**1 January 1937** The Public Order Act of 1936 becomes effective in Great Britain. It allows authorities to ban uniforms and processions. It is largely an attempt to control the British Union of Fascists.

General Anastasio Somoza Garcia becomes President of Nicaragua, thus beginning a 42-year rule of the country by the Somoza family, supported by the United States. He “won” the election by a vote of 107,000 to 169.

Pursuant to a contest by Jay Hormel, his company’s new canned ham product is officially named Spam®. The $100 winning entry was from a New York actor named Kenneth Daigneau.

**2 January 1937** *Cantique du Rhône* op.155 for mixed voices by Darius Milhaud (44) to words of Claudel, is performed for the first time, in Paris.

**3 January 1937** Fascist forces manage to capture an eleven kilometer stretch of the Corunna Road, north of Madrid, against furious loyalist counterattacks.

**4 January 1937** Incidental music to Shakespeare’s play *Julius Caesar* by Darius Milhaud (44) is performed for the first time, in Théâtre Atelier, Paris.

**5 January 1937** The 75th Congress of the United States convenes in Washington. President Roosevelt’s Democratic Party enjoys huge majorities in both houses.

**6 January 1937** Sergey Prokofiev (45) and his wife depart France for a concert tour of the United States.

Incidental music to Kirshon’s play *The Big Day* by Aram Khachaturian (33) is performed for the first time, in the Central Theatre of the Red Army, Moscow.

**7 January 1937** *Love From a Stranger*, a film with music by Benjamin Britten (23), is shown for the first time. It is the only feature-length film for which Britten will compose music.

*The Eternal Road*, a dramatic oratorio by Kurt Weill (36) to words of Werfel (tr. Lewisohn), is performed for the first time, in the Manhattan Opera House, New York. This afternoon, the fire inspector closes the show owing to the many fire law violations in the set. Mayor LaGuardia is reached by the producer desperately trying to save his show (and his investment). Upon arriving at the theatre, His Honor finds the city fire inspector completely justified in his action, but in order that the show go on in the evening, LaGuardia stations firemen, with extinguishers at the ready, throughout the hall during the performance. It is a success, but will eventually lose money. See 13 June 1999.

**8 January 1937** Benjamin Britten (23) meets with WH Auden in Tottenham Court Road in London. They say their farewells. Auden writes his poem “It’s farewell to the drawing-room’s civilized cry” on the score of Britten’s *Sinfonietta*. “It is terribly sad & I feel ghastly about it,” Britten will write. Tomorrow, Auden leaves for the Spanish Civil War.

String Quartet no. 4 by Arnold Schoenberg (62) is performed for the first time, in Los Angeles.

**9 January 1937** Ralph Vaughan Williams’ (64) orchestral work Music for English Folk Dance Society Masque is performed for the first time, in the Royal Albert Hall, London.

**13 January 1937** Karol Szymanowski (54) writes from Grasse, France that he does not believe he will survive his current illness. It is difficult for him to eat and he is unable to speak.

**14 January 1937** A divorce between Arthur Farwell (64) and Gertrude Everts Brice is finalized.

**15 January 1937** Chancellor Kurt von Schuschnigg announces an amnesty for all Austrian Nazis imprisoned for political activities.

The battle for the Corunna Road north of Madrid ends in stalemate. The fascist drive to encircle Madrid is temporarily halted.

**17 January 1937** Two rebel armies and an Italian army converge to begin an offensive against Malaga.

**18 January 1937** After heavy rainfall, the Ohio River starts to overflow its banks. Over the next two weeks it will flood Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Kentucky. 385 people are killed and property loss is high.

**19 January 1937** Kurt Weill (36) and Lotte Lenya remarry in a civil ceremony in North Castle, New York.

Trio for clarinet, violin, and piano op.157b by Darius Milhaud (44) is performed for the first time, in Paris.

**20 January 1937** President Franklin D. Roosevelt is inaugurated for a second term. This is the first time a president is inaugurated on the new constitutional date of 20 January.

**21 January 1937** Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta by Béla Bartók (55) is performed for the first time, in Basel. It is a great success, the audience requiring the last movement to be repeated.

Ernest Bloch’s (56) symphonic poem *A Voice in the Wilderness* is performed for the first time, in Los Angeles.

**23 January 1937** 17 Soviet leaders go on trial in Moscow, charged with an anti-Stalin conspiracy.

**25 January 1937** Incidental music to Obey’s play *Le trompeure Seville* by Darius Milhaud (44) is performed for the first time, in Théâtre Port Saint-Martin, Paris.

Ivan Alyeksandrovich Vyshnegradsky (43) gives the first concert dedicated entirely to his music, in Paris.

**27 January 1937** The Theatre of Music opens at 254 West 54th Street in New York. It provides a home for the Composers’ Forum Laboratory of the Federal Music Project. (In the 1970s it will become Studio 54).

**29 January 1937** Sidney Franklin’s film *The Good Earth* is shown for the first time, in Los Angeles.

**30 January 1937** Karl Radek and 16 other leading communists are found guilty in Moscow of participating in a plot lead by Trotsky to overthrow the government. They all confess. 13 are sentenced to death, four to prison.

Adolf Hitler publicly repudiates the war guilt clause of the Versailles Treaty.

The first movement of *Three Spirals* for violin and piano by Carlos Chávez (37) is performed for the first time, in Town Hall, New York.

**31 January 1937** Philip Glass is born in Baltimore, the last of three children born to Benjamin C. Glass, owner of a record shop, and Ida Gouline, a teacher and librarian.

**1 February 1937** Prelude to a Hymn Tune by William Billings for orchestra by Otto Luening (36) is performed for the first time, in Town Hall, New York, the composer conducting.

**2 February 1937** Senjuro Hayashi replaces Koki Hirota as Prime Minister of Japan.

The Paris Opéra, restored after the fire of 1936, reopens with Jules Massenet’s (†24) *Ariane*.

*Dreaming Lips*, a film with music by William Walton (35), is shown for the first time, in the London Pavilion.

**3 February 1937** *Tel jour, telle nuit*, a song cycle for voice and piano by Francis Poulenc (38) to words of Eluard, is performed for the first time, in the Salle Gaveau, Paris the composer at the piano.

**5 February 1937** US President Roosevelt proposes that the Supreme Court be expanded from nine to 15 members. His attempt to pack the court will be defeated.

The *Journal of Biological Chemistry* receives “Further Studies on the Concentration of the Antipellagra Factor” by Conrad Elvehjem and Carl Koehn wherein a new vitamin (niacin) is identified as the missing factor in pellagra.

**6 February 1937** Spanish rebels and Italians capture Málaga after a three-week battle.

In a further attempt to encircle Madrid, fascist forces begin an offensive in the Jarama Valley to cut the Valencia Road.

Concertino for cello and orchestra by Albert Roussel (67) is performed for the first time, in the Salle Pleyel, Paris.

**9 February 1937** Alfredo Casella (53) writes to George Gershwin (38) informing him that he has been elected to honorary membership in the Royal Academy of Santa Cecilia in Rome.

Béla Bartók (55) gives the premiere of 27 of the numbers from *Mikrokosmos* in London.

**11 February 1937** A six week sit-down strike at the Fisher Body Plant no.1 in Flint, Michigan ends when General Motors agrees to recognize the United Auto Workers.

While performing his Concerto in F in Los Angeles, George Gershwin (38) experiences a brief blackout. A physical examination will reveal nothing unusual. This is his last public performance.

**12 February 1937** Piano Quintet by Roy Harris is performed for the first time, in Town Hall, New York on the composer’s 39th birthday.

*Oriane et le Prince d’Amour*, a ballet by Florent Schmitt (66) to a story by Séran, is performed for the first time, in a concert setting in Paris.

**16 February 1937** American chemist Wallace H. Carothers receives a US patent for nylon.

**17 February 1937** *Minature pastorals, set 1&2* for piano by Frank Bridge (57) are performed for the first time, at the Royal College of Music, London.

**18 February 1937** Kurt Weill (36) takes up residence in Hollywood.

**19 February 1937** Two Eritreans attempt to kill Italian Viceroy Rodolfo Graziani with hand grenades during a ceremony in Addis Ababa. Graziani is seriously wounded and rushed to the hospital. He will survive. The two make their escape but Italian security begin firing indiscriminately into the surrounding crowd. For three days, the Italians go on a rampage, killing 30,000 Ethiopians.

**20 February 1937** The Indian National Congress wins a majority of seats in six Indian provincial elections.

**23 February 1937** *Overture to Adventure* for orchestra by Arnold Bax (53) is performed for the first time, in Winter Gardens, Bournemouth.

**24 February 1937** Fighting in the Jarama Valley southeast of Madrid ends with the fascists holding on to small gains.

*Lucrezia*, an opera by Ottorino Respighi (†0) to words of Guastalla after Shakespeare, and completed by his wife, Elsa Olivieri Respighi, is performed for the first time, in Teatro alla Scala, Milan.

**25 February 1937** *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck is published by Covici Friede in New York.

**26 February 1937** Incidental music to a play by Auden and Isherwood, *The Ascent of F6* by Benjamin Britten (23) is performed for the first time, in the Mercury Theatre, London.

**27 February 1937** France creates a Ministry of Defense, extends the Maginot Line and nationalizes its arms factories.

**28 February 1937** Incidental music to Slater’s play *Pageant of Empire* by Benjamin Britten (23) is performed for the first time, in Collins’ Music Hall, London.

*Case History No...* op.27, a dance by Wallingford Riegger (51) to a scenario by Sokolow, is performed for the first time, in New York.

**1 March 1937** Kyösti Kallio replaces Pehr Evind Svinhufvud as President of Finland.

OZON (Camp of National Unity) is founded in Poland as a pro-government, nationalist, anti-foreign, anti-Semitic party. Within a month it will have 2,000,000 members.

United States Steel recognizes the United Mine Workers.

Suite for two pianos op.6 by Charles Koechlin (69) is performed for the first time, in Salle Chopin, Paris 41 years after it was composed.

**3 March 1937** At a press conference in the Hotel Mayflower, New York, Edgard Varèse (53) and André Malraux announce that they will collaborate on a new work to be called *Espace*.

**5 March 1937** *Tarantella* for chorus and piano four hands by Elliott Carter (28) to words of Ovid is performed for the first time, at Milton Academy, Boston. See 17 May 1937.

**6 March 1937** While having lunch with the conductor Trevor Harvey, Benjamin Britten (23) meets a tenor named Peter Pears.

Queen Mary opens the Holst (†2) Room at Morley College in London. Money for the project was raised mostly through the influence of Ralph Vaughan Williams (64).

**7 March 1937** *I Hear an Army*, the third of the Three Songs op.10 for voice and piano by Samuel Barber (26) to words of Joyce, is performed for the first time, in Casimir Hall of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. See 5 May 1945.

*Lincolnshire Posy* for band by Percy Grainger (54) is performed for the first time, in Milwaukee, directed by the composer.

**8 March 1937** Two fascist armies, including Italian regulars, begin an offensive toward Guadalajara, northeast of Madrid.

**9 March 1937** Act III, scene 1 of Alois Hába’s (43) opera *The New Country*, to words of Pujman after Gladkov, is performed for the first time, in Cowdray Hall, London.

**10 March 1937** Pope Pius XI issues the encyclical *Mit brennender Sorge*. Intended for a German audience (and so published in German), the letter attacks the Nazi regime for reneging on the 1933 concordat and also its racial policies.

Loyalist resistance against the fascist attack toward Guadalajara stiffens after the fascists take Brihuega.

*L’aiglon*, an opera by Arthur Honegger (45) and Jacques Ibert to words of Cain after Rostand, is performed for the first time, in Monaco.

**11 March 1937** Spanish loyalist forces engage and put to flight two Italian regular army divisions on the Zaragoza-Madrid road near Guadalajara.

*Le testament de la tante Caroline*, an opéra-bouffe by Albert Roussel (67) to words of Nino, is performed in French for the first time, in Salle Favart, Paris. See 14 November 1936.

**12 March 1937** Aimo Kaarlo Cajander replaces Kyösti Kallio as Prime Minister of Finland.

Charles-Marie Widor dies in Paris at the age of 93.

**13 March 1937** Benjamin Britten (23) is introduced by a friend to squash.

The National Labor Relations Board issues a ruling in the tne-month Remington Rand Strike. They chronicle a concerted effort of lies, deceit, incitement to violence, economic warfare, and union breaking on the part of Remington Rand. The company is ordered to reinstate all strikers with back pay and recognize the union. Owner James Rand refuses to comply.

**16 March 1937** David Walter Del Tredici is born in Cloverdale, California.

**18 March 1937** Pope Pius XI issues the encyclical Divini redemptoris condemning communism and the Soviet government.

Loyalist troops begin a counterattack against the fascist offensive northeast of Madrid. The Italians facing them are completely routed. The entire fascist army is forced to fall back. Loyalists recapture Brihuega.

A gas explosion destroys a school in New London, Texas killing almost 300 students and teachers.

*The Comedy on the Bridge*, a radio opera by Bohuslav Martinu (46) to his own words after Klicpera, is performed for the first time, over Czechoslovak Radio originating in Prague.

Vocalise for soprano, flute, and piano by Henry Cowell (40) is performed for the first time, at Town Hall, New York. The dedicatees, Ethel and Otto Luening (36), perform the voice and flute parts respectively.

**21 March 1937** Smuggled into Germany, the papal encyclical *Mit brennender Sorge*, is read from German pulpits on Palm Sunday.

A peaceful march by the Puerto Rican Nationalist (independence) Party in Ponce is fired on by police with automatic weapons. 19 people are killed and 200 injured. Many of those shot are not part of the demonstration. No one in authority, from the governor to the police who fired, will ever be punished.

Some works by Charles Koechlin (69) are performed for the first time, over the airwaves of Radio Tour-Eiffel, originating at the Schola Cantorum, Paris: *La divine vesprée* op.67, a ballet to his own story, in a concert setting, and the first three of Quelques choeurs réligieux a cappella, de style modal op.150.

**22 March 1937** Paul Hindemith (41) writes to Fritz Stein, director of the Frankfurt Hochmusikschule, submitting his resignation effective 30 September.

**23 March 1937** Incidental music to Molière’s play *Le médecin volant* by Darius Milhaud (44) is performed for the first time, in Théâtre Scaramouche, Paris.

**24 March 1937** 60,000 striking auto workers end a 17-day strike against Chrysler Corporation after a tentative settlement is reached.

The US Congress approves a plan to establish the National Gallery of Art as part of the Smithsonian Institution.

Concerto for violin and orchestra no.1 by David Diamond (21) is performed for the first time, in New York, conducted by the composer. Also premiered is Diamond’s Sonata in a minor for piano. This concert is a production of the New York City Composers’ Forum Laboratory of the Federal Music Project.

**25 March 1937** Representatives of Italy and Yugoslavia sign a non-aggression treaty in Belgrade.

Paul Hindemith (41) sails from Hamburg aboard the *SS Deutschland* for the United States.

**28 March 1937** Just before midnight. Karol Maciej Szymanowski dies of throat cancer at Lausanne, aged 54 years, five months, and 25 days. The death certificate will read fifteen minutes past midnight on the 29th.

The John Simon Guggenheim Foundation fellowships are announced, includingone for Ross Lee Finney (30).

**31 March 1937** Fascist forces begin an offensive against Basques in Vizcaya heading for Bilbao.

Birkenfeld becomes part of Prussia.

**1 April 1937** The Government of India Act goes into effect. Government is reformed, Burma and Aden are separated from India, greater self-government is granted to the provinces and a central legislature is created in Delhi. Aden is split into the Colony of Aden and the Aden Protectorate.

Lübeck becomes part of Prussia.

*Flourish for a Coronation* for chorus and orchestra by Ralph Vaughan Williams (64) to words of various authors is performed for the first time, in Queen’s Hall, London. On the same program, Frederick Delius’ (†2) orchestra suite *Florida* (omitting no.2) is performed publicly for the first time. The work was performed privately in 1888.

*Amelia Goes to the Ball*, an opera buffa by Gian-Carlo Menotti (25) to his own words, is performed for the first time, in Philadelphia.

**2 April 1937** Paul Hindemith (41) arrives in New York from Hamburg aboard the *SS Deutschland*.

**3 April 1937** Bernd Alois Zimmermann (19) begins six months of service in the Reichsarbeitsdienst.

**7 April 1937** A funeral in memory of Karol Szymanowski takes place in Warsaw. The body lies in state in the Conservatory and is then taken through the streets, past the opera house and Philharmonic before throngs, to the railroad station. The coffin is then taken to Krakow where it is interred in the crypt of the Skalka church. His heart, intended to be placed beside that of Chopin (†87), will be unintentionally destroyed during the Warsaw Uprising.

**8 April 1937** Arthur William Foote dies of pneumonia at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, aged 84 years, one month, and three days. His earthly remains will be buried in Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge.

**9 April 1937** Martha Graham visits Henry Cowell (40) in San Quentin to ask him to write a sarabande for a dance she is planning about the Spanish Civil War. To show him what she wants, she dances around the visitors’ room to the amazement of guards, prisoners, and visitors. Cowell takes notes. See 30 July 1937.

**10 April 1937** Paul Hindemith (41) makes his first performing appearance in the United States, playing his own Sonata for viola solo at the Library of Congress, Washington. On the same program, Hindemith’s Piano Sonata no.3, Sonata for flute and piano, and the first four of the Sechs Lieder for tenor and piano to words of Hölderlin, are performed for the first time. Also premiered are the first two movements of Concerto for Horns by Carlos Chávez (37). See 4 November 1964.

Leopold Stokowski meets Duke Ellington (37) for the first time, during an intermission at the Cotton Club, New York.

**12 April 1937** British engineer Frank Whittle and his team successfully test a prototype jet engine at Rugby, Warwickshire.

*Reveille*, a concert study for violin and piano by Benjamin Britten (23), is performed for the first time, in Wigmore Hall, London.

Paul Hindemith (41) appears as viola soloist with the Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler in the Boston Chamber Music Club. He plays the Sonata for viola solo op.25/1 and *Der Schwanendreher.* Also performed is his Wind Quintet op.24/2.

**13 April 1937** A concert of microtonal music by Alois Haba (43) and his students is presented in Prague by Pritomnost (the Present), a contemporary music society.

*Madmoiselle Docteur*, a film with music by Arthur Honegger (45), is shown for the first time, in Paris.

**15 April 1937** *The Woman I Love*, a film with music by Arthur Honegger (45), is released in the United States.

The Second Suite op.64b from Sergey Prokofiev’s (45) unperformed ballet *Romeo and Juliet* is performed for the first time, in Leningrad. See 30 December 1938.

Paul Hindemith (41) performs *Der Schwanendreher* with the New York Philharmonic in Carnegie Hall, less satisfactorily than in Boston. Nadia Boulanger (49) gives a reception afterward which is attended by Igor Stravinsky (54).

**16 April 1937** *Crown Imperial*, a march for orchestra by William Walton (35) is performed for the first time, in a recording session for His Master’s Voice. See 9 May 1937.

**18 April 1937** *From Olden Times*, for male chorus by Béla Bartók (56) to traditional Hungarian words arranged by the composer, is performed for the first time, in Kecskemét.

**20 April 1937** Three Romances op.73 for voice and piano by Sergey Prokofiev (45) to words of Pushkin are performed for the first time, in a radio broadcast from Moscow.

**21 April 1937** Striking workers reach agreement with Remington Rand after a violent eleven-month strike which involved both state and local governments. The workers are assured of their old positions.

Fantasy for two pianos by Bohuslav Martinu (46) is performed for the first time, in Prague.

*The Second Hurricane*, a school opera by Aaron Copland (36) to words of Denby, is performed for the first time, in the Henry Street Settlement Music School, New York.

A Sonata for viola solo by Paul Hindemith (41) is performed for the first time, in Chicago. He composed it on the train to Chicago within the last two days.

**23 April 1937** Music for Bridson’s play *King Arthur* by Benjamin Britten (23) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC. See 21 October 1995.

**24 April 1937** Belgium is released by Great Britain and France from all obligations under the Locarno Treaty. The nation is now completely neutral.

**25 April 1937** Vier Bagatellen for piano-four hands by Ernst Krenek (36) is performed for the first time, in Vienna.

**26 April 1937** The German Condor Legion destroys the Basque town of Guernica at a cost of 1,654 innocent civilians killed and 889 injured. The event will inspire Pablo Picasso to create his most famous work, named for the town.

**27 April 1937** In the United States, the first payments are made under the Social Security Act of 1935.

*Jeu de cartes*, a ballet in three deals by Igor Stravinsky (54) to a scenario by Malayev and the composer, is performed for the first time, at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York conducted by the composer. The audience is appreciative, the critics range from lukewarm to hostile.

Paul Hindemith (41) sails from New York for Hamburg on the *SS Europa*.

**28 April 1937** Spanish fascists take Durango and Guernica from the Basques.

Cinecittà Studios is opened in Rome by Benito Mussolini. It is the largest film studio in Europe.

*Poèmes pour Mi*, a song cycle for voice and piano by Olivier Messiaen (28) to his own words, is performed for the first time, in the Salle des Concerts de la Schola Cantorum in Paris the composer at the piano.

**29 April 1937** American chemist Wallace Carothers, inventor of nylon, kills himself in Philadelphia by ingesting cyanide. He suffered from chronic depression.

**30 April 1937** A referendum in the Philippines grants women the right to vote.

The rebel battleship *España* hits a mine and sinks off Cape Penas near Santander.

**1 May 1937** The German rocket research center at Peenemünde, on the island of Usedom, opens.

The US Congress approves a Neutrality Act. It prohibits export of arms to belligerents outside of the Western Hemisphere. US citizens are prohibited from travelling of ships of belligerents and may not make loans to belligerent nations.

**2 May 1937** *Changing World*, a dance with music by Lou Harrison (19) to nine choreographers (including the composer), is performed for the first time, in San Francisco.

**4 May 1937** 18 months after its founding, La Spirale gives its last concert, in Paris. See 12 December 1935.

*London Pageant* for orchestra by Arnold Bax (53) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC.

Ruth Crawford Seeger (35) gives birth to a third child, Barbara Mona, in Washington.

**5 May 1937** Igor Stravinsky (54) and Nadia Boulanger (49) are fellow passengers on the *SS Paris* sailing from New York to France. Boulanger brings to him the offer of a commission from a mutual acquaintance, Mildred Bliss, to celebrate her 30th wedding anniversary and to be performed at the Blisses’ mansion in Georgetown, Dumbarton Oaks.

**6 May 1937** A setting of *Psalm 67* for chorus by Charles Ives (62) is performed for the first time, in the Theatre of Music, New York 43 years after it was composed.

After an ocean crossing from Frankfurt, the German Zeppelin *Hindenburg* is destroyed in a ball of flame while mooring at Lakehurst, New Jersey. 36 people are killed.

*Candide* op.24, a dance by Wallingford Riegger (52) to words of Weidman, is performed for the first time, in New York.

**7 May 1937** 18 of the 27 Choruses for two or three part children’s or female chorus by Béla Bartók (56) are performed for the first time, in Budapest. Bartók plays some of *Mikrokosmos* in his first Budapest appearance in eight years.

Chamber Symphony for clarinet, bassoon, trumpet, viola, and piano by David Diamond (21) is performed for the first time, in New York.

*Shall We Dance*, a film with music by George Gershwin (38) to words of Ira Gershwin, is released in the United States. See 13 May 1937.

**9 May 1937** William Walton’s (35) *Crown Imperial*, a march for the coronation of George VI, is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC, London. The work is repeated at the actual coronation, 12 May.

**10 May 1937** Frozen asparagus goes on sale in Britain, produced by Wisbech Produce Canners Ltd. It is the first frozen food marketed in Great Britain.

**11 May 1937** A purge of the Red Army begins with the dismissal of Marshal Mikahil Tukachevsky.

**12 May 1937** *Festival Te Deum* by Ralph Vaughan Williams (64) is performed for the first time, in the Abbey Church of St. Peter, Westminster. This performance marks the end of the coronation festivities of George VI. These are the first British coronation festivities to be broadcast by means of radio.

**13 May 1937** *These things shall be*, a cantata by John Ireland (57) to words of Symonds, is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC originating in London.

*Shall We Dance*, a film with music by George Gershwin (38) to words of Ira Gershwin, is shown for the first time in Radio City Music Hall, New York. It includes the song *They Can’t Take That Away From Me*. See 7 May 1937.

**14 May 1937** Sei Cori di Michelangelo Buonarrotti il Giovane (Set III) for chorus and orchestra by Luigi Dallapiccola (33) is performed for the first time, in Teatro Comunale, Florence. See 26 April 1938.

**16 May 1937** String Quartet no.3 by Arnold Bax (53) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC.

Suite im Hexachord op.24b for oboe and clarinet by Stefan Wolpe (34) is performed for the first time, in Jerusalem.

**17 May 1937** Juan Negrin replaces Francisco Largo Caballero as Prime Minister of the Republic of Spain.

*Tarantella* for chorus and orchestra by Elliott Carter (28) to words of Ovid is performed for the first time, in Symphony Hall, Boston. See 5 March 1937.

**18 May 1937** Three Ostinati with Chorales for oboe and piano by Henry Cowell (40) is performed for the first time, at Bennington College, Vermont.

**19 May 1937** *Il deserto tentato*, an opera mistero by Alfredo Casella (53) to words of Pavolini, is performed for the first time, in Teatro Comunale, Florence. Audience reaction is generally positive. The press is broadly mixed.

**21 May 1937** A Soviet plane lands at the North Pole to establish a weather station.

Upon hearing that the two would-be assassins of 19 February spent a short stay at the Debra Libanos Christian monastery northwest of Addis Ababa, Italian authorities execute everyone living there, over 300 people.

Sept Chansons for chorus by Francis Poulenc (38) to words of Legrand, Eluard, and Apollinaire, is performed completely, perhaps for the first time, in Salle Gaveau, Paris. See 15 November 1936.

**22 May 1937** The Soviet Union claims the North Pole as its possession.

**23 May 1937** John D. Rockefeller dies in Ormond Beach, Florida at the age of 97.

In the Spanish Pavilion of the Exposition Internationale des Arts et des Techniques appliqués à la vie moderne in Paris, *Guernica* by Pablo Picasso is unveiled.

*The Return of Maxim*, a film with music by Dmitri Shostakovich (30), is shown for the first time.

*Lenox Avenue*, a ballet by William Grant Still (42) to a scenario by Arvey, is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the CBS radio network originating in New York.

**24 May 1937** Airplanes of the Spanish loyalists bomb an Italian Navy patrol boat off Palma de Mallorca costing the lives of several Italian sailors.

*Un oiseau blanc s’est envolé*, a ballet by Arthur Honegger (45) to a story by Guitry, is performed for the first time, at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, Paris.

**26 May 1937** Egypt joins the League of Nations, the last nation to do so.

Returns from the voting for the Dutch Parliament show modest gains for the leading Roman Catholic Party. For the first time, four seats are won by the National Socialist Movement (fascist).

As four organizers from the United Auto Workers pass out leaflets at the Ford Plant in Dearborn, Michigan they are attacked by company thugs with clubs. Dozens of people are injured in the resulting battle. The presence of a newsreel camera helps to turn public opinion against Ford.

Thousands of people walk across the newly completed Golden Gate Bridge one day before it opens to traffic.

**27 May 1938** The Italian Ministry for Press and Propaganda is converted into the Ministry of Popular Culture.

President Roosevelt pushes a button in Washington opening the Golden Gate Bridge to traffic. It is the longest suspension bridge, at 1,965 meters.

**28 May 1937** Neville Chamberlain replaces Stanley Baldwin as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

Alfred Adler dies in Aberdeen, Scotland at the age of 67.

The Gesellschaft zur Vorbereitung des Deutschen Volkswagens mbH is founded by the Nazi Deutsche Arbeitsfront. A factory is being built in Wolfsburg to mass produce the new car.

**29 May 1937** Airplanes of Spanish loyalist forces bomb the German ship *Deutschland* off Ibiza. Several lives are lost.

**30 May 1937** Police fire on marching union members at the Republic Steel plant in Chicago. Ten people are killed.

**31 May 1937** Spanish loyalist troops begin an offensive to capture Segovia. After initial gains, they are stopped by a fascist counterattack.

**1 June 1937** The Ministry of Popular Culture is created in Italy. All foreign words and names are banned in favor of Italian replacements. Louis Armstrong becomes Luigi Fortebraccio. Benny Goodman is now Beniamino Buonuomo. Soon, jazz will be banned entirely.

American microbiologist Max Theiler publishes “The Use of yellow Fever Virus Modified by in vitro Cultivation for Human Immunization” in the *Journal of Experimental Medicine*. It outlines his development of a vaccine for yellow fever.

Oldsmobile announces the first automatic transmission available to the public.

**2 June 1937** Louis Vierne dies while giving an organ recital in the Cathedral of Notre Dame, Paris. He is 66 years old.

Alban Berg’s (†1) incomplete opera *Lulu*, to his own words after Wedekind, is performed for the first time, in Zürich.

**3 June 1937** The Duke of Windsor marries Mrs. Wallis Warfield Simpson in Château de Condé, France.

*La citadelle du silence*, a film with music by Darius Milhaud (44) and Arthur Honegger (45), is released in France.

**4 June 1937** Prince Fumimaro Konoye replaces Senjuro Hayashi as Prime Minister of Japan.

**5 June 1937** The British Broadcasting Corporation televises opera for the first time. The third act of *Faust*, by Charles Gounod (†43) is transmitted to a receiver in the company’s London studio.

In San Quentin Penitentiary, Henry Cowell (40) is transferred from work at the prison jute mill to the Education Department. He will teach various kinds of music classes to inmates.

**6 June 1937** Adolf Hitler and Joseph Goebbels visit Regensburg to dedicate a monument to the memory of Anton Bruckner (†40). Goebbels gives a speech praising Bruckner as a champion of German art.

*Mr. Danielken* for chorus by Willem Pijper (42) to traditional words is performed for the first time, in the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam.

**7 June 1937** Incidental music to Shakespeare’s play *Romeo and Juliet* by Darius Milhaud (44) is performed for the first time, in Théâtre Mathurins, Paris.

**8 June 1937** *Carmina Burana* for soprano, tenor, baritone, boys’ chorus, chorus, and orchestra by Carl Orff (41) to anonymous medieval words, is performed for the first time, in the Städtische Bühnen, Frankfurt-am-Main.

**9 June 1937** A team of doctors visits George Gershwin (38) at his home in Los Angeles. They diagnosis his headaches as nothing serious.

**10 June 1937** The US government announces that there will be a 30% cut in Federal Theatre Project personnel, 1,700 workers. No FTP productions may begin before 1 July. Although this affects several plays, it is seen as a direct attack on *The Cradle will Rock* by Marc Blitzstein (32).

**11 June 1937** *Pravda* announces the arrest of Marshal Mikhail Nikolayevich Tukachevsky and other high ranking officers of the Red Army. The arrests actually took place last month.

The bodies of Italian Socialist leaders Carlo and Nello Rosselli are found in a field near Bagnoles sur l’Orne, France. The two were instrumental in recruiting Italian leftists to fight for the constitutional government of Spain, in opposition to the policies of Mussolini.

Arnold Bax (53) is knighted by King George VI at Buckingham Palace.

**12 June 1937** Marshal Mikhail Tukachevsky and eight other senior Red Army officers are executed in Moscow.

**13 June 1937** As the defenses around Bilbao collapse, most of the residents of the city are evacuated.

*Up the Garden Path*, with poetry chosen by WH Auden and music chosen by Benjamin Britten (23), is broadcast for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC.

**15 June 1937** Fearful that the official premiere of *The Cradle Will Rock* will be cancelled, Marc Blitzstein (32) organizes an open final rehearsal at the Maxine Elliott Theatre in New York. Most important people in New York theatre are there.

**16 June 1937** The Federal Theatre Project announces that *The Cradle Will Rock* has been cancelled. Representatives of the play announce that it will go on, somewhere. Guards are stationed outside the Maxine Elliott Theatre in New York to ensure that FTP materials will not be removed. Equity informs the producer, John Houseman and the director, Orson Welles that since it is an FTP play, it can not be put on any stage they desire. They counter by planning to have the cast buy tickets and then perform their parts from their seats. The musician’s union, an AFL affiliate opposed to the CIO, a hero of the play, says that if they plan to use a Broadway house they need Broadway wages. Houseman plans to go ahead with the author, Marc Blitzstein (32) playing the piano. An upright piano is procured and placed in a truck, the driver given five dollars to drive around the block until told where to go. At 20:00, the Venice (59th Street) Theatre is procured and the cast, crew, press, and audience, all gathered outside the Maxine Elliott walk 20 blocks to the Venice. The piano arrives. Firemen get the piano onstage, but a better piano is found. 21:25 After statements from Houseman and Welles, Blitzstein begins to play and sing, half-expecting that he would do the entire production himself. After a few lines, an actress rises from her seat and continues the song, the house’s one spotlight on her. Most of the cast has made it and they perform their parts from the house. Parts missing are done by Blitzstein. Thus, *The Cradle Will Rock*, a play in music by Marc Blitzstein (32) to his own words, is performed for the first time, in New York. At the end, the audience goes wild. Welles will recall the audience reaction as “that mighty, loving explosion which can be heard but once or twice in a theatre lifetime.” (Pollack, 178) See 1 July 1937.

**17 June 1937** Trois chansons de négresse op.148b for voice and piano by Darius Milhaud (44) is performed for the first time, in Paris.

**18 June 1937** The last Basque troops in Bilbao retreat from the town.

**19 June 1937** Spanish fascist rebels capture Bilbao.

A run-through of the vocal and piano score to Sergey Prokofiev’s (46) *Cantata for the Twentieth Anniversary of October* before the Committee on Arts Affairs in Moscow is a disaster. The work is roundly criticized and will not be performed. See 5 April 1966.

**20 June 1937** Writing from the United States, Arnold Schoenberg (62) asks Anton Webern (53) to deny that he has become a member of the Nazi Party. (No reply from Webern is extant.)

Concertino for piano and chamber orchestra by Walter Piston (43) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the CBS radio network originating in New York the composer conducting.

After suffering headaches and dizzy spells for three months, George Gershwin (38) undergoes a neurological examination which shows no discernable abnormalities.

**21 June 1937** When the French Senate refuses to grant powers to Prime Minister Blum to deal with the government debt, he resigns.

**22 June 1937** Camille Chautemps replaces Léon André Blum as Prime Minister of France.

**23 June 1937** George Gershwin (38) enters Cedars of Lebanon Hospital, Los Angeles for four days of diagnostic neurological tests. A spinal tap, which could reveal the presence of a brain tumor, is rejected by Gershwin as too painful and time consuming.

**24 June 1937** Deux marches et un intermède for chamber orchestra by Francis Poulenc (38) is performed for the first time, at a party given by Duke François d’Harcourt at the Paris Exposition Universelle. Other numbers are added by Georges Auric.

**26 June 1937** *Natur-Liebe-Tod*, a cantata for bass and chamber orchestra by Werner Egk (36) to words of Hölty, is performed for the first time, at Göttingen University the composer conducting.

After four days of tests to discover the cause of his headaches and erratic behavior, George Gershwin (38) is released from Cedars of Lebanon Hospital in Los Angeles. The doctors diagnose hysteria.

**27 June 1937** *Mein Vaterland*, a hymn for chorus and orchestra or organ by Werner Egk (36) to words of Klopstock, is performed for the first time, at Göttingen University, the composer conducting.

**28 June 1937** The US government transforms the Emergency Conservation Work program into the Civilian Conservation Corps.

**1 July 1937** In a joint letter, Roman Catholic bishops in Spain express their support for the fascist rebels.

Protestant theologian Rev. Martin Niemöller is arrested by the Gestapo for anti-state activities.

57% of the electorate of the Irish Free State approves a new constitution.

*The Citadel* by AJ Cronin is published this month in London.

Sonata for flute, violin and piano by Bohuslav Martinu (46) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of Radio-Paris.

Darius Milhaud’s (44) suite for two pianos *Scaramouche* is performed for the first time, at the Paris International Exposition.

The last performance of *The Cradle Will Rock* by Marc Blitzstein (32) takes place in New York. In its two-week run, 13,000 people have seen 14 performances. See 3 January 1938.

**2 July 1937** William Walton (35) receives an honorary Fellowship of the Royal College of Music, London.

**3 July 1937** Amelia Earhart is lost on a flight between New Guinea and Howland Island.

**5 July 1937** Hormel Foods Corporation begins selling Spam® in the United States.

**6 July 1937** Forces loyal to the constitutional government of Spain drive south from Madrid and advance eight kilometers, capturing Brunete. Among those fighting for the republic is Conlon Nancarrow (24).

**7 July 1937** A small exchange of gunfire at the Marco Polo Bridge near Peking, between Japanese and Chinese troops, is quieted by local commanders. The incident will snowball into full warfare between the two nations.

A Royal Commission on Palestine, headed by Lord Peel, recommends an end to the British mandate and separation into two states, one Arab, one Jewish.

**9 July 1937** *Les Mille et Une Nuits*for orchestra by Arthur Honegger (45) is performed for the first time, on the banks of the Seine in Paris for the Festival of Light and Water on the Seine. It is part of the Paris Universal Exhibition.

In the morning, George Gershwin (38) plays the piano in his Los Angeles home, at the request of his doctor and is still able to manage the keyboard, but in the evening he falls into a coma. The composer is rushed to a hospital and examined by a neurosurgeon.

**10 July 1937** The Spanish episcopate publishes a pastoral letter firmly placing the Roman Catholic Church on the side of the fascist rebels.

The White House sends two naval vessels into Chesapeake Bay to find Dr. Walter Dandy, one of the top neurosurgeons in the United States, who is currently vacationing on a yacht. He is found and dispatched to Newark for a plane to Los Angeles to operate on George Gershwin (38). Meanwhile, another neurosurgeon, Dr. Howard Naffziger is found vacationing at Lake Tahoe and brought back to Los Angeles.

**11 July 1937** After a spinal tap confirms the presence of a brain tumor, George Gershwin is operated on at Cedars of Lebanon Hospital in Los Angeles by Dr. Howard Naffziger, with Dr. Walter Dandy advising by telephone from Newark. A benign cyst is removed but then doctors discover a malignant glioblastoma. Five hours after the operation (10:35) he dies without regaining consciousness, aged 38 years, nine months, and 15 days.

During Parents’ Weekend at the all-Jewish Camp Onota in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, news arrives of the death of George Gershwin. One of the counselors, Leonard Bernstein (18), goes to the piano in the mess hall, plays a loud chord to quiet the din, and announces the passing of “America’s greatest Jewish composer.” He then plays Gershwin’s Prelude for Piano no.2.

*The Spanish Earth*, a film with music arranged by Virgil Thomson (40) and Marc Blitzstein (32), is shown for the first time, in Hollywood. See 20 August 1937

**12 July 1937** Concerto for piano and orchestra by Aram Khachaturian (34) is performed in its orchestral setting for the first time, in Sokolniky Park, Moscow. See 28 November 1936.

*Main tendue à tous* op.169 for chorus by Darius Milhaud (44) to words of Vildrac, is performed for the first time, in Paris.

**15 July 1937** Funeral services for the memory of George Gershwin are held at Temple Emanu-El, New York, attended by 3,500 people. Police hold back 1,000 more outside along Fifth Avenue. Mourners include Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia, Walter Damrosch, George M. Cohan, Al Jolson, and former mayor James J. Walker. The composer’s earthly remains are laid to rest in Mount Hope Cemetery, Hastings-on-Hudson in Westchester County.

**16 July 1937** The concentration camp at Buchenwald, near Weimar, opens for business.

**17 July 1937** A passenger train derails at Bihta township in Bihar, India. 107 people are killed. Some officials suspect sabotage.

**18 July 1937** The House of German Art opens with grandiose ceremony in Munich, including a speech by former Austrian art student Adolf Hitler. An exhibition of “Degenerate Art” goes on at the same time in that city with confiscated paintings of Picasso, Van Gogh, Cezanne and others. To better inform the art loving public, several sections show specific “degenerate” influences, including Blacks, Communists, and Jews.

*Les eaux vives* op.160 for orchestra by Charles Koechlin (69) is performed for the first time, at the Exposition Universelle, Paris. A recording made earlier this month is broadcast over loudspeakers to accompany the “Fêtes de la lumière.”

**20 July 1937** Guglielmo Marconi dies in Rome at the age of 63.

*Homenaje a Federico García Lorca* for 13 instruments by Silvestre Revueltas (37) is performed for the first time, in the Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City directed by Carlos Chávez (38).

**23 July 1937** The Concordat of 25 July 1935 between Yugoslavia and the Vatican is pushed through the Yugoslav Parliament. The Patriarch of the Orthodox Church dies today. Rumors are he was murdered.

Today’s issue of *Science* announces that a pituitary hormone has been crystallized for the first time, by Abraham White, Herbert Catchpole, and Cyril Long of Yale University.

**24 July 1937** Barry Lloyd Vercoe is born in Wellington, New Zealand.

**25 July 1937** Japanese and Chinese forces enter into armed conflict at Langfang, 80 km from Peking.

The purge of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is extended to all newspapers, journals, and publishing houses.

*Fête des belles eaux* for six ondes martenots by Olivier Messiaen (28) is performed for the first time, on the banks of the River Seine, Paris as part of the Exposition Internationale des Arts et des Techniques appliqués à la vie moderne.

*Music for Radio* (later retitled *Prairie Journal*) by Aaron Copland (36) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the CBS radio network originating in New York.

**26 July 1937** By this time, the Spanish government offensive south of Madrid has been turned back to its original line by fascist rebels.

**27 July 1937** Japanese troops seize the Marco Polo Bridge and establish a bridgehead on the other side, thus inaugurating a general offensive.

A Paris court finds in favor of Igor Stravinsky (55) in his case against Warner Brothers alleging damages when they used his music in their film *The Firebird* without his consent. Stravinsky is awarded one franc.

**28 July 1937** Japanese forces capture Peking and set up a military government to rule occupied China.

When 5,000 supposedly loyal Chinese troops refuse to attack the Kuomintang at Tungchow (Tongzhou), Japanese planes bomb their barracks. The Chinese respond with a mutiny against the Japanese this night. They kill about 500 Japanese soldiers and civilians and set fire to the city. Only 60 Japanese civilians survive.

**29 July 1937** Japanese forces bomb Tientsin, destroying Nankai University.

**30 July 1937** Japanese forces occupy Tientsin.

The Matrimonial Causes Act is given Royal Assent by King George VI. It places women on an equal footing with men in divorce proceedings in England and Wales.

Henry Cowell’s (40) dance music Sarabande, to a scenario by Graham, is performed for the first time, in Bennington, Vermont.

**1 August 1937** Over the next month and a half, Charles Koechlin (69) teaches harmony, counterpoint, fugue, and orchestration at Catherine Urner’s studio in San Diego.

**3 August 1937** *Cantate nuptiale* op.168 by Darius Milhaud (44) to words from the Bible is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of Radio Marseille conducted by the composer.

**8 August 1937** The Orthodox Church of Yugoslavia begins excommunicating deputies who voted for the concordat of 25 July 1935.

*Time Suite* for orchestra by Roy Harris (39) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of WABC, New York.

**9 August 1937** 20,000 people attend a concert at Lewisohn Stadium in memory of George Gershwin (†0)

**11 August 1937** El Salvador withdraws from the League of Nations.

Edith Wharton dies in Saint-Brice-sous-Forêt, France at the age of 75.

**12 August 1937** Bakr Sidqi, military dictator of Iraq since last October, is killed by an anti-government soldier in Mosul.

The first concert at Tanglewood takes place, the new summer home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra in Lenox, Massachusetts. 5,000 people see Serge Koussevitzky conduct an all-Wagner program under a circus tent. A torrential downpour causes leaks in the tent.

**13 August 1937** Japanese forces attempting to land at Shanghai are fired upon by Chinese, precipitating large scale fighting in the Yangtze delta.

Albert Roussel (68) suffers a heart attack at Royan.

The California Parole Board sets Henry Cowell’s (40) sentence at the maximum 15 years.

Two dances by Wallingford Riegger (52) to scenarios by Holm are performed for the first time, in Bennington, Vermont: *Festive Rhythm* and *Trend* op.25.

**14 August 1937** Chinese forces attempt to bomb Japanese warships in Shanghai harbor but instead hit residential areas killing hundreds of civilians.

Clara Rockmore performs Ernst Bloch’s (57) *Schelomo* on the Theremin with the Philadelphia Orchestra. The inventor, Lev Sergeyevich Termen (Leon Theremin) (40), is in the audience.

**15 August 1937** Japanese planes bomb Nanking for the first time.

Polish peasants begin a nationwide strike against OZON (Camp of National Unity), the nationalist, pro-government, anti-Semitic party.

Paraguayan army and navy units overthrow the government of President Rafael de la Cruz Franco Ojeda and install Félix Paiva.

**20 August 1937** *The Spanish Earth*, a film with music arranged by Virgil Thomson (40) and Marc Blitzstein (32), is officially premiered at the 55th Street Playhouse, New York. See 11 July 1937.

**23 August 1937** 16:00 Albert Charles Paul Marie Roussel dies of a heart attack in Royan, aged 68 years, four months, and 18 days.

Basque troops loyal to the Spanish government surrender to the fascist rebels, thus opening the way to Santander.

**24 August 1937** Spanish government troops begin an offensive from Catalonia into Aragon towards Saragossa. They make initial gains.

**25 August 1937** Spanish rebels capture Santander.

Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge (58) op.10 for strings by Benjamin Britten (23) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of Radio Hilversum in the Netherlands. See 27 August 1937.

**26 August 1937** The car of British Ambassador Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen is strafed and bombed by a Japanese plane near Shanghai. The Ambassador is wounded but will survive. Japan will apologize.

Andrew W. Mellon dies in Southampton, New York at the age of 82.

**27 August 1937** Nationwide strikes by Polish peasants begun 15 August are brutally repressed by authorities.

The mortal remains of Albert Roussel are laid to rest in Varengeville, overlooking the sea.

In order to establish an immigrant status (so they can apply for United States citizenship), Kurt Weill (37) and Lotte Lenya go to Canada and re-enter the country on an immigration visa.

Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge (58) for strings by Benjamin Britten (23) is performed live for the first time, in Salzburg. It causes a positive sensation. See 25 August 1937.

Aaron Copland’s (36) tone poem *El Salón México* is performed for the first time, in the Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City Carlos Chávez (38) conducting in the presence of the composer.

**28 August 1937** The Vatican officially recognizes the fascist rebels as the legitimate government of Spain.

**1 September 1937** Fascist rebels in Spain begin a two-pronged offensive to take Gijon. They meet fierce resistance.

This month, electrical engineer Grote Reber completes the first parabolic radio telescope in his back yard in Wheaton, Illinois.

**2 September 1937** A typhoon strikes Hong Kong killing 11,000 people.

**3 September 1937** Prime Minister and Head of State of Estonia Konstantin Päts is created Protector of the State.

**6 September 1937** Incidental music to Euripedes’ play *Hecuba* by Darius Milhaud (45) is performed for the first time, in Paris.

**7 September 1937** Olly Wilson is born in St. Louis.

**8 September 1937** About 400 Arab leaders meet in Bloudan, Syria to address the Palestine issue. They express support for the ongoing attacks on Jews in the mandate, and opposition to Zionism.

A memorial concert for George Gershwin (†0) from the Hollywood Bowl is broadcast around the world.

*Tre Laudi* for soprano and 13 instruments by Luigi Dallapiccola (33) to 13th century texts, is performed for the first time, in Teatro Goldoni, Venice.

**12 September 1937** *Suite provençal* for orchestra by Darius Milhaud (45) is performed for the first time, in Venice.

Suite for string orchestra by Otto Luening (37) is performed for the first time, in Saratoga Springs, New York.

**13 September 1937** Japanese forces capture Tatung (Datong), China, an important rail intersection.

On a trip to Spain, Silvestre Revueltas (37) delivers a radio broadcast in support of the loyalist cause.

**18 September 1937** An article entitled “The Deviations of a Genius” appears in *Pravda*. It denounces Alyeksandr Mosolov (37) and his music. See 4 November 1937.

The first three movements of Howard Hanson’s (40) Symphony no.3 are performed for the first time, in New York. The work was composed to celebrate 300 years of Swedish presence in North America. See 15 March 1938.

**19 September 1937** String Quartet no.3 by Otto Luening (37) is performed for the first time, in Saratoga Springs, New York.

**20 September 1937** Duke Ellington (38) and his Famous Orchestra record his suite *Diminuendo in Blue/Crescendo in Blue* in New York.

**21 September 1937** *The Hobbit* by JRR Tolkien is published by George Allen & Unwin in London.

**22 September 1937** While Madrid lays under siege by fascist rebels, *Homenaje a Federico García Lorca* for chamber orchestra by Silvestre Revueltas (37) is performed in the city under the baton of the composer. See 20 July 1937.

**23 September 1937** Celâl Bayar replaces Ismet Inönü as Prime Minister of Turkey.

Béla Bartók (56) writes to Hungarian Radio to forbid any performing he did for them to be broadcast over German or Italian radio.

**26 September 1937** Lewis Andrews, the British district commissioner for Galilee, his deputy and a bodyguard are all shot to death by Arab terrorists in Nazareth.

Bessie Smith dies in Clarksville, Mississippi from injuries sustained in an automobile accident. Though seriously injured, she is denied admission to a white hospital.

**27 September 1937** The last verified Balinese tiger is killed at Sumbar Kima.

Mahmud Celal Bayar replaces Ismet Inönü as Prime Minister of Turkey.

**28 September 1937** President Franklin Roosevelt dedicates the Bonneville Dam on the Columbia River.

**29 September 1937** Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Tse-tung agree in Nanking to put aside their political differences and join forces to defeat the Japanese invasion.

*The Company of Heaven,* for speakers, solo voices, chorus, timpani, organ, and strings by Benjamin Britten (23) to words of Roberts, is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC National.

Deux chansons d’Yvette Guilbertby Kurt Weill (37) are performed for the first time, during the Paris production of *Die Dreigroschenoper (L’opéra de quat’ sous)*.

**30 September 1937** By this time, the Spanish government offensive into Aragon has been halted by fascist rebels.

Paul Hindemith’s (41) resignation from the Frankfurt Hochschule becomes effective.

**2 October 1937** After an inflammatory speech by President Trujillo, Dominican peasants begin a massacre of Haitians. The Haitian government puts the death toll at 12,168 but some estimates run as high as 25,000.

**5 October 1937** Vincent Persichetti (22) enters a graduate program at Philadelphia Conservatory.

US President Franklin Roosevelt gives a talk in Chicago (Quarantine Speech) where he calls on peace-loving nations to oppose aggressor nations and their numerous treaty violations.

**6 October 1937** *In Honour of the City of London* for chorus and orchestra by William Walton (35) to words of Dunbar, is performed for the first time, ironically enough, in Leeds Town Hall.

**7 October 1937** The Society of Recorder Players is formed in London under its first president, Arnold Dolmetsch.

**11 October 1937** Cantate pour l’inauguration du Musée de l’Homme for vocal quartet and chamber ensemble by Darius Milhaud (45) to words of Desnos is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of Radio Paris.

**13 October 1937** Japanese forces begin a major offensive against Chinese defenses north of Taiyuan.

Germany guarantees the independence and neutrality of Belgium.

Incidental music to Shakespeare’s play *Antony and Cleopatra* by Virgil Thomson (40) is performed for the first time, in Rochester, New York.

**15 October 1937** Incidental music to Shakespeare’s play *The Winter’s Tale* by Lou Harrison (20) is performed for the first time, at Mills College, Oakland.

**16 October 1937** Hungarian fascists form their own National Socialist Party.

The baritone Titta Ruffo is arrested at his home in Rome on orders of Mussolini. He is imprisoned for three days, then released, but his passport is not returned to him. He is the only important Italian singer to have no intercourse with fascism.

Incidental music to Bloch’s play *Naissance d’une cité* by Darius Milhaud (45) is performed for the first time, in the Palais des Sports, Paris.

Two Songs for Alto and Piano from the Song of Songs by Stefan Wolpe (35) are performed for the first time, in Jerusalem.

**17 October 1937** Japanese forces occupy Paotow (Baotou).

Riots break out in the Sudentenland between Czechs and Germans.

Ernst Krenek (37) arrives in New York on a tour with the Salzburg Opera Guild. The group is performing Krenek’s arrangement of Monteverdi’s (†293) *L’incoronazione di Poppea.*

**19 October 1937** Ernest Rutherford dies in Cambridge, England at the age of 66.

**21 October 1937** After initial resistance, Spanish fascist rebels capture Gijón.

**22 October 1937** String Quartet no.3 by Arthur Honegger (45) is performed for the first time, in the Salle de la Réformation, Geneva.

**23 October 1937** In national elections in Australia, the Labor Party gains eleven seats to become the largest party, but the United Australia/Country coalition of Prime Minister Joseph Lyons continues to govern.

After ten days of furious battle, the Japanese break through Chinese defenses north of Taiyuan. The Chinese manage an orderly retreat.

Several fascist groups in Hungary coalesce to form the Hungarian National Socialist Party under Ferenc Szálasi.

**24 October 1937** *I’ve Got the Tune*, a radio song-play by Marc Blitzstein (32) to his own words, is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of CBS radio originating in New York. The composer plays the lead role. See 3 February 1938.

**26 October 1937** Variations for piano op.27 by Anton Webern (53) is performed for the first time, in Vienna. This is the last time that Webern’s music is played publicly in Vienna during his lifetime.

The tenth and eleventh of *Friday Afternoons* op.7, twelve children’s songs for voice and piano by Benjamin Britten (23) to various authors, are performed for the first time, over the airwaves of BBC Regional. See 18 May 1949.

**27 October 1937** *Albada, Interludi i Dansa* for orchestra by Roberto Gerhard (41) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC originating in London.

Symphony no.3 by Bernard Rogers (44) is performed for the first time, in Rochester, New York conducted by Howard Hanson (40).

Danzas Argentinas op.2 for piano by Alberto Ginastera (21) is performed for the first time, in Buenos Aires.

**28 October 1937** The constitutional government of Spain moves to Barcelona.

**29 October 1937** *The River*, a film with music by Virgil Thomson (40), is shown for the first time, in the Strand Theatre, New Orleans. It was commissioned by the Resettlement Administration. See 2 January 1943.

**30 October 1937** Gian Francesco Malipiero (55) is awarded the Coolidge Medal by the Library of Congress, Washington.

**2 November 1937** Incidental music to Nikitin’s play *Baku* by Aram Khachaturian (34) and A. Peisin, is performed for the first time, in Radlov Dramatic Theatre, Leningrad.

**4 November 1937** Alyeksandr Mosolov (37) is arrested. He will be convicted of “anti-Soviet propaganda” and sentenced to eight years in work camps. Through the intervention of his teachers, Mosolov will be released next August.

President Lazaro Cardenas of Mexico nationalizes 140,000 hectares of land leased to Standard Oil Company of California. It is part of a general nationalization of the country’s oil industry.

**5 November 1937** Japanese troops land unopposed at Hangchow (Hangzhou) Bay, 50 km from Shanghai.

**6 November 1937** Italy joins Germany and Japan in the anti-Comintern pact, designed to halt the spread of international communism.

*Il festino*, an opera by Gian Francesco Malipiero (55) to his own words after de Rossi, is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of Turin Radio. See 2 October 1954.

**7 November 1937** Japanese forces begin battling their way into Taiyuan, including hand to hand fighting.

**8 November 1937** An exhibition of degenerate art entitled Der ewige Jude (The Eternal Jew) opens at the Deutsches Museum in Munich.

After an all night battle, Chinese troops and civilians begin fleeing from Taiyuan. Many thousands are killed in the panic, or by Japanese planes.

**10 November 1937** On the day of the presidential election, President Getúlio Vargas of Brazil institutes a state of emergency, cancels the election and dissolves the Congress.

**11 November 1937** After three months of furious, costly fighting, Chinese forces begin a precipitous retreat from Shanghai.

Incidental music to Shakespeare’s play *Julius Caesar* by Marc Blitzstein (32) is performed for the first time, in the Comedy Theatre, New York, in a production by John Houseman and starring Orson Welles.

**12 November 1937** Frederick S. Converse (66) is inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Because of his stroke last December, he is unable to attend.

**13 November 1937** The first performance of the NBC Symphony is heard over that radio network, conducted by Pierre Monteux.

Two works by Heitor Villa-Lobos (50) are performed for the first time, in the Teatro Municipal, Rio de Janeiro: *Missa Sâo Sebastião* for chorus, and *Motivos gregos* for flute, guitar, and female chorus.

The revue *One Sixth of the Earth* takes place in Madison Square Garden sponsored by the New York Committee of the Communist Party. The musical director is Marc Blitzstein (32).

**14 November 1937** At a dance recital in New York, Leonard Bernstein (19) finds that his set is next to Aaron Copland (37) for the first time. Later in the evening, at a birthday party for Copland, Bernstein performs Copland’s *Piano Variations* and several other things at the keyboard. The two become life-long friends.

**16 November 1937** Prelude for Grandpiano by Lou Harrison (20) is performed for the first time in the Community Playhouse, San Francisco by the composer.

**17 November 1937** *A Lincoln Symphony* by Daniel Gregory Mason (63) is performed for the first time, in New York.

**18 November 1937** A Violin Concerto by John Alden Carpenter (61) is performed for the first time, in Orchestra Hall, Chicago. The critics are very positive.

**19 November 1937** Japanese forces conquer Suchow (Suzhou). They begin several days of plunder and destruction, killing men and enslaving women for sexual servitude. The city of over 300,000 is virtually emptied of its citizens.

Benjamin Britten’s (23) cycle for voice and piano *On This Island* op.11 to words of Auden is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC originating in London, the composer at the keyboard.

The film *A Damsel in Distress* with music by George Gershwin (†0) to words of Ira Gershwin is shown for the first time, at Radio City Music Hall, New York. It includes the song *A Foggy Day*.

**21 November 1937** The Symphony no.5 by Dmitri Shostakovich (31) is performed for the first time, in the Leningrad Philharmonic Bolshoy Hall. One-half hour of applause greets the completion of the performance. The work reinstates Shostakovich to official favor, although many see it as a description of and reaction to the Stalinist terror.

**23 November 1937** Incidental music to Shakespeare’s play *Macbeth* by Darius Milhaud (45) is performed for the first time, in the Old Vic, London.

**24 November 1937** Paul Emile Janson replaces Paul Van Zeeland as Prime Minister of Belgium.

**25 November 1937** Music to Auden’s play *Hadrian’s Wall* by Benjamin Britten (24) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC originating in Newcastle, conducted by the composer.

**26 November 1937** Violin Concerto by Robert Schumann (†81) is performed for the first time, in Berlin. The owner of the manuscript, Joseph Joachim, willed that the work not be performed until 100 years after the composer’s death.

**27 November 1937** A suite from Alberto Ginastera’s (21) unperformed ballet *Panambí* is performed for the first time, in the Teatro Colón, Buenos Aires.

*FTP Plowed Under*, a skit by Marc Blitzstein (32), is performed for the first time, as part of the revue *Pins and Needles*, a revue with words and music mostly by Harold Rome, is put on by members of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union in New York. It will eventually move to Broadway and run 1,108 performances, a record until *Oklahoma!*

**29 November 1937** Sudeten German deputies walk out of the Czechoslovakian Parliament.

**30 November 1937** Two works by Albert Roussel (†0) are performed for the first time, privately in Paris: Andante for oboe, clarinet, and bassoon, and Duo for bassoon and cello (or double bass).

**1 December 1937** *Riders to the Sea*, an opera by Ralph Vaughan Williams (65) to his own words, after Synge, is performed for the first time, at the Royal College of Music, London.

*These things shall be*, a cantata by John Ireland (58) to words of Symonds, is performed publicly for the first time, in Queen’s Hall, London. See 13 May 1937.

**3 December 1937** Japanese forces take Tanyang (Danyang), within 80 km of Nanking.

Duo for violin, cello, and orchestra or piano op.43 by Hans Pfitzner (68) is performed for the first time, in Frankfurt-am-Main.

*Not Even Summer Yet* for voice and piano by Benjamin Britten (24) to words of Burra is performed for the first time, in Berkshire.

**5 December 1937** Symphonic Dances by Paul Hindemith (42) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC, originating from London the composer conducting.

Incidental music to MacNeice’s play *Out of the Picture* by Benjamin Britten (24) is performed for the first time, in the Westminster Theatre, London.

**7 December 1937** Hanns Eisler (39) marries his second wife, Louise von Gosztonyi Jolesch.

**8 December 1937** The government of the Republic of China, including President Chiang Kai-shek, moves from Nanking to Hankow (Hankou).

**10 December 1937** The Japanese outside Nanking ask the city for negotiations for its surrender. The Chinese refuse and the Japanese bombardment begins.

The first concert of the newly founded Ernest Bloch (57) Society takes place in Aeolian Hall, London.

Symphony in g minor “Song of a New Race” by William Grant Still (42) is performed for the first time, at the Philadelphia Academy of Music, to mixed reviews.

**11 December 1937** Chinese forces at Nanking are ordered to retreat in the face of the Japanese assault.

Italy withdraws from the League of Nations.

**12 December 1937** Chinese defenders of Nanking and its citizens begin an extremely disorderly retreat from the city. Japanese warplanes sink the United States gunboat *Panay* on the Yangtze River along with three ships belonging to Standard Oil Company. Three US sailors on the *Panay* are killed. Many civilian refugees are killed on the Standard Oil ships.

*Scenes from the Holy Infancy According to St. Matthew*, for tenor, baritone, bass, and chorus by Virgil Thomson (41), is performed for the first time, at the 46th Street Theatre, New York.

Ernst Krenek (37) arrives in Los Angeles with the Salzburg Opera Guild where he will meet Arnold Schoenberg (63) for the first time.

**13 December 1937** Japanese forces capture Nanking and begin six weeks of unspeakable terror. Soldiers roam the streets killing civilians indiscriminately. They search homes for Chinese soldiers, killing residents as they go. The Japanese commit at least 20,000 (and perhaps as many as 80,000) rapes and as many as 300,000 people are killed by every means imaginable. Torture is a particular feature of the atrocities. Nanking itself is obliterated. Hundreds of thousands are saved by westerners, led by German Nazi Party member John Rabe, in a safety zone in the city.

Kurt Weill (37) returns to California from New York, this time with Lotte Lenya. He rents a cottage in Santa Monica.

**14 December 1937** All political parties in Brazil are dissolved.

**15 December 1937** After foreign correspondents leave Nanking, the Japanese seal off the city to limit reporting of the atrocities.

Spanish government forces launch an offensive to capture Teruel. They surround the city by nightfall.

*Regozijo de uma raça* for tenor, chorus, and percussion by Heitor Villa-Lobos (50) to words of Baptista, is performed for the first time, conducted by the composer.

**16 December 1937** 12 Variationen in drei Sätzen for piano by Ernst Krenek (37) is performed for the first time, in the Los Angeles home of Mrs. Edgar Baruch, by the composer.

**17 December 1937** The Japanese conquerors of China set up a provisional government in Peking.

The Japanese take over 14,000 prisoners of war captured at Nanking and march them to the Yangtze River by Mufu Mountain. There they are all machine-gunned. Japanese soldiers spend the entire night bayoneting each body.

Sei Cori di Michelangelo Buonarroti il Giovane (Set I) for chorus by Luigi Dallapiccola (33) is performed for the first time, in Trieste. See 26 April 1938.

**18 December 1937** An exhibition of 39 paintings by George Gershwin (†0) opens in New York.

**19 December 1937** Maurice Ravel (62) undergoes exploratory brain surgery in Paris. After initial consciousness he lapses into a coma, never to awaken.

48 composers meet in New York to form the American Composers Alliance “to regularize and collect all fees pertaining to the performance of copyrighted music.” A temporary executive committee is appointed, including Wallingford Riegger (52), Virgil Thomson (41), Roger Sessions (40), Roy Harris (39), and Aaron Copland (37).

*Deep Song*, dance music by Henry Cowell (40) to a scenario by Graham, is performed for the first time, in New York.

**21 December 1937** The Reichsmusikkammer forbids the dissemination of recordings featuring non-Aryan musicians.

An orchestral suite from the music to the film *Regain* by Arthur Honegger (45) is performed for the first time, in the Salle Gaveau, Paris.

**22 December 1937** The Lincoln Tunnel, connecting Manhattan with New Jersey under the Hudson River, opens to traffic.

**23 December 1937** Alyeksandr Vasilyevich Mosolov (37) enters a Soviet labor camp.

**24 December 1937** Japanese forces capture Hangchow (Hangzhou).

**25 December 1937** The first concert of the NBC Symphony Orchestra is broadcast from New York, conducted by Arturo Toscanini. Millions hear it, including President Franklin Roosevelt.

**28 December 1937** Early morning. Joseph Maurice Ravel dies in Paris after an unsuccessful brain operation to treat apraxia and dysphasia, aged 62 years, nine months, and 21 days.

Octavian Goga, extreme anti-Semite and leader of the conservative Christian League, replaces Gheorghe Tatarescu as Prime Minister of Romania. Anti-Semitic laws will soon follow.

The first transatlantic radio transmission of a musical score takes place when parts to Sibelius’ (72) *Origin of Fire*, ordered by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, are lost in the mail. The publishers Breitkopf and Härtel transmit them by means of radio waves.

**29 December 1937** The constitution of Eire takes effect. The Irish Free State becomes a sovereign state called Eire within the British Commonwealth under a three man Presidential Commission. The office of Governor General is abolished. The Senate is reformed. The Taoiseach (Prime Minister) is Eamon de Valera.

In bitter winter weather, Spanish fascist rebels launch an offensive to relieve the surrounded garrison of Teruel. It will fail.

**30 December 1937** The earthly remains of Maurice Ravel are interred in the cemetery of Levallois, beside those of his parents. Among those attending are Igor Stravinsky (55), Arthur Honegger (45), Darius Milhaud (45), Francis Poulenc (38), and Benjamin Britten (24).

**31 December 1937** France creates the overseas territories of Chad and Middle Congo as part of French Equatorial Africa.

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