



**Letters from a Life: The Selected Letters of
Benjamin Britten, 1913-1976: Volume Four: 1952-
1957 (Selected Letters of Britten)**

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The fourth volume of the annotated selected letters of Benjamin Britten covers the years 1952-57, during which he wrote three major works for the stage - the Coronation opera *Gloriana*, the chamber opera *The Turn of the Screw*, and the full-length ballet *The Prince of the Pagodas* - as well as important vocal works such as *Canticles II and III* and the Hardy song-cycle *Winter Words*. Correspondents include librettists William Plomer (*Gloriana*) and Myfanwy Piper (*The Turn of the Screw*), and friends and collaborators such as Edith Sitwell, E. M. Forster, Basil Coleman, Imogen Holst, Francis Poulenc, Lennox Berkeley, the Earl of Harewood and Britten's partner and principal interpreter, Peter Pears. The volume charts Britten's growing stature as a major figure of the European musical establishment as composer, conductor and pianist, and his continuing involvement with the Aldeburgh Festival, the English Opera Group, and Covent Garden. Central to the period is the world trip undertaken by Britten and Pears and the first-hand encounter with the music and cultures of Bali and Japan that were radically to inform Britten's compositional techniques from *Pagodas* onwards. The comprehensive and scholarly annotations vividly evoke a key period in twentieth-century musical and cultural history, and offer a wide range of detailed information fascinating for both the Britten specialist and the general reader. Published in association with The Britten-Pears Foundation.

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