

G&T GAZETTE

Established 1995. Incorporating the *Edison Echo*

October/November/December

2007



Keep Saturday the 21st of June 2008 free for a special occasion! See page 2 for further details?

Kubelik began recording in London in 1902. For a brief account of his recording activities see page 11. The Odeon recording in my collection came from the Don Cameron estate.



AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

What started out a random search through the classified advertisement columns of the *Evening Post* has rapidly turned into a significant event which is looming large on the horizon for 2008. This is what we discovered in the *Evening Post*, dated Saturday 21st June 1958.

EDISON to electrical era, 1896 to 1925. Persons interested in the above historical recorded music period tel. 86-742 or 51-557.

We predict there will be considerable interest in this anniversary on the 21st June 2008, which will be the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Scratchy Record Group. Planning for this will require a lot of help and cooperation from all our members. If all those who normally attend our meetings turn up with partners, then we can expect a group of about 20 individuals might be expected. If we add another half a dozen or so of former members, then we are looking at about 30 participants for our special function. This has led us to think beyond the normal format of a hosted programme followed by afternoon tea.

This is what looms large in our thoughts.

A sit down luncheon followed by a prepared entertainment. This would be staged at a venue like the Portland Hotel in Thorndon where we would book a room where a buffet luncheon could be served. The cost of this would be in the vicinity of \$30 a head (this figure does not include wine).

Your participation and support on how this anniversary might be celebrated are of great importance to us, so don't hesitate to come forward with your suggestions. We particularly require someone to help us organise entertainments. As well, we are planning a specially produced CD which will feature records that have appeared in our programmes over the last 50 years. So you may be called upon for the loan of a record from your collection.

From the Committee of two.

A MONTH IN LONDON - from an inveterate traveller who is known to all of us in our group.

I flew out of Auckland, Friday 30th June 1978, landing at Los Angeles 2 hours before the Auckland take off time. I spent the weekend at Anaheim, where I met up with a NZ friend who worked in LA and spent time at Disneyland & Universal City. John dropped me at the airport for the flight to Heathrow which I reached on Monday the 3rd of July. I was rather surprised by the ease of entry into the UK, by-passing customs completely. I caught a train into London and alighted appropriately at Covent Garden Station where I left the ticket in the turnstyle, but fortunately the staff recognised an honest face when they saw one. I spent that night at the YMCA in Enderle Street, breakfast was over the road, just about next door to the Gramophone Exchange, which became my next port of call. I wasn't tempted to buy anything. I rang a friend from Hamilton called David who had won a RADA scholarship in the 1960s and was immediately invited to stay.

I taxied to St. John's Wood where I met his wife and daughter and changed into my glad rags for the first of three trips to Glyndebourne. David very kindly delivered me to Victoria station to catch a train to Lewes, then on by bus for Glyndebourne. The Opera was *La Boheme* with Linda Zoghby as Mimi and Alberto Cupido as Rodolfo. Nicholas Braithwaite conducted. I enjoyed it of course and kept pinching myself that I was at Glyndebourne. Had a very nice dinner but was a bit shocked at being asked for a tip! Got back to the flat about 1 am and met other flatters, Gary & Hugh who were ballet students from Belfast. Gary was part Nubian. There were two other visitors from Manchester. A negro and a white. A couple of weeks later got home to find the boys laughing at having a gangster's hatchet man in David's bed. (David was in Portugal). Seems the negro was a gangster and the white was his heavy. Interesting people!

Wednesday was Glyndebourne again, this time for *Così fan tutte*, with Maria Ewing, Hakan Hagegard and Haitink conducting. Thursday was a triple bill of one act operas at the London Opera School. Marie McLaughlin sang *Lauretta* in *Gianni Schicchi* and Nicholas Folwell was in *Riders to the Sea*. I met Nicholas on the Mediterranean Sea Music trip in

2005. He was the MC but also gave a recital. I also bought his CD. Friday was half of Faust. It was an outdoor stage at Holland Park and as luck would have it it started to rain. My good fortune continued when Hugh, who was on the door at the Colosseum, managed to get me in for nothing to see Nureyev in the Sleeping Beauty. Nureyev was bloody awful! He was very arrogant and unless the ballerina was Margot Fonteyn, he just walked through the role. So I left the Colosseum and walked down St. Martin's Lane to Covent Garden and bought a ticket for that evenings performance of Pelleas & Melisande. I've forgotten the names of the cast. Sunday on the other hand, was very different. Godspell at the Shaftesbury which I loved. The Royal Festival hall came up with a Damnation of Faust with John Tomlinson, then it was back to Glyndebourne for Zauberflote, with the decor by David Hockney, Sylvia Greenberg sang the queen of the Night, Isabelle Buchanan, Pamina and Benjamin Luxon was Papageno. Haitink again conducted. During the interval I wandered around taking photographs. I saw a group of picnickers in slacks and blazers so snobbishly looked down my nose at them until I realised it was Hockney and friends.

Jesus Christ Superstar, Evita and Merry Wives of Windsor followed then Christa Luwig at the Wigmore Hall,.A II I remember of that recital was a determined looking woman closing the lid of piano. Finish!

The Royal Albert Hall had a Tchaikovsky concert on the 16th followed by a recital in the crypt of St. John's, Smith Square. I forgot who the singer was until recently when I found the ticket. It was Jessye Norman.

The same evening saw another musical, Bubbling Brown Sugar, an all negro cast. Garry auditioned successfully for the chorus but hadn't started when left.

Hugh was also dancing with the Ballet Rambert at the Round House, a theatre near the flat, so of course I went to that. Schoenberg's Pierre Lunaire and a modern dance based on the flight of condors way up in the stratosphere. Still remember that, so guess this made an impression.

Hugh had also been invited to dance in a student production of Honegger's King David in Brugge, a town just out of Zurich. Sat in on a rehearsal when I got over that way. Another highlight of London was Yeomen of the Guard. This was performed in the moat of the

Tower of London and starred Tommy Steel as Jack Point.

Massenet's oratorio Terre Promise was put on in the church of St. Botolph's, Bishopgate. Before it started I watched a chap setting up recording equipment in the choir loft. Annie followed at the Victoria Palace, then an Israeli Ballet at the Royal Festival Hall. Regent's Park also has an open air theatre so watched Shakespeare's Lady of the Sonnets. This didn't get rained out.

That evening the Royal Albert Hall did Oedipus Rex with Janet Baker and Derek Hammond Stroud.

Saw the Royal Ballet both Friday and Saturday and a matinee of a movie with David in the lead. When I came home and told Lois (D's wife) she laughed her head off. They thought it terrible and gave the opening night such a reception that the rest of the audience moved to the other side of the house. I had to see it, he was me mate! Another very pleasant evening was spent with Leslie Austin and Leslie Cutts. The only mistake was going to Oh Calcutta. I thought it was a musical like Hair, with nude scenes in it. Unfortunately it was a revue with one clothed scene. Not very impressed. Kicked myself for skipping Macbeth with Peter Glossop at the Royal Albert. Also got to Lowestoft to meet Syd Gray of Rubini Records. Bought some. Finally took off from Gatwick for Paris on August 5th, but that's another story. Somewhere along the way was a Norma with Caballe at Covent Garden.

Pat Byrne 2007

"A striking figure in Kubelik's entourage is his Hindu valet, who, with a massive white turban upon his head, is generally seen on guard outside his master's rooms. One of his chief duties is to take care of the three violins which the virtuoso carries with him, estimated to be worth about £5000".

Free Lance 30 May 1908.

KUBELIK'S FIRST CONCERT IN DUNEDIN

A review of this performance which occurred on the 7th July and was printed in the Otago Witness 15 July 1908

The debut of Kubelik in Dunedin will be memorable for more than one reason. The elements were on their, Very Worst behaviour on the 7th, and it was really a great compliment to the distinguished musician who is visiting our somewhat remote city for the first time that, despite the teeming weather, a very large audience was present at the Garrison Hall on the occasion of his first concert. Courage in this case reaped its reward a hundred fold. Kubelik more than satisfies—he astonishes. He is first, and last a superb artist to whom it is an education to listen. One is tempted to, dwell in his ease upon the personality of the musician, for it seems to accord in an uncommon degree with his music. His bow, it is hardly an exaggeration to say, is to those whom music can stir truly a magician's wand, casting a spell over the listener. He disarms criticism by the very perfection of his methods. Surely no instrument combines as does the violin at the same time so great a capacity for causing human suffering and for contributing to the most exquisite, human edification. Being the artist he is Kubelik as the least demonstrative of players. He accomplishes feats of most astonishing brilliance—with the most serene composure. But what is commonly known as temperament he possesses in a marked degree. His music is no mere epitome of sparkling mechanical brilliancy, no mere exposition of what can be accomplished by a species of starting prestigious presentation. There is in it no lack-of that indefinable something called soul, which means that if can play on that imagination of the sensitive listener just as its moods way vary. His technique one competent to judge was heard to describe as "ludicrously marvel-

lous." And the phrase will perhaps serve to convey a sense of that astonishing ease with which Kubelik achieves results that are the desire of every accomplished violinist. From what has been said it will have been gathered that Kubelik entirely delighted his hearers last evening. He did more indeed, for he aroused in them, a demonstrative enthusiasm which was a great tribute to his performance.

The concert programme submitted was one that served well to demonstrate the violinist's powers, while being composed of selections judiciously chosen from the point of view of the audience. It opened with Mendelssohn's fine "Concerto in E minor," the three movements of which provided at the outlet a great test, from which the artist emerged with triumphant honours. Keeping the classic requirements of the work at all times in due regard, the violinist brought the resources, of his art to bear with splendid effect within legitimate bounds. In the opening allegro appassionata the audience had a gratifying initiation into his abilities, faultless execution being combined with a tone of full and even purity and a notable degree of expressiveness. The beautiful succeeding andante was rendered with delightful breadth and sympathy, and a great achieve followed in the allegro vivace, which was interpreted with a vigour and vivacity which the audience found quite irresistible. An ancient proverb has it that the greatest strokes make not the best music. However that may be Kubelik's rippling harmonies are as "musical as the chime of tinkling rills". An encore number being demanded as a matter of course, the violinist gave a "Poem" by Fibich which was marked by excellent feeling and the production of a

fine tone. The Lyric tendency of his art was, here again in evidence. Kubelik's next contributions consisted of the bracketed numbers "Prieslied" from Die Meistersinger, "Praeludium", (Bach) and "Polonaise" Wieniaiowski,

The Wagner-Wilhejmj composition was remarkable as a performance of a merit which might almost be described as crystalline, so pure was the melody produced. The unaccompanied Bach was itself one of the great events of the evening, and worth a Pilgrimage to listen to. The perfection of technique which here enabled the violinist to cope with ease with chords and passages of ceaseless rapidity and bewildering difficulty and to maintain throughout a classic elevation of sentiment appealed irresistible to critical and uncritical alike in the audience and the applause was enthusiastic. In the succeeding Polonaise another great treat was forthcoming, and the interpretation provided a veritable cascade of brilliancies. In this number the truly remarkable character of Kubelik's G string tone was fully manifested. It is a tone of velvety softness, a pure singing note rich with the quality of the human voice. A great ovation was accorded the artist at the close of the number, which was followed by a charming rendering of Hubay's "Zephyre," most delicate in its harmonic effects. The violinist's concluding programme number was Paganini's "Witches' dance," a bravure composition of remarkable difficulty and brilliancy. Here again the player's absolute mastery of all the resources of his instrument was convincingly manifested, and the storm of applause only subsided when he again appeared and rendered with great delicacy of tone Schumann's "Traumerei."

Kubelik's supporting artists were Miss Erna Mueller, mezzo soprano and Miss Emily Dyson, pianist. The Free Lance in Wellington was rather harsh on them, complaining that they were very mediocre stating that "Purchas-

ers of guinea seats are entitled to look for something more than a one-star company". 14 Months later, the Otago Witness gave very generous coverage of a civil law suit which revived memories of Kubelik's visit to New Zealand.

When Kubeik came to New Zealand in 1908, he was served with a claim for expenses incurred between himself and an entrepreneur called Gorlitz. The Otago Witness published this account of the trial in an issue dated the 22nd of September 1909.

GORLITZ v. KUBELIK

In the Supreme Court on the 14th Mr Justice Williams and a special jury of 12 heard a claim by Hugo Gorlitz against Jan Kubelik, the - celebrated violin virtuoso, for £3,000 damages. Mr W. C. MacGregor, with Mr Callan, appeared for the plaintiff, and Mr Solomon K., C., with him Mr A. S. Adams for the defendant.

The special jury was constituted as follows:- J. Moloney (foreman), A. J. Shaw, A. H. Fisher, F. J. Gunn, W. Bannerman, J. S. Webb, W. J. Duke, Thomas Walker, W. R. Christie, A. R. Graham, J. A. Geerin, and C. Draper.

The statement of claim set out that on the 20th February, 1906, the plaintiff and the defendant, during the course of a tour of the United States, met at Chicago, and entered into a contract whereby the defendant agreed to undertake a concert tour through Australia, and New Zealand of not less than 40 concerts, to commence in September, 1906, and to conclude about the end of December, 1906. The terms were to be the same as those of the American tour whereby the defendant should receive 60 per cent. of the gross receipts of all concerts in Melbourne

and Sydney, 55 per cent. of the gross receipts in other centres, or in respect of the first concert which was given, and when a second or subsequent concert was given, 60 per cent. of the gross receipts resulting from the concert, 80 per cent. of the receipts of all philharmonic and symphony society concerts where a fixed price was arranged, and 80 per cent. commission on all gross receipts from any "At homes" arranged by any other agent than the plaintiff. The plaintiff was entitled to the, balance of the gross receipts. The plaintiff bound himself to pay all expenses for special advertisements, and such expenses as the rent of halls, lights, advertisements, printing, posters, and other expenses in connection with the tour, and to pay the salaries and expenses, of the assisting artists, with the exception of the pianist, and to provide at his own expense a concert grand piano by a maker of the first rank. Should the plaintiff desire the support of an orchestra at one or more of his concerts he bound himself to pay the expenses, and he also bound himself to pay the travelling and hotel expenses of himself, his suite, and his pianist. The receipts were to be under the control of Carl Junkermann (Kubelik's secretary), to whom a statement of them was to be handed. The payments due to Kubelik were to be made weekly, and it was provided that they should never be more than three concerts in arrear. Gorlitz was to submit all preliminary arrangements in connection with the concerts for Herr Junkermann's approval. On the day that this contract was entered into, plaintiff, at Kubelik's request, cabled to his representa-

This article on the violinist Jan Kubelik, appears by courtesy of the National Libraries PAPERS PAST project. Those who are computer literate, can use this system which is free to everyone. Although it has been available for years, it has recently undergone improvements with the addition of a OCR search system which locates given topics personalities or events by date or name which have appeared in our national or regional newspapers. Try it and be amazed!

tive in London as follows "Ask Murphy cable Australia tour positively settled; open Melbourne beginning September; also inform English press; tell Madame; propose Louis as advance agent; leaving for 'Frisco to-night." On completion of their American tour plaintiff and defendant arrived at Liverpool on 27th May, 1906, when Kubelik refused to carry out the contract. Plaintiff claims that by reason of this breach he was put to much loss and expense, and lost profits he would otherwise have made had defendant performed his part of the contract. Plaintiff accordingly claimed to recover £3,000 damages.

In the statement of defence it is admitted that Kubelik made several tours of Britain and America with plaintiff as his agent. It is also admitted that plaintiff and defendant met at Chicago on the date alleged,

but defendant denies that he entered into the contract mentioned in the statement of claim, or, in fact, into any contract for a tour of Australia and New Zealand. Defendant admits that on or about May 27, 1906, he refused to enter into a contract with Gorlitz for a tour of Australia and New Zealand. McGregor said that plaintiff was at one time employed by Kubelik to run concerts, in England and also, in the United States. A number of tours were arranged and large sums of money were made out of them. The last tour the plaintiff and the defendant made together was in the United States and Canada. Unfortunately, it was not so successful and at the conclusion of it the plaintiff and the defendant fell out, and the defendant refused to carry out the bargain he

had entered into with the plaintiff. The plaintiff said he entered into a contract with Kubelik during the American tour for a future tour of Australia and New Zealand. The defendant denied that he ever entered into such a contract and said in effect, although the Australasian tour had been often discussed, no conclusive bargain was ever made. On the other hand, he (Mr MacGregor) would attempt to prove that there was an actual contract made while in the United States, that the contract was not carried out, and that, consequently, the plaintiff had suffered large monetary loss. It was in the contemplation of both parties that if Kubelik came to Australia in 1906 he would do so under the direction of the plaintiff, otherwise he would be breaking the contract.

His Honor: But he did not come out in 1906? Mr McGregor: No, and that is part of our contract; he took good care not to come out in 1906. In a letter he wrote in 1905, Kubelik undertook that if he came out in 1906 he would do so under the direction of the plaintiff. He knew that the plaintiff was a British subject which Kubelik was not, and knew the run of the ropes in New Zealand. Gorlitz had been here 30 years ago, and was married 20 years ago in Dunedin to Miss Amy Sherwin, known as the Australian nightingale. Gorlitz had returned to London, but had kept in touch with Australasia. Kubelik new that Gorlitz was familiar with Australasia, and well known there. Counsel went on to give details of negotiations. He put in a letter from Junkermann, from Canton, Ohio, asking the plaintiff to move in the matter of the Australasian tour. When the plaintiff was in New York, Junkermann gave him instructions to open any telegrams for him. He opened one from his clerk named Buckingham in London, in which he wanted to know when he would be wanted for the Australasian tour, showing that Junkermann wanted to undermine

Gorlitz to get the Australasian tour in his hands, and to get Buckingham to carry it out. That brought them to January 1906. Gorlitz met Kubelik in Chicago on February 20, and talked of the Australian tour. The plaintiff would say that one reason why Kubelik was anxious to get dates fixed and the matter settled and communicated to the newspapers was that he had heard that a young and rising violinist named Mischa Elman was booked for Australia, and he was anxious to get ahead of him. Accordingly the cablegram mentioned in the statement of Claim was sent to Miss Murphy in London and it would be shown that in the Dunedin papers and the *Melbourne Age* and *Argus* of February 22, 1906 appeared a cable message announcing the forthcoming tour of Kubelik. After leaving Chicago the parties did not meet until their arrival in San Francisco two months later where the tour was again discussed, and in San Francisco they met several Australians - Mr. O'Connor (Postmaster General) and the Musgroves (who were then touring America). In the end of April Gorlitz was in Chicago, and he wired Junkermann asking if the Australian contract should be made out in German or English. The plaintiff then proceeded to New York, when he received a reply to his telegram. Junkermann wrote it was all the same whether it was made out in German or English, but that be thought it would be better in English, showing clearly that a bargain had been made. The plaintiff then ordered printing for the Australian tour, which came to close on £100 which he had to pay out of his own pocket. Altogether he had paid out about £187 up to this time. On May 14 the parties met again at Montreal. A day or two latter at Quebec Junkermann said that Kubelik wanted the \$920 owing to him on the 80 concerts in America. Gorlitz said that he had not got it - that he had lost money. It was then said it would be all right if he paid half, and be borrowed \$500, which he paid

over to Junkermann, who then asked if he could get a fresh contract of the Australian tour as he had destroyed the other. Gorlitz gave him one, and altogether had forwarded him three contracts, none of which he had seen since. Then the party embarked for Liverpool. The relations were friendly on the voyage. Kubelik used to walk arm in arm with Gorlitz, and play chess with him. They met Sir James and Lady Mills who were travelling by the same steamer. Lady Mills talked about the Australian tour, and promised in Kubelik's presence to arrange a reception for him when he came to Dunedin. Junkermann still had possession of the three contracts. Gorlitz was anxious about getting the contracts signed. He knew his signature was on them and he wanted the other man's. On their arrival at Liverpool Kubelik told a pressman who met the party of his forthcoming tour to Australasia at the end of 1906 under Gorlitz's management. On the journey from Liverpool to London Gorlitz asked Junkermann to get the Australian contract signed before Kubelik went home to the Continent. Junkermann returned with Kubelik's answer that he would not deal with Gorlitz until the latter paid him the money he owed. Gorlitz replied that Kubelik owed him a lot of money for advertising. However, an appointment was made for the Hyde Park Hotel next morning to discuss the matter. Gorlitz turned up only to find that Kubelik had not been near the hotel but had caught the night boat for the Continent. Gorlitz wrote thrice to Kubelik asking him to keep his engagement. In the last letter Gorlitz expressed the intention of claiming £3000 unless he did so. This letter was written in 1906, and it also threatened steps to prevent Junkermann vilifying Gorlitz. A reply was received from Junkermann in July of that year in which Junkermann said he had at last had enough of Gorlitz's uncoutness, and would thenceforth treat Gorlitz as his biggest enemy and would fight him openly.

Counsel suggested that previously Junkermann had posed as Gorlitz's friend, while all the time Junkermann had been undermining Gorlitz with Kubelik, and that this letter was a throwing off all disguise. Kubelik and Junkermann remained on the Continent, so that Gorlitz would not proceed against them in the English courts. Kubelik lived in Bohemia, and took very good care to remain there so long as Gorlitz was in England. Gorlitz left for Australia to prepare a tour for his wife, Amy Sherwin, in 1906. Previously Gorlitz had been in New Zealand for two years in the employ of the Dresden Company, but was shortly going home to pick up the threads of the English business in which he had engaged previous to going on tour with Paderewski and Kubelik. When Kubelik came out to New Zealand he probably did not know where Gorlitz was, but Gorlitz had served him with a writ for damages. He did his best to get Kubelik to stay in New Zealand and fight the case out, but unsuccessfully. As to the damages claimed, the defendant said that the gross takings for the Australasian tour had been £9,618 and the expenses £3,847 so that the plaintiff's 40 per cent. of the gross takings would have been swallowed up in expenses, and that plaintiff was therefore entitled to no damages. But he (counsel) contended that this was a grossly fallacious statement. There were discrepancies in the accounts. On those gross takings the tour should have shown a surplus of £2,000 to the impresario. But the true test would not be the actual profits from the tour as carried out in 1908, but the probable profits from a tour such as that mapped out in 1906. The gross takings would have been nearer £15,000 than £10,000. Gorlitz's 40 per cent. would have been £6000 and the expenses of such a tour should not exceed 20 per cent, or £3,000, that would leave Gorlitz's profit of £3,000, which was precisely the sum Gorlitz claimed for as far back as 1906.

To be continued in our next issue.

Jan Kubelik 1880 - 1940

Thumbnail biography & discography

Kubelik made his debut in Prague at the age of eight, playing a Vieuxtemps Concerto. He was a pupil of Karel Weber, Franz Ondricek (1859-1922), Joseph Foerster (1859-1951), and the great violin teacher Ottokar Sevcik (1852-1934). With the latter, Kubelik studied from 1892 to 1898. He made his debut outside Bohemia in 1898, when he played in Vienna. Soon after, he gave performances in Budapest and Zagreb. In 1900, he toured Europe, making his London debut under the baton of Hans Richter.

In his youth, he played upon a good modern violin. From 1901 to 1909, he used a 1678 Stradivarius presented to him by Lord Walter Palmer. His earlier recordings were made with this instrument. His last violin was a 1715 Stradivarius, bought for him in 1910.

Kubelik recorded five titles for the Gramophone Company in 1902. They form part of the legendary London Red G&T series. He then went onto make fourteen sides for the Fonotipia/Odeon Companies 1905-1909. Finally in 1908-9 he made twelve recordings for the Gramophone Company all of which were transferred to the double sided DB & DA series in 1924.

In 1903 he married the Countess Czaky Szell and became a naturalised Hungarian citizen. His compositions include an American Symphony (Composed in the united States in 1937 and first performed in Prague in 1939).

Kubelik died in Prague in 1940. He is best remembered today as the father of the conductor Rafael Kubelik.

Jan Kubelik first toured New Zealand in 1908. He returned again in 1911 for another series of concerts. His popularity was such that the Rotary Company in Britain did a roaring trade with his postcards. I have been fortunate to locate several of these in my capacity as a collector of postcards. Those featured on the front and back cover date from about 1906 and include a study with his wife and family made in the grounds of her family's castle in Hungary. Note the small child with the American flag.



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