



Letters from a Life Volume 3 (1946-1951): The Selected Letters of Benjamin Britten

Benjamin Britten

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The third volume of the annotated selected letters of composer Benjamin Britten covers the years 1946-51, during which he wrote many of his best-known works, founded and developed the English Opera Group and the Aldeburgh Festival, and toured widely in Europe and the United States as a pianist and conductor.

Correspondents include librettists Ronald Duncan (*The Rape of Lucretia*), Eric Crozier (*Albert Herring*, *Saint Nicolas*, *The Little Sweep*) and E. M. Forster (*Billy Budd*); conductor Ernest Ansermet and composer Lennox Berkeley; publishers Ralph Hawkes and Erwin Stein of Boosey & Hawkes; and the celebrated tenor Peter Pears, Britten's partner. Among friends in the United States are Christopher Isherwood, Elizabeth Mayer and Aaron Copland, and there is a significant meeting with Igor Stravinsky.

This often startling and innovative period is vividly evoked by the comprehensive and scholarly annotations, which offer a wide range of detailed information fascinating for both the Britten specialist and the general reader.

Donald Mitchell contributes a challenging introduction exploring the interaction of life and work in Britten's creativity, and an essay examining for the first time, through their correspondence, the complex relationship between the composer and the writer Edward Sackville-West.

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