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The Cambridge Companion to Michael Tippett

Sir Michael Tippett is widely considered to be one of the most individual composers of the twentieth century, and his music continues to be performed to critical acclaim throughout the world. Written by a team of international scholars, this *Companion* provides a wide-ranging and accessible study of Tippett and his works. It discusses the contexts and concepts of modernism, tradition, politics, sexuality and creativity that shaped Tippett's music and ideas, engaging with archive materials, relevant literature and models of interpretation. Chapters explore the genres in which Tippett composed, including opera, symphony, string quartet, concerto and piano sonata, to shed new light on his major works and draw attention to those that have not yet received the attention they deserve. Directing knowledge and expertise towards a wide readership, this book will enrich the listening experience and broaden understanding of the music of this endlessly fascinating and challenging composer.

KENNETH GLOAG is Reader in Musicology at Cardiff University.

NICHOLAS JONES is Co-ordinating Lecturer for Humanities at the Centre for Lifelong Learning, Cardiff University.

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In memory of Ian Kemp (1931–2011)

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Contributors

Alastair Borthwick is Professor of Music and Head of the Department of Drama and Music at the University of Hull. His published work focuses on British music since 1900, music theory and analysis (including semiotic and cognitive approaches) and the philosophy of music (including the limitations of logic in music, intentionality and transcendence). As a composer he has been commissioned to write choral, chamber and orchestral music that has been performed in concerts and festivals in the UK and internationally.

Joanna Bullivant is Leverhulme Early Career Fellow in Music at the University of Nottingham, having previously held the post of Junior Research Fellow and Lecturer in Music at Worcester College, Oxford. Arising from her doctoral thesis on ‘Musical Modernism and Left-Wing Politics in 1930s Britain’, she has a range of articles and book chapters on twentieth-century British music and politics published or forthcoming. She is currently working on the first major monograph on the English communist composer Alan Bush, titled *Modern Music, Alan Bush, and the Cold War: The Cultural Left in Britain and the Communist Bloc*, for Cambridge University Press.

Suzanne Cole is a Lecturer in Musicology at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, University of Melbourne. Her research interests include the reception of early music in later periods, and the history of early music revivals. She is currently working on an extended study of the revival of ‘Tudor’ church music in the early twentieth century, funded by the Australian Research Council. Her book *Thomas Tallis and his Music in Victorian England* was published in 2008.

Kenneth Gloag is Reader in Musicology at Cardiff University. His publications on the music of Tippett include a book on *A Child of Our Time* (Cambridge University Press, 1999) and a contribution to *Tippett Studies* (Cambridge University Press, 1999). During the Tippett centenary year (2005) he gave several conference papers and pre-concert talks on important works, including *The Knot Garden*, the Second Symphony and the string quartets. He is co-author of *Musicology: The Key Concepts* (2005), co-editor of *Peter Maxwell Davies Studies* (Cambridge University Press, 2009) and author of *Nicholas Maw: Odyssey* (2008), and has recently published a book titled *Postmodernism in Music* (Cambridge University Press, 2012). He is currently reviews editor of *twentieth-century music*.

Nicholas Jones is Co-ordinating Lecturer for Humanities at the Centre for Lifelong Learning, Cardiff University. From 2005 to 2007 he was a Lecturer in Music and Deputy Chair of the MA in Music programme at the Open University. He has a specialist interest in twentieth-century and contemporary British music and is co-editor of and contributor to *Peter Maxwell Davies Studies* (Cambridge University Press, 2009). He has published a number of articles on the music of Davies, William Mathias and Anthony Powers for *Music & Letters*, *The Musical Times*

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and *Tempo*. He is a member of the Editorial Advisory Board for *Tempo* and is currently working on a book concerning the writings of Peter Maxwell Davies.

Christopher Mark is a Senior Lecturer in Musicology at the University of Surrey. A co-founder of the journal *twentieth-century music*, of which he was Editor-in-Chief until January 2009, he is the author of *Early Benjamin Britten* (1995) and *Roger Smalley: A Case Study of Late Twentieth-Century Composition* (2012), and of numerous articles, conference papers and book chapters on Britten, Smalley, Elgar, Vaughan Williams, Warlock and Tippett. He is currently completing *Britten: An Extraordinary Life* and working on a monograph on melancholy in twentieth-century English music.

Jonathan Rees is the Course Co-ordinator and Head of Singing and Music at Stella Mann College of Performing Arts, Bedford. His Ph.D. thesis, completed in 2011 with the Open University, was an analytical study of Peter Maxwell Davies's *Revelation and Fall*. He has presented papers on Davies's works at conferences organized by the Society for Music Analysis at the Universities of Durham and Bangor, and a paper on Erwin Schulhoff's opera *Flammen* at an interdisciplinary symposium on the Don Juan legend at the Institute of Musical Research, London.

Suzanne Robinson is an Honorary Research Fellow at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, University of Melbourne, and Series Editor for *Australasian Music Research*. She was editor of *Michael Tippett: Music and Literature* (2002) and has published articles on British composers including Britten, Tippett and Smyth in *American Music*, *Cambridge Opera Journal* and *Music Review*. Her current project is a biography of Australian-American composer Peggy Glanville-Hicks.

Thomas Schuttenhelm is a composer, guitarist and scholar. He is editor of *The Selected Letters of Michael Tippett* (2005), contributor to *Estudios sobre Fernando Sor* (2003) and author of numerous articles for the journal *Soundboard*. In 2007 he was the recipient of a Fulbright Fellowship to the UK and in 2008 he was a British Music Studies fellow at the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin. He is currently completing a monograph for Cambridge University Press, *Creative Development and Compositional Process in the Orchestral Music of Michael Tippett*.

Iain Stannard studied for his Ph.D. under David Clarke at the University of Newcastle. His thesis, 'Michael Tippett and Modernism: Instrumental Works and Aesthetics, 1962–1977', focused on hermeneutic and analytical approaches to Tippett's works from that period. Since then he has published work on analytical issues and on gender and sexuality in Tippett's music. His research interests also include the use of cultural theory to inform analytical models, particularly in twentieth-century music.

Edward Venn is Senior Lecturer in Music at Lancaster University. His research interests centre around twentieth-century and contemporary British music. An analysis of Tippett's writings was published in *Michael Tippett: Music and Literature* (2002), and a study of Tippett's engagement with ritual processes appeared in *Ritual Dynamics and the Science of Ritual*, vol. II (2010). In addition, he regularly gives papers on Tippett's music in colloquia, seminars and conferences.

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Arnold Whittall is Professor Emeritus of Music Theory and Analysis at King's College London, and a writer specializing in nineteenth-, twentieth- and twenty-first-century music. His books include *The Music of Britten and Tippett* (Cambridge University Press, 1982/1990), *Musical Composition in the Twentieth Century* (2000), *Exploring Twentieth-Century Music* (Cambridge University Press, 2003) and *The Cambridge Introduction to Serialism* (Cambridge University Press, 2008). Writings on Tippett include contributions to *Michael Tippett O.M.: A Celebration* (1985), *Tippett Studies* (Cambridge University Press, 1999) and *Michael Tippett: Music and Literature* (2002), as well as an essay discussing *The Midsummer Marriage* (*Cambridge Opera Journal*, 21/2 (2009)). His contribution to the present volume is part of a series of essays titled 'British Music After Britten'.

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Preface

Since his death in 1998 the music of Sir Michael Tippett continues to be performed and studied, with works such as the Concerto for Double String Orchestra (1938–9), *A Child of Our Time* (1939–41) and *The Midsummer Marriage* (1946–52) achieving a significant public profile as well as continued critical scrutiny. The wider recognition and reception of Tippett and his music was further extended through the centenary celebrations of 2005, which drew attention to several other works such as the opera *The Knot Garden* (1966–9), which received several performances.

However, given the wide range of music that Tippett composed during a long career that extended for much of the twentieth century, there is a great deal of music by him that is not being performed and has not been discussed extensively in the literature, and as Arnold Whittall documents in the first chapter, following a productive period around the late 1990s, there has not been much published on Tippett and his music since then. This *Companion* cannot fully address this absence, but it does provide commentary on Tippett’s music beyond just the already well-known works and it raises issues that were pertinent to Tippett at many key points in his career.

Each of the contributors brings to this book their own interests and experiences, formed through close study of, and research on, Tippett and his music. Such interests and experiences include deep knowledge of specific archive materials – letters, documents – and often close analytical study of specific works. Many contributors draw on Tippett’s own writings about music, and the published selected correspondence, and all engage with, and reflect upon, the existing literature.

However, as is consistent with the *Cambridge Companion* series, we seek to direct this knowledge and expertise towards a wide readership, making accessible scholarship that will enrich the listening experience of the music and construct a context for it. But we also hope that this book can present some issues, and suggest directions, that can influence both the future scholarly understanding of this music and the wider perception of it.

Part I engages with the contexts and concepts within which Tippett is situated and through which the music can be interpreted. Tippett was a product of the twentieth century and, in the first chapter, Arnold Whittall reflects on the polarities of that century and Tippett’s position within it. The question of the extent to which Tippett may, or may not, be a product of a set of traditions defined as English is explored by Christopher Mark, while Suzanne Cole discusses Tippett’s often practical involvement with early

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music. Tippett was always aware of the wider world beyond his own compositional experiences and Joanna Bullivant examines his involvement in specific political activities in the 1930s along with his dialogue with the composer Alan Bush. If political engagement was important for Tippett at that time questions of personal, sexual identity were also crucial and, as Suzanne Robinson highlights, such issues remain directly relevant to our understanding of the music. Tippett provided a great deal of written commentary about himself, his music and other factors. These writings are returned to at many different points in this book, but Thomas Schuttenhelm's contribution deals directly with such texts as a way of reconstructing and interpreting Tippett's own understanding of his creative imagination and process.

As a composer Tippett always related to historically defined genres – opera, string quartet, symphony, concerto, sonata – and Part II of the book traces his compositional activity in each genre, or, in the case of vocal works as a loose grouping, through discussion of individual works. In most genres Tippett's music extends across his long career and each contributor gives an account of how, within a specific genre, different works fit into a larger picture. However, although this becomes a recurring pattern, each author has an individual interpretation of how that picture is constructed within the selected genre. And yet, one common factor in Chapters 8 to 13 is the difference of Tippett's music composed after *King Priam* (1958–61) in comparison to the music which came before, with the nature of the 'great divide' that this opera represents discussed in some detail by Iain Stannard in Chapter 7. As David Clarke correctly reminds us, 'there was always a tension in Tippett's music between coherence and the inchoate and in this light we might see connections and continuities between different periods of his oeuvre'.¹ As becomes evident through this part of the book, there are continuities across different works and different periods of Tippett's career, but there are also dramatic differences, between the essentially tonal idioms of, for example, the Concerto for Double String Orchestra and *The Midsummer Marriage*, and the post-tonal soundworld of *King Priam* and beyond.

We hope this book will help readers to navigate their own path through Tippett's long and remarkable career, shedding new light on some works and issues while bringing others into a clearer focus.

KENNETH GLOAG

NICHOLAS JONES

Notes

- 1 David Clarke, review of Kenneth Gloag, *Tippett: A Child of Our Time* (Cambridge University Press, 1999), *Music & Letters*, 82/2 (May 2001), 344.

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References to Tippett’s scores and note on music examples

References to specific bars take the following form: Fig. [rehearsal number]: [bar number after rehearsal number]. For example, ‘Fig. 52:5’ means ‘5 bars after Figure 52’ (taking the first bar to be that in which the figure itself appears).

Unless stated otherwise, all transposing instruments in the music examples are written in C.

Chronology of Tippett’s life and career

JONATHAN REES

Date	Biography	Works	Cultural and Historical Events
1905	Michael Kemp Tippett born in London on 2 January to Henry William Tippett and Isabel Clementine Binny Kemp; the family soon moves to Wetherden, Suffolk		Strauss, <i>Salome</i> ; Debussy, <i>La Mer</i> ; Trotsky formulates the theory of Permanent Revolution and is one of the leaders of the 1905 Russian Revolution
1910	Begins piano lessons		Vaughan Williams, <i>Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis</i> ; Yeats, <i>The Green Helmet</i>
1913			Ives, <i>Holidays Symphony</i> (one of Tippett’s choices for the BBC radio programme <i>Desert Island Discs</i> ¹)
1914	Joins Brookfield Preparatory School in Dorset, having being schooled by a governess at home since November 1909		Vaughan Williams, <i>The Lark Ascending</i> ; Yeats, <i>Responsibilities</i> ; the Austro-Hungarian invasion of Serbia on 28 July initiates the conflict of World War I
1916			The Irish Easter Rebellion, on which, in the 1930s, Tippett planned to base his first opera; the Military Service Act allows conscientious objectors to be exempted from combat and perform civilian service or non-combatant army service
1917			The 1917 Russian Revolution deposes the Tsarist autocracy and leads to the formation of the Soviet Union – Lenin and Trotsky are among the principal activists
1918	Enters Fettes College in Edinburgh, continuing piano lessons, whilst joining the school choir and beginning organ studies		World War I ends on Armistice Day, 11 November
1919	Tippett’s parents leave England; he then spends school holidays visiting them, particularly at the hotel in Cannes of which Tippett’s father was the proprietor, and later in Corsica and Florence; this gives him a strong connection to a European sensibility and fluency in French by the age of		Elgar, Cello Concerto; Reed, <i>Ten Days that Shook the World</i> , which deeply affected Tippett’s socialist politics

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Date	Biography	Works	Cultural and Historical Events
	ten; he later also becomes fluent in German, and well versed in Italian		
1920	Is moved to Stamford Grammar School in Lincolnshire after unpleasant experiences at Fettes; his piano lessons with Frances Tinkler, Malcolm Sargent’s former teacher, nurture his desire to become a composer		Stravinsky, <i>Symphonies of Wind Instruments</i> (another <i>Desert Island Discs</i> choice)
1921			<i>The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse</i> (film), a viewing of which in 1923 confirms Tippett’s pacifism due to its graphic depiction of the World War I trenches
1922	Expelled from Stamford Grammar School due to his non-conformism and overt atheism; his ambition to compose is firmly crystallized after attending a concert in Leicester in which Sargent conducts works including Ravel’s <i>Mother Goose Suite</i> ; continues his musical training with Frances Tinkler and by studying Stanford’s book <i>Musical Composition</i> ; a local organist helps him with species counterpoint; attends an International Congress of Youth in Brussels, which makes him aware of the plight of child victims of the war – in his registration as a conscientious objector in 1940 he describes this as his first political act		Vaughan Williams, <i>The Shepherds of the Delectable Mountains</i> ; Schoenberg, <i>Die Jakobsleiter</i> (unfinished); Eliot, <i>The Waste Land</i>
1923	Accepted into the Royal College of Music (RCM), despite requiring some remedial study; begins compositional study with Charles Wood, supplementing this with his own study of counterpoint, particularly Renaissance polyphony		Walton, <i>Façade</i> ; Stravinsky, <i>Les Noces</i> ; Yeats becomes the first Irishman to be awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature
1924	Begins conducting a small madrigal choir in Oxted, Surrey, mainly in order to continue his own study of contrapuntal and vocal techniques; later he combines this with a local amateur theatre group to mount productions of English operas, such as Vaughan Williams’s <i>The Shepherds of the Delectable Mountains</i> and Stanford’s <i>The Travelling Companion</i>		Vaughan Williams, <i>Hugh the Drover</i>

xxiii *Chronology of Tippett’s life and career*

Date	Biography	Works	Cultural and Historical Events
1926	Following Wood’s death he studies with C. H. Kitson; as a student at the RCM he studies piano with Aubin Raymar and conducting with Malcolm Sargent and Adrian Boult		
1928	Passes the B.Mus. exams in December, having failed them in September	Conducts his own realization of <i>The Village Opera</i> (1927–8) with his Oxted group	Schoenberg, Variations for Orchestra; Yeats, <i>The Tower</i>
1929	Moves to Oxted; teaches French part-time at Hazlewood Preparatory School, where he meets Christopher Fry, with whom he collaborates in some early works		Eisler, <i>Song of the Working People</i> ; Yeats, <i>The Winding Stair and Other Poems</i> ; the Great Depression begins following the Wall Street Crash on 29 October
1930	The first concert of Tippett’s own music takes place on 5 April in the Barn Theatre, Oxted; he later withdraws all this music and begins a two-year course of study in counterpoint with R. O. Morris, an expert in sixteenth-century polyphony, who had impressed Tippett in a tutorial given at the RCM during his student days	The April concert includes the early works Concerto in D (1928–30), String Quartet in F (1928, rev. 1930) and Psalm in C (1930)	Shostakovich, <i>The Nose</i> ; Stravinsky, <i>Symphony of Psalms</i> ; Eliot, <i>Ash Wednesday</i> ; Trotsky founds the International Left Opposition
1932	Takes on responsibility for music in the work camps for unemployed miners in Boosbeck, set up in 1931 by Major Pennyman; accepts his first role in Morley College, London, organizing and directing the South London Orchestra, consisting of out-of-work professional musicians; also takes on the task of conducting two choirs run by the Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society; is introduced to the painter Wilfred Franks, with whom he begins an intense personal relationship	String Trio in Bb	Eisler, <i>Ballad of the Women and the Soldiers</i> ; Schoenberg, <i>Moses und Aron</i> (unfinished); Britten wins the Cobbett Chamber Music Prize for his <i>Phantasy</i> string quintet; Maritain, <i>The Degrees of Knowledge</i> ; Trotsky, <i>The History of the Russian Revolution</i>
1933	Conducts a well-received production of <i>The Beggar’s Opera</i> with members of the work camp	Symphony in Bb (rev. 1934)	The Balham Group, a faction of the British Communist Party, sets up its own party, the Communist League, to follow Trotskyan principles
1934	The November issue of the Communist League’s paper, <i>The Red Flag</i> , introduces Tippett to Trotsky’s <i>The History of the Russian Revolution</i> , which has a profound effect upon him; conducts two performances of the Pageant of Labour at the Crystal Palace, depicting the hardships of a working-class family from the Industrial Revolution to the present time	<i>Robin Hood</i>	Vaughan Williams, Symphony No. 4; Shostakovich, <i>Lady Macbeth of Mtzensk</i> ; Britten, <i>A Boy was Born</i> , <i>Simple Symphony</i> ; Eisler, <i>Song Against War</i> ; Priestley, <i>English Journey</i> , which powerfully portrays the poverty and degradation caused by unemployment in the North of England, the principal effect of the Great Depression in the UK

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Date	Biography	Works	Cultural and Historical Events
1935	His work with the unemployed bolsters his interests in Trotsky’s ideas and he joins the Communist Party for a short time, leaving when he realizes that he would not be able to convert his branch to Trotskyism; sings in a choir representing Britain in the first International Workers’ Music Olympiad, which he claims to have taught him more about socialism than any book; presents the political songs of Hanns Eisler in a concert in March; a performance of his play, <i>War Ramp</i> , examining how bank credit is used to finance war, is organized by the Labour League of Youth	String Quartet No. 1 in A (1934–5; rev. 1943), which the composer called his first mature composition	Gershwin, <i>Porgy and Bess</i> ; Eliot, <i>Murder in the Cathedral</i> ; the Reverend Dick Sheppard founds the Peace Pledge Union (PPU), attracting sponsors such as Bertrand Russell and Aldous Huxley; the Communist League is disbanded; A. J. Cronin’s novel <i>The Stars Look Down</i> argues a strong religious case for conscientious objection
1936			The public trials and execution of Grigory Zinoviev and Lev Kamenev as part of Stalin’s Great Purges convince Tippett of the importance of Trotskyism as an alternative to Stalinism
1937	Is introduced to T. S. Eliot, who becomes an important friend and mentor, introducing him to the poetry of W. B. Yeats and the philosophy of Jacques Maritain and Susanne Langer	<i>A Song of Liberty</i>	Vaughan Williams, <i>Riders to the Sea</i> ; Bartók, <i>Music for Strings, Percussion and Celeste</i> ; Berg, <i>Lulu</i> ; Shostakovich, Symphony No. 5; Eisler, <i>Peace Song</i> ; the PPU formally merges with the No More War Movement
1938	The anti-Jewish events in Germany and Austria set Tippett’s mind to the creation of <i>A Child of Our Time</i> , for which he asks Eliot to contribute a libretto – Eliot recommends that the composer should write it himself; the breakdown of his relationship with Wilfred Franks catalyses a personal crisis that leads him to submit himself to Jungian analysis under John Layard; joins the Socialist Anti-War Front	Piano Sonata No. 1 (1936–38; rev. 1942)	Hindemith, <i>Mathis der Maler</i> ; von Horváth, <i>Ein Kind unserer Zeit</i> , from which Tippett derives the title <i>A Child of Our Time</i> ; Beausobre’s <i>The Woman Who Could Not Die</i> reveals the atrocities of torture and labour camps used by the Russian secret police; the Munich Pact allows Hitler’s annexation of Czechoslovakia’s Sudetenland; the shooting of a German embassy official by a young Polish Jew, Herschel Grynszpan, a reaction to Nazi persecution, leads to brutal anti-Jewish pogroms culminating in the <i>Kristallnacht</i> destruction of Jewish shops and homes on 9 and 10 November
1939	Following the Jungian model he analyses his own dreams between January and August,	Concerto for Double String Orchestra (1938–9)	Harris, Symphony No. 3; Cage, <i>Imaginary Landscape No. 1</i> ; Eliot, <i>The Family Reunion</i> ;

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Date	Biography	Works	Cultural and Historical Events
	resulting in a greater acceptance of his homosexuality and personal needs; influenced by writings such as Beausobre's <i>The Woman Who Could Not Die</i> he turns away from party politics, refocusing his efforts on composition; Willy Strecker, the director of Schott in Mainz, offers him a publishing contract, but the outbreak of the war delays the actual publications		World War II begins with the Nazi invasion of Poland and the declaration of war from France, Britain and members of the Commonwealth in September; the National Service (Armed Forces) Act enforces military conscription in the UK and results in nearly 60,000 registered conscientious objectors; the PPU campaigns against conscription and supports conscientious objectors
1940	Becomes Director of Morley College, London, after the former director Arnold Foster is evacuated from London; directs the college choir and secures performances of rarely heard pieces of early and contemporary music by composers such as Tallis, Dowland, Purcell, Monteverdi, Stravinsky, Hindemith and Britten; joins the PPU in November, registering as a conscientious objector in the same month; becomes a very active member of the Union, offering support to other conscientious objectors		Stravinsky, <i>Symphony in C</i> ; Schoenberg, <i>Violin Concerto</i> ; Britten, <i>Les illuminations</i> ; Webern, <i>Variations for Orchestra</i> ; Sitwell, <i>Still Falls the Rain</i> ; Trotsky dies on 21 August from brain damage received in an assassination attempt
1941	The release of a recording of Phyllis Sellick's performance of the Piano Sonata No. 1 on Rimington, Van Wyck Ltd marks the first recording of his music	<i>Fantasia on a Theme of Handel</i> (1939–41); <i>A Child of Our Time</i> (1939–41) is completed although not premiered until 1944	Messiaen, <i>Quatuor pour la fin du temps</i>
1942	Begins a long relationship with publishers B. Schott's Söhne, Mainz, with the publication of the Piano Sonata No. 1; his registration as a conscientious objector comes before a tribunal on 3 February – Vaughan Williams supports his cause, declaring his music a 'distinct national asset'; he refuses to undertake the non-combatant military duties allocated to him	String Quartet No. 2 in F# (1941–2); Two Madrigals: <i>The Source</i> and <i>The Windhover</i>	Britten, <i>Seven Sonnets of Michelangelo</i> , <i>A Ceremony of Carols</i> ; Langer, <i>Philosophy in a New Key</i>
1943	In January he gives his first radio broadcast, 'Portrait of Stravinsky' on the BBC; on 21 June he begins a three-month sentence (reduced to two) in Wormwood Scrubs Prison	<i>Boyhood's End</i> (composed for Britten and Peter Pears); <i>Fanfare No. 1</i>	Vaughan Williams, <i>Symphony No. 5</i> ; Messiaen, <i>Visions de l'Amen</i> ; Britten, <i>Rejoice in the Lamb</i> ; Bartók, <i>Concerto for Orchestra</i> ; Hindemith, <i>Symphonic Metamorphoses of Themes by Carl Maria von</i>

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Date	Biography	Works	Cultural and Historical Events
	for failing to meet the conditions of his tribunal		<i>Weber</i> ; <i>Die Weisse Rose</i> student uprising against the National Socialist Government in Germany, led by Sophie and Hans Scholl, is ended with the capture and guillotining of its leaders
1944	Receives his first commission from the BBC (which became very important to his development through many future commissions) resulting in the motet <i>The Weeping Babe</i> ; writes a pamphlet, ‘Abundance of Creation’ for the PPU; his meeting and collaboration with countertenor Alfred Deller helps to establish a great deal of Purcell’s music that had been forgotten	<i>Plebs Angelica</i> (1943–4); <i>The Weeping Babe</i>	Messiaen, <i>Vingt regards sur l’enfant Jésus</i> ; Britten, <i>Festival Te Deum</i>
1945	After the war, he gives more regular talks on the BBC Third Programme and World Service, many of which would be published in his collection <i>Moving into Aquarius</i> (see 1959)	Symphony No. 1 (1944–5)	Britten, <i>Peter Grimes</i> ; Prokofiev, Symphony No. 5; Eliot, <i>Four Quartets</i> ; Sitwell, <i>The Song of the Cold</i> ; World War II ends with the total surrender of Germany on 8 May, followed on 15 August by the surrender of Japan
1946	Begins work on his first opera, <i>The Midsummer Marriage</i>	String Quartet No. 3 (1945–6); <i>Preludio al Vespro di Monteverdi</i> for organ (written to precede the first British performances of Monteverdi’s <i>Vespro della Beata Virgine</i> of 1610); <i>Little Music</i> for string orchestra	Britten, <i>Rape of Lucretia</i> ; Copland, Symphony No. 3; Stravinsky, <i>Symphony in Three Movements</i> ; Prokofiev, <i>War and Peace</i>
1948	Develops severe hepatitis, possibly as a result of the stress of combining work on <i>The Midsummer Marriage</i> and <i>The Heart’s Assurance</i> with his responsibilities at Morley College	<i>Suite in D for the Birthday of Prince Charles</i>	Lutosławski, Symphony No. 1; Henze, Symphony, No. 1; Britten, <i>Saint Nicolas</i> ; Fry, <i>The Lady’s Not for Burning</i> ; the National Service Act formalizes peacetime military conscription
1949	Awarded the Cobbett Prize for services to chamber music; becomes a member of the Music Advisory Committee, British Council – a position which he holds until 1965		Bliss, <i>The Olympians</i> ; Messiaen, <i>Turangalila-symphonie</i> ; Eliot, <i>The Cocktail Party</i>
1951	Moves to Tidebrook Manor, near Wadhurst in Sussex; income from the BBC broadcasts means that he can concentrate more fully on composition; gives up his position at Morley College after conducting a series of concerts for the Festival of Britain	The song cycle <i>The Heart’s Assurance</i> (1950–1) premiered by Britten and Pears	Vaughan Williams’s <i>The Pilgrim’s Progress</i> and Britten’s <i>Billy Budd</i> performed as part of the Festival of Britain; Stravinsky, <i>The Rake’s Progress</i> ; Hindemith, Symphony in Bb for Concert Band

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Date	Biography	Works	Cultural and Historical Events
1952		<i>Dance, Clarion Air</i> , a madrigal which is later included in <i>A Garland for a Queen</i> – a collection of works by British composers to celebrate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II; <i>The Midsummer Marriage</i> (1946–52) – the <i>Ritual Dances</i> are premiered in the following year, but the whole opera will not be performed until 1955	Vaughan Williams, <i>Sinfonia Antartica</i> ; Cage, <i>4’33’’</i> ; Maritain, <i>The Range of Reason</i>
1953	Runs into a series of problems with performers, beginning with the replacement of Malcolm Sargent as the conductor of the <i>Fantasia Concertante</i> after Sargent publicly criticized the work for being overly intellectualized; becomes the artistic director of the St Ives Festival of the Arts for one year	<i>Ritual Dances</i> from Act 2 of <i>The Midsummer Marriage</i> are premiered two years before the complete opera; <i>Fantasia Concertante on a Theme of Corelli</i> ; <i>Fanfares Nos. 2 and 3</i> , composed for the St Ives Festival	Britten’s <i>Gloriana</i> is performed at Covent Garden as part of the celebrations for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II; Stockhausen, <i>Kontra-Punkte</i> ; Shostakovich, Symphony No. 10; Maritain, <i>Approaches to God</i> ; Langer, <i>Feeling and Form</i>
1954		<i>Four Inventions</i> for recorders; <i>Divertimento on ‘Sellinger’s Round’</i> (1953–4), which incorporates his contribution to the collection <i>Variations on an Elizabethan Theme</i>	Lennox Berkeley, <i>A Dinner Engagement</i> ; Britten, <i>The Turn of the Screw</i> ; Walton, <i>Troilus and Cressida</i> ; Varèse, <i>Déserts</i> ; Fry, <i>The Dark is Light Enough</i> (with incidental music by Bernstein)
1955	Julius Katchen refuses to premiere the Concerto for Piano, claiming the piano part to be unplayable – Louis Kentner replaces him and plays the score from memory; the Dennis Brain Wind Ensemble find the Sonata for Four Horns to be written too high and demand that the work be transposed for the premiere	Concerto for Piano (1953–5); Sonata for Four Horns	Boulez, <i>Le marteau sans maître</i>
1956		<i>Bonny at Morn</i> ; <i>Four Songs from the British Isles</i>	Nono, <i>Il canto sospeso</i>
1957	The premiere of Symphony No. 2 breaks down in the first movement, whilst being broadcast live on the radio – conductor Adrian Boult shoulders the blame and begins the work again; these problems with performers reinforce the prevalent criticism of Tippett’s amateurism in composition; he is elected to the presidency of the PPU	Symphony No. 2 (1956–7) (another <i>Desert Island Discs</i> choice)	Stravinsky, <i>Agon</i> ; Hindemith, <i>Die Harmonie der Welt</i> ; Stockhausen, <i>Gruppen</i>
1958		The cantata <i>Crown of the Year</i> written to celebrate the centenary of Badminton School (commissioned by	Boulez, <i>Doubles</i> ; Cage, Piano Concerto

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Date	Biography	Works	Cultural and Historical Events
		musicologist Eric Walter White, whose daughter attended the school); the hymn tune <i>Unto the Hills</i> <i>Around Do I Lift My Longing Eyes</i>	
1959	<i>Moving into Aquarius</i> , a collection of Tippett’s radio broadcasts, essays and articles is published; ² awarded the CBE	<i>Lullaby</i>	
1960	Moves to Parkside, in Corsham, Wiltshire	<i>Music; Words for Music, Perhaps</i>	Britten, <i>A Midsummer Night’s Dream</i> ; Boulez, <i>Pli selon pli</i> ; Ligeti, <i>Apparitions</i> ; the abolition of National Service means that armed forces consist entirely of volunteers, removing the need for conscientious objection
1961	Becomes a Fellow of the Royal College of Music	<i>King Priam</i> (1958–61); <i>Songs for Achilles</i> , the first song of which is taken from <i>King Priam; Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis</i>	Penderecki, <i>Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima</i>
1962	<i>King Priam</i> first performed at the Coventry Festival celebrating the opening of the new cathedral; the work is a great success and marks a turning point for the composer’s reputation	Piano Sonata No. 2; Incidental Music for Shakespeare’s <i>The Tempest</i> in response to an invitation from the Old Vic, London; <i>Songs for Ariel; Praeludium</i> for brass, bells and percussion	Britten, <i>War Requiem</i> ; Solzhenitsyn, <i>One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich</i>
1963	The BBC studio recording of <i>The Midsummer Marriage</i> , conducted by Norman Del Mar, is very well received by the critics and reinforces Tippett’s growing international reputation; <i>King Priam</i> becomes his first opera to be performed abroad, in a production at the Badisches Staatstheater, Karlsruhe, in German translation	Concerto for Orchestra (1962–3)	Williamson, <i>Our Man in Havana</i> ; Henze, Symphony No. 5; Maritain, <i>God and the Permission of Evil</i> ; Stravinsky, <i>Abraham and Isaac</i>
1964	Is made an honorary Doctor of Music at the University of Cambridge		Britten’s <i>Curlow River</i> is dedicated to Tippett in anticipation of his 60th birthday the following year; Davies, <i>Second Taverner Fantasia</i> ; Messiaen, <i>Couleurs de la cité céleste</i>
1965	Makes first visit to America, to act as the composer-in-residence at the Aspen Music Festival; America becomes an important cultural and spiritual influence on Tippett thereafter – seen particularly in his next operas; begins an association with the excellent Leicestershire Schools Symphony Orchestra	<i>The Vision of Saint Augustine</i> (1963–5)	R. R. Bennett, <i>The Mines of Sulphur</i> ; Birtwistle, <i>Tragoedia</i>

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Date	Biography	Works	Cultural and Historical Events
1966	Awarded a knighthood for services to music	<i>Braint</i> for orchestra, included in the collection <i>Severn Bridge Variations</i>	Stravinsky, <i>Requiem Canticles</i> ; Goehr, <i>Arden Must Die</i>
1968	Steps in for an indisposed Stravinsky at short notice in a concert with the St Louis Symphony in April, conducting his own Concerto for Orchestra		Birtwistle, <i>Punch and Judy</i> ; Britten, <i>The Prodigal Son</i> ; Berio, <i>Sinfonia</i>
1969	Joins Colin Davis and Jack Phipps to help the ailing Bath Festival and inaugurates the Bath Festival of Blues	<i>The Knot Garden</i> (1966–9)	Birtwistle, <i>Down by the Greenwood Side</i> , <i>Verses for Ensembles</i> ; Davies, <i>Worldes Blis</i> , <i>Eight Songs for a Mad King</i> ; Weiss, <i>Trotsky in Exile</i>
1970	Moves to the Marlborough Downs; takes over the Bath Festival and runs it single-handedly until 1974, widening the scope of the festival to include progressive pop music as well as blues; begins to suffer from macular dystrophy, an eye disease that forces him to read with a magnifying glass and use large-print manuscript paper for composition; an amanuensis, Michael Tillett, is engaged to help complete scores	<i>The Shires Suite</i> (1965–70) written for the Leicestershire Schools Symphony Orchestra; <i>Songs for Dov</i> (1969–70)	Maw, <i>The Rising of the Moon</i> ; Carter, Concerto for Orchestra
1971		<i>In memoriam magistri</i> , commissioned by the journal <i>Tempo</i> in memory of Stravinsky	Britten, <i>Owen Wingrave</i> ; Bernstein, <i>Mass</i> ; Ligeti, <i>Melodien</i> ; Birtwistle, <i>The Triumph of Time</i> , <i>Tombeau in memoriam Igor Stravinsky</i>
1972	Several television appearances over the previous decade introduce Tippett to a new audience and culminate in the documentary made for the BBC by Mischa Scorer, <i>Poets in a Barren Age</i>	Symphony No. 3 (1970–2)	First performance of Davies’s opera <i>Taverner</i>
1973	A German production of <i>The Midsummer Marriage</i> is given at the Badisches Staatstheater	Piano Sonata No. 3 (1972–3)	Britten, <i>Death in Venice</i>
1974	A ‘Sir Michael Tippett Festival’ is mounted in his honour at Tufts University, USA, on 13 February; the American premiere of <i>The Knot Garden</i> at Northwestern University, Illinois, on 22 February is the first performance of any Tippett opera in America		
1975	Visits Zambia for a performance of <i>A Child of Our Time</i> in Lusaka Cathedral		The fall of Saigon on 30 April precipitates the end of the Vietnam War after almost twenty years of conflict
1976	Undertakes a lecture tour in America, including the Doty Lectures in Fine Art at the	<i>The Ice Break</i> (1973–6)	Davies, Symphony No. 1, <i>The Martyrdom of St Magnus</i> ; Glass, <i>Einstein on the Beach</i> ;

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Date	Biography	Works	Cultural and Historical Events
	University of Austin, Texas; is awarded the Gold Medal of the Royal Philharmonic Society		Britten, <i>Phaedra</i> ; Holloway, <i>Clarissa</i>
1977	Although his involvement in the PPU decreases, he speaks out against President Carter’s development of the neutron bomb at the opening of a PPU exhibition on 8 August	Symphony No. 4 (1976–7)	
1978	<i>The Ice Break</i> receives its first German production on 26 June; he visits Java and Bali during a stay in Australia to conduct his Symphony No. 4 – the sounds of the gamelan he experiences on these islands influence his Triple Concerto	String Quartet No. 4 (1977–8)	Davies, <i>Salome</i>
1979	Awarded the Companion of Honour	Triple Concerto for Violin, Viola, Cello and Orchestra (1978–9)	Davies, <i>The Lighthouse</i>
1980	Publication of <i>Music of the Angels: Essays and Sketchbooks of Michael Tippett</i> , ³ a collection of essays and broadcasts not published in <i>Moving into Aquarius</i>	<i>Wolf Trap Fanfare</i>	
1982		<i>The Mask of Time</i> (1980–2)	Langer, <i>Mind: An Essay on Human Feeling</i>
1983	Awarded the Order of Merit and becomes the President of the London College of Music	<i>The Blue Guitar</i> (1982–3); <i>Festal Brass with Blues</i>	Martland, <i>Babi Yar</i>
1984		Piano Sonata No. 4 (1983–4)	Davies, Symphony No. 3; Birtwistle, <i>The Mask of Orpheus</i> ; Holloway, <i>Seascape and Harvest</i>
1985	Celebrates his 80th birthday with a two-week tour of Texas including concerts of his music; he conducts some of his music despite now being blind in his right eye		Goehr, <i>Behold the Sun</i>
1987	Has an operation for colon cancer in October but is well enough to take part in a celebration of his music in Manchester only three months later		Davies, <i>Resurrection</i>
1988		<i>New Year</i> (1986–8)	Turnage, <i>Greek</i>
1990	His 85th birthday is celebrated by twelve hours of continuous broadcasting devoted to his music on BBC Radio 3; goes on two-month tour of Australia and New Zealand to attend performances of his work	<i>Byzantium</i> (1989–90)	Birtwistle, <i>Gawain, Ritual Fragments</i> ; Adès, <i>Five Eliot Landscapes</i> ; MacMillan, <i>The Confession of Isobel Gowdie</i>
1991		String Quartet No. 5 (1990–1)	
1993	Declares <i>The Rose Lake</i> to be his final composition – after this he completes only <i>Caliban’s</i>	<i>The Rose Lake</i> (1991–3)	MacMillan, <i>Seven Last Words from the Cross</i> ; Martland,