**1 January 1938** The Socieété Nationale des Chemins de fer français is formally constituted. All railways in France are now nationalized.

A new constitution for Estonia goes into effect.

The former French colony of Haute-Volta (Burkina Faso) is reconstituted as Haute Côte d’Ivoire.

Unbeknownst to him, Manuel de Falla (61) is named President of the Spanish Institute in Salamanca by the Nationalist government. He will resign the position.

**3 January 1938** The BBC begins its first non-English broadcasts, in Arabic.

*The Cradle Will Rock* by Marc Blitzstein (32) reopens in the Windsor Theatre, New York for a run of 108 performances. See 16 June and 1 July 1937.

**4 January 1938** The British government announces a new commission to investigate the proposed partition of Palestine. It is headed by Sir John Woodhead.

**5 January 1938** *Songs of Our Day* op.76*,* nine works for solo voices, chorus, and orchestra by Sergey Prokofiev (46), is performed for the first time, in Moscow.

**6 January 1938** Percy Grainger (55) performs for the third time at the White House, this time for President and Mrs. Roosevelt.

Virgil Thomson’s (41) ballet *Filling Station*, with a scenario by Christensen, is performed for the first time, in the Avery Memorial Theatre, Hartford, Connecticut. The music is played in piano reduction. See 18 February 1938.

**7 January 1938** *Oriane et le Prince d’Amour*, a ballet by Florent Schmitt (67) to a story of Séran, is staged for the first time, at the Paris Opéra. See 12 February 1937.

**8 January 1938** After holding out for three weeks, the fascist garrison in Teruel surrenders to surrounding Spanish government forces.

An article by Soviet physicist Pyotr Kaptiza appears in the journal *Nature*. He describes liquid helium below 2.2° K as being unaffected by friction and suggests the term “superfluid.”

*Mont Juic* for orchestra by Benjamin Britten (24) and Lennox Berkeley is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC National.

**10 January 1938** Japanese troops capture Tsingtao (Qingdao).

**12 January 1938** Tristan da Cunha is made a dependency of St. Helena by Great Britain.

**13 January 1938** Maurice Martenot receives a patent for his microtonal keyboard designed to be a part of his Ondes Martenot.

**14 January 1938** Norway lays claim to part of the Antarctic continent from 45°E to 20°E and Peter I Island.

**16 January 1938** Béla Bartók’s (56) Sonata for two pianos and percussion is performed for the first time, in Basel. The piano parts are played by the composer and his wife, Ditta Pásztory, in her performing debut.

The Benny Goodman orchestra plays the first jazz concert in Carnegie Hall, New York.

**17 January 1938** Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin becomes Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

**18 January 1938** King Karol dissolves the Romanian Parliament because of the economic crisis brought on by removing Jews from business.

Paul Hindemith’s (42) Organ Sonatas nos. 1 and 2 are performed for the first time, at the West London Synagogue.

**20 January 1938** Nikolay Sergeyevich Zhilyaev, critic, musicologist, professor at Moscow Conservatory, is executed as part of the Stalinist terror.

*Volochayevka Days*, a film with music by Dmitri Shostakovich (31), is shown for the first time.

**21 January 1938** Hanns Eisler (39) arrives in the United States on a visitor’s visa but intending to stay.

**23 January 1938** *Icaro*, a ballet by David Diamond (22) to a scenario after de Bosis, is performed for the first time, in Kauffman Auditorium, New York.

**25 January 1938** An article signed by Dmitri Shostakovich (31) appears in *Evening Moscow* called “My Creative Answer.” Here is the first mention that his Symphony no.5 is “a constructive creative answer of a Soviet artist to just criticism.”

Nadia Boulanger (50) sails from France aboard the *Champlain* making for the United States where she and her vocal ensemble will give 40 concerts.

**27 January 1938** The first program in the radio feature *Lines on the Map* entitled “Communication by Land” with music by Benjamin Britten (24), is broadcast for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC.

**28 January 1938** *Mollenard*, a film with music by Darius Milhaud (45), is shown for the first time, in Ciné Normandie, Paris.

*The Goldwyn Follies*, a film with music by George Gershwin (†0) to words of Ira Gershwin, is shown for the first time, in Miami. Some songs were completed by Vernon Duke after the death of Gershwin during filming.

**29 January 1938** Florent Schmitt’s (67) *Suite sans esprit de suite*, for orchestra is performed for the first time, in Paris.

**30 January 1938** *L’Oiseau*, a choreographic poem by Darius Milhaud (45), is performed for the first time, in Paris.

**31 January 1938** *Quell’innocente figlio* D.17 for various voices by Franz Schubert (†109) to words of Metastasio is performed for the first time, in the Gemeindehaus Wieden, Vienna 126 years after it was composed.

*God’s Grandeur,* for double chorus by Samuel Barber (27) to words of Hopkins, is performed for the first time, at the State Teachers College in Shippensburg, Pennsylvania.

**1 February 1938** Prime Minister Stojadinovic announces that he will not implement the concordat with the Vatican of 25 July 1935 ratified by the Yugoslav Parliament.

*Esther de Carpentras*, a comic opera by Darius Milhaud (45) to words of Lunel, is staged for the first time, in Théâtre Favart, Paris. On the same day, incidental music to Aristophanes’ play *Plutus* by Milhaud is performed for the first time, in Théâtre Atelier, Paris.

**2 February 1938** *Le cantique des cantiques*, a ballet by Arthur Honegger (45) to a scenario by Boissy and Lifar, is performed for the first time, at the Paris Opéra.

**3 February 1938** The union musical revue *Pins and Needles*, written mostly by Harold Rome and performed by members of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, is performed at the White House by request of President Franklin Roosevelt and his wife Eleanor Roosevelt. It includes the sketch *FTP Plowed Under* by Marc Blitzstein (32).

*I’ve Got the Tune*, a radio song-play by Marc Blitzstein (32) to his own words, is staged for the first time, at the 46th Street Theatre, New York. See 24 October 1937.

**4 February 1938** Hitler fires German Army Chief of Staff Werner von Fritsch for alleged homosexual activities with minors. The Führer then dismisses 16 other generals and takes over personal command of the armed forces.

*Our Town* by Thornton Wilder opens on Broadway.

**5 February 1938** Adolf Hitler appoints Joachim von Ribbentrop as Foreign Minister.

*Green Ways: Three Lyric Pieces* for solo piano by John Ireland (58) is performed for the first time, by the composer over the airwaves of the BBC originating in London.

William Grant Still (42) is disappointed when nothing extraordinary happens today. Four days ago he was visited in a dream by his grandmother who told him to “watch 5 February.” In a few days Still will receive a letter from the New York World’s Fair asking him to write theme music for the fair. The letter is written and mailed today, 5 February.

**6 February 1938** Excerpts from Antonín Dvorák’s (†33) unperformed opera *Alfred* are performed for the first time, in a broadcast from Prague. See 10 December 1938.

**7 February 1938** Rebel forces attack Spanish government troops north of Teruel, forcing them to retreat.

**9 February 1938** Japanese forces advancing north cross the Huai River and invest the towns of Pangpu and Huaiyuan.

Grave and Allegro in c minor for string quartet D.103 by Franz Schubert (†109) is performed publicly for the first time, in Vienna 124 years after its composition.

**10 February 1938** King Karol of Romania forces Prime Minister Octavian Goga out of office.

Duo Concertant for two violins and orchestra by Bohuslav Martinu (47) is performed for the first time, in Lausanne.

**11 February 1938** A new Romanian government is formed under Patriarch Miron Cristea. It consists of seven former prime ministers. The constitution and political parties are suspended. A new constitution will give the king complete power.

*Evocations* for orchestra by Ernest Bloch (57), is performed for the first time, in San Francisco.

**12 February 1938** After bullying by Hitler at Berchtesgaden, Austrian Chancellor Schuschnigg agrees to an amnesty for Austrian Nazis (including the murderers of Chancellor Dollfuss) and to appoint Nazis as ministers of interior and defense.

**13 February 1938** *The Great Citizen*, a film with music by Dmitri Shostakovich (31), is shown for the first time.

At the second meeting of the general membership of the American Composers Alliance, Aaron Copland (37) is chosen as president. He will serve until 1945.

*Les petits cardinales*, an operetta by Arthur Honegger (45) and Jacques Ibert, to words of Willemetz and Brach after Halévy, is performed for the first time, at the Bouffes-Parisiens.

*Jubilee Cantata* for baritone, narrator, chorus, and orchestra by Vladimir Ussachevsky (26) is performed for the first time, at Pomona College, Claremont, California to celebrate its 50th anniversary. Also premiered is Ussachevsky’s *Lord’s Prayer* for male chorus.

**15 February 1938** Pursuant to Hitler’s demands, a new Austrian cabinet is sworn in.

**16 February 1938** John Paul Corigliano is born in New York, son of John Corigliano, a violinist, and Rose Buzen.

**18 February 1938** Paul Hindemith (42) arrives in New York from Bremerhaven aboard the *SS Deutschland* for a second concert tour of the United States.

*Filling Station*, a ballet by Virgil Thomson (41) to a scenario by Christensen, is performed for the first time in its orchestral arrangement, in New York. See 6 January 1938.

**19 February 1938** Bruno Walter conducts the Vienna Philharmonic for the last time. After Austria’s absorption into Germany, Walter will be denied this honor due to his “impure racial status.”

**20 February 1938** In a speech to the Reichstag broadcast throughout Germany and Austria, Hitler paves the way for the demand of Anschluss, the union of the two countries.

British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden resigns over the government’s policy of appeasement.

Jaime Gerardo Roberto Marcelino Ortiz Lizardi replaces Agustín Pedro Justo Rolón as President of Argentina.

**21 February 1938**  The Spanish government garrison of Teruel, almost surrounded by fascist rebels, retreats from the city.

**22 February 1938** Spanish rebel forces reconquer Teruel.

Prime Minister Chamberlain defeats a censure motion against him in the House of Commons, but 25 members of his own Conservative Party vote in favor of the motion.

**23 February 1938** Generalissimo Franco orders all civilians remaining in Teruel to be killed.

*Signature* for orchestra by Aaron Copland (37) is performed for the first time, in New York.

**24 February 1938** Austrian Chancellor Schuschnigg addresses his National Diet and declares that Austria will fight to the death against Hitler. He ends his speech by crying: “Rot-weiss-rot! Bis im Tod! Österreich!” His supporters begin spontaneous street demonstrations. Not to be outdone in their forte, Austrian Nazis organize counter-demonstrations.

**25 February 1938** Sonata for bassoon and piano op.71 by Charles Koechlin (70) is performed for the first time, in Salle Cortot of the École Normale de Musique, Paris.

The second program in the radio feature *Lines on the Map* entitled “Communication by Sea” with music by Benjamin Britten (24) is broadcast for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC.

**27 February 1938** Five days of rain begin today which causes devastating floods in and around Los Angeles. Over 100 people are killed.

**1 March 1938** Gabriele D’Annunzio dies in Gardone Riviera at the age of 74.

The second storm in three days hits southern California with torrential rains. Rivers flood in Los Angeles, Orange, and Riverside counties. About 115 people are killed and property damage is extensive.

**2 March 1938** His first US tour complete, Ernst Krenek (37) sets sail from New York for Europe.

**6 March 1938** Spanish government naval forces sink the rebel cruiser *Baleares* near Cartagena. 765 of the 1,206 aboard are killed.

**7 March 1938** *The Dance* for voice and piano by Samuel Barber (27), to words of Stephens, is performed for the first time, in Casimir Hall of the Curtis Institute of Music, Philadelphia.

**8 March 1938** Quintet for flute, violin, viola, cello, and piano by David Diamond (22) is performed for the first time, in New York.

**9 March 1938** Spanish rebels begin an offensive into Aragon, seeking to split government-held areas in two.

Austrian Chancellor Schuschnigg announces that a national plebiscite on the political future of Austria will be held on 13 March.

**10 March 1938** Austrian composer Ernst Krenek (37) arrives at Le Havre from the United States.

**11 March 1938** Germany mobilizes along the Austrian frontier, threatening invasion. Chancellor Schuschnigg resigns on radio saying “God protect Austria.” Among the thousands of Austrians listening to his address is Anton Webern (54). In the new Austria, Webern’s music will be banned.

**12 March 1938** 08:00 The German army crosses the border into Austria, in many places abetted by Austrian troops. Within hours 76,000 potential enemies of the Nazis, including Chancellor Kurt von Schuschnigg and all non-Nazis in his cabinet, are arrested. Hitler names Arthur Seyss-Inquart as Chancellor.

The Columbia Broadcasting System covers the Anschluss with Edward R. Murrow in Vienna, William R. Shirer in London along with print journalists in Berlin, Paris, and Rome. This is the first multiple news broadcast.

Ernst Krenek (37) attends a performance of his *Reisebuch* in Brussels. By not proceeding directly to Vienna, he avoids capture by the Germans.

**13 March 1938** Russian becomes a required subject in all schools in the USSR.

17 high officials of the Soviet government, including Nikolay Bukharin, are sentenced to death for treason in Moscow.

The Austrian cabinet agrees to the Anschluss between Austria and Germany, effectively ending Austrian independence. The fact is proclaimed by the new Chancellor, Arthur Seyss-Inquart.Benjamin Britten (24) confides to his diary, “Think of Wien, under Nazi control-no more Mahler (†26), no lightness, no culture, nothing but their filthy, lewd, heartiness, their despicable conceit, & unutterable stupidiy.” (Kildea, 147-148)

President Wilhelm Miklas, however refuses to sign the document and resigns.

Léon André Blum replaces Camille Chautemps as Prime Minister of France.

Jean-Claude Risset is born in Le Puy, France.

**14 March 1938** Hitler enters Vienna in triumph.

Triofor flute, violin, and bassoon by Bohuslav Martinu (47) is performed for the first time, in Paris.

*Hark! From the Pit a Fearsome Sound* for voice and piano by Henry Cowell (41) is performed for the first time, in the Biltmore Hotel, Los Angeles.

**15 March 1938** Hitler addresses 200,000 Austrians gathered in the Heldenplatz, Vienna.

Nikolay Bukharin, Aleksey Rykov and 15 other top Communist leaders are executed near Moscow.

The Hungarian government announces a massive rearmament program.

Howard Hanson’s (41) Symphony no.3 is performed completely for the first time, over the airwaves of the NBC radio network under the baton of the composer. See 18 September 1937.

**16 March 1938** By this date, the Spanish rebel offensive into Aragon has advanced 100 km in places. Over the next three days, Barcelona is subjected to round-the-clock bombing by Italian air forces.

*Julietta*, an opera by Bohuslav Martinu (47) to his own words after Neveux, is performed for the first time, in the National Theatre, Prague. The public and press give it the best reception he will ever receive in Czechoslovakia.

William Schuman’s (27) Choral Etude for chorus is performed for the first time, in New York.

*To Music* for soprano and chorus by Elliott Carter (29) to words of Herrick is performed for the first time, in Federal Music Theatre, New York.

**17 March 1938** Spanish rebels capture Caspe.

**18 March 1938** President Lázaro Cárdenas of Mexico nationalizes the assets of 17 foreign oil companies. The date is annually celebrated as Mexico’s Declaration of Economic Independence.

**19 March 1938** Paul Hindemith (42) teaches in the United States for the first time when he lectures on “Inspiration” at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts.

**24 March 1938** Chinese units fall back to defensive positions at Taierhchuang (Tai'erzhuang).

British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain tells the House of Commons that he rejects a Soviet call for a conference of nations to halt further German agression.

Vladas Mironas replaces Juozas Tubelis as Prime Minister of Lithuania.

**25 March 1938** Fierce fighting begins between Chinese and Japanese at Taierhchuang (Tai'erzhuang).

The third program in the radio feature *Lines on the Map* entitled “Communication by Wireless” with music by Benjamin Britten (24) is broadcast for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC.

*Who is Like Unto Thee*for solo voice, chorus, and organ by Hugo Weisgall (25) to Hebrew liturgical words, is performed for the first time, in Temple Emanu-El, New York.

**26 March 1938** String Quartet no.2 by William Schuman (27) is performed for the first time, in New York. This concert is a production of the New York City Composers’ Forum of the Federal Music Project.

**30 March 1938** The Second Suite from *Façade* by William Walton (36) is performed for the first time, in Carnegie Hall, New York. See 24 January 1922, 12 June 1923 and 3 December 1926.

**31 March 1938** Percy Grainger (55) arrives in California. He will visit Henry Cowell (41) in San Quentin.

**1 April 1938** Recordings of music by Jewish musicians and composers are banned in Germany.

Nestlé introduces instant coffee in Switzerland under the name Nescafé.

*La Nausée* (*Nausea*) by Jean-Paul Sartre is published in Paris.

**2 April 1938** An Extraordinary National Congress for China adjourns after five days of meeting in Hankow (Hankou). Chiang Kai-shek is named Director-General.

The Boat Race between Oxford and Cambridge is televised for the first time, by the BBC.

After eleven concerts in the United States, Paul Hindemith (42) departs for Germany.

**3 April 1938** Spanish rebels capture Lérida in their offensive into Aragon.

Mass in G for chorus by Francis Poulenc (39) is performed for the first time, in Paris.

The John Simon Guggenheim Foundation fellowships are announced, includingones for William Grant Still (42), David Diamond (22), and Carlos Chávez (38).

**4 April 1938** *Finlandia Hymn* op.113/12 for male chorus and harmonium by Jean Sibelius (72) to words of Sola is performed for the first time, in Helsinki.

Piano Trio no.3 by John Ireland (58) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC originating in London the composer at the keyboard. See 20 June 1938.

**5 April 1938** Trio no.2 for violin, viola, and cello op.58 by Albert Roussel (†0) is performed for the first time, in the École Normale, Paris on what would have been his 69th birthday.

**6 April 1938** DuPont chemist Roy Plunkett, engaged in refrigerant research, opens a tank of tetrafluoroethylene in hopes of using it to produce a nontoxic refrigerant. But when he opens the tank, no gas is found. The molecules have polymerized into a solid material, a white powdery substance later known as Teflon.

**7 April 1938** After two weeks of furious, desperate, often hand-to-hand fighting, Japanese troops retreat north from Taierhchuang (Tai'erzhuang). Over 30,000 troops died in the battle, along with untold numbers of civilians.

**8 April 1938** Symphony no.1 by Walter Piston (44) is performed for the first time, in Boston, under the baton of the composer.

**9 April 1938** Benjamin Britten (24) and Peter Pears move into the Old Mill in Snape, near Aldeburgh.

**10 April 1938** A plebiscite is held in Germany and Austria (Jews are not allowed to vote) to confirm the Anschluss. Reported results: Germany 99.02% yes, Austria 99.73% yes. The vote on the Nazi list of candidates for a new combined Reichstag: 99.8% yes.

Édouard Daladier replaces Léon André Blum as Prime Minister of France.

**12 April 1938** Feodor Ivanovich Chaliapin dies in Paris at the age of 65.

**13 April 1938** Frederic Anthony Rzewski is born in Westfield, Massachusetts.

**15 April 1938** Spanish rebel forces reach the Mediterranean Sea at Vinaroz, effectively cutting government-held areas in two.

**16 April 1938** After three months in North America, Sergey Prokofiev (46) returns to the USSR. He will not leave the country again.

Representatives of Great Britain and Italy sign an agreement in Rome. Britain agrees to Italian sovereignty over Ethiopia. Italy agrees to evacuate Spain once the Civil War ends.

In Basel, Swiss chemist Albert Hofmann accidentally creates and ingests lysergic acid diethylamide. Realizing that the delirium he experiences is a result of the chemicals he has been using, he decides to experiment on himself in minute amounts aided by an assistant. The effects are repeated. LSD is born.

**17 April 1938** Japanese forces capture Lini (Linyi), northeast of Hsuchow (Xujou).

**19 April 1938** An earthquake centered in Kirsehir, Turkey kills 224 people.

The Romanian government begins rounding up hundreds of Iron Guards.

**20 April 1938** Both parts of Leni Riefestahl’s film *Olympia* are released in Germany.

**21 April 1938** General Electric begins the public marketing of fluorescent lamps.

*Irish Reel* for orchestra by Benjamin Britten (24) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC National.

*Trojan Incident* op.26, a dance by Wallingford Riegger (52) to a scenario by Tamiris, is performed for the first time, in New York.

**22 April 1938** Eddie Rickenbacker buys Eastern Airlines from General Motors for $3,500,000.

Although they claim it was an accident, Japan pays over $2,000,000 indemnity for the *Panay* incident of last December.

The fourth program in the radio feature *Lines on the Map* entitled “Communication by Air” with music by Benjamin Britten (24) is broadcast for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC.

**24 April 1938** Konrad Henlein, leader of the Sudeten National Socialist Party and the spokesman for the Sudeten Germans, lists eight demands for the Czech government, including full autonomy for German speaking regions.

Protector of State of Estonia Konstantin Päts is named President of Estonia.

**25 April 1938** An agreement signed in London between Great Britain and Eire ends the tariffs imposed hitherto by both states.

**26 April 1938** By the Decree on the Registration of the Property of the Jews, all Jews in Austria must value their assets and register them if they exceed RM5,000.

Sei Cori di Michelangelo Buonarroti il Giovane for chorus by Luigi Dallapiccola (34) is performed completely for the first time, over the airwaves of Radio Prague. See 6 April 1935, 14 May 1937 and 17 December 1937.

**27 April 1938** The Whitehead Commission, announced 4 January, arrives in Jerusalem to study the partition of Palestine.

Marc Blitzstein (33) and Wallingford Riegger (52) sign a letter in support of the Moscow show trials. They are joined by almost 150 well-known people including Lillian Hellman, Langston Hughes, Dorothy Parker, Irwin Shaw, and Richard Wright.

**28 April 1938** *Festival Fanfare* for brass and percussion by Howard Hanson (41) is performed for the first time, in Eastman Theatre, Rochester, New York the composer conducting. Hanson also conducts the premiere of *Elegy in Memory of Maurice Ravel* for brass, harps, and percussion by David Diamond (22).

**30 April 1938** Luigi Dallapiccola (34) marries Laura Coen Luzzatto, a librarian at the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence.

Preston and Huddlesfield Town play for the FA Cup. It is the first time that the FA Cup is televised. The audience is estimated at 10,000.

**1 May 1938** The German Reichsmusikkammer rules that Aryan music instructors may not take Jewish pupils.

Four of the *Hebrew Solo Songs* for voice and piano by Stefan Wolpe (35) are performed for the first time, in Jerusalem.

**2 May 1938** Soviet poet Osip Emilyevich Mandelstam is arrested again. He will be convicted of “anti-Soviet agitation” and be sentenced to five years in a labor camp.

*Sécheresses*, a cantata for chorus and orchestra by Francis Poulenc (39) to words of James, is performed for the first time, in Paris.

**3 May 1938** Adolf Hitler arrives by train in Rome for a week-long state visit. He is greeted by King Vittorio Emanuele and Benito Mussolini.

The first prisoners are transferred to the new concentration camp at Flossenbürg.

**4 May 1938** Nobel Peace Prize winner Carl von Ossietzky dies in police detention in Berlin-Pankow at the age of 48.

**5 May 1938** A number of leading Hungarian artists and scientists publicly declare their opposition to the anti-Semitic legislation currently being written. Among them are Béla Bartók (57) and Zoltán Kodály (55).

**6 May 1938** *Celtic Set* for concert band by Henry Cowell (41) is performed completely for the first time, in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania.

**7 May 1938** Great Britain and France advise Czechoslovakia to make greater concessions to ethnic Germans within its borders.

**8 May 1938** Igor Stravinsky’s (55) *Concerto “Dumbarton Oaks”* for chamber orchestra, is performed for the first time, privately at Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C. conducted by Nadia Boulanger (50). The composer was slated to conduct but he is ill in Paris and asked Boulanger, in the United States already, if she would do the honors. See 8 June 1938.

**9 May 1938** Sudeten German leader Konrad Henlein breaks off talks with the Czech government and goes to Germany.

**10 May 1938** John Alden Carpenter (62) is awarded the Medal of St. Sava by King Petar II of Yugoslavia in Belgrade.

**11 May 1938** Three Improvisations for piano by Charles Ives (63) is performed for the first time, in a recording session in New York.

**12 May 1938** Japanese forces occupy Amoy (Xiamen).

Germany recognizes the Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo.

Ernst Krenek (37) manages to obtain a visa to travel to the United States.

US Secretary of State Cordell Hull rejects a proposal by the USSR for a defense treaty to oppose Germany.

*Jeanne d’Arc au bucher*, a stage oratorio by Arthur Honegger (46) to words of Claudel, is performed publicly for the first time, in Basel. See 29 October 1935. The poet remarks, “An audience of a thousand, endless ovations.”

**13 May 1938** Music to Miller’s play *The Chartists’ March* by Benjamin Britten (24) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC conducted by the composer.

**14 May 1938** Béla Imrédy de Omoravica replaces Kalmán Darányi de Pusztaszentgyörgy et Tetétlen as Prime Minister of Hungary.

Chile withdraws from the League of Nations.

**15 May 1938** Paul Henri Spaak replaces Paul Emile Janson as Prime Minister of Belgium. Spaak is the first socialist prime minister of Belgium.

Incidental music to Shakespeare’s play *Hamlet* op.77 by Sergey Prokofiev (48) is performed for the first time, in Leningrad.

**17 May 1938** *Quest*, a ballet by Hugo Weisgall (25) to a scenario by Resnick, Rosenberg, and the composer, is performed for the first time, in Baltimore. See 21 March 1942.

**18 May 1938** *Cantate de l’enfant et de la mère* op.185 for speaker and chamber ensemble by Darius Milhaud (45) to words of Carême is performed for the first time, in the Palais des Beaux Arts, Brussels, conducted by the composer.

The general election in the Union of South Africa results in victory for the National Party of Prime Minister Hertzog.

**19 May 1938** Japanese forces occupy Tungshan.

After months of fighting towards the city, Japanese troops fight their way into Hsuchow (Xujou).

**20 May 1938** Rumors of German troop movements cause the Czech government to mobilize 400,000 troops. The incident is termed the “May Crisis.”

**21 May 1938** Mutsuo Toi goes on a rampage in the village of Kaio, near Tsuyama, Japan, killing 30 people including himself. Three people are seriously injured.

**22 May 1938** Adolf Hitler creates the *Richard-Wagner-Forschungsstätte* to encourage study of Wagner’s (†55) music and philosophy.

**23 May 1938** Germany denies any planned aggression against Czechoslovakia. The Czechs demobilize and the crisis passes.

*Zangezur*, a film with music by Aram Khachaturian (34), is released.

*Pioneers!* for chorus by William Schuman (27) to words of Whitman, is performed for the first time, in Princeton, New Jersey.

Trio for violin, viola, and cello by David Diamond (22) is performed for the first time, at the Library of Congress, Washington.

**24 May 1938** Hungary enacts limited anti-Jewish legislation.

As part of the Reichsmusiktage which began two days ago, an exhibition of degenerate music opens in Düsseldorf. Among the composers enshrined as “cultural bolsheviks” are Arnold Schoenberg (63), Igor Stravinsky (55), Alban Berg (†2), Paul Hindemith (42), Kurt Weill (38), and Ernst Krenek (37).

*O Spiritual Pilgrim* for soprano and chorus by Gustav Holst to words of Flecker is performed for the first time, in Royal Albert Hall, London on the eve of the fourth anniversary of the composer’s death. Also premiered is the orchestration of *Paean* by Arnold Bax (54).

**25 May 1938** Manuel de Falla (61) writes to a friend in Argentina for help in escaping Spain for South America.

The Second Symphony by William Schuman (27) is performed for the first time, in New York by the Greenwich Orchestra and funded by the Federal Music Project. Aaron Copland (37) is in the audience.

*Chile-Brasil* for chorus by Heitor Villa-Lobos (51) is performed for the first time, directed by the composer.

**26 May 1938** Adolf Hitler opens the first Volkswagen factory in Wolfsburg.

The United States House of Representatives establishes a committee on un-American activities, to investigate American citizens and others holding political beliefs deemed offensive to the state.

William Elden Bolcom is born in Seattle, son of Robert Samuel Bolcom and Virginia Lauermann.

**28 May 1938** Hitler orders the mobilization of 96 divisions in preparation for an invasion of Czechoslovakia.

*Mathis der Maler*, an opera by Paul Hindemith (42) to his own words, is performed for the first time, at the Zürich Stadttheater. It is an immediate success. See 12 March 1934.

**30 May 1938** Walter Piston’s (44) ballet *The Incredible Flutist* is performed for the first time, in Boston.

**2 June 1938** Anton Webern’s (54) youngest daughter, Christine, a member of the Bund deutscher Mädchen, marries a Nazi storm trooper.

**3 June 1938** The Guggenheim Foundation renews William Grant Still’s (43) fellowship for six more months.

**4 June 1938** *Antonio e Cleopatra*, an opera by Gian Francesco Malipiero (56) to his own words after Shakespeare, is performed for the first time, in Teatro Comunale, Florence.

**5 June 1938** *The World of the Spirit* for speakers, solo voices, chorus, and orchestra by Benjamin Britten (24) to words from various sources is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC National.

**8 June 1938** Igor Stravinsky’s (55) *Concerto “Dumbarton Oaks”* for chamber orchestra is performed publicly for the first time, in Salle Gaveau, Paris conducted by the composer. See 8 May 1938.

*You and Me*, a film by Friz Lang and some music by Kurt Weill (38) (considerably rearranged by the studio) is released in the United States.

**9 June 1938** Charles Peter Wuorinen is born in Physicians and Surgeons Hospital, New York City, the second of two children born to John Henry Wuorinen, a history teacher at Columbia University, and Alfhild Kalijarvi.

**10 June 1938** Dane Rudhyar (43) becomes Vice-President of the Transcendental Painting Group in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Incidental music to Euripides play *Electra* by Lou Harrison (21) is performed for the first time, at Mills College, Oakland.

**12 June 1938** In an attempt to slow the Japanese advance, Chiang Kai-shek orders the destruction of dikes on the Yellow River. Many Chinese are killed and hectares of farm land destroyed. It has no lasting effect on the Japanese.

Two new works by Leonard Bernstein (19) are performed for the first time, in Brookline, Massachusetts: Music for Two Pianos and Music for the Dance. It is his first appearance as pianist-composer.

**13 June 1938** Japanese troops take Anking (Anqing) on the Yangtze.

String Quartet no.4 by Bohuslav Martinu (47) is performed for the first time, privately, at the home of Cestmir Puc in Paris.

**14 June 1938** Spanish rebels capture Castellon de la Plana, 60 km north of Valencia.

*Symphonie d’hymnes* for chorus and orchestra by Charles Koechlin (70) is performed for the first time, in Salle Pleyel, Paris. It consists of *Hymne à la nuit* op.48/1, *Hymne à la vie* op.69, *Hymne au jour* op.110, *Hymne au soleil* op.127, and *Hymne à la jeunesse* op.148. Also premiered is his *Choral: Final de la suite “les Saisons”* op.69 for chorus, organ, and orchestra to his own words

**15 June 1938** Hungarian newspaperman László Bíró applies for a British patent for the first practical ball point pen.

Ralph Vaughan Williams (65) receives the Shakespeare Prize presented by the University of Hamburg. By next year, Vaughan Williams’ music will be banned in Germany.

**17 June 1938** *Das Augenlicht*, for chorus and orchestra by Anton Webern (54) to words of Jone (pseud. Hildegard Humplik), is performed for the first time, in Queen’s Hall, London. It is very successful. In the audience is Luigi Dallapiccola (34) who is strongly impressed.

**18 June 1938** The California Parole Board denies Henry Cowell’s (41) request for a reconsideration of his sentence.

**19 June 1938** Italy defeats Hungary 4-2 in Paris to win the third FIFA World Cup™.

The Senate of the Prussian Academy of Arts votes to protest to Minister of Education Bernhard Rust about the inclusion of Igor Stravinsky (56) in the exhibition of “degenerate music” last month.

**20 June 1938** Piano Trio no.3 by John Ireland (58) is performed publicly for the first time, in Boosey & Hawkes Music Room, London the composer at the keyboard. See 4 April 1938.

**21 June 1938** Piano Sonata no.2 “Concord, Mass., 1840-1860” by Charles Ives (63) is performed completely for the first time, in a private setting in Stamford, Connecticut. See 28 November 1938 and 20 January 1939.

**22 June 1938** Ernst Krenek’s (37) play with music *Karl V*, to his own words, is performed for the first time, at the Neue Deutsches Theater, Prague. Krenek is not in attendance, fearing to cross German territory. The work was scheduled for performance in Vienna in 1933 but cancelled after rehearsals had begun. The authorities apparently objected to its nationalistic, Catholic, anti-Nazi subject matter.

Incidental music to Slater’s play *Spain* by Benjamin Britten (24) is performed for the first time, in the Mercury Theatre, London.

Joe Louis defeats Max Schmeling in Yankee Stadium, the Bronx to regain the heavyweight boxing title. In the audience is Duke Ellington (39) who has put off a hernia operation to witness the match.

**25 June 1938** Douglas Hyde becomes President of Eire replacing a provisional presidential commission.

US President Franklin Roosevelt signs the Fair Labor Standards Act. It creates the first national minimum wage, requires time-and-a-half for overtime in certain cases, and prohibits “oppressive child labor.”

**27 June 1938** After four days of fighting, Japanese forces take Matang on the Yangtze.

**29 June 1938** Four songs by Claude Debussy (†20) are performed for the first time, in the Salle Gaveau, Paris: *Sérénade, Souhait* and *Le Lilas* to words of Banville, and *Jane* to words of Leconte de Lisle.

**30 June 1938** *Victoire de la vie*, a film with music by Charles Koechlin (70), is shown for the first time, at Port St. Cloud.

**1 July 1938** Duke Ellington (39) undergoes an operation for a hernia at Wickersham Hospital, New York. He will be hospitalized for two weeks.

**2 July 1938** *Music for an Aquatic Ballet* by John Cage (23) is performed for the first time, at the University of California at Los Angeles.

**6 July 1938** At the suggestion of President Roosevelt, representatives of 32 countries and 39 refugee aid agencies meet in Evian on Lake Geneva to discuss solutions to the problem of increased expulsions of Jews from Germany. Nothing concrete is done. Only the Dominican Republic agrees to take any Jews.

American astronomer Seth Barnes Nicholson discovers Lysithea from the Mount Wilson Observatory near Pasadena, California. It is the tenth moon of Jupiter to be identified from Earth.

**9 July 1938** *England’s Pleasant Land*, music for a pageant for chorus and band by Ralph Vaughan Williams (65), is performed for the first time, in Milton Court, Westcott, Surrey. Vaughan Williams is one of several composers contributing to the pageant.

**12 July 1938** Venezuela leaves the League of Nations.

**14 July 1938** Benito Mussolini publishes the Manifesto of Race. He declares Italians to be Aryans and superior to non-Aryan races, in particular Jews and Africans.

**15 July 1938** The sentence of Alyeksandr Vasilyevich Mosolov (37), presently in a Soviet labor camp, is reduced. He will be released, but forbidden to live in Moscow, Leningrad, or Kiev for five years. See 25 August 1938.

Incidental music to Coburn’s play *Fairy Gold* by Granville Bantock (69) is performed for the first time, at the Liverpool College for Girls.

**20 July 1938** Sonata for oboe and piano by Paul Hindemith (42) is performed for the first time, in London.

**21 July 1938** After years of negotiation, a peace treaty is agreed to by Bolivia and Paraguay in Buenos Aires. Paraguay receives significant parts of the Gran Chaco commensurate with its victories on the battlefield.

*Nobilissima visione*, a dance legend by Paul Hindemith (42) to a scenario by Massine, is performed for the first time, in London, the composer conducting.

**22 July 1938** The German Foreign Office replies to Ambassador André François-Poncet about a complaint from France that one of its citizens, Igor Stravinsky (56) was included in an exhibition of “degenerate music” in May. The Germans say that “the exhibition was not directed against individual artists, but only against certain artistic directions.”

**24 July 1938** Spanish loyalist forces secure the southern bank of the River Ebro, which they will hold until 16 November. The offensive is so successful they advance up to 40 km in places.

*Friedenstag*, an opera by Richard Strauss (74) to words of Gregor, is performed for the first time, at the Munich Staatsoper.

**25 July 1938** Prince Franz von Paula of Liechtenstein dies in Valtice (Czech Republic) and is succeeded by Franz Josef II who has been serving as regent since 30 March.

**26 July 1938** Chinese troops abandon the rail hub of Kiukiang (Jiujiang). Japanese soldiers go on a rampage in the city.

*Cantos del Tucumán* for voice, flute, harp, drums, and violin by Alberto Ginastera (22) to words of Jijena Sánchez, is performed for the first time, in Buenos Aires.

**28 July 1938** The new Cunard White Star liner *RMS Mauretania* is launched in Birkenhead, England.

**29 July 1938** Japanese and Soviet forces clash over the disputed border between Manchukuo and Siberia.

An anti-fascist revolt on Crete, during which the rebels briefly held the capital of Chania, is brutally suppressed by loyal Greek troops.

*Heroic Piece* for chamber orchestra by David Diamond (23) is performed for the first time, in Zürich.

**30 July 1938** American astronomer Seth Barnes Nicholson discovers Carme from the Mount Wilson Observatory near Pasadena, California. It is the eleventh moon of Jupiter to be identified from Earth and the discovery comes just 24 days after Lysithea.

**31 July 1938** Further border clashes take place between Soviet and Japanese troops. Soviet airplanes bomb targets in Korea and Manchukuo.

**1 August 1938** Leonard Bernstein (19) plays his first full-length piano recital, at the Scituate Yacht Club, Massachusetts.

**2 August 1938** A *New York Times* business report tells of Dr. West’s Miracle Tuft Toothbrush now marketed by Weco Products. It is the first product to use the new material from Du Pont, nylon.

**3 August 1938** British mediator, Lord Runciman, arrives in Prague in an attempt to diffuse the crisis between the Czechoslovak government and the Sudeten Germans.

After gathering information for 14 weeks, the Whitehead Commission sails from Haifa.

**4 August 1938** Lord Runciman, personal envoy of British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, arrives in Prague to investigate the situation and seek solutions.

The Romanian government institutes a new law guaranteeing full citizenship rights for all minorities.

The Shed, an open-air concert venue, is inaugurated at Tanglewood, in Lenox, Massachusetts as the summer home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

**5 August 1938** *Conquest* for flute or ocarina or recorder, piano, conch shell, and percussion by Lou Harrison (21) is performed for the first time, at Mills College, Oakland.

**7 August 1938** Konstantin Sergeyevich Stanislavsky dies in Moscow at the age of 75.

Construction begins on a series of concentration camps around Mauthausen and Gusen, near Linz.

**9 August 1938** String Quartet no.3 by Roy Harris (40) is performed for the first time, at the Juilliard School, New York.

**10 August 1938** The USSR and Japan agree to a cease-fire.

The Bolivian legislature ratifies the peace treaty with Paraguay.

**12 August 1938** Hitler orders the mobilization of German troops because of the Sudeten crisis.

The first hearings of the House Committee on Un-American Activities take place in Washington.

Overture no.1 for orchestra by David Diamond (23) is performed for the first time, in New York.

**13 August 1938** The Italian government orders newspapers to pursue racial propaganda.

The House Un-American Activities Committee begins an investigation into alleged communists in the CIO.

**16 August 1938** Spanish Prime Minister Juan Negrín becomes dictator of “Revolutionary Spain.”

Paul Hindemith (42) and his wife abandon their Berlin residence. They will soon reside in Switzerland.

**18 August 1938** Ernst Krenek (37) flees Europe, boarding the *Ausonia* with his wife in Le Havre, making for Montreal.

US President Franklin Roosevelt and Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King dedicate the new Thousand Islands Bridge system linking New York State with Ontario over the St. Lawrence River.

Piano Concerto op.13 by Benjamin Britten (24) is performed for the first time, in Queen’s Hall, London the composer at the keyboard. The audience is pleased (he is mobbed as he leaves the theatre), but the critics are not. See 2 July 1946.

**19 August 1938** As part of their campaign against the New Deal, the House Un-American Activities Committee begins four days of testimony from disgruntled members of the Federal Theatre Project about the communists within the project and their influence.

**20 August 1938** Japanese forces take Juichang after five days of fighting, but beyond the city Chinese defenses hold.

**25 August 1938** Alyeksandr Vasilyevich Mosolov (38) is released from a Soviet labor camp after serving eight months of an eight year sentence.

**26 August 1938** This is possibly the date of the first conversation between Sergey Prokofiev (47) and the poet Mariya (Mira) Abramovna Mendelson, in Kislovodsk. In 1941, Prokofiev will leave his wife and children to live with Mira.

**27 August 1938** During a poetry reading by Archibald MacLeish at the Bread Loaf Inn in Middlebury, Vermont, Robert Frost sets fire to a stack of papers.

**29 August 1938** Ernst Krenek (38) crosses from Canada into the United States.

**31 August 1938** In great personal and business financial difficulty, Lev Sergeyevich Termen (Leon Theremin)(42) grants complete power of attorney to M. Boyd Zinman. He plans to return to the USSR.

**1 September 1938** All foreign Jews are ordered expelled from Italy.

**2 September 1938** The Italian cabinet adopts measures today and tomorrow to remove Jewish teachers and students at all levels of education. They renounce Italian citizenship for all foreign-born Jews who attained it after 1918.

**5 September 1938** Jews in Italy may no longer attend any public or private schools, nor be employed by any educational institution.

Members of the fascist National Socialist Movement of Chile attempt to overthrow the government. They are put down and most participants are killed.

**6 September 1938** The Czech government issues the “fourth plan”, providing that all nationalities within Czechoslovakia share proportionally in state offices. The Sudeten German leaders break off negotiations.

Joan Tower is born in New Rochelle, New York, second of three children born to George Warren Tower III, a mining engineer, and Anna Peabody Robinson.

Tre Ricercari for chamber orchestra by Bohuslav Martinu (47) is performed for the first time, in Venice.

**7 September 1938** Clashes between Czechs and Germans break out in Moravská Ostrava.

**10 September 1938** Expressing his special insight into the Czechoslovakian question, German Air Minister Hermann Göring declares “The Czechs, the vile race of dwarfs without any culture...are oppressing a civilized race; and behind them, together with Moscow, there can be seen the everlasting face of the Jewish fiend!”

**12 September 1938** Speaking at a rally in Nuremberg, Hitler vigorously demands self-determination for Sudeten Germans.

The Sonata a tre for piano trio by Alfredo Casella (55) is performed for the first time, in the Giustiniani Palace, Venice.

**13 September 1938** After Sudeten Germans attack police stations and other symbols of Czechoslovak authority, the Czechoslovak government declares martial law in those districts experiencing violence.

An orchestral suite from *Nobilissima visione* by Paul Hindemith (42) is performed for the first time, in Venice.

**14 September 1938** Negotiations between the Czech government and Sudeten leader Konrad Henlein are broken off.

Ernst Krenek (38), recently arrived from Montreal, takes a room at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Boston.

**15 September 1938** British Prime Minister Chamberlain meets Hitler at Berchtesgaden. Hitler informs him that he is willing to risk war to return the Sudeten Germans to the Reich.

In virtual financial ruin, and with identification forged by the Soviet government, Lev Sergeyevich Termen (Leon Theremin) (42) boards the freighter *Stary Bolshevik* in New York to return to the USSR. He is told that his wife will join him soon. She has the feeling he is being taken against his will. Termen travels clandestinely to avoid the US Internal Revenue Service, to whom he owes money.

**16 September 1938** Variationen über ein altes Wiener Strophenlied for soprano and orchestra by Werner Egk (37) is performed for the first time, in the Berlin Staatsoper.

**19 September 1938** France and Great Britain agree to German demands and urge Czechoslovakia to accept them.

Ernst Krenek (38) begins duties as an instructor at the Malkin Conservatory, Boston.

**20 September 1938** Hungarian Prime Minister Béla Imrédy and Foreign Minister Kálmán Kánya are summoned to Berchtesgaden. Hitler tells them that he has no claim on Slovakia or Ruthenia provided Hungary takes an active part in the destruction of Czechoslovakia.

Suite for Jazz Orchestra no.2 by Dmitri Shostakovich (31) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of Moscow Radio.

**21 September 1938** British mediator Lord Runciman recommends to Prime Minister Chamberlain that the Sudetenland be transferred to Germany without a referendum.

Czechoslovakia agrees to an Anglo-French plan which includes the cession of the Sudetenland to Germany. President Benes announces the agreement in a communique critical of Czechoslovakia’s “friends”, Great Britain and France.

Spanish leader Juan Negrín announces to the League of Nations that all International Brigades will be withdrawn from the fighting.

Poland demands that Czechoslovakia hand over the Teschen (Cieszyn) district.

A Category Four hurricane moves across Long Island and New England. 650 people are killed. 15% of all mature timber in New England is destroyed.

**22 September 1938** The government of Czechoslovakia, feeling sold-out by their allies, resigns. Jan Syrovy replaces Milan Hodza as Prime Minister.

The International Brigades begin withdrawing from the front lines of the Spanish Civil War.

Neville Chamberlain meets Hitler at Godesberg. Hitler lists new demands including German occupation of the Sudetenland by 1 October.

String Quartet op.28 by Anton Webern (54) is performed for the first time, in Pittsfield, Massachusetts.

**23 September 1938** A new Czechoslovak cabinet under Prime Minister Jan Syrovy orders full mobilization.

String Quartet no.4 by Frank Bridge (59) is performed for the first time, in Pittsfield, Massachusetts.

**24 September 1938** France orders partial mobilization of its armed forces due to the Czech crisis.

*Petit Ramusianum harmonique* for solo voice or unison chorus by Igor Stravinsky (56) to words of Cingria is performed for the first time, privately in Paris.

**25 September 1938** Czechoslovakia agrees to Hitler’s Godesberg demands.

**26 September 1938** In the Berlin Sportpalast, Hitler announces that his Godesberg demands represent a minimum, and that Czechoslovakia must evacuate the Sudetenland by 1 October or there will be war.

**27 September 1938** The League of Nations identifies Japan as an aggressor and invites its members to support China.

Hitler’s threat to march into the Sudetenland by 14:00 on 28 September is published, as is Britain’s promise to support France in aid of Czechoslovakia. Britain mobilizes its fleet.

Air Raid Precautions, under the direction of the Home Office, distributes 38,000,000 gas masks to the British public.

*Queen Elizabeth* is launched at Clydebank, Scotland by Queen Elizabeth. It is the largest ocean liner in the world.

**28 September 1938** Hitler agrees to a four-party conference at Munich between Germany, Great Britain, France, and Italy.

*Knickerbocker Holiday*, a musical comedy by Kurt Weill (38) to words of Anderson, is performed for the first time, in Bushnell Memorial Theatre, Hartford. See 19 October 1938.

**29 September 1938** After three weeks fighting up the Yangtze and ten days assaulting the fortress of T’ien-chia-chen, the Japanese finally fight their way into the city. Every one of the surviving Chinese defenders is killed.

Leaders of the four powers, German Führer Adolf Hitler, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, French Prime Minister Édouard Daladier and Italian Prime Minister Benito Mussolini, meet in Munich to discuss the Czechoslovakia question.

Having abandoned their Berlin residence, Paul Hindemith (42) and his wife move to Bluche, Switzerland.

**30 September 1938** 01:00 The Munich conferees agree that Czechoslovakia will cede the Sudetenland to Germany between 1 and 10 October. The integrity of the rest of Czechoslovakia is guaranteed by all parties. Chamberlain gets Hitler’s signature on a piece of paper stating that this agreement was “symbolic of the desire of our two peoples never to go to war with one another again.”

**1 October 1938** German troops begin to occupy the Sudetenland.

Czechoslovakia agrees to cede Teschen (Cieszyn) to Poland.

Jewish physicians are forthwith barred from practicing in Germany.

*The Friends*, a film with music by Dmitri Shostakovich (32), is shown for the first time.

**2 October 1938** Polish troops enter Czechoslovak territory and occupy Teschen (Cieszyn).

Arabs kill 19 Jews in Tiberias, Palestine, mostly by stabbing. The synagogue and many homes are torched.

**3 October 1938** Duff Cooper, First Lord of the Admiralty, resigns from the British government in opposition to the Munich agreement.

**4 October 1938** Manuel de Falla (61) writes Pedro Sainz Rodrigo, the Minister of Education for the rebel government of Spain, asking him to find a job for Joaquin Rodrigo (36). He will.

*Kol Nidre* for speaker, chorus, and orchestra by Arnold Schoenberg (64) is performed for the first time, in Los Angeles, the composer conducting.

**5 October 1938** Jan Syrovy becomes acting President of Czechoslovakia, replacing Edvard Benes who resigns and goes into exile in London.

All German passports held by Jews are declared invalid. New ones are issued with a red “J”.

*Serenade to Music* for 16 vocal soloists and orchestra by Ralph Vaughan Williams (65) to words of Shakespeare, is performed for the first time, in the Royal Albert Hall, London.

**6 October 1938** The Italian cabinet adopts measures today and tomorrow which bans marriage between Italians and Jews. They also expel foreign Jews not resident in Italy at least since 1919, under 65 and not married to Italians as of 1 October. Jews are barred from owning businesses that employ more than 100 people, owning more than 50 hectares of land, or serving in the armed forces.

*Billy the Kid*, a ballet by Aaron Copland (37), is performed for the first time, on two pianos in Chicago. See 24 May 1939 and 9 November 1940.

**8 October 1938** The Italian Chamber of Deputies, the last remaining part of the old constitution, is abolished and replaced by the Chamber of Fasces and Corporations.

**9 October 1938** Hungarian and Czechoslovak delegates meet to discuss the Magyar districts of Slovakia. Their lack of agreement leads to border clashes.

**10 October 1938** Dino Alferi, Minister of Popular Culture for Mussolini, informs all theatres that they are not to hire the German conductor Hermann Scherchen. He “is a well-known Communist.” (Sala, 281)

The border between Bolivia and Paraguay is fixed by arbitration, ending many years of conflict.

String Quartet no.1 by Dmitri Shostakovich (32) is performed for the first time, in Leningrad Conservatory Malyi Hall.

**11 October 1938** The Czechoslovakian government grants full autonomy to Ruthenia which takes the name Carpathian Ukraine.

**14 October 1938** Incidental music to Lestringuez’ play *Tricolore* by Darius Milhaud (46) is performed for the first time, in the Comédie Française, Paris.

Songs by Francis Poulenc (39) are performed for the first time, at The Hague: Deux poèmes de Guillaume Apollinaire, *Le Portrait* to words of Colette, and *Tu vois le feu du soir* from *Miroirs brûlants*, to words of Eluard.

**15 October 1938** The ruling Labor Party of Prime Minister Michael Savage continues with their majority virtually unchanged in elections to the New Zealand Parliament.

*Daphne*, an opera by Richard Strauss (74) to words of Gregor, is performed for the first time, at the Dresden Staatsoper. The response is tepid despite the approval of Joseph Goebbels.

**16 October 1938** In a radio broadcast to the United States, Winston Churchill, MP asks America to become more involved in Europe and take a stand with Britain against dictatorships.

**19 October 1938** *Knickerbocker Holiday*, a musical comedy by Kurt Weill (38) to words of Anderson, is performed for the first time in New York, at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre. It is a success, with 168 performances. See 26 September 1938.

**21 October 1938** Japanese forces occupy Canton.

**22 October 1938** American physicist and lawyer Chester Carlson makes the first xerographic image, in Queens, New York. The word xerox is derived from the Greek for “dry writing.”

**23 October 1938** A farewell concert for Stefan Wolpe (36) and his wife Irma Schoenberg takes place, organized by their students at the Palestine Conservatoire in Jerusalem. Wolpe is too radical for the faculty and administration, politically and musically.

**24 October 1938** Polish Ambassador Józef Lipski meets with German Foreign Minister Joachim von Rippentrop at Berchtesgaden. Ribbentrop tells Lipski that must agree to Germany’s annexation of the free city of Danzig (Gdansk). Lipski does not agree.

French Foreign Minister Georges Bonnet begins sacking and reassigning members of his ministry who oppose appeasement.

The Fair Labor Standards Act goes into effect in the United States. It establishes the first minimum wage at $.25 per hour and requires a 40-hour week.

**25 October 1938** After months of furious Chinese defense, aided by Soviet pilots, Japanese troops capture Hankow (Hankou) and Wuchang surrounding Wuhan, the temporary capital of the Chinese Republic. The republican government flees to Chungking (Chongqing).

The Most Rev. Francis Beckman, Archbishop of Dubuque, Iowa, warns a meeting of the National Council of Catholic Women in Biloxi, Mississippi against swing music. “We permit, if not freely endorse by our criminal indifference, ‘jam sessions,’ ‘jitter-bugs’ and cannibalistic rhythmic orgies to occupy a place in our social scheme of things, wooing our youth along the primrose path to hell!” (New York Times 26 October 1938)

**26 October 1938** Luigi Dallapiccola (34) is expelled from the National Fascist Party. The reason given is that he is Jewish. He is not.

An Overture in a minor by Georges Bizet (†63) is performed for the first time, at the Opéra-Comique, Paris approximately 83 years after its composition, one day after the 100th anniversary of the composer’s birth.

**27 October 1938** Germany begins the expulsion of thousands of Polish Jews to Poland. Many will not be accepted and will spend months near the Polish border.

Three piano compositions by Georges Bizet (†63) are performed for the first time, in the Bibliothèque de l’Opéra, Paris during the centennial year of the composer’s birth: First Caprice original in c# minor, *Grande Valse* de concert in E flat, and Nocturne in F. Also premiered are the songs *L’âme humaine est pareille au doux ciel* to words of Lamartine, *Le Colibri* to words of Glan, and *Voeu* to words of Hugo.

**30 October 1938** Spanish fascist forces launch a furious counter-attack against government troops that crossed the River Ebro on 24 July.

Frank Bridge (59) is awarded the Coolidge Medal by the Library of Congress, Washington.

*The War of the Worlds*, adapted by Orson Welles, is broadcast over the CBS radio network, causing widespread panic.

**31 October 1938** Five Sixteenth-Century Poems for voice and piano by John Ireland (59) to words of various authors is performed for the first time, in Wigmore Hall, London.

**1 November 1938** Owens-Illinois and Corning Glass form a joint venture to produce their new product, Owens Corning Fiberglas®.

*The Man With a Gun*, a film with music by Dmitri Shostakovich (32), is shown for the first time.

**2 November 1938** In the First Vienna Award, decided on by Germany and Italy, Southern Slovakia and Southern Ruthenia (12,009 sq.km. and 1,040,000 pop.) are awarded to Hungary.

Incidental music to Buechner’s play *Danton’s Death* by Marc Blitzstein (33) is performed for the first time, in New York. It is the last production of Orson Welles’ Mercury Theatre.

**4 November 1938** Piano Concerto no.2 by Ernst Krenek (38) is performed for the first time, in Boston.

**5 November 1938** Adagio for Strings by Samuel Barber (28), an arrangement for string orchestra of the second movement of his String Quartet, is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the NBC Radio Network, originating in Rockefeller Center, New York. On the same program is the premiere of Barber’s *Essay for Orchestra* op.12.

**6 November 1938** *Alexander Nevsky*, a film by Sergey Eisenstein with music by Sergey Prokofiev (47), is shown for the first time, in an official screening at Mosfilm. See 17 May 1939.

A Bassoon Sonata by Paul Hindemith (42) is performed for the first time, in Zürich. Also premiered is Hindemith’s Sonata for piano four-hands.

*Billy the Kid*, a ballet by Aaron Copland (37), is performed for the first time, on two pianos in Chicago. While in Chicago, Copland meets a young dancer in the Ballet Caravan named Jerome Robbins. See 24 May 1939 and 9 November 1940.

**7 November 1938** Herschel Grynszpan, a Jew whose parents were deported from Germany to Poland, goes to the German embassy in Paris intending to kill the ambassador. He is waylaid by a minor official at the embassy, Baron Ernst von Rath (himself an opponent of anti-Semitism). Frustrated, Grynszpan shoots Rath instead. Rath will die 9 November.

**8 November 1938** Sonata for piano by Frederick S. Converse (67) is performed for the first time, in Boston.

Voting takes place in the United States for members of Congress. The opposition Republican Party gains 81 seats in the House of Representatives and six seats in the Senate but is still nowhere near a majority in either house.

**9 November 1938** The report of the Whitehead Commission is made public. They reject the previous plan to partition Palestine and conclude that partition itself is unfeasible. They suggest a federation of Arabs and Jews be worked out at a round table conference in London.

After learning of the death of Baron von Rath, Hitler orders that if spontaneous anti-Semitic demonstrations break out, they should not be interfered with. Most party functionaries take this as an order to organize demonstrations. Tonight, throughout Germany, SS and SA men loot Jewish businesses, arrest Jews, and carry out other acts of violence against Jews. Official figures say that 26 Jews are killed, 36 seriously injured, 191 synagogues are burned, 76 destroyed, 814 shops, and 171 apartment houses are destroyed. 20,000 Jews are arrested. Actual destruction of people and property is probably much higher. The night will forever be known as Kristallnacht, the Night of Breaking Glass.

Nazis in Garmisch plan to arrest Alice Strauss, daughter-in-law of Richard Strauss (74), who is Jewish, but she has been hidden by a family friend in Düsseldorf. Strauss’ grandsons, Richard and Christian are beaten and taken to the town square in Garmisch where they are required to spit on Jews who have been arrested.

**10 November 1938** Henri Hinrichsen and his wife Martha return to Leipzig from Vienna. They find their apartment, and their firm, CF Peters, ransacked and vandalized.

President Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey, dies in Istanbul. He is succeeded by Mustafa Abdülhalik Renda ad interim.

*Metamorphosis* for piano by John Cage (26) is performed in Seattle by the composer, perhaps for the first time.

**11 November 1938** Mustafa Ismet Inönüreplaces Mustafa Abdülhalik Renda as President of Turkey.

Piano Sonata no.1 by Michael Tippett (33) is performed for the first time, in Queen Mary Hall, London.

**13 November 1938** The City of Changsha, its population swollen with refugees fleeing the fighting, is set on fire by Kuomintang soldiers so that it not fall into the hands of the Japanese. 30,000 people are killed. 90% of the structures are destroyed.

Bachianas brasileiras no.1 for at least eight cellos by Heitor Villa-Lobos (51) is performed completely for the first time, at the Casa d’Italia, Rio de Janeiro. See 22 September 1932.

**14 November 1938** Incidental music to a play by Auden and Isherwood, *On the Frontier*, by Benjamin Britten (24), is performed for the first time, in Cambridge.

**15 November 1938** The International Brigades parade through Madrid before disbanding.

All books by Jewish authors are ordered removed from Italian schools.

**16 November 1938** The government of the Netherlands rejects the petition by the Dutch East Indies for autonomy.

**17 November 1938** CF Peters music publishers is confiscated by the German government. The owner, Henri Hinrichsen and his family are Jewish.

Pursuant to the Manifesto of Race, first published last July, the Laws for the Defense of the Race is enacted by the Italian government. Jews are purged from the civil service, the armed service, and the Fascist Party. Marriage of Jews to gentiles is prohibited. Right of ownership of businesses and property by Jews is limited.

**18 November 1938** By this date, all advances by Spanish government troops across the River Ebro have been turned back to their original positions.

Four Gregorian Etudes op.104 for brass quartet by Frederick S. Converse (67) is performed for the first time, in Boston.

**21 November 1938** Incidental music to Catto’s play *They Walk Alone* by Benjamin Britten is performed for the first time, in the Q Theatre, London on the eve of the composer’s 25th birthday.

**22 November 1938** *Set Me as a Seal Upon Thine Heart*, for chorus by William Walton (36) to words from the Bible, is performed for the first time, at St. Mary Abbots, London.

**23 November 1938** The Czechoslovakian National Assembly approves full autonomy for Slovakia.

Unable to secure all of Ruthenia, the Imrédy government of Hungary falls.

**24 November 1938** *Peer Gynt*, an opera by Werner Egk (37) to his own words after Ibsen, is performed for the first time, in the Berlin Staatsoper conducted by the composer.

**26 November 1938** Cello Concerto op.58 by Sergey Prokofiev (47) is performed for the first time, in Moscow.

A ballet entitled *Soirée musicale*, collected from the music of Gioachino Rossini (†70) by Benjamin Britten (25), is performed for the first time, in the London Palladium.

**28 November 1938** Admiral Horthy reappoints Béla Imrédy as Prime Minister of Hungary. All ministries go to pro-Germans.

The State Jazz Orchestra of the USSR gives its inaugural concert including a performance of Shostakovich’s (32) Suite for Jazz Orchestra no.2.

Trois poèmes for voice and piano by Francis Poulenc (39) to words of Vilmorin are performed for the first time, at the Salle Gaveau, Paris the composer at the piano. Also premiered is *Scenic Railway* for piano by Arthur Honegger (46).

Piano Sonata no.2 “Concord, Mass., 1840-1860” by Charles Ives (64) is performed completely and publicly for the first time, before a small audience in The Old House, Cos Cob, Connecticut. The only important critic in attendance, Paul Rosenfeld, will publish a very favorable review in *Modern Music* which will help secure Ives’ fame. See 21 June 1938 and 20 January 1939.

**29 November 1938** *A Poem About Stalin* for orchestra and chorus by Aram Khachaturian (35) to words of Bayramov, is performed for the first time, in Moscow Conservatory Bolshoy Hall.

**30 November 1938** In a Romanian government attempt to destroy the fascist Iron Guard, Corneliu Codreanu and other party leaders are garroted by prison guards. The government claims that they were shot while trying to escape.

Appeasement advocate Emil Hacha becomes President of Czechoslovakia, replacing acting President Jan Syrovy.

In Turin with his son Soulima, Igor Stravinsky (56) receives a telegram informing him of the death of his daughter Mika from tuberculosis in Paris.

**1 December 1938** Rudolf Beran replaces Jan Syrovy as Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia.

Jewish lawyers are forthwith barred from practicing in Germany.

*Alexander Nevsky*, a film by Sergey Eisenstein with music by Sergey Prokofiev (47) is shown for the first time in general release. See 17 May 1939.

At a party at the Club Crawford in Pittsburgh, Duke Ellington (39) is introduced to Billy Strayhorn. The 23-year-old will be a big part of Ellington’s music in the future.

**2 December 1938** The Burma Road opens between Kunming and Mandalay. It is the only supply route for Chinese forces fighting the Japanese invasion.

**3 December 1938** The German government issues a decree intended to remove Jews from the economy of the country. Jews may not buy property. Places are set up to transfer stocks, precious metals, and jewelry held by Jews to government control. Jews may not buy these items, and may not sell them, except to the government.

**4 December 1938** *The Coming of Light* for women’s chorus by Henry Cowell (41) to words of Hagemeyer is performed for the first time, at Bennington College, Vermont.

**6 December 1938** Foreign Ministers of France and Germany conclude a pact of friendship and peace in Paris.

Vladimir Kosma Zworykin receives a US patent for the cathode-ray tube, the essential element of television.

**8 December 1938** Chiang Kai-shek arrives in Chungking (Chongqing).

**9 December 1938** John Cage (26) gives his first percussion concert at the Cornish School of Music, Seattle. Trio for three percussionists is performed, probably for the first time.

**10 December 1938** *Alfred*, an heroic opera by Antonín Dvorák (†34) to words of Körner, is staged for the first time, in the Czech Theatre, Olomouc, 68 years after its composition. See 6 February 1938.

Percy Grainger (56) is present for the ceremonial opening of the Grainger Museum at the University of Melbourne.

**11 December 1938** The Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional is inaugurated in Lima.

Voting in the Yugoslav general election results in an overwhelming victory for the Yugoslav Radical Community.

Elections for the local Memel (Klaipeda) Parliament in Lithuania give 25 seats to pro-Nazi Germans, four seats to Lithuanians.

**15 December 1938** The Front of National Renaissance is established by royal decree as the only political party in Romania.

Stefan Wolpe (36) and his wife arrive at Ellis Island from Palestine.

Two works by Silvestre Revueltas (38) are performed for the first time, in the Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City directed by the composer: *Sensemayá* for solo voice and orchestra, and *Música para Charlar* for orchestra, taken from his film music.

Ernest Bloch’s (58) Violin Concerto is performed for the first time, in Cleveland.

**16 December 1938** Concerto for organ, strings, and timpani by Francis Poulenc (39) is performed for the first time, privately at Hôtel Singer-Polignac in Paris with Maurice Duruflé at the organ and Nadia Boulanger (51) conducting. See 21 June 1939.

Samuel Barber (28) takes two recent recordings by Arturo Toscanini of Adagio for Strings and First Essay for orchestra and sends them to Jean Sibelius (73) with a letter. “Your music means so much to us who are trying once again to compose...after the years of post-war experimentation into which we were born--your example as an artist is so beautiful and encouraging: so I have always wanted to meet you...”

*An Outdoor Overture* by Aaron Copland (38) is performed for the first time, in New York.

**17 December 1938** Otto Hahn and Fritz Strassmann discover nuclear fission at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute in Berlin, although they do not realize it.

Luigi Dallapiccola (34) appeals his expulsion from the National Fascist Party on the grounds that he is not, in fact, Jewish. See 26 October 1938.

**18 December 1938** *Chaîne brisée* op.87 for piano by Florent Schmitt (68) is performed for the first time, in Paris.

**19 December 1938** Otto Hahn writes to Lise Meitner in Copenhagen about the strange results of the experiment of two days ago. She will recognize it as nuclear fission, thus proving Einstein’s E=mc2.

**20 December 1938** Vladimir Kosma Zworykin patents the iconoscope, the first practical television camera.

John Harris Harbison is born in Orange, New Jersey, the son of Elmore Harris Harbison, a history professor at Princeton University, and Janet German.

**22 December 1938** A fishing trawler docks at East London, South Africa with a strange fish on board. It will be identified as a coelacanth, previously thought to be extinct.

An orchestral suite from the incidental music to *Egyptian Nights* op.61 by Sergey Prokofiev (47) is performed for the first time, in Moscow.

**23 December 1938** An offensive by Spanish fascist rebels begins along the rivers Segre and Noguera Pallaresa into Catalonia. They begin pushing the government troops back.

**24 December 1938** 21 Western Hemisphere nations meeting in Peru sign the Declaration of Lima. They affirm in solidarity that they will oppose any foreign intervention in any Western Hemisphere state.

**26 December 1938** Colin McPhee (38) sails from Batavia (Jakarta) for New York by way of Cape Town and Halifax. He has been on Bali for almost two years, during which he was divorced by his wife.

Plaek Pibulsongkram replaces Phraya Phaholphonphayuhasena as Prime Minister of Siam.

**27 December 1938** The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia dissolves. Its leaders go into exile in the USSR.

**29 December 1938** Concerto for string quartet by David Diamond (23) is performed for the first time, in the Library of Congress, Washington.

**30 December 1938** *Romeo and Juliet* op.64, a ballet by Sergey Prokofiev (47) to a scenario by several artists (including the composer) after Shakespeare, is performed for the first time, in Brno. See 24 November 1936, 15 April 1937 and 8 March 1946.

©2004-2016 Paul Scharfenberger

19 July 2016