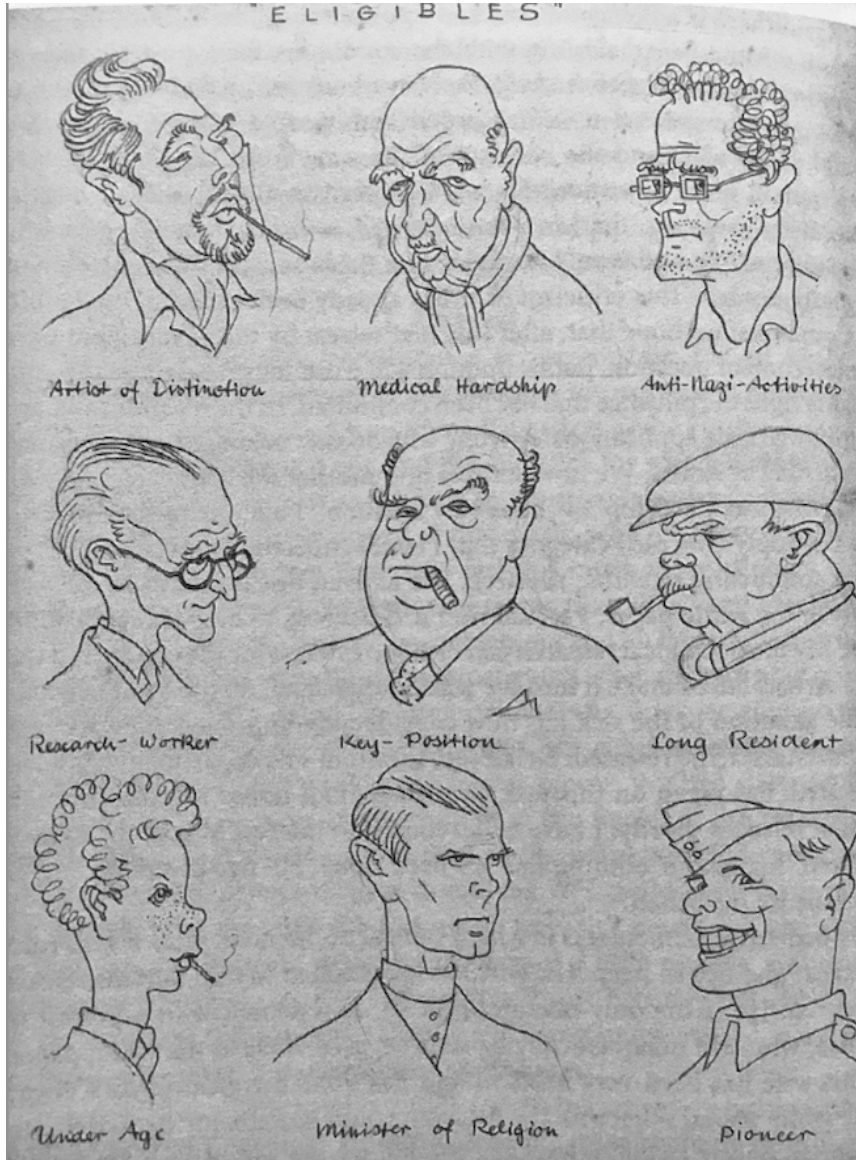


Figure 3: Cartoon by an unknown internee depicting some of the categories for release³⁴

A mere month after being released, Rauter helped to found the Refugee Musicians Committee. That Committee included Rauter’s co-founder Maud Karpeles, a folk dancer and assistant to folk music specialist Cecil Sharp, Georg Knepler, and the likes of Ralph Vaughan Williams, pianists Dame Myra Hess and Harriet Cohen, and RCM Director George Dyson. The immediate goals of the organization were to get musicians (and especially young musicians like Nissel and Brainin) out of internment and pursuing music studies, and to secure work permits for migrant musicians. According to Rauter’s diaries, the RMC had some significant successes in assisting young musicians. Peter Schidlof, for instance—who was released in July 1942—was

³⁴ Private collection of Eva Fox-Gál. Cartoon of unknown provenance, first published in: Hans Gál, *Music Behind Barbed Wire: A Diary of Summer 1940*, trans. Anthony Fox and Eva Fox-Gál (London: Toccata Press, 2014): 126.

accepted as a pupil of famed Jewish violinist Max Rostal,³⁵ who had himself migrated to Britain in 1934.³⁶ Young pianist Paul Hamburger from Vienna, who would later act as accompanist for tours of *Die Fledermaus* under the auspices of the AAMS, was given a fellowship to study at the Royal College of Music.³⁷ And we can see by a note appended to the transcript of a speech Rauter gave to his fellow Refugee Musicians Committee members in March 1942 that Rauter was pleased with progress in supporting young musicians and securing work permits for newly released internees, saying:

To my great joy, this talk was understood by my committee and turned their view to a considerable degree. An early release of the young musicians was achieved and the fight for permits began more intensely.³⁸

By late spring of 1942, the RMC had been joined by the AMG—the Austrian Musicians Group—which Rauter co-founded with Knepler and Hermann Ullrich, a lawyer and music critic. Rauter, of course, knew Knepler from his work on the RMC, but also through Knepler’s contributions to musical life at the left-leaning Austrian Centre, which hosted many concerts by migrant and refugee musicians during the war. Ullrich was also involved with activities at the Centre. He contributed, for instance, articles on cultural affairs to the Centre-published German-language weekly, *Zeitspiegel*. Though not himself a Communist, he was also a member of the Communist-led Free Austria Movement, which sponsored many early AMG events, including its inaugural concert.

The adoption of a nationalist orientation by the Austrian Musicians Group accorded with the general proliferation at this time of societies aimed at promoting the interests of and establishing community among particular migrant groups in Britain. These generally broke along linguistic lines, but Austrian migrants were keen to distinguish themselves and their interests from those who had migrated from lands comprising pre-war Germany. Indeed, the rejection of pan-Germanism and the, at times, assertive promotion of an “Austrian national music” was as much a political project as a cultural one. We see this at work in a statement of the group’s goals originally published in *Zeitspiegel*:

[The AMG] wishes to preserve Austrian music so that it can be replanted back in its homeland after liberation. We work with the Refugee Musicians Committee and the British authorities to promote the interests of our members, to improve their situation, and to promote understanding with English musicians.³⁹

A primary aim of the AMG was to respond to the limited access migrant musicians had to the public sphere. The activities of the AMG primarily entailed, then, the organization of concerts, where many musicians had previously only been able to perform in private homes. Often these took place at the Austrian Centre, and

³⁵ Jutta Raab Hansen, “The Musician Ferdinand Rauter,” forthcoming.

³⁶ Antje Kalcher, “Max Rostal,” last updated March 29, 2021, https://www.lexm.uni-hamburg.de/object/%20lexm_lexmperson_00002648.

³⁷ Entries from Ferdinand Rauter’s unpublished diaries from 1941, demonstrate that arranging for the release and education of Schidlöf and Hamburger preoccupied him throughout the spring and summer of that year, and prompted numerous conversations with Rauter’s British-born colleagues such as Maud Karpeles. Rauter also arranged for a series of house concerts in which Schidlöf performed for enthusiastic audiences. Unpublished Ferdinand Rauter diary, summarized with permission of Andrea Rauter.

³⁸ “Speech Given to the Refugee Musicians Committee,” March 24, 1942, Box 3, Folder 20, Ferdinand Rauter Archive, Salzburg Music and Migration Collections, University of Salzburg.

³⁹ “Untitled Article,” *Zeitspiegel*, January 2, 1943, 7. Cited in Jutta Raab Hansen, *NS-verfolgte Musiker in England: Spuren deutscher und österreichischer Flüchtlinge in der britisch Musikultur* (Hamburg: von Bockel Verlag, 1996): 322. Translation is mine.

the musicians were unpaid. Where allowed by proper permits, however, these concerts took place in concert halls like the Wigmore Hall and involved paying audiences and paid musicians.

The inaugural concert of the AMG took place at the end of May 1942 at the Wigmore Hall with a celebration and symbolic reclamation of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. In heralding the ensemble, the concert program claims:

In celebrating the orchestra’s centenary, we do not think of the remnant still carrying on under the famous old name, but transformed into an instrument to grace Nazi functions. Many of the orchestra’s best members have been dismissed, conductors banned, composers disappeared from its repertoire. The orchestra, created as an interpreter of the Austrian spirit, is for the time being dead, struck down by the Nazi invaders. But it lives on in the heart of Austrians, to whom the restoration of Austria will also bring the rebirth of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra as a cultural institution of the nation.⁴⁰

Although attempts had been made to form an orchestra of migrant musicians, the still-restrictive work permit situation made such a large-scale undertaking impossible. The performing forces for the concert were, thus, modest but rich in significance—the evening’s performers were the Rosé Quartet, led by refugee Arnold Rosé. The program included quartets by Schubert, Beethoven, and Brahms. The elderly Rosé, who would be a frequent participant in the Anglo-Austrian Music Society’s wartime concerts, stood as a potent reminder of the Philharmonic’s current state but also perhaps as a symbol of a past that might have unfolded differently into the present moment.

A variety of concerns led Rauter to step away in late 1942 from the Austrian Musicians Group. He did, it should be noted, continue to work in a limited capacity with the AMG, which helped the AAMS with the engagement of musicians and the rental of concert spaces during the wartime years. Rauter’s overarching motive in creating this distance seems to have been pragmatic; he was concerned with the long-term financial viability of the AMG and sought a way to engage British-born patrons and audiences more directly, thereby expanding the exposure to and building the networks of migrant musicians. There is evidence in the archive, however, that Rauter also sought to disengage himself from the Free Austria Movement. I have found no evidence that Rauter was personally put off by the politics of the group. Yet, as Michael Haas astutely points out, a clear distance from politics (and especially Communism) was required if one was to gain the financial support of many of the British social elite.⁴¹ And Rauter’s troubles with FAM were not just political but also personal, involving the organization’s handling of the AMG inaugural concert. According to Rauter’s account, FAM—who did not involve themselves in any way with the organization of the event until a week prior—stepped in at the last minute and funneled the proceeds of the concert (which had been promised to a fund to support migrant musicians) toward their own coffers. This proved a bridge-too-far for Rauter, who was motivated to found the AAMS in part to distance himself from FAM.⁴²

It was with these concerns in mind that Rauter formed what would come to be known as the Anglo-Austrian Music Society at the end of 1942 with the help of patron John Holroyd-Reece, a diplomat and publisher. Holroyd-Reece, a Cambridge-educated British citizen, had been born Johann Hermann Rieß in

⁴⁰ “Program for AMG Inaugural Concert,” May 1942, AAS15 “Publicity material for all Anglo-Austrian Society and Anglo-Austrian Music Society activities,” Folder 1, Anglo-Austrian Society and Anglo-Austrian Music Society Archive, Senate House Library, University of London.

⁴¹ Michael Haas, “Das Austrian Centre und die Anglo-Austrian Music Society,” in *Hans Gál und Egon Wellesz: Continental Britons*, edited by Michael Haas and Marcus Patka (Vienna: Jüdischen Museum der Stadt Wien, 2004), 93.

⁴² Ferdinand Rauter, “An das Free Austria Movement, London,” May 1942, Box 3, Folder 21; and “Correspondence with John Holroyd-Reece,” 1942, Box 3, Folders 30–32, Ferdinand Rauter Archive, Salzburg Music and Migration Collections, University of Salzburg.

Munich in 1897 to an English mother and German father. Over the course of the previous three decades, Holroyd-Reece had lived and worked in Egypt, Italy, France, and Germany, having helped to found Pegasus Press in Paris and the Albatross Continental Library in Hamburg. According to Rauter's diaries, he met with Holroyd-Reece frequently between July and December 1942, finding the publisher's help invaluable. In fact, by Rauter's account, the duo almost single-handedly planned the launch of the Society at a protracted meeting at Holroyd-Reece's home on November 15, 1942.⁴³

The inaugural concert of what was then known as the Society of Friends of the Austrian Musicians Group (but changed its name to the Anglo-Austrian Music Society a few short months later) took place once again in the Wigmore Hall, this time on December 15, 1942.⁴⁴ From Rauter's diaries, we know that the work of engaging performers for the concert and general planning of the event took place during two meetings, one on September 14 and the other on October 15, and was complicated by the ever-evolving work permit situation. Claire Born was the only performer to participate in those meetings (alongside Rauter, Ullrich, and a music critic by the name of Dr. Alfred Rosenzweig).⁴⁵ In Rauter's estimation, the concert was a rousing success, with a well-sold house and an audience populated by a large number of the British social elite.⁴⁶

The concert program contains no notes giving rationales for the pieces performed, and a transcript of Rauter's speech from the event has not survived. Yet, one can see that the program was constructed faithfully on the principle of mutual fertilization and the goal of shared projects and futures that Rauter (as we will see in a moment) emphasized in his correspondence about the AAMS—British-born musicians performed the works of Austrian-born composers and vice versa.⁴⁷ Although it is unclear whether the concert's organizers—Rauter, Ullrich, Born, and Rosenzweig—had a hand in choosing repertoire (beyond Born, of course), the choice of works by English composers may be notable. There does seem to be a concerted effort to construct a kind of English musical heritage reaching back to Purcell, through the German-born Handel, and forward to twentieth-century composers like Elgar. The decision to include a work by Vaughan Williams, the only living composer programmed that evening, may also have been significant. Vaughan Williams, as we will see, was a rather reluctant patron of the nascent AAMS, and one might detect in the programming of his work a placating gesture.

⁴³ Unpublished Ferdinand Rauter diary, summarized with the permission of Andrea Rauter.

⁴⁴ There is some debate about which concert best marks the inception of the Society. Michael Haas, for instance, identifies the *Gründungskonzert* as the later June 16, 1943, "Banned Composers Concert." [See Michael Haas, "Das Austrian Centre und die Anglo-Austrian Music Society," 86–95.] While that choice accords with the naming of the Society, both evidence from the Society's meeting minutes and a Society publication (Walter J. Foster, ed., *If music be the food of love. . . : 50 Years of the Anglo-Austrian Music Society, 1942–1992*, 5, <http://aams.org.uk/book.html>) support the notion that the December 15, 1942, event served as the AAMS's inaugural concert.

⁴⁵ Unpublished Ferdinand Rauter diary, summarized with the permission of Andrea Rauter. It is notable that Ullrich remained a close collaborator with Rauter as the AAMS took shape over the second half of 1942. Knepler, however, was largely absent from these planning sessions, taking up serious work with the AAMS only in mid-1943.

⁴⁶ Unpublished Ferdinand Rauter diary, summarized with the permission of Andrea Rauter.

⁴⁷ "Anglo-Austrian Concert," December 15, 1942, Box 6, Folder 73, Ferdinand Rauter Archive, Salzburg Music and Migration Collections, University of Salzburg.

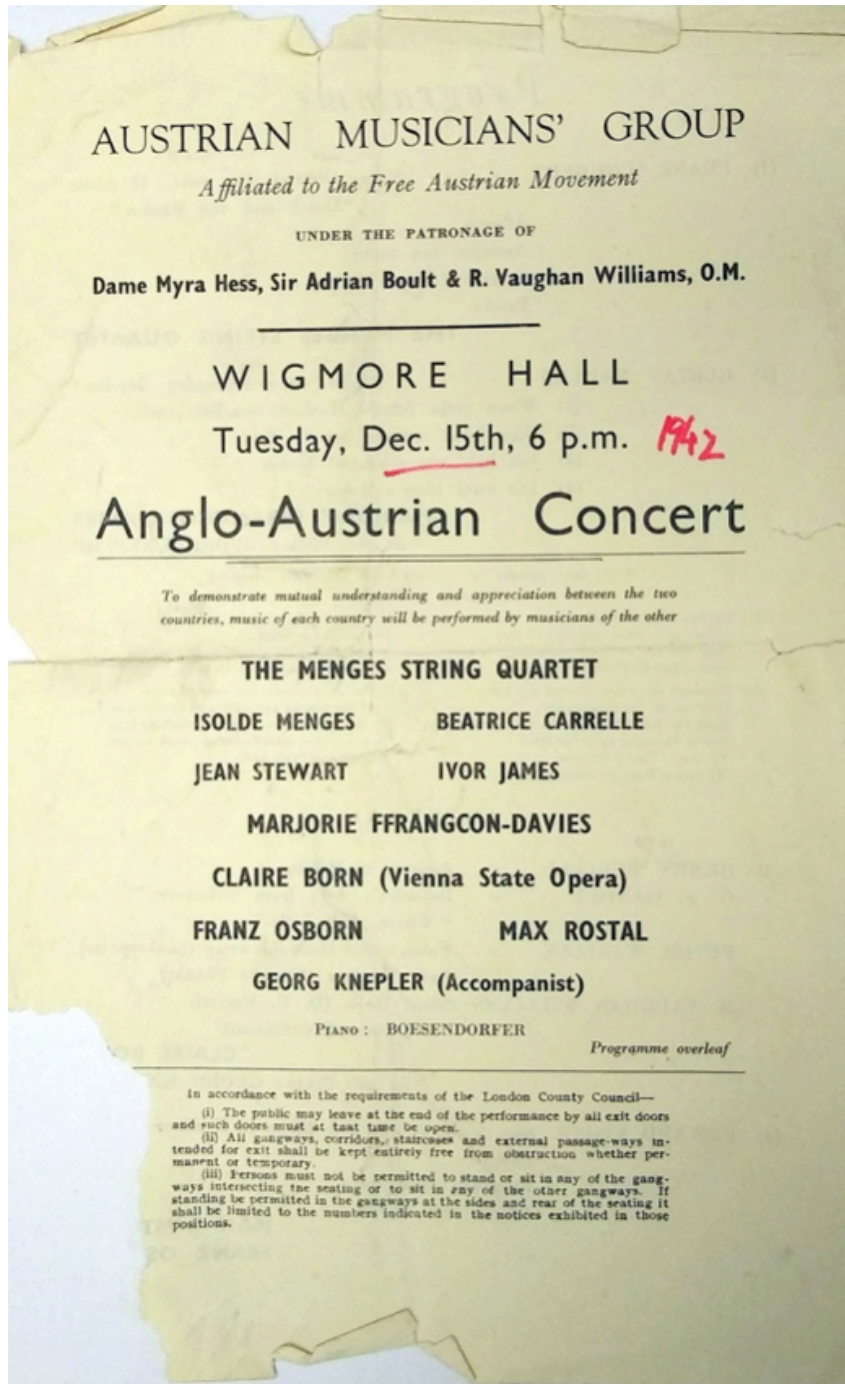


Figure 4: Program of the inaugural concert of what would come to be known as the Anglo-Austrian Music Society, 1942⁴⁸

⁴⁸ “AAMS Inaugural Concert Program,” Box 6, Folder 73, Ferdinand Rauter Archive, Salzburg Music and Migration Collections, University of Salzburg. Published with permission from Andrea Rauter.

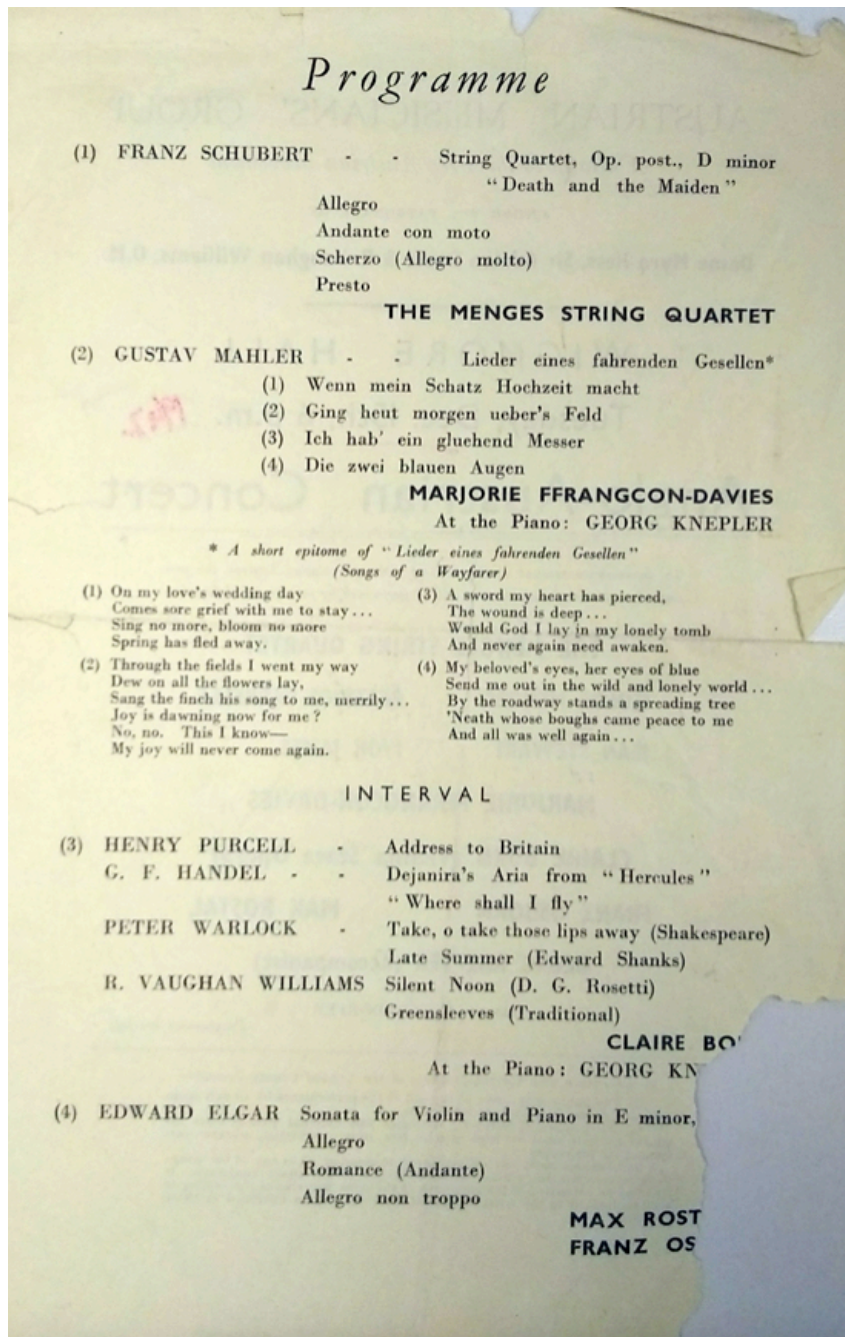


Figure 4: continued

Representing Mobility in Discourses about Music, Migration, and Nation

Thus far, I examined both patterns of migratory movement and the practices (particularly of regulation and control) that helped form Britain's constellation of mobility in the 1930s and 1940s. But considerations of mobility also permeate the discursive landscape about musical creativity and migratory and refugee status that Rauter and his colleagues navigated and in which they participated. Rauter, for instance, had made it

clear both through his concertizing activities with Lund and his writing about music that he was not especially interested in narrowly territorializing musical creativity, claiming quite evocatively in an unpublished essay that “lines drawn in the soil have no meaning in art.”⁴⁹ Another likeminded musician was composer Egon Wellesz. In a speech given in October 1944 at the Second Austrian Cultural Conference in London, he was asked to speak about the past and future of an Austrian national music. Rather than accepting that task uncritically, he instead provoked his audience with the claim that “the strength of Austrian music has always been that it was never nationally oriented.”⁵⁰ Rather, he paints a picture of a musical Austria (and Vienna in particular) that attracted musicians from all over Europe who came to study and give concerts in the city. It was this contingent, shifting, and highly mobile musical community that brought Austrian music to prominence, and it was a prevailing attitude of “openness and receptivity, a desire to imbibe and incorporate, an impulse to transfigure and reshape, to reflect and render new that has made Austrian music so great.”⁵¹

Wellesz was clearly situating himself and his likeminded compatriots in dialogue with avowed British musical nationalists such as Ralph Vaughan Williams. We see this stance—of promoting a nationally oriented territorialization of musical creativity—put forward in the aforementioned debate from 1940 that led to the BBC’s ban on the works of many foreign composers. That debate took place via a series of letters published in three editions of the journal, *The Author, Playwright & Composer*—Summer, Autumn, and Winter 1940. In those letters, Vaughan Williams and his colleagues—Frederic Austin, Granville Bantock, Thomas F. Dunhill, Theodore Holland, John Ireland, Sidney Jones, Constant Lambert, Martin Shaw, and Ethel Smyth—make the claim that, as a national institution, the BBC owes a duty to British composers and audiences alike to “progress musical art in this country” by promoting a national musical tradition both at home and abroad.⁵² Vaughan Williams, for his part, had already established his bona fides as a musical nationalist in essays dating from as early as 1912, and most notably in a series of lectures given on the topic in 1932 and published two years later. In those lectures, he attempts to establish a new metric for evaluating the significance of musical creativity—no longer beauty or goodness, but sincerity. He aligns sincerity with an artist’s embrace of his surroundings, claiming:

[the composer] must clothe his inspiration in such forms as the circumstances of time, place, and subject dictate. This should come unself-consciously to the artist, but if he consciously tries to express himself in a way which is contrary to his surroundings, and therefore to his own nature, he is evidently being, though perhaps he does not know it, insincere.⁵³

The sincere artist is one who communicates via his art first and foremost to “those who by race, tradition, and cultural experience are the nearest to him; in fact, those of his own nation, or other kind of homogenous community.”⁵⁴ In contrast, the artist who does not embrace his rootedness in place and nation, who “tries

⁴⁹ Ferdinand Rauter, “An approach to folk song,” undated and unpublished essay for an unrealized Festschrift in honor of Maud Karpeles, Box 3, Folder 6, Ferdinand Rauter Archive, Salzburg Music and Migration Collections, University of Salzburg.

⁵⁰ Egon Wellesz, “Zum Wiederaufbau des Musiklebens in Oesterreich,” *Zeitspiegel* 44 (4 November 1944): 7, translation is mine.

⁵¹ Wellesz, “Zum Wiederaufbau,” 7.

⁵² Frederic Austin, Ralph Vaughan Williams, et al., “The B.B.C. and British Composers,” *The Author, Playwright & Composer* 50, no. 4 (Summer 1940): 111. For discussion of the history of this perceived anti-British bias at the BBC and procedures meant to ensure representation of British composers, please see Jennifer Doctor, *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music, 1922–1936: Shaping a Nation’s Taste* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

⁵³ Ralph Vaughan Williams, “National Music,” in *National Music and Other Essays* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1963), 3. Lecture first given in October 1932 at Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania and first published in 1934.

⁵⁴ Vaughan Williams, “National Music,” 1.

to be cosmopolitan, who tries to express himself in a way which is contrary to his surroundings,” is insincere.⁵⁵ The anxiety that motivates this thinking is palpable. Vaughan Williams is searching for a way to value a sphere of creative praxis (contemporary British music) that is, in his estimation, consistently undervalued and ignored within his own country and abroad. This new metric, sincerity, may accomplish this, but only by encoding an artist’s mobilities, particularly migratory mobilities (which he only ever treats as freely chosen), as insincere.

Philosopher Hannah Arendt—then living in Los Angeles after fleeing Nazi persecution—offers a potent rejoinder to Vaughan Williams’ embrace of nationalist constructions of identity and value in her incendiary essay, “We Refugees,” from 1943. In it, she makes vivid—via an etymology of sorts—the power and violence of categorizing individuals as “foreigners” (or, relatedly, as “refugees,” “immigrants,” or “Jews”), terms that assign those individuals a figurative (and sometimes literal) space in society and a horizon of opportunity. And she interrogates the inhumanity of the commandment to forget and assimilate (even when issued by well-meaning individuals), keying in on the impossibility of this task and the absurdity of requiring persons to adopt an identity that will never be fully granted to them.⁵⁶

Ferdinand Rauter offers a less philosophical but equally deft rejoinder to Vaughan Williams’ claims in his correspondence with the British composer in 1942. In a letter dated from August of that year, Vaughan Williams responds to Rauter’s request to act as honorary president of the newly forming AAMS. Initially, the British composer demurs, in the process painting Austrian musicians in Britain as peaceful invaders and cultural chauvinists threatening the “tender little flower” of Britain’s native musical culture. He calls for Rauter and his compatriots to assimilate, to “become Englishmen,” and to throw their energies into developing the native culture rather than importing and imposing their own.⁵⁷

If we take these prescriptions alongside his earlier claims about sincerity and rootedness, Vaughan Williams sets out something of an impossible task for Rauter and the Society—Austrian musicians in Britain risk the label of insincerity if they too easily shed their roots, and they risk the label of invader if they bring that heritage to bear on their engagements with British musicians and audiences. Further—they risk being seen as chauvinists if they attempt to isolate themselves, forming what Vaughan Williams terms a “little Austria in England,”⁵⁸ and they risk the charge of cultural polluters if they do not.

Rauter rather ingeniously responds to Vaughan Williams’ anxieties by recasting relations between British and Austrian-born musicians as being mutually beneficial, providing an opportunity to cultivate “real understanding between the British and ourselves, resulting in a mutual fertilization of ideas”⁵⁹ without accepting the call for assimilation. Rauter also rights the skewed power dynamic set out by the British composer, offering gentle reminders of the precarity and powerlessness of migrant musicians in wartime Britain due to internment and due to prohibitive cultural policies. He concludes the letter by reinforcing his earlier assertion, claiming, “we can work as friends and brothers and in a happier future reap what we have sown together.”⁶⁰ Ultimately, Rauter is unable to persuade Vaughan Williams with his rhetoric, and the

⁵⁵ Vaughan Williams, “National Music,” 2.

⁵⁶ See Hannah Arendt, “We Refugees” (1943), in *The Jewish Writings*, ed. Jerome Kohn and Ron H. Feldman (New York: Schocken Books, 2007), 264–74.

⁵⁷ “Letter from R. Vaughan Williams to Dr. Ferdinand Rauter,” August 16, 1942, published in *If music be the food of love*, 2.

⁵⁸ “Letter from R. Vaughan Williams to Dr. Ferdinand Rauter,” 2.

⁵⁹ “Letter from F. Rauter to Dr. Vaughan-Williams,” September 26, 1942, Box 3, Folder 25, Ferdinand Rauter Archive, Salzburg Music and Migration Collections, University of Salzburg.

⁶⁰ “Letter from F. Rauter to Dr. Vaughan-Williams.”

British composer accepts only an uneasy détente. Vaughan Williams does (to his immense credit, given his ideological convictions) offer the power of his name and patronage to the Society.⁶¹

Constructing a Mobile Musical Community and the Early Activities of the AAMS

What I hope I have made clear thus far is that Rauter and his colleagues were responding quite explicitly and ingeniously to a problem—one with very real stakes for themselves and their fellow migrant and refugee musicians. In order to survive and flourish as artists and humans, they needed to carve out a space in Britain in which to work and create. And they needed to do so by, at least superficially, agreeing to the fixed terms—the nationalist categories—they were given. And yet we can see the emergence of a creative response to their situation, an attempt to transform and transcend these received categories and relations—categories formed by and contributing to the constellation of mobility in wartime Britain. Their response betrays suspicion of the project of easily territorializing musical creativity. This is evident, of course, in Rauter’s own convictions about music—not only in his creative activities but also in his impassioned plea to Vaughan Williams to establish relations with migrant musicians based on shared projects and futures. This suspicion is also evident in Wellesz’s defiant claim about a Vienna both real and imagined, one harboring a contingent and mobile community that transfigures the musical life of the city—elevating it via the flux of ideas and practices carried there by its musical inhabitants. Most significantly, we see it in the eclectic programming of Society concerts (when taken as a whole), and the diversity of performers engaged in the 1940s and 1950s.

In my research on the Society’s concert activities, I have scoured concert programs, correspondence, and minutes of the meetings of the executive board and programming committee from a period beginning in 1942 and stretching well into the 1970s. What became apparent, looking at the diversity of activities during the early years, was that key members of the Society—through pursuing their own musical interests and pragmatic and ideological goals—presented a conception of Austrian music both prismatic and multivocal, and at times rife with internal tension. This is apparent in the diversity of repertoires, genres, and styles of music one could hear at AAMS concerts—with various programs featuring styles and genres we might deem both high and low, and that traversed art, popular, and folk traditions.

The Society also pursued diverging and conflicting approaches to related repertoires. One thinks of Rauter’s own humanist and transnational approach to folk music—on display during his AAMS-sponsored performances with Lund throughout the 1940s and early 1950s⁶²—which sat in tension with the touristic and geographically bounded approach to folk culture performed by the Toni Praxmair Ensemble, otherwise known as The Gay Tyrolese, a group of Tyrolean folk singers and dancers that toured annually throughout England and Scotland under the sponsorship of the AAMS from 1957 until well into the 1970s.

⁶¹ Rauter and the composer maintained a warm relationship despite this exchange. So much so that it seems Vaughan Williams felt comfortable joking about the matter with Rauter in the immediate aftermath of this correspondence. As Rauter recounts in a diary entry from September 10, 1942, he attended an evening lecture by the composer on national culture, a talk wherein Vaughan Williams purportedly argued for the harm that internationalism can do to culture. When Vaughan Williams saw Rauter after the talk he apparently jokingly greeted Rauter by saying, “I don’t want you here.” Rauter seems to have understood the jest in the spirit in which it was intended. Unpublished Ferdinand Rauter diary, summarized and quoted with the permission of Andrea Rauter.

⁶² *If music be the food of love*, 4; and “Songs of Many Lands Programs,” September 9, 1944, January 27, 1945, October 25, 1952, AAS15 “Publicity Materials,” Folders 1 and 8, Anglo-Austrian Society and Anglo-Austrian Music Society Archive, Senate House Library, University of London.



Figure 5: Cover of program booklet for first AAMS-sponsored tour of The Gay Tyrolese, 1957⁶³



Figure 6: Photograph of Bettina Vernon and Evelyn Ippen, back cover of performance program, 1950⁶⁴

⁶³ "The Gay Tyrolese program," AAS 15 "Publicity Materials," Folder 13, Anglo-Austrian Society and Anglo-Austrian Music Society Archive, Senate House Library, University of London. Published with permission from Senate House Library, University of London.

⁶⁴ "Viennese Dancers Program," 1950, AAS15 "Publicity Materials," Folders 6, Anglo-Austrian Society and Anglo-Austrian Music Society Archive, Senate House Library, University of London. Published with permission from Senate House Library, University of London.

One ensemble that, according to reviews, bridged the gap between the folkloric and the modernist was the Viennese Dancers—a rather uninspired name for a trio comprising pianist Marcel Lorber and modern dancers Evelyn Ippen and Bettina Vernon. The trio’s programs were by most accounts eccentric, marrying Classical and folk tunes with choreography that owed much to the Laban/Jooss school of modern dance in its embrace of Expressionism (and particularly facial expressivity) and improvisation. Here, of course, it was the dance rather than the music that was modern in performances by the trio—who had toured Japan and Southeast Asia extensively during wartime and toured under the aegis of the Society from 1950–1952.

The promotion of musical modernism, particularly that associated with both the Schoenberg and the Schreker circles, was also actively pursued by some key members of the AAMS. The programming of music from Schoenberg and his pupils, Webern, Berg, and Wellesz, was due primarily to the interest of pianist Peter Stadlen (a Webern pupil) and music publisher Alfred Kalmus, who had established Universal Edition London in 1936 after his forced migration. Both joined the Executive Committee at the war’s end.⁶⁵ Prior to their joining the committee, it was Rauter who displayed an interest in modernist repertoires, helping to program a “Banned Composers Concert” on June 16, 1943 at the Wigmore Hall that featured Berg’s Adagio for violin, clarinet, and piano (featuring Stadlen on piano), Schoenberg’s op. 23 (also played by Stadlen), songs by Wellesz sung by the Fleet Street Choir, and songs by Ernst Krenek and Wilhelm Grosz, performed by soprano and noted Schoenberg interpreter Erika Storm.⁶⁶ A concert immediately following the end of the war presented “Modern Austrian Music,” including works by Webern, Berg, Schoenberg, and Wellesz, and performed by, among others, Stadlen, German-born pianist Peter Gellhorn, and violinist Norbert Brainin of the Amadeus Quartet.⁶⁷

Programming of Schoenberg’s music unsurprisingly experienced an uptick in the wake of the composer’s death in July 1951. Even ensembles that rarely played his music paid tribute, as in an October 17, 1951, AAMS concert of the Harvey Phillips String Orchestra at the Wigmore Hall that featured *Verklärte Nacht*, op. 4, alongside works by living British composers such as Pamela Harrison, Kenneth Leighton, and Gerald Finzi.⁶⁸ Stadlen also organized a memorial concert for the composer on June 5, 1952, again at the Wigmore Hall. It featured the first performance in England of Schoenberg’s String Quartet No. 4, op. 37 (performed by the Peter Gibbs Quartet), a world premiere of Three Songs, op. 48 sung by contralto Anne Wood, and the first performance of the composer’s alternate arrangement for flute, clarinet, bassoon, strings, and piano of Suite for Seven Instruments, op. 29, played by the Chamber Music Ensemble of the London Symphony Orchestra. The choice of obscure (at least in Britain) works and the employment of British-trained performers were remarked upon in most press outlets. Much was made of the fact that the concert’s programmers chose to premiere two late 12-tone works deemed minor, rather than the “early romantic and

⁶⁵ “Executive Committee and Annual General Meeting Minutes, September 1943–December 1950,” AAS7 “Meeting Minutes,” Folder 2.1, Anglo-Austrian Society and Anglo-Austrian Music Society Archive, Senate House Library, University of London.

⁶⁶ “Banned Composers Concert Program,” June 16, 1943, AAS15 “Publicity Materials,” Folder 1, Anglo-Austrian Society and Anglo-Austrian Music Society Archive, Senate House Library, University of London.

⁶⁷ “Modern Austrian Music Concert Program,” 1945, AAS15 “Publicity Materials,” Folder 1, Anglo-Austrian Society and Anglo-Austrian Music Society Archive, Senate House Library, University of London.

⁶⁸ “Harvey Phillips String Orchestra Concert Program,” October 17, 1951, AAS15 “Publicity Materials,” Folder 7, Anglo-Austrian Society and Anglo-Austrian Music Society Archive, Senate House Library, University of London.

middle period Expressionist Schoenberg” that English audiences may have known.⁶⁹ As such, the concert was received with some consternation, with claims that it made “no concessions. Ignoring the relatively likable early works, it concentrated upon the composer’s most forbidding period.”⁷⁰

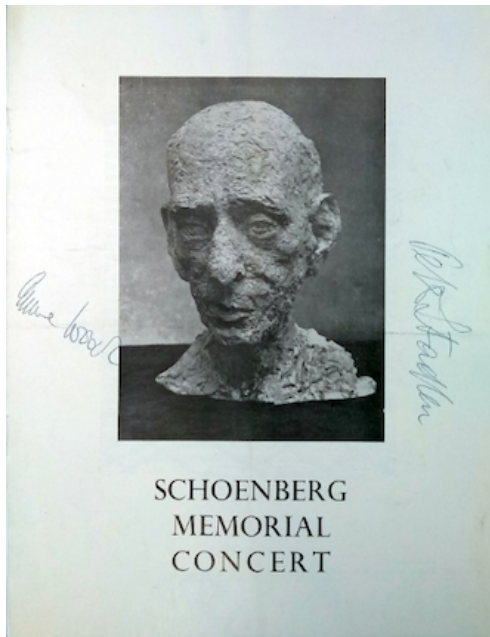


Figure 7: Front cover of Schoenberg Memorial Concert program signed by contralto Anne Wood and Peter Stadlen, 1952⁷¹

Sometimes the programming of a concert acted as a kind of microcosm of the diverse interests of the Society’s members. One thinks, for instance, of a concert of the London Ensemble Singers, which included Kalmus’s daughter Margherita, and was led by Hungarian-born refugee Jani Strasser, a répétiteur with the Glyndebourne Opera Festival. The program for that January 20, 1951, concert at the Wigmore Hall began with the premiere of songs written by composers who moved through the Habsburg Court in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—Giovanni Priuli, Carl Luython, and Lamberto Sayve.⁷² This music was followed by selections from Purcell’s “Orpheus Britannicus,” some Haydn songs, and a selection of “Folksongs from Europe,” which included Spanish, Hungarian, Czech, and German songs arranged by Kodály, Brahms and others. The eclectic concert concluded with a series of Donizetti duets. The variety of the programming was likely largely the result of Strasser’s interests and the strengths of his ensemble, but the emphasis on musicians moving through the Habsburg Court, in particular, brings Wellesz’s notion of a mobile and contingent musical community to the fore.

⁶⁹ Anonymous, “Wigmore Hall: Schoenberg Memorial Concert,” *The Times*, June 6, 1952, in “Program for the Schoenberg Memorial Concert,” June 1952, AAS12, “Concert Materials, Correspondence, Miscellaneous,” Folder 1, Anglo-Austrian Society and Anglo-Austrian Music Society Archive, Senate House Library, University of London.

⁷⁰ R.C. “Schoenberg with no concessions,” *The Daily Telegraph*, June 6, 1952, in “Program for the Schoenberg Memorial Concert,” June 1952, AAS12, “Concert Materials, Correspondence, Miscellaneous,” Folder 1, Anglo-Austrian Society and Anglo-Austrian Music Society Archive, Senate House Library, University of London.

⁷¹ “Schoenberg Memorial Concert Program,” 1952, AAS12, “Concert Materials, Correspondence, Miscellaneous,” Folder 1, Anglo-Austrian Society and Anglo-Austrian Music Society Archive, Senate House Library, University of London. Published with permission from Senate House Library, University of London.

⁷² “London Ensemble Singers Concert Program,” January 20, 1951, AAS15 “Publicity Materials,” Folder 7, Anglo-Austrian Society and Anglo-Austrian Music Society Archive, Senate House Library, University of London.

Stadlen and Rauter, in particular, often served as both organizers of concerts and performers during the first decade or so. But in most cases, of course, the programming committee was responsible for the engagement of artists but not ultimately for the music performed. And, as we might expect, Debussy, Chopin, Dvořák, Liszt, J.S. Bach, and numerous others were frequently heard alongside (or in lieu of) Mozart, Schubert, and Mahler. Thus, it is perhaps more telling to look at who those engaged artists were. Even the aforementioned inaugural concert—which hews closely to the received categories of “Austrian music” and “English music” in its programming and cultural exchange model—departs from this strictness in the engagement of musicians. The musicians chosen to represent Britain in the equation do appear to have been born and trained on the island. But the “Austrian” musicians were represented by those with more complex migratory pathways. These included soprano Claire Born, who was born in Bayreuth and trained in Chemnitz, but who left Germany for Austria in 1933 because of her Jewish heritage (fleeing once again after the annexation of Austria); violinist Max Rostal, who was born in Silesia and studied and taught in Berlin before migrating to Britain; and pianist Franz Osborn, born and trained in Berlin before fleeing Nazi Germany.

The tendency to engage artists with only fleeting connections to Austria (or none at all) alongside those who had lived and trained in Vienna, Graz, and Salzburg was established in the earliest years of the Society and continued throughout the first two decades. Oftentimes, performers were sought—regardless of citizenship or nationality—because of their connections with Viennese institutions like the Philharmonic and State Opera. This was the case with Irene Eisinger, a German-born soprano who made her name at the Salzburg Festival and Vienna State Opera, and who performed a Society-sponsored recital with British composer and pianist Edmund Rubbra at the Queen Mary Hall in 1946 (alongside Hungarian-born violinist and refugee Suzanne Rozsa).⁷³ It was also true of VSO star Elisabeth Schumann, who collaborated with the Society on a number of occasions, including a concert with Peter Schidlof, the violist of the Amadeus Quartet (who had been interned with Rauter).⁷⁴ But even artists that had no strong connection to Austria through birth, education, or professional affiliation were frequently engaged. This includes the aforementioned Rostal, Osborn, Gellhorn, and Lund, but also Danish-born tenor Aksel Schiøtz, Polish-born cellist Sela Trau, Czech-born conductor Rafael Kubelik, and many others. What mattered was not nationality or training but personal relationships, professional networks, and expertise—Trau was Rostal’s first wife; Rozsa was dating Martin Lovett, the cellist of the Amadeus Quartet (they later married); Schiøtz was a Schubert lieder specialist (as well as a singer of Danish folk songs and friend of Rauter); Eisinger was a close associate of Jani Strasser via their mutual work at Glyndebourne in the 1930s; and Strasser was, in turn, an associate of Rauter, and so on, and so on.

Conclusion

Both the engagement of artists and the diversity of repertoire in the AAMS complicate the coherence of the notion of an “Austrian national music.” In a sense, this is entirely expected. Wellesz certainly recognized the futility of trying to present a bounded vision of an Austrian national music in speech, let alone in practice. Far more interesting than the recognition that no single body of repertoire, group of

⁷³ “Eisinger/Rubbra Concert Notice,” 1946, AAS15 “Publicity Materials,” Folder 2, Anglo-Austrian Society and Anglo-Austrian Music Society Archive, Senate House Library, University of London.

⁷⁴ “Schidlof/Schumann Concert Notice,” November 1945, AAS15 “Publicity Materials,” Folder 1, Anglo-Austrian Society and Anglo-Austrian Music Society Archive, Senate House Library, University of London.

institutions, or set of musical practices or individuals might circumscribe an “Austrian music” are the possible reasons for such a clear departure from easy territorialization of musical creativity by an organization that named itself, after all, the Anglo-Austrian Music Society.

We might explain this tension between naming and practice as a *failed* project to present a univocal vision of Austrian music to British audiences. But this seems unlikely. Apart from Rauter’s convictions that musical creativity moves through sites and individuals unbounded, there is little evidence in the archive of attempts to police cultural or national boundaries in engaging artists or programming music. There was an early incident involving a British patron—Lady Piggott—who withdrew her financial support from the Society in February of 1946 over concerns that “the Society was not fulfilling its original aim of creating a link between the musical life of Austria and this country, and had merely become another musical society.”⁷⁵ Aside from prompting Maud Karpeles to ask “that the guiding principles of the Society be considered seriously at some future date,”⁷⁶ the matter was unceremoniously dropped.

Another possibility was that the key figures intended, in their diverse programming and “big tent” approach to engaging musical talent, a kind of *critique* of the very nationalist containers they inherited from individuals like Vaughan Williams. The language of “suspicion” I employed earlier may tempt us in this direction. But this interpretation of the motivations of Rauter and his colleagues strikes me as forced and ill-suited to such a long-lasting and collaborative endeavor. It would be difficult to see how such pointed critique could be maintained over a diverse range of activities that carried well into the 1980s and contributed so significantly to the musical life of not just London but also Britain (through the extensive tours sponsored by the Society). It also attributes a degree of collective intention to the members of the Society that was not likely present. Many just wanted to pursue their musical interests without directly engaging in nationalist debates.

More persuasively, the AAMS, viewed through the lens of its early activities, represents neither a failed enterprise nor a project of critique. Rather, we can best understand it as a *realization*—of precisely the kind of highly mobile and contingent creative community that Wellesz envisioned, one with the power to transfigure and render new both what had been brought from the Continent and what had been found in Britain—be it in Mozart’s or Schoenberg’s Vienna, or Rauter’s London. As we have seen, the Society’s genesis can be attributed quite explicitly to the constellation of mobility in which Rauter and his fellow musicians were enmeshed as new arrivals to Britain. Rauter, Ullrich, and their sympathetic British colleagues like Vaughan Williams and Karpeles were trying, via quite practical means, to carve out a space for migrant and refugee musicians to live and work in wartime Britain. But the Society’s key members were not content to merely exist within those entanglements. They sought to respond to them—to craft a soundscape of musical creativity where mobilities and new relations were valorized instead of problematized.

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