

Completions and Reconstructions of Musical Works

Part 6: Conclusion

by Stephen Barber

I am not suggesting that all these completions and reconstructions are equally successful and worthwhile. One test of success is acceptance into the general repertoire, and, leaving out revisions, orchestrations and transcriptions, here are some obvious examples: Bach concertos, Gluck's *Orfeo* in versions based on Berlioz' edition, Mozart's clarinet concerto with bass clarinet and his *Requiem* (various versions), Beethoven's *Leonore*, Bruckner's eighth symphony (Haas edition), Mahler's tenth symphony (Cooke edition), Faure's *Requiem* (1893 reconstruction), Russian operas notably *Prince Igor* and *Khovanshchina*, Elgar's third symphony, Bartók's third piano concerto, Schoenberg's *Jakobsleiter*, Berg's *Lulu*.

There are others which seem to me equally worthy of acceptance but which currently have only marginal or fringe status. Some of these are: reconstructed Renaissance church music, Mozart's C minor Mass (Levin edition), Schubert symphonies and piano sonatas, Bruckner's ninth symphony (Gerd Schaller revised version), Debussy's *Printemps* (de Cou choral version), Stravinsky's *Les Noces* (1917 version), Grieg's second string quartet (Röntgen version), the Tchaikovsky-Bogatyrev symphony in E flat, Aarre Merikanto's *Symphonic Study*, Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass* (Wingfield version), various works by Enescu, the septet version of Richard Strauss's *Metamorphosen*, various works by Kurt Weill and the Terezin composers. There are also successful shorter works such as Bach's final fugue from *The Art of Fugue* (Tovey completion, together with his suggestions for performance), Mozart's *Concert Rondo* K.386, the Sinon scene from Berlioz' *Les Troyens*, the *Tristan* Prelude with the concert ending, Beaumont's completion of Busoni's *Dr Faust*, Prokofiev's *Cello concertino* (Blok version) and various piano pieces by Liszt and others.

There are also some I regard as failures: Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante for four wind instruments* even in the Levin version, the Scriabin-Nemtin *Prefatory Action*, Schoenberg's reworkings of Monn and Handel, the vocal version of Berg's *Lyric Suite*, Bartók's viola concerto, Falla's *Atlantida*. This does not mean that I think that these attempts were not worth making or the works not worth hearing, but simply that I do not regard them as artistic successes.

I consider that we owe a good deal to those scholars and others who have made many works performable which previously were not, or made versions which were more complete and satisfactory than those we had before, and that this continues to be a very worthwhile field to explore.

Note

The complete survey is available as a single pdf [here](#).