

Peter Warlock (1894 - 1930)

Serenade (1922)

'to Frederick Delius on his sixtieth birthday'

*arranged for Wind Octet (Flute, Oboe, 2 Clarinets,
2 Horns and 2 Bassoons) by Toby Miller (2020)*



Peter Warlock
in 1924

Jelka and Frederick
Delius in
the late 1920s

Bernard van
Dieren in 1917

Kaikhosru
Shapurji Sorabji
in 1933



Frederick (born Fritz) Delius' 60th birthday was on 29th January 1922. When he produced this *Serenade* as a present on that occasion, Peter Warlock (born Philip Heseltine) was only 27. Heseltine's obsession with the older composer began aged 14 when, having heard a piece of his, he later discovered that Delius' house in France was close to his uncle's. In 1911 he was given leave from Eton to attend an all-Delius concert in the Queen's Hall and managed to meet the composer in the interval. Afterwards he wrote him the first of very many letters (often running to several pages). Heseltine was unhappy at Eton and took refuge in music: clearly relevant is that his father Arnold, a wealthy solicitor, had died when he was only two. Delius encouraged Heseltine to follow his desires and pursue music as a career despite his mother's discouragement - advice that the conductor Thomas Beecham strongly reproved. (Delius himself had previously earned his father's displeasure by dedicating himself to music instead of business.) Delius remained an outsider in English and French musical life, thanks to a highly personal style and to increasing cantankerousness as he got older and seriously ill. He owed most of his exposure to Beecham, who thought the relationship with Heseltine unhealthy, and Delius' encouragement ill-advised for a youth so mentally and emotionally unstable and (in Beecham's view) incapable of commitment. The year after the *Serenade* (1923), when Delius was already seriously disabled from syphilis, Heseltine published a biography. By now he had absorbed other influences and started to admit privately that he no longer admired Delius' music so much, while continuing publicly to champion it.

In 1916 Heseltine had been introduced to Bernard van Dieren, a Dutch composer living in London: another older, ill and unpleasant outsider, who became a powerful second influence. Attempting to champion his music, Heseltine fought a battle with publisher Winthrop Rogers, who had refused to publish some of van Dieren's works. So when in August 1918 Heseltine wanted to submit some of his own songs for publication, he used the pseudonym Peter Warlock, a name he had first used in November 1916, reflecting his interest in the occult. Thereafter he kept it for all his compositions. Unlike Delius, now almost mainstream, Van Dieren's music, described as 'harmonically chromatic, rhythmically fluid and freely polyphonic', has remained a byway. (A few radio recordings are now available on Youtube: the string quartets show a journey away from early atonality.) Van Dieren suffered from kidney stones which caused severe and chronic pain, for which he became addicted to morphine. This may have exacerbated his bad behaviour towards the few people who attempted to champion his music. Erik Chisholm records the events of 15th-16th December 1930, when van Dieren called off a planned concert of his music at the last minute: " 'Couldn't we understand plain English THE CONCERT WAS CANCELLED.' For an hour or so we tried to persuade him to change his mind: he was adamant - there would be no concert! So, the van Dierens took the night Scot to London (after wheedling out of me cash to buy first-class train tickets - they had neither tickets nor money). Arriving in London van Dieren rushed off to see Peter Warlock one of our vice-presidents and a great friend and supporter of van Dieren. What transpired at the meeting between the two composers will never be known nor whether van Dieren's recital of his unhappy visit to Glasgow added to Warlock's already [missing word?] mental sufferings - anyway, van Dieren was the last person to see him alive for Warlock successfully gassed himself that night!" (early on the morning of 17th: the coroner recorded an open verdict for lack of proof of intent).

Heseltine had also had a friendship with a third, young, compositional outsider, another prickly eccentric, Kaikhosru Shapurji (born Leon Dudley) Sorabji. A Farsi & English (not Sicilian/Spanish as he claimed) pianist with a quixotic personality, he wrote unclassifiable music at the extremes of playability, which for most of his life he banned others from playing. He retired from public life in 1951 to live as a semi-recluse in the village of Corfe Castle in Dorset, where he continued to compose until a few years before his death in 1988 at the age of 96. Strenuous efforts on his behalf by a small number of devotees persuaded him to lift the ban before his death, leading to performances by virtuosi including John Ogdon, Yonty Solomon and Marc-André Hamelin.

To these three outsiders from musical mainstream and society whom Heseltine befriended in life, we can add a fondness for one already dead. In his earliest (9th Feb 1915) review as music critic for the Daily Mail, of a concert in the Queen's Hall of Delius' piano concerto, Heseltine wrote: 'The concert concluded with a performance of the last great symphony that has been delivered to the world - that of César Franck.' As Warlock, he also paid it tribute in his *The Old Codger*, a ragtime parody of Franck's main theme from the last movement (dedicated to Colin Taylor, his music teacher at Eton). Franck was also an outsider, and musically there are some clear similarities across Heseltine's four enthusiasms: highly personal, strongly chromatic harmony, and an idiosyncratic approach to compositional form. Warlock's *Serenade* adopts some of Delius' style: divided and double-stopped strings allow rich but elusive harmonies. But the piece is tightly constructed with exposition (up to letter E in my transcription) and recapitulation (to letter N), each with four or so themes that partly overlap, and a short coda. Although the music seems to me to work well for wind, one consequence is that the sound of rippling parallel semiquavers on flute and clarinet (before E) even more closely foreshadows Ronald Binge's *Sailing By*, used as closing music for BBC Radio 4 for many years... I have not found a performance that respects the composer's metronome mark. Complex harmonies need time to be absorbed, but the themes flow better faster, at least on second hearing perhaps. Heseltine was as dogmatic as his friends ('music is neither old nor modern: it is either good or bad'), but Warlock definitely wrote good music: he made it to the mainstream.

Serenade for Strings arr. for Wind Octet by Toby Miller

Score (instrumental pitch)

for Frederick Delius on his 60th birthday

Peter Warlock

Allegro moderato ♩ = 72 [usually slower]

Flute

Oboe

Clarinet 1 in A

Clarinet 2 in A

Horn 1 in F

Horn 2 in F

Bassoon 1

Bassoon 2

[poco rit. a tempo]

Fl

Ob

Cl1

Cl2

Hn1

Hn2

Bn1

Bn2

8

Fl *mf* *f*

Ob *mp* *mf*

Cl1 *mp* *p* *mp*

Cl2 *p* *mp*

Hn1 *p* *mp*

Hn2 *mp*

Bn1 *p*

Bn2 *p* *mp*

11 *poco rit.* **A** *a tempo*

Fl *f*

Ob *mf*

Cl1 *mf* *espress.* *mf* *p*

Cl2 *mf* *p*

Hn1 *mf*

Hn2 *mf* *p*

Bn1 *mf* *p*

Bn2 *mf* *p*

15

Fl

Ob *espress.*

Cl1 *p* *mp*

Cl2 *pp* *mp*

Hn1 *pp* *mp*

Hn2 *mp*

Bn1 *pp*

Bn2 *pp*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 15 through 18. The Flute (Fl) part is silent. The Oboe (Ob) part begins in measure 16 with a melodic line marked *espress.* and *p*, moving to *mp* in measure 17. The Clarinet 1 (Cl1) and Clarinet 2 (Cl2) parts play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, starting at *pp* and moving to *mp*. The Horn 1 (Hn1) part plays a sustained note in measure 15, then a melodic line in measure 16, and a sustained note in measure 17. The Horn 2 (Hn2) part is silent in measure 15, then plays a melodic line in measure 16, and a sustained note in measure 17. The Bassoon 1 (Bn1) and Bassoon 2 (Bn2) parts play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, starting at *pp* and moving to *mp*. There are dynamic markings and hairpins throughout the system.

19

Fl

Ob *mp*

Cl1 *mp* *p*

Cl2 *mp* *p*

Hn1

Hn2

Bn1 *mf* *p*

Bn2 *p*

Detailed description: This system contains measures 19 through 22. The Flute (Fl) part is silent. The Oboe (Ob) part plays a melodic line marked *mp*. The Clarinet 1 (Cl1) and Clarinet 2 (Cl2) parts play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, starting at *mp* and moving to *p*. The Horn 1 (Hn1) part plays a melodic line. The Horn 2 (Hn2) part is silent. The Bassoon 1 (Bn1) and Bassoon 2 (Bn2) parts play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, starting at *mf* and moving to *p*. There are dynamic markings and hairpins throughout the system.

pochiss. rit. **B** a tempo
teneramente

23

Fl *mf sf f mp*

Ob *mf sf p fp mp*

Cl1 *mf sf p f mp*

Cl2 *mf sf p fp mp*

Hn1 *mf sf p fp p*

Hn2 *mf sf p fp*

Bn1 *mf sf p fp*

Bn2 *mf sf p fp*

26

Fl *mp*

Ob *p*

Cl1 *p*

Cl2 *p mp*

Hn1 *pp*

Hn2

Bn1 *p*

Bn2

29

Fl

Ob *pp*

Cl1 *pp*

Cl2 *pp*

Hn1

Hn2

Bn1 *p*

Bn2

31

poco rit. ... **C** a tempo

Fl *f* *mp* *pp*

Ob *f*

Cl1 *mf* *p*

Cl2 *mf* *pp*

Hn1 *pp*

Hn2 *pp*

Bn1 *mf* *pp*

Bn2 *p*

poco rit. a tempo

35

Musical score for measures 35-38. The score includes parts for Flute (Fl), Oboe (Ob), Clarinet in Bb (Cl1), Clarinet in C (Cl2), Horn in F# (Hn1), Horn in C (Hn2), Bassoon 1 (Bn1), and Bassoon 2 (Bn2). The key signature is one sharp (F#). The tempo markings are 'poco rit.' and 'a tempo'. Dynamics include *p*, *f*, *mp*, *mf*, and *fp*. A dynamic hairpin is present in the Flute part.

39

Musical score for measures 39-42. The score includes parts for Flute (Fl), Oboe (Ob), Clarinet in Bb (Cl1), Clarinet in C (Cl2), Horn in F# (Hn1), Horn in C (Hn2), Bassoon 1 (Bn1), and Bassoon 2 (Bn2). The key signature is one sharp (F#). The tempo markings are 'poco rit.' and 'a tempo'. Dynamics include *mp*, *f*, *fp*, and *f*. A dynamic hairpin is present in the Flute part. A circled 'D' is above the Flute staff in measure 40.

42

[poco meno mosso] [accel.] [poco più mosso]

Fl

Ob

Cl1

Cl2

Hn1

Hn2

Bn1

Bn2

mf *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

45

Rallentando

Fl

Ob

Cl1

Cl2

Hn1

Hn2

Bn1

Bn2

fp *f* *f* *f* *fp* *f* *fp* *f* *fp* *f*

47 **E** a tempo ♩ = 72
[perhaps as marked or nearly, faster than Tempo 1]

Musical score for measures 47-49. The score is for a woodwind ensemble and includes parts for Flute (Fl), Oboe (Ob), Clarinet in Bb (Cl1), Clarinet in C (Cl2), Horn in F (Hn1), Horn in E (Hn2), Bassoon in Bb (Bn1), and Bassoon in Bb (Bn2). The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked 'a tempo' with a quarter note equal to 72 beats per minute. The dynamic markings are: Fl (mf), Ob (mf), Cl1 (mp), Cl2 (mp), Hn1 (mp), Hn2 (mp), Bn1 (mf), and Bn2 (p). The music features various melodic lines with slurs and dynamic markings.

Musical score for measures 50-52. The score is for a woodwind ensemble and includes parts for Flute (Fl), Oboe (Ob), Clarinet in Bb (Cl1), Clarinet in C (Cl2), Horn in F (Hn1), Horn in E (Hn2), Bassoon in Bb (Bn1), and Bassoon in Bb (Bn2). The key signature changes to one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked 'a tempo' with a quarter note equal to 72 beats per minute. The dynamic markings are: Fl (subito p), Ob (mp), Cl1 (subito p), Cl2 (pp), Hn1 (subito pp), Hn2 (subito pp), Bn1 (mf), and Bn2 (mf). The music features various melodic lines with slurs and dynamic markings, including a 'dolce' marking and a 'poco rit.' marking.

54

Fl *mf* *f*

Ob *mp* *mf*

Cl1 *mp* *p* *mp*

Cl2 *p* *mp*

Hn1 *p* *mp*

Hn2 *mp*

Bn1 *p*

Bn2 *p* *mp*

poco rit. G a tempo

57

Fl

Ob

Cl1 *f* *espress.* *mf* *pp*

Cl2 *mf* *pp*

Hn1 *mf* *pp*

Hn2 *mf* *pp*

Bn1 *mf* *pp*

Bn2 *mf* *pp*

61

Fl

Ob *espress.*

Cl1

Cl2

Hn1

Hn2

Bn1

Bn2

p *pp* *mp* *mf*

65 **H** *molto tranquillo* *rallentando molto* ...

Fl

Ob

Cl1

Cl2

Hn1

Hn2

Bn1

Bn2

p *pp* *mf* *f*

68 **J** **a tempo**

Fl *p subito* *mp* *f*

Ob

Cl1 *mp subito* *mf*

Cl2 *mp subito* *mf*

Hn1 *mp subito* *mf*

Hn2 *mp subito* *mf*

Bn1 *mp* *mf*

Bn2

70 **[pochiss rit.]**
(Ob lead)

Fl *mp* *f* *mf*

Ob *mp* *f*

Cl1 *mp* *mf*

Cl2 *mp* *mf*

Hn1 *mp* *mf*

Hn2 *mp* *mf*

Bn1 *mp* *f* *mf*

Bn2 *mp* *mf*

72 **K** a tempo]

Fl

Ob *pp*

Cl1 *pp*

Cl2 *pp*

Hn1

Hn2

Bn1

Bn2 *p*

74 poco rit. ... **L** a tempo

(Fl lead)

Fl *f* *mp* *pp*

Ob *f*

Cl1 *mf* *p*

Cl2 *mf* *pp*

Hn1 *pp*

Hn2 *pp*

Bn1 *pp*

Bn2 *mf* *p* *p*

Fl *p*

Ob *mp*

Cl1 *mf*

Cl2 *p*

Hn1 *p*

Hn2 *p*

Bn1 *p*

Bn2 *p*

Fl *f* *ff*

Ob *mf* *f* *mf* *ff*

Cl1 *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

Cl2 *mf* *f* *mf* *f*

Hn1 *mf* *f* *mf*

Hn2 *mf* *f* *mf*

Bn1 *mf* *f* *mf*

Bn2 *mf* *f* *mf*

85 **molto rit.** (Ob lead) ... **N** **a tempo**

Fl *ff* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mp*

Ob *ff* *mf dim.* *mf* *mf*

Cl1 *ff* *mf* *mp* *mf* *mf*

Cl2 *ff* *mf dim.* *mf* *mf*

Hn1 *ff* *mf dim.* *p*

Hn2 *ff* *mf dim.* *p*

Bn1 *ff* *mf*

Bn2 *ff* *mf*

89 **molto rit.** (Fl) **GP**

Fl *p* *f*

Ob *mp* *p* *pp* *f*

Cl1 *p* *f*

Cl2 *pp* *f*

Hn1 *p* *pp* *f*

Hn2 *p* *pp* *f*

Bn1 *p* *pp* *f*

Bn2 *mp* *pp* *f*

92 **a tempo**

opt.8

GP

ff

(no tongue)

ff

ff

ff

ff

ff

This musical score page, numbered 92, is for woodwinds and brass instruments. It begins with the tempo marking 'a tempo'. The Flute (Fl) part features a melodic line with an 'opt.8' marking and a 'GP' (Grain Processing) marking. The Oboe (Ob), Clarinet in B-flat (Cl1), Clarinet in C (Cl2), Horn in F (Hn1), Horn in E-flat (Hn2), Bassoon 1 (Bn1), and Bassoon 2 (Bn2) parts all play sustained notes with a 'ff' (fortissimo) dynamic. The Cl2 part includes a '(no tongue)' instruction. The bottom two staves (Bn1 and Bn2) have a melodic line with a 'ff' dynamic. The score concludes with a double bar line.