**1 January 1954** General Henri Eugene Navarre, commander of French forces in Indochina, says that the Viet Minh will be defeated within six months.

It is reported that 305,737 East Germans fled to West Berlin in 1953. 48,724 of them were policemen.

Fantasy for english horn, harp and strings by Walter Piston (60) is performed for the first time, in Boston.

**3 January 1954** 14 major tobacco companies form a Tobacco Industry Committee to investigate the claims of some researchers that cigarette smoking causes lung cancer.

**6 January 1954** Viet Minh forces attack the airfield at Seno, Laos but are repulsed by French and colonial troops.

The newly elected parliament of Sudan chooses Ismail el Azhari as the dependency’s first Prime Minister.

**8 January 1954** In today’s issue of *Soviet Music*, jazz musician Leonid Utyosov defends jazz, so long as it is confined to eminent composers such as Gershwin (†16), Kern, and Ellington (54). He says recent developments in US jazz are “the very quintessence of crazy formalism…fat people’s music.”

**10 January 1954** The USSR and Yugoslavia resume relations on the ambassadorial level.

Viet Minh forces capture Son Tay from colonial troops west of Hanoi.

Music for Piano 2 by John Cage (41) is performed for the first time, in New York.

**13 January 1954** *Domaine musical*, founded by Pierre Boulez (28) to present contemporary music, gives its first performance, at the Théâtre du Petit-Marigny in Paris. *Polifonica, Monodia, Ritmica* by Luigi Nono (29) is performed for the first time.

**14 January 1954** Experimental television begins in Norway, broadcasting from Oslo.

The Hudson Motor Car Company merges with Nash-Kelvinator to form American Motors Corporation.

Joe DiMaggio marries Marilyn Monroe in San Francisco.

**15 January 1954** British and colonial troops capture Waruhiu Itoto, the second ranking Mau Mau, in battle near Nyeri.

In New York, Gregor Piatigorsky regains possession of a 1712 Stradivari cello confiscated in Paris by the Germans during World War II. It was found in Aachen.

**16 January 1954** René Jules Gustave Coty replaces Jules Vincent Auriol as President of France.

**18 January 1954** Amintore Fanfani replaces Giuseppe Pella as Prime Minister of Italy.

**20 January 1954** Over the next two days, Indian officials return 14,209 Chinese and 7,582 North Korean POWs to the UN. They have refused repatriation. Even though it is in accord with the armistice agreement, the Chinese and North Koreans consider it illegal.

French and colonial troops retake Thakhek, Laos on the Mekong River without opposition. They also reoccupy Tuy Hoa on the south coast of Vietnam.

The Netherlands ratifies the European Defense Community Treaty.

The US State Department announces an internal investigation revealed no evidence to support Senator Joseph McCarthy’s charge that department employees engaged in a $150,000 “shakedown” of a friendly government.

**21 January 1954** Indian officials at Panmunjom complete the return of Chinese and North Korean POWs to the UN. The Koreans will be released as civilians in South Korea. The Chinese will be sent to Taiwan. The Indians now hold only eight North Koreans on charges of murder, along with several witnesses, as well as 93 North Korean and Chinese who asked to be sent to a neutral country.

*USS Nautilus*, the first nuclear powered submarine, is launched at Groton, Connecticut.

**23 January 1954** The Investigations subcommittee of the US Senate, chaired by Joseph McCarthy, reports that several employees of the Voice of America are “not dedicated to the American way of life,” and that some programming has “anti-American content.”

Septet for clarinet, bassoon, horn, piano, violin, viola, and cello by Igor Stravinsky (71) is performed for the first time, at Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, DC, conducted by the composer.

*Alvorado na Floresta Tropical*, an overture by Heitor Villa-Lobos (66), is performed for the first time, in Louisville.

**24 January 1954** *Mass to St. Anthony* for chorus, trumpet, harp, and strings by Lou Harrison (36) is performed for the first time, in Carl Fischer Hall, New York.

**25 January 1954** Viet Minh forces capture the French outpost of Muongphine in central Laos, 100 km east of Seno.

Foreign Ministers of France, Great Britain, the USSR, and the United States meet for the first time in almost five years, in Berlin.

**26 January 1954** Viet Minh forces take Phalane, 90 km east of Seno in central Laos.

The US Senate ratifies a mutual defense treaty with South Korea.

It is revealed that the Veterans of Foreign Wars post in Norwalk, Connecticut has formed a committee to turn over to the FBI the names of Norwalk residents it deems to be “communistic.” When told of it, President Eisenhower says he has no objections.

US Representative Robert Condon testifies before the Joint Congressional Atomic Energy Committee over the next three days. He says neither he or his wife have ever been communists. He was not allowed to attend an atomic weapons test by the Defense Department because of “reports” linking Condon and his wife to communists. The sources of the reports have never been made public.

**28 January 1954** Indian officials in Panmunjom return 347 POWs (325 South Koreans, 21 US and one UK) who refuse repatriation, to the Chinese and North Koreans.

The Syrian army begins operations against Druze citizens of the country who they say have fomented rebellion.

*Pages from a Mother’s Diary* for orchestra by William Grant Still (58) is performed for the first time, in Montgomery Theatre, Santa Clara, California. See 30 March 1957.

**29 January 1954** *De profundis* for chorus by Arnold Schoenberg (†2) to words from the Bible, is performed for the first time, in Cologne.

**30 January 1954** A division of Viet Minh troops invades Laos under heavy French air attack.

Symphonic Fantasy for orchestra by Roy Harris (55) is performed for the first time, in Syria Mosque, Pittsburgh.

**31 January 1954** The first direct passenger rail service between Moscow and Peking opens.

US Secretary of Defense Charles Wilson orders that racial segregation at schools for children on military facilities be ended by 1 September 1955.

**1 February 1954** Viet Minh forces capture Muongkhoua, Laos.

The US Atomic Energy Commission reports that Element 99 has been created by adding particles to Uranium. It is radioactive, but only lasts a few minutes before turning into Element 97.

**3 February 1954** Thousands of Indians stampede at a religious festival in Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh. As many as 800 people are killed.

Mau Mau leader Waruhiu Itote is sentenced to death by a court in Nairobi.

Aaron Copland (53) resigns from the Workers’ Musical Association, the last leftist group he belongs to.

**6 February 1954** The Constituent Assembly in Kashmir votes to accept union with India.

The House Un-American Activities Committee rules that, after “thorough study”, it has decided to remove the Consumers’ Union from its list of subversive organizations.

**7 February 1954** US Senator Joseph McCarthy charges that former Undersecretary of War John McCloy ordered the destruction of all intelligence files on communists. McCloy calls the accusation “absolutely false.”

**8 February 1954** Three Songs op.18 for voice, e flat clarinet, and guitar by Anton Webern (†8) to anonymous words, are performed for the first time, in Los Angeles.

**9 February 1954** Mario Scelba replaces Amintore Fanfani as Prime Minister of Italy.

George R. Stibitz receives a US patent for a “complex computer” 13 years after he filed for one. Stibitz is seen as the progenitor of the digital computer.

Carl Ruggles (77) is elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters.

US Senator Joseph McCarthy retracts his accusation of 7 February but said that McCloy was the “moving force” behind commissioning communists.

**10 February 1954** US President Eisenhower tells reporters that he opposed involving his country in a war in Indochina, saying it would be a great tragedy for the US.

**11 February 1954** Viet Minh forces reach the outer defenses of Luang Prabang, Laos.

**12 February 1954** UK Health Minister Ian Macleod reports that a government study group “established that there is a relationship between smoking and lung cancer.”

*The Tale of the Stone Flower*, a ballet by Sergey Prokofiev (†0) to a scenario by Lavrovsky and Mendelson after Bazhov, is performed for the first time, in the Bolshoy Theatre, Moscow.

**13 February 1954** Reinforcements are dropped into Muong Sai, the last French stronghold in northern Laos.

*O Frabjous Day!* from Two Settings from Lewis Carroll for voice and original instruments by Harry Partch (52) is performed for the first time, in Mill Valley, California.

**15 February 1954** Advance units of the Viet Minh offensive cross the Mekong 12 km north of Luang Prabang but are beaten back by French and colonial defenders.

**18 February 1954** Foreign Ministers of France, Great Britain, the USSR, and the United States end their meetings in Berlin after 25 days. No agreement is reached on Germany or Austria. They do agree on a meeting in Geneva about the future of Korea and Indochina to which China will be invited.

The British government informs Parliament that “atomic weapons are in production in this country and delivery to the forces has begun.”

Televised hearings by a Senate committee including Joseph McCarthy into communist infiltration of the US Army begin in New York. McCarthy questions a dentist, Major Irving Peress, whom he claims is the key to the infiltration. After Peress refuses to answer 33 questions, McCarthy calls him a “Fifth Amendment Communist.” In the afternoon closed session, McCarthy questions Peress’ commanding officer General Ralph Zwicker, who promoted Peress. Zwicker, a decorated veteran of the Normandy Invasion, is told by McCarthy that he is “not fit to wear that uniform.” McCarthy tells Zwicker that he does not have “the brains of a five-year-old child.” He orders John G. Adams, legal counsel for the Army, to produce the names of all those involved in the promotion and honorable discharge of Peress within 24 hours. McCarthy then throws Zwicker and Adams out of the hearing.

Incidental music to Giraudoux’s play *Ondine* by Virgil Thomson (57) is performed for the first time, in the 46th Street Theatre, New York.

**19 February 1954** US Secretary of the Army Robert Stevens tells Senator McCarthy that he will not get the names he demanded yesterday.

Nonet no.3 op.82 by Alois Hába (60) is performed for the first time, in the Rudolfinum, Prague.

**21 February 1954** The Neutral Nations Repatriations Commission in Korea ceases to exist, according to the provisions of the armistice agreement.

The British Chamber of Shipping issues its annual report wherein it tells of “incredible restrictions” imposed on British sea trade after “repeated and hysterical denunciations” by Senator Joseph McCarthy. The US has placed “armed guards on British merchant ships” when they enter US ports after stopping in China.

**23 February 1954** Viet Minh forces withdraw from forward positions near Luang Prabang and Muongsai, Laos.

Dr. Jonas Salk begins to vaccinate children against polio in Pittsburgh. Concurrent tests begin in 44 states.

US Secretary of the Army Robert Stevens tells the Senate Investigations Subcommittee, chaired by Joseph McCarthy, that he will provide the names of all involved in the promotion and discharge of Irving Peress and that those listed will testify.

Olivier Messiaen’s (45) piano work *Cantéyodjayâ* is performed for the first time, in Paris.

*Variations* for piano and orchestra by Wallingford Riegger (68) is performed for the first time, in Louisville.

**24 February 1954** The University of California at Berkeley and the Argonne National Laboratory in Chicago announce that they have produced Element 100. It has an atomic weight of 254 and a radioactive half-life of three years.

**25 February 1954** The Revolutionary Council of Egypt announces the resignation of Mohammed Neguib as President and Prime Minister of Egypt. He is replaced as Prime Minister by Gamal Abdel Nasser. Nasser declares a state of emergency and confines Neguib to his home.

The United States closes Polish consulates in Chicago, Detroit, and New York.

The National Council of the Churches of Christ in the US demands that the House Un-American Activities Committee stop spreading “malicious gossip” by releasing accusations about persons or groups without evaluating their validity.

**26 February 1954** The General Electric Company suspends eight employees in Schenectady, New York. The eight invoked their rights under the Fifth Amendment to the US Constitution when questioned by Senator Joseph McCarthy’s Senate subcommittee.

Chorale and Alleluia for concert band by Howard Hanson (57) is performed for the first time, in West Point, New York.

**27 February 1954** The USSR announces the transfer of the Crimea from the RSFSR to the Ukranian SSR.

Poland retaliates to the events of 25 February by closing the United States consulate in Gdansk.

The Revolutionary Council of Egypt reinstates Mohammed Neguib as President. Gamal Abdel Nasser retains his post of Prime Minister.

**1 March 1954** The US explodes a second thermonuclear device at Bikini Atoll. The explosion is much larger than expected and radioactivity extends beyond the “safety zone.” 23 Japanese fishermen about 130 km from the blast are seriously injured. Americans and Marshall Islanders on Kwajalein 280 km away are exposed to “some radiation.”

Bulgaria ends its state of war with Greece.

14:32 Four Puerto Rican nationalists wound five members of the United States Congress as they fire into the House chamber from the spectators’ gallery. Three of the four are subdued by Capitol Police, spectators, reporters, and House employees. One other is later arrested at Union Station in Washington.

**2 March 1954** Six of the Douze pastorales op.77 for piano by Charles Koechlin (†3) are performed for the first time, over the airwaves of Radio Paris Inter, 34 years after they were composed. See 20 June 1982.

**3 March 1954** The French cabinet agrees to a cease-fire in Indochina on terms outlined by Prime Minister Nehru of India, provided the safety of French troops and citizens could be assured.

**4 March 1954** Todor Khristov Zhivkov replaces Vulko Velev Chervenkov as First Secretary of the Bulgarian Communist Party.

Symphony no.1 by Karel Husa (32) is performed for the first time, in Brussels.

Incidental music to Rossin’s play *Am stram gram* by Benjamin Britten (40) is performed for the first time, in Toynbee Hall Theatre, London.

Cello Concerto no.1 by Ernst Krenek (53) is performed for the first time, in Philharmonic Auditorium, Los Angeles.

**6 March 1954** Police in Puerto Rico begin a roundup of 43 Nationalist Party supporters, in response to the attacks of 1 March.

**7 March 1954** Four Inventions for clarinet, piano, and text by Kenneth Gaburo (27) is performed for the first time, in Dixon Hall of Tulane University, New Orleans, the composer at the keyboard.

**8 March 1954** Mohammed Neguib replaces Gamal Abdel Nasser as Prime Minister of Egypt.

Peace talks begin in Paris between France and the Viet Minh.

Two days of voting for the Finnish Parliament leave the parties virtually unchanged.

Three Songs from William Shakespeare for mezzo-soprano, flute, clarinet, and viola by Igor Stravinsky (71) is performed for the first time, in Los Angeles.

**9 March 1954** Three days of voting begin today for the Majlis in Iran. The balloting features gangs of thugs who patrol the voting places beating hundreds of citizens perceived to be anti-government. Police assist in the beatings.

The French National Assembly votes to attempt a peace settlement for Indochina at the upcoming Geneva conference on the Far East.

Republican Senator Ralph Flanders of Vermont attacks Joseph McCarthy on the floor of the Senate, saying he is “doing his best to shatter” the Republican Party.

On the CBS television program *See it Now*, reporter Edward R. Murrow launches an attack on Senator McCarthy, condemning him with his own filmed words.

**10 March 1954** Amidst fears of blacklisting and right-wing pickets, Marc Blitzstein’s (49) English translation of *Die Dreigroschenoper*, starring Lotte Lenya, opens off-Broadway at the Theatre de Lys, New York. The audience loves it. The critics are generally positive. Intended to run three months, it will not close for seven years. This, more than anything else, secures the fame of Kurt Weill (†3) and Bertolt Brecht in the United States.

**11 March 1954** The Schine Report is released by the US Army, detailing 44 instances of attempted coercion by Senator Joseph McCarthy and subcommittee counsel Roy Cohn, in an attempt to gain favorable treatment by the army for his recently-drafted staffer, David Schine.

Appearing on a radio program, Senator Joseph McCarthy said that Edward R. Murrow, a former official of the Institute for International Education, was an “American adviser to [a] Communist propaganda school.” He further states that Murrow lied when he said McCarthy had falsified the record by saying the American Civil Liberties Union was on the Attorney General’s list of subversive organizations.

**12 March 1954** Belgium ratifies the European Defense Community treaty.

Finland ends its state of war with Germany.

Senator Joseph McCarthy denies all charges in the Schine Report, claiming that Army Secretary Robert Stevens used the report to blackmail him into stopping his investigation into Communists in the Army. Stevens denies the charge.

The American Civil Liberties Union responds to Senator McCarthy’s attack of yesterday by stating it has never been listed as a subversive organization by any government official or agency.

Acts I and II of Arnold Schoenberg’s (†2) unfinished opera *Moses und Aron*, to his own words, are performed for the first time, in a concert setting, over the airwaves of Radio Hamburg. At the concert, Schoenberg’s daughter Nuria meets Luigi Nono (30) for the first time. They will marry next year. See 2 July 1951 and 6 June 1957.

**13 March 1954** Viet Minh forces begin a major offensive against the French stronghold of Dien Bien Phu.

*Metamorphosen*, music from the film for chamber orchestra by Bernd Alois Zimmermann (35), is performed for the first time, in Hamburg.

**14 March 1954** Symphony no.9 by Henry Cowell (57) is performed for the first time, in West High School Auditorium, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

**15 March 1954** Viet Minh forces take the outer defenses of Dien Bien Phu.

**16 March 1954** The two airstrips at Dien Bien Phu are knocked out by the Viet Minh, thus cutting the only supply mechanism.

Georgy Fyodorovich Alyeksandrov replaces Panteleimon Kondratyevich Ponomarenko as Minister of Culture of the Soviet Union.

The French National Assembly is told that the United States is paying 78% of the cost of their colonial war in Indochina.

**17 March 1954** Arab terrorists attack an Israeli bus 150 km north of Elat. Eleven men, women, and children are killed by machine gun fire.

US President Eisenhower backs Secretary of the Army Robert Stevens in his dispute with Senator McCarthy. He says that Americans fear “what unwise investigators will do to us…as they try to combat subversion.” McCarthy responds, “I don’t give a tinker’s dam how high or low are the people in either the Republican or Democratic parties who are unhappy about our methods.”

**18 March 1954** Jozef Cyrankiewicz replaces Boleslaw Bierut as Prime Minister of Poland.

Incidental music to the radio production of Fernando de Rojas’ *Celestina* by Roberto Gerhard (57) is broadcast for the first time, over the airwaves of BBC Third Programme.

**19 March 1954** Speaking in Milwaukee, Senator Joseph McCarthy “indicts” the Democratic Party for “treason or criminal stupidity” for actions over the 20 years it held the executive branch.

**20 March 1954** Rhapsodic Variations for orchestra and electronic tape by Otto Luening (53) and Vladimir Ussachevsky (42) is performed for the first time, in Louisville.

**21 March 1954** French and colonial troops capture Pakseng, 75 km north of Luang Prabang.

**23 March 1954** The Viet Minh begin their first main attack on Dien Bien Phu.

Israel withdraws from the Mixed Armistice Commission because the Commission has not fixed blame for the terrorist attack of 17 March. Israel blames Jordan.

US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles announces that his country will give the French whatever military assistance it needs to continue its colonial rule in Indochina.

**24 March 1954** Stockholders in Nash-Kelvinator Corporation and Hudson Motor Car Company approve the merger of the two to form American Motors Corporation.

**25 March 1954** RCA announces the production of color television sets.

Arturo Toscanini resigns as conductor of the NBC Symphony Orchestra, a position he has held since 1937.

**26 March 1954** The German Democratic Republic is declared a sovereign state by the USSR.

Jordanian troops attack the Israeli village of Kisalon, killing one person.

Annie Lee Moss is reinstated to her job as a typist in the Signal Corps supply room in the Pentagon. She was suspended after Senator Joseph McCarthy called her before his committee as a communist. It later came out that a former FBI employee saw her name on some Communist Party records but did not know her personally. There are three Annie Lee Mosses in Washington. After subcommittee counsel Roy Cohn claims to have proof of her party affiliations, Democrats on the subcommittee rebuke him for refusing to produce it.

**27 March 1954** Dmitri Shostakovich (47) is named a Peoples Artist of the USSR.

Lou Harrison (36) departs for Rome where his music is to be performed in a composition contest sponsored by the Congress for Cultural Freedom and the International Conference for Contemporary Music.

**28 March 1954** *Wisconsin Suite* for orchestra by Otto Luening (53) is performed for the first time, in New York.

**29 March 1954** Israeli troops attack the Jordanian village of Nahhalin, 13 km southwest of Jerusalem in retaliation for the Jordanian attack on Kisalon on 26 March. Nine Jordanians are killed.

The Revolutionary Council of Egypt reverses a plan by President Mohammed Neguib to have elections in July to return the country to responsible government.

In an address in New York, US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles claims that a victory for the Viet Minh would mean Communist domination of all southeast Asia.

West Germany ratifies the European Defense Community Treaty.

**30 March 1954** Viet Minh forces launch a massive attack at Dien Bien Phu, gaining footholds in the French defenses.

A subway opens in Toronto.

**31 March 1954** Incidental music to Lindsay and Grouse’s play *Life with Father* by Peter Sculthorpe (24) is performed for the first time, in the National Theatre, Launceston, Tasmania.

Incidental music to Shakespeare’s play *Hamlet* by Dmitri Shostakovich (47) is performed for the first time, in the Pushkin Theatre, Leningrad.

**1 April 1954** *The Tender Land*, an opera by Aaron Copland (53) to words of Everett (pseud. of Johns), is performed for the first time, at the New York City Center. Jerome Robbins creates the staging. The public is enthusiastic but the press is mixed.

**5 April 1954** US President Dwight Eisenhower announces that his country will never use hydrogen bombs first.

Music for Five Instruments for flute, clarinet, trumpet, trombone, and piano by Kenneth Gaburo (27) is performed for the first time, at the University of Texas, Austin.

**6 April 1954** Senator Joseph McCarthy appears on television to answer charges made against him by Edward R. Murrow on 9 March. He says that Murrow was “engaged in propaganda for Communist causes” at least 20 years ago. He questions whether “traitors in our government” were responsible for an 18-month “deliberate delay [in] research on the hydrogen bomb.” “Our nation may well die because of that…delay.” Both Presidents Truman and Eisenhower will state tomorrow that they are aware of no such delay.

Fantasy for cello and piano by Ernst Krenek (53) is performed for the first time, in Lucerne, the composer at the keyboard.

**7 April 1954** US President Eisenhower claims that a French loss in Indochina would create a “domino effect” with country after country falling to communism. This is the first mention of the domino theory of Cold War parlance.

A revised version of Paul Hindemith’s (58) lustige Oper *Neues vom Tage* to his own words, is performed for the first time, in Naples, conducted by the composer.

**9 April 1954** John Cage writes to Helen Wolff (the mother of Christian Wolff (20)) about his composition *4’33”*, “What we hear is determined by our own emptiness, our own receptivity; we receive to the extent we are empty to do so.” “I also consulted the I-Ching after receiving your letter and got Exhaustion (47). 4’33” is also a matter of consultation. Each person present will receive his own hexagram.”

In the first complete performance of Charles Ives’ (79) *Holidays Symphony*, Thanksgiving or Forefather’s Day is performed for the first time, in Minneapolis, 50 years after it was composed.

**10 April 1954** Archbishop Mariano Rossell y Arellano of Guatemala calls on the country to revolt and overthrow the leftist president Jacobo Arbenz Guzman.

**11 April 1954** In Belgian national elections, the Socialist Party makes gains at the expense of the ruling Christian Peoples Party.

Robert Ashley (24) marries Mary Tsaltas, a student at the Massachusetts College of Art, in New York. It is a double wedding with their friends painter George Manupelli and Mary’s art school friend Betty Johnson. The women have taken a bus down to New York, get married on a Sunday, and take the bus back to Boston to be in class on Monday.

**12 April 1954** The colonial government of Vietnam orders the mobilization of all men 21-25 years of age.

700 Mau-Mau are arrested in Kenya. They are extremist members of the Kikuyu tribe working to oust the British from Kenya.

It is revealed that Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer, leader of the Manhattan Project, has been suspended by the Atomic Energy Commission as a security risk. He is charged with associating with and hiring Communists and ex-Communists, aiding Communist causes, and actively opposing the development of the hydrogen bomb. Oppenheimer says he has associated with Communists, contributed to specific Communist causes and is sympathetic to some Communist goals. He denies that he has ever been a Communist Party member and is disillusioned with Communism. He also said that he supported the development of the hydrogen bomb and worked actively for it.

**13 April 1954** The Tobacco Industry Research Committee issues a statement quoting 36 cancer specialists to support their contention that there is no proof that cigarette smoking causes lung cancer.

The National Broadcasting Company in the US announces that it is disbanding the NBC Orchestra. Instead, they will broadcast concerts by the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

**14 April 1954** The US Army files a statement with the Senate Investigations Subcommittee charging that Senator Joseph McCarthy and committee counsel Roy Cohn attempted to get preferential treatment for their associate, Private David Schine, 29 times.

An Air from Act 3 of *Rapunzel*, a chamber opera by Lou Harrison (36) to words of Morris, is performed for the first time, in Rome as part of a composition competition. This will win a 20th Century Masterpiece Award, conferred on Harrison by Igor Stravinsky (71). See 14 May 1959.

*Twenty-five Pages* for 1-25 pianos by Earle Brown (27) is performed for the first time, in Carl Fischer Hall, New York. On the same program is the New York premiere of John Cage’s (41) *4’33”*. During the intermission, Cage’s mother asks Brown, “Now Earle, don’t you think that John has gone too far this time?”

*Sicilian Limes*, an opera by Dominick Argento (26) to words of Olon-Scrymgeour after Pirandello, is performed for the first time, at Peabody Conservatory, Baltimore, conducted by Hugo Weisgall (41). The accompaniment is two pianos, one of which is played by the composer.

**16 April 1954** US Vice-President Richard Nixon says it will be necessary to send US troops to Indochina to prevent it falling to the Communists.

**18 April 1954** Gamal Abdel Nasser replaces Mohammed Neguib as Prime Minister of Egypt.

**19 April 1954**  Gheorghe Apostol replaces Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej as First Secretary of the Romanian Workers’ Party.

**20 April 1954** The US State Department, acting for United Fruit Company, presents a bill of almost $16,000,000 to President Jacobo Arbenz Guzman of Guatemala for 162,000 hectares of unused United Fruit land he expropriated to give to peasants. Arbenz has offered $1,185,000 based on the value of the land reported by United Fruit Co. on their tax records. Unknown to Arbenz, the CIA is already planning his overthrow.

**21 April 1954** The United States Air Force reveals that it has been used to fly French colonial troops to Indochina.

**22 April 1954** Socialist Achille van Acker replaces Jean van Houtte of the Christian Peoples Party as Prime Minister of Belgium.

Televised hearings by a United States Senate committee into actions by the US Army and Senator Joseph McCarthy begin. Secretary of the Army Robert Stevens begins 13 days of testimony about preferential treatment given to David Schine, a McCarthy staffer, by the army. The last nine of the 13 are questions and speeches by Senator McCarthy.

**23 April 1954**  The USSR breaks diplomatic relations with Australia over the defection of a Soviet diplomat and his wife.

*Song of Jeremiah*, a cantata for bass-baritone, chorus, and orchestra by Ulysses Kay (37) to words of the Bible, is performed for the first time, in Nashville.

Sonata for trombone and piano by Leslie Bassett (31) is performed for the first time, in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

**24 April 1954** 3,679 Kenyans are arrested in Nairobi as suspected Mau Maus.

*Kontraste*, a ballet by Bernd Alois Zimmermann (36) to an idea by Schneckenberger, is staged for the first time, in Stadttheater Bielefeld. See 1 January 1953.

**25 April 1954** *Brasilianischen Ouvertüre*, part I of *Alagoana, Caprichos Brasileiros* for orchestra by Bernd Alois Zimmermann (33), is staged for the first time, in the Stadttheater Bielefeld. See 12 November 1951.

At a news conference in Murray Hill, New Jersey, Bell Laboratories scientists Gerald Pearson, Daryl Chapin, and Calvin Fuller demonstrate the first solar battery.

**26 April 1954** The International conference on East Asia opens in Geneva. Represented are the USSR, China, North Korea and the 16 allied nations in Korea.

Akira Kurosawa’s film *The Seven Samurai* is released in Japan.

*Suite for Younger Orchestras* op.56 by Wallingford Riegger (68) is performed for the first time, in New York.

*Soldier Songs*, a cycle for voice and piano by Hugo Weisgall (41) to eight different authors, is performed for the first time, in New York. See 30 March 1966.

**27 April 1954** Viet Minh forces reach to within 600 meters of the center of Dien Bien Phu. French air forces retaliate with planes recently supplied by the United States.

**28 April 1954** An agreement is signed in Paris by Prime Minister Joseph Laniel and Vice-Premier Nguyen Trung Vinh of Vietnam. France guarantees “total independence” within the French Union in return for a promise from Vietnam to “maintain and consolidate” its friendship with France.

Michael Kevin Daugherty is born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, the first of five children born to a Willis Daugherty, a drummer in a dance band, and Evelyn Daugherty, an amateur singer.

Two works are performed for the first time, in Carl Fischer Concert Hall, New York: *Intersection 3* for piano by Morton Feldman (28), and *Four Systems* for variable instrumentation by Earle Brown (27).

**29 April 1954** An agreement between India and China is signed in Peking. It provides for the withdrawal of all Indian troops from Tibet, the cession to China of all postal, telegraph, and telephone facilities administered by India, and the establishment of free travel facilities for religious pilgrims from both sides.

Six Children’s Songs for chorus and orchestra by Witold Lutoslawski (41) is performed for the first time, in Warsaw. They were originally written in 1947 for voice and piano.

**30 April 1954** *Ode an den Westwind* for cello and orchestra by Hans Werner Henze (27) is performed for the first time, in Bielefeld.

Incidental music to Anouilh’s play *Ring Around the Moon* by Ben Johnston (28) is performed for the first time.

**1 May 1954** Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity is founded by Sun Myung Moon.

**2 May 1954** The Democratic Party wins 502 of 541 parliamentary seats in Turkish national elections.

The first movement of the original version of Anton Bruckner’s (†57) Symphony no.8 is performed for the first time, 67 years after it was composed. See 18 December 1892 and 2 September 1973.

*O Filii et Filiae* for chorus by Charles Wuorinen (15) to words of 15th century French plainsong in English and Latin is performed for the first time, in Town Hall, New York.

**3 May 1954** Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and the Viet Minh are invited to the Geneva Conference for discussions on Indochina.

**4 May 1954** Viet Minh forces reach to within 500 meters of the French command headquarters at Dien Bien Phu.

In the Army-McCarthy hearings, Senator McCarthy produces a 1951 letter from FBI director Hoover to the head of Army Intelligence naming 35 employees at Fort Monmouth as subversives. The witness, Secretary of the Army Robert Stevens, has never seen the letter.

**5 May 1954** Ralf Johan Gustaf Törngren replaces Sakari Severi Tuomioja as Prime Minister of Finland.

Senator Joseph McCarthy testifies before his own committee, and refuses to name the person who gave him the letter produced yesterday.

**6 May 1954** Roger Bannister becomes the first human to run a mile in under four minutes (3:59.4), at Oxford.

US Attorney General Herbert Brownell rules that the letter produced by Senator McCarthy on 4 May is an unauthorized use of classified information.

**7 May 1954** After a siege of 55 days, the French garrison of Dien Bien Phu falls to the Viet Minh.

US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles says that his country may have to make “serious commitments” in southeast Asia.

**8 May 1954** The Geneva Conference on East Asia begins talking about Indochina.

Many festivities planned over the next two days in France to celebrate the end of World War II and the capture of Paris by Jeanne d’Arc are cancelled due to the loss of Dien Bien Phu.

**13 May 1954** The government of French Prime Minister Joseph Laniel survives a vote of confidence in the National Assembly, 289-287.

Concerto for violin, piano, and orchestra by Bohuslav Martinu (63) is performed for the first time, in New York.

*Pajama Game* opens in New York.

**14 May 1954** With Viet Minh permission, French planes begin evacuating their wounded from Dien Bien Phu.

**16 May 1954** The head of the US delegation to the Geneva Conference, W. Bedell Smith, visits Bao Dai, Vietnam’s Head of State, in Evian, and assures him that the US will never agree to a partition of Vietnam.

**17 May 1954** The United States Supreme Court rules 9-0 that six-year-old Linda Brown was unfairly treated when the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas forced her to attend an all-Black school. It further orders that schools across the country must be desegregated.

At the Army-McCarthy hearings, Army Counselor John G. Adams refuses to testify about a “high-level” meeting wherein Adams was advised to make a written record of his dealings with Senator McCarthy. Adams refuses on orders of President Eisenhower. The subcommittee votes to recess until 24 May.

**18 May 1954** Parliamentary elections in Ireland result in a ten-seat gain for the opposition Fine Gael. They form a three party coalition to rule.

Prelude and Fugue for string quartet by Pauline Oliveros (21) is performed for the first time, at San Francisco State College.

**19 May 1954** Charles Edward Ives dies in Roosevelt Hospital, New York of a stroke suffered after a double hernia operation, aged 79 years, six months, and 29 days.

**21 May 1954** Viet Minh forces capture the French stronghold of Anxa, 100 km southeast of Hanoi.

The central observatory of the USSR Academy of Sciences opens near Leningrad.

Funeral services in memory of Charles Ives take place at his West Redding, Connecticut home. Presiding is his brother-in-law, Rev. Joseph Hooker Twichell. His neighbor, Luemily Ryder, plays Ives’ *Prelude on Eventide* on the upright piano. His mortal remains are laid to rest in Wooster Cemetery, Danbury, Connecticut.

**22 May 1954** Bulgaria and Greece resume diplomatic relations.

Two works for orchestra by Darius Milhaud (61) are performed for the first time, in Louisville: *Kentuckiana* op.287, and *Ouverture méditerranéenne* op.330.

**23 May 1954** *Grief*, a song for voice and piano by William Grant Still (59) is performed for the first time, in Saratoga, California.

**24 May 1954** The United States Supreme Court rules that membership in the Communist Party is sufficient for the deportation of aliens.

**25 May 1954** *Wakaki hi no takuboku: Kumo wa tensai de aru*, a film with music by Toshiro Mayuzumi (25), is released in Japan.

**26 May 1954** An explosion aboard the aircraft carrier *USS Bennington* kills 103 crewmen.

The case of the US Army in the Army-McCarthy hearings is completed after 21 days of testimony.

17 Puerto Rican nationalists are indicted by a federal grand jury in New York for seditious conspiracy. The indictments are a result of the 1 March attack in Congress.

String Quartet no.4 by Ralph Shapey (33) is performed for the first time, in Kaufman Auditorium of the 92nd Street Y, New York.

**27 May 1954** McCarthy committee counsel Roy Cohn begins to testify about the David Schine case at the Army-McCarthy hearings. He claims that Secretary of the Army Robert Stevens tried to discredit his investigation and change the focus to the Navy and Air Force.

Igor Stravinsky (71) conducts a concert in Royal Festival Hall, London and receives the medal of the Royal Philharmonic Society. He also receives a baton said to have belonged to Franz Joseph Haydn (†144).

**28 May 1954** The French cabinet approves a draft of 80,000 men to replace men in Germany sent to Indochina.

**29 May 1954** In voting for the House of Representatives in Australia, the Labour Party wins over 50% of the vote and a plurality of seats, but power is maintained by the Liberal-Country coalition of Prime Minister Robert Menzies.

The Geneva Conference on East Asia orders direct truce talks between France and the Viet Minh.

Henry Cowell’s (57) Symphony no.11 “Seven Rituals of Music” is performed for the first time, in Columbia Auditorium, Louisville.

**30 May 1954** *Odisséia de uma raça*, a symphonic poem by Heitor Villa-Lobos (67) dedicated to the State of Israel, is performed for the first time, in Haifa.

**1 June 1954** The Viet Minh celebrate their victory over the French by blowing up an ammunition dump at Tan Son Nhut air base, Saigon.

Lawyers for J. Robert Oppenheimer disclose that a special Atomic Energy Commission board said he was loyal but recommended against reinstating him as a consultant. This is a recommendation to the full AEC.

*David*, an opera by Darius Milhaud (61) to words of Lunel, commissioned to celebrate the 3,000 years since the establishment of Jerusalem as the capital of Judea, is performed for the first time, in a concert setting in Jerusalem. See 2 February 1955.

**2 June 1954** John Aloysius Costello replaces Eamon de Valera as Prime Minister of Ireland.

**4 June 1954** Viet Minh forces capture the French garrison at Chonoi, 40 km southeast of Hanoi.

**5 June 1954** The skull of Franz Joseph Haydn (†145) is placed in an urn and transported in a large motorized procession from Vienna to Rohrau, the composer’s birthplace. It is then taken to Eisenstadt where it is reunited with the rest of his remains.

*Die schlafende Prinzessin*, a ballet by Hans Werner Henze (27) to a scenario by Zehden, is performed for the first time, at the Essen Stadttheater.

Jacob Druckman marries Muriel Helen Topaz, a dance student at Juilliard.

**7 June 1954** *Piccola Musica Notturna* for orchestra by Luigi Dallapiccola (50) is performed for the first time, in Hanover.

**8 June 1954** Leaving Geneva for a National Assembly debate in Paris, French Foreign Minister Georges Bidault says that the peace effort is “all over” and “one should just plainly say so.”

Incidental music to Pemán and Sánchez-Castañer’s play *La destrucción de Sagunto* by Joaquín Rodrigo (52) is performed for the first time, in Teatro Romano, Sagunto.

**9 June 1954** At the most dramatic point of the televised Army-McCarthy hearings, Senator McCarthy reveals that a young employee of the Hale & Dorr law firm (representing the Army) was once a member of the National Lawyers’ Guild. Counsel for the US Army Joseph Welch replies “Until this moment, I think I never really gauged your cruelty or your recklessness.” He explains that the young man is now the secretary of the Young Republicans League of Newton, Massachusetts. “Little did I dream you could be so reckless and so cruel as to do an injury to that lad.” As McCarthy resumes his attack, Welch asks “Have you no sense of decency, Sir, at long last? Have you left no sense of decency?”

**10 June 1954** *Ils étaient tous des volontaires*, a film with music by Darius Milhaud (61) is shown for the first time, in France.

**12 June 1954** Viet Minh troops cut the Hanoi-Haiphong Railroad, 18 km east of Hanoi.

The French National Assembly refuses (306-293) to express confidence in Prime Minister Joseph Laniel’s handling of the Indochina war. His government resigns.

**13 June 1954** Nicolas Obouhow (Nikolay Obukhov) dies in Paris, aged 62 years, one month, and 22 days.

Tuba Concerto by Ralph Vaughan Williams (81) is performed for the first time, in Royal Festival Hall, London to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the London Symphony Orchestra.

**15 June 1954** Toru Takemitsu (23) marries Asaka Wakayama, an actress.

Head of State Bao Dai of Vietnam accepts the resignation of Prime Minister Buu Loc and names the prominent anti-Communist Ngo Dinh Diem to succeed him.

The UN allies at the Geneva Conference break off negotiations over Korea. In “A Declaration of the 16” (15 UN allies plus the Republic of Korea), the allies declare that it was better to end the negotiations rather than “raise false hopes.” They leave over the refusal of the Communists to agree to “genuinely free elections” throughout the peninsula.

The US State Department reveals that it has tried to get other nations to prevent arms shipments to Guatemala.

**16 June 1954** Four Puerto Rican nationalists are convicted of assault in Washington for their attack on Congress 1 March. Three of the four are also convicted of intent to kill.

**17 June 1954** The televised investigation into the US Army by a Senate committee ends after eight weeks of testimony. Republican Senator Charles Potter releases a statement saying that the principal charges of both sides had been born out. He said the testimony was “saturated with statements which were not truthful and which might constitute perjury in a legal sense…there may have been subornation of perjury [and] a criminal case against some of the principals might be developed.”

**18 June 1954** Pierre Mendès-France of the Radical Party replaces Joseph Laniel as Prime Minister of France.

Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas with 150 men enters Guatemala from Honduras as part of the CIA plot to overthrow President Arbenz. Guatemala calls for an urgent meeting of the United Nations Security Council to address the threat. Current Council President, Henry Cabot Lodge of the United States, puts off a meeting for a week.

*Singing Band* for concert band by Henry Cowell (57) is performed for the first time, in Central Park, New York conducted by the composer.

**19 June 1954** Rebel planes begin attacking Guatemala City and other towns and cities. They destroy the country’s oil reserves at Puerto Barrios.

*The Fellowship of the Ring* by JRR Tolkien is published. It is the first part of the trilogy to reach book stores.

**20 June 1954** *Uwasa no onna*, a film with music by Toshiro Mayuzumi (25), is released in Japan.

Assistant US Secretary of Defense Struve Hensel releases an affidavit in which he says that Senator Joseph McCarthy stated to him that McCarthy’s charges against him had “no basis” and that McCarthy was “guessing.” He releases it to the public after the Republican chairman of the committee refused to do so.

**21 June 1954** CIA-backed Guatemalan rebels set up a headquarters at Esquipulas, nine km from the Honduran border.

**22 June 1954** Studebaker Corporation and Packard Motor Car Company agree to merge in meetings in New York.

**23 June 1954** French Prime Minister Pierre Mendès-France meets with Prime Minister Chou En-lai of China in Bern, in an effort to end the Indochina war.

**25 June 1954** French forces abandon An Khe in the central plateau region of Vietnam.

Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas sets up a rebel government for Guatemala at Chiquimala.

Security Council President Henry Cabot Lodge refuses to put the Guatemalan question on the agenda, claiming it should be handled by the OAS.

**26 June 1954** The first nuclear power plant connected to an electricity grid goes on line at Obninsk, USSR.

**27 June 1954** Jacobo Arbenz Guzman, constitutionally elected President of Guatemala, resigns in the face of a CIA-directed rebellion. He turns the government over to a three-man junta.

*Wiegenlied der Mutter Gottes* for chorus and nine players by Hans Werner Henze (27) to words of Lope de Vega, is performed for the first time, in Duisburg.

**28 June 1954** *Couronne de gloire* op.211, a cycle for voice and chamber ensemble by Darius Milhaud (61) to words of Rabbi Solomon, is performed for the first time, in Brussels, conducted by the composer.

**29 June 1954** The French High Command announces its intention to abandon Nam Dinh Province in the delta of the Red River, Vietnam.

The three-man junta which took power in Guatemala two days ago is overthrown by the CIA-directed coup led by Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas, who places himself at the head of a new junta.

R. Buckminster Fuller receives a US patent for his geodesic dome.

The US Atomic Energy Commission votes 4-1 not to reinstate the security clearance of Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer. Oppenheimer led the Manhattan Project, which produced the first atomic bomb.

**1 July 1954** French forces complete their evacuation of the southern part of the Red River Delta in Vietnam

**2 July 1954** Incidental music to Gide’s play *Saül* by Darius Milhaud (61) is performed for the first time, in Toulon.

**4 July 1954** Officials of the Viet Minh and the French Colonial authority open negotiations in Trung Gia, 40 km north of Hanoi, over a possible truce.

West Germany defeats Hungary 3-2 in Bern to win the fifth FIFA World Cup™.

*Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight*, a cantata by Roy Harris (56) to words of Lindsay, is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of CBS radio originating in Pittsburgh. See 13 October 1954.

**6 July 1954** Iannis Xenakis (32) attends a class given by Olivier Messiaen (45) for the last time.

**7 July 1954** General Paul Ely, commander of French forces, warns foreign civilians to leave Hanoi as it is expected to be a battle ground.

**8 July 1954** Carlos Castillo Armas becomes head of the Guatemalan junta which took power on 29 June.

Sonatine for violin and cello op.324 by Darius Milhaud (61) is performed for the first time, in Santa Barbara, California. It is part of the film *A Visit to Darius Milhaud.*

**10 July 1954** The Comite revolutionnaire d'unite et d'action is founded in Algiers to unite the nationalist movement and begin armed rebellion against France.

**12 July 1954** Viet Minh forces attack French positions north of Hungyen, 40 km southeast of Hanoi. They are beaten off by French defenders.

**17 July 1954** The first Newport Jazz Festival opens at the Casino Tennis Club.

**18 July 1954** Roberto Gerhard’s (57) incidental music to Albert Camus’ *L’étranger* is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC Third Programme, conducted by the composer.

**20 July 1954** Mehmet Shehu replaces Enver Hoxha as Prime Minister of Albania.

Roy Cohn, counsel to the US Senate Subcommittee on investigations, and protégé of Senator Joseph McCarthy, resigns. His resignation was demanded by the three Democrats on the committee.

**21 July 1954** An armistice for the Indochina war is signed in the Palais des Nations, Geneva. France agrees to evacuate North Vietnam and to respect the independence of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. Communist forces agree to evacuate Laos, Cambodia, and South Vietnam. South Vietnam will be independent in the hands of the western-back Head of State Bao Dai. The parties agree that Vietnam will be partitioned along the 17th parallel pending unification elections within two years (which will never be held). Cease-fire orders are communicated to fighters in the field.

**22 July 1954** Indian nationalists invade Dadra, in Portuguese territory. Three of the five policemen in the town are killed.

Dr. Otto John, head of the West German civil service, disappears in East Berlin. He makes radio broadcasts from the East wherein he says the reason for the defection is the reappearance of so many former Nazis in the West German government and society.

**23 July 1954** Two Chinese fighters shoot down a British passenger plane 50 km south of Hainan. Eight of the 18 people aboard survive.

The French National Assembly votes 462-13 to approve the truce in Indochina.

**26 July 1954** China apologizes for shooting down a British airliner on 23 July and offers restitution. Three US Navy planes, searching the area for survivors are attacked by Chinese warplanes. Both attacking planes are shot down.

**27 July 1954** 08:00 A cease-fire goes into effect in northern Vietnam. Several Viet Minh attacks continue, the local commanders still not hearing of the armistice.

Great Britain and Egypt agree broadly on ending the British occupation of the Suez Canal Zone. The agreement calls for the withdrawal of British troops within 20 months of the signing of a detailed pact. Britain will be allowed to maintain a base there, employing civilians from either country. Both countries agree to guarantee the international use of the canal.

**28 July 1954** *On the Waterfront*, a film with music by Leonard Bernstein (35), is shown for the first time, in the Astor Theatre, New York.

**29 July 1954** Indian nationalists take control of Neroli in Portuguese territory.

British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden tells the House of Commons that 38,000 troops will be withdrawn from the Suez Canal Zone over the next 20 months.

String Quartet no.4 by Ernest Bloch (74) is performed for the first time, in Lenox, Massachusetts.

**30 July 1954** The government of India orders Portuguese diplomats out of Bombay after Portugal ordered all Indians out of its west coast colonies.

Aldo Vergano’s film *Schicksal am Lenkrad*, with music by Hanns Eisler (56), is released in East Germany.

**31 July 1954** French Prime Minister Pierre Mendès-France flies to Tunis. He offers Bey Muhammad al-Amin of Tunis internal autonomy provided anti-French violence ends and all current French residents of Tunisia are allowed to stay. The Bey accepts in principle.

Nationalist rioting in Fez and elsewhere in Morocco kills 13 and injures at least 18.

**1 August 1954** The Indochina cease-fire goes into effect in central Vietnam.

Indian nationalists take control of Selvassa in Portuguese territory.

Alfred Hitchcock’s film *Rear Window* is shown for the first time, in New York.

Michael Tippett’s (49) Four Inventions for two recorders is performed for the first time, at the Froebel Institute, London.

**2 August 1954** Bey Muhammad al-Amin of Tunis appoints Tahar Ben Amar as Prime Minister with authority to negotiate home rule with France. Exiled nationalist leader Habib Bourguiba calls for a cease-fire throughout the country.

The US Senate sets up a committee to look into charges of misconduct by Senator Joseph McCarthy.

**3 August 1954** Portuguese border guards exchange gunfire with Indian nationalists who try to force their way into Goa.

The British government appoints Sir Kenneth Clark, chairman of the British Arts Council, to head the Independent Television Authority to oversee the country’s commercial television.

**4 August 1954** Dr. Otto John, former head of West German internal security, is granted political asylum by East Germany.

**5 August 1954** Iran reaches agreement with eight western oil companies to reactivate the stalled oil industry in the country.

An attempt is made on the life of Carlos Lacerda, editor of *Tribuna da Imprensa* of Rio de Janeiro. Lacerda is wounded by gunfire, but his companion, Air Force Major Rubens Florentino Vaz is killed by the assassins. Personal bodyguards of President Getulio Vargas are implicated in the crime.

Six Compositions for carillon by Gian Carlo Menotti (43) are performed completely for the first time, in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Five of the six were performed between 16 October and 8 November 1932. This is the first time they have been all performed together. *Arabesque* is apparently performed for the first time.

**6 August 1954** The Indochina cease-fire goes into effect in Laos.

**7 August 1954** The Indochina cease-fire goes into effect in Cambodia.

Over the next three days, 13 people are killed, 30 injured, and 1,000 arrested in anti-French riots in Port Lyautey and Fez, Morocco.

**8 August 1954** *Romantic Suite,* a ballet by Toru Takemitsu (23) after Tchaikovsky (†60), is performed for the first time, in Osaka Sankei Hall.

**10 August 1954** In agreements signed at The Hague, the Netherlands and Indonesia end their union which has been in effect since 1949.

US backed Guatemalan dictator Carlos Castillo Armas abolishes political parties.

**11 August 1954** The Indochina cease-fire goes into effect in southern Vietnam, thus completing the truce process. A cease-fire is now in effect throughout the entire former French Indochina.

French and colonial troops surround Fez in an attempt to cut off the nationalists there from the rest of Morocco.

Opposition forces riot outside the offices of the Brazilian Labor Party of President Getulio Vargas. They blame Vargas for the events of 5 August and the failure of police to apprehend the assailants. Police use tear gas to disperse the crowd.

US backed Guatemalan dictator Carlos Castillo Armas abolishes the constitution and outlaws all printed material deemed offensive by the state. Widespread arrests begin throughout the country.

String Quartet no.14 by Heitor Villa-Lobos (67) is performed for the first time.

**15 August 1954** French Foreign Legionnaires occupy part of Fez, Morocco to stop anti-French violence. Since 1 August, 25 people have been killed and 300 injured.

Alfredo Stroessner Matiauda becomes President of Paraguay. He will not relinquish the post for 35 years.

**16 August 1954** *Of Identity*, a ballet with music by Otto Luening (54) and Vladimir Ussachevsky (42), is performed for the first time, privately in Westport, Connecticut. See 9 February 1955.

**17 August 1954** In the first large withdrawal of British forces under the 27 July agreement, 2,000 British troops depart Port Said in the Suez Canal Zone.

President Eisenhower announces that the United States will defend Taiwan.

**18 August 1954** French planes and US Naval vessels begin transporting refugees from Hanoi and Haiphong to Saigon, as part of an agreement with the Viet Minh.

**19 August 1954** Gunther Schuller’s (28) dance music *The Traitor* is performed for the first time, in New London, Connecticut.

**21 August 1954** *Klavierstücke I-IV* no.2 by Karlheinz Stockhausen are performed for the first time, in Darmstadt, one day before the composer’s 26th birthday. The audience reaction is loudly and overwhelmingly negative so the pianist, Marcelle Mercenier, plays *Klavierstück V* as an encore. The same response ensues. See 1 June 1955.

*The Lamentation of Saul*, a dramatic cantata for baritone, flute, oboe, clarinet, viola, cello, and piano by Norman Dello Joio (41), is performed for the first time, in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, the composer at the keyboard.

**22 August 1954** Concerto for flute and orchestra by Bruno Maderna (34) is performed for the first time, in Darmstadt.

**23 August 1954** Commandos from mainland China raid the Nationalist island of Quemoy (Jinmen), killing twelve soldiers and capturing one.

String Quartet in C by Claude Champagne (63) is performed for the first time, in Hermitage Hall, Montreal.

**24 August 1954** US President Eisenhower signs the Communist Control Act, effectively banning US citizens from engaging in certain peaceful political activities disliked by the state.

After evidence comes to light that men close to him were involved in the murder of Major Rubens Florentino Vaz and the attempted murder of Carlos Lacerda, a Rio de Janeiro editor, President Getulio Dornelles Vargas of Brazil shoots himself to death in Rio. He leaves a note which states, “To the wrath of my enemies, I leave the legacy of my death.” Riots break out in which four people are killed and many wounded.

**25 August 1954** The right-wing junta of Guatemala outlaws Communism.

*La victoire de Guernica*, an oratorio for chorus and orchestra by Luigi Nono (30), to words of Eluard, is performed for the first time, in Darmstadt.

**26 August 1954** João Fernandes de Campos Café Filho becomes President of Brazil, succeeding Getulio Dornelles Vargas, who died two days ago.

**27 August 1954** The French National Assembly votes to support the government’s efforts to make peace with rebels in Morocco and Tunisia and effect reforms leading to internal self-government.

**28 August 1954** Symphony for Strings op.61 by Vincent Persichetti (39) is performed for the first time, in Louisville, Kentucky.

**30 August 1954** The French National Assembly votes 319-264 to indefinitely postpone debate on the European Defense Community. This action effectively kills the idea.

*Rudá*, a ballet by Heitor Villa-Lobos (67), is performed for the first time, in the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, Paris, the composer conducting.

**31 August 1954** The US Senate subcommittee that conducted the Army-McCarthy hearings issues a report critical of Senator Joseph McCarthy, Secretary of the Army Robert Stevens, and former chief counsel of the committee Roy Cohn.

A select committee of the US Senate opens hearings into censure charges against Senator McCarthy.

**1 September 1954** UN and North Korean officials begin the repatriation of bodies at Panmunjom.

Following the French actions of yesterday, West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer calls for immediate talks with the US and Great Britain on German sovereignty.

Sonata for viola and piano no.2 by Ross Lee Finney (47) is performed for the first time, at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

**2 September 1954** In spite of the recent Supreme Court ruling, 23 Black children are prohibited from attending all-white elementary schools in Montgomery, Alabama.

**3 September 1954** Chinese and Taiwanese forces trade artillery bombardment around Quemoy (Jinmen) Island until 6 September.

**4 September 1954** Soviet war planes shoot down a US bomber near or over the coast of Siberia. Nine of the ten crew members are rescued.

Dmitri Shostakovich (47) is awarded the International Peace Prize, in Moscow.

US President Eisenhower signs into law a measure allowing for the revoking of citizenship to anyone advocating the violent overthrow of the government.

**7 September 1954** Over the next month Taiwan sends large scale air attacks against the mainland in Fukien (Fujian) Province.

SS General Kurt Meyer, found guilty of murdering Canadian prisoners in Normandy, returns to his home town of Niederkrüchten, his life sentence having been reduced to 14 years by the Canadian government with time off for good behavior.

Racial segregation is ended in the public schools of the District of Columbia.

**8 September 1954** An agreement forming the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, designed to halt the spread of communism in the region, is signed in Manila by representatives of the United States, Great Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Pakistan, and Thailand.

Racial segregation is ended in the public schools of Baltimore.

Senator Joseph McCarthy testifies before a select committee of the US Senate investigating charges of censure against him.

*Hodie*, a cantata for soprano, tenor, baritone, boys’ chorus, chorus, optional organ, and orchestra by Ralph Vaughan Williams (81) to words from various sources, is performed for the first time, in Worcester Cathedral, directed by the composer.

**9 September 1954** Edgardo Togni’s film *Su seguro servidor*, with music by Alberto Ginastera (38), is released in Argentina.

**10 September 1954** An earthquake centered in Orleansville (Chlef), in French Algeria kills over 1,200 people.

**12 September 1954** *Serenade (after Plato)* for violin, strings, harp, and percussion by Leonard Bernstein (36) is performed for the first time, in Teatro La Fenice, Venice, under the baton of the composer.

**13 September 1954** Hearings by a select committee of the US Senate into censure charges against Senator Joseph McCarthy close in Washington. They have heard nine days of testimony.

**14 September 1954** *The Turn of the Screw* op.54, a chamber opera by Benjamin Britten (40) to words of Piper after James, is performed for the first time, in Teatro La Fenice, Venice conducted by the composer.

Concerto for flute, strings, harp, and percussion by Virgil Thomson (57) is performed for the first time, in Venice.

**15 September 1954** An attempt to desegregate the schools of White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia is met by a massive demonstration by white parents. The plan is postponed for a year.

*A Tale of Thieves*, a ballet by Thea Musgrave (26) after Chaucer, is performed for the first time, in Moreton Hall, Oswestry, Shropshire. See 16 May 1957.

**16 September 1954** The legislature of the State of Mississippi responds to school desegregation by passing a constitutional amendment. It provides for the abolition of the public school system, or for local schools, and for paying students to attend private schools.

**17 September 1954** *Haha no hatsukoi*, a film with music by Toshiro Mayuzumi (25), is released in Japan.

*The Lord of the Flies* by William Golding is published by Faber and Faber in Great Britain.

*The Song of the Rivers*, a film with music by Dmitri Shostakovich (47), is shown for the first time, in Berlin.

**18 September 1954** Serenade for Orchestra by Ulysses Kay (37) is performed for the first time, in Louisville, Kentucky.

**20 September 1954** The government of Chile imposes a state of siege over the country. They claim a dangerous leftist movement organized during recent strikes by copper miners.

*Il mantell rosso (Der rote Mantel)*, a ballet by Luigi Nono (30) to a scenario by Gsovsky, is performed for the first time, in Berlin.

*In memoriam Dylan Thomas* for tenor, string quartet, and four trombones by Igor Stravinsky (72) to words of the poet, is performed for the first time, in Los Angeles.

**21 September 1954** Twenty Miniatures for piano by Ernst Krenek (54) is performed for the first time, in St. Gallen, the composer conducting.

**23 September 1954** Through the intercession of Olivier Messiaen (45), Iannis Xenakis (32) meets Pierre Schaeffer (44) in Paris.

Benjamin Britten’s (40) symphonic suite *Gloriana* for tenor or oboe and orchestra to words of Devereux, is performed for the first time, in Birmingham.

**24 September 1954** Karel Husa (33) departs France to take up a position teaching at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York.

**26 September 1954** 1,168 people die when the *Toya Maru*, a commercial ferry, sinks in the Tsuygaru Strait off Hokkaido in a typhoon. The storm also kills about 500 other people.

Diego Rivera is readmitted to membership in the Communist Party of Mexico. He was expelled in 1929 as a Trotskyite.

**27 September 1954** The first synagogue built in Barcelona since 1492 opens for New Year’s services.

A United States Senate select committee recommends that Senator Joseph McCarthy be censured on two counts, that he verbally abused and made false accusations of General Ralph Zwicker and for four times refusing to appear before a Senate subcommittee.

**28 September 1954** Arthur Honegger (62) and his wife return to Paris for the last time. Since he is no longer able to take care of himself, she will move in with him. Even though they have been married since 1926, they have only spent about a year living together.

Karel Husa (33) arrives in Ithaca, New York to take up a position as music theory teacher at Cornell University. He is able to speak German, French, some Italian but little English.

**30 September 1954** The *USS Nautilus* gets underway for her maiden voyage. It is the first nuclear-powered ship.

At a NATO foreign ministers’ conference in London, tentative agreement is reached to bring West German forces into the organization.

Eleven black students are removed from the high school in Milford, Delaware after a boycott by white students. The school board who ordered the desegregation resigned and was replaced by a board which ordered it halted.

**1 October 1954** The United Kingdom grants autonomy to the Federation of Nigeria.

A Paris journalist and two members of the Ministry of Defense are arrested for passing state secrets to Communists.

The Attorney General of the State of Florida files a brief with the US Supreme Court stating that any attempt to force desegregation in his state would be met with “violent physical resistance.”

**2 October 1954** John Cage (42) and David Tudor sail from New York aboard the *Massdam* bound for a European tour. Cage carries the newly finished scores of *34’ 46.776”* and *31’ 57.9864”* both for prepared piano.

*Il festino*, an opera by Gian Francesco Malipiero (72) to his own words after de Rossi, is staged for the first time, in Teatro Donizetti, Bergamo. Also premiered is Malipiero’s *Donna Urraca* to his own words after Mérimée. See 6 November 1937.

Luigi Dallapiccola’s (50) Variazioni per orchestra is performed for the first time, in Louisville.

**3 October 1954** Foreign Ministers of seven European and two North American nations sign a treaty in London bringing West Germany into the western alliance. It provides for granting sovereignty to West Germany and ending the occupation, West German membership in NATO and the Brussels Treaty, controlling the manufacture of arms in West Germany and increased powers for the NATO supreme commander. It also provides for Italian membership in the Brussels Treaty.

The *Massdam* collides with the French ship *Tofevo* and is forced to return to New York. Within a few days, John Cage (42) and David Tudor will be part of a sit-down protest, demanding that Holland America Line provide for their transport to Europe. The line gives in and charters a KLM plane to transport 60 “hardship cases” (among them Cage and Tudor) to Amsterdam.

Elections for the Brazilian Congress, held six weeks after the death of President Vargas, result in gains for the Social Democratic Party.

**4 October 1954** Demonstrations by white students against the desegregation of schools in the District of Columbia take place in Washington. They carry signs reading “Send them back to the plantation” and “Back to Africa.”

**5 October 1954** *Aku no tanoshisa*, a film with music by Toshiro Mayuzumi (25), is released in Japan.

Italy and Yugoslavia reach a negotiated agreement in London over Trieste. Italy gains sovereignty over Zone A including the city while Yugoslavia receives Zone B, including Crevatini, and the right to use the port.

Edgard Varèse (70) returns to France for the first time in over 20 years. He will complete *Déserts* at the studios of RTF.

Marilyn Monroe files for divorce from Joe DiMaggio citing mental cruelty.

**7 October 1954** Marian Anderson becomes the first African-American singer to sign a contract with the Metropolitan Opera, New York.

The West German Bundestag votes approval of the London treaty on rearmament.

**9 October 1954** 30,000 Viet Minh troops enter Hanoi.

Helmut Knochen of the Paris Gestapo is sentenced to death. He will eventually be released in 1963 and return home to Baden-Baden.

**11 October 1954**  The USSR agrees to return Port Arthur (Lüshun) to China before next April.

*Symphony Pallas Athene* by Ernst Krenek (54) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of NDR, originating in Hamburg, the composer conducting.

A revised version of Igor Stravinsky’s (72) Four Russian Peasant Songs for chorus and four horns, to words of Sakharov, is performed for the first time, in Los Angeles.

Hurricane Hazel strikes Haiti causing and estimated 1,000 deaths.

**12 October 1954** The French National Assembly votes confidence in Prime Minister Mendès-France over the recently signed German treaty.

Violin Sonata in a minor by Ralph Vaughan Williams is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of the BBC Home Service, on the composer’s 82nd birthday.

Two works for voice and piano by Francis Poulenc (55) are performed for the first time, in the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, the composer at the keyboard: *Parisiana*, to words of Jacob, which includes the songs “Jouer du bugle” and “Vous n’écrivez plus?” and *Rosemonde*, to words of Apollinaire.

**13 October 1954** *Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight*, a cantata by Roy Harris (56) to words of Lindsay, is performed in a concert for the first time, in Carnegie Music Hall, Pittsburgh. See 4 July 1954.

**16 October 1954** Three One-Part Inventions for piano by Arthur Berger (42) are performed for the first time, in Town Hall, New York.

**17 October 1954** Urho Kekkonen replaces Ralf Johan Gustaf Törngren as Prime Minister of Finland.

*34’ 46.776”* and *31’ 57.9865”* for a pianist (prepared piano) by John Cage (42) are performed for the first time, in the Festhalle, Donaueschingen by David Tudor and the composer. Also premiered is Morton Feldman’s (28) *Intersection for Magnetic Tape*. The audience is largely confused, some laughing, some shouting. It is the first time Cage and Tudor perform in Europe.

*Triumvirate* for male choir by Ulysses Kay (37) to words of Emerson, Longfellow, and Manville is performed for the first time, at Hunter College, New York.

A letter from Harry Partch (53) appears in the *Los Angeles Times* in response to that paper’s review of his most recent recording: “Sir: How dare you waste my time with your ‘reviews’? You...are a Euro-technique-inculcated hashbrain, who displaces a depth of water that a pollywog would die in. Go back to your histories, crawl between the pages, and get pressed for another century.”

**18 October 1954** The Regency TR-1, the first transistor radio, is marketed as a joint venture of Texas Instruments and Industrial Development Engineering Associates.

**19 October 1954** A treaty is agreed to in Cairo between Great Britain and Egypt over the Suez Canal. Britain will withdraw its 80,000 troops by 18 June 1956, thus ending its occupation of over 70 years. Egypt is given sovereignty over the canal. Both parties agree to maintain the neutrality and freedom of navigation of the canal.

A federal judge in Oklahoma City rules that an Oklahoma law requiring the word “negro” after the name of any African-American candidate on the ballot is constitutional and not discriminatory.

*Studie I & II* no.3 for electronic sound generators by Karlheinz Stockhausen (26) are performed for the first time, in the Funkhaus, Cologne, in an all-electronic/serial concert over the airwaves of West German Radio. Also premiered is *Seismogramme* by Henri Pousseur (25). Earlier in the day, Stockhausen makes the acquaintance of John Cage (42) and David Tudor.

**20 October 1954** The FBI arrests ten members of the Communist Party of Puerto Rico on charges of advocating the overthrow of the government.

*Pampeana no.3* op.24 for orchestra by Alberto Ginastera (38) is performed for the first time, in Louisville.

**21 October 1954** A treaty signed in New Delhi turns all French possessions in the subcontinent over to Indian administration effective 1 November.

In the same hour that Francis Poulenc (56) completes *Dialogues des Carmélites*, the salesman Lucien Roubert, with whom he has had a six-year relationship, dies of cancer in Toulon.

**22 October 1954** Four Silesian Songs for four violins by Witold Lutoslawski (41) is performed for the first time, in Warsaw.

**23 October 1954** Agreements are signed in Paris by foreign ministers of 15 nations. They restore sovereignty to West Germany, bring Italy and West Germany into the Western European Union and provide for limited German rearmament, admit West Germany into NATO while expanding the powers of the supreme commander and further integrating the various forces, and creating a “European” status for the Saarland. The Saar will be politically autonomous within the Western European Union, while retaining economic ties to France.

String Quartet no.2 by Karel Husa (33) is performed for the first time, in Paris.

*Poèmes pour la paix*, a cycle for voice and piano by Ned Rorem to words of various authors, is performed for the first time, the composer at the piano on his 31st birthday.

**25 October 1954** Yugoslavia completes occupation of Zone B of Trieste.

**26 October 1954** British and US officials turn over Zone A of Trieste to Italian troops. Despite bad weather, joyous celebrations ensue by the Italian citizenry.

Eight shots are fired at Egyptian Prime Minister Gamal Abdel Nasser as he addresses a rally in Alexandria. Four members of the Moslem Brotherhood are arrested.

The Jewish Theological Seminary of New York confers on Ernest Bloch (73) an honorary Doctor of Letters.

A federal judge in New York sentences 13 Puerto Rican communists to six years in prison for seditious conspiracy.

**27 October 1954** The Symphony of the Air gives its first major concert, in Carnegie Hall, New York. The NBC Symphony, defunct since the retirement of Arturo Toscanini, is reconstituted in this form by its musicians. The concert is given without conductor.

**29 October 1954** Nicolaas Christiaan Havenga replaces Daniel François Malan as acting Prime Minister of South Africa.

**30 October 1954** Desegregation of the United States Armed Forces is complete.

Two new works for orchestra are performed for the first time, in Louisville: *Euphony* by Robert Ward (37), and *A Carol on Twelfth Night* by William Bergsma (33).

**31 October 1954** Nine people are killed in fighting between Tunisian nationalists and French troops near Gafsa.

**1 November 1954**  Chinese aircraft attack Tachin (Dachen) Islands off Chekiang (Zhejiang) Province.

All French possessions in the subcontinent are turned over to Indian administration.

The Algerian National Liberation Front begins its war of independence with several small attacks on French installations throughout the country. Nine Frenchmen are killed.

In elections held today, Major General Fulgencio Batista and his followers are swept back into power in Cuba.

**2 November 1954** 900 French troops are sent to Algeria in response to terrorist attacks.

Guildhall in London is reopened after repair of war damage.

Congressional elections in the United States see a gain of two seats in the Senate and 19 in the House of Representatives for the Democratic Party, giving them control of both.

**3 November 1954** Henri Matisse dies in Nice at the age of 84.

**4 November 1954** The first of the major Nuremberg defendants is freed. Konstantin von Neurath, Protector of Bohemia and Moravia, is released for health reasons after serving eight years of a 15-year sentence.

**5 November 1954** Representatives of Japan and Burma sign peace and reparations treaties in Rangoon. Japan will give Burma $250,000,000 worth of manufactured goods, loans, and technological aid over ten years.

Many nationalist leaders throughout Algeria are arrested by French authorities, their organizations banned, as a result of the attacks of 1 November.

*Divertimento on Sellinger’s Round* for chamber orchestra by Michael Tippett (49) is performed for the first time, in the Zürich Tonhalle.

**6 November 1954** *Festive Overture* op.96 for orchestra by Dmitri Shostakovich (48) is performed for the first time, in the Bolshoy Theatre, Moscow for the 37th anniversary of the October Revolution.

**7 November 1954** Soviet fighters shoot down a US reconnaissance plane off Hokkaido Island, Japan. One member of the crew is killed.

French police raid suspected nationalist centers in Algeria, capturing 196 people.

*Suite cisalpine* op.332 for cello and orchestra by Darius Milhaud (62) is performed for the first time, in Paris.

**8 November 1954** Security forces in Kenya begin an offensive against Mau Maus north of Nairobi.

Concertino op.94 and Tarantella, both for two pianos four-hands by Dmitri Shostakovich (48) are performed for the first time, in Moscow Conservatory Malyi Hall. Playing one of the parts is the composer’s 14-year-old son, Maxim.

**10 November 1954** French troops seal the border between Algeria and Tunisia.

Hossein Fatemi, foreign minister in the Mossadegh government, is executed by firing squad in Teheran. He was convicted of treason in the attempted overthrow of the Shah in 1953.

**12 November 1954** Ellis Island closes. In almost 63 years it has processed 20,000,000 immigrants into the United States.

**13 November 1954** The first of five episodes of *War in the Air* with music by Roberto Gerhard (58) is shown on British television.

**14 November 1954** Mainland Chinese vessels sink a Taiwanese destroyer-escort north of the Tachen Islands. 28 people are killed.

The Revolutionary Council of Egypt removes Major General Mohammed Neguib from the presidency. They charge that he plotted with the Moslem Brotherhood to kill Prime Minister Gamal Abdel Nasser.

Leonard Bernstein (36) gives his first television lecture on the CBS *Omnibus* program.

*Menelaus on the Beach at Pharos* for voice and piano by Ralph Vaughan Williams (82) to words of his wife Ursula Vaughan Williams, is performed for the first time, at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

*Symphonic Epigram* for orchestra by Roy Harris (56) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of CBS radio originating in Carnegie Hall, New York.

Little Piano Book op.60 by Vincent Persichetti (39) is performed for the first time, at Philadelphia Conservatory by his daughter Lauren.

**15 November 1954** Musiche di scena per “Come vi Piace” di William Shakespeare for baritone, piccolo, clarinet, bass clarinet, trumpet, guitar, and percussion by Luigi Nono (30) is performed for the first time, in Berlin.

**17 November 1954** Gamal Abdel Nasser replaces Mohammed Neguib as President of Egypt.

Fantasy for piano and orchestra by Roy Harris (56) is performed for the first time, in Hartford, Connecticut the composer conducting.

*Ahavah*, a symphonic eulogy for narrator and orchestra by David Diamond (39), is performed for the first time, in Washington.

**18 November 1954** *A Poem in Cycles and Bells* for tape and orchestra by Otto Luening (54) and Vladimir Ussachevsky (43) is performed for the first time, in Los Angeles.

**19 November 1954** The United States and Canada announce a plan to construct a line of radar stations from Alaska to Greenland. Called the Distant Early Warning (DEW) line, it will warn of the approach of attacking Soviet planes or missiles across the North Pole.

Sammy Davis Jr. loses his left eye in an automobile accident near San Bernadino, California.

**20 November 1954** *The Little Black Boy* for voice and piano by Henry Cowell (57) to words of Blake is performed for the first time, in Town Hall, New York.

**23 November 1954** *Nyonin no yakata*, a film with music by Toshiro Mayuzumi (25), is released in Japan.

A Chinese military court hands down prison sentences of from four years to life to eleven US airmen and two civilians found guilty of spying. Nine Chinese accused of aiding the Americans are sentenced to death or life imprisonment.

**25 November 1954** *The Fiery Angel* op.37, an opera by Sergey Prokofiev (†1) after Bryusov, is performed completely for the first time, in a concert setting at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, Paris. See 14 June 1928.

*Heart’s Music* for chorus by Ralph Vaughan Williams (82) to words of Campion is performed for the first time, in the Church of St. Sepulchre, Holborn, London.

**26 November 1954** Concerto for orchestra by Witold Lutoslawski (41) is performed for the first time, in the Roma Theatre, Warsaw.

**27 November 1954** Alger Hiss is released from federal prison in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania after serving 44 months of a five-year sentence for perjury. He is given time off for good behavior.

**28 November 1954** *Adventure* for flute, clarinet, horn, harp, and various non-western instruments by Samuel Barber (44) is performed for the first time, over the airwaves of CBS television, the composer conducting. The non-western instruments are taken from the collection of the Museum of Natural History, New York.

**29 November 1954** Sonatine for oboe and piano op.337 by Darius Milhaud (62) is performed for the first time, in Town Hall, New York.

**30 November 1954** Johannes Gerhardus Strijdom replaces Nicolaas Christiaan Havenga as Prime Minister of South Africa.

**30 November 1954** *Niwatori wa futatabi naku*, a film with music by Toshiro Mayuzumi (25), is released in Japan.

Trio for violin, cello, and piano by Leon Kirchner (35) is performed for the first time, in Pasadena Playhouse, Pasadena, California the composer at the keyboard.

**2 December 1954** A mutual defense treaty between the United States and Taiwan is signed in Washington.

Eight eastern European nations sign a declaration to form a defense pact similar to NATO if West Germany is rearmed.

Arthur Honegger (62) is raised to the rank of Grand Officer in the Legion of Honor.

The US Senate votes 67-22 to condemn (not censure) Joseph McCarthy for conduct unbecoming a senator.

*Déserts* for 14 winds, piano, five percussionists, and two-track tape by Edgar Varèse (70), is performed for the first time, at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, Paris, and broadcast live. Pierre Henry (26) is in charge of the tape. A scandal ensues with audience members of differing opinions hurling insults during the performance. These turn to fisticuffs and wrestling matches with some patrons attempting unsuccessfully to use seats as weapons. The office of Prime Minister Pierre Mendès-France is inundated with telephone calls from angry listeners trying to get the music or the broadcast stopped. An order is given to RTF to stop the broadcast, but the order is ignored.

**3 December 1954** *Troilus and Cressida*, an opera by William Walton (52) to words of Hassall, is performed for the first time, at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Reviews are generally good but many are disappointed, calling it “old fashioned.” See 12 November 1976.

*Prayers of Kierkegaard* op.30 for soprano, alto, tenor, chorus, and orchestra by Samuel Barber (44) is performed for the first time, in Symphony Hall, Boston.

**4 December 1954** Nina Vasilyevna Varzar, wife of Dmitri Shostakovich (48), undergoes an emergency operation on a cancerous colon, in Yerevan, Armenia. Traveling from Moscow, the composer arrives to find her in a coma after surgery. She dies today. Though they each had an open liaison with another person, their marriage was relatively harmonious.

**6 December 1954** Simone de Beauvoir receives the Goncourt Prize for *Les Mandarins*.

**7 December 1954** Six members of the Moslem Brotherhood are hanged for plotting to overthrow the government of Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser.

**8 December 1954** Six days after the “scandale”, Edgard Varèse’s (70) *Déserts* is given its second performance in a studio broadcast over NDR in Hamburg. Bruno Maderna (34) conducts the orchestra and Karlheinz Stockhausen (26) oversees the tape. Also on the program is Stockhausen’s *Kontra-Punkte* and the premiere of Maderna’s Composizione in 3 tempi.

**9 December 1954** Ichiro Hatoyama replaces Shigeru Yoshida as Prime Minister of Japan.

**10 December 1954** The UN General Assembly votes 47-5-7 to condemn China for imprisoning eleven US airmen in violation of the Korean armistice agreement. They instruct Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld to immediately seek their release.

**11 December 1954** Symphony no.3 by Carlos Chávez (55) is performed for the first time, in Caracas, under the baton of the composer.

**15 December 1954** The Netherlands grants full autonomy to the Netherlands Antilles and Surinam.

**16 December 1954** HT Hall of General Electric Research Laboratories produces the first synthetic diamond.

Aaron Copland (54) is elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

**17 December 1954** Symphony no.4 op.51 by Vincent Persichetti (39) is performed for the first time, in Philadelphia.

**18 December 1954** NATO ministers meeting in Paris authorize military commanders to base their planning for the defense of western Europe on the availability of nuclear weapons.

Henry Cowell’s (57) dance music *Changing Woman*, to a scenario by Erdman, is performed for the first time, in San Francisco.

**19 December 1954** A special committee of the US House of Representatives concludes that the Rockefeller, Carnegie, Ford, and other large charitable foundations “have directly supported subversion.”

**20 December 1954** The independence of Cambodia is recognized by France.

*Giovanni d’Arco al rogo*, a film with music by Arthur Honegger (62), is released in Italy.

**21 December 1954** In a nationally notorious case, Dr. Samuel Sheppard is found guilty in a Cleveland court of murdering his wife on 4 July. He is sentenced to life in prison.

**23 December 1954** 40 members of the Moslem Brotherhood are sentenced to jail terms for conspiring to kill President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt and take over the government.

The first successful kidney transplant in humans is conducted by Dr. John P. Merrill at Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in Boston. Richard Herrick (23) receives a kidney from his identical twin, Ronald. Richard Herrick will live seven more years, finally succumbing to congestive heart failure caused by his original kidney disease.

**27 December 1954** *The Saint of Bleecker Street*, a music drama by Gian-Carlo Menotti (43) to his own words, is performed for the first time, in the Broadway Theatre, New York. It receives mixed reviews. See 2 May 1955.

**28 December 1954** Five members of the Moslem Brotherhood are sentenced to death for conspiring to kill President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt and take over the government.

*A Wreath for Waits* for chorus by Ulysses Kay (37) to anonymous words is performed for the first time, in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

**29 December 1954** 117 members of the Moslem Brotherhood are sentenced to jail terms for conspiring to kill President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt and take over the government.

**30 December 1954** The French National Assembly ratifies the agreements to rearm West Germany and bring it into the Western European Union.

Incidental music to Lavrenev’s play *Lermontov* by Aram Khachaturian (51) is performed for the first time, in Moscow.

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