|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **About you** | **[Salutation]** | Joel | [Middle name] | Hawkes |
|  | | | |
| University of Victoria | | | |

|  |
| --- |
| **Your article** |
| **Foulds, John (1880-1939)** |
| **[Enter any *variant forms* of your headword – OPTIONAL]** |
| [Enter an **abstract** for your article] |
| John Herbert Foulds (1880-1939) was an English composer of classical music who found popularity with his light music and theatrical scores, but also created more experimental compositions that drew inspiration from Indian music, and explored the relationship between music, literature and painting. Furthermore, he was one of the first British composers to use quarter-tones (a pitch half way between the regular notes on the chromatic scale) in his compositions.  Foulds began learning the piano when just four years old, and by the age of seven he played the oboe as well, and had begun to compose. His first performed piece was *Rhapsodie nach Heine* in Halifax in 1897. In 1900, he joined his father in the Hallé Orchestra where he met and was appreciated by conductor Hans Richter, and it was likely Richter who invited him, in 1906, to Tonkunstlerfest des Allgemeines Deutschen Musikvereins in Essen, where he met composers such as Mahler and Strauss. Foulds’s music was from very early on able to emulate and transform distinct styles of other composers, a skill exhibited in the Schuman and Wagner-influenced *Dichterliebe* (1897-98). Other significant works from this period include the earliest surviving example of his quarter-tones compositions, the cello sonata “The Waters of Babylon” (1905) and *Lyrics* for solo piano (in Opus 1), which uses an experimental, unbarred notation and structure, with music arranged and punctuated like a poem (1905); Foulds’s *Epithalamium* (1905-06) became his first orchestral piece produced in this “Music-Poem” format. One of his largest compositions also dates from this time, the concert opera, *The Vision of Dante* (c. 1905-08). In 1905, *Variazioni ed Improvvisati* became his first work in print.  Lighter music, such as Foulds’s *Holiday Sketches* (1909) and *Keltic Suite* (1911), and the later *Lyra Celtica* and *Gaelic Melodies* (mid-1920s), brought a steady income, as did over thirty theatre scores, many of which were penned for Lewis Carson and Sybil Thorndike productions, including Bernard Shaw’s *Saint Joan*, written especially for Thordike to star. From around 1912 to the outbreak of the Great War, Foulds also composed a number of what he called “Music-Pictures,” responses to visual stimuli, in particular to paintings. The first movement in *Music-Pictures Group III* (1912), for example, is entitled “The Ancient of Days,” responding to the watercolour by William Blake. After the war, his *World Requiem* was premiered at the Royal Albert Hall in commemoration of the war dead. The piece called for world peace, and drew from writers such as John Bunyan and Hindu religious poet Kabir. However, after the international success of *Requiem*, Foulds’s reputation declined, especially during his time in Europe (1927-30) – in Sicily and then France, a period where he met Korngold, Varèse, and Stravinsky. At this time, he not only became interested in Greek Modes as a focus for composition but also other Modes, including those used in classical Indian music, producing six so-called “Essays” (of a much larger planned work), in *Essays in the Modes* (1920-27). Another important work from this time is *Three Choruses in the Hippolytus of Euripides* (1928).  Upon returning to England, Foulds attempted to re-establish himself as a “serious” composer and looked to the BBC to perform his work, though ultimately they were more disposed to his lighter music. The BBC did, however, perform his more “serious” piece *Dynamic Triptych* (1931) to much acclaim. Other works of interest during this period include *Quartetto Intimo* (1932) and *The Seven Ages* (1932), a setting of “All the world’s a stage” speech from *As You Like It*. In 1934, Foulds published *Music To-day: Its Heritage from the Past, and Legacy to the Future*, a contemplation of his musical influences, including those of mysticism; thoughts on Modern composers, and his own compositional methods with many references to his *Quartetto Intimo* in illustration of modern techniques. Plans for a second volume on the subject of Indian music, and his continued fascination with this music, led him to India in 1935.  Foulds’s early interest in mysticism and the occult found form in Theosophy but later developed into a broader appreciation of mysticism, which had always been informed by particular interest in India. The surviving arrangements, *Three Mantras*, from his unfinished opera, *Avatara* (1919-32), showcase this influence. In India, he taught music and in 1937 became director of the European Music Department of All-India Radio in Delhi, though his time was primarily directed to a study of Indian music and the collection of its folksongs. He continued to compose in both European and Indian styles, later blurring the two as he would also blur distinctions between light and serious music. Compositions of this period include *Indian Suite* (1932-35), *Chinese Suite* (1935), and *An Arabian Night* (1936). His final, though unfinished, major work, *Pasquinades Symphoniques*, is constructed as a commentary on symphonic form, with the final “Modernist” movement reflecting Cubist artistic forms.  After his death in India in 1939 from cholera, Foulds’s music and reputation fell into further decline; only in the mid 1970s did his work begin to be rediscovered. |
| Further reading:  [Enter citations for further reading here] |