

BIOGRAPHY

Tristram Cary.

14th May 1925 – 24th April 2008.

Born in Oxford, he was the third son of famed novelist Joyce Cary (Mr Johnson, The Horses Mouth etc). As a youth Tristram enjoyed a keen interest in science, sound and electronics, and even though his father wanted him to become a doctor, he supported his son's desire to be a composer. Cary went on to study at Trinity College where he was introduced to the delights of modern classical music by friends Michael Flanders and Donald Swann.

As war broke out Cary joined and served in the Royal Navy as a radar operator. Here he encountered modern German tape equipment, and on his return to Oxford started experimenting with recorded sound. After further studies in composition, piano, viola and horn, Cary started gradually building up his own modern electronic studio, the first of its kind in the UK. Thanks to his experiences in the navy and his mind for odd electronics, Cary started constructing his own sound generators using discarded, defunct and decidedly cheap military equipment. Simultaneously across Europe similar minded musicians were working along similar lines, but Cary was unaware of their sound or progress.

By 1954 Cary was earning a living as a composer, and in 1955 got the job of writing all the music for new Ealing movie The Ladykillers. The film's director, Alexander MacKendrick, had been Cary's drinking partner in their local boozier, the Fringes in Fulham Road.

By the late 1950s the commissions were coming in at quite a rate, there was work for more films, radio, theatre and TV. Much of this work was straight classical, but there were opportunities for Cary to bring in his new ideas and electronic sounds. Unusually Cary was happy working across all musical mediums; he'd be content composing in a conventional classical style, and equally thrilled building electronic scores for modern commissions. In 1962 his radio musical "The Ballad Of Peckham Rye" won him the Prix Italia, and no doubt more international commissions followed.

He worked for the BBC on many occasions, most infamously creating the music and otherworldly effects for the Dr Who Daleks seven part series in 1963 (this is the series in which the Daleks first appear).

In 1967 he founded the Royal College Of Music Electronic Studio, wrote the groundbreaking music for Hammer's Quatermass And The Pit, and in 1969 along with Peter Zinovieff and David Cockerell founded EMS (Electronic Music Studios), the UK's first ever synthesiser company. Their first major products included the VCS 3 synthesiser, the suitcase Synthi and the Delaware, equipment that became the modern musical tools of their times.

Pink Floyd, Brian Eno and the BBC Radiophonic Workshop would have all sounded very different without their EMS equipment. At the same time Cary was still experimenting with his very own studio and sound ideas, and through a local label in Norfolk released two extraordinary short records (both on this release).

On demonstration tour in Australia he was offered further work, and moved to Adelaide 1974 where he worked at the University under a number of different musical titles. He left in 1986 and returned to composing, and in 1991 received the Medal Of The Order Of Australia for services to Australian music. He carried on developing sound, consulting and composing for the rest of his life.

His 1973 'Divertimento for Olivetti machines, Chorus and Percussion' which includes a photograph of him conducting singers among various items of office equipment"



Tristram Cary conducting a rehearsal, with the Olivetti orchestra and the Ambrosian Singers.

The "Orchestra"

A 730 electronic invoicing/ accounting machine.
P603 micro-computer for commercial, scientific and technical applications.
Logos desk-top electronic printing calculator.
DES23 key to cassette data entry system and remote batch terminal. Editor
S14 automatic typing system.
Editor 5 proportional spacing electric typewriter.
Linea 98 standard manual typewriter.
Summa Prima 20 manual add /listing machine.
Copia 305 roll and sheet fed electrostatic copier.
TC380 programmable realtime computer terminal.

Tristram Cary (b. 1925)

Tristram Cary, son of novelist Joyce Cary, is the pioneer of electronic music in this country.

Since his first electronic compositions in the mid-fifties he has written numerous scores, many of them orchestral, for films, television, theatre and radio.

He composed the sound for the industrial section of the British Pavilion at Expo 67 and in 1968 was appointed the first Professor of Electronic Music at the Royal College of Music.

Composer's Notes

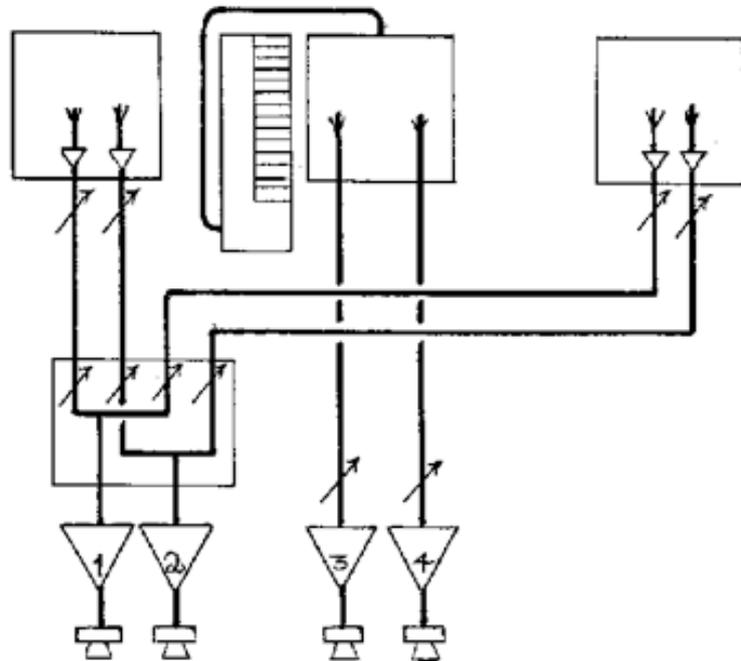
Although intended as a 'divertimento' - this piece has an underlying serious intention, in the sense that it tries to make a fresh statement about relationships between people and machines.

Against the warmest and most unmachine-like of musical instruments - the human voice - I have set the sound of computers and other figuring machines. Repetitious and mechanical in the raw state, machine sounds acquire a new kind of beauty when processed in the electronic music studio. Some are transformed into melodic and harmonic sounds - perhaps the starting point of a choral development; and sometimes, conversely, the voices are made machine-like.

The dialogue is worked out in five linked movements. You can imagine the piece as a cycle of activity, a day perhaps, beginning with the opening sung 'zero' - rising to hectic thousands, millions, at the mid-day climax - falling to zero at day's end.



For four track working, the equipment should be arranged like this:



A good platform arrangement is shown in the following sketch:

