**2 January 1931** *Sonido 13* for piccolo, horn, guitar, harp, violin, and cello by Julián Carrillo (55) is performed for the first time, in Mexico City.

**4 January 1931** *Piano Variations* by Aaron Copland (30) is performed for the first time, by the composer in the Art Center, New York. The critics are not pleased.

**5 January 1931** Two works for chorus, by Benjamin Britten (17) to anonymous words, are performed for the first time, in St. John’s Church, Lowestoft: *A Hymn to the Virgin* and *I Saw Three Ships*. The latter will be revised as *The Sycamore Tree.*

**6 January 1931** Sadler’s Wells Theatre reopens in London.

The first of the *Four Transcriptions from “Emerson”* for piano by Charles Ives (56) is performed for the first time, at the inauguration of a new auditorium for the New School for Social Research, New York. See 12 March 1948.

**9 January 1931** Three Songs to Poems by Guillaume Apollinaire by Bohuslav Martinu (40) is performed for the first time, in Prague.

**10 January 1931** Vincent d’Indy (79) is elevated to Grand Officer of the Legion of Honor.

*Three Places in New England* by Charles Ives (56) is performed publicly for the first time, in Town Hall, New York. The composer is in attendance. During a performance of Carl Ruggles’ (54) *Men and Mountains* Ives tells a hissing audience member to “...stand up and use your ears like a man...”

**11 January 1931** *Kérob-shal* op.67, a cycle for voice and orchestra by Florent Schmitt (60), is performed for the first time, in Paris.

**12 January 1931** In an unusual political outburst, Sergey Rakhmaninov (57), together with two other Russian expatriates, writes an open letter to the *New York Times* attacking suggestions that certain achievements have been made by the Soviet regime.

**13 January 1931** Belá Bartók (49) accepts an invitation to become a member of the Permanent Committee for Literature and the Arts of the League of Nations’ Commission for Intellectual Cooperation.

**15 January 1931** The open letter sent 12 January by Sergey Rakhmaninov (57), Ivan Ostromislensky and Count Ilya Tolstoy appears in the *New York Times*. “At no time, and in no country, has there ever existed a government responsible for so many cruelties, wholesale murders, and common law crimes in general as those perpetrated by the Bolsheviki.”

**19 January 1931** The Round Table Conference on India ends in London without substantive result.

Béla Bartók (49) begins a three-week concert tour of Spain and Portugal.

**20 January 1931** The Duke Ellington (31) band records *Creole Rhapsody* in New York*.*

*Dalla mia terro* for voice, chorus, and orchestra by Luigi Dallapiccola (26) to words of folk poetry is performed for the first time, in Palazzo di Parte Guelfa, Florence.

Heitor Villa-Lobos (43) and several well-known Brazilian musicians begin the Excursão Artística Villa-Lobos, 54 concerts in São Paulo State, designed to bring serious music to the people.

**23 January 1931** Anna Pavlova dies of pneumonia in The Hague at the age of 49.

**24 January 1931** *Tristesse au jardin* for voice and orchestra by Florent Schmitt (60) is performed for the first time, in Paris 23 years after it was composed.

Sonata for violin and piano by Virgil Thomson (34) is performed for the first time, in the Salle des Conferences du Parthénon, Paris the composer at the keyboard.

**26 January 1931** Lord Irwin, the British Viceroy of India, releases Mahatma Gandhi and other Congress leaders from prison as a gesture of conciliation.

**27 January 1931** Pierre Laval replaces Théodore Steeg as Prime Minister of France.

**30 January 1931** Piano Piece op.33a by Arnold Schoenberg (56) is performed for the first time, in Hamburg.

**1 February 1931** Anarchists Severino di Giovanni and Paulino Scarfó are executed by firing squad in Buenos Aires for the bombing of the Italian consulate in 1928.

**2 February 1931** *Bacchanale* op.11, a dance by Wallingford Riegger (45) to a scenario by Graham, is performed for the first time, in New York.

**3 February 1931** An earthquake centered in Hawke’s Bay, New Zealand kills 256 people.

**4 February 1931** Sonata for piano by Willem Pijper (36) is performed for the first time, in the Small Hall of the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam.

*Steel and Stone*, dance music by Henry Cowell (33) to a scenario by Weidman, is performed for the first time, in New York. See 5 January 1932.

The contract of the Cotton Club, New York with the Duke Ellington (31) band ends. Although they will play the Cotton Club from time to time for the next nine years, they are now more and more on the road.

**5 February 1931** *Evocation* for speaker, female chorus, and orchestra by Charles Martin Loeffler (70) to anonymous ancient Greek words (tr. Mackail), is performed for the first time, celebrating the dedication of Severance Hall, Cleveland.

**6 February 1931** Incidental music to Bertolt Brecht’s play *Mann ist Mann* by Kurt Weill (30) is performed for the first time, at the Staatliches Schauspielhaus, Berlin.

**8 February 1931** A gas explosion occurs in a mine in Fushun, Manchuria. The blast, and subsequent fire, kills 3,000 people.

**10 February 1931** Several days of ceremonies and festivities begin celebrating the transfer of the capital of India to New Delhi.

**12 February 1931** Konstantin Päts replaces Otto Strandman as Head of State of Estonia.

16:49 Introduced by Guglielmo Marconi, Pope Pius XI makes the first papal broadcast, over the new Vatican Radio.

Tod Browing’s film *Dracula*, starring Bela Lugosi, is released in the United States.

**13 February 1931** Bowing to domestic pressure, the US State Department announces that the American occupation of Nicaragua will end after the Nicaraguan presidential election next year.

Symphony no.1by Arthur Honegger (38), composed to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, is performed for the first time, in Boston.

**14 February 1931** Florence Smith Price (33) marries her second husband, Pusey Arnett, in Chicago.

Trois mélodies for voice and piano by Olivier Messiaen (22) to words of the composer and Cécile Sauvage (his mother) are performed for the first time, in Paris the composer at the keyboard.

**15 February 1931** Sonata for flute and piano by Walter Piston (37) is performed for the first time, in Boston.

String Quartet “The Italian” by Marc Blitzstein (25) is performed for the first time, at the Philadelphia Academy of Music.

**16 February 1931** Juho Heikki Vennola replaces Pehr Evind Svinhufvud as Prime Minister of Finland.

**17 February 1931** 14:30 Mahatma Gandhi walks up the steps of the Viceroy’s palace for his first meeting with Lord Irwin to begin negotiations. Of the scene, Winston Churchill will note that he was revolted by “the nauseating and humiliating spectacle of this one-time Inner Temple lawyer, now seditious fakir, striding half-naked up the steps of the Viceroy’s palace, there to negotiate and to parley on equal terms with the representative of the King-Emperor.”

**18 February 1931** Juan Bautista Aznar-Cabañas replaces Dámaso Berenguer y Fusté, conde de Xauen as Prime Minister of Spain.

**19 February 1931** Olivier Messiaen (22) makes his performing debut at the organ of Église de la Trinité, Paris.

The meditation symphonique *Les offrandes oubliées* for orchestra, by Olivier Messiaen (22), is performed for the first time, at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, Paris.

The film of the *Die Dreigroschenoper*, with music a pastiche of popular songs by Kurt Weill (30), is shown for the first time, at the Atrium, Berlin.

*The Prison*, a symphony for solo voices, chorus, and orchestra by Ethel Smyth (72) to words of Brewster, is performed for the first time, in Usher Hall, Edinburgh the composer conducting.

**20 February 1931** Two Albanian emigres fire nine shots at King Zog as he exits a performance at the Vienna Opera. They kill one of the King’s aides but Zog is unhurt. Bystanders chase and subdue the attackers. They will be tried and receive relatively light sentences.

**21 February 1931** Miles Laboratories of Elhart, Indiana introduces Alka-Seltzer to the market.

**22 February 1931** *Vers la plage lointaine, nocturne* op.43, a symphonic poem by Charles Koechlin (63), is performed for the first time, in Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt, Paris.

**23 February 1931** A ceremony takes place in Budapest in which President Horthy is to present the Corvin Wreath, Hungary’s highest cultural award, to several Hungarian musicians including Béla Bartók (49). Bartók refuses to attend, protesting official obstruction to the Budapest staging of *The Miraculous Mandarin*.

Nellie Melba dies in Sydney at the age of 69.

**1 March 1931** Pehr Evind Svinhufvud replaces Lauri Kristian Relander as President of Finland.

*Diaphonic Suite no.1* for flute solo by Ruth Crawford (29) is performed for the first time, at a League of Composers concert at the Art Center in New York.

**2 March 1931** *The Good Earth* by Pearl Buck is published by John Day in New York.

**3 March 1931** President Herbert Hoover signs a law making *The Star-Spangled Banner* the national anthem of the United States.

**4 March 1931** After two weeks of personal talks, Mahatma Gandhi and British Viceroy Lord Irwin reach an agreement which includes the end of the campaign of civil disobedience, the release of political prisoners, and the representation of the Indian National Congress at the Second Round Table discussions.

**7 March 1931** An orchestral suite from Sergey Prokofiev’s (39) ballet *The Prodigal Son* op.46a is performed for the first time, in Paris. See 21 May 1929.

Henry Cowell (33) gives $200 to Lev Sergeyevich Termen (Leon Theremin) (34) for the invention and construction of an instrument which will be known as the rhythmicon.

**9 March 1931** *Evening Moscow* publishes an attack on Sergey Rakhmaninov (57) for his letter of 12 January. His music is banned for performance and study in the Soviet Union. The ban will be lifted in 1933.

*How Old is Song?* for voice and piano by Henry Cowell (33) to words of his father Harry Cowell is performed for the first time, in Town Hall, New York.

**15 March 1931** *Ronde burlesque* op.78 for orchestra by Florent Schmitt (60) is performed for the first time, in Paris. The composer says that its subject is “a battle of sub-marine airplanes.”

At the last Copland (30)-Sessions (34) Concert, in the Broadhurst Theatre, New York, three experimental films by Ralph Steiner are shown: *H2O*, *Mechanical Principles*, and *Surf and Seaweed*. The first two feature music by Colin McPhee (30), and music for the last was composed by Marc Blitzstein (26)*.*

**16 March 1931** Incidental music to Chlumberg’s play *Miracle at Verdun* by Aaron Copland (30) is performed for the first time, at the Martin Beck Theatre, New York.

**18 March 1931** The electric razor is marketed by Schick, Inc. of Stamford, Connecticut.

**19 March 1931** *Funeral Music* op.111/2 for organ by Jean Sibelius (65) is performed for the first time, for the funeral of Akseli Gallén-Kallela in Helsinki.

**20 March 1931** Tre Pezzi for orchestra by George Whitefield Chadwick (76) is performed for the first time, in Jordan Hall, Boston.

**21 March 1931** A customs union between Germany and Austria is established.

Juho Emil Sunila replaces Juho Heikki Vennola as Prime Minister of Finland.

Bohuslav Martinu (40) marries a French woman, Charlotte Quennehen, at the Paris Registry Office near Porte d’Auteuil. She is a successful dressmaker.

**22 March 1931** Andantino for orchestra by Roy Harris (33) is performed for the first time, in Philharmonic Auditorium, Los Angeles.

**23 March 1931** Indian revolutionaries Bhagat Singh, Shivaram Rajguru, and Sukhdev Thapar are hanged by British authorities in Lahore.

**24 March 1931** Karlis Ulmanis replaces Hugo Celmins as Prime Minister of Latvia.

**25 March 1931** For his fiftieth birthday, the French consulate in Budapest awards Béla Bartók the Legion of Honor. The anniversary is officially ignored by the Hungarian government.

Suite en quatuor op. 55 for flute, violin, viola and piano by Charles Koechlin (63) is performed for the first time, in Salle de l’École Normale, Paris. Also premiered is *La mort du nombre* for soprano, tenor, violin, and piano by Olivier Messiaen (22) to his own words, the composer at the keyboard.

**26 March 1931** Swiss Air Transport Company Ltd. (later Swissair) is founded by the merger of Balair and Ad Astra Aero.

**29 March 1931** The John Simon Guggenheim Foundations fellowships are announced, including ones for Otto Luening (30) and Henry Cowell (34).

**31 March 1931** His Master’s Voice and Columbia Graphophone Company merge to form Electric & Musical Industries (EMI).

An earthquake centered in Managua, Nicaragua kills 2,000 people and virtually levels the city.

**1 April 1931** The government of nationalist China begins the Second Encirclement Campaign against communists in Kiangsi (Jiangxi) Province.

**3 April 1931** Konzertmusik op.50 for strings and brass by Paul Hindemith (35) is performed for the first time, in Boston.

**4 April 1931** A revolt begins in Madeira against the fascist government of Portugal.

Incidental music to Grundtvig’s play *Easter Eve* by Carl Nielsen (65) is performed for the first time, at the Royal Theatre, Copenhagen.

About 22:00 George Whitefield Chadwick dies suddenly at his Boston home at 360 Marlboro Street, from complications of arteriosclerosis, aged 76 years, four months, and 22 days.

The first and fourth movements of *Suite for Carillon* by Samuel Barber (21) are performed for the first time, in Lake Wales, Florida, along with the premiere of Improvisation for carillon by Gian Carlo Menotti (19).

**5 April 1931** Henry Cowell (34) is awarded a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship of $2,500 to study non-western music.

**7 April 1931** A funeral in memory of George Whitefield Chadwick takes place in Trinity Church, Boston. Among the honorary pallbearers are Frederick S. Converse (60) and Charles Martin Loeffler (70). His mortal remains are laid to rest in Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge.

A federal appeals court upholds the 1929 bribery conviction of former Secretary of the Interior Albert B. Fall in the Teapot Dome scandal.

**8 April 1931** *The Bolt*, a ballet by Dmitri Shostakovich (24) to a scenario by Smirnov, is performed for the first time, in the Academic (Kirov) Theatre of Opera and Ballet, Leningrad. It is a failure. See 17 January 1933.

The first two movements of the *Diaphonic Suite no.4* for viola (or oboe) and cello by Ruth Crawford (29) are performed for the first time, in Berlin. It is the only work of Crawford’s to be performed during her European journey under a Guggenheim fellowship.

**10 April 1931** Khalil Gibran dies in New York at the age of 48.

*Durch die Nacht*, a cycle of seven songs for voice and piano by Ernst Krenek (30) to words of Kraus, is performed for the first time, in the Dresden Künstlerhaus, the composer at the piano. See 19 June 1932.

**12 April 1931** In Spanish municipal elections, 49 of the 50 province capitals elect anti-monarchy councilors.

**13 April 1931** In the first concert devoted entirely to the music of Anton Webern (47) the Quartet op.22 for violin, clarinet, tenor saxophone, and piano is performed for the first time. The music takes place in the Kleiner Musikvereinssaal, Vienna.

**14 April 1931** Baron Reijiro Wakatsuki replaces Osachi Hamaguchi as Prime Minister of Japan.

The municipal councils of Barcelona, Oviedo, Seville, Valencia, and other cities proclaim the Spanish Republic. Niceto Alcalá Zamora y Tores becomes President of Spain. He names himself to replace Juan Bautista Aznar-Cabañas as Prime Minister. King Alfonso XIII leaves Madrid for Cartagena, making for Marseille.

*In Windsor Forest*, a cantata for chorus and orchestra by Ralph Vaughan Williams (58) to words of Shakespeare, is performed for the first time, in Queen’s Hall, London.

**15 April 1931**  *Dance Symphony* by Aaron Copland (30) is performed for the first time, at the Philadelphia Academy of Music.

With the proclamation of the republic, King Alfonso XIII of Spain, who came to the throne on the day he was born, 17 May 1886, sails from Cartagena into exile. He does not abdicate.

**16 April 1931** Serenade for chamber orchestra by Bohuslav Martinu (40) is performed for the first time, in Paris. It is dedicated to his teacher, Albert Roussel (62).

**17 April 1931** *Demeter*, a cantata for alto, female chorus, and orchestra by Karol Szymanowski (48) to words of Szymanowska after Euripedes, is performed for the first time, in Warsaw.

*Sinfonia Dialectica*, the first symphony of Arthur Lourié (39), is performed for the first time, in Philadelphia.

**18 April 1931** George Freeman Freeman-Thomas, Earl of Willingdon replaces Edward Frederick Lindley Wood, Baron Irwin as Viceroy of India.

Nicolae Iorga replaces Gheorghe G. Mironescu as Prime Minister of Romania.

The new government of Brazil creates the Superintendência de Educação Musical e Artística to make the teaching of music compulsory in every school in Rio de Janeiro. The appointment to head the program will go to Heitor Villa-Lobos (44).

**23 April 1931** *Caprice & Elegy* for cello and chamber orchestra by Frederick Delius (69) is performed for the first time, in Wigmore Hall, London.

**25 April 1931** An automobile design company with the ambitious title, Dr. Ing. h.c. F. Porsche Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung, Konstruktion und Beratung für Motoren- und Fahrzeugbau, is founded by Ferdinand Porsche in Stuttgart.

String Quartet no.1 op.50 by Sergey Prokofiev (39) is performed for the first time, in Washington.

**27 April 1931** An earthquake strikes the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan in the USSR. Almost 3,000 people are killed.

**30 April 1931** The first round of the Prix de Rome competition opens. Among the candidates is Olivier Messiaen (22) on his second try.

**1 May 1931** The Empire State Building opens in New York, dedicated by President Hoover.

**3 May 1931** *Cris du monde*, a stage oratorio by Arthur Honegger (39) to words of Bizet, is performed for the first time, in Solthurn.

**4 May 1931** Months of labor-management unrest, including wage reductions, firings, and attempts at organizing coal miners, comes to a climax in Harlan County, Kentucky. A gun battle breaks out between coal operators and union sympathizers near Evarts leaving several people dead. The strike and organizing efforts will be effectively quashed by owners, with the help of armed sheriff’s deputies.

**5 May 1931** The People’s National Convention, meeting in Nanking, adopts a provisional constitution for China.

**6 May 1931** The International Colonial Exposition opens near Paris. Over 30,000,000 people will visit it this year.

The provisional government of republican Spain orders that religious instruction is no longer required in schools.

A concert version of the second scene from Karol Szymanowski’s (48) unfinished ballet *Harnasie* is performed for the first time, in Warsaw. This concert marks the 25th anniversary of the Young Poland concert. Szymanowski and two others receive the Gold Cross. See 11 May 1935.

**7 May 1931** Sechs Deutsche Tänze D.820 for piano by Franz Schubert (†102) are performed for the first time, in the Musikvereinsaal, Vienna.

*Chant, 1930 “To an Angel”* for chorus by Ruth Crawford (29) is performed for the first time, in Town Hall, New York.

**9 May 1931** The first round of the Prix de Rome competition is judged. Olivier Messiaen (22) is among those allowed to proceed to the second round.

Incidental music to Piotrovsky’s play *Rule, Britannia!* by Dmitri Shostakovich (24) is performed for the first time, in the Working Youth Theatre, Leningrad.

**10 May 1931** Street battles break out in Spanish cities between republicans and monarchists over the religious instruction decree of 6 May. Some convents in Madrid are set on fire.

**11 May 1931** Peter Ludwig Kolstad replaces Johan Ludwig Mowinckel as Prime Minister of Norway.

The Austrian bank Creditanstalt declares bankruptcy, precipitating a financial crisis in Austria and central Europe.

**12 May 1931** The Spanish government decides to stop the burning of convents and calls the Civil Guard into the matter.

**14 May 1931** Swedish soldiers fire on unarmed strikers in Ådalen, Sweden. Five people are killed, five injured.

Afternoon. Arturo Toscanini is instructed to lead his orchestra in the fascist hymn *Giovinezza* at a concert this evening in Bologna to commemorate the composer Giuseppe Martucci. He replies that the anthem is not required simply because a member of the government is present. As the conductor arrives at the theatre his car is surrounded by fascist youths and he is slapped in the face. He returns to his hotel. Black shirts are stationed at the doors to the theatre. On hearing the news of the events, Ottorino Respighi (51) leaves his box and attends Toscanini at his hotel. A fascist demonstration ensues below the window of Toscanini’s hotel room. Local fascists move into the hotel. They are confronted by Respighi who elicits from them a promise of safe passage for Toscanini out of Bologna tonight.

Manuel de Falla (54) and other supporters of the republic in Granada send a telegraph to Prime Minister Niceto Alcalá Zamora expressing deep concern over the recent convent burnings.

Alvin Augustus Lucier is born in Nashua, New Hampshire, one of four children born to Alvin A. Lucier, a lawyer, and Kathryn E. Lemery. (In 1934, Alvin Lucier will be elected mayor of Nashua.)

**15 May 1931** In Bologna, Arturo Toscanini sends a telegram to Benito Mussolini, recounting the events of yesterday “so that the deed be remembered.” Mussolini does not reply.

*Torneo notturno*, an opera by Gian Francesco Malipiero (49) to his own words, is performed for the first time, in the Nationaltheater, Munich.

**16 May 1931** Donald James Martino is born in Plainfield, New Jersey, son of James Edward Martino and Alma Ida Renz.

**17 May 1931** After two days of fighting, Communists defeat Nationalists near Zhongdong, Kiangsi (Jiangxi) Province*.*

*Die Mutter*, the first opera in quarter-tones, by Alois Hába (37) to his own words (tr. Joss), is performed for the first time, in Munich. Specially constructed instruments have been prepared for the opera. See 23 May 1947.

**18 May 1931** The Syndicate of Bologna Artists and Musicians condemns conductor Arturo Toscanini for failing to lead the orchestra in the fascist hymn *Giovinezza* at a 14 May Bologna concert.

*Furchtlosigkeit und Wohlwollen*, a secular oratorio by Werner Egk (30) to his own words, is performed for the first time, in Munich.

**19 May 1931** Communists defeat Nationalists at Baisha, Kiangsi (Jiangxi) Province, inflicting heavy casualties.

The German heavy cruiser *Deutschland* is launched at Kiel.

*Deux idylles* op.44 for voice and piano by Albert Roussel (62) to words of Theocritus and Moskhos (tr. de Lisle), are performed for the first time, privately at the Eiffel Tower in Paris. See 5 March 1932.

**22 May 1931** Communists ambush and defeat Nationalists at Yongfeng, Kiangsi (Jiangxi) Province. The new Spanish Republic prohibits the display of religious items in schools.

Albert Roussel’s (62) ballet *Bacchus et Ariane*, to a scenario by Hermant, is performed for the first time, at the Paris Opéra. See 2 April 1933 and 2 February 1934.

*Sahdji*, a ballet by William Grant Still (36) to a scenario by Locke and Bruce, is performed for the first time, in Rochester, New York Howard Hanson (34) conducting.

**23 May 1931** *Nursery Suite*, for orchestra by Edward Elgar (73) is performed for the first time, in the HMV recording studio, Kingsway Hall, London under the baton of the composer in the presence of the Duke and Duchess of York. The work is dedicated to them and their daughters, the Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret. See 20 August 1931.

**24 May 1931** Heitor Villa-Lobos (44) presents the first of his Civic Exhortations in São Paulo. It is a concert of 12,000 voices made of up workers, students, and soldiers.

**25 May 1931** Marc Blitzstein (26) begins a two-month stay at the Yaddo Colony in Saratoga Springs, New York. Here he will compose his Piano Concerto and the opera *The Harpies.*

**27 May 1931** A Communist counteroffensive against Nationalists in Kiangsi (Jiangxi) Province results in their victory at Guangchang. They take the city.

Aleksander Blazej Prystor replaces Walery Slawek as Prime Minister of Poland.

August Piccard of Switzerland and Charles Knipfer ascend in a closed gondola carried by a balloon from Augsburg, reaching a height of 15,786.5 meters, making them the first Earth beings to reach the stratosphere. They land, 17 hours after liftoff, on a glacier near Innsbruck.

**28 May 1931** Peter Talbot Westergaard is born in Champaign, Illinois son of Harald Malcolm Westergaard and Rachel Talbot.

**30 May 1931** *La Belle de Moudon*, an operetta by Arthur Honegger (39) to words of Morax, is performed for the first time, in the Théâtre du Jorat, Mézières.

**31 May 1931** Communists defeat Nationalists at Jianning. After a string of severe defeats, the Nationalist government ends the Second Encirclement Campaign.

**1 June 1931** The provisional constitution for China goes into effect.

Quatre poèmes de Guillaume Apollinaire, for voice and piano by Francis Poulenc (32) are performed for the first time, in the Salle Chopin, Paris. Also premiered is Poulenc’s Trois Poèmes de Louise Lalanne for voice and piano to words of Laurencin and Apollinaire. The composer plays piano for both.

**3 June 1931** Edward Elgar (74) is created First Baronet of Broadheath.

Salvador Dali exhibits 16 paintings, seven pastels, and a copper sculpture at the Pierre Collé Gallery in Paris. Among the works to be seen for the first time is *The Persistence of Memory*.

**5 June 1931** Jules Renkin replaces Marcel Henri Jaspar as Prime Minister of Belgium.

**6 June 1931** The United States Supreme Court denies the petition for a writ of certiorari of former Secretary of the Interior Albert B. Fall. His conviction is upheld and he will serve nine months of a one-year sentence at the New Mexico State Penitentiary in Santa Fe.

*Orchesterstück: Synchrony*, by Henry Cowell (34) is performed for the first time, in Salle Gaveau, Paris under the name *Synchrony of Dance, Music, Light*. Also premiered is the version for full orchestra of Carl Ruggles’ (55) *Men and Mountains.* Attending is Ruth Crawford (29) on her Guggenheim fellowship. It is an important concert of American moderns, introducing Europe to the music of Ives (56), Varèse (47), and Ruggles, all conducted by Nicholas Slonimsky. See 7 December 1924.

**7 June 1931** Konzertstück for trautonium and strings by Paul Hindemith (35) is performed for the first time, in Munich.

**11 June 1931** *Energía*, for piccolo, flute, bassoon, horn, trumpet, bass trombone, viola, cello, and bass by Carlos Chávez (31) is performed for the first time, in Paris.

**12 June 1931** *Due Liriche del Kalevala* for solo voices, chorus, and percussion by Luigi Dallapiccola (27) are performed for the first time, in Florence.

**13 June 1931** Joseph Athanse Gaston Doumer, dit Paul Doumer replaces Pierre Paul Henri Gaston Doumergue as President of France.

**14 June 1931** After the collapse of the Viennese bank Creditanstalt, it calls in credits from Hungarian banks which promptly fail. The entire banking system of Hungary collapses resulting in depression.

The small pleasure craft *St. Philibert* goes down in a storm off Nantes. Around 500 people are lost. Only eight survive.

The candidates in the second round of the Prix de Rome end their sequestration at the Fontainebleau Palace.

**15 June 1931** Two new works by Virgil Thomson (34) are performed for the first time in the Salle Chopin, Paris: *Stabat mater* for soprano and string quartet to words of Jacob, and String Quartet no.1.

**16 June 1931** The Bank of England advances 150,000,000 schillings to the Austrian national bank to stem the financial crisis begun with the collapse of Creditanstalt last month.

**19 June 1931** The first commercial photoelectric cell is installed to operate the door between the kitchen and dining room in Wilcox’s Pier Restaurant in West Haven, Connecticut.

**20 June 1931** Karl Buresch replaces Otto Ender as Chancellor of Austria.

US President Herbert Hoover calls for a one-year moratorium on German reparation payments. It will eventually be agreed to by France.

**23 June 1931** *Amphion*, a ballet melodrama by Arthur Honegger (39) to a scenario by Valéry, is performed for the first time, at the Paris Opéra.

**26 June 1931** George Gershwin (32) hires a studio at NBC New York and 55 musicians to play through his *Second Rhapsody* so he can hear the orchestration. He likes what he hears. See 29 January 1932.

**28 June 1931** A Constituent Assembly of the Spanish Republic is elected.

**29 June 1931** Aleksandur Pavlov Malinov replaces Andrei Lyapchev as Prime Minister of Bulgaria.

Pope Pius XI issues the encyclical *Non abbiamo bisogno* protesting against the closing down of certain Catholic organizations and calling the Mussolini government anti-Catholic.

**1 July 1931** The opening of the rail link between Benguella and Katanga completes the first trans-Africa railroad.

US Representative Sol Bloom, associate director of the George Washington Bicentennial Commission, writes to John Alden Carpenter (55) asking him to compose a work in honor of the 200th anniversary of Washington’s birth.

**4 July 1931** *L’Ensorceleuse*, a cantata by Olivier Messiaen (22) to words of Arosa, is performed for the first time, at the Académie des Beaux-Arts, Paris, the composer at the piano. This is the work produced by Messiaen for his second attempt at the Prix de Rome. He does not succeed.

**5 July 1931** *Job, A Masque for Dancing*, by Ralph Vaughan Williams (58) to a scenario by Keynes and Raverat after Blake, is performed for the first time, in London. See 23 October 1930.

**7 July 1931** Olivier Messiaen (22) applies for the position of organist at L’Église de la Sainte-Trinité in Paris. Among those offering support on his application are Charles-Marie Widor and Marcel Dupré.

For the first time, a work by William Grant Still (36) is performed in Europe when *Darker America* for orchestra is played in Bad Homburg.

**10 July 1931** King Haakon VII of Norway proclaims a section of eastern Greenland for Norway as Eirik Raudes Land.

**13 July 1931** The German Danat Bank (Darmstädter-und Nationalbank) collapses precipitating a run on all German banks.

**16 July 1931** Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia introduces a constitution. All power resides in him but some forms of parliamentary government are introduced.

**23 July 1931** Great Britain transfers sovereignty over the Ashmore and Cartier Islands to Australia. This will take effect on 10 May 1934.

**26 July 1931** *The Northern Pines*, a march by John Philip Sousa (76), is performed for the first time, at Interlochen, Michigan.

**1 August 1931** Bankers from France and the United States agree to a loan plan to bolster the British economy.

**6 August 1931** Bix Beiderbecke dies in New York at the age of 28.

**8 August 1931** An international committee of bankers convenes in Basel to recommend solutions to the German debt crisis. They are led by the Englishman Sir Walter Layton and American Albert Wiggin.

**10 August 1931** An earthquake strikes northern Xinjiang Province, China. Approximately 10,000 people are killed.

**14 August 1931** *Commotio* op.58 for organ by Carl Nielsen (66) is performed publicly for the first time, in the Aarhus Domkirke.

**15 August 1931** The French government extends an important loan to Hungary.

**17 August 1931** The Japanese government announces that a Captain Nakamura and three other Japanese nationals, innocently travelling in China, were arrested, killed and their bodies cremated by Chinese authorities in June. The Chinese admit the action, but contend that Nakamura was a spy. The incident sparks an anti-Chinese fever in Japan.

**18 August 1931** The Yangtze River reaches its peak in what may be the deadliest natural disaster ever recorded. Between July and November, all the major rivers of China flood, killing perhaps as many as 4,000,000 people.

A committee of bankers from several countries, meeting in Basel since 8 August, issue the Layton-Wiggin Report. They announce that Germany is no longer solvent and is incapable of meeting its debt obligations. They recommend a six-month extension of credit to Germany.

The first worldwide opera broadcast takes place when *Tristan und Isolde* is transmitted from the Bayreuth Festspielhaus.

**20 August 1931** *Nursery Suite* for orchestra by Edward Elgar (74) is performed publicly for the first time, in Queen’s Hall, London the composer conducting. See 23 May 1931.

**24 August 1931** Gyula, Count Károlyide Nagykároly replaces István, Count Bethlen de Bethlen as Prime Minister of Hungary. Bethlen’s government fell due to the economic calamity in the country and the desire of Admrial Horthy to introduce summary justice.

A non-aggression pact is signed between France and the USSR.

**29 August 1931** Mahatma Gandhi sails from Bombay for England and the Second Round Table Conference on India.

**3 September 1931** King Aleksandar II of Yugoslavia proclaims a new constitution to legitimize his dictatorship.

*Washington’s Birthday* for orchestra by Charles Ives (56) is performed for the first time, in the Community Playhouse, San Francisco 23 years after it was composed.

**5 September 1931** The Permanent Court of International Justice rules that the proposed customs union between Germany and Austria violates the Treaty of St. Germain of 1922.

**7 September 1931** The Second Round Table Conference on India opens in London, attended by Mohandas K. Gandhi as the sole representative of the Indian National Congress.

Olivier Messiaen (22) is offered the position of organist at L’Église de la Sainte-Trinité in Paris. He will accept.

**8 September 1931** A Choral Fantasia for soprano, chorus, organ, strings, brass, and percussion by Gustav Holst (56) to words of Bridges, is performed for the first time, in Gloucester Cathedral the composer conducting.

**10 September 1931** A category four hurricane strikes British Honduras (Belize) killing about 2,500 people.

**12 September 1931** Mexico is admitted to the League of Nations.

The Heimwehr, Austrian fascists led by Walter Pfrimer, attempt a putsch in Styria. It will fail.

After learning of pay cuts, many sailors from ten British warships meet in Invergordon, Scotland and vote to strike. However, no direct action is taken.

**13 September 1931** Two days of rioting by whites erupt in Honolulu after five native men are acquitted of raping a white woman. In a few days, one of the men will be shot to death, one beaten.

**14 September 1931** A string quartet by Aram Khachaturian (28) is performed for the first time, in Moscow.

**15 September 1931** Sailors on several British naval vessels begin refusing orders in Invergordon, Scotland, protesting pay cuts.

**16 September 1931** After the British government makes some concessions to the lower ranks, all British naval vessels in Invergordon depart for their home ports and the mutiny ends.

The dirigible *Los Angeles* docks at the Empire State Building.

**17 September 1931** RCA demonstrates a 33 1/3 rpm long playing record at the Savoy Plaza Hotel in New York. However, the playback devices are too expensive to be commercially successful.

*A Song of Summer* for orchestra by Frederick Delius (69) is performed for the first time, in Queen’s Hall, London. The work was dictated by the blind and ailing composer. The concert is broadcast, allowing Delius to hear it at his home in France.

**18 September 1931** Japanese army officers carry out explosions on a railroad near Mukden to pre-empt forthcoming orders from Tokyo to restrain themselves in Manchuria. Skirmishes break out and an attack is ordered on the Chinese.

Angela Maria (Geli) Rabaul, the 23 year-old daughter of Adolf Hitler’s half-sister Angela, shoots herself in the heart in Hitler’s Munich apartment and dies instantly. She found a letter from Eva Braun to the object of her affections, Uncle Adolf, although it is not definitely known that this was the prelude to her action. Hitler is in Nuremberg, campaigning for president.

**21 September 1931** Due to a run on the Pound following the Invergordon Mutiny, the Bank of England abandons the gold standard, two days after they run out of it.

**22 September 1931** Henry Cowell (34) departs New York for Europe in his Guggenheim fellowship. He plans to go to Berlin to study the collection of 22,000 cylinder recordings of music from around the world.

**27 September 1931** Two schoolboy teams play a baseball game in Tozuka Baseball Ground, Tokyo. It is the first sporting event to be televised.

**28 September 1931** Carl Nielsen (66) is taken to a Copenhagen hospital where a blood clot at the heart is diagnosed.

**30 September 1931** Thousands of Londoners protesting unemployment riot near the Battersea Town Hall. Police on horseback charge the crowd, trampling many demonstrators.

The League of Nations calls on Japan to withdraw from Manchuria.

**1 October 1931** 50,000 people battle police in Glasgow protesting unemployment and cuts in benefits.

**2 October 1931** In the Rigshospitalet, Copenhagen, Carl Nielsen (66) loses consciousness from a heart ailment.

Incidental music to a stage revue of Voyevodin and Riss, *Conditionally Killed*, by Dmitri Shostakovich (25), is performed for the first time, in the Leningrad Music Hall.

**3 October 1931** Just after midnight. After briefly regaining consciousness, Carl August Nielsen dies of angina pectoris in the Rigshospitalet, Copenhagen, Kingdom of Denmark, aged 66 years, three months, and 24 days.

**4 October 1931** The comic strip character Dick Tracy first appears, in the *Detroit Mirror*.

**5 October 1931** Clyde Pangborn and Hugh Herndon Jr. land in Wenatchee, Washington, just having made the first non-stop crossing of the Pacific Ocean. The pair flew from Sabishiro Beach, Japan, a distance of 7,173 km in 41 hours and 34 minutes.

**6 October 1931** *Caixinha de Música Quebrada* for piano by Heitor Villa-Lobos (44) is performed for the first time.

**7 October 1931** Infrared photography is first used to photograph a large number of people. A picture is taken of 50 visitors to Eastman Kodak Research Laboratory in Rochester, New York in a totally dark room.

**8 October 1931** Italian university teachers are required to sign an oath of loyalty to the fascist regime. Only 13 refuse. They are dismissed.

*Belshazzar’s Feast*, an oratorio for baritone, chorus, and orchestra by William Walton (29) to words of Sitwell after the Bible, is performed for the first time, in Town Hall, Leeds. It is a stunning success with critics and the public.

**9 October 1931** Six days after his death, a state funeral in memory of Carl Nielsen takes place in the Free Church of Copenhagen. King Christian X and Queen Alexandrine attend and the church is full. Hundreds congregate outside. His mortal remains are laid to rest in the Western Churchyard, Copenhagen.

**10 October 1931** *Alone*, a film with music by Dmitri Shostakovich (25), is shown for the first time, at the Splendid Palace Cinema, Leningrad.

**11 October 1931** A conference of various German conservative groups in Bad Harzburg creates a unified front against the government. Members include the Nazis, German National Peoples Party, paramilitary veterans, the Agricultural League, and Pan-German League.

**12 October 1931** Nikolay Stoykov Mushanov replaces Aleksandur Pavlov Malinov as Prime Minister of Bulgaria.

The colossal statue of Christ the Redeemer is dedicated atop the Corcovado mountain in Rio de Janeiro.

A Concert Overture in c minor by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (†37) is performed for the first time, in Voronezh 66 years after it was composed.

*Variations on a Theme of Corelli* for piano by Sergey Rakhmaninov (58) is performed for the first time, by the composer in Montreal.

**13 October 1931** Spanish Minister of War Manuel Azaña y Díez declares that “Spain has ceased to be a Catholic country.” Intended to celebrate the new religious freedom and the separation of church and state, it is taken by many to mean religion will soon be outlawed.

**14 October 1931** Manuel Azaña y Díez replaces Niceto Alcalá Zamora y Torres as Prime Minister of Spain.

**18 October 1931** Al Capone is convicted in federal court in Chicago on five counts of income tax evasion.

**20 October 1931** *So perverse* for voice and piano by Frank Bridge (52) to words of Bridges is performed for the first time, in Grotrian Hall, London.

**21 October 1931** Valse for harp by Arnold Bax (47) is performed for the first time, in Wigmore Hall, London.

**23 October 1931** Violin Concerto by Igor Stravinsky (49) is performed for the first time, in Berlin under the baton of the composer.

Ernest MacMillan (38) accepts the post of permanent conductor of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. He will hold it for 25 years.

**24 October 1931** Sofiya Asgatovna Gubaidulina is born in Chistopol, USSR, the last of three children born to Asgad Masgudovich Gubaidullin, a geodetic engineer and son of an imam, a Tatar, and Fedosia Fyodorovna Yelkhova, a teacher and daughter of a laborer, a Russian.

The George Washington Bridge is dedicated. It will open to traffic tomorrow. At 1,450 meters, it is the longest main span of any bridge in the world.

A federal judge in Chicago sentences Al Capone to eleven years in jail for tax evasion.

Six Pieces for male chorus op.35 by Arnold Schoenberg (57) to words of various authors is performed completely for the first time, in Frankfurt-am-Main. See 3 November 1929.

Al Capone is sentenced to eleven years in prison for income tax evasion by a federal court in Chicago.

**26 October 1931** *Mourning Becomes Electra* by Eugene O’Neill opens at the Guild Theatre, New York.

**27 October 1931** *Die Nachtigall* for voice and orchestra by Ernst Krenek (31) to words of Kraus, is performed for the first time, in Bern. See 26 November 1931.

Voting in the British general election results in an overwhelming victory for the Conservative Party led by Stanley Baldwin. They gain over 200 seats, holding 85% of the total.

**29 October 1931** *Afro-American Symphony* by William Grant Still (36) is performed for the first time, at the Eastman School of Music, Rochester, New York conducted by Howard Hanson (35). This work secures Still’s fame for the rest of his life.

Theme and 13 Variations for orchestra by Ernst Krenek (31) is performed for the first time, in Carnegie Hall, New York.

Rhapsody op.5 for orchestra by Wallingford Riegger (46) is performed for the first time, in New York.

**2 November 1931** Synthetic rubber is produced for the first time on a commercial scale, by du Pont Company in Wilmington, Delaware.

**4 November 1931** At a party at Buckingham Palace, Mahatma Gandhi meets Emperor George and Empress Mary of India. They have a pleasant chat for five minutes.

**5 November 1931** *Toccata quasi una fantasia* for piano op.38 by Alois Hába (37) is performed for the first time, in Prague.

**6 November 1931** *The Golden Mountains*, a film with music by Dmitri Shostakovich (25), is shown for the first time, in the Khudozhestvenny Cinema, Leningrad.

**7 November 1931** The first All-China Soviet Congress convenes in Juikin. It promulgates a constitution for the Chinese Soviet Republic.

**9 November 1931** A Category four hurricane crosses the Cayman Islands and strike Cuba near Santa Cruz del Sur, which is destroyed by the storm surge. 110 people are killed in the Cayman Islands and over 3,000 in Cuba.

**10 November 1931** Ruth Crawford (30) arrives in New York from Cherbourg, her Guggenheim fellowship over. While she and Charles Seeger pretend to be married, they will give this date for their wedding day.

**12 November 1931** Edward Elgar (74) opens the new His Master’s Voice studio in Abbey Road, St. John’s Wood, with a recording of *Falstaff.*

*Das Herz*, a music drama by Hans Pfitzner (62) to words of Mahner-Mons, is given simultaneous premieres in Berlin and Munich.

Three Piecesfor piano by Sergey Rakhmaninov (58) is performed for the first time, at the Juilliard School, New York by the composer.

**14 November 1931** Anton Webern (47) enters the Sulz-Stangen Sanitorium near Hinterbühl, Austria, this time for a digestive ailment. He will stay 2-3 weeks.

The Bayonne Bridge, connecting Bayonne, New Jersey with Staten Island, is dedicated. It is the longest steel arch bridge in the world.

*Zeitschrift für angewandte Chemie* publishes “Über die chemische Untersuchung der Sexualhormone” by the German biochemist Adolf Butenandt wherein he describes his isolation of the male sex hormone androsterone.

*Northern Ballad No. 1* for orchestra by Arnold Bax (48) is performed for the first time, in St. Andrew’s Hall, Glasgow.

**17 November 1931** In a lecture in Mannheim, Ernst Krenek (31) declares that “politically neutral art is not possible.”

**19 November 1931** *Overture to a Picaresque Comedy* for orchestra by Arnold Bax (48) is performed for the first time, in Manchester. It is very successful.

**20 November 1931** *Drowsy Dreamtown* op.129, a song for soprano, women’s chorus, and piano by Amy Beach (64) to words of Norwood, is performed for the first time, in New York, with the composer at the piano. The performance is a surprise for Dr. Norwood who is the minister of St. Bartholemew’s Church.

*Esquinas* for orchestra by Silvestre Revueltas (31) is performed for the first time, in Teatro Arbeu, Mexico City, directed by the composer.

**21 November 1931** American Telephone and Telegraph inaugurates the first telex service.

James Whale’s film *Frankenstein*, starring Boris Karloff, is released in the United States.

*Das Unaufhörliche*, an oratorio by Paul Hindemith (36) to words of Benn, is performed for the first time, in Berlin.

**23 November 1931** An orchestral suite from Béla Bartók’s (50) ballet *The Wooden Prince* is performed for the first time, in Budapest. See 12 May 1917.

A concert by Henry Cowell’s (34) Pan-American Association of Composers takes place in Madrid before a packed house. The music of Latin American composers has not arrived so the music is all by North Americans, causing criticism in the press. Nevertheless, it is a success.

**25 November 1931** *Der Löwe und die Maus*, a children’s opera by Werner Egk (30), is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of Bavarian Radio conducted by the composer.

The second (orchestral) version of *Hammersmith* op.52 by Gustav Holst (57) is performed for the first time, in Queen’s Hall, London. This arrangement is not a success. See 17 April 1932.

**26 November 1931** *Die Nachtigall* for voice and piano by Ernst Krenek (31) to words of Kraus, is performed for the first time, in Frankfurt. See 27 October 1931.

**27 November 1931** At the final meeting of the International Disarmament Congress in the Trocadero, Paris, rightist street mobs led by François de La Rocque move in and boisterously disrupt the proceedings. The entire episode is broadcast over French Radio.

**1 December 1931** Communists in Kiangsi (Jiangxi) Province declare the Soviet Republic of China. Mao Tse-tung (Mao Zedong) is named Chairman of the Central Executive Committee.

The Second Round Table Conference on India closes in London, having failed to accomplish anything.

Kinetic Chemicals, Inc. of Wilmington, Delaware (later DuPont) begins producing Freon (fluorinated hydrocarbons) for refrigerators.

**2 December 1931** National elections are held in New Zealand. A coalition between the United Party and the Reform Party defeats the Labor Party.

Paul Marie Théodore Vincent d’Indy dies in the Avenue de Villars, Paris, Republic of France, aged 80 years, eight months, and five days.

**3 December 1931** *Delicious*, a film with music by George Gershwin (33), is released in the United States. See 25 December 1931.

**4 December 1931** An orchestral suite from the unperformed ballet *Caballos de vapor* by Carlos Chávez (32) is performed for the first time, in the Teatro Arbeu, Mexico City under the baton of the composer. See 31 March 1932.

**5 December 1931** Margers Skujenieks replaces Karlis Ulmanis as Prime Minister of Latvia.

Mohandas K. Gandhi, sole Congress Party delegate to the Round Table Conference on India, departs London for home.

A funeral mass in memory of Vincent d’Indy takes place in the parish church of Saint-François Xavier in Paris. Soldiers line the entire Boulevard des Invalides for the procession. The mortal remains are laid to rest in the cemetery of Montparnasse.

The journal *Physical Review* receives the article "A Hydrogen Isotope of Mass 2" by Harold Urey, Ferdinand G. Brickwedde, and GM Murphy, wherein they announce their discovery of deuterium. It will be published in the January 1932 issue.

*Vier kleine Stücke* for orchestra by Franz Schreker (53) is performed for the first time, in Krefeld.

**7 December 1931** In the waiting room of her doctor’s office, Rue Carpenter, wife of John Alden Carpenter (55), dies of a cerebral hemorrhage. She is accompanied by her daughter, who will blame her mother’s early death on the longstanding affair of her father with Ellen Borden.

The 72nd Congress of the United States convenes in Washington. Republicans barely control the Senate. Democrats barely control the House of Representatives.

*In the Night* from the Set for Theatre Orchestra by Charles Ives (57) is performed for the first time, in St. Paul, Minnesota. See 16 February 1932.

**8 December 1931** A United States patent is issued to American Telephone and Telegraph Co. for a coaxial cable. It was invented by Lloyd Espenschied of Kew Gardens, New York and Herman A. Affel of Ridgewood, New Jersey.

*The Christmas Rose*, an opera by Frank Bridge (52) to his own words after Kemp-Welch and Cotterell, is performed for the first time, in Parry Opera Theatre, Royal College of Music, London directed by the composer.

*Of Thee I Sing*, an operetta with a book by Kaufman and Ryskind, lyrics by Ira Gershwin, and music by George Gershwin (33), is performed for the first time, in Boston. See 26 December 1931.

**9 December 1931** A constitution for the Spanish Republic is ratified. It includes the right to vote for women over age 23 and separates church and state.

**10 December 1931** *Niemandsland*, a film with music by Hanns Eisler (33), is shown for the first time, in Berlin.

*The Circumnavigators Club*, a march by John Philip Sousa (77), is performed for the first time, at the annual meeting of its namesake in New York. The composer is a member.

**11 December 1931** Japan abandons the gold standard.

The Statute of Westminster is given Royal Assent, to take effect 31 December. It grants sovereignty and equality to the British dominions and creates the British Commonwealth of Nations. Original members are Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, Newfoundland, South Africa, and the United Kingdom.

**13 December 1931** Concerto for cello and orchestra no.1 by Bohuslav Martinu (41) is performed for the first time, in Berlin.

**14 December 1931** Ki Inukai replaces Baron Reijiro Wakatsuki as Prime Minister of Japan.

**15 December 1931** Lin Sen replaces Chiang Kai-shek as acting President of China.

**16 December 1931** The anti-extremist Iron Front is formed by various center-left groups in Germany. It opposes both Nazis and Communists.

**17 December 1931** William Grant Still (36) signs a contract with Willard Robison to provide arrangements for Robison’s orchestra in a thrice-weekly program on radio station WOR in New York.

**18 December 1931** Ralph Vaughan Williams (59) is awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws by University College, Liverpool.

**19 December 1931** In Australian general elections, the coalition partners United Australia Party and the Country Party make significant gains and take power.

**21 December 1931** *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* by Kurt Weill (31) and Bertolt Brecht opens in Berlin for the first time, in the Kurfürstendammtheater. It turns out to be a great success in the capital.

**22 December 1931** Part of the roof of the Vatican Library (built in 1588) collapses. Five people are killed. About 800 books are lost.

Incidental music to von Wangenheim’s play *Die Mausefalle* by Stefan Wolpe (29) is performed for the first time, in the Kleines Theater Unter Den Linden, Berlin. It will have 120 performances in Berlin before touring Germany and Switzerland.

**23 December 1931** String Quartet no.4 by Willem Pijper (37) is performed for the first time, in the Bachzaal, Amsterdam.

**24 December 1931** Mauricio Raúl Kagel is born in Buenos Aires, Republic of Argentina, the fourth and last child born to Jewish immigrants who fled Russia in 1922. The father, a printer, met his wife in Buenos Aires.

**25 December 1931** *Delicious*, a film with music by George Gershwin (33), opens in New York and several other cities in the United States. See 3 December 1931.

**26 December 1931** *Of Thee I Sing*, an operetta with a book by Kaufman and Ryskind, lyrics by Ira Gershwin and music by George Gershwin (33), is performed for the first time in New York, in the Music Box Theatre. Its run of 441 performances is Gershwin’s greatest success in musical theatre. See 8 December 1931.

**27 December 1931** *Decoration Day* for orchestra by Charles Ives (57) is performed for the first time, in the Teatro Nacional, Havana.

**28 December 1931** Mahatma Gandhi returns empty handed to Bombay from London to an enormous hero’s welcome.

*Land of Luthany* op.87 for cello and piano by Arthur Farwell (59) is performed for the first time.

**31 December 1931** The Statute of Westminster goes into effect. It grants sovereignty to the British dominions and creates the British Commonwealth of Nations. Original members are Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, Newfoundland, South Africa, and the United Kingdom.

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