

Dennis and Aubrey Brain
A Compiled Listing of New-Found Unpublished Holdings
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Abstract

The discovery of unpublished and otherwise obscure holdings pertaining to the legendary horn players Dennis Brain and Aubrey Brain is reported upon below. Findings include performance venues, dates and works performed uncovered from the Britten-Pears Foundation Archive Catalog. An inventory of former privately held Collections pertaining to Dennis Brain found in the Arts and Humanities Research Council Concert Program database is also reported upon. Collections now reside at various locations including The British Library, The National Library of Ireland, Universities, Colleges and Concert Halls. Content includes concert handbills, notes, programs and prospectuses and may include music scores, taped program and broadcast recordings.

Britten-Pears Foundation Archive Catalog Findings

Dennis Brain

The holdings which follow were discovered in the Britten-Pears Foundation Archive Catalog.¹ Two works listed in its inventory are particularly noteworthy: Benjamin Britten's *Serenade for Tenor Horn and Strings*, Op.31, and Humphrey Searle's *Aubade for Horn and String Orchestra*, Op.28.

Britten's *Serenade* ranks perhaps as the single greatest contribution to horn repertoire in contemporary times. The work is the earliest and arguably the most significant composed for, and dedicated to Brain. It is interesting to note how frequently the Britten (1913-1976) *Serenade* was performed by Brain following its First Performance at Wigmore Hall. Britten composed the work in March-April 1943 at the request of Brain who was performing in the R.A.F. Central Band for which Britten was writing incidental music for a series of wartime radio documentaries. Britten dedicated the work to Brain and British tenor, Peter Pears. The *Serenade* received its First Performance on October 15, 1943. It included Peter Pears as the vocal soloist and was conducted by Walter Goehr.

The Humphrey Searle (1915-1982) *Aubade for Horn and Strings*, Op. 28, was composed for, and commissioned by Brain who proclaimed the *Aubade* as the finest work ever composed for him. It is the only known work to have been commissioned by Brain for himself. *The Radio Times*, vol.127, no.1648, week 12-18 June 1955, p.9, 13 June 1955 Third Program, reports the First Performance of the *Aubade* that evening listing Dennis Brain - Horn with the Aldeburgh

Festival Orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr. Humphrey Searle commented on hearing a radio broadcast of the work, “*How marvelously he played it for it is not at all easy.*” It is unfortunate that the Aubade was not “officially” recorded by the BBC that evening although it was broadcasted. Although a recording of the Aubade by Brain remains elusive, there are reports of an “unofficial” recording of the broadcast in circulation that has been heard.

Source: Britten-Pears Foundation Archive Catalog
Performance Venues, Dates and Works Performed

Date	Performance
15 October 1943	Britten, Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings, Britten; Boosey and Hawkes Concerts, 4th Season, 2nd Concert, Wigmore Hall, London, UK
16 January 1944	Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings, Britten; Friends House, Euston, London, NW1
26 April 1944	Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings, Britten; Boosey and Hawkes Concerts, 8th Concert of the 3rd Season, Wigmore Hall, London
28 March 1949	Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings, Britten; Boyd Neel Concert Society, Chelsea Town Hall, Kings Road, London, UK
12 June 1950	Brandenburg Concerto No.1, Bach, Commemoration Concerts, Broadcasting House Concert Hall, London, UK
13 August 1950	Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings, Britten, Cambridge Summer Festival of Music and Drama, Clare College, Cambridge
2 February 1951	Serenade for Tenor Horn and Strings, Britten, Sheffield Philharmonic Society, City Hall, Sheffield, UK
4 March 1951	Serenade for Tenor Horn and Strings, Britten; Horn Concerto, Hindemith, Museum Gallery Concerts, Victoria and Albert Museum, London
16 April 1951	Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings, Britten; Horn Quintet in E-flat K.407, Mozart, Kingsway Hall, London, UK
12 June 1951	Sonata for Horn and Piano, Hindemith, Aldeburgh Parish Church, Aldeburgh, Suffolk, UK
11 January 1952	Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings, Britten, Usher Hall Second Season 7th Concert, Series A Friday, Usher Hall, Edinburgh, UK
12 January 1952	<i>Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings</i> , Britten, Glasgow Saturday Concerts, 13th Concert, Series A, No.7, St Andrew's Hall, Glasgow, UK

25 January 1953	<i>Auf dem Strom, Schubert; Sonata in F for Horn and Piano, Beethoven; Sonata for Horn and Piano, Hindemith, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK</i>
20 June 1953	<i>Horn Concerto In D, No.1, Haydn, Aldeburgh Festival of Music and the Arts, Jubilee Hall, Aldeburgh, Suffolk Hall, UK</i>
28 January 1955	<i>Canticle III Still Falls the Rain, Britten, (Premiere performance), Aldeburgh Festival of Music and the Arts, Wigmore Hall, London, UK</i>
23 June 1955	<i>Concerto in D No.2 for Horn and Strings, Haydn, Wigmore Hall, London, UK</i>
21 June 1955	<i>Aubade for Horn and Strings, Searale (First Performance), Divertimento No.14 in B-flat K.270 for Flute, Oboe, Horn, Clarinet, Horn and Bassoon, Mozart, Aldeburgh Festival of Music and the Arts</i>
15 June 1957	<i>Sinfonietta Op.48 for two oboes, two horns and strings, Arnold, Aldeburgh Festival of Music and the Arts</i>

*NB. The correct date for the First Performance of the Aubade by Dennis Brain is 13 June 1955 not 21 June 1955 as incorrectly listed in the Britten-Pears Foundation Archive Catalog. The 13 June 1955 date has been verified by the author through citation in the Radio Times provided above.

**NB. The first of the three Sinfoniettas was written in 1954 and received a particularly memorable performance at the Tenth Aldeburgh Festival three years later when the conductor was the celebrated horn player, Dennis Brain, a long-standing friend of Arnolds, and one whose tragic death shortly afterwards had a profound and lasting effect on the composer.

Arts and Humanities Research Council Findings

The following holdings were discovered in the Arts and Humanities Research Council Concert Programs² database. Twenty collections pertaining to Brain are listed. It is unknown if any of the collections contain recordings or music scores as there is no indication that their full contents have been inventoried and published.

Source: Arts and Humanities Research Council
Concert Programs

1. Ernst Henscel Collection: London, Wigmore Hall (1938-1966), British Library³

Description

A miscellaneous collection of handbills, programs and prospectuses for performances given at the Wigmore Hall, London between 1938 and 1966, held loosely and arranged chronologically

across the boxes of the Ernst Henschel collection (1892-1966).

9 March 1944; Philharmonia Concert Series, (Box 31/i (1950)

11 February 1950: Philharmonia Concert Series presents Louis Kentner, Richard Lewis, Dennis Brain, Constance Shacklock and John Wills. (Box 31/i (1950)

20 December 1955: Frederick Grinke (violin) and Michael Mullinar (piano) with the Dennis Brain Ensemble (Box 31/i (1950)

27 and 30 April 1956: Dennis Brain Chamber Orchestra/Wind Ensemble (Box 31/i (1950)

2. Ernst Henschel Collection: London, Conway Hall (1939-1966)⁴

Description

A miscellaneous collection of programs and handbills for performances - principally the South Place Sunday Concerts - given at the Conway Hall, London between 1939 and 196 held loosely and arranged chronologically across boxes 25 to 37 to the Ernst Henschel Collection 1892-1966

9 March 1944: Free Austrian Movement in Great Britain/Rostal Chamber Orchestra with Max Rostal (violin) and Dennis Brain (horn) Box 27/I (1940-1944)

11 February 1950: Philharmonia Concert Series presents Louis Kentner, Richard Lewis, Dennis Brain, Constance Shacklock and John Wills Box 31/I (1950)

20 December 1955: Frederick Grinke (violin) and Michael Mullinar (piano) with the Dennis Brain Ensemble Box 34/I (1956)

27 and 30 April 1956: Dennis Brain Chamber Orchestra/Wind Ensemble Box 34/I (1956)

3. Ernst Henschel Collection: London: Town Hall, Chelsea (1946-60), British Library⁵

Description

A collection of programs and handbills for performances given at the Town Hall, Chelsea between 1946 and 1960, held loosely and arranged chronologically across boxes 28 to 35 of the Ernst Henschel collection (1892-1966).

26 November 1946: Central London Orchestra with George Chitty (tenor) and Dennis Brain (horn), conducted by Norman del Mar (box 28)

7 February 1951: Haydn-Mozart Society Concerts with the London Mozart Players and Dennis Brain (horn), conducted by Harry Blech

4. Leonard Darke Collection: 1945-1949, Royal College of Music, Center for Performance History⁶, Royal College of Music, Center for Performance, College Hall 220-238 Goldhawk Road, London W12 9PL

Description

The programs of the following three concerts all appear in one brochure.

30 April 1946, Chelsea Music Club, Chelsea Town Hall, Denis Matthews, Dennis Brain Wind Quintet

28 May 1946, Chelsea Music Club, Chelsea Town Hall, Franz Osborn, Max Rostal, Maria Lidka, Muriel Taylor, James Merritt Jr., Pauline Juler, Archie Camden, Dennis Brain

5 April 1948, Chelsea Music Club, Chelsea Town Hall, Griller String Quartet, Dennis Brain, Max Gilbert

5. Leonard Darke Collection: 1950-1955, Royal College of Music, Center for Performance⁷, College Hall 220-238 Goldhawk Road, London W12 9PL

Description not provided

4 July 1952, City Music Society, Goldsmiths' Hall, Dutch String Quartet, Max Gilbert, Dennis Brain, Gerald Moore

11 November 1952, Chelsea Music Club, Chelsea Town Hall, Dennis Brain Wind Ensemble

6. Harold Darke Collection, 1948-1949⁸

Description not provided.

5 May 1948, Busch Concerts, Kingsway Hall, Jo Vincent, Robert Irwin, Evelyn Rothwell, Joy Boughton, Leonard Brain, Dennis Brain, Ian Beers, Adolf Busch, Paul Draper, Colin Smith, James Merrett

7. Colyer-Fergusson Collection: London: Venues G-P, Royal College of Music, Centre for Performance History⁹

Description not provided.

Kingsway Hall, London:

17 November 1945 Philharmonia Concert Society, Ernest Element, Herbert Downes, Anthony Pini, Kendall Taylor, Alec Whittaker, Reginald Kell, John Alexandra, Dennis Brain

18 October 1946 Philharmonia Concert Society, Philharmonia Orchestra, Dennis Brain, Denis Matthews, Walter Susskind

26 February 1951 Philharmonia Concert Society, Mysore Concerts, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Georg Demus, Arthur Grumiaux, Dennis Brain (with reviews & annotations)

16 April 1951 Philharmonia Concert Society, Mysore Concerts, Philharmonia Orchestra, Norman Del Mar, Wilma Lipp, Peter Pears, Dennis Brain (with reviews & annotations)

Westminster:

23 November 1946 Ernest Read Orchestral Concerts for Children, Central Hall, Westminster

8. Del Mar Program Notes 321-397 (1954-1962), Royal College of Music, Library¹⁰

Description

A collection of programs for performances given in London and Edinburgh between 1954 and 1963, each of which includes historical and analytical notes (with musical examples) by Norman del Mar, held within the last of four boxes of material relating to del Mar's activity as a program note writer. The collection consists principally of performances given at the Usher Hall, Edinburgh as part of the Edinburgh International Festival of Music and Drama (1956-63) and by the Philharmonia Orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall, London (1954-58).

18 April 1956, Wigmore Hall: Dennis Brain Chamber Orchestra (first appearance), with Leonard Brain (Cor Anglais), conducted by Dennis Brain (2 copies)

9. Hans Keller Archive Concert Programs. Box JX/3: 1929 – 1954 (Cambridge University Library, Music Department)¹¹

Description

Programs for concerts which Keller either reviewed or simply attended. Many are annotated and have press cuttings of reviews (not by Keller) attached. Some are handbills only and a few are brochures for the Aldeburgh and Holland Festivals. The programs span 1929-1954.

10. Roberto Gerhard Concert Program Collection: Box 4 (Cambridge University Library, Music Department)¹²

Description

Concert programs featuring performances of single works by Roberto Gerhard. The collection is arranged in alphabetical order of composition.

04 March 1947, Wigmore Hall, Dennis Brain Wind Quintet

03 March 1969, Town Hall, Hampstead, Dennis Brain Wind Quintet Handbill (Horn player unknown)

11. Roberto Gerhard Concert Program Collection: Box 5 (Cambridge University Library, Music Department)¹³

Description not provided.

February – March 1965, Denis brain Wind Quintet. No further details provided. NB. Horn performer is unknown.

12. Aldeburgh Festival of Music and the Arts (1948-1969)¹⁴

Description not provided.

12 June 1951: Martin String Quartet/Mewton-Wood and Dennis Brain

22 June 1955: Brain Wind Quintet

13. Del Mar Program Notes 1-150 (1946-1950)¹⁵

Description

Central London Orchestra (1946–47)/Chelsea Symphony Orchestra (1948–1950). All performances were given at the Town Hall, Chelsea and were conducted by Norman del Mar. All programs include words for the vocal/choral pieces.

28 January 1955, Wigmore Hall, Zorian String Quartet, Dennis Brain, Benjamin Britten, Alan Bush, Herbert Downes, Peter Pears, Max Rostal. Memorial concert for Noel Mewton-Wood. Newspaper cuttings attached. Annotations on program.

14. Hans Keller Archive concert programs. Box JX/3: 1929 – 1954 Hans Keller Archive Concert Programs. Box JX/3: 1929 – 1954¹⁶

Description not provided.

7 February 1951, Town Hall, Chelsea, London Mozart Players, Harry Blech, Dennis Brain, Handbill

18 November 1953, Royal Festival Hall, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Paul Sacher, Dennis Brain (Minor annotations)

15. Charles Acton Collection: Box 64 (1956): (National Library of Ireland)¹⁷

Description

Miscellaneous programs from 1956, arranged chronologically, which form part of Box 64 in the Charles Acton Collection. RE Concerts: 8 January 1956, Royal Dublin Society Members' Hall, Ball's Bridge: The Dennis Brain Ensemble [reverse side]

16. Boydell Collection: Royal Dublin Society Concert Programs (1941-1985), Trinity College, Dublin Library¹⁸

Description

One folder of programs collected by Dr Brian Boydell relating to the Royal Dublin Society from 1 December 1941-9 January 1985

16 January 1956: The Dennis Brain Ensemble, [opposite side] 23 January 1956 'Pianoforte Recitals' Nina Milking

17. Halle Orchestra Concerts (1948-1968) (Henry Watson Music Library)¹⁹

Description

A collection of programs for the following concerts given by the Halle Orchestra: Albert Hall, Manchester - 18 and 19 February 1948

Albert Hall, Manchester:

31 January and 1 February 1951 - Solo tenor, Peter Pears - Solo horn, Dennis Brain - Conductor Paul Kletzki has duplicate.

18. The Ernest Bradbury Collection (1944-1992) (University of Leeds, Brotherton Library)²⁰

Description

This is a collection of 53 boxes, most of which contain concert programs.

26 June 1954 - York Festival, Art Gallery, York - The Dennis Brain Wind Ensemble, Box 4, 1954

19. C. Kennedy Scott Archive (1934-76) (Trinity College of Music, Jerwood Library of the Performing Arts)²¹

Description

A miscellaneous collection of handbills, programs and program books for performances given at a range of English venues between 1934 and 1976, forming part of the archives of the English composer and conductor, Charles Kennedy Scott (1876-1965)

15 August 1951, Royal Albert Hall: Henry Wood Promenade Concert (57th season), with Monica Sinclair (vocal), Dennis Brain (horn) and Kyla Greenbaum (piano) and the BBC Chorus and Symphony Orchestra, conducted by John Hollingsworth and Constant Lambert (with notes and photographs).

20. Eglesfield Musical Society: Envelope 4 (1942-56) Queen's College Manuscripts Collection²²

Description

A collection of programs for concerts given at The Queen's College, Oxford under the auspices of the Eglesfield Musical Society, 1942-1956, held loosely as the last of four envelopes of material. Also contained is a letter dated 27 November 1958 announcing the next concert in the

series and providing a provisional program. A handwritten annotation to this notes that no program survives for this event.

15 May 1948, Hall: Ena Mitchell, Richard Lewis, Alfred Deller, Duncan Thomas, Thomas Hemsley (vocal), Dennis Brain (horn) and Russell King (flute) and the Riddick String Orchestra, as part of the Oxford Music Festival (with words).

Notes:

1. <http://brittaa1.memset.net/DServe/dserve.exe?dsqIni=Dserve.ini&dsqApp=Archive&dsqDb=Roles&dsqSearch=RoleCode=='ROLE117447'&dsqCmd=Show.tcl>
2. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/search>
3. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/4632>
4. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/4632>
5. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/4627>
6. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/8157>
7. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/8160>
8. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/8204>
9. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/8233>
10. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/4511>
11. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/8113>
12. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/8123>
13. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/8124>
14. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/4205>
15. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/4508>
16. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/8113>
17. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/3179>
18. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/3301>
19. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/3922>
20. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/4146>
21. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/4338>
22. [http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/?fields\[start\]=30&keywords=brain](http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/?fields[start]=30&keywords=brain)

NB. Enter *Dennis Brain* in the Search Box then click on Go. You will be directed to the *Dennis Brain Concert Programs* site (page 1 of 3) containing the holdings listed below. After selecting and opening the desired Collection of interest, go to *Edit/Find on this page* and insert *Dennis Brain*. References to Dennis Brain will show highlighted on the page.

Aubrey Brain

The following listings for Aubrey Brain were also uncovered in the Arts and Humanities Research Council Concert Programs.

11 May 1939²³: National Gallery, Trafalgar Square: Griller String Quartet with Frederick Thurston (clarinet), Archie Camden (bassoon), Aubrey Brain (horn) and Victor Watson (double bass), given as part of the Royal Philharmonic Society London Music Festival 1939 (with Analytical Notes). Inserted in this program is various related material, including a ticket for this concert and fliers for other performances given as part of the Festival.

18 August 1925²⁴: Leila Megane and Signor G. Lenghi-Cellini (vocal), Isolde Menges (violin) and Aubrey H. Brain horn).

24 September 1929²⁵: Haydn and Mozart Concert with Dora Labbette and Robert Easton (vocal), Arthur Catterall (violin) and Aubrey Brain (horn).

Saturday 29 September²⁶ [no year], Gaumont Palace, Taunton: BBC Symphony Orchestra with Aubrey Brain (horn), conducted by Sir Adrian Boult (with Analytical Notes, including a list of the orchestral ensemble).

3 January 1934²⁷, Queen's Hall, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Sir Thomas Beecham, Elsie Suddaby, Stuart Robertson, Jelly D'Aranyi, Aubrey Brain, Philharmonic Choir

Notes continued...Aubrey Brain

23. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/4190>

24. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/4192>

25. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/4497>

26. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/8151>

27. <http://www.concertprogrammes.org.uk/html/search/verb/GetRecord/4184William>

William C. Lynch and Stephen Gamble, PhD. are co-authors of the recently published academic book, *Dennis Brain A Life in Music*, University of North Texas Press, ISBN 978-1-57441-307-6, ML419.B72G36 2011.