

IGOR STRAVINSKY AND ALDOUS HUXLEY: PORTRAIT OF A FRIENDSHIP

by

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## Abstract

Igor Stravinsky and Aldous Huxley maintained a sincere and abiding friendship for nearly two decades while both men were living in Los Angeles, California. Huxley's command of music literature and understanding of musical concepts promoted a vital exchange of ideas between the two men. By the time of their meeting in Hollywood, each man appreciated the importance of the other in his field of expertise, despite Huxley's negative criticisms of Stravinsky's music in the 1920s. This mutual respect led to collaborations between Stravinsky, Huxley, and the American conductor Robert Craft on a series of concert-lectures and recordings. Stravinsky esteemed his friend so highly that he was compelled to dedicate a composition that he had been writing at the time of Huxley's death to the writer's memory.

This paper includes a chapter of biographical information on Aldous Huxley, a chapter detailing the friendship of Stravinsky and Huxley in chronological order, a chapter about Huxley's criticisms of Stravinsky's music, a chapter about Huxley's concert collaborations with Stravinsky and Craft, and a chapter detailing the compositional history and techniques of Stravinsky's *Variations for Orchestra (in Memory of Aldous Huxley)*. The first appendix lists additional meetings between Stravinsky and Huxley, as detailed in the writings of Igor Stravinsky, Vera Stravinsky, and Robert Craft. The second appendix is a chronological list of all Huxley writings mentioning Stravinsky.

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## CHAPTER 1 - Biographical Information on Aldous Huxley

The life and output of Aldous Huxley are subjects about which the average musician might not be knowledgeable. A better familiarity with the history of Aldous Huxley and his works reveals a writer who influenced society. His frequent travels made it possible for him to interact with people from many backgrounds and cultures. The body of his work is comprised of hundreds of documents that have reached generations of people. Some of his writings were controversial and contributed to the discussions of the topics of the time.

Aldous Leonard Huxley was born on July 26, 1894 at the Huxley family home, Laleham, near Goldaming in Surrey, England. He was the third son of Leonard Huxley and Julia Arnold Huxley. Aldous's paternal grandfather was Thomas Hardy Huxley, the biologist and staunch supporter of Charles Darwin. Julia Huxley's grandfather was Dr. Thomas Arnold of Rugby, the educator and historian. Her father was Reverend Thomas Arnold, her uncle was the poet Matthew Arnold, and her sister was the novelist Mrs. Humphrey Ward. Huxley was preceded by his brothers Julian Sorell and Noel Trevenen and followed by his sister Margaret Arnold.

In 1901 the Huxley family moved to Prior's Field, where Julia opened a girls boarding school the next year.<sup>1</sup> Aldous was first educated at Prior's Field as one of seven pupils. He entered a preparatory school at Hillside in 1903 with his contemporary cousin Gervas Huxley. Here he met his lifelong friend Lewis Gielgud. The three boys produced a magazine titled *The Doddite*, which had two editions.

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<sup>1</sup> Prior's Field School is still operating at the original site.

Aldous entered Eton College in fall 1908. After only being sick for a few months, Julia Huxley succumbed to cancer on November 29, 1908. Aldous had not been aware of the severity of his mother's illness and was deeply grieved. He returned to Eton two weeks after the funeral to finish the term. By 1910 Aldous had decided to become a doctor emphasizing in research. To this end he took intensive biological courses.

Aldous left Eton in 1911 with a severe case of Keratitis punctata<sup>2</sup> in both eyes. Eighteen months later his vision recovered to the point that one eye was capable of reading two hundred foot character on the Snellen chart and the other was able only to distinguish light from darkness. During those eighteen months Huxley wrote his first novel in Braille. Unfortunately, the manuscript was lost.

Leonard Huxley married twenty-two year old Rosalind Bruce in 1912. Leonard Huxley's new wife was younger than his two eldest sons. Aldous entered Balliol College at the University of Oxford in 1913 where he won the Stanhope Historical Essay Prize and graduated with a "First" in English. Tragedy struck Aldous a third time when his brother Trevenen hung himself in 1914 after being institutionalized for a breakdown.

During World War I the vast majority of Huxley's male classmates, as well as Julian Huxley, joined the armed services. Aldous tried twice to enlist but was disqualified due to his poor eyesight. Many of his classmates were killed in the war, and it was the losses in the war that were the impetus for his acceptance of pacifism later in life.

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<sup>2</sup> Keratitis punctata is an inflammation of the cornea, and when the deeper layers of the eye are affected, scarring of the cornea can occur which can lead to blindness. For a more detailed description of Huxley's eyesight see Aldous Huxley's *The Art of Seeing* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1942), pp. vii-ix.

Huxley did his alternative service at Garsington Manor, the country estate of Philip and Lady Ottoline Morrell. The Morrells allowed many conscientious objectors to the war to work on their estate to avoid prosecution. It was here and through acquaintances made here that Huxley met Virginia Woolf, T. S. Eliot, John Middleton Murry, John Maynard Keynes, Bertrand Russell, and D. H. Lawrence. It was also at Garsington that Aldous met his first wife Maria Nys, a war refugee from Belgium, who was staying with the Morrells. Aldous and Maria married in 1919. Julian Huxley later married the Morrells' governess, Juliette Baillot.

Aldous took a position at Eton upon leaving Oxford teaching French. One of his students was a young Eric Blair who later wrote under the pen name George Orwell. He soon resigned from this post and took an editorial job at the literary magazine *Athenaeum*. The Huxleys' only child Matthew Huxley was born in 1920. To support his family Huxley took two additional jobs, as a drama critic for the *Westminster Gazette*<sup>3</sup> and an assistant at the Chelsea Book Club.

It was also in 1920 that Chatto & Windus printed Huxley's first published work of fiction, *Limbo*, a collection of six short stories. The work sold just 1,600 copies, but it did attract the attention of the intellectual crowd in London. As a cost-saving measure Maria and Matthew went to stay with her mother in Belgium while Aldous continued working as a journalist. He made enough money to meet his family in Italy in 1921. In Belgium he wrote *Chrome Yellow*, his second novel. It was published that same year.

The family returned to London in October when Huxley accepted a job with Condé Nast. Huxley made a new three-year arrangement with his publisher Chatto & Windus in January 1923, in which he received £500 a year to produce two works of fiction each year. His salary was augmented by royalties from his works.

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<sup>3</sup> For more information on Huxley's tenure at the *Westminster Gazette*, see Chapter 3, pp. 43-4.

Sometime in 1922, Huxley fell madly in love with the vivacious British poet Nancy Cunard. They had a brief affair that Maria seemingly tolerated, but Huxley remained lovesick over Cunard for months. In spring 1923 Maria had finally had enough of her husband's languishing. She resolved to leave for Italy in the morning and gave Aldous the choice whether or not to go with her. She packed all evening and in the morning she and Aldous left on the first train from England in the clothes they had been wearing the night before.

The Huxleys would remain on the continent for the next several years. The Huxleys traveled often, and Aldous supported his family by writing without ceasing. They maintained a residence in Florence, Italy, and Maria drove them about the Italian countryside. Huxley's novel *Antic Hay* was published in November 1923, and it sold 5,000 copies in the first year. *Those Barren Leaves* was published two years later, selling 8,000 copies in the first year.

In June, the Huxleys went to London to prepare for a trip around the world. They left Matthew with Maria's family and sailed from Genoa, Italy in September. Over the course of the next nine months they visited India, Malaysia, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Japan, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York. Huxley's travelogue of the trip was published with the title *Jesting Pilate*<sup>4</sup> in October 1926.

Huxley made a new contract with Chatto & Windus in 1926. His yearly salary was raised to £650 and his royalties increased. He was only obligated to write one novel in the course of the next three years. They arrived in Italy in August 1926, and Huxley began *Point Counter Point* in October. He put away the novel in the early part of 1927 to write *Proper Studies*, a collection of essays published in November 1927. The Huxleys met with D. H. Lawrence and his wife Frieda for the first time in a decade in 1927. They spent a great deal of

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<sup>4</sup> Aldous Huxley, *Jesting Pilate* (New York: George H. Doran Co., 1926), 326 p.

time with Lawrence as his health was declining. Huxley returned to *Point Counter Point* in August 1927, writing as they traveled through Western Europe.

The novel was completed in May 1928, and they moved to a Paris suburb the next month. The novel sold 10,000 copies in its first year and Huxley was by this time modestly successful as an author. Huxley's third contract with Chatto & Windus increased his per annum salary to £1,000 for the next three years, during which time he was to write two novels.

The Huxleys were with D. H. Lawrence when he died on March 2, 1930 in Vence, France. The Huxleys relocated to Sanary, France on March 19, 1931 where Huxley completed *Brave New World*. Published in February 1932, the novel sold 23,000 copies in England over the first two years. While *Brave New World* sold only 3,000 copies in the United States in its initial year, Huxley secured a lucrative contract with Harper and Brothers in New York. He also renegotiated with Chatto & Windus to raise his royalties and his salary to £1,250. Huxley edited a volume of the letters of D. H. Lawrence, which was published in September 1932. The Huxleys were now able to maintain an apartment in London in addition to their home in Sanary.

In 1934, Huxley composed his first pacifist pamphlet, "War and Emotions," which he included in his travelogue *Beyond the Mexique Bay*, published the same year. Between 1934 and 1936 Huxley gave public lectures on pacifism and published articles in pacifist journals. His pamphlet of 1936 "What Are You Going to Do About It?: The Case for Constructive Peace" garnered Huxley public criticism, and a reply from poet Cecil Day Lewis titled "We're Not Going to Do Nothing." *Eyeless in Gaza* was also published that year.

Aldous and Maria Huxley, their son Matthew, and their friend and fellow pacifist Gerald Heard left England for the United States in April 1937 to give a series of lectures on pacifism.<sup>5</sup> The Huxleys settled in Southern California in February 1938, where they would spend the rest of their lives, and began socializing with the émigré community of European war refugees. They applied for United States citizenship, but their application was endlessly deferred because the Huxleys refused to take up arms to defend the United States. In the end they withdrew their application.

The next two years were a period of near-blindness for Huxley. He was frustrated and plagued by eyestrain that caused mental and physical exhaustion. In the latter part of 1938, Huxley became aware of the Bates Method.<sup>6</sup> Through rigorous and dedicated training he was able to recover his eyesight to the point that he could read without glasses and was free from strain and fatigue. Huxley completed *After Many a Summer Dies the Swan* in July 1939, which sold 10,000 copies in its first year.

During the 1940s and 1950s, Huxley was able to find work writing screenplays for the films *Pride and Prejudice* (1940), *Madame Curie* (1943), *Jane Eyre* (1944), *A Woman's Vengeance* (1948), and *Alice in Wonderland* (1951). Huxley's next novel, *Time Must Have Stop*, was not published until 1944, first in the United States and then in the United Kingdom, as correspondence with Chatto & Windus was delayed by the war. The novel sold 40,000 copies in its initial year. *Ape and Essence*, published in 1948, was set in Huxley's new home, Los Angeles. It would be six years before he published another novel, *The Genius and the Goddess*.

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<sup>5</sup> For a more detailed description of the Huxleys' relocation to Hollywood, see Chapter 2, pp. 10-3.

<sup>6</sup> An alternative therapy pioneered by William Horatio Bates, M.D., this method promotes relaxation to reduce eyestrain. Consult Huxley, *The Art of Seeing*.

Huxley began experimenting with the hallucinogen mescaline in 1953 under the observation of the British psychiatrist Dr. Humphrey Osmond. This experience inspired the novel *The Doors of Perception*, published in 1954. After suffering for two years, Maria Huxley passed away on February 12, 1955 from cancer and was buried in Los Angeles two days later.<sup>7</sup> Huxley had his first dose of the hallucinogen LSD shortly before Christmas 1955. Huxley married Italian violinist, psychological counselor, and author Laura Archera at a drive-in wedding chapel in Yuma, Arizona on March 19, 1956. She would remain with Huxley until his death.

Huxley spent the latter part of the 1950s and the early 1960s traveling and giving lectures for numerous organizations including the University of California at Berkeley, the University of California at Santa Barbara, Duke University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Dartmouth College, and the Menninger Foundation in Topeka, Kansas. He wrote his final novel, *Island*, between 1956 and 1962. When it was published in March 1962, the novel received ambivalent reviews.

In May 1962, Huxley was diagnosed with a malignant tumor on the back of his tongue. The first course of treatment suggested was surgical removal, which might have left him unable to speak. A second opinion was sought from oncologist Dr. Max Cutler, who suggested that radium needles be implanted in Huxley's tongue. The Huxleys chose this second course of treatment and also decided to tell only a few close friends, but not Huxley's son Matthew or brother Julian. The treatment was successful and Huxley's cancer went into remission.

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<sup>7</sup> For a more detailed description of the days preceding and following Maria Huxley's death see Chapter 2, pp. 31-2.

On May 12, 1961, the Huxleys' home on Deronda Drive was destroyed by a brushfire. Nearly all of their belongings were consumed with the house. They had been at the home of their friend Virginia Pfeiffer earlier that evening and watched that house burn after Laura Huxley had saved only one box of documents. An unidentified onlooker drove the Huxleys to their house where they were able to save a few articles of clothing, Laura's Guarneri violin, and the manuscript of *Island*. The driveway to their home was untouched by the flames, on which was a large case of books Aldous had removed from his personal library with the intention of donating to a charity, and grotesquely, a stock of firewood.

In September 1963 Huxley's health began deteriorating rapidly due to his resurgent cancer. On the morning of November 22, 1963 Huxley made a written request to his wife for 100 micrograms of LSD. She administered the dose at 11:45 a.m. and gave him another dose, with his permission, about an hour later. After this second dose, Huxley was still and quiet. He was no longer responsive after 2:00 p.m. and passed away at 5:20 p.m. in the home of Virginia Pfeiffer.

Aldous Huxley's death was overshadowed by the assassination of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy, which occurred earlier that day in Dallas, Texas. The Irish author Clive Staples Lewis also died on November 22, 1963. Laura and Matthew agreed that there would be no funeral, on the grounds that Aldous would not have wanted money spent on a ceremony, and Huxley's body was cremated. On December 17 a memorial was held in London at which violinist Yehudi Menuhin played the "Chaconne" from Bach's *Partita in D minor* for unaccompanied violin, BWV 1004. Julian Huxley, David Cecil, Stephen Spender, and Kenneth Clarke all gave eulogies. Aldous Huxley's ashes were removed to the family burial plot in the village of Compton in Surrey, England on October 27, 1971. Maria Huxley's ashes were



relocated to the plot a year later. Laura Archera Huxley also succumbed to cancer, at her Hollywood Hills home on December 13, 2007.

Aldous Huxley's life was characterized by frequent travels and a constant production of works. His travels, combined with his command of several languages, enabled him to live a cosmopolitan lifestyle. He was a man of ideals who dedicated his life to lecturing on pacifistic and humanistic topics. He composed twelve full-length novels, seven collections of short fiction, books of poetry, travelogues, stage adaptations of his fiction, screenplays of other writer's works, more than twenty collections of essays, scores of articles, philosophical writings, pacifist pamphlets, a weekly column in a newspaper, and even two children's books. He was a controversial figure for promoting pacifism in the face of world war, alternative therapies, and popularizing hallucinogenic drugs. Though he may not have been the most important writer of his time, his body of work certainly resonated with the people who were open and receptive to his point of view.

## **CHAPTER 2 - Igor Stravinsky and Aldous Huxley in Los Angeles, California**

During their years in Hollywood, California Igor and Vera Stravinsky considered Aldous and Maria Huxley their closest friends. Maria referred to the Stravinskys and her husband and herself as a “happy family” on multiple occasions. In the late 1940s and the 1950s they met weekly, for lunch at the Town and Country Market and in each other’s homes for evenings of food, conversation, and music. They toured southern California together and visited art museums and zoological parks. Huxley accompanied the Stravinskys to concerts and many Stravinsky premieres. The two couples shared a wide and diverse circle of friends and acquaintances. Their genuine friendship continued until Aldous Huxley’s death in 1963.

Stravinsky and Huxley departed their countries and made a home in Los Angeles for similar reasons. Huxley left Europe as Germany and the United Kingdom were preparing for war, and Stravinsky left three weeks after war had begun. Both men came to the United States to give a series of lectures, Stravinsky at Harvard on musical topics and Huxley touring the country with a message of peace. Both men were drawn to Hollywood by the warm, dry climate and the potential for financial success in the film industry.

### **Aldous Huxley’s Departure From Europe**

By 1936 pacifism in England was ebbing, largely due to the support of European intelligentsia of the Spanish Republic in the Spanish Civil War. Britain and Germany were

engaged in re-armament and Europe seemed to be balanced on the brink of war. Huxley soon found himself under attack in the press by former supporters.<sup>8</sup>

The Neutrality Acts passed in the United States in the 1930s established the policies of isolationism and non-interventionism. Huxley and fellow pacifist Gerald Heard hoped that if the United States refused to join the arms race, war might be avoided. Pacifism in the United States was, at that time, still a popular movement and Huxley and Heard began considering a United States lecture tour on peace. The time to campaign for nonviolence was upon them, and once the war in Europe began it would be too late.

The Huxleys had discussed visiting the United States frequently in the interval of the past five years. The idea appealed to Huxley, especially when the gray clime of London impaired his sight.<sup>9</sup> When the decision was finally made, Huxley and his wife Maria began the process of packing, obtaining visas, and booking lectures. Their son Matthew, who was in his last year of high school, would be accompanying them. Matthew's parents had already decided he should attend Duke University in Durham, North Carolina for his undergraduate degree and medical school.

At the beginning of their journey, the Huxleys considered it to be an extended visit to the United States. Maria assumed that it would last no more than a year and in a letter to his stepmother, Huxley estimated that they would be gone for six months. The Huxleys and Heard set sail from Southampton, UK on the S.S. *Normandie* on April 7, 1937. When they arrived in New York City, the Huxleys purchased a Ford and began the drive across the South and

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<sup>8</sup> David King Dunaway, *Huxley in Hollywood* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1989), p. 36.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

Southwest to Frieda Lawrence's<sup>10</sup> ranch near Taos, New Mexico. Heard began the journey with the Huxleys, but he chose to separate from the group in Atlanta, Georgia to travel by train to Los Angeles, California.

New Mexico became a literary refuge for Huxley, as it had been for Lawrence. The Huxleys spent the summer at the Lawrence ranch. Maria participated in the daily upkeep of the buildings, while Matthew performed maintenance and carpentry tasks. At this time Huxley wrote the book of essays *Ends and Means*.

As summer drew to a close, the Huxleys began considering the next phase of their journey. The weather had become cold, and the dark, stormy weather impaired Huxley's vision, which caused him to become more dependent on Maria. "The lecture tour was about to begin, and no definitive decision to stay or return to Europe could be made until its end. The prospect of going back now, as war news continued, alarmed them."<sup>11</sup>

The reports of the enormous sums paid to writers in Hollywood's film industry had reached Huxley's ears and he decided to visit Los Angeles. The Huxleys began the trip from New Mexico to Los Angeles in September, stopping at the Grand Canyon and driving across the desert. They began a modest lifestyle in a small apartment to prevent exhausting their meager funds. Matthew left to attend a private school in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and the Huxleys began to explore the social scene in Hollywood.

Huxley and Heard began their lecture tour in Los Angeles in October 1937 and continued across the country until Heard broke his arm. Huxley took Heard to the hospital and pressed on by himself. He described the remainder of the tour as "very boring . . . as I find this process of

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<sup>10</sup> Frieda Lawrence was the widow of British author and poet D. H. Lawrence, who was admired greatly by Huxley and became a close friend of the Huxleys.

<sup>11</sup> Dunaway, *Huxley in Hollywood*, p. 51.

lecturing extremely tedious.”<sup>12</sup> In the meantime, Maria Huxley had relocated to Rhinebeck, New York, where Aldous and Matthew joined her for Christmas. Following the holidays, Huxley continued the tour.

While Maria considered her time in Los Angeles to be completed,<sup>13</sup> the Huxleys had not settled on their next course of action. Maria wrote of their uncertainty, “I wish I could say we were returning to the . . . life in Sanary but we don’t know . . . it may be Sanary, it may be Mexico, it may be Hollywood.”<sup>14</sup> They could return to Europe on the verge of war, or they could remain in America where Matthew was completing his secondary education.

Huxley received word in February that a scenario he had written might be accepted by a studio, and for the immediate future, the Huxleys chose to establish themselves in Hollywood. They purchased a new Ford and crossed the country for a second time to California, where they spent the remainder of their lives.

### **Igor Stravinsky’s Departure From Europe**

Between November 1938 and June 1939, the composer lost his daughter Lyudmilla, his first wife Yekaterina, and his mother. Stravinsky referred to the period between his eldest daughter’s death on November 30, 1938 and his departure from France to the United States as the “most tragic year of [his] life.”<sup>15</sup>

Following the death of his wife, Stravinsky spent five months in the sanitarium in Sancellemoz in the French department of Haute-Savoie convalescing with tuberculosis. It was

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<sup>12</sup> Aldous Huxley writing to his brother Sir Julian Huxley. Sybille Bedford, *Aldous Huxley: a Biography*, Vol. 1 (London: Chatto & Windus; Collins, 1973-1974), p. 351.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> In a letter to Vicomte Charles de Noailles. *Ibid.* p. 354.

<sup>15</sup> Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Memories and Commentaries*, 1st ed. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1960; 1959), p. 188.

during this time at Sancellemoz that Stravinsky accepted the Charles Eliot Norton Professorship in Poetry at Harvard University for winter 1939-40. A frequent visitor of Stravinsky's in Sancellemoz, Pierre Souvtchinsky brought the composer literature and assisted him in drafting his Norton lectures in Russian. These six lectures were then rewritten in French with the aid of Alexis Roland-Manuel.

Stravinsky had been living in exile since the Russian Revolution and eventually became a French citizen. With a European war loomed on the horizon, he was again faced with exile. On September 27, 1939 Stravinsky set sail for New York City alone on the S.S. *Normandie*, three weeks after Germany invaded Poland.

Stravinsky did not remain in New York, but traveled immediately to Cambridge, Massachusetts. He delivered two sets of three lectures in French to large audiences in the New Lecture Hall at Harvard. A brief summary of each lecture was provided for students whose knowledge of French was limited. Harvard University Press published the lectures in French with the title *Poétique Musicale* in 1942, and in 1947 Ingolf Dahl and Arthur Knodel produced an English translation titled *The Poetics of Music*.<sup>16</sup>

During his time at Harvard, Stravinsky also gave "informal talks about music" to small groups of promising composition students. Rather than instructing in compositional technique, he would critique the compositions of the aspiring composers.<sup>17</sup> These student composers included Ellis B. Kohs and Jan LaRue. Robert M. Stevenson, who was attending Yale

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<sup>16</sup> Igor Stravinsky, *The Poetics of Music: in the form of six lessons* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1947), 142 p.

<sup>17</sup> Eric Walter White, *Stravinsky: The Composer and his Works*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), p. 115.

University at the time, had twenty-three private composition lessons with Stravinsky between November 1939 and April 1940.<sup>18</sup>

Vera de Bosset, Stravinsky's mistress of nearly twenty years, arrived in New York City on January 13, 1940. She joined Stravinsky in Cambridge, and they were married in Bedford, Massachusetts on March 9, 1940. The Norton lectureship ended in May and the Stravinskys sailed from Boston to New York City where they boarded a train to Los Angeles.

Stravinsky had long considered relocating to Los Angeles. Southern California's warm, dry climate appealed to Stravinsky, who had only recently recovered from tuberculosis.<sup>19</sup> The Stravinskys reentered the United States through Mexico in August of that year and after doing so, applied for naturalization papers. The couple bought the house at 1260 North Wetherly Drive on April 6, 1941, and they began socializing with "a small circle of friends, mainly expatriates like themselves, with whom they were on close and familiar terms. . . ."<sup>20</sup> The Stravinskys would remain in Los Angeles for twenty-nine years.

### **Stravinsky and Huxley in Los Angeles, 1940-63**

Stravinsky and Huxley met for the first time in London in July 1934.<sup>21</sup> They were introduced by Argentine author Victoria Ocampo, who was a mutual friend. Stravinsky later wrote of the encounter, "I remember only his spectacles and the thickness of the lenses, through

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<sup>18</sup> H. Colin Slim, "Lessons with Stravinsky: The Notebook of Earnest Andersson," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 62/2 (Summer 2009), p. 326.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> In the book *Stravinsky in Pictures and Documents* edited by Robert Craft, it states that Stravinsky and Huxley first met through Victoria Ocampo in 1925. This is the only source to make this claim, and multiple sources date their first meeting as June 1934. Vera Stravinsky and Robert Craft, ed. *Stravinsky in Pictures and Documents* (New York, Simon and Schuster, 1978), p. 389.

which his eyes were like the magnified eyes of fish in an aquarium.”<sup>22</sup> Ocampo had published Spanish translations of some of Huxley’s books, and they had been acquainted for several years. Her relationship with the composer had been, for her part, amorous, as Stravinsky’s amanuensis Robert Craft explained, “Victoria had been in love with [Stravinsky] since the 1920s, as she revealed to Coco Chanel.”<sup>23</sup> Although Stravinsky and Huxley did not meet again until 1946, Stravinsky was aware that Huxley was living in Hollywood, which he mentioned in a letter to Ocampo dated April 10, 1941.<sup>24</sup>

In 1942 Huxley was working on a screenplay for the film *Jane Eyre* for Twentieth-Century Fox. The film starred actor Orson Welles as Edward Rochester. Welles’s agents approached Stravinsky in an effort to commission Stravinsky to compose the incidental music for the film. Musicologist Dorothy Lamb Crawford suggests that it could have been Huxley who recommended Stravinsky for the project.<sup>25</sup> Stravinsky was interested in the commission, but ultimately it did not come to fruition. When he received a commission from the Koussevitzky Music Foundation to compose a work in memory of Serge Koussevitzky’s late wife Natalie in 1943, Stravinsky reused material he had already composed for the hunting scene of *Jane Eyre* as

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<sup>22</sup> Stravinsky and Craft, *Memories and Commentaries*, p. 245.

<sup>23</sup> Robert Craft, *An Improbable Life: Memoirs by Robert Craft* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2002) p. 121. Coco Chanel and Stravinsky were repeatedly romantically linked ca. 1920 in Paris. This affair is depicted in the 2009 film *Coco Chanel and Igor Stravinsky*. Other sources, such as Sylvia Kahan’s *Music’s Modern Muse: A Life of Winnaretta Singer, Princesse de Polignac* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2003), also attest to this relationship.

<sup>24</sup> Vera and Igor Stravinsky. *Dearest Bubushkin: The Correspondence of Vera and Igor Stravinsky, 1921-1954: With Excerpts from Vera Stravinsky's Diaries, 1922-1971*, Robert Craft ed. (London, Thames and Hudson, 1985), p. 119.

<sup>25</sup> Dorothy Lamb Crawford, *A Windfall of Musicians: Hitler’s émigrés and exiles in Southern California* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 225.



the second movement of his *Ode*. Despite the fact that Stravinsky did not participate in *Jane Eyre*, he did go see the film on April 2, 1944.<sup>26</sup>

Although Stravinsky and Huxley had both been in Hollywood for years,<sup>27</sup> they did not meet again until 1946. One reason that Stravinsky and Huxley did not meet earlier was that the Huxleys spent a great amount of time outside of Los Angeles, first in the Mojave Desert in Llano, Los Angeles County, California and later in Wrightwood, California in the San Gabriel Mountains. The exact date of their meeting is not recorded, but the first mention of Stravinsky and Huxley meeting is in Vera Stravinsky's diary was for lunch at the Town and Country Market<sup>28</sup> at Fairfax Avenue and Third Street in Los Angeles on September 14, 1946.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Vera and Igor Stravinsky, *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 130.

<sup>27</sup> The Huxleys purchased a home on Doheny Drive in 1943. Doheny Drive is the southern extension of Wetherly Drive, and the Huxleys' home was less than two miles from the Stravinskys'.

<sup>28</sup> Dorothy Lamb Crawford noted that the Town and Country Market was popular among European exiles who were drawn to it because of similarities to the markets of Europe. Crawford, *Windfall*, p. 228.

<sup>29</sup> Igor and Vera Stravinsky were meticulous diarists, and much of the chronology of the friendship of Stravinsky and Huxley is taken from their diaries and the writings of Robert Craft. Vera and Igor Stravinsky, *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 138.

**Figure 2.1—August 1949—The Stravinskys and the Huxleys at the Town and Country Market (Left to right) Maria Huxley, Vera Stravinsky, Igor Stravinsky, and Aldous Huxley.<sup>30</sup>**



While having lunch at the Farmers Market, Stravinsky was approached by two Belgian girls who had met Stravinsky previously at a party. These young ladies were Claire and Suzanne Nicolas, the nieces of Maria Huxley. Huxley, who lunched at the Farmers Market often as he had a taste for health food, was with them and introduced himself to Stravinsky as a “friend of Victoria Ocampo’s.”<sup>31</sup>

A close friendship developed between the Huxleys and the Stravinskys that fall, aided by a mutual friendship with Anita Loos, a screenwriter who tutored Vera Stravinsky in English. The conversation between the Stravinskys and the Huxleys flowed in a multilingual manner in French and Italian. Stravinsky biographer Stephen Walsh noted that the friendship between Stravinsky and Huxley was “based less on a common worldview than on some less readily

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<sup>30</sup> Vera Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Pictures*, p. 390.

<sup>31</sup> Stephen Walsh. *Stravinsky: The Second Exile: France and America, 1934-1971*, 1st ed. (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), p. 194.

definable mutual fascination, and they began to meet regularly, at first on the Huxleys' routine expeditions to the Farmers Market, then socially at each other's houses and elsewhere."<sup>32</sup>

Stravinsky and Huxley would meet for lunch at the Farmers Market two or three times a week throughout the late 1940s and 1950s. Huxley's friend Peggy Kiskadden joined them for many of these lunches, which she described to Huxley biographer David King Dunaway for a book of recollections about Huxley. The writer and the composer would meet at Yolanda Loeffler's spaghetti and fried chicken stall at the Farmers Market, when Huxley was in town, between 1:30 and 2:00 p.m., both having worked in the morning.<sup>33</sup>

It would be a long lunch, about an hour and a half. It was a time for them to relax. Aldous always loved talking to Stravinsky, and Stravinsky loved him. They had a wonderful relationship because Aldous knew a great deal about music. . . . Their relationship was [close] because Aldous knew things Stravinsky didn't, and Stravinsky knew things Aldous didn't. So they were both terribly anxious to get at what the other knew. That was what made a most lovely relationship. . . . They had a wonderful working relationship because it never impinged one on the other, but augmented [each] in a very nice way.<sup>34</sup>

Robert Craft and Reverend and Mrs. James McLane were also regulars at these open-air lunches under the pepper trees. Gerald Heard and writer Christopher Isherwood often augmented this group.

During the latter part of the 1940s and the 1950s the Stravinskys considered the Huxleys their closest friends. This deep attachment was returned by the Huxleys, as can be seen in a letter from Maria Huxley to her son Matthew dated December 3, 1946.

Today we had a most delightful dinner with the Stravinskys. . . . I must say it was delightful to listen to Stravinsky. He pours out—what pours out is very intelligent—it is often very new—sometimes quite difficult to explain but always immensely worth

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> David King Dunaway, *Aldous Huxley Recollected: An Oral History*, Rev ed. (Walnut Creek, CA, Alta Mira Press, 1999), p. 68.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

listening to, and the French, not perfect, is intelligent and colorful. . . . A vegetarian dinner for Aldous, just right, simple, good. She is so easy and very nice. . . . Stravinsky is so extremely polite, I suppose the old school of politeness but quite all right and unnoticeable at the same time. Then suddenly, at ten, they asked us if we wanted some champagne. It startled me so much. Of course I said no. So did Aldous, but when they opened it all the same, we had it, and it was such a symbolic thing somehow. We quite easily and unostentatiously drank each other's health, but I felt it was a gracious act of hospitality and also a gesture of particular friendship. I believe they have a real friendship for us. We like them very much.<sup>35</sup>

When Huxley and Stravinsky would meet, the conversation would invariably turn to music. Huxley was a rapacious listener and had made a living in the early 1920s as a music critic. In his book *Chronicle of a Friendship*, Craft wrote that Huxley looked to Stravinsky mistakenly as a source of musical knowledge and musicological facts.<sup>36</sup> He was well acquainted with music history and had a “tune-humming acquaintance with the repertory which, on that level may [have been] as wide as [Stravinsky's].”<sup>37</sup>

Stravinsky lent Huxley a copy of his *Poétiques Musicale*. Huxley wrote to Stravinsky from Wrightwood on April 9, 1947 that he took great pleasure in the lectures, “only regretting that some (particularly the one on time) are not longer.”<sup>38</sup> Huxley agreed with the opinions expressed by Stravinsky in *Poétiques*, mentioning that hearing Richard Wagner's *Parsifal* made him “sick to [his] stomach”.<sup>39</sup> He thought that Wagner's concept of spirituality was self-gratification prolonged to infinity. Huxley wished to discuss many points in the lectures with Stravinsky at leisure when Huxley returned to town. Huxley thanked Stravinsky for the opportunity to read the lectures and sent regards from himself and Maria to the Stravinskys.

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<sup>35</sup> Vera Stravinsky and Craft, *Pictures*, p. 390.

<sup>36</sup> Robert Craft, *Stravinsky: Chronicle of a Friendship*, Revised and expanded ed. (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1994), p. 30.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> Aldous Huxley, *Letters of Aldous Huxley*, Grover Cleveland Smith, ed. (London, Chatto & Windus, 1969), p. 750.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

In May 1947 Maria Huxley's sister Suzanne Nicolas and her daughters Claire and Sylvia visited the Stravinsky home. This visit to the Stravinskys was described by Claire Nicolas in an article published in *Junior Bazaar*. Matthew Huxley wrote to Claire claiming that her article displeased Stravinsky. Claire was upset by Matthew's letter and wrote to Stravinsky informing him of Matthew's claims. Matthew's letter offended Stravinsky, as can be seen in Huxley's letter to his son dated June 17, 1947. Huxley thought Claire's actions were irrelevant.

The point is that you shouldn't—especially almost on the day of your arrival—have made a disobliging criticism of Claire's work, which must (to judge by the way Stravinsky described the letter) have upset her. And you shouldn't have made remarks about Stravinsky in a quarter from which they might so easily return to him. We did our best to soothe Stravinsky's obviously ruffled feelings, excusing you on the ground . . . that you were tired by the journey, felt in a bad mood, had been in some way irritated by Claire and had put her in her place by telling her something that would depress her about her article. The net result is that he probably won't be too cordial when he sees you again, as he seems to have something of the elephant's memory for real or fancied slights. So for heaven's sake be careful in the future.<sup>40</sup>

Craft wrote in *Stravinsky in Pictures and Documents* that this incident was worth notice because Stravinsky's habit of holding a grudge had not been mentioned before in print.

It was Huxley that suggested Wystan Hugh Auden to Stravinsky as a possible librettist for *The Rake's Progress* on September 26, 1947. Ten days later, Stravinsky wrote to Auden, "Am grateful to Aldous Huxley who suggested you to me as a prospective collaborateur. Not so long ago I heard with delight your brilliant commentary verses in an English travelogue film. The more I am glad that you can understand this work. Looking forward to your reaction to all the above said."<sup>41</sup> For his part in the opera's conception, Stravinsky called Huxley the godfather of *The Rake's Progress*. Huxley felt honored, and he humbly wrote to Stravinsky on July 18,

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 571.

<sup>41</sup> Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Stravinsky, Selected Correspondence*, Vol. 1, American ed. (New York: Knopf, Distributed by Random House, 1982), p. 299.

1951, “At most I am only the go-between who happily contrived the meeting of those two eminent Lesbians, Music and Poetry, who, for these past thirty centuries, have stuck together so notoriously.”<sup>42</sup>

The Stravinskys had the Huxleys for dinner on July 27, 1949. The entry in Craft’s diary of this event is particularly revealing as to the nature of the Stravinsky-Huxley relationship.

I. S. seems to think of Mr. H. as an English-born Frenchman, quintessentially English in manners (good in I. S.’s book), but in other respects more civilized (French). Language apart, the two men inhibit each other. If Mr. H. is the wrong size, he is also the wrong culture. I. S. has not followed any science or philosophy since his University of St. Petersburg years . . . and he is in terror all evening lest Mr. H. dwells on scientific theories and deeds. Yet Mr. H. is as self-conscious of his own limitations in being unable to stem the flow of his thoughts long enough to approach the world of the other from the other’s bias. The two men watch each other like champions of two mutually incomprehensible games, but for basic toeholds rather than gambits.<sup>43</sup>

Huxley did dwell on scientific topics that evening, which ranged from conchology,<sup>44</sup> to bacteria in the depths of the ocean, to the possibility of lunar travel within the decade. It was because of experiences like this that Stravinsky came to consider Huxley a convenient human encyclopedia.

During lunch at the Farmers Market on August 10, 1949 Huxley introduced the Stravinskys to writer Christopher Isherwood who would become one of the Stravinskys’ closest friends. The crowd of patrons at the Market that day was made up of movie stars, European immigrants, and a number of Stravinsky and Huxley admirers. According to Craft,<sup>45</sup> Stravinsky was uncomfortable being outnumbered by the Englishmen speaking primarily in English. He disapproved of the freedom with which Huxley and Isherwood discussed topics that Stravinsky

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<sup>42</sup> Huxley, *Letters*, p. 636 n. 299.

<sup>43</sup> Craft, *Chronicle*, pp. 22-3.

<sup>44</sup> The study of mollusk shells.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

considered best unsaid. Regardless, a bond of friendship was formed between Isherwood and the Stravinskys that would last until the composer's death.

The Huxleys had the Stravinskys and Craft to tea nine days later. The fare was vegetarian, "parsley tea with crystal sugar, and a tray of molasses cookies, wheat germ, raw carrots, small wedges of non-fattening fruit cake."<sup>46</sup> The division of the sexes made Stravinsky uncomfortable when Maria departed with Vera to allow the men a "smoking-room chat."<sup>47</sup> He was desirous of a whiskey, but Maria's offer of sherry and the vegetarian meal discouraged him from asking. Huxley was entirely unaware of Stravinsky's discomfort and talked in length on the "culinary mortifications of St. Philip Neri."<sup>48</sup>

On January 31, 1951 the Huxleys went to the Stravinskys for dinner. Huxley departed from his usually sparse diet and consumed a double portion of chicken and three glasses of wine. After dinner, Huxley and Craft performed a psychological experiment in which Craft held a string with a ring tied to the end. Craft was asked to make silent wishes, and the ring made different motions according to the positive or negative nature of the wish. Huxley said that the movements of the ring are "the result . . . of subconscious muscular flexes."<sup>49</sup>

The Stravinskys, the Huxleys, and Craft left Hollywood on April 24, 1951 for a two-day trip to San Diego. They stayed the first night at a hotel in Escondido, California. That night Huxley led them on a late-night walk while identifying the stars for them. The next day they visited the San Diego Zoo. Huxley was again their tour guide, explaining that animals held in captivity led healthier and longer lives than their counterparts in the wild and telling each

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

animal's Latin name, habitat, and expected lifespan. He diagnosed a lion with constipation having but heard its roar and remarked on the resemblance the eagles bore to General Douglas MacArthur.

The group next visited the San Diego Museum of Art where they were given a tour by Alfred Frankfurter. He removed several paintings from the walls so that they might view them more closely. Huxley viewed the paintings through a large magnifying glass, making well-informed comments about each. Stravinsky was presented by Frankfurter a photo of Francisco de Zurbarán's Paschal lamb.

The following day they drove to Llano through the Palomar and San Bernardino Mountains. Craft wrote of the drive, "Rain falls, mercifully, most of the way. The desert is in bloom and the Joshua trees are flaming torches."<sup>50</sup> They lunched in Llano, but Stravinsky was displeased by the meal consisting solely of vegetables. They arrived back in Hollywood late that afternoon.

Maria Huxley described a typical evening in her home with the Stravinskys in a letter to Matthew dated May 13, 1951. Vera Stravinsky called to ask if they, the Stravinskys and Craft, could come visit. Maria accepted saying "the programme would be good but not the refreshments."<sup>51</sup> The guests arrive at 9:00 p.m., and the men retire to the music room where they listened to music and the women chatted elsewhere. Maria wrote that she was very fond of the Stravinskys, and of Stravinsky she recorded, "Last night Stravinsky arrived in an enchanting costume . . . narrow effect in little blue jeans, and a blue jean zipper jacket open on a deep red wine jersey and silk scarf tied with pin. He looked enchanting and was really pleased with

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 49.

<sup>51</sup> Vera Stravinsky and Craft, *Pictures*, p. 390.



himself. I must not forget the always white socks and sandals.”<sup>52</sup> Huxley turned off the heat after Maria left the room, and “poor little Stravinsky shivers and dares not ask and Aldous notices nothing.”<sup>53</sup> Stravinsky eventually joined Maria and Vera. “I am very fond of him and I like her and we are very good friends. Bob too is very nice . . .” she wrote. She regretted that she would not be able to attend the world premiere of *The Rake’s Progress* in Venice.

The Stravinskys, the Huxleys, and Craft drove to Pasadena, California on May 22, 1951 to visit the Huntington Library. There they were allowed to handle rare manuscripts, including a Shakespeare folio, an illuminated Chaucer from 1400, and a score of Haydn’s Symphony No. 104 copied by Richard Wagner. Afterwards they went to astronomer Edwin Hubble’s home for tea.

In mid-July the Stravinskys and Craft attended a dinner party at the Huxleys. Dinner was served in the open lean-to behind the house. In attendance were Huxley’s brother, Sir Julian Huxley, a biologist, Heard, Isherwood, Sir C. A. Hadow, the British Consul, the Hubbles, and the Kiskaddens. In the company of so many scientists, the conversation was “highly competitive in the display of up-to-date scientific information, but Aldous and Gerald [Heard] are so quick at the game that no one else even has a chance to play.”<sup>54</sup> Julian Huxley teased his younger brother after Huxley suggested a weak theory, but Craft called Huxley “skepticism itself compared to Gerald.”<sup>55</sup>

*The Rake’s Progress* was premiered in Venice on September 11, 1951. Maria Huxley wrote to Stravinsky in Cologne on October 2 to congratulate him. The Huxleys regretted not

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 392.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

being at the premiere, but Maria thought that since Stravinsky was “surrounded by so many old friends that perhaps [they] would have been a little jealous. . . .”<sup>56</sup>

The Stravinskys were surprised on January 12, 1952 when Huxley told them over lunch that Maria was in the hospital recovering from a mastectomy. The Stravinskys had been to the Huxleys’ four days before, and at that time no reference of the surgery was made. Stravinsky described this strange behavior as “very British,”<sup>57</sup> and Huxley discussed the matter no further. After lunch, Craft drove Huxley to the hospital to visit Maria.

Huxley went to the Stravinskys for lunch on January 13, 1952 during a particularly stormy time in Los Angeles. He informed the Stravinskys and Craft that these were the “first of such duration and force since 1934.”<sup>58</sup> Two nights later Huxley accompanied the Stravinsky household to Stravinsky’s Los Angeles Chamber Symphony concert at Royce Hall on the UCLA campus. “Stravinsky conducted his *Octet*, *L’Histoire du Soldat*, *Dumbarton Oaks Concerto*, and *Dances Concertantes* for a sold-out crowd on the stormiest night in several years.”<sup>59</sup> Afterwards Huxley accompanied the Stravinskys and Craft to a party in Stravinsky’s honor at the home of Alma Mahler Werfel. According to Ruth Vincent,<sup>60</sup> Stravinsky attempted to jump over a gutter of rushing water, but landed short of his mark. When inside the house, he removed his wet shoes and stockings and wore a pair of pink nylon stockings lent to him by Alma Mahler Werfel for the rest of the night.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Vera and Igor Stravinsky, *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 151.

<sup>57</sup> Craft, *Chronicle*, p. 70.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>59</sup> Craig Burwell Parker, “John Vincent (1902-1977): An Alabama Composer’s Odyssey.” Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1981, p. 318.

<sup>60</sup> The second wife (of three) of composer John Vincent.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 318-9.

In June 1953 the Huxleys spent three weeks touring the northwestern United States by car, visiting national parks. The Stravinsky household received a postcard on June 5, 1953 from the Huxleys who were in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. They wrote, “We think you should start a restaurant. Vera will paint, Igor will play the piano, Maria will cook (God help the customers), and I will write the advertisements. Love, Aldous. And Bob will entertain the Signore?? Love Maria.”<sup>62</sup>

Stravinsky greatly enjoyed seeing films, and the Stravinskys, the Huxleys, and Craft would often go to the cinema together. Huxley would sit alone in the front row holding his magnifying glass. On June 25, 1953 they went to see the documentary *A Queen is Crowned*, which was about the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, narrated by Laurence Olivier. Craft recorded in his diary that Huxley was “no monarchist.” Huxley called the Dean of Westminster the “stupidest person [he had] ever known.”<sup>63</sup> He said the coronation had only religious significance.

The Stravinskys, the Huxleys, Craft, and Heard met for lunch at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel in Beverly Hills, California on June 28, 1953. Stravinsky told the group that he must dispose of his favorite canary, which was too old and required too much of the housekeeper’s time. Huxley replied, “But old canaries can be taught new tunes, surely you remember the serinette, the organ, mentioned by Diderot, and used for teaching it.”<sup>64</sup> Stravinsky was unable to sleep that night due to anxiety about his upcoming prostatectomy. He sent Craft to bring Huxley to him, and Huxley massaged Stravinsky and then hypnotized him.

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<sup>62</sup> Craft, *Chronicle*, p. 100.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 101.

The Stravinskys and Craft spent the evening of June 29, 1953 at the Huxleys. Huxley expounded on the practice of Mormons baptizing their ancestors who predated Joseph Smith to establish a genealogical link to Abraham. Huxley talked at great length about mescaline.<sup>65</sup> Under the influence of peyote, one experiences a state of simultaneous hyper-perception and indifference that is similar to schizophrenia. “Mescaline is non-toxic . . . and the automatic nervous system and mental activity remain normal under it, at which time the works of men do not attract, where as the beauty of Nature—flowers, grass, the blue of the sky—is overwhelming. . . . The only music that holds up under it is Bach’s.”<sup>66</sup>

On July 8, 1953 the Stravinskys and Craft went to the Huxleys where Huxley showed his guests his new relaxing instrument. It was a veil comprised of copper netting worn over one’s head. Maria explained the reasoning behind the acquisition of this gadget, “We do these things because two years ago both of us thought we were going blind and now Aldous’s eyes are much better and I no longer have my cataracts. But, if we *had* been blind, we would still have had each other.”<sup>67</sup> The men listen to a recording of music by Nicolas Gombert. Huxley loaned Craft John Dryden’s satirical poem “Absalom and Achitophel” and a book on religious fanaticism.

Huxley joined the Stravinskys and Craft at their home on August 14, 1953 for a visit with British composer Sir William Walton and his wife. While Walton’s manner was easy, that evening he was uncomfortably quiet. Stravinsky had difficulty understanding Walton’s accent.

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<sup>65</sup> Sara Outhier found no evidence of Stravinsky participating in or witnessing any of Aldous Huxley’s experiments with any hallucinogenic drugs.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 101-2.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

Craft recorded the evening as being monotonous aside from the “dalliance-inviting exposure of Lady [Walton]’s bosom.”<sup>68</sup>

The Stravinskys and Craft dined at the Huxleys’ on September 6, 1953. The other guests included Heard, Hubble, educator Robert Hutchins, and Julian Huxley. Even in the company of so many great minds, Heard dominated the conversation. Hutchins entertained the crowd with impressions of British mathematician Alfred North Whitehead and Danish physicist Niels Bohr’s command of English. Craft described Julian Huxley as more critical and less kind than his younger brother.<sup>69</sup>

Robert Craft held rehearsals for an Evening on the Roof concert in fall 1953 in the home of harpsichordist Carol Rosenstiel.<sup>70</sup> At about 6:00 p.m. before one of these rehearsals, Craft telephoned Rosenstiel to ask if it would be “all right”<sup>71</sup> if the Stravinskys and Huxley came with him that evening. The work being rehearsed that evening was *Il Combattimento* by Claudio Monteverdi. Upon their arrival to the Rosenstiel home, Stravinsky accepted a Scotch offered to him by Bob Rosenstiel.

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 103.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 104.

<sup>70</sup> In the liner notes for the record album, *Don Carlo Gesualdo: Prince of Madrigalists* (Columbia KL 5718, reissued on Columbia AKS 6318), it states that Rosenstiel “is affiliated with the Los Angeles Baroque Players and performs independently with various chamber music groups in New York and Los Angeles.” She is also listed (on page 38 of Arthur and Herbert Morton’s *Monday Evening Concerts 1954-1971: The Lawrence Morton Years* [Los Angeles: Arthur and Herbert Morton, 1993]) as having performed on seventeen Monday Evening Concerts from October 25, 1954 through November 5, 1962.

<sup>71</sup> Carol Rosenstiel to Lawrence Morton. This document is in the Lawrence Morton Papers, 1908-1987, at the UCLA Department of Special Collections (Collection 1522).

The musicians were initially made nervous by the eminent guests but were eventually absorbed in the work. Looking at the score, Stravinsky listened raptly. Huxley also was captivated by the music, which Rosenstiel described in a letter to Lawrence Morton.<sup>72</sup>

It was a good rehearsal. Our three distinguished guests listened intently (Huxley to such an extent that my mother who was visiting at the time insisted that he “couldn’t keep his eyes off” me and all my protestations to the effect that the man couldn’t see a foot ahead of him went unheeded. Mother had spoken—Aldous Huxley was smitten with her daughter!).<sup>73</sup>

When the musicians took an intermission, Stravinsky occupied himself examining a pile of the Rosenstiel children’s toys. Stravinsky would make inquiry of the Rosenstiels if the workings of a toy were not easily discerned. “He was absorbed in the toys and somewhat reluctantly tore himself away when we resumed the rehearsal.”<sup>74</sup>

The Huxleys were great admirers of Vera Stravinsky’s artwork. This was evidenced on September 9, 1954 when the Stravinskys and Craft lunched at the Huxleys’. Huxley gave Vera a signed copy of his novel *The Doors of Perception*. The inscription read, “For Vera, whose paintings prove that she sees some of these things even without mescaline [sic]. Aldous. 1954.”<sup>75</sup> Three years later he would provide an introduction to a book of Vera Stravinsky’s paintings.<sup>76</sup>

Julian Huxley visited Hollywood in October 1954, and the Stravinskys and Craft saw the Huxleys often during his visit. On October 5 the Stravinskys attended a party at the Huxleys’ in

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<sup>72</sup> A minor film composer and prodigious author on musical topics, Morton (1902-87) was at one time the director of the Monday Evening Concerts (1955-72) and the director of Ojai Music Festival. His extended biography of Stravinsky was left incomplete at the time of his death.

<sup>73</sup> Letter from Carol Rosenstiel to Lawrence Morton dated March 30, 1985, Lawrence Morton Papers.

<sup>74</sup> Carol Rosenstiel to Lawrence Morton. Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Vera and Igor Stravinsky, *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 175, n. 5.

<sup>76</sup> Vera Stravinsky, *Fantastic Cities and Other Paintings* (Boston: David R. Godine, 1979).

Julian's honor, which Vera Stravinsky called "boring."<sup>77</sup> Ten days later, the Stravinskys and Craft dined at the Huxleys' with Heard, Isherwood, and Julian. In Julian Huxley's presence Heard was reluctant to discuss his shaky scientific theories. On October 16 the Stravinskys attended a lecture by Julian, which Vera Stravinsky found dull.<sup>78</sup>

Weeks before her death, Maria Huxley wrote about the relationship between the Stravinskys and Aldous and herself. "We are such a happy family with [the Stravinsky's]."<sup>79</sup> In their evenings together they would enjoy dinners with red wine and large desserts. After dinner they would listen to music and discuss books and artwork. She recognized Stravinsky's prodigious work ethic, and both she and Aldous loved Vera Stravinsky's paintings.

Maria Huxley was hospitalized at the end of January 1952 after her cancer spread to her liver, resulting in jaundice. On February 5 the Huxleys' longtime friend Peggy Kiskadden went to the Stravinsky home to tell the Stravinskys and Craft that Maria was dying and had only hours to live. She shared their confusion over Huxley's denial to himself and others that Maria's illness was cancer for more than two years. The shock of Maria's imminent death had blinded Huxley. While the Stravinskys and Craft were at Heard's house the next day, Heard received a telephone call from Huxley. Rejoining his guests in what Craft called a euphoric state, Heard declared, "At last, the mask will soon be off; how much happier she will be out of the body."<sup>80</sup> This behavior horrified Stravinsky.

Maria Huxley died at 6:00 a.m. on February 12, 1955. Two days later the Stravinskys and Craft attended Maria's funeral at St. Matthias Catholic Church. An anguished Huxley, pale

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<sup>77</sup> Vera and Igor Stravinsky, *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 175.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> Vera Stravinsky and Craft, *Pictures*, p. 393.

<sup>80</sup> Craft, *Chronicle*, p. 113.

with red eyes, led the recessional holding the arm of Maria's mother, who stoically showed no outward manifestation of grief. When Huxley joined the Stravinskys and Craft for dinner on February 16, he retained his deathly pallor. Of this night Craft wrote, "Maria's name [was] not mentioned, and we talk too fast trying to cover the expanding silences."<sup>81</sup> They continued in this manner until Matthew Huxley arrived to take his father home.

In his book *Chronicle of a Friendship* Craft credited Maria Huxley with affirming the depth of the friendship between the Stravinskys and the Huxleys, as Aldous was more reserved. Craft explained further, writing, "Maria, moreover, Belgian-born and French-speaking was capable of intimacy and affection. Stravinsky, who was in the habit of locking arms with his male friends, and hugging and kissing them in the Russian manner, left, right, left, felt that Aldous's English reticence, rather than his height, forbade such behavior."<sup>82</sup> The loss of Maria, for Huxley and for the Stravinskys, overshadowed the next few months. Huxley's friends were greatly concerned for him. Stravinsky confided in Isherwood on February 28, 1955 that he was worried for Huxley and thought him too stoic. Huxley had yet to discuss Maria's death with Stravinsky, and the composer was afraid that his friend might suffer a breakdown.<sup>83</sup>

Huxley was to Stravinsky a convenient human encyclopedia. Stravinsky would often telephone Huxley with a request for information. This information would be given over the phone, or when the request required a more complex answer, Huxley would send the composer a note. Stravinsky apparently consulted Huxley regarding a Latin text, as Huxley wrote him a note on May 3, 1955:

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 122.

<sup>83</sup> Christopher Isherwood, *Diaries, Volume One: 1939-1960*, Katherine Bucknell, ed. (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1997), p. 477.



*Septiformis*—adjective, in ecclesiastical Latin. “Sevenfold.” Used by St. Augustine of the Grace of the Holy Spirit. “*Septiformis gratia Spiritus Sancti*.” I think in your sheet-music there is a misprint. It should be “*Septiformis Paracleti gratia*”—the sevenfold grace of the Paraclete. Without the seven graces? I don’t know, but St. Augustine did. Aldous.<sup>84</sup>

Huxley spent May and June 1955 in New York City to make arrangements for a production of his adaptation of his novel *The Genius and the Goddess*. At the end of June he traveled to Guilford, Connecticut to stay with Matthew Huxley and his family. On June 30, 1955 Huxley wrote the Stravinskys from Guilford that he planned to return to Los Angeles in September, but he might have to return to New York in November for play rehearsals. While in New York, he had been delighted by an exhibition of artwork from Cézanne to Picasso at the Museum of Modern Art. Huxley was appalled by the “cruel” juxtaposition of this collection with an exhibition called “The New Decade.” He called these new works “five or six acres of non-representational ennui.”<sup>85</sup>

**Figure 2.2—March 4, 1956—Igor Stravinsky and Aldous Huxley<sup>86</sup>**



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<sup>84</sup> Vera Stravinsky and Craft, *Pictures*, p. 392.

<sup>85</sup> Craft, *Chronicle*, p. 121.

<sup>86</sup> The accompanying caption read, “Two men of genius, composer Igor Stravinsky (left) and writer Aldous Huxley, are shown as they inspect the Schott Doll Collection during their recent tour of the Art Museum.” Robert Craft, ed., *A Stravinsky Scrapbook 1940-1971* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1983), p. 60. Originally in the *Santa Barbara News-Press*.

The Stravinskys were shocked when on March 19, 1956 Maria's sister Rose de Haulleville telephoned to inform them that Huxley had married Italian violinist Laura Archera at a drive-in wedding chapel in Yuma, Arizona. It was not the timing of the wedding that surprised them. They were astonished by what they suspected was a discreet pre-arrangement of the marriage.

While conducting his *Symphony in C* at a concert on October 2, 1956 in Berlin, Stravinsky suffered a stroke. This occurred near the end of the first movement. Stravinsky stopped conducting and the orchestra finished the movement undirected. After a lengthy pause, during which time Stravinsky said he was unconscious, the composer recovered and was able to finish the lengthy program.

Huxley wrote to Vera Stravinsky on October 13, then in Munich, with great concern after hearing about Stravinsky's illness from Lawrence Morton. He hoped that the composer was resting and that the Stravinskys would return immediately to California. If they found that this trip was impossibly long, he recommended that they travel to somewhere that was warm with no concert engagements, such as Sicily. Huxley was departing for New York to manage some affairs connected with his production of *The Goddess and the Genius*, but he hoped to return to Los Angeles within the month. He wrote, "The staging of my play is becoming less problematical, but nothing in the theater is certain. Meanwhile I am working too much at too many things at a time."<sup>87</sup>

The Stravinskys and Craft lunched with the Huxley at his new home on Deronda Drive, on the hillside below the "Hollywood" sign. Huxley told them of two foxes that had looked into the house from the back porch the previous evening before departing. The Huxleys had acquired

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<sup>87</sup> Vera and Igor Stravinsky, *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 190, n. 4.

yet another relaxing device, this one a vibrating chair which agitated Craft. On this occasion Huxley gave the Stravinskys some recordings of Byzantine music.

Huxley wrote to Craft on March 26, 1957 asking for advice in approaching a composer for his stage adaptation of *Brave New World*. Rather than a traditional musical, Huxley envisioned a play with music. Leonard Bernstein and Rodgers and Hammerstein had been suggested, but Huxley was contemplating offering the project to Stravinsky. “Needless to say, if the maestro felt inclined to take some time off to do something light—a little ballet music for brave new worlders and another piece for the Indians on the reservation, plus half a dozen vocal numbers, I would be only too happy. But I hesitate to ask him—wouldn’t want to do so before finding out what you think.”<sup>88</sup> Stravinsky did not become involved in the project, and Huxley wrote to Bernstein ten days later.

The Stravinskys celebrated New Year’s Eve 1957 with the Huxleys, Craft, and Heard. The holiday was a happy one, and 1957 had proven a good year for the Stravinskys. Stravinsky’s health was greatly improved and *Agon* had proven to be a great success. That evening Huxley’s talk was of the myth of sexual impotence in tall, left-handed men. Vera Stravinsky wrote in her diary the next day that it was the “best New Year’s Eve. . . . Music, champagne, and good conversation.”<sup>89</sup>

On April 26, 1958 the Stravinskys, the Huxleys, and Craft dined at Isherwood’s home with British novelist Rosamond Lehmann. Lehmann was wearing an elaborate gown that was out of place and was covered in makeup and constantly combed her “wig-like white hair.”<sup>90</sup> An entry in Isherwood’s diary for the evening described Stravinsky as “wonderfully oracular,” while

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<sup>88</sup> Aldous Huxley, *Letters*, pp. 820-1.

<sup>89</sup> Vera and Igor Stravinsky, *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 190.

<sup>90</sup> Craft, *Chronicle*, p. 175.

Huxley talked of mescaline and literature. Lehmann was hampered by the conversations of these great men. Isherwood found Laura Huxley “less rude and more feminine than usual,” and Craft charming. Vera Stravinsky told Isherwood that she had been dreaming of him and W. H. Auden the previous day at the time he had telephoned her.<sup>91</sup>

**Figure 2.3—September 1959—Aldous Huxley with Igor and Vera Stravinsky in New York City.**<sup>92</sup>



On May 12 1961 the Stravinskys and Craft went to see the film *The Virgin Spring* starring Ingmar Bergman. After the movie they found that the hill with the “Hollywood” sign was on fire. They had to take a wide detour to reach the Stravinsky home. Upon arrival they were informed that Huxley’s house and the vast majority of its contents had burned. The Stravinskys were worried all the next day about the welfare of the Huxleys. They were relieved when they received a telephone call from Maria Huxley’s mother, Mrs. Nys, saying that they were staying in a hotel. The Huxleys dined at the Stravinskys’ on May 18. Huxley observed,

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<sup>91</sup> Robert Craft, *An Improbable Life: Memoirs by Robert Craft* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2002), p. 200.

<sup>92</sup> Taken by Arnold Weissberger. Vera and Igor Stravinsky, *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 199.

“Well, it is rather inconvenient, losing all your notes, annotated books, correspondence, library, accounting, addresses and telephone numbers.”<sup>93</sup> No matter how dispassionate Huxley tried to be, he could not conceal how badly shaken he truly was.

The Stravinskys and Huxley attended a Monday Evening Concert on February 19, 1962 on which Craft conducted “O holder Tag” from J. S. Bach’s Cantata BWV 210, the premiere of Stravinsky’s four-part anthem *The Dove Descending*, Elliott Carter’s *Double Concerto*, and Arnold Schönberg’s *Kammersymphonie No. 1*.

After the concert the Stravinskys hosted a party in their home, which Elliott Carter later depicted in his *Collected Essays and Lectures*.<sup>94</sup> Carter became withdrawn in the company of Huxley, Isherwood, and Spender and secluded himself in a remote corner of the house. Stravinsky sought him out and joined him. The conversation turned to music. When Carter asked Stravinsky how he composed, he took Carter into his studio to show him his sketchbook with scraps of paper with musical fragments glued onto the pages. This book of musical fragments was the workbook for *The Flood*.

On March 3, 1963 Igor Stravinsky and Aldous Huxley met for the last time. The Stravinskys and Craft dined with the Huxleys at Trader Vic’s. Aldous Huxley succumbed to throat cancer on November 22, 1963 at 5:20 p.m. at the age of sixty-nine. The Stravinskys and Craft were in Naples, Italy on November 24 when they saw a newspaper with the headline “E morto il piccolo maestro, Aldous Huxley (He is dead the minor master, Aldous Huxley).” While this came as a terrible shock, Huxley had been ill for some time and his passing had been expected. Stravinsky was at this time already composing a set of variations for orchestra, which

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<sup>93</sup> Craft, *Chronicle*, p. 240.

<sup>94</sup> Craft, *Improbable*, p. 254. Originally in Elliott Carter, *Collected Essays and Lectures, 1937-1995*. Jonathan W. Bernard, ed. (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 1998).

he felt compelled to dedicate to the memory of his cherished friend. Craft wrote of Huxley's death in his *Chronicle of a Friendship*, "At one time, during a good period of five years, we met at least once, and more commonly several times, a week. Then, after Maria's death, his remarriage and his and our travels separated us. Lately he seemed to belong to an already completed past."<sup>95</sup>

### **Igor Stravinsky on Aldous Huxley**

In his conversation book *Memories and Commentaries*, Stravinsky described his friendship with and impressions of Aldous Huxley. He began by calling Huxley the "most aristocratic man [he had] ever known," not only intellectually but also in demeanor. Huxley was "gentle" and "intellectually charitable,"<sup>96</sup> and an extraordinary conversationalist. Stravinsky did not consider himself an equal to Huxley in conversation, as were others, especially Julian Huxley.

Huxley's sphere of association was all encompassing. During his time with Huxley, Stravinsky met people from every profession: "hypnotists, economists, parasitologists, speleologists, industrialists, physicians, occultists, a Lebanese magician (Tara Bey), holy men from India, actors, anthropologists, educators (Robert Hutchins), astronomers (Edwin Hubble), and even the occasional literary gent."<sup>97</sup>

"What [was] Aldous 'like'?" He was lissome with "long, ever-folding and unfolding legs." He ardently appreciated music. He was reserved. He was constantly purchasing the latest instruments both "spiritual" (psychedelic drugs) and "physical" (his relaxing gadgets). Huxley's

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<sup>95</sup> Craft, *Chronicle*, pp. 385-6.

<sup>96</sup> Stravinsky and Craft, *Memories and Commentaries*, p. 244.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 246.

belief that the future of humanity would be “short” and “black” was ever affirmed with daily illustrations of humanity’s successes and failures. Every person that Huxley met was treated with equal gentleness. He assumed that others were endowed with “his knowledge and intelligence; whether considering the history of the Baptist Church in Burma or Stendhal’s recipe for *zabaglione*, Aldous assumes that you know all this but have momentarily forgotten.”

Southern California had done little to alter the English gentleman. His manner of observation was scientific, looking at each new thing from every angle. Stravinsky gave an example of this way of thinking in which Huxley read a poem in the literary journal *Transition* and then reflected on the title of the magazine, “Backwards it spells NO IT ISN(T) ART.”<sup>98</sup>

Stravinsky found immense comfort in his friendship with Huxley. Huxley’s hypnosis cured the composer’s insomnia. During their years in Hollywood, Huxley had suffered greatly, first the loss of Maria, and later the fire that had destroyed his home and his effects. “But Aldous [was] an aristocrat, and therefore a stoic, and stoicism takes an inward toll.”<sup>99</sup>

When Stravinsky read the volume of Huxley’s letters edited by Grover Cleveland Smith,<sup>100</sup> he did not find Huxley’s selected correspondence an accurate representation of the man. The letters failed to capture his sense of humor, and his academic mind was emphasized. The “puritan streak” that was a prominent characteristic in his letters was another incongruity. “Aldous tended to translate or reduce all moral categories to ‘intelligent’ or ‘unintelligent’ behaviour. He would regard an addiction to alcohol, for instance, not as a vice but as a lapse of the intellect.”<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Aldous Huxley, *Letters*, 992 p.

<sup>101</sup> Stravinsky and Craft, *Memories and Commentaries*, p. 247.

Huxley's defects became more pronounced in his personal correspondence than in his writings, as did his numerous virtues. In his letters, he was able to be more "shrewd" and "candid." The small number of letters to Huxley's circle of California acquaintances was due to the pleasure he took in speaking to friends on the telephone or in person.

Igor Stravinsky and Aldous Huxley shared a deep and abiding friendship for nearly two decades. Their families met on numerous occasions and cherished their bonds of friendship. Each man greatly respected the other and viewed his friend as a genius in his field. Through this friendship Stravinsky and Huxley increased their own circles of acquaintances. Stravinsky considered Huxley's friendship a comfort, and he and Vera Stravinsky were deeply grieved by their losses first of Maria and then of Aldous Huxley.



## **CHAPTER 3 - Aldous Huxley as a Music Critic of Igor Stravinsky**

From the time that they met for a second time in Hollywood, California in 1946 until Huxley's death in 1963, Igor Stravinsky and Aldous Huxley maintained an abiding friendship, which produced mutual respect, an exchange of knowledge and ideas, and much successful collaboration. This personal understanding, however, had not always been the case, at least where Huxley was concerned. Huxley's stance on Stravinsky the composer had begun as emphatic support, progressed to ambivalent skepticism, and finally transformed to appreciation as the musical genius of his time. This evolutionary process can be clearly delineated through an examination of Huxley's musical critiques through his career.

### **Huxley's Background in Music and Music Criticism**

Two decades before Igor Stravinsky and Aldous Huxley met for a second time in California, Huxley was a young writer struggling to make ends meet as a music critic for a weekly newspaper in London. Although Huxley had not been formally trained in music, he had taught himself to play the piano, which had provided great comfort during the most traumatic years of his life. Huxley had made himself aware of the body of music literature, from Machaut's early polyphony to Stravinsky's *Mavra*. Huxley critiqued concerts with this musical background—including those of Stravinsky's newest compositions—and wrote on musical topics in his weekly column and published essays.

When Huxley was stricken blind by Keratitis punctata in 1911 he became isolated and withdrawn from the outside world. Able only to distinguish light from dark, he taught himself to read Braille and to play the piano using Braille scores, memorizing one hand at a time. He

withdrew from society for countless hours, which he spent in his room reading books, typing on a typewriter, and playing the piano. His capacity for memory became vastly improved at this point in time, because the time needed to read anything twice was forbidding. Huxley memorized scores such as Beethoven's Funeral March and Chopin preludes and enjoyed improvising long sequences of chords. Margaret Huxley, his younger sister, recollected the countless hours spent "playing rather curiously at the piano."<sup>102</sup>

After being nearly blind for eighteen months, Huxley's vision recovered to the point that one eye was capable of reading two hundred foot character on the Snellen chart and the other was able only to distinguishing light from darkness. He was able to enter Balliol College at the University of Oxford in 1913. Huxley had a piano in his room at Balliol. He had recently become aware of jazz, and he introduced it to his peers, delighted by the syncopations. Huxley would later find this music vulgar and distasteful and was offended by its sensuality.<sup>103</sup>

He was ever modest concerning his proficiency at the keyboard. When he wrote to his brother, Julian, to report his progress in learning the score of Wagner's *Die Meistersinger* that Julian had sent, he had begun learning the overture, playing as best as his talent would allow.<sup>104</sup> When Huxley attempted to teach his son, Matthew, to play it was of little avail, although he demonstrated "controlled conspicuous patience."<sup>105</sup>

In later years Huxley was self-effacing of his musical proficiency, stating, "I never had any musical training, beyond the usual youthful piano training of the bad, unintelligent kind

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<sup>102</sup> Sybille Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, Vol. 1, p. 35.

<sup>103</sup> John Aplin, "Aldous Huxley and Music in the 1920s," *Music & Letters* 64/1-2 (Jan-Apr, 1983), p. 25.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

generally current at the time of my youth.”<sup>106</sup> Yet he thought this musical innocence an advantage when it came to his observations as a critic. He often found the musical preferences of trained musicians uninteresting and favored for the technical aspects of form or orchestration. The musical layman, however, was free from these tendencies towards theoretical sophistry.<sup>107</sup>

In the journal *Music & Letters*, John Alpin wrote that, due to an absence of analytical grammar, Huxley was able to view a composition as any other work of art, evaluating the work’s truthfulness and ability to speak to the human spirit. His extensive range of interests, artistic and scientific, created a context in which these judgments could be made.<sup>108</sup>

After a brief stint in teaching, Huxley secured a position as a writer on the editorial staff for a weekly literary magazine, *Athenaeum*. This publication was well respected, publishing contributions by some of the very best writers of the time. Three months later Huxley was married to Maria Nys, and it became necessary for him to find a second employment. In 1920 he became employed as a theater critic with the *Westminster Gazette*. Two years later the newspaper was reorganized as the *Weekly Westminster Gazette*,<sup>109</sup> and Huxley began writing as a music critic, submitting over sixty articles from February 18, 1922 to June 2, 1923.

His column for the *WWG* was usually devoted to concert reviews, but occasionally he would write on a musical topic such as the nature of the child prodigy. In this manner Huxley was introduced to musical works to which he might not have otherwise been exposed. In his *WWG* criticisms, nearly equal observance was paid to works of the eighteenth and early

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<sup>106</sup> Basil Hogarth, “Aldous Huxley as a Music Critic,” *The Musical Times* Vol. 76, No. 1114 (Dec, 1935), pp. 1079-80.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Aplin, “Aldous Huxley and Music in the 1920s,” pp. 29-30.

<sup>109</sup> *Weekly Westminster Gazette* is hereafter abbreviated *WWG*.

nineteenth centuries and new music. Huxley also wrote with great esteem on polyphonic compositions from the late Renaissance.

In the 1920s, specifically in the employ of the *WWG*, Huxley formed essential opinions of certain composers and schools of composition, which endured for the remainder of his personal and professional life. From his very first column for the *WWG* on February 18, 1922, Huxley began comparisons of other composers to Beethoven, in this case Brahms to Beethoven, setting Beethoven as the standard of nobility and great art. A recurring theme in Huxley's musical writings is the concept of the musical genius. He once compared his own capacity for genius to Beethoven's writing that it was the "relation of an intelligent cat to a man."<sup>110</sup>

Huxley clearly delineated Palestrina, Bach, and Beethoven as examples of the perfect union of genius and ability.<sup>111</sup> His predilection for these three composers was demonstrated when he wrote with conviction that "Wagner is not so satisfying as Bach; one is quickly tired of Strauss's *Till Eulenspiegel*, never tired of Mozart's G minor Symphony; the directly emotional appeal of Tchaikowsky's "Pathetic" [*sic*] can be made too often, but there is forever a new exaltation, a new and indescribable source of life in the last sonatas and quartets of Beethoven."<sup>112</sup>

Huxley's early opinion of Russian music can be seen in a letter to his brother Julian dated October 1915. In this letter Aldous quotes a Berlin philosopher named Lasson who felt the German peoples were "without peer" in morality and intellect.<sup>113</sup> Aldous thought this claim was ridiculous, and he felt that if one compared the music of Germany with that of Russia, Stravinsky

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<sup>110</sup> Aldous Huxley, "The Mysteries of Music," *Aldous Huxley: Complete Essays*, Vol. 1, Robert S. Baker and James Sexton, ed. (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2000), p. 240, originally in *WWG*.

<sup>111</sup> Huxley, "Brahms's Birthday," *Ibid.*, p. 338, originally in *WWG*.

<sup>112</sup> Huxley, "Literary Music," *Ibid.*, p. 256, originally in *WWG*.

<sup>113</sup> Aldous Huxley, *Letters*, p. 80.

and Rimsky-Korsakov to Strauss and Reger, that one would “discover which is the country that is fullest of life.”<sup>114</sup>

Yet by the time of his employment with the *WWG*, Huxley’s opinion of Russian music had been drastically altered. He wrote that he doubted whether he could bear to attend a performance of Tchaikovsky, which he had enthusiastically done in years before.<sup>115</sup> He now found Scriabin’s *Prometheus* silly,<sup>116</sup> and as for the music of Rimsky-Korsakov, if it were in his power, he vowed, to never listen to *Capriccio* again and thought *Scheherazade* “intolerable.”<sup>117</sup>

### **Huxley’s Musical Criticisms of Stravinsky in the 1920s**

Despite this dramatic change in Huxley’s views of Russian music, his opinion of Stravinsky’s music was more ambivalent. Huxley continued to hold an appreciation for Stravinsky the Russian nationalist, and he was well acquainted with Stravinsky’s early works—*L’oiseau de feu*, *Petrushka*, *Le sacre du printemps*, and *Pribaoutki*. He wrote in his column in the *WWG* on March 25, 1922 that Stravinsky’s music had an aspect of novelty. On the other hand, at the time during which Huxley was writing for the *WWG*, Stravinsky was composing some of his earliest neo-classical works. After experiencing these compositions, Huxley was dismayed by the incongruity of the Stravinsky works with which he was familiar.

The last paragraph of Huxley’s column on April 8, 1922 is dedicated to a review of the Stirling Mackinley Opera Society’s production of Stravinsky’s *Ragtime*, which to Huxley was the most interesting music of the evening. Huxley best described the work as “inverted

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Huxley, “Reflections in the Promenade,” *Complete Essays*, Vol. 1, p. 287, originally in *WWG*.

<sup>116</sup> Huxley, “Reflections in the Concert Room,” Ibid., p. 291, originally in *WWG*.

<sup>117</sup> Huxley, “Barbarism in Music,” Ibid., p. 324, originally in *WWG*.

transcendentalism.”<sup>118</sup> In his opinion, the plane to which *Ragtime* rose was one of soullessness, to which he compared the transcendental heroism of music penned by Beethoven. He thought the work was especially characteristic of the modern worldview, which was enhanced by the mechanistic choreography of Leonid Massine.

The primary detraction of the work for Huxley was that the work was “not large enough in conception, not vigorous, or certain, or emphatic enough.”<sup>119</sup> This characterization of *Ragtime*, he thought, in comparison to Beethoven, was small and uncertain. However the idea of inverted transcendentalism was not without promise, and Huxley closed his column writing, “One of these days someone will write a work of inverted transcendentalism as prodigious and convincing in its own way as Beethoven’s ninth symphony; and then there will be nothing to do, when one has heard it, but to go home and quietly commit suicide.”<sup>120</sup>

While in Paris, Huxley saw an early performance of *Mavra* by the Ballet Russes, and in his column on June 24, 1922 Huxley called the evening “somewhat depressing.”<sup>121</sup> The dancing that evening was inadequate due mostly to the absence of the company’s best dancers and choreographer, naming Massine and ballerina Lydia Lopokova, and the disparity of their successors. Huxley called the music “depressing in spite of its gaiety”<sup>122</sup> and while the work was clever, it was at the same time inconsequential. In Stravinsky’s latest compositions, Huxley saw the corrupting influence of the new generation of French composers, calling the triviality of

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<sup>118</sup> Huxley, “Light Opera and the New Stravinsky,” *Complete Essays*, Vol. 1, p. 238, originally in *WWG*.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup> Huxley, “A Few Complaints,” *Ibid.*, p. 257, originally in *WWG*.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

these works Dadaism and citing the stylistic disparity between, *L'oiseau de feu*, *Petrushka*, and *Le sacre du printemps*.

The compositional style of the French Six was well established in Western Europe, and Huxley thought the sophistication of this music had the effect of shaming Stravinsky into abandoning his Russian “seriousness and vigor.”<sup>123</sup> He predicted that succeeding Stravinsky works would continue the trend of triviality, and “the result of this happy consummation will be the loss to Europe of one of its most interesting and original composers.”<sup>124</sup>

This opinion would be repeated in his criticisms of subsequent Stravinsky compositions, such as his review of the Salzburg Festival in the December issue of *Vanity Fair*. He reported that the Frenchmen, for whom he harbored great distain, were present. Also accounted for was the “later Stravinsky”<sup>125</sup> who had lost all his Russian vitality in their company.

When discussing the extremity of modern rhythm in his *WWG* column on December 2, 1922 titled “Verdi and Palestrina,” Huxley used Stravinsky’s *Le sacre du printemps* as his primary example of the contemporary works that were constructed on the basis of rhythm, rather than melody. This technique he considered barbarism and primitive, and he thought that this reliance on rhythm had been taken too far. Huxley’s dismissal of barbarism as unacceptable would be another recurring theme in his criticisms, especially where Stravinsky’s music was concerned.

Huxley dedicated an entire column in the *WWG* on February 17, 1923 to the topic of barbarism. Huxley evaluated the role of Russian music in Britain from the time of the first performance of Tchaikovsky’s *Pathétique Symphony* on February 28, 1894 to the time of the

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., p. 258.

<sup>125</sup> Huxley, “The Salzburg Festival,” Ibid., p. 49, originally in *Vanity Fair*.

column. Following the British premiere of the *Pathétique*, the people of England were enamored with the novelty of Tchaikovsky and clamored for more Russian music, which had enjoyed great popularity in Britain for nearly three decades by the time of Huxley's column. Contrary to popular taste, however, Huxley felt that charm had faded from the Russian revelation, and he thought *Pathétique* was a singularity in the whole of Russian music. When first heard, works such as Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* were especially significant. However, the majority of Russian music did not withstand the test of repeated hearings.

Listening to *L'oiseau de feu* and *Petrushka* more than once could be borne, but it was still too early to say the same of *Le sacre du printemps*. For Huxley the future legacy of Stravinsky's works was still dubious, and Huxley suggested that "it may be permitted to doubt whether any of Stravinsky's works would stand the constant repetition which only tends to increase our admiration, as it enlarges our knowledge, of some favourite symphony or sonata of Beethoven."<sup>126</sup>

Huxley contended that the initial appeal of the melodic and harmonic aspects, having Russian folk and religious idioms as their basis, had long since faded. The Russians had injected barbarianism into music, and while it was an appealing and fresh approach, in "civilised" [*sic*] Western Europe such barbarism could not be listened to with regularity. "Civilised men must have civilised art."<sup>127</sup> Huxley was sure that Russian music was guaranteed a place in the standard repertoire but only an occasional one. It was the "civilised" music of the West that would prove worthy of repeated listening.

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<sup>126</sup> Huxley, "Barbarism in Music," *Ibid.*, p. 324, originally in *WWG*.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 325.



The subject of Huxley's March 10, 1923 column titled "Contemporaneousness" is the relevance of the date of composition of a work to the appreciation of the work. Huxley asserted that in theory one's enjoyment of a piece of literature or music should not be affected by the time in which the work was composed. Yet Huxley found that in practice this theory is not credible. The authors of contemporary literature live in the same world as their audience, and their issues are the same as the issues faced by readers. Huxley pointed out that literature becomes outdated more quickly than music. The subjects of literature are external and change more quickly than the more constant aspects of the human spirit, which are so often the inspiration for musical works.

Huxley then outlined three current musical disciplines of the 1920s. He first mentions the emotional music of composers such as Delius and Wagner. Next he named two styles that he considers reactions to emotionalism. The first named is playful or exciting barbarism, and the examples given were Stravinsky's *Pribaoutki*, *Berceuses du chat*, *L'oiseau de feu*, and *Le sacre du printemps*. For good measure he included an aside that, with a handful of passages that are exceptions, *Sacre* does not improve with repeated listening. Lest his readers forget, Huxley reminded them that the new of this barbaric music had worn off, and he predicted that the advocates of this style would either return to the emotional style from which they had diverged or turn to a third style of music, the intellectualism of Schönberg. This intelligent music was also a reaction to emotionalism, but instead of turning from emotion, it was "fused with intellect"<sup>128</sup> and "controlled and moulded and formed by the mind."<sup>129</sup> Huxley felt that even though these three styles of music differed so greatly, that current composers of all styles were

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<sup>128</sup> Huxley, "Contemporaneousness," *Ibid.*, p. 331, originally in *WWG*.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*

rejecting earlier standards of harmony and tonality. These composers experimented with new concepts of harmony, which the modern man found “the refreshing thing to which [one] might turn every now and then after too long a sojourn among the strait-laced tonic and dominant of earlier ages.”<sup>130</sup>

Huxley explored the topic of modernity in art—music, visual art, and literature—in an article for *Vanity Fair* in May 1925. The music of Stravinsky—barbaric as it was—was decidedly not modern. It was an “ingenious, scholarly, and more efficient development”<sup>131</sup> of the music of savage people, and Stravinsky’s approach was intelligent atavism. Bach and Beethoven were more modern than Stravinsky through intellectuality and idealism. Schönberg on the other hand was eligible for the title of modern by “appealing to the intellect and the spirit, not to the primary emotions and nerves.”<sup>132</sup> Even as Stravinsky was looking backward from intellect to physiology, Schönberg was progressing forward.

In an essay titled “Popular Music” from his travelogue *Along the Road*, published in September 1925, Huxley considered what piece of music one might choose if it were the only piece of music to which one could listen for the rest of one’s life. Given the choice between Beethoven’s *Grosse Fuge* and Stravinsky’s *L’oiseau de feu*, it seemed clear to Huxley that the *Grosse Fuge* with its complexities would be the only choice to occupy oneself, rather than the overly simple rhythms of the Stravinsky. He thought that composers were prone to forgetting that the listener was, despite appearances, “tolerably civilised.”<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Huxley, “What Exactly is Modern?” Ibid., p. 171, originally in *Vanity Fair*.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., p. 172.

<sup>133</sup> Huxley, “Popular Music,” Ibid., p. 348, originally in travelogue *Along the Road*.

In the span of a decade from 1915 to 1925, Huxley's opinion of Stravinsky's music evolved drastically. While he initially appreciated the vitality of Stravinsky's Russian nationalistic works, Huxley did not understand the new direction that Stravinsky took in neo-classicism. He was unsure of the ability of Stravinsky's work to achieve a place in the standard concert hall repertoire. Yet even as Huxley tired of other Russian composers, he could not completely dismiss Stravinsky's importance as a contemporary composer.

### **Huxley's Essay on Stravinsky in 1953**

When Igor Stravinsky and Aldous Huxley met again in Hollywood in 1946, Huxley's criticisms of the 1920s were long forgotten and a deep friendship developed between the Stravinskys and the Huxleys. With the hindsight of the composer's success as a neo-classicist, Huxley's criticisms in the early 1920s of the triviality of Stravinsky's new style were unfounded. Stravinsky was not aware of Huxley's columns in the *WWG*, and Huxley did not desire to dwell on his early existence that necessitated a journalistic career that prevented him from his literary endeavors.<sup>134</sup>

Stravinsky had become one of the most important composers of the twentieth century, and Huxley's opinion of Stravinsky's ability as a composer had understandably changed. Huxley now considered Stravinsky a musical genius and recognized that his catalogue contained masterpieces, not just the Russian nationalistic ballets but newer works such as the *Symphony of Psalms* and *The Rake's Progress*. When Huxley wrote again of Stravinsky in the February 15, 1953 issue of *Vogue* it was with the deepest devotion and respect.

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<sup>134</sup> Aplin, "Aldous Huxley and Music in the 1920s," pp. 34-5.

Huxley began his essay with an endearing description of the pleasant atmosphere of the Stravinsky home, with which he was well acquainted. The house was a balance of Californian architecture, both warm and private. He described the interior of the house as “pleasant” and “civilised,”<sup>135</sup> due largely to the good taste of Mrs. Stravinsky, filled with Picassos, literature, and books of art reproductions. At the end of the hall was Stravinsky’s studio. Inside the studio was a piano, Stravinsky’s collection of scores, and the table at which the *Symphony in Three Movements*, the *Mass for Mixed Voices and Double Wind Quintet*, and *The Rake’s Progress*, which Huxley called “three of the most notable works of our time,”<sup>136</sup> were composed.<sup>137</sup>

Huxley then returned to a recurring theme in his musical criticisms, the mysteries of musical genius. Huxley now regarded Stravinsky as a genius on par with Bach and the masters of classicism who had always been the Huxlian ideal. As a mere listener, Huxley could not comprehend the experience of creating a musical masterwork such as *Das musikalische Opfer* or the *Symphony of Psalms*, and thus he derived great enjoyment in “reading the books, or listening to the talk, of a musician at once as eminent in his own field as Stravinsky and so articulate, at the same time, in the field of verbal expression.”<sup>138</sup>

Huxley thought Stravinsky capable not just as a creator of music, but also as a writer of prose. This pairing of abilities is not always the case with composers, and in his opinion, the writings of some of the greatest composers were not interesting. Of those musicians that were apt writers, there were those who Huxley thought let their writings “get into their music”<sup>139</sup> in a

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<sup>135</sup> Huxley, “Conversation with Stravinsky,” *Complete Essays*, Vol. 5, p. 383, originally in *Vogue*.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 384.

detrimental way, his chief examples being Wagner and Berlioz. Stravinsky on the other hand was comfortable with the medium of words as well as music. “His *Poétique Musicale*<sup>140</sup> is a most excellent and rewarding book; and his conversation combines that book’s lucidity with a liveliness and a range of digression which he does not permit himself in his writings.”<sup>141</sup> In a letter to Stravinsky dated April 9, 1947, Huxley wrote of his great enjoyment of Stravinsky’s Harvard lectures, and his only disappointment was that some topics were not discussed in greater length.<sup>142</sup>

Stravinsky had visited six of the seven continents and been a citizen of Russia, France, and the U. S., and in his travels had become a polyglot. Huxley called him, “Good in English, better in French, and, presumably, best of all in Russian.”<sup>143</sup> He thought Stravinsky spoke with authority and vitality on a range of topics—aesthetics, techniques for writing for certain voices and instruments, literature, musical criticism, etc.—with each topic blending seamlessly into the next, and unfailingly the conversation would return to the main theme of music. Topics spanned the recorded history of music, from the Middle Ages to the music of the future, from the sacred music of Machaut to Stravinsky’s own perceptions of serialism. Huxley wrote, “To be a good talker, one needs a quick intelligence and a fund of readily available knowledge. To be a good listener, one must be charitable, one must be sensitively aware of other people, and one must be

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<sup>140</sup> In winter 1939-40 Stravinsky presented six lectures in French as a partial fulfillment of his Charles Eliot Norton lectureship. These lectures were first drafted in Russian with the help of Pierre Souvtchinsky and were then translated into French with Alexis Roland-Manuel.

<sup>141</sup> Huxley, “Conversation with Stravinsky,” *Complete Essays*, Vol. 5, p. 384.

<sup>142</sup> Huxley, *Letters*, p. 570.

<sup>143</sup> Huxley, “Conversation with Stravinsky,” *Complete Essays*, Vol. 5, p. 384.

interested in everything. Stravinsky possesses all these qualities and can therefore listen as well as he talks.”<sup>144</sup>

The composer did not endure well the company of tedious, foolish, or pretentious persons. Still, in Huxley’s experience, to all he was unfailingly polite and aristocratic in demeanor, with polish and kindness. Stravinsky had a phenomenal work ethic and great energy and was “never satisfied with any achievement however high; but this steady unbending will to perfection is associated with a far from unbendable organism.”<sup>145</sup> No matter the circumstance, the composer’s pursuit of perfection endured, as well as his polite nature. When put upon by fools Stravinsky remained courteous, and “The worst that befalls them is to discover, if they permit themselves to be distracted for a moment, that the master is no longer there.”<sup>146</sup>

Huxley’s admiration for one of his closest friends is evident throughout the essay. His estimation of Stravinsky’s music had improved greatly with time and association with the composer. The description of the character of Stravinsky was vastly different from the “uncivilised” Russian émigré who had been so easily corrupted by the French in the 1920s. The music of Stravinsky did not appeal to Huxley, as did Beethoven’s or Palestrina’s, but after years of close friendship, Huxley understood Stravinsky’s immense importance in music history.

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<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., p. 385.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

## **CHAPTER 4 - Huxley as a Concert Collaborator of Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft**

A result of the profound respect and admiration that Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft had for Aldous Huxley was that they requested Huxley provide commentary for multiple concert projects and recordings. The three men had common interests that became the material for several successful collaborations. Huxley gave short addresses at two Stravinsky concerts (the premiere of *In Memoriam Dylan Thomas* and the seventy-fifth birthday celebration of Stravinsky at UCLA) and a lecture at a series of Craft concerts and recordings of the music of Don Carlo Gesualdo.

### ***The Premiere of In Memoriam Dylan Thomas***

Igor Stravinsky and Dylan Thomas met in May 1953 to discuss collaborating on an opera. This was the first and only time that the two would meet. Thomas was on his way to Los Angeles from the United Kingdom to meet with Stravinsky, when he passed away in New York City on November 9, 1953. Stravinsky was made aware of Thomas's death on the morning of his intended arrival in California, by a cable sent to Robert Craft from a news organization asking for comment on the death. Stravinsky was shocked by Thomas's passing. He secluded himself in his studio and wept. He tried unsuccessfully that evening to listen to a recording of

Thomas reading his poetry.<sup>147</sup> It was Aldous Huxley who told the Stravinskys and Craft of the details of Thomas's death.<sup>148</sup>

The Monday Evening Concert Series gave their first concert on September 20, 1954 under the direction of Lawrence Morton.<sup>149</sup> This standing-room-only concert at the Los Angeles County Auditorium was dedicated to the memory of Dylan Thomas. On this program Stravinsky premiered his *In Memoriam Dylan Thomas*, a setting of Thomas's poem "Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night," scored for tenor, four trombones, and string quartet. The work was performed again following the intermission, as was the tradition with later Stravinsky premieres.

The nonmusical events of the evening were recordings of Thomas reading three of his poems and a short reading by Aldous Huxley about Thomas and lyric poetry. The last line of Huxley's address summarized the sentiments of the whole, "God help a generation that neglects to read its poets."<sup>150</sup> Also on the program were Andrea Gabrieli's *Ricercar del 12 tono*, Henry Purcell's *Funeral Music for Queen Mary*, Adrian Willaert's *Ricercar for Instruments*, Heinrich Schütz's *Fili mi, Absalom*, six madrigals for five voices by Carlo Gesualdo, and J. S. Bach's cantata *Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit* BWV 106. Craft conducted the program with the "unobtrusive intelligence and skill which make him such a noteworthy exponent of rare music."<sup>151</sup> Craft named this program as his favorite of all the concerts he had directed for the

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<sup>147</sup> Robert Craft, *Stravinsky: Glimpses of a Life*, 1st ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), p. 57.

<sup>148</sup> For more information about Dylan Thomas's death, see Andrew Lycett's *Dylan Thomas: A New Life* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2003), pp. 363-74.

<sup>149</sup> The organization was founded in 1939 by Peter Yates under the name Evenings on the Roof.

<sup>150</sup> The manuscript is untitled. Aldous Huxley, "[A Word About Dylan Thomas]," *Aldous Huxley: Complete Essays*, Vol. 5, Robert S. Baker and James Sexton, ed. (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2000), pp. 427-9.

<sup>151</sup> Albert Goldberg, "Stravinsky's Tribute to Poet Premiered," in *The Los Angeles Times*, Tuesday 21 September 1954, p. B6.



Monday Evening Concert series.<sup>152</sup> After the concert Huxley accompanied the Stravinskys and Craft to the reception.

## **Stravinsky, Huxley, and Craft as Collaborators Concerning the Music of Carlo Gesualdo**

Robert Craft organized a quintet to perform madrigals by Don Carlo Gesualdo at the Monday Evening Concert honoring the memory of poet Dylan Thomas in September 1954. Four members of the quintet continued to participate with Craft in a series of concerts and recordings as the Gesualdo Madrigalists.<sup>153</sup> The group would often rehearse in the Stravinsky home, and the composer and Aldous Huxley attended these rehearsals.<sup>154</sup> In her autobiography mezzo-soprano Marilyn Horne included her impression of Stravinsky and Huxley from this time. “Stravinsky and Huxley certainly were a strange duo, the former a gnomish balding Russian, the latter a lanky aquiline Englishman. . . . Together they resembled a psychedelic Mutt and Jeff.”<sup>155</sup>

It was at this time that Huxley became interested in the music of Gesualdo. When Craft programmed a Monday Evening Concert of mostly Renaissance music, including ten Gesualdo madrigals, he invited Huxley to give a lecture on Gesualdo and the Court of Ferrara. Huxley wrote to his friend the British psychiatrist Dr. Humphrey Osmond on September 25, 1955 that he had agreed “rather rashly” to give the lecture on the “psychotic prince of Venosa, who murdered his wife and could never go to the bathroom unless he had been previously flagellated . . . and on

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<sup>152</sup> Craft, *Improbable*, p. 111.

<sup>153</sup> Grace-Lynne Martin, soprano, Marilyn Horne, mezzo-soprano, Cora Burt Lauridsen, contralto, Richard Robinson, tenor, and Charles Scharbach, bass.

<sup>154</sup> Lawrence Morton, “Stravinsky in Los Angeles,” in Orrin Howard, comp. and ed., *Festival of Music Made in Los Angeles* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Philharmonic, 1981), p. 80.


<sup>155</sup> Marilyn Horne and Jane Scovell, *Marilyn Horne: My Life* (New York: Atheneum, 1983), p. 87.

the Court of Ferrara, where he developed his utterly amazing musical style.” The preparation of the lecture required a considerable amount of reading, including Alfred Einstein’s *The Italian Madrigal*,<sup>156</sup> books on Renaissance poet Torquato Tasso, and histories of post-Renaissance Italy.<sup>157</sup>

**Figure 4.1—October 16, 1955—A program of a concert sponsored by the Music Society of Santa Barbara at which Robert Craft’s Gesualdo Madrigalists performed and Huxley lectured.**<sup>158</sup>

*Music Society of Santa Barbara*  
 October 16, 1955 - Lobero Theatre

**ALDOUS HUXLEY** and **THE GESUALDO MADRIGALISTS**  
*Robert Craft, conductor*  
*Grace-Lynn Martin, Marilyn Horne, sopranos*  
*Cora Lauridsen, contralto*  
*Richard Robinson, tenor*  
*Charles Scharbach, bass*



I. Four Madrigals by Carlo Gesualdo, Prince of Venosa  
*Dolcissima mia vita* (c. 1560-1613)  
*O dolorosa gioia*  
*Meraviglia d'amore*  
*Moro lasso*

II. Mr. Huxley, speaking on "The Court of Ferrara and Gesualdo."

III. Four Madrigals by Gesualdo  
*Ardo per te*  
*Tu diangi*  
*Ardita zanzaretta*  
*Luci serene e chiare*

INTERMISSION

IV. A. Two Arias by Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)  
*Lasciatemi morire*  
*Partenza amoroso*  
*Miss Horne*

B. Solo Ballata by Heinrich Isaac (c. 1450-1517)  
*Mostrarsi ardirata di fore*  
*Mr. Robinson*

C. Four Madrigals by Gesualdo  
*Ecco moriro dunque*  
*Tu m'uccidi o crudele*  
*Io tacerò*  
*Itene o miei sospiri*

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*This program is produced by the Monday Evening Concerts of Los Angeles*

On October 17, 1955 Huxley delivered his lecture<sup>159</sup> at a Monday Evening Concert to an over-capacity crowd at the Los Angeles County Auditorium in West Hollywood Park. He

<sup>156</sup> This three-volume tome was translated into English by Alexander H. Krappe, Roger H. Sessions, and Oliver Strunk, and was published in 1949 by Princeton University Press.

<sup>157</sup> Aldous Huxley, *Letters*, p. 767.

<sup>158</sup> Robert Craft, *Chronicle*, Plate 7b.

discoursed on the Court of Ferrara, which was a center for progressive music and the madrigal in Italy. In this atmosphere of new music, Gesualdo “wrote with a freedom of invention and a total disregard of the rules of his day that was of an audacity that has seldom been equaled in kind.”<sup>160</sup>

The scandalous history of Gesualdo’s personal life proved too tempting to be left out of Huxley’s address. The novelist detailed how the cuckolded Gesualdo sent his retainers to brutally murder his first wife and her lover and then dump their bodies in the street. Gesualdo himself was reported to have killed the infant son who he believed he had not fathered by rocking the child’s cradle so violently that the infant could not catch his breath. According to the aristocratic code of that time, Gesualdo would have been within his rights to kill his unfaithful wife and the man with whom she betrayed him. However, by sending his servants to carry out the act he elicited the ire of the murdered couple’s families and was forced into seclusion to escape retribution.

Gesualdo suffered in later years from tremendous guilt, which caused him to become a masochist to such an extreme degree that *Los Angeles Times* critic Albert Goldberg “[did] not dare even to quote Mr. Huxley on the subject in this family newspaper.”<sup>161</sup> Huxley gave multiple examples of Gesualdo’s personal eroticism while the crowd laughed out loud and amusement swept the room.<sup>162</sup> Mrs. Nys was in attendance that night and was made most

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<sup>159</sup> Huxley’s lecture became an essay titled “Gesualdo: Variations on a Musical Theme” and can be found in *Aldous Huxley: Complete Essays*, Vol. 5, Robert S. Baker and James Sexton, ed. (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2000), pp. 436-49, originally in *Adonis and the Alphabet* published by Chatto & Windus in 1956.

<sup>160</sup> Albert Goldberg, “Huxley Lures Crowd to Lecture-Concert,” in *The Los Angeles Times*, Tuesday 18 October 1955, p. B10.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>162</sup> Sybille Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, Vol. 2, p. 205.

uncomfortable by the lecture of her son-in-law.<sup>163</sup> Goldberg wrote in his review that Huxley was knowledgeable on the subjects of Gesualdo and the Court at Ferrara, and that he “spiced the dry bones of history with wit and even a shade of malice.”<sup>164</sup>

The concert began with Lukas Foss and André Previn performing Mozart’s Sonata for Piano for Four Hands, K. 521. This work was the first of a series of W. A. Mozart compositions performed at the Monday Evening Concerts during their 1955-6 season honoring the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mozart’s birth. Foss and Previn stepped in on short notice after the two members of the Pacific Art Trio were unable to perform.

The Gesualdo Madrigalists performed five madrigals conducted by Craft preceding Huxley’s lecture and five additional madrigals following. Also on the program were Josquin des Pres’s *Royal Fanfare*, Luzzasco Luzzaschi’s *Canzona*, Heinrich Isaac’s *Canonic Song*, Henry Purcell’s *Funeral Music for Queen Mary*, and Andrea Gabrieli’s *Ricercar*. After a long program including the lecture, the music for four trombones by the five Renaissance composers came “Far too late for hearing . . .” for Goldberg.<sup>165</sup>

In her biography of Aldous Huxley, Sybille Bedford included an entry from Betty Wendell’s<sup>166</sup> diary describing Huxley’s performance that night.

After the lecture when we were waiting to drive Aldous home and his admirers had dispersed, only one young man, very earnest and erudite, was lingering. He asked Aldous to tell him where he had found so much data on Gesualdo. . . . Aldous mumbled about journals and letters. The young man asked where they could be read. Aldous said to telephone him. Safely in my car, he said, ‘I have done the most dreadful thing—and

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<sup>163</sup> Craft, *Chronicle*, p. 122.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> A friend of Huxley’s and the co-writer of the 1958 stage adaptation of Huxley’s *The Genius and the Goddess*.

I'll be caught. . . . I was carried away and invented all those stories except the first one. Never have I done anything so preposterous. Oh dear!' <sup>167</sup>

Craft and his madrigal group made four recordings of Gesualdo's works.<sup>168</sup> Stravinsky and Huxley attended many of these recording sessions. Marilyn Horne documented one such instance of a session at Capitol Records in her autobiography *Marilyn Horne: My Life*. Horne could see Stravinsky and Huxley hunched over the piano in the recording room staring at a note on the piano. The writing on the paper confounded the men. Horne heard Stravinsky recommend to Huxley that they consult her about their quandary. The singer was incredulous that Stravinsky would seek her opinion on a musical matter. Huxley called Horne into the recording room where the note on the piano read "NO COTTON-PICKIN' DRINKS ON THIS INSTRUMENT." The two great men did not know what "cotton pickin'" meant.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, Vol. 2, pp. 205-6. This claim was not substantiated by any other source found in Sara Outhier's research.

<sup>168</sup> These four are *Gesualdo: Madrigals and Sacred Music* (Columbia ML 5324), *Gesualdo (1560-1613) Canzonettas, Madrigals, Galliards, Sacrae Cantiones, Psalms* (Columbia ML5341), *Don Carlo Gesualdo: Prince of Madrigalists, Tributes to His Astonishing Life and Music* (Columbia KL 5718), *Gesualdo Madrigals Book VI, Complete* (Columbia MS 7441). *Don Carlo Gesualdo: Prince of Madrigalists* was reissued on Columbia AKS 6318. Various sources claim that Huxley was involved on three of these recordings, but he is only credited on the first two. Laura Huxley is also credited on the first recording.

<sup>169</sup> Horne and Scovell, *Marilyn Horne*, pp. 87-8.

**Figure 4.2—October 1955—Igor Stravinsky and Aldous Huxley at a recording session directed by Robert Craft of Gesualdo madrigals<sup>170</sup>**



Huxley and his second wife Laura Archera Huxley translated the madrigal texts for three of Craft's Gesualdo recordings.<sup>171</sup> He wrote to Craft on June 10, 1958 about Gesualdo's selection of madrigal texts. The high quality of the music was not matched by the inferior texts. Huxley called the texts "so grotesquely affected as to be almost incomprehensible," "silly," and "entirely pointless." The composer looked for startling texts that made for easy word painting, with abrupt modulations and unusual harmonic progressions. Huxley did not see the need to translate the texts literally, writing, "Bad verse distracts from good music." Instead the key terms, such as "death," "pain," and "woe," were the only necessary translations for enjoying the music.<sup>172</sup>

Stravinsky's interest in the music of Carlo Gesualdo began in 1952.<sup>173</sup> Four years later while on a concert tour of Europe, he visited the commune of Gesualdo, Italy and the Castle Gesualdo, which he found inhabited by hens, a heifer, a goat, and a large family. The residents

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<sup>170</sup> Craft, *Chronicle*, plate 6b.

<sup>171</sup> See note 166.

<sup>172</sup> Craft, *Improbable*, p. 157, n. 21.

<sup>173</sup> White, *Stravinsky: Composer and his Works*, p. 549.

were unaware of the composer whose heraldry the castle entrance bore. Stravinsky had to divulge a portion of the Prince of Venosa's history to gain entry to the castle. He later wrote that the result of his explanations in his "poverty-stricken Italian" was that the inhabitants gathered that it was Stravinsky who was the murderous prince.<sup>174</sup> Barring the coat of arms above the entrance, the castle itself was unimpressive. "In short, it was difficult to imagine the high state of musical culture that once flourished on this forlorn hill, the singers, the instrumentalists, the church choristers, and, not least, the great, if emotionally disequilibrated, composer whose last madrigal books were first printed here."<sup>175</sup>

At this time Stravinsky also visited the Capuchin church in Gesualdo, the Chiesa di Santa Maria delle Grazie. For this church Gesualdo had commissioned a painting depicting among other things himself and his uncle, the future St. Charles Borromeo, perhaps in an effort to assuage his extraordinary guilt. Stravinsky found the painting on his first visit dirty but intact. Stravinsky returned to Gesualdo in 1959, while in Naples for a conducting engagement, and on his return, he discovered the painting had been cleaned but damaged above Gesualdo's head. Stravinsky visited the grave of Gesualdo upon his return to Naples, which is below the floor of the Chiesa del Gesù Nuovo.

Stravinsky's interest in the music of Gesualdo led him to recompose three incomplete sacred motets that were published by Boosey & Hawkes in 1960 with the title *Tres Sacrae Cantiones*, honoring the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Gesualdo's birth. The third motet, "Illumina nos," was the first to be recomposed in 1957 with Stravinsky providing the sixth and seventh parts. He intended for the song to be performed in Venice at the premiere of *Canticum Sacrum*, but the

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<sup>174</sup> Stravinsky wrote the preface to Glenn Watkins, *Gesualdo: The Man and His Music* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1973), dated March 7, 1968. p. x.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

idea was abandoned when it became evident that the Venetians would not suffer the work of a Neapolitan to be performed in St. Mark's Basilica. He did not return to the project until September 1959. In the two remaining motets, "Da pacem Domine" and "Assumpta est Maria," Stravinsky only added the seventh part.

Stravinsky's next Gesualdo project was a recomposition of three madrigals for instruments (two oboes, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, and strings [minus double bass]). The work, *Monumentum pro Gesualdo di Venosa ad CD annum*, was completed in Hollywood in March 1960. The first madrigal was the most significantly altered of the three. Stravinsky repeated phrases that were anticipations of the next sections and incorporated suspensions and accented dissonances to alter Gesualdo's tedious harmonic progressions. The alterations in the second and third madrigals were less extensive than in the first. "Otherwise there are octave transpositions, exchanges of parts, harmonic doublings, occasional completions of the implied harmony, and one or two inserted passing-notes, but the substance of the two pieces remains essentially as it was."<sup>176</sup> In first madrigal Stravinsky excluded trumpets and trombones, while in the second horns and strings were not used. The composer utilized the whole ensemble in the third madrigal. Stravinsky conducted the Orchestra del Teatro la Fenice in the 27 September 1960 premiere of *Monumentum pro gesualdo* as part of the Venice Biennale. Boosey & Hawkes published this work that same year.

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<sup>176</sup> White, *Stravinsky: Composer and his Works*, p. 550. Originally found in Colin Mason's "Stravinsky and Gesualdo," *Tempo* 55/56 (Autumn/Winter, 1960), pp. 39-48.



## The Concert Honoring Igor Stravinsky's Seventy-Fifth Birthday

The final concert of the eleventh Los Angeles Music Festival,<sup>177</sup> in association with the Monday Evening Concert series, was an all Stravinsky program in honor of the composer's seventy-fifth birthday held on June 17, 1957.<sup>178</sup> Royce Hall on the UCLA campus was filled with a capacity audience to honor Stravinsky. A telegram from President Dwight Eisenhower was read,<sup>179</sup> and the Los Angeles City Council and the National Association for American Composers and Conductors presented scrolls to Stravinsky.

Aldous Huxley gave an address<sup>180</sup> in honor of his dear friend describing his career as a series of perpetual dawns.<sup>181</sup> Huxley called Stravinsky a "great genius", a "saint of music" and the "maker of 'the Stravinsky revolution.'" The writer's sincere admiration was made evident in the speech, and Christopher Isherwood, who did not appreciate the music, was convinced of Stravinsky's importance to musical history by Huxley's words.<sup>182</sup>

The director of the Los Angeles Music Festival, Franz Waxman opened the program with Stravinsky's *Greeting Prelude*, which Stravinsky composed in 1955 in honor of conductor Pierre

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<sup>177</sup> The Los Angeles Music Festival was founded by composer/conductor Franz Waxman (1906-1967) to present concerts combining orchestral masterworks with new music. Composer-conducted performances were common. For further details on this festival, see <http://franzwaxman.com> and also chapter XIII of Craig Burwell Parker's "John Vincent (1902-1977): An Alabama Composer's Odyssey" (Ph.D. dissertation, UCLA, 1981).

<sup>178</sup> This was the only concert ever co-sponsored by these two organizations.

<sup>179</sup> Christopher Isherwood wrote: "Eisenhower sent an asinine telegram, carefully worded so Igor shouldn't be praised *too* highly." Quoted in H. Colin Slim, *Annotated Catalogue of the H. Colin Slim Stravinsky Collection Donated by him to The University of British Columbia Library* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 2002), p. 299.

<sup>180</sup> No complete text of this exists.

<sup>181</sup> Albert Goldberg, "Stravinsky Honored at Festival Concert," in *The Los Angeles Times*, Wednesday 17 June 1957, p. 24.

<sup>182</sup> Craft, *Improbable*, p. 187.

Monteux's eightieth birthday.<sup>183</sup> Craft conducted the 1947 version of *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*, followed by the American premiere of *Canticum Sacrum*, dedicated to Venice and its patron Saint Mark, and the world premiere of *Agon*, which was Stravinsky's first work for large orchestra since *Symphony in Three Movements*.<sup>184</sup>

Stravinsky finished the program by conducting his arrangement of Bach's *Von Himmel hoch* and a reading of *Symphony of Psalms*, which *Los Angeles Times* music critic Albert Goldberg found "deeply moving." Stravinsky had been active in southern California's musical life since moving to Los Angeles in 1940. Music critic C. Sharpless Hickman wrote that the "ovation tendered him was not just the abstract one given in tribute to a world cultural leader, but was also a personally felt gesture of friendship for a distinguished neighbor."<sup>185</sup>

Igor Stravinsky and Aldous Huxley maintained a close friendship for almost two decades. Stravinsky, Huxley, and Craft spent numerous evenings listening to and discussing music. Huxley would often give Stravinsky and Craft recordings and literature. Both Stravinsky and Huxley recognized the superiority of the other in his field. It was only natural that Stravinsky and Craft would request that Huxley lecture at their concerts on topics that meant a great deal to him personally, and according to the critical response to these concerts, the concertgoers benefitted from these collaborations.

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<sup>183</sup> Pierre Monteux (1875-1964) was conductor of the Ballet Russes from 1911 until called into military service for World War I. He conducted the first performance of *Petrushka* (1911) and *Le sacre du printemps* (1913), as well as many other premieres by composers such as Debussy and Ravel. Stravinsky's *Greeting Prelude* is a somewhat pointillistic setting of *Happy Birthday*.

<sup>184</sup> *Agon* was rehearsed only once by Craft and the musicians the day before the concert. The score was unknown to the musicians at the beginning of the rehearsal.

<sup>185</sup> C. Sharpless Hickman, "Music," in *B'nai B'rith Messenger*, an undated newspaper clipping (ca. June 16, 1957) located in the Franz Waxman papers at Syracuse University.

## CHAPTER 5 - *Variations for Orchestra (in Memory of Aldous Huxley)*

Stravinsky was deeply wounded when Huxley passed away on November 22, 1963.

Stravinsky wrote to Huxley's brother, Sir Julian Huxley,

I loved Aldous deeply and his death has been a terrible shock and loss to me. I am still unable to think about it and I cannot write about him. I have tried— indeed struggled— to compose a tribute for your book to his memory, but I cannot find words for my feelings. Since I came to California a quarter of a century ago, Aldous has been a guiding spirit to me. And I feel lost without that spirit and that dearest friend.<sup>186</sup>

The composer had already begun work on a set of orchestral variations at the time of Huxley's death. In a letter to the French teacher, composer, and conductor, Nadia Boulanger, Stravinsky wrote,

The *Variations*, dedicated to the memory of Aldous Huxley, has no connection with his work. I was composing it during the months in which dear Aldous was dying of throat cancer. Thus it was only natural that I dedicate this work to his memory. Furthermore, I am certain, though it does not discourage me, that this music would mean nothing to him or that it would displease him, because he liked romantic and classical music very foreign to my composition.<sup>187</sup>

The composition of the *Variations (in Memory of Aldous Huxley)* was begun in Santa Fe, New Mexico in July 1963 and finished in Hollywood on October 28, 1964. A draft score of the variation for twelve violins was completed on August 12, 1963. Measures 63-71 were finished on January 3, 1964, but not in their final form, which was completed January 24. Measures 73-5 and 61-2 were composed on February 22. The composition of the *Variations* was briefly halted

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<sup>186</sup> Igor Stravinsky, letter of 1965 to Sir Julian Huxley in response to Huxley's request for a recollection of Aldous Huxley for the commemorative volume, Julian Huxley, ed. *Aldous Huxley: A Memorial Volume*. (Edinburgh: Chatto & Windus Ltd., 1966), p. 26.

<sup>187</sup> Stravinsky, letter of December 1964 to Nadia Boulanger, *Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence*, Vol. 1, p. 261.

while Stravinsky composed the *Elegy for J. F. K.* and the *Fanfare for a New Theatre*. Stravinsky returned to the *Variations* on May 22 at measure 86. The fugato section was completed August 13, and the entire work on October 28.

*Variations (in Memory of Aldous Huxley)* was premiered on April 17, 1965 in Chicago by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, with Robert Craft conducting. Stravinsky elected to include the newly finished *Introitus* on the program and the audience was favored with two Stravinsky premieres in one evening. A previously planned Columbia recording of the performance was cancelled due to a dispute in which the orchestra claimed they had not been fully paid for the July 20, 1964 recording session by Stravinsky and his musical assistant, conductor Robert Craft of *Orpheus* and Schoenberg's transcription of Brahms's G-minor Piano Quartet. The members of the orchestra members contested that the recording constituted two sessions. Craft conducted both premieres that evening, the *Variations* were played twice, and Stravinsky conducted the final piece, *Pulcinella*, in full. The *Variations* received many accolades following the premiere. Alternatively, one notable negative assessment of the work came from composer and conductor Pierre Boulez, who said in an interview, "Stravinsky's *Variations* contain nothing new, or nothing that Webern had not done already."<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> Stravinsky, *Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence*, p. 360. Originally from an interview with Janeslav Buxga published in *Melos*.

Figure 5.1—Poster for the European premiere of *Variations* on May 28, 1965 in Warsaw<sup>189</sup>



On March 31, 1966 the *Variations* was presented as a ballet by choreographer George Balanchine and his New York City Ballet. Balanchine staged the *Variations* three times, each with different choreography. In 1982 Balanchine re-choreographed *Variations* for the New York City Ballet Stravinsky Festival. This was his final choreography.

The *Variations* was Stravinsky's first solely orchestral work since *Agon* and the next step in the development of duodecapronic techniques begun in *Agon*. The work was Stravinsky's last orchestral composition, and it was also his last use of variation form. Following the *Variations*, his final compositions were all vocal works.

This work is scored for two flutes, alto flute, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, harp, piano, and strings of equal weight, calling for twelve first violins with no second violins, ten violas, eight cellos, and four double basses. The piano and harp are used here, in a partnership, as percussion. Stravinsky

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<sup>189</sup> Vera Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Pictures*, p. 475.

preferred the work be considered “concise . . . rather than short,”<sup>190</sup> the duration being only about five minutes.

The duodecimal pitch series was conceived as a melody. Stravinsky later discovered coincidentally that it was comprised of twelve different notes. In a documentary aired by CBS titled *Portraits of Stravinsky*, the composer said of the series, “The melody was first, then came the charts. I can repeat two notes but not three in a series.”<sup>191</sup>

**Figure 5.2—The *Variations* series in its prime form as given in the program notes from the world premiere.<sup>192</sup>**



As was often the case in Stravinsky’s duodecimal compositions, the melody was conceived first. This melody is created with a certain register, rhythm, and usually instrumentation in mind. It is then manipulated until it contained all twelve pitches resulting in a series. Stravinsky “altered or diversified”<sup>193</sup> this series rather than using a theme or a subject. The first way in which the series is altered is the pre-compositional creation of pitch constructs. These constructs are then diversified to create the variations in the composition.

The formal structure of the *Variations* is a single movement of eleven individual variations *without* a melodic theme. In an essay originally found in *The Weekly Westminster Gazette*, Aldous Huxley commented on variation form. The music critic wrote, in a reflection on practicing Johannes Brahms’s *Variations on a Theme by Haydn*, “For the principle of the

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<sup>190</sup> White, *Stravinsky: Composer and his Works*, p. 537.

<sup>191</sup> Charles M. Joseph, *Stravinsky Inside Out* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 185. Originally found in a documentary directed and produced by David Oppenheim for CBS titled *Portraits of Stravinsky*.

<sup>192</sup> Orrin Howard, comp. and ed., *Festival of Music Made in Los Angeles*, (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Philharmonic Association, 1981), p. 11.

<sup>193</sup> White, *Stravinsky: Composer and his Works*, p. 537.

variation is one of the fundamental principles of all art. A theme, repeated with differences; a series of forms developing out of one another and having a recognizable relation to some primary form—you find these things in poetry and painting as well as music.”<sup>194</sup> Huxley here wrote glowingly of variation form, the same form of the piece dedicated to him by Stravinsky that the composer supposed Huxley would not appreciate.

Eminent Stravinsky biographer and analyst, Eric Walter White calls the three twelve-voiced variations duodecets, or twelve-part inventions.<sup>195</sup> In each of these inventions Stravinsky uses a repeated metrical framework of 4 + 3 + 5, equaling twelve bars. This pattern is used like a stanza in three groups of four with breaks after each use. White labeled these three stanzas A, B, and C.<sup>196</sup> The stanzas are surrounded by a prelude, two interludes, and postlude.

Rhythmical articulation in each part is consistent and unique throughout the duodecet. Stravinsky utilized isorhythm in each of the twelve voices. The notes are changed from A in parts B and C, but the rhythmic treatment is redistributed and unaltered. Stravinsky said of the importance of rhythm in his *Variations* that, “Some of us think that the role of rhythm is larger today than ever before, but, however that may be, in the absence of harmonic modulation it must play a considerable part in the delineation of form. And more than ever before, the composer must be certain of building rhythmic unity into variety. In my *Variations*, tempo is a variable and pulsation a constant.”<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>194</sup> Aldous Huxley, “Variations,” *Aldous Huxley Complete Essays*, Vol. 1, 1920-1925, Robert S. Baker and James Sexton, ed. (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2000), pp. 294-5.

<sup>195</sup> White, *Stravinsky: Composer and his Works*, p. 535.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

<sup>197</sup> Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Themes and Episodes* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1966), pp. 60-1.

The twelve parts are drawn from the original series with use of modulation. Yet, each part is distinct, resulting in twelve-part polyphony, having no exact repetition. Stravinsky considered the primary innovation of *Variations* to be the density of these three twelve-voice variations.<sup>198</sup> The density of twelve parts using only one tone color appealed greatly to Stravinsky. He wrote of this texture, “At the first performances the variation for twelve violins—i.e., in one timbre—pleased me most. It sounded like a sprinkling of very fine broken glass.”<sup>199</sup>

Figure 5.3—The third part from each of the three duodects<sup>200</sup>

I. Variation 1 is found in the prelude, which is comprised of measures 1-22. After introductory chords, and the prelude begins with monodic phrases by solo instruments or doublings of instruments. Stravinsky called this melodic treatment “*Klangfarben* monody.”<sup>201</sup>

<sup>198</sup> Stravinsky and Craft, *Themes and Episodes*, p. 61.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61, n. 7.

<sup>200</sup> White, *Stravinsky: Composer and his Works*, pp. 535-6.

<sup>201</sup> Stravinsky and Craft, *Themes and Episodes*, p. 61.



A. Variation 2 is the first of three variations of twelve-part texture, occurring in measures 23- 34. This stanza is scored for twelve solo violins with a relatively high tessitura, and utilizes one third of the available string instruments.

II. Following part A in measures 35-46 is variation 3 serving as the first interlude. This is a short episode for flutes and bassoons, with an oboe solo.

B. Variation 4 is the second twelve-voice variation, and it occurs in measures 47-58. The rhythmic patterns used are identical to the corresponding parts in A. The voices here are four solo violins, six solo violas, and two solo basses, again using one third of the strings.

III. The second interlude occurs in measures 59-117, and is an extended section of variations 5-9: (5) measures 59-72, a three-part invention for woodwinds, and then trumpets, trombones and strings. The use of chords and monodic phrases is reminiscent of variation 1; (6) measures 73-85, two chords sounded in quick succession (the first “forte,” the second “piano”) framing a three-part invention for trombones; (7) measures 86-94, a short contrapuntal episode for strings, clarinets, English horn, bassoon, and horn; (8) measures 95-100, in which staccato chords are repeated from the trombones; and (9) the fugato section for strings reinforced by comments from piano.

C. Part C is the final twelve-part variation, variation 10, and it is made up of measures 118-129. Two flutes and alto flute, two oboes and English horn, two clarinets and bass clarinet, horn and two bassoons are scored in this final stanza. The rhythmic parts are distributed differently in part C, almost inverted, with violins 1 and

12 switched. Here Stravinsky orders the instruments in regards to ranges, rather than using the traditional ordering.

IV. The postlude features variation 11. Variation 11 begins with chordal cadences, again reminiscent of the prelude that frame monodic phrases from the flutes, piano, and harp. The final cadence is comprised of five chords using eleven notes. The twelfth note (G sharp) is found in the final bar played alone by the bass clarinet.

When trying to divide the work into individual variations, Stravinsky recommended looking to the orchestration of the families of instruments:

The use of families and individuals in contrast is a principal projective element of the form, especially of its symmetries and reversibles. The leading solo roles are those of the flutes, bassoons, and trombones; and perhaps my economy is inconsistent in that the trumpet and horn families have in comparison so little to do, but I needed only a spot of red, and a spot of blue. I might add that the orchestral *dramatis personae* is unusual in that four rather than the standard five string parts are required (there is only one division of the violins) and that all must be of equal weight. Percussion instruments are not used, but their position is occupied by the piano and harp which appear as a couple (married).<sup>202</sup>

The four instrument families are presented together at the beginning of the work.

Stravinsky soon separates them and uses each in a distinct way. The brass are often paired with chords, the strings occur in twelve-voice texture, and woodwinds are found in pairs or quartets.

Piano and harp play a secondary, supporting role.

Trombones are the most frequently used brass instrument. They are prominently featured in variations 1, 3, and 8. In variation 1 trombones balanced with the trumpets play a series of chords that alternate from “forte” to “piano.” The return of the trombones comes in variation 6, in which they play three-part counterpoint. Finally the trombones combine the two approaches

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid., p. 62.

in variation 8, playing chords with oscillating dynamics of variation 1, with the rhythm and soli orchestration of variation 6. This is the last time that the *Variations* features brass, excluding the use of horn I in an ensemble role in variation 10 and in the first chord of variation 11.

**Figure 5.4—Variation no. 8, measures 95-98**<sup>203</sup>

The strings and woodwinds are introduced together with harp in the first section of variation one, and in the second section the groups play in turn. Strings and woodwinds are used in alternating variations and do not appear together again until variation 5. In variations 2 and 4 groups of strings are used in twelve-part counterpoint. These are the first two of the three twelve-part variations.

<sup>203</sup> Igor Stravinsky, *Variations (Aldous Huxley in Memoriam)* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1965), p. 18.

Figure 5.5—Variation no. 2, measures 22-5<sup>204</sup>

The image shows a musical score for Variation no. 2, measures 22-5. The score consists of 12 staves, numbered 1 through 12 on the left. The top staff is marked "12 VI. Solo poco sul pont. in *pp*". The tempo is marked "♩ = 80". The time signature is 4/8. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and slurs. There are several performance instructions: "7 for 3 ♯" appears above the first staff in two places; "7 for 3 ♯" appears above the eighth staff; "pizz. 2 for 3 ♯" appears above the eighth staff; "poco marc." appears below the fifth and ninth staves; "détaché" appears below the third and eighth staves; and "with the whole bow" appears below the twelfth staff. A box containing the number "25" is located above the first staff. The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines.

Woodwinds are used in variations 3 and 5, sections 1 and 2, playing counterpoint or in parts, typically in three or four parts.

<sup>204</sup> Stravinsky, *Variations*, p. 4.

Figure 5.6—Variation no. 3, measures 35-8<sup>205</sup>

The image shows a musical score for Variation no. 3, measures 35-8. The score is written for five parts: Fl. gr. I, Fl. gr. II, Fl. alto, and two Bassoon parts (I and II). The music is in 3/4 time and features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes. The Fl. gr. I part starts with a measure number of 35 in a box. The Fl. gr. II part has a measure number of 35. The Fl. alto part has a measure number of 35. The Bassoon I part has a measure number of 35. The Bassoon II part has a measure number of 35. The score includes dynamic markings such as *mf* and *mf marc.*, and articulation markings such as accents and slurs. The Fl. gr. I part has a measure number of 35 in a box. The Fl. gr. II part has a measure number of 35. The Fl. alto part has a measure number of 35. The Bassoon I part has a measure number of 35. The Bassoon II part has a measure number of 35. The score includes dynamic markings such as *mf* and *mf marc.*, and articulation markings such as accents and slurs.

The entire complement of strings plays with trumpets and trombones in section 3 of variation 5. In measure 69 solo bassoon and tutti cellos play together a solitary note. In variation 6 strings and woodwinds return to their oscillating roles. In chords that are interjected into the three-part trombone invention, the strings and woodwinds play again in turn.

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<sup>205</sup> Stravinsky, *Variations*, p. 8.

Figure 5.7—Variation no. 6, measures 80-5<sup>206</sup>

The musical score is presented in two systems. The left system contains measures 80 through 84, and the right system contains measures 85 through 89. The instruments are arranged as follows:

- Ob. I, II:** Oboe parts, starting with a *p* dynamic.
- I, II:** Clarinet parts.
- Cor.:** Cor Anglais part.
- III, IV:** Trumpet and Trombone parts.
- Trbn. tes. I, II:** Trumpet parts, with a change to 3/16 time signature and *sim.* marking.
- Trbn. bas.:** Bass Trombone part.
- Arpa:** Harp part, marked *sim.*
- Piano:** Piano part, marked *p*.
- VI.:** Violin I part, marked *sim.*
- Via.:** Viola part, marked *sim.*
- Vc.:** Violoncello part, marked *div.*

Measure numbers 80 and 85 are enclosed in boxes. A dotted line indicates the continuation of the score from measure 84 to measure 85.

<sup>206</sup> Stravinsky, *Variations*, p. 16.

The strings and woodwinds approach cohesion in variation 7, playing different parts in two and four-part counterpoint. The separation begins to break as the contrabasses are paired with bass clarinet in measure 88 and clarinet I, English horn, and bassoon I in measures 92-3. In measures 93-4 the English horn plays together with the violins, violas, and cellos, and cohesion has finally occurred.

**Figure 5.8—Variation no. 7, measures 90-4**<sup>207</sup>

The image shows a musical score for Variation no. 7, measures 90-4. The score is written for a woodwind and string ensemble. The instruments included are Clarinet I (Cl. I.), Clarinet II (C. I.), Bassoon I (Fag. I), Cor Anglais (Cor. I), Violin I (Vl.), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Cello (Ch. (Cello)). The score begins at measure 90, which is highlighted with a box. The music is in 3/4 time and features complex counterpoint. Vertical dashed lines mark measures 91, 92, 93, and 94. Performance markings include 'pizz. poco sf' and 'pizz. sim.' for the cello part.

Both families play a secondary, supporting role in the trombone feature, variation 8.

The whole string section adopts the three-part counterpoint previously associated with the woodwinds in variation 9.

<sup>207</sup> Stravinsky, *Variations*, p. 17.

Figure 5.9—Variation no. 9, measures 112-4<sup>208</sup>



The woodwinds then appear in twelve-part counterpoint in variation 10, the third twelve-part variation, a texture that was reserved for strings. This is the only time in the work that the entire complement of woodwinds plays together.

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<sup>208</sup> Stravinsky, *Variations*, p. 19.



Figure 5.10—Variation no. 10, measures 124-6<sup>209</sup>

The image displays a page of a musical score for Variation no. 10, measures 124-6. The score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with multiple staves. At the top left, a box contains the number '125'. The instruments listed on the left are: Fl. gr. I and II, Fl. alto, Ob. I and II, C. I., Cl. I and II, Cl. bas., Cor. I, and Fag. I and II. The music is written in 4/8 time. The Fl. gr. I part features a melodic line with slurs and accents. The Fl. alto part has a similar melodic line. The Ob. I and II parts play a rhythmic pattern with slurs. The C. I. part has a rhythmic pattern with slurs. The Cl. I and II parts play a rhythmic pattern with slurs. The Cl. bas. part has a rhythmic pattern with slurs. The Cor. I part has a rhythmic pattern with slurs. The Fag. I and II parts play a rhythmic pattern with slurs. The word 'sempre articolato' is written below the Fag. I part. The word 'stacc.' is written above the Ob. I part. The word 's for 4 2' is written above the Cl. I part. The word '4 8' is written below the Fl. alto, C. I., and Cor. I parts. The word '4 8' is written below the Fl. gr. I part.

<sup>209</sup> Stravinsky, *Variations*, p. 22.

Finally in variation 11 the families are playing simultaneously as the flute shares passages with the violins, violas, and cellos. The strings play the final chordal cadence in measures 137-40 which is in essence a repeat of the opening using different serial derivations, and the final note of the work is played by solo bass clarinet.

**Figure 5.11—Variation no. 11, measures 137-41<sup>210</sup>**

Stravinsky said that his *Variations (in Memory of Aldous Huxley)* was in no way influenced by the work of his dear friend and collaborator, and he freely admitted that Huxley would most assuredly not have liked the work. Still Stravinsky dedicated his last orchestral work to the memory of Huxley with the deepest sincerity, even if the composition was truthfully the next stylistic progression of the most prominent composer of the twentieth century.

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<sup>210</sup> Stravinsky, *Variations*, p. 25.

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## **Appendix A - Additional Interactions Between Igor Stravinsky and Aldous Huxley**

### **1946**

October 3—The Stravinskys and the Huxleys attended a private viewing of the sculptures of Suzanne Nicolas, the sister of Maria Huxley. They went to dinner afterward at the Huxleys.’ (Vera Stravinsky and Igor Stravinsky, *Dearest Bubushkin: The Correspondence of Vera and Igor Stravinsky, 1921-1954: With Excerpts from Vera Stravinsky's Diaries, 1922-1971*. Robert Craft ed. [London: Thames and Hudson, 1985], p. 138)

October 15—The Stravinskys and The Huxleys lunched at the Town and Country Market at Fairfax Avenue and Third Street in Hollywood, California. (Ibid.)

October 31—The Stravinskys and The Huxleys lunched at the Farmers Market. (Ibid.)

November 3—The Stravinskys and the Huxleys spent the day in Wrightwood, California at the home of Maria’s sister Rose Wessberg. (Ibid.)

December—Maria wrote to Matthew, “Stravinsky has been curiously kind and considerate to me, gone out of his way to be kind about nothing in particular. . . .” (Stravinsky, Vera and Robert Craft, ed. *Stravinsky in Pictures and Documents* [New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978], p. 390)

### **1947**

April 2—The Stravinskys and The Huxleys lunched at the Farmers Market. (Vera Stravinsky and Igor Stravinsky, *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 139)

April 3—The Stravinskys and The Huxleys lunched at the Farmers Market with Lady Abdy. (Ibid.)

May 13—The Stravinskys and The Huxleys lunched at the Farmers Market. (Ibid., p. 141)

June 4—The Stravinskys and The Huxleys lunched at the Farmers Market. (Ibid.)

June 17—The Stravinskys and Huxley attended a production of Benjamin Britten’s *The Rape of Lucretia*. (Ibid.)

August 25—The Stravinskys and The Huxleys lunched at the Farmers Market with George Balanchine and Rose Wessberg. Wessberg photographed Stravinsky and Balanchine. (Ibid.)

August 30—The Stravinskys and The Huxleys lunched at the Farmers Market. (Ibid.)

September 10—The Stravinskys and The Huxleys lunched at the Farmers Market. (Ibid.)

November 28—The Stravinskys and The Huxleys lunched at the Farmers Market. (Ibid., p. 143)

December 3—The Stravinskys had the Huxleys and painter Eugene Berman for dinner. (Ibid.)

December 24—The Stravinskys and The Huxleys lunched at the Farmers Market. (Ibid.)

## 1948

February 17—The Stravinskys and The Huxleys lunched at the Farmers Market. They went to a film together that evening at 10:00 p.m. (Ibid.)

March 23—The Stravinskys had lunch with the Huxleys. (Ibid.)

May 27—The Stravinskys had lunch with Huxley. (Ibid., p. 144)

June 5—The Stravinskys dined at the Huxleys' with Peggy Kiskadden, Lesley Le Crou, a counseling psychologist, and Frederick Barienhock, an architect. (Ibid.)

December 3—Huxley visited Stravinsky in Hollywood. (Robert Craft, *An Improbable Life: Memoirs by Robert Craft* [Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2002], p. 87)

## 1949

April 9—The Stravinskys and the Huxleys lunched at Yolanda's at the Farmers Market. (Vera Stravinsky and Igor Stravinsky. *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 146)

April 13—The Stravinskys had the Huxleys at their home for dinner. (Ibid.)

April 16—The Stravinskys and The Huxleys lunched at the Farmers Market. The Stravinskys and Edwin and Grace Hubble dined at the Huxleys. (Ibid.)

August 17—The Stravinskys had lunch with the Huxleys. (Ibid.)

August 18—The Stravinskys had lunch with the Huxleys. (Ibid.)

August 19—The Stravinskys and Robert Craft had lunch with the Huxleys and two Israeli friends of Craft who he had invited." (Ibid.)

## 1950

January 24—The Stravinskys and Craft went to a party at the Huxleys'. Also in attendance were: "[Edwin] Hubble the astronomer . . . Dr. Kiskadden the surgeon, Moller the geneticist, a cetologist from Monterey, an eminent hypnotist, an automatic writing instructor from La Jolla, a

master *vitrailleur*, a parapsychologist from Duke, a monk who has a secret formula for manuscript preservation.” Huxley talked of the introduction of barnacles to the Salton Sea by a seaplane. (Robert Craft, *Stravinsky: Chronicle of a Friendship*, Revised and expanded ed. [Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1994], p. 35)

February 5—The Stravinskys held a going away party for themselves at their home. Huxley, Isherwood and Father [James] McLane attended. (Vera Stravinsky and Igor Stravinsky. *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 147). Huxley talked about dianetics. (Craft, *Chronicle*, p. 35)

April 27—The Stravinskys and Craft attended Matthew Huxley’s wedding to Ellen Hovde (daughter of Bryan Hovde, President of The New School), in New York City. (Vera Stravinsky and Igor Stravinsky. *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 150; n. 6)

April 30—The Stravinskys and Craft attended a reception for the newlyweds at a hotel. Here they met Truman Capote and Audrey Hepburn. (*Ibid.*, p. 150; n. 7)

## 1951

February 17—The Stravinskys, the Huxleys, and Craft went to see the film *The Blue Angel*, starring Marlene Dietrich. “Aldous, in the front row, raises his magnifying glass at each close-up of Dietrich’s charms.” (Craft, *Chronicle*, p. 45)

February 18—The Stravinskys went to see a film on the Mayans in the living room of the Huxleys’. (Vera Stravinsky and Igor Stravinsky. *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 150)

March 23—The Stravinskys had Huxley and composer Nicolas Nabokov to their house for dinner. (Craft, *Chronicle*, p. 46)

June 23 The Stravinskys dined at the Huxleys. (Vera Stravinsky and Igor Stravinsky. *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 151)

June 25—The Stravinskys, The Huxleys, and Craft lunched at the Farmers Market. (*Ibid.*)

July 11— “Huxleys for dinner with Signor Ungaro, the Italian Consul, Professor Passinetti, the novelist, and the Baroness d’Erlanger. Aldous talks about Sir Aurel Stein, and about second-century Bodhisattvas.” (Craft, *Chronicle*, p. 53)

## 1952

January 4—The Stravinskys and Craft dined at the Huxleys’. “[Huxley] insists that the only prose he can read is of the point-by-point Voltaire kind, as distinguished from the molten-mass Kierkegaard kind, but most of his books, treatises by mystics, belong to the latter category.” (*Ibid.*, p. 70)

January 27—The Stravinskys and Craft met the Huxleys, Frieda Lawrence, and her second husband Angelo Ravagli at the Huxleys’. Maria Huxley was very pale, recovering from a



mastectomy. The group departed for a party at British actor Brian Aherne's beach house in Santa Monica. (Ibid., p. 71)

February 2—Stravinsky composed. At the Huxleys' that evening, Stravinsky, Huxley, and Craft listened to a recording of music by Guillaume Dufay conducted by Safford Cape. "Aldous, in a chipper mood, dances a hoe-down." (Ibid., p. 72)

February 5—The Stravinsky and Craft attended a farewell party for Frieda Lawrence at the Huxleys'. (Vera Stravinsky and Igor Stravinsky. *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 155)

February 6—The Stravinskys went to the Huxleys' in the evening to see Frieda Lawrence and Angelo Ravagli. (Ibid.)

February 11—Stravinsky and Craft spent the evening at the Huxleys'. Stravinsky, Huxley, and Craft listened to a recording of Haydn's Trumpet Concerto, and Huxley loaned Stravinsky a recording of Bach's *St. John Passion*. (Craft, *Chronicle*, p. 72)

February 23—Craft witnessed Huxley's will. The Stravinskys, the Huxleys, and Craft drive to Pasadena to the Huntington Library to see an exhibition of J. M. W. Turner's watercolors. Afterward they went to the Hubbles for tea. Huxley and Hubble talked about Flammarion galaxies and the possible duration of the Big Bang. (Ibid.)

July 25—Stravinsky and Craft dined at the Huxleys' with the Hubbles and Mary Louise Kent. "Aldous remarks that the most popular words rhyming with his name are tremendous, stupendous, horrendous, and hazardous." (Ibid., p. 86)

August 7—The Stravinskys and Craft spent the evening at the Huxleys. Huxley explained how breathing exercises could heighten erotic sensibilities. He also spoke about irrigation in Southern California in the first half of the nineteenth century. (Ibid.)

August 12—Huxley attended a Stravinsky concert at the Hollywood Bowl with Craft, and the Baroness Catherine d'Erlanger. Stravinsky conducted the *Fingal's Cave Overture* and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 2, and his own *Firebird* and *Capriccio* played by his son Soulima. Huxley remarked that the amphitheater looked like "a cross-section of the womb." (Ibid.)

September 13—The Stravinskys and Craft dined at the Huxleys with Robert Hutchins. Huxley talked about stirpiculture [a form of eugenics practiced by the Oneida Community (1848-81) intended to breed superior spiritual qualities and virtues]. (Ibid., p. 87)

September 14—Stravinsky, Huxley, and Craft attended a lecture by Gerald Heard at the Vedanta Society. Huxley and Heard discuss molecular structure, schizophrenia, and viscosity as a function of pressure afterward. (Ibid.)

October 18—The Stravinskys and Craft dined at the Huxleys' with Gregor Piatigorsky, the Ukrainian-American cellist. Piatigorsky entertained the group with talk about Sam Goldwyn [of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer]. Craft reminded the cellist of a 1946 symposium at Tanglewood, where

Piatigorsky defended violinist Jascha Heifetz's decision not to play Stravinsky's Violin Concerto out of opposition to the initial chord. The work was defended by composer Harold Shapero as "perfectly playable." (Ibid.)

November 11—Huxley attended a Stravinsky concert by the Los Angeles Chamber Symphony at Royce Hall on the campus of UCLA with Craft and Piatigorsky, at which Stravinsky conducted his *Concertino* and *Cantata*. Stravinsky, Huxley, Craft, and Piatigorsky went together to a reception at the home of Conrad Lester. (Ibid., p. 88)

## 1953

March 7—The Stravinskys and Huxley attended a performance of Stravinsky's *Septet* and *Cantata* at the Lobero Theater in Santa Barbara. (Craft, *Improbable*, p. 162)

July 1—The Stravinskys and Craft went to the Huxleys' where they met Gerald Heard's former partner Christopher Wood. Maria talked of Huxley's friendship and collaboration with Heard. (Craft, *Chronicle*, p. 102)

June 21—The Stravinskys dined at the Huxleys'. (Vera Stravinsky and Igor Stravinsky. *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 168)

July 26—The Stravinskys and Craft attended a party at the Huxleys' for Huxley's fifty-ninth birthday. Also in attendance were the Hubbles, Heard, Wood, and Maria Huxley's friend Eva Hermann. (Sybille Bedford, *Aldous Huxley; a Biography*, Vol. 2. London: Chatto & Windus; Collins, 1973-1974. p. 146)

August 2—The Stravinskys lunched at the Huxleys'. (Vera Stravinsky and Igor Stravinsky. *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 168)

August 6—The Stravinskys dined at the Huxleys' with fakir Tara Bey. (Ibid.)

September 25—The Stravinskys dined at the beach with the Huxleys. (Ibid.)

October 19—The Stravinskys and Huxley attended the premieres of revised editions of Stravinsky's *Preludium for Jazz Band* and *Tango for Orchestra* at an Evenings on the Roof concert. Afterward they went to a party at the home of Eugene and Laure Lourié. (Craft, *Chronicle*, p. 105)

October 22—The Stravinskys had the Huxleys to their home for tea. (Vera Stravinsky and Igor Stravinsky. *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 168)

October 24—The Stravinskys dined at the Huxleys'. Afterward the Stravinskys, Huxley, and Craft attended a production of *Madame Butterfly*. (Ibid.)

November 10—Huxley delivered details of Dylan Thomas's death to the Stravinskys and Craft. (Craft, *Stravinsky: Glimpses of a Life*, 1st ed. [New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993], p. 56)

November 21—The Stravinskys and the Huxleys attended a concert at Hancock Auditorium on the USC campus by Pro Musica Antiqua. (Vera Stravinsky and Igor Stravinsky, *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 168) The concert was conducted by Stafford Cape. It was at this time that Stravinsky became aware of Jeanne Deroubaix who later sang in the premiere of Stravinsky's *Threni*. (Ibid., p. 168, n. 8)

December 16—Huxley visited the Stravinsky household after dinner. (Ibid., p. 168)

## 1954

January 17—The Stravinskys went to the Huxleys' for tea. (Ibid., p. 171)

January 23—The Stravinskys dined at the Huxleys'. (Ibid., p. 171)

February 8—The Stravinskys and Huxley attended an Evenings on the Roof concert on which Craft conducted Couperin and Anton Webern. The Stravinskys invited Huxley and Lawrence Morton to their home afterward. (Ibid.)

February 10—The Stravinskys dined at the Huxley's, although Huxley himself was ill and in bed. (Ibid.)

February 22—The Stravinskys had Huxley and Heard to their home for dinner. Craft called the pair "witty and unstoppable." (Craft, *Chronicle*, p. 107)

September 23—Gasparo Del Corso [director of the the Galleria Obelisco in Rome] visited Vera Stravinsky at the Stravinsky home to discuss her one-woman show. The Huxleys were invited as well. (Vera Stravinsky and Igor Stravinsky, *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 175) "The Huxleys, who spoke impeccable Italian, were regularly invited to the Stravinskys when they had Italian guests." (Ibid., p. 175 n. 7)

October 25—The Stravinskys and Huxley attended the Monday Evening Concert on which Craft conducted Bach's Cantata 106. André Previn and Dorothy Wade performed Béla Bartók's Rhapsody for Violin and Piano No. 2. "Aldous, afterward, talks of St. Catherine of Siena's letter to Sir John Hawkwood asking him to fight pagans instead of Christians." (Craft, *Chronicle*, p. 111)

November 25—The Stravinskys spent the evening at the Huxleys'. (Vera Stravinsky and Igor Stravinsky, *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 177)

December 16—The Stravinskys had the Huxleys, Heard, and his partner Michael Barrie to their home for dinner. (Ibid.)

## 1955

March 2—The Stravinskys had Huxley and Heard to their home for dinner. (Ibid.)

September 3—The Stravinskys and Huxley dined at the Hotel Bel-Air. (Ibid., p. 179)

September 5—The Stravinskys had Huxley and Lucia Davidova to their home for dinner. (Ibid.)

September 16—The Stravinskys and Huxley dined at the Hotel Bel-Air. (Ibid.)

September 21—The Stravinskys had Huxley, Heard, and Barrie to their home for dinner. (Ibid.)

September 26—The Stravinskys had Huxley to their home for lunch. (Ibid.)

October 2—The Stravinskys and Huxley attended the opening concert of the Monday Evening Concert series. (Ibid.)

October 5—The Stravinskys and Huxley dined at The Captain's Table. (Ibid.)

November 1—The Stravinskys and Huxley attended a performance of Verdi's *Macbeth* at the Shrine Auditorium, which Vera Stravinsky recorded was "a bore, stupid." (Ibid.)

November 30—The Stravinskys and Huxley dined at the home of Lawrence Morton, after which they listened to music. (Ibid.)

## 1956

February 4—The Stravinskys, the Huxleys, and Morton dined at the Hotel Bel-Air. (Ibid.)

February 19—The Stravinskys dined with Huxley. (Ibid.)

April 6—The Stravinskys hosted Huxley and his second wife Laura Archera, Heard, and Isherwood. Isherwood recorded the evening in his diary, writing, "Talk about dreams. Igor had once dreamed a passage of music which he was able to use. Also a whole lot of pastiche Beethoven—a sort of Tenth Symphony, as Aldous said." (Christopher Isherwood, *Diaries, Volume One: 1939-1960*. Katherine Bucknell, ed. [New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1997], pp. 600-1)

May 12—The Stravinskys had the Huxleys to their home for dinner. (Vera Stravinsky and Igor Stravinsky, *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 179)

June 7—The Stravinskys had the Huxleys and Heard to their home for dinner. (Ibid.)

## 1957

May 1—The Stravinskys and Craft lunched with the Huxleys at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel. Huxley talked of the language in Francis Bacon's *Natural Historie*, quoting "the sperm of inebriates is unfruitful, because it wanteth spissitude." Huxley gave Stravinsky recordings of Sweelinck and Lasso. (Craft, *Chronicle*, p. 165)

November 10—The Stravinskys spoke to Huxley on the telephone. (Vera Stravinsky and Igor Stravinsky, *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 190)

December 9—The Stravinskys hosted a reception in their home after Craft conducted a Monday Evening Concert. The Huxleys and Ernst and Gladys Krenek were in attendance. (Ibid.)

December 26—The Stravinskys and Huxley dined at Romanoff's. (Ibid.)

## 1958

January 26—The Stravinskys, Huxley, and Craft dined at the Hotel Bel-Air. Huxley talked of his experiences with T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound. (Craft, *Chronicle*, p. 174)

March 12—The Stravinskys, the Huxleys, and Craft dined at Luau. Huxley talked about Chaucer. (Craft, *Improbable*, p. 199)

June 27—The Stravinskys attended opening night of Huxley's stage adaptation of his novel *The Gioconda Smile* at the Beverly Hills Playhouse. (Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, Vol. 2, p. 237)

## 1959

February 22—The Stravinskys hosted a party in their home for the Huxleys, British writer Stephen Spender and his wife, Heard, and Isherwood. (Craft, *Improbable*, p. 211)

March 19—The Stravinskys and Craft lunched at the Huxleys'. Romain Gary and Lesley Blanch were also in attendance. "Aldous, dominating and correcting Gary, rather too obviously prefers her to him." (Craft, *Chronicle*, p. 193)

## 1961

June 9—The Stravinskys had Huxley and Heard to their home for dinner. (Craft, *Improbable*, p. 251)

## 1962

December 10—The Stravinskys and the Huxleys dined at Isherwood's with British writer Gavin Lambert. (Vera Stravinsky and Igor Stravinsky, *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 211)

December 18—The Stravinskys and Craft and the Huxleys dined at Isherwood's with Gavin Lambert. (Craft, *Improbable*, p. 266)

## 1963

January 10—The Stravinskys and Craft dined at the Huxleys' with Heard and film director George Cukor. (Ibid., p. 267)

March 1—The Stravinskys dined with the Huxleys at Trader Vic's. (Vera Stravinsky and Igor Stravinsky, *Dearest Bubushkin*, p. 211)

## Appendix B - Chronological Listing of Aldous Huxley's Writings Mentioning Igor Stravinsky

March 25, 1922 "Emotional Contributions," *Aldous Huxley: Complete Essays*, Vol. 1, p. 236, originally in *Weekly Westminster Gazette*.<sup>211</sup>

April 8, 1922 "Light Opera and the New Stravinsky," *Ibid.*, p. 238, originally in *WWG*.

June 3, 1922 "The Question of Form," *Ibid.*, p. 254, originally in *WWG*.

June 24, 1922 "A Few Complaints," *Ibid.*, p. 257-8, originally in *WWG*.

November 25, 1922 "Temporaries and Eternals," *Ibid.*, p. 383, originally in *WWG*.

December 1922 "The Salzburg Festival," *Ibid.*, p. 49, originally in *Vanity Fair*.

December 2, 1922 "Verdi and Palestrina," *Ibid.*, p. 305, originally in *WWG*.

February 17, 1923 "Barbarism in Music," *Ibid.*, p. 324, originally in *WWG*.

March 10, 1923 "Contemporaneousness," *Ibid.*, p. 331, originally in *WWG*.

March 1924 "The Dangers of Work" *Ibid.*, p. 371, originally in *Vanity Fair*.

May 1925 "What Exactly is Modern?" *Ibid.*, p. 171-2, originally in *Vanity Fair*.

September 1925 "Popular Music," *Ibid.*, p. 348, originally in travelogue *Along the Road*.

1934 *Beyond the Mexique Bay*, *Ibid.* Vol. 3, p. 588.

February 15, 1953 "Conversation with Stravinsky", *Ibid.* Vol. 5, p. 383-5, originally in *Vogue*.

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<sup>211</sup> Page numbers are given for the references found in Huxley's *Aldous Huxley: Complete Essays*. 6 vols. Robert S. Baker and James Sexton, ed. Chicago, Ivan R. Dee, 2000.