**5 January 1940** Polish forces are reconstituted under French command.

Edwin H. Armstrong demonstrates the linking of radio stations by means of short wave, using frequency modulation, between radio stations in Worcester, Massachusetts and New York City.

**7 January 1940** Violin Concerto by Willem Pijper (45) is performed for the first time, in Amsterdam.

**8 January 1940** Food rationing begins in Great Britain, starting with butter, bacon, and sugar.

Violin Concerto by Roger Sessions (43) is performed for the first time, in the Blackstone Theatre, Chicago, funded by the Federal Music Project. Benjamin Britten (26) attends, but is not impressed.

**9 January 1940** Dr. Richard Hildebrandt, Chief of the SS and Police of Greater Danzig-West Prussia, informs Heinrich Himmler of the elimination of 6,000 mental patients.

**10 January 1940** A German military plane accidentally crash lands in Belgium. The two men on board survive and are taken into custody, along with plans for the German invasion of the Low Countries.

**11 January 1940** Sergey Prokofiev’s (48) ballet *Romeo and Juliet* is performed in the Soviet Union for the first time, in the Kirov Theatre in Leningrad. Due to the war with Finland, the city is in blackout.

*The Great American Goof*, a ballet by Henry Brant (26), is performed for the first time, in New York.

**13 January 1940** Belgium and the Netherlands order partial mobilization.

Harry Partch (38) quits his job at the Federal Writers’ Project in Los Angeles.

**14 January 1940** Charles Ives’ (65) Fourth Violin Sonata “Children’s Day at the Camp Meeting” is performed for the first time, at the Museum of Modern Art in New York 24 years after it was composed.

Rhapsody for clarinet and orchestra op.105 by Frederick S. Converse (69) is performed for the first time, in Indianapolis.

**16 January 1940** Mitsumasa Yonai replaces Nobuyuki Abe as Prime Minister of Japan.

**17 January 1940** In a press conference, Eleanor Roosevelt states that she is not opposed to birth control, but does not wish to impose her views on others.

*Cavalcade d’amour*, a film with music by Arthur Honegger (48), is shown for the first time, in Paris.

**18 January 1940** 255 Jews are chosen at random in Warsaw are taken to the Palmiry Woods and shot to death.

Two songs by Charles Ives (65) are performed for the first time, in Danbury, Connecticut: *He is There!* and *In the Alley*, both to his own words.

**20 January 1940** *Joan von Zarissa*, a dramatic dance-poem by Werner Egk (38) to his own story, is performed for the first time, in the Berlin Staatsoper, directed by the composer.

Incidental music to Rice’s play *Two on an Island* by Kurt Weill (39) is performed for the first time, in the Broadhurst Theatre, New York.

**21 January 1940** An engine room explosion causes a fire aboard the Italian liner *Orazio* 60 km off Toulon. 106 of the 633 people aboard are killed and the ship goes down.

A German submarine sinks the destroyer *HMS Exmouth* in the North Sea. All 192 aboard go down with her.

**22 January 1940** Pope Pius XII broadcasts from the Vatican condemning atrocities in Poland.

**24 January 1940** The German government issues orders requiring the registration of all Jewish-owned property in Poland.

John Ford’s film *The Grapes of Wrath* is shown for the first time, in New York.

**25 January 1940** Governor General Hans Franck orders 1,000,000 Polish workers to the Reich.

**29 January 1940** A fire at Ajikawaguchi railroad station, Osaka, causes almost 200 deaths.

The Soviet Union and Finland begin secret peace negotiations in Sweden.

Four of the Seven Pieces from Mikrokosmos for two pianos by Béla Bartók (58) are performed for the first time, in Budapest.

**30 January 1940** After months of bureaucratic roadblocks, Henri Hinirichsen, former owner of CF Peters music publishers, and his wife Martha, arrive in Brussels from Leipzig. They are both Jewish. They are allowed to bring only the clothes they are wearing.

*Les illuminations* op.18, a cycle for voice and strings by Benjamin Britten (26) to words of Rimbaud, is performed completely for the first time, in Aeolian Hall, London. See 21 April 1939 and 17 August 1939.

**31 January 1940** The Royal Commission on the Distribution of the Industrial Population (Barlow Commission) issues its findings. It suggests the “planned decentralization” of industry from the population centers. It also recommends a single planning authority for all of Britain.

Partita for two pianos by Arthur Honegger (47) is performed for the first time, in Zürich, by Franz-Josef Hirt and the composer.

**1 February 1940** Soviet forces open an offensive against the Mannerheim Line between the Gulf of Finland and Lake Ladoga. It will largely fail.

*The Music Review* begins publication in Cambridge, England.

Hanns Eisler (41) begins a Rockefeller Foundation grant to study music and its relationship with film. The grant is for $20,000 with $6,000 of that going directly to Eisler.

**2 February 1940** The Russian theatre director Vsevolod Meyerhold is executed in Moscow after a secret trial and torture by the NKVD. He was an open defender of other artists, especially Dmitri Shostakovich (33).

**4 February 1940** Kurt Weill’s (39) scenic cantata *The Ballad of Magna Carta* to words of Anderson, is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the CBS radio network.

**6 February 1940** *Barbershop Ballad* for orchestra by Ross Lee Finney (33) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the Columbia Broadcasting System originating in New York.

**7 February 1940** Marc Blitzstein (34) gives the first of a series of one-man performances of his musical play *No For An Answer* at the Malin Studios, New York. See 5 January 1941.

**8 February 1940** An official decree establishes a ghetto in Lodz. Mass transfers of people begin immediately.

**9 February 1940** Double Concerto for two string orchestras, piano, and timpani by Bohuslav Martinu (49) is performed for the first time, in Basel. Arthur Honegger (47) is in the audience and is greatly moved.

**10 February 1940** Soviet forces begin a new offensive against the Mannerheim Line. The Finns retreat in good order to a second defensive line.

Five Songs on Poems of Stefan George op.4 for voice and piano by Anton Webern (56) is performed completely for the first time, in Basel.

**11 February 1940** The Soviet offensive against Finland reaches its height.

*Toccanta* for soprano, flute, cello, and piano by Henry Cowell (42) is performed for the first time, in the New School Auditorium, New York.

*Rhythmicana* for piano by Henry Cowell (42) is performed for the first time, at New York Public Library.

**13 February 1940** The Soviet offensive breaks through the Finnish line at Summa.

**14 February 1940** *Second Construction* for four percussionists by John Cage (27) is performed for the first time, at Reed College in Portland, Oregon.

**15 February 1940** Paul Hindemith (44) arrives by ship in New York from Genoa. Travelling on a German passport he was stopped and questioned in Gibraltar by the Royal Navy. After a perfunctory interview, the captain in charge tells him “Right-O, Mr. Hindemith. Good by and good luck.” The composer tells his wife, “I hope the fellow is soon promoted to Admiral.”

**16 February 1940** Bogdan Dimitrov Filov replaces Georgi Ivanov Kyoseivanov as Prime Minister of Bulgaria.

While avoiding *HMS Cossack*, the *SS Altmark*, with 300 British prisoners on board, strikes ground in Jøssingfjord, Norway. Sailors from the *Cossack* board *Altmark* and engage in hand-to-hand fighting with the crew. The Germans are overpowered and the prisoners liberated. Six Germans are killed, eight wounded.

**17 February 1940** *Can’tcha Line ‘em* for orchestra by William Grant Still (44) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the Columbia Broadcasting System.

**18 February 1940** The destroyer *HMS Daring* is sunk by a German submarine off Scotland. Only five of her crew of 162 are saved.

Paul Hindemith (44) arrives in Buffalo to take up residence for his first lengthy teaching position in the US, at the University of Buffalo.

At a meeting of the Seattle Artists League, John Cage (27) delivers his lecture “What next in American art?” When published, it will be called, “The Future of Music: Credo.”

**21 February 1940** Richard Gluecks, head of the German Concentration Camp Inspectorate, informs Himmler that he has found a site for a “quarantine” camp where Poles could be held and punished. It is a former Austro-Hungarian cavalry barracks near Oswiecim, known in German as Auschwitz.

John Randall and Harry Boot, at Birmingham University, invent the cavity magnetron. This makes airborne radar possible.

**22 February 1940** Four-year-old Tenzin Gyatso is enthroned as the 14th Dalai Lama in Lhasa.

Soviets begin to occupy islands in the Gulf of Finland.

The German destroyer *Z1 Leberecht Maass* is mistakenly sunk by a German warplane off Dogger Bank with the loss of 280 aboard. While attempting a rescue, the destroyer *Z3 Max Schultz* strikes a mine and goes down with all 308 of her crew.

Duke Ellington’s (40) exclusive recording contract with Victor Records goes into effect.

**24 February 1940** *Poems for Piano, Volume 1* op.4 by Vincent Persichetti (24) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of CBS radio in New York, by the composer.

**25 February 1940** The first ice hockey game to be televised takes place in Madison Square Garden between the New York Rangers and the Montreal Canadiens.

**27 February 1940** Norway and Sweden refuse to allow British and French troops to cross their territory to aid Finland.

An eyewitness report sent from Katowice to the west tells of mass executions of Poles near the city’s municipal park.

Martin Kamen and Sam Ruben discover the isotope Carbon-14 at the University of California at Berkeley.

String Quartet no.3 by William Schuman (29) is performed for the first time, in Town Hall, New York. Reviews are mixed.

**28 February 1940** *Old American Country Set* for orchestra by Henry Cowell (42) is performed for the first time, in Indianapolis.

**29 February 1940** Yale University offers Paul Hindemith (44) six days of lectures. He immediately accepts.

**1 March 1940** *Native Son* by Richard Wright is published in New York.

**2 March 1940** Arthur Honegger’s (47) dramatic oratorio *La Danse des Morts*, to words of Claudel, is performed for the first time, in Basel.

**3 March 1940** The Stockholm offices of the communist newspaper *Norrskensflamman* are destroyed by a bomb. Five people are killed, five injured.

**4 March 1940** Soviet troops begin a massive attack on Viipuri (Vyborg), 120 km northwest of Leningrad.

Chromatic Study on the Name of Bach for organ by Walter Piston (46) is performed for the first time, in Hartford, Connecticut.

**5 March 1940** *John Henry* for small orchestra by Aaron Copland (39) is performed for the first time, in New York.

**6 March 1940** Italian musicologist Massimo Mila is released from prison after serving five years of a seven year sentence for anti-Fascist activities.

**7 March 1940** As fighting continues throughout Finland, Prime Minister Risto Ryti arrives in Moscow to negotiate peace terms.

*Carnival Song* for three male voices, male chorus, and brass by Walter Piston (46) to words of Lorenzo de Medici is performed for the first time, in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

**8 March 1940** Igor Stravinsky (57) performs in a concert of his own music in Sanders Theatre of Harvard University. The program notes are written by Irving Fine (25).

**9 March 1940** Igor Stravinsky (57) marries his second wife, Vera de Bosset, at the home of Harvard professor Dr. Taracuzio in Bedford, Massachusetts. It is her fourth marriage.

**10 March 1940** Soliloquy and Dance for viola and piano by Roy Harris (42) is performed completely for the first time, at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. See 23 April 1939.

**12 March 1940** Finland signs a peace treaty (surrender) with the USSR in Moscow. Finland is forced to cede all of the Karelian Isthmus including Viipuri (Vyborg), territory near Salla and the Tybachiy Peninsula near Murmansk and offshore islands. The USSR gains a 30-year lease on Hanko (Hangö) for use as a naval base. Petsamo is returned to Finland.

This day completes the deportation of Jews from Stettin (Szczecin) and Schneidemühl (Pila) into the Lublin district. They were removed in sealed freight cars and by forced march.

Paul Hindemith (44) gives the first of six successive Tuesday afternoon lectures at Cornell University.

**13 March 1940** News of the Finnish capitulation is broadcast. The cease-fire takes effect at noon. 85,000 people were killed in the war between Finland and the Soviet Union.

**14 March 1940** Violin Concerto by Paul Hindemith (44) is performed for the first time, in Amsterdam.

*München*, an “occasional waltz” for orchestra by Richard Strauss (75), is performed publicly for the first time, in Munich. The waltz was written to accompany a film about the city’s cultural heritage. See 24 May 1939.

**16 March 1940** Carlos Chávez (40) begins a series of concerts of Mexican music at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. The series is commissioned by Nelson Rockefeller.

**18 March 1940** Violin Concerto by Walter Piston (46) is performed for the first time, in Carnegie Hall, New York.

**19 March 1940** Amy Beach (72) plays the piano part in her Piano Trio at the Neighborhood Club in Brooklyn. Unknown to all present, it is her last public performance.

**21 March 1940** Paul Reynaud replaces Édouard Daladier as Prime Minister of France.

**22 March 1940** After a recital in Brooklyn, Amy Beach (72) is stricken with what she calls “terrific bronchitis” leaving her gasping for breath. She is diagnosed with a serious heart condition. This turns out to be her last performance.

**23 March 1940** At its convention in Lahore, the All-India Muslim League calls for the creation of an Islamic homeland in India.

Hermann Göring orders forced deportations temporarily halted after news of atrocities and deaths is reported around the world.

**26 March 1940** Voters go to the polls to elect the 19th Parliament of Canada. The large majority of the ruling Liberal Party remains unchanged.

**27 March 1940** Heinrich Himmler orders the establishment of a small camp near the Polish town of Oswiecim.

On his ninth application, Marc Blitzstein (35) receives a $2,000 Guggenheim Fellowship.

**28 March 1940** Benjamin Britten’s (26) Violin Concerto op.15 is performed for the first time, in Carnegie Hall, New York. It is very successful.

**30 March 1940** A new national government of China is inaugurated (under Japanese supervision) at Nanking, led by President Wang Ching-wei (Wang Jingwei).

Paul Hindemith (44) visits the students and faculty at Yale University. The day is so positive for all, the Yale faculty believe he must be brought there permanently.

*Night of Frost in May*, a song by Charles Ives (65) to words of Meredith, is performed for the first time, at the Dalcroze School of Music in New York.

**31 March 1940** Incidental music to Shakespeare’s play *The Tempest* by Lukas Foss (17) is performed for the first time, in New York.

**1 April 1940** Peter Fraser replaces Michael Savage as Prime Minister of New Zealand.

*Symphonic Set* op.17 by Henry Cowell (43) is performed for the first time, in Chicago.

**3 April 1940** The German Social Democratic leader Ernst Heilmann dies in Buchenwald.

Béla Bartók (59) sails from Naples for a seven-week tour of the United States. While there he will arrange his planned move with his wife to the US for the duration of the war.

**4 April 1940** Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain announces to a Conservative party gathering that he is confident of victory, saying “...Hitler has missed the bus...”

**5 April 1940** Beginning today and continuing for six weeks, small groups of Polish officers are taken from their prisoner of war camp in Kozelsk by Soviet secret police. They are marched to a wood near Katyn and are shot to death. (5,000 people are known to have died this way. It is possible that there were 10,000 more.)

**6 April 1940** Paul Hindemith (44) makes his second visit to Yale. He is invited to join the faculty beginning in September.

*Izaht*, an opera by Heitor Villa-Lobos (53) to words of Azevedo, Júnior, and the composer, is performed completely for the first time, in a concert setting, in the Teatro Municipal, Rio de Janeiro under the baton of the composer. See 13 December 1958.

**7 April 1940** Heitor Villa-Lobos’ (53) piano work *New York Skyline Melody*, is performed for the first time, in a broadcast from Rio de Janeiro to the opening of the Brazilian pavilion at the New York World’s Fair.

**8 April 1940** The German troops ship *Rio de Janeiro* is sunk by a Polish submarine off Lillesand, Norway. Around 200 are lost. 180 will be rescued.

Piano Sonata no.6 op.82 by Sergey Prokofiev (48) is performed for the first time, by the composer over the airwaves of Radio Moscow. See 26 November 1940.

**9 April 1940** Early morning. Germany invades Denmark and Norway. Troops land at Narvik, Bergen, Kristiansand, and Trondheim.

06:45 King Christian X of Denmark orders all resistance to cease.

Oslo is occupied easily by the Germans but Norwegian shore batteries sink a German cruiser *Blücher* killing as many as 800 aboard. A British submarine sinks the German cruiser *Karlsruhe* off Kristiansand. German surface ships sink the Norwegian coastal defense ship *Eidsvold* in the harbor of Narvik. She goes down quickly with the loss of 175 of 181 men. The *Norge* is also sunk at Narvik with the loss of 101 men. King Haakon VII, the Norwegian royal family, members of the government, gold reserves, and Foreign Office papers all escape. Germans deliver a surrender ultimatum in Oslo. It is refused as the Norwegian government is transferred to Hamar, 100 km north of Oslo.

By sunset, all major Norwegian ports are in German hands.

Gestapo agents visit the offices of Universal Edition in Vienna. They carry off 33,000 copies of 45 separate publications, all music of Kurt Weill (40), Hanns Eisler (41), and Anatol Rathaus.

Stereophonic reproduction of recorded music from sound film is demonstrated in public for the first time by Bell Laboratories in Carnegie Hall, New York.

**10 April 1940** British and German naval forces fight an inconclusive battle in Narvik harbor. Three ships are sunk, one run aground.

British planes sink the German cruiser *Königsberg* in Bergen harbor.

Igor Stravinsky (57) delivers the sixth and last of his Norton Lectures in the New Lecture Hall (Lowell Hall) of Harvard University.

*Les musiciens du ciel*, a film with music by Arthur Honegger (48), is shown for the first time, in Paris.

The first song of *Canti di Prigiona* by Luigi Dallapiccola (36) to words of Queen Mary Stuart for accompanied chorus is heard for the first time, over the airwaves of Belgian Radio, Brussels. See 11 December 1941.

**11 April 1940** After a request by France and Great Britain to station troops in their territory, the Belgian government sends two divisions to protect their border with France.

**12 April 1940** German forces capture Kongsberg, 70 km southwest of Oslo.

British forces occupy the Faeroe Islands.

Two investigators from the House Un-American Activities Committee, accompanied by a cadre of local police, raid the offices of the Communist Party in Philadelphia. They fill a large truck with materials and transport them to New Jersey. Next month, the raid will be ruled illegal.

**14 April 1940** Britain and France begin landing troops in Norway.

Germans kill 220 Poles near Serokomla.

Quintet for two violins, two violas, and cello by Roy Harris (42) is performed for the first time, in Coolidge Auditorium of the Library of Congress, Washington. Also premiered is Divertimenti for flute, oboe, clarinet, and bassoon by Frank Bridge (61).

**15 April 1940** Vidkun Quisling becomes the head of the Administrative Council of occupied Norway.

**16 April 1940** *Christophe Colomb*, a radio drama by Arthur Honegger (48) to words of Aguet, is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of Radio Lausanne.

**17 April 1940** Concerto for oboe and orchestra by Ulysses Kay (23) is performed for the first time, in Rochester, New York, Howard Hanson (43) conducting.

**19 April 1940** Dutch Prime Minister Dirk Jan de Geer declares a state of siege throughout the country “in the interests of neutrality.”

**20 April 1940** A public test of an electron microscope takes place at the RCA laboratory in Camden, New Jersey. The machine is three meters high, weighs 300 kg and produces a maximum magnification of 100,000 diameters. It was invented by Vladimir Kosma Zworykin.

**21 April 1940** German forces capture Lillehammer, 130 km north of Oslo.

Concerto for double string orchestra by Michael Tippett (35) is performed for the first time, at Morley College, the composer conducting.

Septet for clarinet, alto-saxophone, bassoon, violin, viola, double bass, and piano by Conlon Nancarrow (27) is performed for the first time, in New York.

**22 April 1940** German and British forces battle in the Gudbrandsdal north of Lillehammer.

Béla Bartók (59) arrives at Harvard University for the first time and lectures on folk music research.

**23 April 1940** Variations on an Original Theme for chamber orchestra by David Diamond (24) is performed for the first time, in Rochester, New York.

*A Stopwatch and an Ordnance Map* op.15 for male chorus and timpani by Samuel Barber (30) to words of Spender is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the NBC Radio Network, originating in Casimir Hall of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia the composer conducting. Also premiered is Charles Ives’ (65) song *1, 2, 3* to his own words.

A fire destroys the Rhythm Club dance hall in Natchez, Mississippi. Over 200 people are killed.

**24 April 1940** Josef Terboven becomes Reich Commissioner for Norway.

*The Wise Virgins*, a ballet by William Walton (38) consisting of an arrangement of the music of Johann Sebastian Bach, is performed for the first time, in Sadler’s Wells Theatre, London.

Prelude for female chorus by William Schuman (29) to words of Wolfe is performed for the first time, in New York the composer conducting.

**25 April 1940** Women gain the right to vote in provincial elections in Quebec. It is the last Canadian province to grant suffrage to women.

Symphony no.4 “Folksong Symphony” for chorus and orchestra by Roy Harris (42) is performed for the first time, conducted by Howard Hanson (43) at the Eastman School of Music, Rochester, New York.

**26 April 1940** The Gestapo makes its second and last visit to the offices of Universal Edition in Vienna. They make a much smaller haul than 9 April, taking music of Béla Reinitz and the writings of Heinrich Schenker.

**27 April 1940** Joaquín Turina (57) is named commissioner of the Ministry of Education for Music in the new Spanish administration.

**28 April 1940** John Ireland (60) plays his first service as organist at St. Stephen’s Church, St. Peter Port, Guernsey.

John Cage’s (27) first composition for prepared piano, the ballet *Bacchanale*, is performed for the first time, at the Cornish School in Seattle by the composer.

**29 April 1940** King Haakon VII of Norway, his government and gold reserve are evacuated from Molde to Tromsø on the Arctic Ocean.

Incidental music to Puget’s play *Un petit ange de rien du tout* by Darius Milhaud (47) is performed for the first time, in Théâtre Michel, Paris.

**30 April 1940** The City of Vienna awards the Ring of Honor to Franz Lehár on his 70th birthday.

**1 May 1940** After two-and-a-half months of chaos, the Germans seal off the ghetto in Lodz. There are 160,000 Jews inside. Any Jew approaching the barbed wire fence will be shot.

**2 May 1940** Allied forces are withdrawn from central Norway.

**3 May 1940** While carrying British soldiers away from Norway, the destroyer *HMS Afridi* is sunk by German warplanes in the North Sea. 101 men are lost.

*Shoonthree* for band by Henry Cowell (43) is performed for the first time, in Mansfield, Pennsylvania.

**4 May 1940** Rudolf Höss is appointed commander of the concentration camp at Auschwitz.

*Commemorative March* for piano, violin, and cello by Samuel Barber (30) is performed for the first time, at the composer’s apartment at 166 East 96th Street, New York for the wedding of his sister.

The Duke Ellington (41) band records *Cotton Tail* and *Never No Lament.*

**6 May 1940** *The Grapes of Wrath*, a novel by John Steinbeck, wins the Pulitzer Prize.

Henry Cowell (43) is granted a parole from the California state parole board to take effect 8 June. He will not be released until 26 June.

**7 May 1940** The government of Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain survives a confidence vote 281-200 but the victory is not large enough for him to claim that the government is representative. Chamberlain resigns.

Igor (57) and Vera Stravinsky board ship at Boston for a honeymoon trip, first to New York, but eventually to California.

Music for several dances by John Cage (27) is performed for the first time, at the Cornish School in Seattle: *America was Promises* for speaker and piano four hands to words of MacLeish, *Four Songs of the Moment* for piano, *Spiritual* for piano, and *Imaginary Landscape no.2* for variable frequency turntables, string piano, and percussion.

**9 May 1940** *Our Town*, a film with music by Aaron Copland (39), is shown for the first time, in Grauman’s Chinese Theatre, Los Angeles.

**10 May 1940** Dawn. 136 German divisions advance into the Netherlands and Belgium. 2,500 aircraft attack the airfields of Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, and France. 16,000 German airborne troops parachute into Rotterdam, Leiden, and The Hague. 100 Germans, born by gliders, seize the bridges across the Albert Canal, Belgium. Germans attack the fortress of Eben-Emael. German aircraft drop mines in the Scheldt River and bomb Nancy. German troops march into Luxembourg. The Belgian government requests Allied assistance in repelling the invasion. This is immediately granted as French troops move into the country. By 16:00 Germans troops have crossed the Meuse.

King George VI asks Winston Churchill to form a national government. A Luxembourg government-in-exile is established in London under Prime Minister Pierre Dupong. The first bombs fall on England, in Canterbury.

British troops land in Iceland to prevent Germans from using the island.

**11 May 1940** Belgians in the fortress of Eben-Emael surrender to the Germans.

British and French troops land on the Dutch islands of Aruba and Curaçao to protect oil installations. A British protectorate is established over Aruba.

Concertino for flute and strings by Norman Dello Joio (27) is performed for the first time, at a student composition concert at the Juilliard School, New York.

**12 May 1940** French troops are thrown back near Tilburg, 90 km south of Amsterdam.

German troops enter Sedan. The French retreat to the west bank of the Meuse.

**13 May 1940** German forces establish themselves on the west bank of the Meuse at Sedan and Dinant. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Churchill tells the House of Commons: “I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat.”

German forces capture Liège.

Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands and her cabinet take ship for London, thus ending formal Dutch resistance against the Germans.

A commemorative United States postage stamp commemorating Victor Herbert (†15) goes on sale. As 1,500 people gather at the General Post Office in New York to buy the stamps, they are entertained by the Post Office band playing selections of Herbert’s music.

**14 May 1940** After an attack begun 12 May, German forces destroy French defenders along the Meuse at Sedan, Dinant, Givet, Revin, and Monthermé. Thousands (military and civilian) flee in panic. By 15 May, French resistance along the Meuse will be completely smashed.

The Luftwaffe annihilates the center of the city of Rotterdam. 814 civilians are killed. The home of Willem Pijper (45) is destroyed, along with most of his sketches and manuscripts. Pijper escapes with his life to Amersfoort, where he is given shelter by a former student, Louise Bolleman.

The French 13th Infantry Division, including signal Lieutenant Pierre Schaeffer (29) begins a retreat through the Somme.

Anthony Eden, British Secretary of State for War, makes a radio appeal to all men aged 17-65, “able to fire a rifle or shotgun” to enlist in a new force called Local Defense Volunteers.

Willard Van Dyke’s film *Valley Town: A Study of Machines and Men*, with music by Marc Blitzstein (35), is shown for the first time, in Chicago.

**15 May 1940** British, French, and Belgian forces repulse the Germans along the Dyle River from Louvain to Gembloux.

French troops capture Bjerkvik, near Narvik.

Dutch forces capitulate to the Germans. The government of the Dutch East Indies declares a state of siege and puts its forces on wartime alert.

Nylon stockings first go on sale in the United States. In a matter of hours, 800,000 are sold.

The final performance of the New York Composers’ Forum of the Federal Music Project takes place in New York.

**16 May 1940** The French High Command orders an evacuation of Belgium.

Two British officers drain 150,000 tons of fuel into the Scheldt at Antwerp.

Two new works by Carlos Chávez (40) are performed for the first time, at the Museum of Modern Art, New York: *Xochipili-Macuilxochitl* for four winds and percussion ensemble, and *La Paloma Azul* for chorus and small orchestra.

**17 May 1940** As German forces enter Brussels, the Belgian government evacuates to Ostend.

Germans reach the Oise at Origny.

**18 May 1940** German forces capture Antwerp, St. Quentin, and Cambrai.

Artur Seyss-Inquart is appointed Reich Commissioner for Holland.

Béla Bartók (59) sails from New York to return to Hungary.

*Volo di notte*, an opera by Luigi Dallapiccola (36) to his own words after Saint-Exupéry, is performed for the first time, at the Teatro della Pergola, Florence. The response is eight curtain calls and a relatively positive press.

**19 May 1940** Cello Sonata no.1 by Bohuslav Martinu (49) is performed for the first time, in Paris.

*I Will Give Thanks* op.146 for soprano, chorus, and organ by Amy Beach (72) to words of Psalm III, is performed for the first time, at St. Bartholomew’s Church, New York.

**20 May 1940** Dmitri Shostakovich (33) wins the Order of the Red Banner of Labor for his work in films.

The first prisoners arrive at Auschwitz.

German forces take Amiens and reach the English Channel at Abbeville, trapping the British, French, and Belgian forces in Belgium.

The US Federal Communications Commission authorizes commercial FM radio over 40 frequencies, the lowest five reserved for educational stations. The authorization will take effect on 1 January 1941.

**21 May 1940** British forces counterattack at Arras, but they will be forced to withdraw 23 May.

**22 May 1940** The British Parliament grants the government absolute powers over the nation, its industry and inhabitants.

**23 May 1940** Sir Oswald Mosley, former leader of the British Union of Fascists, is arrested.

Igor (57) and Vera Stravinsky arrive in Los Angeles by train from Houston.

The Little Concerto for piano, organ, and orchestra by Ernst Krenek (39) is performed for the first time, in Skinner Recital Hall, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York conducted by the composer.

**24 May 1940** 5,000 British troops are evacuated from Boulogne. The Luftwaffe begins air attacks off Dunkirk and Calais.

Concert Piece for orchestra by David Diamond (24) is performed for the first time, in New York.

**25 May 1940** German forces take Boulogne after the British and French evacuate the city. The Belgian cabinet boards a British ship at Dunkirk and makes for England. King Leopold III remains.

The Belgian Congo administration remains loyal to the government-in-exile.

After finding some of Alexander Fleming’s mold from 1929 still alive, Ernst Chainward and Walter Florey of Oxford University inject mice with streptococcus bacteria, then one half of them with penicillin. Those treated with penicillin survive.

**26 May 1940** The evacuation of British, French, and Belgian forces from Dunkirk begins.

**27 May 1940** 14,000 men are evacuated from Dunkirk.

99 British soldiers are shot and bayoneted after surrendering to Germans near Dunkirk. Two survive to later tell the tale.

17:00 King Leopold III of Belgium sends emissaries to ask the Germans for an armistice.

22:00 The Germans reply to Belgium that unconditional surrender is the only acceptable option.

**28 May 1940** Allied (Britain-France-Norway-Poland) forces capture Narvik, Norway.

11:00 King Leopold III surrenders the Belgian armed forces to Germany. A cease-fire goes into effect. The Belgian government-in-exile repudiates his actions.

25,000 men are evacuated from Dunkirk.

80 British prisoners-of-war are murdered by the SS in Wormhout, France.

The British ship *SS Abukir* is sunk by a German E-boat off Belgium. About 200 of her compliment of military and civilian evacuees are lost, many shot by the Germans as they struggled in the water. Around 30 will be rescued.

**29 May 1940** 47,310 men are evacuated from Dunkirk. The destroyer *HMS Wakeful* is sunk by a German e-boat while carrying 640 British troops from Dunkirk to Dover. Only 26 of those on board survive.

**30 May 1940** 53,823 men are evacuated from Dunkirk.

Manuel de Falla (63) conducts a concert of the Orquesta Sinfónica de Córdoba (Argentina) to benefit flood victims in Buenos Aires.

**31 May 1940** 68,104 men are evacuated from Dunkirk.

**1 June 1940** German forces begin shelling the Dunkirk beaches with artillery.

64,229 men are evacuated from Dunkirk.

In an effort to forestall an indefinite postponement of his opera *Semyon Kotko*, Sergey Prokofiev (49) writes to Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyacheslav Molotov. It has already been pushed back two months because of objections to German characters shown in an unfavorable light. He asks Molotov to view the opera himself. The composer and the government will come to a compromise. See 23 June 1940.

**2 June 1940** 26,256 men are evacuated from Dunkirk, including the last British units.

Francis Poulenc (41) is mobilized into the 72nd anti-aircraft artillery battery at Bordeaux.

Music for Auden’s play *The Dark Valley* by Benjamin Britten (26) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the CBS radio network originating in New York.

**3 June 1940** German planes bomb Paris killing 254 people.

The United States agrees to sell surplus war materials to Great Britain.

**4 June 1940** The Dunkirk evacuation ends. During the last week, 338,226 British, French, and Belgian soldiers have been saved from capture by the Germans. Remnants of the First French Army surrender at Dunkirk. In a speech before the House of Commons, Winston Churchill pledges that Great Britain will fight on alone, saying: “We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills, we shall never surrender.”

The *New York Times* announces that *Pochahontas*, by Elliott Carter (31), has won the Juilliard School’s competition for orchestral works by American composers.

*The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, a novel by 23-year-old Carson McCullers, is published by Houghton Mifflin to great acclaim.

**5 June 1940** 04:00 German forces begin an offensive southward across the Somme and Aisne.

**6 June 1940** King Haakon VII broadcasts to the Norwegian people, announcing the end of military resistance. He then boards the cruiser *HMS Devonshire* at Tromsø and heads for London.

*Canadian Carnival* op.19 for orchestra by Benjamin Britten (26) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC Home Service.

**7 June 1940** German forces break through French resistance and reach Forges-les-Eaux, 39 km from Rouen. They also take Montdidier and Noyon.

King Haakon VII and Prime Minister Johan Nygaardsvold of Norway arrive in London.

Sofiya Gubaidulina (8) gets her first review, in *Komsomolets Tatarii*, her hometown newspaper in Kazan. It is a performance she gave with her sister Ida playing piano.

**8 June 1940** Although a citizen of a neutral nation, Virgil Thomson (43) takes no chances, fleeing Paris and the approaching Germans by boarding a train to Oloron in the Pyrenees.

British and French troops abandon Narvik, Norway. Three British ships, including the aircraft carrier *HMS Glorious*, are sunk killing 1,515 men.

German troops enter Rouen, 110 km northwest of Paris.

German cruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* sink the carrier *HMS Glorious* and two destroyers off Norway with the loss of over 1,500 men.

Frederick Shepherd Converse dies at his home in Westwood, Massachusetts, aged 69 years, five months, and three days.

Edwin Mattison McMillan of the University of California at Berkeley announces his discovery of the element Neptunium.

**9 June 1940** German forces reach the Seine and occupy it from Rouen to Vernon. On the same day, they launch a major offensive along the Aisne.

Germans occupy Dieppe and Compiègne.

**10 June 1940** German troops cross the Seine west of Paris. The French retreat in disorder.

Italy declares war on France and Great Britain, effective at 01:00 11 June.

Rudolf Firkusny telephones Bohuslav Martinu (49) and advises him to leave Paris immediately. Martinu and his wife find Charles Munch and ask if they can go to his place in Villefavard, near Limoges. Munch readily agrees and the couple leave immediately (after the four hour ticket line at the Gare d’Austerlitz). With so many refugees, there is no room at Munch’s house but they find a place in nearby Rancon.

**11 June 1940** Great Britain, France, and Canada declare war on Italy.

German forces capture Reims and reach the Marne at Château-Thierry, 75 km northeast of Paris. The French government evacuates Paris for Tours, 200 km to the southwest.

British troops from Egypt attack Italian border units in Libya. British planes bomb Genoa, Turin, and Eritrea.

Italian planes bomb Aden and Malta.

In a concert by the Basler Kammerorchester in the Neuer Casino-Saal, Basel, Béla Bartók’s (59) Divertimento for Strings is performed for the first time, along with the premiere of Symphonic Piece for string orchestra by Ernst Krenek (39).

A funeral in memory of Frederick Shepherd Converse is held in St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Dedham, Massachusetts. From there, his mortal remains are cremated in Forest Hills and from thence buried in Westwood Cemetery.

**12 June 1940** The Soviet Union sends an ultimatum to Lithuania demanding a change in government and territory.

Generalissimo Francisco Franco proclaims the non-belligerence of Spain.

German troops capture St. Valery-en-Caux. 46,000 British and French soldiers are taken captive including twelve generals.

**14 June 1940** France officially surrenders Paris. German troops enter the city shortly after dawn. 09:45 Germans march ceremoniously down the Champs Elysées. Simultaneously, the French government quits the Loire for Bordeaux. Meanwhile, French naval forces heavily bombard Genoa.

Spain occupies the international city of Tangier.

**15 June 1940** As the French government assembles in Bordeaux, Admiral Darlan proscribes further naval action against Italy.

Germany annexes Alsace and Lorraine.

German troops occupy Verdun.

Soviet forces invade Lithuania, occupying Kaunas and Vilna (Vilnius). President Smetona flees to East Prussia.

The United States declines Finland’s appeal for aid.

**16 June 1940** A new Lithuanian government is installed.

German forces enter Dijon and cross the Rhine at Colmar.

French Prime Minister Paul Reynaud resigns, replaced by Marshal Henri Pétain.

Arthur Honegger (48), his wife and three other couples leave Montquin and travel south to Saint-Hilaire-sur-Garonne where they have rented a house.

**17 June 1940** Soviet troops take control of Latvia and Estonia.

The new French government sends an armistice request to the Germans through the Spanish ambassador. Before the Germans respond, Prime Minister Pétain announces his request in a broadcast to the nation. This broadcast causes thousands of French soldiers to immediately lay down their arms. Meanwhile, General Charles de Gaulle is spirited out of Bordeaux by the British.

30,630 Allied soldiers are evacuated from Cherbourg.

21,474 Canadians are evacuated from St. Malo.

32,584 Allied soldiers are evacuated from Brest.

57,235 Allied soldiers are evacuated from St. Nazaire and Nantes. The converted Cunard liner *Lancastria*, now a troop ship, is bombed by German planes and sinks off St. Nazaire. At least 4,000 people are killed (some estimates go as high as 9,000).

2,303 British and Polish troops are evacuated from La Pallice.

19,000 Allied (mostly Polish) troops are evacuated from southern France.

Bohuslav (49) and Charlotte Martinu flee Rancon just before the Germans arrive, eventually reaching Aix-en-Provence.

**18 June 1940** German troops occupy Cherbourg, Vannes, Rennes, Briare, Le Mans, Nevers, and Colmar.

The RAF bombs Hamburg and Bremen.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill tells the House of Commons, “Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties, and so bear ourselves, that if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say, this was their finest hour.”

18:00 As the first bombs fall on London, General Charles de Gaulle broadcasts to France. He announces defiance and urges all French soldiers to join him in England.

**19 June 1940** A pro-Soviet government is installed in Estonia.

The British begin a five-day evacuation of the Channel Islands.

German troops enter Nantes and Brest.

**20 June 1940** German troops take Lyon and Vichy.

29-year-old composer and organist Jehan Alain is killed in action at Saumur.

Armistice negotiations begin in Compiègne between Germany and France.

During an attempt to get from Verdun south to Epinal, Olivier Messiaen (31) and four companions are captured by the Germans.

Goffredo Petrassi, superintendant of Teatro La Fenice, and Mario Corti, artistic director of the Biennale d’Arte, officially inform Luigi Dallapiccola (36) that the work they commissioned, *Canti di prigionia*, will not be performed because the Contemporary Music Festival has been suspended.

**21 June 1940** Governments of the Baltic States request annexation from the Soviet Union.

French and German delegates meet near Compiègne, 70 km northeast of Paris, in the presence of Adolf Hitler. The Germans read the surrender demands to the French.

Ned Rorem (16) performs with an orchestra for the first and last time, as soloist in the Piano Concerto of Edvard Grieg (†32) in the Illinois Music Hall, Chicago.

**22 June 1940** Italian troops occupy Menton.

Through the efforts of Adrian Boult and the BBC, John Ireland (60) is evacuated from Guernsey to the mainland due to the threat of German invasion. He is on the *SS Antwerp*, one of the last boats.

18:50 A French delegation signs an armistice with Germany in the same spot, in the same railroad car as the 1918 armistice. It is set to take effect six hours after an armistice is concluded between France and Italy. Meanwhile, three French armies encircled along the Maginot Line surrender.

10,000 Afrikaner women march to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to protest South African involvement in the European war.

Paul Hindemith (44) takes up residence in Lenox, Massachusetts. He is there to teach at the Berkshire Music Center.

**23 June 1940** Hitler makes his tour of Paris, especially (as an architecture buff) stopping at the Opéra. Suitably impressed he waxes, “This is the most beautiful theatre in the world.”

Over the past week, the USSR has effected the occupation of the Baltic States.

Darius Milhaud (47), in Lisbon, writes to Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge asking for help. He plans to flee to the United States and needs work.

*Semyon Kotko* op.81, an opera by Sergey Prokofiev (49) to words of Katayev and the composer, is performed for the first time, in the Stanislavsky Theatre, Moscow. See 27 December 1943.

**24 June 1940** An armistice between France and Italy is signed in Rome.

**25 June 1940** Hostilities between France and Germany officially cease.

In Lewisohn Stadium, New York, two works by American composers are performed for the first time: *And They Lynched Him on a Tree*, a cantata by William Grant Still (45) to words of Chapin, and *Challenge 1940* for baritone, chorus, and orchestra by Roy Harris (42).

**26 June 1940** The Soviet Union demands Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina from Romania.

Turkey declares neutrality in the European war.

After almost four years, Henry Cowell (43) is released from San Quentin Penitentiary on parole. He will become “musical secretary” to Percy Grainger (57) in White Plains, New York.

**27 June 1940** After Romania refuses to cede Bessarabia and Bukovina, the USSR invades the country.

**28 June 1940** Soviet troops occupy Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, forcing Romania to cede the provinces.

Marshal Italo Balbo, Italian governor of Libya, is shot down by Italian anti-aircraft guns over Tobruk. The official explanation is mistaken identity, but some think Mussolini ordered it.

German planes bomb Guernsey.

**29 June 1940** The French government moves from Bordeaux to Clermont-Ferrand.

US President Franklin Roosevelt signs the Alien Registration Act, requiring that all aliens be registered and fingerprinted and making it illegal to advocate the violent overthrow of the government.

Paul Klee dies in Muralto, Switzerland at the age of 60.

**30 June 1940** German troops land unopposed on the Channel Islands.

Soviet troops land at Ismail (Izmail), Bessarabia.

Hitler orders the seizure of all art in Paris owned by the state or by Jews.

**1 July 1940** The French government moves from Clermont-Ferrand to Vichy.

The psychiatric Institute at Görden begins operations as the center for killing “mentally defective” children.

Jersey surrenders to invading Germans.

**2 July 1940** Adolf Hitler orders his high command to prepare for the invasion of the British Isles.

The converted Blue Star Liner *Arandora Star*, carrying German and Italian prisoners to Canada, is struck by a torpedo from a German U-boat northwest of Scotland. Over 800 people are killed but hundreds, mostly prisoners, are saved by *HMCS St. Laurent*.

Alderney surrenders to invading Germans.

**3 July 1940** British forces take over all French ships now in British ports and in Alexandria, Egypt. French naval forces at Mers el Kebir near Oran, Algeria refuse to surrender and are fired upon by the Royal Navy. Three large ships and several smaller ones are destroyed. 1,297 people are killed, 341 are injured.

Sark surrenders to invading Germans.

**4 July 1940** Italian forces capture Kassala, Sudan.

Pro-German businessman Ion Gigurtu replaces Gheorghe Tatarescu as Prime Minister of Romania.

The converted merchant ship *HMS Foylebank* is seriously damaged by German warplanes near Portland. She will sink tomorrow with a loss of 176 of her crew of 298.

*This is Our Time* (Secular Cantata no.1) by William Schuman (29) to words of Taggard, is performed for the first time, in Lewisohn Stadium, New York.

**5 July 1940** The French government in Vichy breaks off relations with Great Britain.

US President Roosevelt invokes the Export Control Act forbidding the export of aircraft parts, minerals or chemicals to Japan without a license.

**6 July 1940** The Japanese government dissolves the Social Mass Party. Within a few weeks, all political parties in Japan will cease to exist.

As Hitler makes a triumphal parade through Berlin, German bombers begin daylight raids on Britain.

*Something to Please Everybody* for recorder, piano, and percussion by Lou Harrison (23) is performed for the first time, at Mills College, Oakland. Also premiered is Harrison’s *16 to 24* for piano and percussion.

**8 July 1940** The opening ceremonies for the Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood in Lennox, Massachusetts take place. The first season includes the residency of Paul Hindemith (44) and Aaron Copland (39). Among the students are Norman Dello Joio (27), Leonard Bernstein (21) and Lukas Foss (17).

Fire destroys part of the summer home of John Alden Carpenter (64) in Beverly, Massachusetts. Among the items lost are Carpenter’s piano and some manuscripts.

Transcontinental and Western Air (later TWA) introduces the Boeing Stratoliner into service on a flight from New York to Los Angeles. It is the first commercial airliner with a pressurized cabin.

**10 July 1940** The German Luftwaffe begins heavy bombing of Britain.

In Vichy, the French National Assembly votes to end the Third French Republic and set up a “French State” under the dictatorship of Marshal Henri Petain.

Romania withdraws from the League of Nations.

**11 July 1940** Henri Philippe Pétain replaces Albert François Lebrun as President of France.

**12 July 1940** Leonard Bernstein (21) conducts at Tanglewood for the first time, as a student of Serge Koussevitzky. He directs the Institute Orchestra in Randall Thompson’s Symphony no.2.

*Panambí*, a ballet by Alberto Ginastera (24) to a story by Errico after a Guarani legend, is performed for the first time, in the Teatro Colón, Buenos Aires. See 27 November 1937.

**13 July 1940** Manuel de Falla (63) is invested with the Gran Cruz de la Orden Civil de Alfonso X el Sabio*,* in Argentina.

**15 July 1940** Italian forces from Ethiopia take Moyale, Kenya.

Darius Milhaud (47) and his wife arrive in New York aboard the *Excambion* from Lisbon. Milhaud has fled the Germans who undoubtedly would not approve of his ancestry. They are met at the dock by Kurt Weill (40) and Lotte Lenya.

**16 July 1940** Ex-communist John Leech testifies in secret session before the House Un-American Activities Committee in Washington today and tomorrow. He names 42 members of the movie industry as communists, including James Cagney, Humphrey Bogart, and Frederic March.

The *Physical Review* receives the article “Artificially Radioactive Element 85” from Dale R. Corson, Kenneth Ross Mackenzie, and Emilio Segrè of the University of California at Berkeley. The three announce their discovery of Astatine. It will be published in the October issue.

**17 July 1940** The Vichy government orders that Jews not born in France be denied employment by the government.

**18 July 1940** Francis Poulenc (41) is demobilized from the French army.

John Cage (27) gives an important all-percussion concert at Mills College, Oakland, featuring his own music, as well as that of Henry Cowell (43) and others. Among the performers are Lou Harrison (23), Cage, and his wife Xenia.

**19 July 1940** In a speech to the Reichstag, Hitler offers peace between Germany and Great Britain in return for British acceptance of German domination of the continent.

The Italian cruiser *Bartolomeo Colleoni* is sunk by an Australian ship off Crete. 121 of her crew are lost.

**20 July 1940** Six kilometers of the Arroyo Seco Parkway open, joining Pasadena and Los Angeles. It is the first part of the Los Angeles freeway system.

**21 July 1940** Prince Fumimaro Konoye replaces Mitsumasa Yonai as Prime Minister of Japan.

The Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republics are created.

**22 July 1940** The government of the French-British territory of New Hebrides (Vanuatu) declares its support for the Free French movement of Charles de Gaulle.

A Czechoslovak National Committee is established in London and recognized by Great Britain under President Edvard Benes and Prime Minister Jan Srámek.

British Foreign Secretary Lord Halifax makes a radio broadcast rejecting Hitler’s peace offer.

Francis Poulenc (41) arrives at the home of relatives in Brive-la-Gaillarde.

The Duke Ellington (41) band records *Harlem Airshaft* in New York*.*

**25 July 1940** The United States prohibits the export of oil and metal outside the Americas or Britain. The action is aimed at Japan, whose oil stocks immediately begin to diminish.

**26 July 1940** A Free-French administration takes over in Côte d’Ivoire.

*Pastoral and Fiddler’s Delight* for orchestra by Henry Cowell (43) is performed for the first time, in New York.

**27 July 1940** *Billboard* magazine publishes the first record popularity chart.

Bugs Bunny makes his debut in *A Wild Hare* starring with Elmer Fudd.

Henry Cowell’s (43) dance music *Fanfare: Variations to a scenario by Van Tuyl* is performed for the first time, at Mills College in Oakland, California. Also premiered is Cowell’s Chaconne for piano.

**28 July 1940** Hitler meets with Slovak leaders in Salzburg and orders them to take up certain measures including a German-like regime over Jews.

**29 July 1940** Germany annexes Eupen and Malmedy from Belgium.

**31 July 1940** Organ Sonata no.3 by Paul Hindemith (44) is performed for the first time, at the Tanglewood Music Festival, Lennox, Massachusetts.

**2 August 1940** The Soviet Union creates the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic in lands taken from Romania in June.

A French military court in Clermont-Ferrand condemns General Charles de Gaulle to death for desertion.

*Omnipotent Chair* for bass and percussion by Lou Harrison (23) is performed for the first time, at Mills College, Oakland.

**3 August 1940** Italian forces from Ethiopia invade British Somaliland.

The USSR annexes Lithuania.

**4 August 1940** One of Paul Hindemith’s (44) students at Tanglewood, Charles Naginski, drowns in the Housatonic River. Officially an accident, the fact that he could not swim and that he went alone suggests design to some. There is speculation that the rigor of Hindemith’s approach drove him to it.

*Le cortège funèbre* for orchestra by Darius Milhaud (47) from his score to the film *Espoir* is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the CBS radio network conducted by the composer.

**5 August 1940** Italian troops take Hargeysa in British Somaliland.

The USSR annexes Latvia.

Great Britain recognizes the Polish government-in-exile in London.

In Paul Hindemith’s (44) composition class at Tanglewood, an air of underlying tension pervades the class. Harold Shapero will remember, “After about two hours went by, the tension got extreme. And Hindemith suddenly burst out and said, ‘They say I killed him.’ Nobody could reply to that. Hindemith wasn’t unsympathetic. He tried to figure out what he’d done and if it could have been his fault. He did talk about it. And then we let it lie, and that was the end of it.” (Copland/Perlis 2012, 131)

Incidental music to O’Neill’s play *The Emperor Jones* by Colin McPhee (40) is performed for the first time, in Westport, Connecticut.

**6 August 1940** Italian forces capture Oodweyne in British Somaliland.

The USSR annexes Estonia.

**8 August 1940** A Jewish Statute is issued in Romania placing severe restrictions on Jewish employment, education, and rights.

**11 August 1940** In a German raid on Weymouth and Portland 70 planes are destroyed.

**12 August 1940** After travelling through occupied France, Spain, and Portugal, Virgil Thomson (43) boards a ship in Lisbon, bound for the United States.

In a German raid on Portsmouth and the southern airfields 53 planes are destroyed.

Because of the incapacitation of President Jaime Gerardo Roberto Marcelino Ortiz Lizardi, Ramón S. Castillo Barrionuevo takes over as acting President of Argentina.

**13 August 1940** The Day of the Eagle begins constant daily air attacks by the Germans on Britain. Today 1,485 planes flying 2,500 sorties attack the Royal Air Force. 58 total planes are lost.

**15 August 1940** The Luftwaffe sends 940 planes against southern England, including a bomb attack on Tyneside. 109 planes are lost.

British forces withdraw from Tug Argan British Somaliland in the face of the Italian attack.

Arthur Honegger (48), in Saint-Hilaire-sur-Garonne, writes to Paul Sacher that he is not allowed to leave the area but hopes to get to Switzerland next month.

**16 August 1940** The Germans fly 2,491 sorties over Britain. 66 planes are destroyed.

The RAF bombs Milan.

The Vichy government prohibits aliens (Jews) to work as physicians, dentists, or pharmacists. This order applies to the colonies as well.

US President Franklin Roosevelt creates the Office for the Coordination of Commercial and Cultural Relations between the American Republics. See 30 July 1941.

**17 August 1940** The Germans are forced to reduce the size of their daily attacks on Britain.

The Duke of Windsor (former King Edward VIII) arrives in the Bahamas to serve as governor.

Part I of *Ancient Desert Drone* for orchestra by Henry Cowell (43) is performed for the first time, in Saugerties, New York. See 12 January 1941.

**18 August 1940** The Permanent Joint Board of Defense is created by Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King and US President Roosevelt at Ogdensburg, New York.

**19 August 1940** For the first time since the Day of the Eagle there is no air attack on Britain.

The British complete the evacuation of 5,700 men from Berbera as Italians enter the city, thus ending the Somaliland campaign.

**20 August 1940** Italian bombers attack Gibraltar.

Referring to the RAF in the House of Commons, Prime Minister Churchill states that, “Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few.”

Former Red Army commander Lev Trotsky is mortally wounded near Mexico City by a Stalinist agent identified by Mexican authorities as Roman Mercador del Rio, a Spanish national. Trotsky will die tomorrow. The murderer, who accomplished his deed with an ax, will serve 20 years imprisonment.

**23 August 1940** Beginning this day, German planes (1,000 per day on average) bomb England every day for three weeks. One of the bombers accidentally bombs London proper, killing nine civilians.

**24 August 1940** Howard Florey and Ernst Chain of Oxford University announce their studies of the antibacterial qualities of penicillin, in *The Lancet*.

**25 August 1940** An off-course British bomber accidentally drops bombs on the center of Berlin.

**26 August 1940** The Luftwaffe attacks Portsmouth and the southern airfields. 76 planes are destroyed.

Governor Adolphe Félix Sylvestre Éboué of Chad in French Equatorial Africa declares for the Free-French government.

**27 August 1940** The government of Vichy France repeals all laws against race hatred.

Serenata from *Serestas*, a cycle for voice and piano by Heitor Villa-Lobos (53), is performed for the first time.

**28 August 1940** Free-French administrations take over from the former Vichy governments of French Cameroun, Middle Congo, and the Ubangi-Shari territory.

The RAF again drops bombs accidentally on Berlin. Six people are killed.

50 German planes are lost in attacks over Britain, including a night raid on Liverpool.

**29 August 1940** The Germans lose 26 planes in raids over Britain.

**30 August 1940** Germany mediates a territorial dispute in the Balkans in the Second Vienna Award. Transylvania is transferred from Romania to Hungary (42,492 sq km and 2,500,000 pop.). Bulgaria receives southern Dobruja.

Slovakia issues an order requiring the registration of all Jewish property.

800 German aircraft attack RAF airfields by day.

German planes drop incendiary bombs on London by night. In today’s action 62 planes are destroyed.

**31 August 1940** German air forces attack British airfields. 80 planes are lost.

Seán Lester of Ireland replaces Joseph Louis Anne Avenol of France as Secretary-General of the League of Nations.

**1 September 1940** German planes attack British airfields.

Italian forces capture Buna, Kenya.

**2 September 1940** German planes attack the southern airfields by day and London by night.

**3 September 1940** Pieter Sjoerd Gerbrandy replaces Dirk Jan de Geer as Prime Minister of the Netherlands government-in-exile, in London.

German planes attack the southern British airfields.

A law is passed by the Slovak Parliament empowering the government to expropriate the rights, wealth, and property of Jews.

The United States transfers 50 aging destroyers to Great Britain in return for leases on British bases in Newfoundland and the Caribbean.

**4 September 1940** A Free French administration takes over in French Oceania.

German planes attack the British airfields and an aircraft factory at Weybridge.

The CBS Color Television System is demonstrated to the public for the first time, from the Chrysler Building in New York.

The America First Committee is established by a law student at Yale University. Its goal is to keep the United States out of World War II.

**5 September 1940** Conservative nationalist Ion Antonescu replaces Ion Gigurtu as Prime Minister of Romania and assumes dictatorial powers.

German planes attack the British airfields.

The Nuremberg Laws, reducing Jews to second-class citizens, are introduced in Luxembourg. Occupation forces seize all Jewish-owned businesses.

**6 September 1940** German planes attack British airfields and an aircraft factory at Brooklands. 268 planes have been destroyed in the first six days of September.

King Carol I of Romania abdicates and goes into exile in Mexico. His son, Former King Mihai I resumes the throne.

The first of the 50 US destroyers are handed over to the British at Halifax, Nova Scotia.

**7 September 1940** The Luftwaffe abandons airfield bombing and sends 300 bombers and 600 fighters against London in daytime raids. 69 planes are lost, 448 people are killed on the ground. The attack is resumed at night.

Representatives of Romania and Bulgaria sign the Treaty of Craiova. Romania hands over southern Dobruja and agrees to a population exchange.

Concerto for small orchestra by David Diamond (25) is performed for the first time, in Saratoga, New York.

**8 September 1940** 200 German planes attack the London electricity station and railway lines. 109 planes are lost.

**9 September 1940** The administration of French India claims allegiance to Free France.

200 German bombers are sent over London. 47 planes are lost.

Francis Poulenc (41) arrives back in Paris from Brive-la-Gaillarde. He made the trip on a cattle train.

**10 September 1940** Paul Hindemith (44) departs Lenox, Massachusetts. He will move to New Haven, Connecticut after meeting his wife in New York as she arrives from Lisbon.

**11 September 1940** German planes attack London and Southampton. Among the buildings hit is Buckingham Palace. 54 planes are lost.

At Dartmouth College, during a meeting of the American Mathematical Society, Dr. George Stibitz sends problems to the Complex Number Calculator in New York by teletype. He receives results the same way. This is the first instance of remote operation of an electrical digital computer. The device was invented last January by Stibitz and Samuel Williams of Bell Laboratories.

*Malambo* op.7 for piano by Alberto Ginastera (24) is performed for the first time, in Montevideo.

**12 September 1940** German planes attack Liverpool, Swansea, and Bristol. London is struck by night.

The cave paintings of Lescaux are discovered by five schoolboys near Montignac, France. They date to 15,000 B.C.

The Tizard Committee convenes in Washington. This is a group of six sent by Prime Minister Churchill to bring all of Britain’s most important military secrets to the US for further development.

**13 September 1940** Italian forces move across the border from Libya into Egypt and occupy Sollum (Salûm).

Italian forces advance 30 km into Kenya.

Bohuslav Martinu (49), in Aix-en-Provence, writes to Milos Safránek that they have been granted visas by the US consulate. The visas were largely the work of Safránek in New York, while Paul Sacher worked on the Vichy government to allow them to leave.

A few minutes after the royal family returns to Buckingham Palace, a bomb explodes 75 meters from the King and Queen. They are unhurt. The Queen remarks, “I’m glad we’ve been bombed. It makes me feel I can look the East End in the face.”

*The Silly Little Mouse*, a film with music by Dmitri Shostakovich (33), is shown for the first time.

**14 September 1940** Romania is proclaimed a “National Legionary State” with the Iron Guard as the only legal party.

Daytime attacks on London resume after a two-day lull. Night attacks are continuous. 28 planes are lost.

The United States institutes the first peacetime conscription in its history.

**15 September 1940** The Luftwaffe sends 230 bombers and 700 fighters to attack London, Southampton, Bristol, Cardiff, Liverpool, and Manchester. 89 planes are lost.

The Soviet Union begins conscripting 19-20-year-olds.

Canada begins to conscript single men aged 21-24.

Paul Hindemith (44) takes up residence in New Haven, Connecticut where he will be teaching at Yale University.

In the Swedish general election, the Social Democratic Party attains a majority in the Riksdag for the first time. All other parties lose seats.

**16 September 1940** British carrier planes attack Benghazi, Libya.

US President Roosevelt signs the Selective Training and Service Act, introducing conscription.

**17 September 1940** The Germans order the expropriation of all Polish property owned by Poles who have fled the country or by Jews.

Hitler orders the establishment of a Special Action Team for Art designed to plunder the artworks of the occupied territories.

Hitler orders his high command to postpone the invasion of England.

Italian forces reach Sîdi Barrâni, Egypt, 380 km west of Alexandria.

A filmed version of the musical *Strike Up the Band* with music by George Gershwin (†3) is released.

**18 September 1940** Just after midnight. The British ship *SS City of Benares* carrying British children to the safety of Canada is torpedoed by a German submarine in the North Atlantic. 294 people are killed.

The Italian advance in Egypt is halted.

The Luftwaffe bombs London by day. 31 planes are lost.

**19 September 1940** An administration loyal to free France takes over in New Caledonia.

Over the next week, the Germans will stage minor air raids on Britain. 81 planes will be destroyed.

**20 September 1940** The Belgian government-in-exile moves from Vichy to London.

**21 September 1940** In national elections in Australia, the United Australia/Country coalition loses its majority, but continues to govern through independent support.

A vehicle prototype designed by Karl Pabst for the Bantam Car Company of Butler, Pennsylvania, is submitted to the US Army for approval. Submitted to road tests, it will be accepted. (the vehicle is now known as the Jeep)

**22 September 1940** The Hanoi Convention is concluded. Japan agrees to respect French interests in the Far East in return for allowing the Japanese military to use French facilities in Indochina. Within hours, Japan introduces troops to the area.

**23 September 1940** British and Free French forces attack Dakar, Senegal.

The RAF bombs Berlin.

SS Commander Heinrich Himmler orders that all gold fillings be removed from concentration camp inmates and delivered to the SS account at the Reichsbank.

**24 September 1940** *Jud süss*, a film warning gentiles about the “evils of the Jewish race”, opens in cinemas throughout Germany and occupied Europe.

**25 September 1940** British and Free French forces are driven away from Dakar, Senegal by Vichy defenders.

Over the next week, the Luftwaffe attacks Britain daily, mostly aircraft factories. 225 planes will be lost.

Norwegian Nazi Josef Terboven deposes King Haakon VII in absentia and sets up a Council of State consisting entirely of Nazi sympathizers. Vidkun Quisling is named to head the new government. This act immediately creates a Norwegian resistance movement.

**26 September 1940** Ralph Hawkes writes to Benjamin Britten (26) in America about the hostility towards young Britons not in the country in its hour of need. “There is no doubt at all that we are going to have difficulty in getting performances of your works and caustic comment has been passed on your being away.” (Kildea, 162-163)

Hanns Eisler (42) attempts to cross from Mexico into the United States with a permanent visa but he is denied entry.

**27 September 1940** Germany, Italy, and Japan sign the Tripartite Pact in Berlin.

In occupied France, Jews are required to carry special identity cards. Jewish shopkeepers must advertise that fact with signs in their windows.

Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen, of the Jewish family which formerly owned CF Peters music publishers, dies of typhoid fever in a French internment camp in Perpignan. After getting his parents out of Germany, he himself escaped to Belgium, which he fled with the German invasion. He was arrested on his way to Spain. He was 31 years old.

**28 September 1940** The works of 842 authors are ordered removed from French bookshelves.

Hitler orders the economy of Germany be redirected to an invasion of the Soviet Union.

**1 October 1940** One of the first modern limited access highways in North America, the Pennsylvania Turnpike, opens to traffic.

**2 October 1940** Governor Ludwig Fischer of Warsaw orders the beginning of the transfer of Jews into a ghetto. This will not be made public until 14 October.

**3 October 1940** All Jews in Warsaw are ordered to move to the predominantly Jewish district of the city, which is to be walled in. The 100,000 Poles living there are required to move out. Once the ghetto is created, 400,000 people will live where 250,000 people live now.

The Vichy government issues the Jewish Statute defining a Jew along Nuremberg lines and denying government employment to all Jews. Quotas are established for Jews working in any sector which might influence public opinion, such as education and entertainment.

**4 October 1940** Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini meet at the Brenner Pass in the Alps.

Large numbers of foreign-born Jews are arrested in Vichy France and held in camps.

A second revision of *Orpheus* by Carl Orff (45) to a translation of Striggio by Günther is performed for the first time, in Dresden. See 17 April 1925 and 13 October 1929.

**5 October 1940** Hitler orders the suspension of daylight raids on Britain, but night raids are intensified.

*El Renacuajo Paseador*, a ballet pantomime for marionettes by Silvestre Revueltas (40), is performed for the first time, in Mexico City. At the same time, the composer is found unconscious on a street in the city and taken to the home of his doctor.

**6 October 1940** 00:10 Silvestre Revueltas dies in Mexico City of bronchial pneumonia and the cumulative effects of alcoholism, aged 40 years, nine months, and six days. The oration at his funeral will be written and performed by Pablo Neruda.

**7 October 1940** German troops seize the Romanian oil fields.

Henryk Lutoslawski, brother of Witold (27), a Polish prisoner of war, dies in the labor camps of northeast Siberia.

**8 October 1940** Under German pressure, the Hungarian government institutes further anti-Semitic laws.

Béla Bartók (59) and his wife give their farewell performance at the Budapest Academy of Music, a few days before they leave Hungary.

**10 October 1940** The Romanian government permits German troops into the country.

Virgil Thomson (43) is hired as music critic for the *New York Herald Tribune*.

Fulgencio E. Batista y Zaldivar becomes the dictator of Cuba.

**11 October 1940** German planes attack Liverpool.

German bombs hit Center Court, Wimbledon causing extensive damage but no injuries.

Symphony in C op.46 by Hans Pfitzner (71) is performed for the first time, in Frankfurt-am-Main.

**12 October 1940** British and Italian ships engage southeast of Sicily. The Italian destroyer *Artigliere* is sunk with the loss of 132 of her crew.

Béla Bartók (59) and his wife depart Budapest making for Lisbon and America. He will never see Hungary again.

Igor Stravinsky (58) views a screening of *Fantasia* at the Disney Studios in Los Angeles. He is not entirely unhappy.

**15 October 1940** In very heavy bombing of London, 400 people are killed. During the attack, a high explosive bomb obliterates Morley College. Later this month, its newly appointed Director of Music, Michael Tippett (35), will begin choir rehearsal in a nearby school.

Charlie Chaplin’s film *The Great Dictator* is shown for the first time, in New York.

**16 October 1940** In the United States, registration begins under the Selective Service Act.

Tres Piezas op.6 for piano by Alberto Ginastera (24) is performed for the first time, in Montevideo.

**17 October 1940** Symphony no.1 by Darius Milhaud (48) is performed for the first time, in Chicago the composer conducting.

**18 October 1940** New laws in Vichy France bar Jews from public service or decision-making positions in industry and media.

Registration of Jewish-owned businesses begins in German-occupied France.

**20 October 1940** After having arrived at 02:00 and only a few hours sleep, Béla Bartók (59) and his wife, without luggage, board ship in Lisbon for the United States.

**21 October 1940** *For Whom the Bell Tolls* by Ernest Hemingway is published by Charles Scribner’s Sons.

**22 October 1940** Jewish businesses in the Netherlands are required to register.

The Germans expel 7,000 Jews from Germany into Vichy France.

The destroyer *HMCS Margaree* collides with a freighter she is escorting in the North Atlantic. *Margaree* sinks with the loss of 142 of the 176 aboard.

**23 October 1940** Hitler meets with his fellow fascist, Francisco Franco, at Hendaye, where the French-Spanish border meets the Bay of Biscay. The Führer is unable to browbeat the Caudillo into entering the war.

**24 October 1940** Hitler meets Marshal Pétain at Montoire, 45 km north of Tours, but is unable to convince him into an alliance.

A Belgian government-in-exile is constituted in London.

Pursuant to the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, a 40-hour workweek goes into effect in the United States.

First Symphony by John Alden Carpenter (64) is performed for the first time, in Chicago to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. It is an almost complete revision of his Symphony no.1 “Sermons in Stone.” See 5 June 1917.

**26 October 1940** Soviet troops occupy Romanian islands at the mouth of the Danube.

As the composer, his wife and child reach Paris from Saint-Hilaire-sur-Garonne, *Nicolas de flue*, a dramatic oratorio by Arthur Honegger (48) to words of de Rougemont, is performed for the first time, in a concert setting in Solothurn. See 31 May 1941.

**27 October 1940** Charles de Gaulle sets up the Empire Defense Council in Brazzaville, inviting all French overseas possessions to join.

**28 October 1940** Italian forces in Albania invade Greece bombing Patras. Greece invokes British guarantees and the Churchill government agrees to honor them.

Adolf Hitler meets with Benito Mussolini in Florence. Hitler has known about the invasion of Greece for three hours.

Iannis Xenakis (18) passes his entrance examination to the Polytechnic School in Athens.

Decrees in Belgium order the registration of all Jews and bars Jews from government, law, teaching, newspaper editing, and broadcasting.

Igor Stravinsky (58) signs a contract with Walt Disney to use *The Firebird, Renard,* and *Fireworks* in future Disney films, in return for $1,500. Disney will never use the music.

**29 October 1940** Béla Bartók (59) and his wife arrive in New York from Europe.

The first draft lottery under the Selective Training and Service Act takes place in Washington.

**30 October 1940** String Quartet no.10 by Darius Milhaud (48) is performed for the first time, at the Library of Congress, Washington. He is awarded the Coolidge Medal.

*American Creed* for orchestra by Roy Harris (42) is performed for the first time, in Orchestral Hall, Chicago.

**3 November 1940** This is the first night since 7 September that no bombs fall on Great Britain.

Incidental music to Anouilh’s play *Leocadia* by Francis Poulenc (41) is performed for the first time, in Théâtre Michodière, Paris.

Béla Bartók (59) and his wife Ditta Pásztory give their first recital since arriving in the United States, in Town Hall, New York.

**5 November 1940** The armed merchant cruiser *HMS Jervis Bay* is sunk in the North Atlantic by a German surface ship while escorting a convoy. Of a crew of 254, 68 are rescued.

Voting in the United States ensures the reelection of President Franklin Roosevelt to an unprecedented third term over Wendell Willkie. Democratic majorities in both houses of Congress remain essentially unchanged.

**6 November 1940** Italian forces reach Igoumenitsa, 17 km inside Greece.

Nadia Boulanger (53) and Ignacy Paderewsi arrive at the port of New York aboard the *Excambion* from Portugal.

Symphony no.3 by Florence Price (53) is performed for the first time, at the Detroit Institute of the Arts.

**7 November 1940** Free French troops land at Libreville. Over the next week they will gain control of French Equatorial Africa.

The Tacoma Narrows Bridge, a suspension bridge 1,810 meters long in Washington State, collapses in 65 kph winds. It opened last 1 July.

Symphony no.6 by Frederick S. Converse (†0) is performed for the first time, in Indianapolis.

Symphony in C by Igor Stravinsky (58), commissioned to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, is performed for the first time, in Orchestra Hall, Chicago under the baton of the composer.

**8 November 1940** Greek troops pin down the Italians in the Pindus Gorges taking 5,000 prisoners.

FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover directs his New York office to begin an investigation into the private life of Marc Blitzstein (35) because of his communist activities.

The second and third movements of Roy Harris’ (42) ballet *Song of the West* are performed for the first time, at Madison College, Harrisonburg, Virginia. See 17 January 1942.

Sonatine for organ, pedals alone op.11 by Vincent Persichetti (25) is performed for the first time, in Arch Street Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia by the composer.

**9 November 1940** Neville Chamberlain dies in Heckfield, Hampshire, at the age of 71.

Anton Webern (56) writes to the Reichmusikkammer asking for a grant from the Künstlerdank, a fund for musicians in financial difficulty. The request is granted, even though his music is not desirable, he is politically acceptable. His son is a member of the party.

*Concierto de Aranjuez* for guitar and orchestra by Joaquín Rodrigo (38) is performed for the first time, in Palau de la Música Catalana, Barcelona.

A suite from the ballet *Billy the Kid* by Aaron Copland (39) is performed for the first time, at Radio City, New York. See 6 October 1938 and 24 May 1939.

**10 November 1940** An earthquake centered in Vrancea County, Romania kills at least 1,600 people.

**11 November 1940** British air forces attack the home port of the Italian fleet at Taranto, 250 km east of Naples. They disable half the fleet.

The first official mass execution takes place at Dachau concentration camp. 55 Polish intellectuals are killed.

A massive blizzard crosses the middle United States causing around 150 deaths.

*The Adventures of Korzinkina*, a film with music by Dmitri Shostakovich (34), is shown for the first time.

**12 November 1940** A Free French administration takes over in French Equatorial Africa.

**13 November 1940** Walt Disney’s *Fantasia* is shown for the first time, at the Broadway Theatre, New York.

**14 November 1940** By this date, all Greek forces have moved over to the offensive against the Italians.

449 German planes attack Coventry in a raid that continues until 06:30. A firestorm ensues in which 568 people are killed and 60,000 of 75,000 buildings are destroyed, including the great cathedral. See 30 May 1962.

Incidental music to Lope de Vega’s play *The Valencian Widow* by Aram Khachaturian (37) is performed for the first time, in Lenin Komsomol Theatre, Moscow.

*Sanctus* for alto and piano by Lou Harrison (23) is performed for the first time, at the San Francisco Museum of Art.

**15 November 1940** Greeks break through the Italian line around Mt. Morava.

**16 November 1940** The Warsaw ghetto is closed even though the transfer of Jews in and Poles out is not complete. The ghetto covers 2.4% of the city’s land and contains 30% of the city’s population. The border is 18 km long with a wall three meters high.

Michael Tippett (35) applies for provisional registration as a conscientious objector.

Violin Concerto by Aram Khachaturian (37) is performed for the first time, in Moscow. Sergey Prokofiev (49) and Dmitri Shostakovich (34) attend along with a host of Soviet musical luminaries. It is a tremendous success.

A British air raid on Hamburg kills 233 people.

**17 November 1940** German bombs destroy the Horsley Street wardrobe and scene store in Southeast London. Scenery and costumes for the D’Oyly Carte Opera Company’s productions of *The Sorcerer*, *HMS Pinafore*, *Princess Ida,* and *Ruddigore* are destroyed.

**18 November 1940** *Evocations* for piano by Carl Ruggles (64) is performed for the first time, in a private setting in Greenwich, Connecticut. See 31 January 1941.

**19 November 1940** Greek forces push the Italians back over the River Kulamas.

Switzerland dissolves the National Socialist Party for subversive activities.

Royden Sanders receives a US patent for a radio altimeter.

**20 November 1940** Hungary signs the Tripartite Pact to the great dismay of Prime Minister Teleki’s more moderate followers.

Paul Hindemith (44) is awarded the Howland Memorial Prize by President Charles Seymour of Yale University. It is the highest honor given by Yale.

**21 November 1940** *Die Walküre* by Richard Wagner (†57) is performed for the first time at the Bolshoy Theatre in Moscow in a production by Sergey Eisenstein. The audience includes many important officials of the Soviet and Nazi governments.

**22 November 1940** Greek forces, after counterattacking against the Italians, capture Koritza (Korçë), Albania.

*Jeune France* is founded by Pierre Schaeffer (30) and several others “to receive all artistic and cultural projects and to provide work for young, unemployed artists...”

A suite from the ballet *The Incredible Flutist* by Walter Piston (46) is performed for the first time, in Pittsburgh. See 30 May 1938.

**23 November 1940** Romania adheres to the Tripartite Pact.

Piano Quintet op.57 by Dmitri Shostakovich (34) is performed publicly for the first time, in the Moscow Conservatory Malyi Hall, the composer at the keyboard. This work wins Shostakovich a Stalin Prize.

*La Coronela*, a ballet by Silvestre Revueltas (†0), is performed for the first time, in Mexico City.

**24 November 1940** Italian bombers from Libya attack the British fleet at Alexandria, Egypt.

Slovakia adheres to the Tripartite Pact and the Anti-Comintern Pact.

Four Irish Tales for piano and orchestra by Henry Cowell (43) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of radio station WNYC, originating in New York the composer at the keyboard.

Music for the radio play *The Dynasts* after Hardy by Benjamin Britten (27) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the CBS radio network originating in New York.

**25 November 1940** The *SS Patria* intended by the British to carry 1,800 Jewish refugees from Palestine to Mauritius is blown up by Haganah in the port of Haifa. Intended only to damage the ship and prevent it from sailing, the bomb sinks the ship in 15 minutes. Over 250 people are killed.

Columbia University confers an honorary doctorate on Béla Bartók (59).

**26 November 1940** Arthur Lourié (49) marries his third wife, Elisabeta Alyekseyevna, Countess Belyovskaya-Zhukovskaya, a descendant of Tsar Alyeksandr II, in Amélie-les Bains in the eastern Pyrenees.

Piano Sonata no.6 op.82 by Sergey Prokofiev (49) is performed for the first time in a concert setting, at Moscow Conservatory. See 8 April 1940.

**27 November 1940** The Romanian Iron Guard murders 64 important politicians and generals including former Prime Ministers Nicolae Iorga and Virgil Madgearu. The murders will continue into January.

After protests by teachers and students at Delft University against anti-Jewish laws, Germans close the university and forbid students to enroll elsewhere.

**28 November 1940** *The Eternal Jew*, a film purporting to show the destructive result of Jews on history, opens in Berlin.

*La camera dei disegni*, a ballet by Alfredo Casella (57), is performed for the first time, in Rome.

**29 November 1940** Symphony no.5 op.107 by Frederick S. Converse (†0) is performed for the first time, in Indianapolis.

**30 November 1940** A British ship uses radar to detect a submarine for the first time, in the Bay of Biscay.

A revised version of *Klage der Ariadne* by Carl Orff (45) to his own translation of Rinuccini, is performed for the first time, in Gera. See 16 April 1925. Also premiered is a revised version of Orff’s *Tanz der Spröden* to a translation of Rinuccini by Günther.

**1 December 1940** Miguel Avila Camacho replaces Lázaro Cárdenas as President of Mexico.

Incidental music to Garcia Lorca’s play *Blood Wedding* by Otto Luening (40) is performed for the first time, at Bennington College, Bennington, Vermont.

**2 December 1940** *HMS Forfar*, a refitted passenger liner, is sunk by a German submarine west of Ireland. 172 men are lost. 21 are rescued.

Two songs for voice and piano by Roy Harris (42) are performed for the first time, in Cos Cob, Connecticut: *Evening Song* to words of Tennyson and *La Primavera*, a folksong arrangement.

**4 December 1940** Greek troops enter Premeti (Përmet), Albania.

**6 December 1940** Greek troops capture Sarandë, Albania.

Violin Concerto by Arnold Schoenberg (66) is performed for the first time, in Philadelphia.

**7 December 1940** *Finlandia Hymn* op.26/7 for male chorus by Jean Sibelius to words of Koskenniemi is performed for the first time, in Helsinki on the eve of the composer’s 75th birthday.

Two Choruses on Jacobean Poems for female chorus by Ernst Krenek (40) to words of Drummond and Raleigh, are performed for the first time, in Skinner Recital Hall, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York.

Béla Bartók (59) moves into a furnished apartment in Forest Hills, New York.

Sonatine for two violins op.221 by Darius Milhaud (48) is performed for the first time, in San Francisco. Also premiered is Milhaud’s Sonatine à trois op.221b for violin, viola, and cello.

**8 December 1940** Greek troops capture Argyrocastro (Gjirokastër), Albania.

The British cargo/passenger ship *SS Calabria* is sunk by a German submarine 500 km west of Ireland. All 360 aboard, including over 200 Indians, are lost.

Four Romances on Poems by Pushkin op.45 for voice and piano by Dmitri Shostakovich (34) are performed for the first time, in Polytechnic Museum Hall, Moscow the composer at the piano.

Queen’s Hall, London is damaged in an air raid. Nearly all the doors and windows are blown out.

**9 December 1940** Allied (Britain-India-Australia) forces attack Italians at Sîdi Barrâni, Egypt. They easily overwhelm the forward defenders and send them into retreat.

1,560 Jewish refugees from Europe are deported from Palestine to Mauritius.

Sextet for piano, flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, and horn by Francis Poulenc (41) is performed for the first time, in its “definitive” version, in the Salle Pleyel, Paris. Also premiered is Poulenc’s *Ce doux petit visage* for voice and piano to words of Eluard.

Incidental music to Euripedes’ (tr. Hamilton) play *The Trojan Women* by Virgil Thomson (44) is performed for the first time, in a radio broadcast.

**10 December 1940** British troops take Sidi Barrâni and cut the coast road at Buqbuq. 20,000 Italian prisoners have been taken in the last two days.

**11 December 1940** Advancing Allied troops take 14,000 Italian prisoners in Egypt.

**14 December 1940** *Festmusik zur Feier des 2600 jährigen Bestehens des Kaiserreichs Japan* for orchestra by Richard Strauss (76), is performed for the first time, in the Kabukiza Theatre, Tokyo.

*Banalités* for voice and piano by Francis Poulenc (41) to words of Apollinaire, is performed for the first time, at the Salle Gaveau, Paris the composer at the piano.

Glenn Seaborg, Arthur Charles Wahl and Joseph William Kennedy discover plutonium at the University of California at Berkeley. The announcement will be postponed for six years due to security concerns.

Incidental music to Shakespeare’s play *King Lear* by Henry Cowell (43) is performed for the first time, at the New School in New York.

**15 December 1940** Kammersymphonie no.2 by Arnold Schoenberg (66) is performed for the first time, in Carnegie Hall, New York.

*Proprium missae in festo SS.Innocentium martyrum* for female chorus by Ernst Krenek (40) is performed for the first time, in the Vassar College Chapel, Poughkeepsie, New York.

*A Red-Bird in a Green Tree*, a folksong arrangement for chorus by Roy Harris (42), is performed for the first time, at Western Kentucky State Teachers College, Bowling Green.

**16 December 1940** Charlie Chaplin’s film *The Great Dictator* is released in the United Kingdom.

**17 December 1940** Allied troops advancing from Egypt reach the Libyan border.

The destroyer *HMS Acheron* strikes a mine and sinks off the Isle of Wight. Of the 215 aboard, 19 are saved.

*Fino cristal* for voice and piano by Joaquín Rodrigo (39) to words of Rodríguez Pinto is performed for the first time, in Teatro de la Comedia, Madrid.

A patriotic song for chorus and orchestra, *It’s a Grand Life If We Don’t Weaken*, by Ernest MacMillan (47) to words of his sister Dorothy, is performed for the first time, in Toronto.

**18 December 1940** All Jewish music teachers in France, including the Conservatoire, are dismissed.

**19 December 1940** During farewell ceremonies at Helsinki’s central railway station, President Kyösti Kallio of Finland suffers a fatal heart attack. He is succeeded by Prime Minister Risto Heikki Ryti. Rudolf Walden becomes acting Prime Minister.

A decree in German-occupied France forbids Jews from engaging in any kind of business.

*Purdue* for orchestra by Henry Cowell (43) is performed for the first time, in West Lafayette, Indiana.

**20 December 1940** New anti-Jewish laws are instituted in Bulgaria.

Six Choral Songs to be Sung in Time of War for unison chorus and piano by Ralph Vaughan Williams (68) to words of Shelley, are performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC.

In El Centro, California, 37-year-old Nathaniel West and his wife are killed in an automobile accident.

**21 December 1940** The Norwegian Supreme Court unanimously resign rather than preside over Nazi justice.

F. Scott Fitzgerald dies in Hollywood at the age of 44.

**22 December 1940** Nathanael West dies in a car accident in El Centro, California at the age of 37.

**24 December 1940** A Law for the Protection of the Nation places restrictions on Jews in Bulgaria.

**26 December 1940** George Cukor’s film *The Philadelphia Story* is released in the United States.

**27 December 1940** The German raider *Komet* bombards the phosphate production on Nauru.

*Le voyage d’été* op.216, a cycle for voice and piano by Darius Milhaud (48) to words of Paliard, is performed for the first time, in New York the composer at the piano.

**28 December 1940** Greeks halt their offensive inside Albania to consolidate their gains.

*Five Mosaics* for chamber orchestra by Ulysses Kay (23) is performed for the first time, in Cleveland.

**29 December 1940** Germans drop incendiary bombs on London on a scale never before seen, creating a fire in an area of London larger than the Great Fire of 1666. Several historic buildings are destroyed but, through the heroic efforts of firefighters, St. Paul’s Cathedral is saved.

In a fireside chat, President Roosevelt announces that the United States must support those fighting dictatorship and be “the great arsenal of democracy.”

Piano Sonata by Ulysses Kay (23) is performed for the first time, in Cleveland.

**30 December 1940** *Lady in the Dark*, a musical play with book by Hart, lyrics by Ira Gershwin, and music by Kurt Weill (40), is performed for the first time, in the Colonial Theatre, Boston. Despite the extreme anxiety of the creative team, it is a hit. See 23 January 1941.

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