

1 NYP 18-27, "Rule, Britannia!"

2 (THEME MUSIC & OPENING BILLBOARD)

3 AB: ...and **THIS week:**

4 (MUSIC: UP and UNDER)

5 AB: ...Our broadcast is devoted entirely to music by
6 British composers. This is Alec Baldwin
7 inviting you to listen as we hear excerpts from
8 Britten's War Requiem and a complete
9 performance of The Planets by Gustav Holst.
10 Also on the program: The Fantasia on a Theme by
11 Thomas Tallis by Ralph Vaughan-Williams. We
12 begin right now with music by Sir Edward Elgar.
13 This is the Cockaigne Overture. Leonard
14 Bernstein conducts...the New York Philharmonic.

15 (MUSIC)

16 AB: Ah, there's that characteristic blaze of sound
17 we expect from Elgar. That's a very satisfying
18 end to Elgar's lively and colorful portrait of
19 Edwardian London, The Cockaigne Overture. The
20 New York Philharmonic was conducted in that
21 recording by Leonard Bernstein.

22 (SLIGHT PAUSE)

23 AB: Ralph Vaughan-Williams composed the next work
24 on our program in 1910 and it was premiered at
25 Gloucester Cathedra for the Three Choirs
26 Festival that same year. Dubbed Fantasia on a
27 Theme by Thomas Tallis, this piece is scored
28 for string orchestra. At the root of this
29 sumptuous modal delight is a hymn tune from
30 1567 by Thomas Tallis. This melody was
31 originally one of nine that Tallis wrote for
32 the Archbishop of Canterbury. When Vaughan-
33 Williams edited the English Hymnal centuries
34 later, in 1906, he included the melody there.
35 Here's the original, *Why F'umth in Fight, the*
36 *Gentiles Spite* as performed by The Sixteen:

37 (MUSIC)

38 AB: ...and let's now here what Vaughan-Williams did
39 with it. This is the Fantasia on a Theme by
40 Thomas Tallis. Dimitri Mitropoulos conducts...The
41 New York Philharmonic.

42 (MUSIC)

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46 AB: Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis. The New
47 York Philharmonic was conducted by Dimitri
48 Mitropoulos. The recording was made at the St.
49 George Hotel in Brooklyn on March 3, 1958.
50 Vaughan-Williams died just five months later on
51 August 26.

52 The Tallis Fantasia remains one of the best-
53 known works by Vaughan-Williams. The same can
54 be said of another fantasia he wrote, which was
55 also based on a tune from the late 16th
56 century. I think you may recognize it:

57 (MUSIC: Fantasia on Greensleeves)

58 AB: Fantasia on Greensleeves by Ralph Vaughan-
59 Williams. The New York Philharmonic was
60 conducted by Leonard Bernstein.

61 (SLIGHT PAUSE)

62 AB: If Elgar and Vaughan-Williams served as
63 stewards and guardians of British music in the
64 20th century, then it was Benjamin Britten who
65 most visibly pushed it in new directions and
66 carried it forward.

67 We'll conclude this first half with two
68 movements from Britten's War Requiem from 1962.

69 In October of 1958—a two months after the death
70 of Vaughan-Williams--Britten was invited to
71 compose a major work for an arts festival.
72 This was to coincide with the re-consecration
73 of Coventry Cathedral, which had been leveled
74 during a German air raid in 1940. The festival
75 was to be an international event with respect
76 to both musicians and audience.

77 A lifelong pacifist, Britten responded with
78 great enthusiasm. The composer had already
79 been forced to shelve two earlier projects that
80 he had planned: an oratorio called *Mea culpa*
81 after the dropping of the atomic bombs on
82 Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945...and a work to
83 commemorate the assassination of Mahatma Ghandi
84 in 1948. As Michael Steinberg wrote in the
85 liner notes for this recording quote, "*In a*
86 *sense, the commission from Coventry was what*
87 *[Britten] was waiting for—what he NEEDED.*"

88 Britten himself wrote in response to the
89 commission quote, "*I should be very honored to*
90 *be connected with such a significant and moving*
91 *occasion, and shall do my best to turn out*
92 *something worthy of it.*" End quote.

93 AB: What Britten "turned out," stands today as a
94 true monument of Western Culture.

95 The War Requiem draws on forces larger and more
96 complex than in any of Britten's previous
97 works. The performers are basically divided
98 into two groups, reflecting the dual source of
99 the sung words. These include texts from the
100 Latin *Missa pro defunctis* and commentary, as
101 expressed through nine English-language poems
102 by Wilfred Owens. A casualty of the last days
103 of the First World War, Owens wrote these poems
104 from the trenches and the hospital between 1917
105 and 1918.

106 While the Latin text is generally the property
107 of a large mixed chorus and soprano soloist
108 with a full orchestra, the poetry is expressed
109 via a tenor and baritone soloist, accompanied
110 by a chamber orchestra.

111 We're going to hear the last two movements:
112 Agnus Dei and Libera Me. As soloists we'll
113 hear soprano Carol Vaness, tenor Jerry Hadley,
114 and baritone Thomas Hampson. The orchestra is
115 joined by the Westminster Choir and the
116 American Boychoir. Kurt Masur conducts...the New
117 York Philharmonic.

118 (MUSIC)

119 (APPLAUSE)

120 AB: *"Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord; and let*
121 *perpetual light shine on them. Let them rest*
122 *in peace. Amen."*

123 The final words of the War Requiem, Op. 66 by
124 Benjamin Britten. We just heard the concluding
125 two movements of this masterwork. The New York
126 Philharmonic was conducted by Kurt Masur. As
127 soloists, we heard soprano Carol Vaness, tenor
128 Jerry Hadley and baritone Thomas Hampson. The
129 orchestra was also joined by the Westminster
130 Choir and the American boychoir. Samuel Wong
131 conducted the chamber orchestra.

132 The War Requiem was hailed at its 1962 World
133 premiere as being virtually beyond criticism.
134 Indeed, it is worthy of note that the preceding
135 year saw the Bay of Pigs invasion, the
136 construction of the Berlin Wall, and marked the
137 beginning of the United States' involvement in
138 Vietnam. How weighty and poignant this work
139 must have seemed to that audience...and how very
140 powerful and timely it continues to be.

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142 AB: In a moment, we'll lighten up with a trip
143 around the Solar System courtesy of Gustav
144 Holst. I'm Alec Baldwin and you're listening
145 to The New York Philharmonic This Week.

146 (ID)

147 AB: And we conclude now with The Planets, Op. 32 by
148 Gustav Holst. Zubin Mehta conducts...The New
149 York Philharmonic.

150 (MUSIC)

151 AB: That music may have been composed to explore
152 the influence of the planets on the psyche, but
153 it also makes for a very pleasant journey
154 around the solar system. We just heard The
155 Planets, Op. 32 by Gustav Holst. The New York
156 Philharmonic was conducted by Zubin Mehta,
157 concluding this program dedicated to music by
158 British composers.

159 (INSERT END CREDITS)

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164 PROMO for 18-29

165 AB: The Philharmonic visits the opera on our next
166 New York Philharmonic broadcast. This is Alec
167 Baldwin. Please join me as we present a
168 complete performance of Bluebeard's Castle by
169 Bartok plus orchestral and vocal highlights
170 from Beethoven's Fidelio, Wagner's Ring Cycle,
171 and more. It's A Night at the Opera...on The New
172 York Philharmonic This Week.