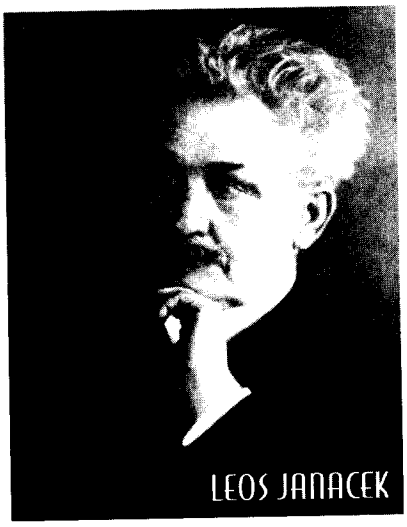
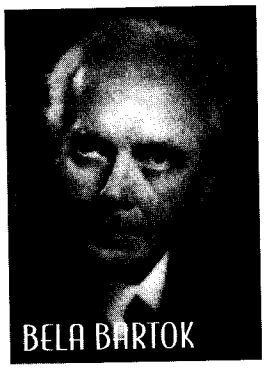
RARE FINDS

Footnotes in Music History

BY JOSEPH SMITH





What do Janacek and Bartok have in common? Hmmmm... both are among the very greatest twentieth-century composers, each drew inspiration and stylistic traits from the study of folklore, both created utterly fresh and distinctive music without abandoning tonal centers—and both have suffered the eradication of important footnotes by their respective publishers.

On the first page of the "Night Music" movement of Bartok's great cycle, *Out of Doors,* are two footnote reference numbers. If you have the widely circulated edition issued by Boosey & Hawkes as PIB-130, you will cast your eyes down to the bottom of the page, however, and find no footnotes, just—a copyright notice! The missing footnotes, found in earlier editions, tell us how to distinguish the grace notes to be played on the beat from those to be played before the beat (Bartok assigns a special symbol to the ones preceding the beat). Someone in the graphics department of Boosey & Hawkes must have decided that the prominence of the copyright notice was more important than the inclusion of Bartok's directives. According to Ernest Roth, who worked for both of Bartok's major publishers (Universal and Boosey) during his lifetime, "Engravers and proof-readers dreaded him. He was the most scrupulous writer himself and would not tolerate the slightest carelessness in others. If now and then he abandoned the usual musical orthography he always had a definite purpose in mind and his wishes had to be followed unconditionally and unreservedly."

What would Bartok's reaction be to the PIB-130 edition of *Out of Doors*? It is painful even to contemplate. Boosey & Hawkes is, of course, a great publisher, with a rich catalog of twentieth-century masterpieces—the principal publisher not just of Bartok, but also of Copland and Britten. Therefore, I was disappointed that a letter I sent apprising them of the error went unanswered. Happily, in 2003 they brought out an entirely new edition of the work (BR704) with the correct footnotes. But, the older edition is still in circulation. If you are buying a new copy, look for BR704.

Encountering a missing footnote is an experience a musician neither expects nor desires to repeat. But I did! On the first line of the first page of the score of Janacek's Concertino (published by Supraphon), below the staff of the first line is an indication in Czech, marked by one asterisk, and a few bars later, two asterisks and no indication. Looking for the single asterisk at the foot of the page, we find a note in three languages: Czech, German, and English: "The pedal is given in places of special importance only." The alert reader will note that we now have *two* Czech indications attached to the single asterisk, and none to the double. In fact, the given footnote marked with a single asterisk belongs to the place in the music marked with a double asterisk. But what about the missing single-asterisk footnote?

I recently had the pleasure of playing the Concertino. Fortunately, I had originally looked at it in miniature score, where the footnotes are complete. (Full and miniature scores are otherwise photographically identical.) When I studied the work from the full-sized score, I remembered the missing indication, given in three languages, because it is so unusual—indeed, I have never encountered anything similar in any piece of music: "The piano part is to be memorized" (L. Janacek).

Why would a pianist need to be instructed to memorize a concerto? But in fact, the unprecedented, idiosyncratic—okay, I risk the word "unique"!—schema of the piece requires the note. The "orchestra" of the Concertino consists of a mere six performers, and could conceivably be performed without conductor. In the first movement, this "orchestra" is reduced to a single French horn, in the second, a single clarinet. Presumably, Janacek feared that the audience, seeing so few pieces on stage, would misunderstand the work to be chamber music including piano, rather than a piano concerto with chamber ensemble. The pianist's playing from memory establishes him immediately as soloist, and allows the audience to follow the music better. For instance, in the first movement, for piano and horn, the horn offers only interjections in response to a continuous piano part. The audience needs to understand that the horn is accompanying the piano, and not vice versa. Janacek is by no means as careful and explicit in his notation as Bartok. (When Janacek changes meter, for instance, the performer is often simply left to infer what the relationships between note values should be.) But his signing this special indication with his name indicates the weight that he gave it. According to what I have been told, the Bärenreiter reprint of 2001 corrects this omission. If you want to play this work and your library or music store still has only the older

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Ginastera's Rondo, *continued from page 24*

must provide the solid foundation for the theme. The transition passage from m.75 to the Allegretto shows how far Ginastera can wander from C major. Playing the left-hand staccato will be helpful.

The function of the *rallentando* at m.87 is to help the return from the previous *accelerando* back to the *a tempo.* It is a logical progression and should not be inflated out of context.

Be aware of the importance of contrast throughout—in touch, dynamics, color, mood, and character. The ending is quite effective: the theme returns from a distant place and suddenly explodes after the unexpected glissando. The coda that starts at m.125 is quite funny. I hear the 7/8 measure and the two measures that follow as children teasing and sticking out their tongues at each other. The last two measures are filled with pure joy.

With all the excitement that's going on, make sure that you land on the final G major chord and on nothing else.

The Rondó is an undiscovered gem. It must be played with charm, wit and joy. Ginastera asks the performer to embody the innocence and naiveté of a child, combined with the maturity and nostalgia of an adult looking back at childhood. Reminiscent of what Schumann achieved with his *Kinderszenen*, Ginastera's Rondó is tinged with melancholy and longing, mixed together with a sense of play and fun. It is a piece about children, but profits from the wisdom and experience of age. Ginastera has crafted a little masterpiece. Enjoy!

Barbara Nissman, who is preparing to record all three of Ginastera's Piano Concertos at the request of his widow, has long been associated with this composer. To learn more about her, see the feature earlier in this issue.

See Ginastera's music beginning on page 8.

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Supraphon edition be warned: you must memorize your part!

Now, it is pleasant to turn from a lacuna in Janacek publication to an addition to Janacek publication. I have long owned the piano solo volume from the beautifully produced and scrupulously edited collected works edition (Supraphon and Bärenreiter), and believed that it included all the extant pieces. In fact, however, I have just come across a little volume that Universal edition subsequently published, entitled *Intimate Sketches.* This volume comprises brief pieces and fragments either previously unpublished, or published in journals and forgotten, such as the present *Melodie* (which appeared in a Czech newspaper in 1923). Rarely does a piece so encapsulate a composer's style in so short a time. In its mere five bars, we recognize Janacek's predilection for the rich interval of the sixth, his characteristically short phrases—more declamation than song—his modal freedom within a defined key center. This publication supplies us with several pieces no more difficult than the easiest Chopin preludes by a composer who seems to speak to us more and more eloquently as the years pass.

See *Melodie* on page 7.