

6 Oct	ORGOVANY GONGRETT - BERTHOUDING, BRIGOLA, London. Symphony Orchestra. Michael Tilson Thomas conducts and conducts the symphony. LSO Ltd £18 511.53 £5
7 Oct	MOZART 200 - English Chamber Orchestra, Misaia Uchida pianoforte. Frank Lloyd horn. Piano Concerto No. 17 in G, K453; Horn Concerto No. 3 in E flat, K447; Piano Concerto No. 19 in F, K459 £13.511.53 £5.50
7 Oct	THE TAKEMITSU SIGNATURE 19 - 13 OCTOBER SPONSORED BY PROMER HIGH FIDELITY (GB) LIMITED SPONSORED BY SENTRY LIMITED & THE WMO CO. SECURITIES (EUROPE) LTD
Barbican Hall	LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Michael Tilson Thomas cond. Julian Bream guitar, Peter Donohoe piano, Kusanagi Fournish with Fyeworka Masselin, Cécile de la Cité Chéssis Takemitsu; Vero Mac-Coll, Pamela Stranberry; The Five of Spain, £28.119.50 £12.50 £5.50
Barbican Hall	QUINSHALL NEW MUSIC ENSEMBLE James Wood director. Debussy; Poulenc at apex; mtd of un laure (arranged for chamber ensemble); Takemitsu; Weinberg
Barbican Hall	BBC WELSH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Federali Onda cond. Linda Finnie mezzo John Welchson tenor
Barbican Hall	FEDERALI Onda cond. Linda Finnie mezzo John Welchson tenor Ferrer; Hazaola Espagnola Takemitsu; Donohoe
Barbican Hall	MAHER: Das Unverloren Erbe BBC Welsh S.O. £2.50 £5.50
Barbican Hall	LINCOLNIE GONGRETT with percussion from Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Led by James Wood. Admission Free
Barbican Hall	Vind Traca Takemitsu: Pian Trac Varese; Ionisation; Admision Free
Barbican Hall	NEW LONDON CHAMBER CHOIR James Wood cond. Guildhall Percussion Ensemble, Royal College of Music Percussion Ensemble, Debussy; 'Tros Christus de Christus Ockens Stranberry; The Dove Descending Varese Chamber Assistant; O Sacram Communion Takemitsu; Vero Mac-Coll
Barbican Hall	ALIAN ENSEMBLE SERRATIAN BELL Guitar and Flute
Barbican Hall	Paul Ser: Lump Op.7; Allegro ma non Troppo Grandioso; Valdes Policia Villalobos; Distribulo de Flores; Suite; Emancipacion; Vozes; At in Twilight; Toward the Sea; Haveli; Fervens pour une Infante Deluere; Valse
Barbican Hall	LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Michael Tilson Thomas cond. Paul Crossley, Peter Seikin piano, Stranberry; Symphony in Three Movements (commission) Donohoe; Lute, Lute and Lute (commission) Donohoe; LSO Ltd £28.119.50 £12.50 £5.50
Barbican Hall	FACTORY STORE The world of musical humour returns for two evenings of unique entertainment. Returns only.
Barbican Hall	CHILDREN'S GONGRETT Aquarius Ensemble, Inpocord, Nicholas Cleobury, narrator Brian Kay, Pauline ar. Matthew Barber, the Elephant Martin Butler; Dny Beasts (based on the verses of Road Dahl); Saint-Saens: The Carnival of Animals Aquila £7.50 Children £5
Barbican Hall	POLISH NATIONAL RADIO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Antoni Wit cond. Yury Solomon piano Soloists: Fryderyk Dabys; Chopin; Piano Concerto No. 1 Brahms; Symphony No. 1 £22 £18.14 £10.15
Barbican Hall	AN EVENING WITH DAVE BRUBUCK £21.18 £15.15 £5.50
Barbican Hall	A TRIBUTE TO LEONARD BERNSTEIN London Symphony Orchestra, Bernstein; A Quiet Place Suite, Three Scenes from Mass; Symphony Chorus, WRT 566 Story; Chichester Palace £28 £19.50 £12.50 £5.50
Barbican Hall	CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Simon Rattle cond. Alfred Brendel piano; Beethoven; Piano Concerto No. 1 Schoenberg; Variations for Orchestra Beethoven; Piano Concerto No. 4
Barbican Hall	£25 £19.50 £12.50 £5.50

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HAYDN Surprise Symphony; DOMINIC MILDOWNY Percussion Concerto new commission; SAINT SAENS (arr Clemie) Rondo Capriccioso; BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 2
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Holywell Music Room 8.00pm
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The Sommer/Monika Huggewil/Wilbert Hazzel
Saturday 12 October
Sheildonian Theatre 8.00pm
LONDON CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
MOZART Divertimento K138 Sinfonia Concertante for Violin and Viola; MENDELSSOHN Oeul
Thursday 24 October
Sheildonian Theatre 8.00pm
PIOTR ANDRZESZEWSKI piano
BACH French Suite; BEETHOVEN Sonata Op. 110
SCHUMANN Faschingschwank aus Wien; CHOPIN 3 Mazurkas; Polonaise
Thursday 31 October
Sheildonian Theatre 8.00pm
EUROPEAN COMMUNITY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
Bernard d'Arcaill piano
MOZART Piano Concerto K271; HAYDN Symphony No. 57
HANDEL Concerto Grosso Op 3 No. 5
Saturday 2 November
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THE ENGLISH CONCERT IN OXFORD Trevor Pinnock
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Books

Towards the millennium

Sir Michael Tippett is still looking ahead as his autobiography is published.
Liz Thomson talks to a great composer with a lust for life



Malcolm Crowthers

Sir Michael Tippett prefaces his autobiography by saying that he hates 'focusing endlessly on what is past and gone. The future matters more.' Only intimations of mortality, a tussle with cancer, prompted the dozen of contemporary composers to commit his store of memories to paper. The result, written with a little help from Meliton Bowen, is, he tells you, 'bloody interesting'.

Retrospection over, Sir Michael, 86, is once again busy with the future. When we spoke, he had just finished a string quartet and an orchestral piece, tentatively titled *The Rose Lake*, is in the thinking stages. A joint LSO/Boston SO commission. It will be the centrepiece of a 1995 festival to celebrate both Tippett's own 90th birthday and that of the LSO. Solti told him recently that he can be 90 if he wants to be. 'So that settles it,' laughs Sir Michael, 'if Solti orders you to be 90 - well, you'd better get on with it!'

Never mind 1995. Tippett is looking forward to the millennium. He is bound to have something relevant to contribute: he has never been anything less than a child of his time, and *Those Twentieth Century Blues* confirms what we always suspected - the composer as a fully paid-up member of the human race (he loves TV soaps), Jungian psychology, politics (he went to jail as a conscientious objector), adventure travel and fancy cocktails.

All very different from his near contemporary, Benjamin Britten - or at least the Britten presented by Donald Mitchell, of whose earnest endeavours Sir Michael rather disapproves. The book confirms that Britten and Tippett grew apart. Indeed, many friends grew apart from Britten, from the stifling atmosphere of Aldeburgh. Sir Michael, an astute judge of character, believes that, somewhere around *Peter Grimes*, Britten changed. 'Something happened to Ben and people had great difficulty coming to terms with it. I decided in my own way how to deal with it - which was to expect little in the way of personal warmth from Britten, with whom he once shared an unconscious-mated night. 'It became difficult to talk to him composer to composer.' Sir William Walton was completely fazed by Britten's success. 'Willie was deeply insecure,' continues Sir Michael, 'Susanna [his wife] held him up - but heavens, he was insecure. The whole Britten thing was disturbing for him, almost dried him up.' Like Walton, Tippett was a friend of the Sitwells. 'They were a funny lot, love,' he chuckles, adding that only Edith had any real talent. 'She thought I ought to have a great deal of time for her lot, but I wasn't made for that. I enjoyed it mightily when everybody was there. At one gathering he met T S Eliot, with whom he hoped to work. But the poet cautioned him against setting words that possessed their own 'inner music'. So Tippett began to write

his own libretti - though in Byzantium, premiered recently at the Proms, he set Yeats, whom he had begun reading years ago on Eliot's recommendation.

Widespread recognition of Tippett's talent came late - in the Forties, following *A Child of Our Time*, which Britten was quick to praise. He scripted a living conducting and teaching and was for a long time director of music at Morley College, Lambeth. There he dusted off pre-classical masterpieces by the likes of Gibbons, Purcell and 'with Walter Goehr and the refugee lot, Monteverdi, beginning the restoration of the Vespers to its rightful place in the repertory.

Such quarrying of the old informed his own work, causing problems for conductors of the day. Under Sir Adrian Boult a performance of the Second Symphony actually broke down, while Sir Malcolm Sargent once held a pre-concert press conference to denounce intellectualism in music. Nevertheless, Tippett liked Sargent. 'We got on extremely well. He was like that and you just had to lump it. It was a technical thing; he'd never looked at Purcell or Monteverdi so he didn't recognise their techniques when they appeared in someone else's music. One just let him be.'

Improved standards of music-making he attributes to two factors: the BBC, which enabled listeners unable to get to a concert, and to the teaching of music in schools, particularly to the patriotic instrumentalists. While praising such counsils as Birmingham for supporting music come what may, Tippett believes that 12 years of Thatcher misrule 'certainly didn't do any good'. Naturally, he is concerned that too high a value is placed on commerce and utility, ignoring the true value of the arts. 'The Kent Opera business was scandalous,' he says. Covent Garden is only secure, relatively speaking, 'because where else would you take your ambassadors?'

His memoirs out of the way, Sir Michael is spending time recording his own versions of the triple concerto and the CBSO and chorus in *A Child of Our Time* for Collins Classics. Poor eyesight makes conducting and composing difficult these days, 'but you can't stop doing something just because you have a problem'. He works with oversized score paper on a specially constructed music stand. 'Even then it's a bloody nuisance - if I go away for a break and then come back, I can't see what I did before. But I have help, an amanuensis who really guesses a lot of it!'

'I write very slowly at home,' Sir Michael concludes. 'I sit on my arse for ages. But, as my minders say, if I weren't thinking of composition I'd get into mischief.'

Those Twentieth Century Blues is published by Hutchinson, price £16.99