

= Jane Joseph =

Jane Marian Joseph (31 May 1894 ? 9 March 1929) was an English composer , arranger and music teacher . She was a pupil and later associate of the composer Gustav Holst , and was closely concerned in the organisation and management of various of the music festivals which Holst sponsored . Many of her works were composed for performance at these festivals and similar occasions . Her early death , which prevented the full realisation of her talents , was considered by her contemporaries as a considerable loss to English music .

Holst first observed Joseph 's potential when he was teaching her composition at St Paul 's Girls ' School . She began to act as his amanuensis in 1914 , when he was composing *The Planets* , her special responsibility being the preparation of the score for the " Neptune " movement . She continued to assist Holst with transcriptions , arrangements and translations , and was his librettist for the choral ballet *The Golden Goose* . During her short professional life she became an active member of the Society of Women Musicians , was the prime mover behind the first Kensington Musical Competition Festival , and helped to found the Kensington Choral Society . She also taught music at a girls ' school , where Holst 's daughter Imogen was one of her pupils , and became a leading figure in the musical life of Morley College .

Much of Joseph 's compositional oeuvre was never published and has been lost . Of her published works , two early short orchestral pieces , *Morris Dance* and *Bergamask* won considerable critical praise , although neither became part of the general orchestral repertory . Two choral works , *A Festival Venite* and *A Hymn for Whitsuntide* were admired during her lifetime , but seldom performed thereafter . Her carol " *A Little Child There is I bore* " was thought by Holst to be among the best of its kind . In the eight decades after her death there were no commercial recordings of Joseph 's music , but there have been occasional broadcast performances .

= = Biography = =

= = = Family background and early childhood = = =

Jane Joseph was born on 31 May 1894 at 23 Clanricarde Gardens , in the Notting Hill district of the Borough of Kensington , London , to a prosperous Jewish family . Her father , George Solomon Joseph (1844 ? 1917) , a solicitor in his family 's firm , had married Henrietta , née Franklin (1861 ? 1938) in 1880 . Jane was their fourth child ; the youngest of her three brothers was seven years older than her . George Joseph had a deep interest in music , which he passed on to his children ; two sons , Frank (1881 ? 1944) and Edwin (1887 ? 1975) , became competent string players , while Jane learned piano (she took her first examination at the age of seven) and later , double @-@ bass . In time , Frank 's musical children , with Jane and friends , formed the basis of a " Josephs orchestra " that performed concerts at Frank 's home for many years .

= = = St Paul 's Girls ' School and Gustav Holst = = =

In 1909 Joseph won a scholarship to St Paul 's Girls ' School (SPGS) in Hammersmith . The school had opened in 1904 , as an offshoot of the long @-@ established St Paul 's School for boys . Its high mistress , Frances Ralph Gray , was a formidable figure with traditional views about female education , who nevertheless provided a lively and varied learning environment in which Joseph excelled . Apart from her academic successes , Joseph played double @-@ bass in the school orchestra , gave an acclaimed piano performance of Bach 's D minor keyboard concerto , began to compose , and won a prize for sight @-@ reading . While at the school she composed " *The Carrion Crow* " , a song setting which , in 1914 , became her first published work . Outside music she supported the school 's Literary Society , where she presented papers on Charlotte Brontë and Samuel Taylor Coleridge . She also won Honours in the examinations of the Royal Drawing Society .

Among the music teachers at SPGS , most significantly in terms of her musical development , Joseph encountered the emergent composer Gustav Holst , then little known , who taught her composition . After leaving the Royal College of Music in 1898 Holst had earned his living as an organist , and as a trombonist in various orchestras , while awaiting critical recognition as a composer . In 1903 he gave up his orchestral appointments to concentrate on composing , but found that he needed a regular income . He became a music teacher , initially at the James Allen 's Girls ' School in Dulwich ; in 1905 he was recommended to Frances Gray by Adine O 'Neill , a former pupil of Clara Schumann , who taught piano at SPGS . He was first appointed on a part @-@ time basis to teach singing , and later extended his activities to cover the school 's wider music curriculum including conducting and composition . According to the composer Alan Gibbs , Joseph quickly came under Holst 's spell , and adopted his principles as her own . Holst later described her as the best girl pupil he ever had : " From the first she showed an individual attitude of mind and an eagerness to absorb all that was beautiful " .

= = = Student , scribe and teacher , 1913 ? 18 = = =

= = = = Girton = = = =

In the autumn of 1913 , at the age of 19 , Joseph began studying Classics at Girton College , Cambridge . At that time , under Cambridge University regulations that were not fully repealed until 1948 , women were ineligible to receive degrees , although they could sit the degree examinations , in Joseph 's case the Classical Tripos . She soon found much in the university 's life to divert her from her regular studies : debating , drama and , above all , music . In her first term she became a double @-@ bass player in the Cambridge University Musical Society orchestra , under its conductor Cyril Rootham . She also sang alto in the society 's choir , and may have participated in a performance of Berlioz 's La damnation de Faust that was praised in the Cambridge Review of 17 June 1914 . During vacations she continued her composition studies under Holst ; in 1916 her " Wassail Song " , a companion piece to " The Carrion Crow " , was published . At Girton she wrote incidental music for a performance of W. B. Yeats 's verse play The Countess Cathleen , in which she acted the part of the First Dragon .

From 1915 Joseph 's association with Holst became closer . Overextended by his teaching duties and other commitments , Holst required assistance in the task of organising his music for publication and performance , and used a group of young women volunteers ? his " scribes " ? to make fair copies of his scores , write out instrumental or vocal parts , or prepare piano arrangements . In 1915 the composer was working on his largest and best @-@ known work , the orchestral suite The Planets , and invited Joseph , in her vacations , to join his scribes . Among these were Vally Lasker , a piano teacher from SPGS , and Nora Day , who had been a pupil with Joseph at the school and since 1913 had been teaching there . Joseph 's main assignment for The Planets was to copy the " Neptune " movement , of which almost the entire original manuscript is written in her hand . For the rest of her career she remained one of Holst 's most regular amanuenses , and he came to rely on her more than on any other . Her commitments to musical activities at Girton , combined with her work for Holst , had an adverse effect on her formal studies . In the 1916 Classical Tripos examinations she was awarded only a Class III pass , a disappointing result duly noted in her parting testimonial from the college .

= = = = Early career = = = =

When Joseph left Girton , the First World War was at a critical state ; the Battle of the Somme had begun on 1 July 1916 . Joseph wanted to assist the war effort , and after considering work on the land or in a munitions factory , took up part @-@ time welfare work in Islington . In the autumn of 1916 she began teaching at Eothen , a small private school for girls in Caterham , founded and run by the Misses Catharine and Winifred Pye . In 1917 Holst 's ten @-@ year @-@ old daughter

Imogen started at the school ; soon , under Joseph 's guidance the young pupil was composing her own music . Joseph extended her own musical activities by joining the orchestra at Morley College , where Holst was the director of music and where her brother Edwin had played the cello before the war . At first she played the double @-@ bass , but later took French horn lessons , possibly from Adolph Borsdorf ; later still , at very short notice , she taught herself the timpani part for a summer concert . By 1918 she was a member of the Morley committee that on 9 March organised and produced an opera burlesque , English Opera as She is Wrote , in which English , Italian , German , French and Russian opera styles were parodied in successive scenes . The performance was a great success and was repeated at several venues . It may have inspired Holst to use parody in his own opera , The Perfect Fool , which he began composing in 1918 . In her spare time Joseph founded and ran a choir for Kensington nannies , which took part in local singing contests as the " Linden Singers " .

Joseph increased her teaching commitments by often deputising for Holst , both at James Allen 's and at SPGS . She also continued in her role of the composer 's amanuensis , and was invited to attend the private premiere of The Planets , on 29 September 1918 at the Queen 's Hall , where Adrian Boult conducted the Queen 's Hall orchestra . She later wrote : " From the moment of Mars ... to the last sound of Neptune , it was a big thing that will last all our lives , I think " . She was able to draw on her classical education at Girton when she helped to translate the apocryphal work The Acts of John from the original Greek , to provide the text for Holst 's Hymn of Jesus (1917) ; for the same work she prepared a vocal score and an arrangement for piano , strings and organ . She and Holst combined to produce a women 's voices version (two sopranos and an alto) of William Byrd 's Mass for Three Voices , and Joseph worked alone to produce an orchestral accompaniment for Samuel Wesley 's Sing Aloud with Gladness . This latter work was prepared for the 1917 Whitsun musical festival , one of an annual series of such festivals that Holst masterminded , first at his home town of Thaxted , in later years at assorted venues including Dulwich , Chichester and Canterbury . Joseph became a key figure in these festivals , as organiser , performer and composer . At Thaxted in 1918 two of her compositions were performed : Hymn for female voices (now lost) , and an orchestral piece , Barbara Noel 's Morris , which Joseph wrote to mark her friendship with the daughter of Conrad Noel , Thaxted 's vicar .

The years 1917 and 1918 also brought personal sadness . On 22 October 1917 Joseph 's father died from a heart attack . On 27 May the following year , just after the Whitsun festival , her brother William was killed in action on the western front ; in September , Edwin was severely wounded in the final Allied offensive of the war . In his monograph on Joseph 's life and music , the composer Alan Gibbs writes that " there is no hint in Jane 's letters of the effect these events had on her " . Gibbs quotes Duff Cooper , who wrote of those times : " ... if we wept ? as weep we did ? we wept in secret " .

= = = Teacher , facilitator and composer , 1918 ? 28 = = =

= = = = Postwar years = = = =

In 1919 , seeking to consolidate her musical career , Joseph joined the Society of Women Musicians (SWM) , founded in 1911 by the violinist and musicologist Marion Scott and others to promote the interests of women in music . Scott was known to Joseph , having been leader of the Morley orchestra . Joseph became a member of the SWM 's Composers ' Sectional Committee , and occasionally gave lectures to the society on subjects such as " The Necessity of Practical Experience for Composers " , and " The Composer as Pupil " . In the summer of 1919 she took conducting lessons from Adrian Boult , whom she described as " the most chinless man I have ever met " . The purpose of the lessons was to enable her to conduct her orchestral work Bergamask , which was performed at the Coliseum Theatre under a scheme devised by Sir Oswald Stoll to showcase new British music . In that same summer she met Ralph Vaughan Williams , a close friend of Holst . She played him some of her music , probably a piano reduction of Bergamask , and

described him as " a very appreciative critic " .

Towards the end of 1918 Holst had asked Joseph to provide a libretto for his opera *The Perfect Fool* , feeling that she might possess the required light touch that he thought his own writing lacked . It is not clear whether she declined , or whether Holst changed his mind , but he eventually wrote the text himself . Joseph did , however , write the story for a ballet based on Holst 's music *The Sneezing Charm* ; the ballet , entitled *A Magic Hour* , was performed at Morley in October 1920 . Meantime , Joseph 's works were being performed at SWM concerts : two songs , probably from her *Mirage* cycle , in January 1920 , and some of her settings of Walter de la Mare poems in December .

At Eiothen , Joseph continued to supervise Imogen Holst 's musical education , aspects of which had earlier been causing Holst some concern . In a letter to his wife dated February 1919 , written when he was serving as YMCA musical organiser for British troops stationed in the Eastern Mediterranean , Holst reported that " I 've had a very kind and wise letter from Jane about Imogen " . Whatever issues had troubled Holst were resolved satisfactorily , and Joseph became Imogen 's theory teacher : " Theory with Jane is ripping " , the young pupil enthused . In the summer term of 1920 , with help from Joseph , Imogen devised and composed a " *Dance of Nymphs and Shepherds* " which was performed at the school on 9 July . At the beginning of 1921 Imogen started at SPGS ; before becoming a boarder at Bute House (one of the school 's residences for pupils) , she stayed in the Joseph family home .

The Whitsun festivals , suspended during Holst 's absence , resumed at Dulwich in 1920 . Joseph 's part in this event is unrecorded , but she made a major contribution to the following year 's festivities , which began beside the Thames at Isleworth and concluded on Whit Monday at SPGS in the gardens of Bute House . For the Monday 's celebrations Joseph devised a presentation of Purcell 's semi-opera from 1690 , *Dioclesian* . Writing of the occasion after Joseph 's death , Holst recalled that she had woven Purcell 's music and Thomas Betterton 's text , both long neglected , " into a delightful outdoor pageant founded on a fairy story , complete with lost princess , dragon and princely hero " . Not satisfied with planning every aspect of the outdoor performance , Joseph prepared an indoors version of the entertainment , should the weather require this . The production was a great success , and was repeated that summer in Hyde Park and , in October 1921 , at the Old Vic theatre . Throughout this considerable organisational task , Holst wrote , " Jane gave the minimum of worry to each person concerned by giving herself the maximum of hard work and forethought " .

== == Career zenith == ==

In November 1921 Joseph organised the Morley forces to perform a large-scale pageant , celebrating the bicentenary of the church of St Martin in the Fields . The text was by Laurence Housman and the music , directed by Holst , was taken from the Morley repertory . In the following year Joseph 's increasing recognition as a composer was confirmed when her *Seven Two-Part Songs* were performed at a SWM concert that included works by Ethel Smyth and other women composers . Two of Joseph 's works , *A Hymn for Whitsuntide* and *A Festival Venite* were introduced during the 1922 Whitsun festival at All Saints ' church , Blackheath , with Holst conducting . After the *Venite* premiere Joseph wrote appreciatively to Holst : " Do you suppose for one moment that any other conductor takes trouble like that ? If you do , you are quite wrong " . The *Venite* was performed on 13 June 1923 at the Queen 's Hall , by the Philharmonic Choir under Charles Kennedy Scott ; the *Spectator* 's critic thought it a " very notable addition to modern British music " . Amidst her compositional and other activities , Joseph found time , in 1922 , to organise the first Kensington Musical Competition Festival , and to orchestrate many of the competition songs . In due course this festival became an important annual event in Kensington ; Vaughan Williams was among the adjudicators . On 12 October 1922 , Vaughan Williams 's 50th birthday , Joseph organised a choir which gave an early-morning surprise performance in the composer 's garden of a song she had written to mark the occasion .

As early as 1919 , Joseph had written to her brother Edwin expressing concern about Holst 's

health . When following a physical breakdown in 1923 Holst gave up his duties at Morley College , Joseph wrote him a supportive letter congratulating him on his decision which would enable him to concentrate on composition . The following years were particularly fruitful for Holst , and Joseph assisted in many of the works he produced in the 1924 ? 28 period . She helped him prepare the score for his Choral Symphony , for which assistance he presented her with his original draft sketches , as a gesture of gratitude . Together with Lasker and Day she worked to prepare vocal and full scores for the opera *At the Boar 's Head* , and attended the rehearsals in March 1925 . After the opera 's premiere on 3 April she wrote to Holst with mildly critical comments on some of the singers , though with praise for the conductor , the young Malcolm Sargent . When Holst composed a short choral piece to celebrate the 21st birthday of the Oriana Madrigal Society , Joseph provided words which humorously reflected the conductor Kennedy Scott 's working methods ; the work was greatly appreciated by the choir . In that same year , 1925 , she helped to found the Kensington Choral Society . By this time the Joseph home in Kensington , where Jane lived for her whole life , was becoming a recognised musical gathering @-@ place ; a visitor recalled meeting Vaughan Williams , Boult , and the harpist Sidonie Goossens there , among others .

In 1926 Joseph provided Holst with the libretto for his choral ballet *The Golden Goose* , based on a story by the Brothers Grimm , and arranged its first performance at the 1926 Whitsun festival , held at the James Allen school . Joseph also assisted Holst and the librettist Stuart Wilson in the production of a second choral ballet , *The Morning of the Year* ? the first work commissioned by the BBC 's newly formed music department ? which was performed at the Royal Albert Hall in March 1927 . The Morley College Annual Report of 1927 recorded the formation of a folk dance club , and noted Joseph 's " skilful direction " of the group . Her increasing interest in dance led her , that year , to join the English Folk Dance Society and the Kensington Dance Club .

= = = Illness , death and tributes = = =

The main feature of the 1928 Whitsun festival , held at Canterbury , was a religious drama , *The Coming of Christ* , commissioned by George Bell , then Dean of Canterbury , and written by John Masefield . Holst provided the incidental music . In a photograph described by Gibbs , taken of the festival 's organisers and performers , Joseph is sitting between Holst and Mrs Bell , " taller than either , an efficient @-@ looking lady in her early thirties , clearly of some importance to the festival " . This was Joseph 's last Whitsun . Towards the end of the year her health began to fail ; there is a mention in Holst 's diary for 29 November 1928 , " Jane 's concert 8 @. @ 15 " , but no indication is given of whether she was a performer . In February 1929 she paid off the final amount owing to the piano manufacturer C. Bechstein , for Morley 's new piano for which she had been fundraising since 1926 . On 9 March 1929 Joseph died at home , in Kensington , of kidney failure . After a private funeral she was buried in Willesden Jewish Cemetery .

Holst was in Venice when the news of Joseph 's death reached him ; although Imogen records that he received it stoically , he was privately devastated . Joseph had , wrote Imogen , " come nearest to his ideal of clear thinking and clear feeling " . In his own tribute , Holst drew attention to Joseph 's " infinite capacity for taking pains which amounts to genius " . No Whitsun festival was held in 1929 , but in early July , at an open @-@ air production of Holst 's *The Golden Goose* at Warwick Castle , a special performance of his *St Paul 's Suite* was played in Joseph 's memory . On 5 December 1929 , at a competitive music festival , Vaughan Williams conducted the choir in Joseph 's *Hymn for Whitsuntide* while the audience stood in tribute . The same hymn was played at the first resumed Whitsun festival , at Chichester in May 1930 . In July 1931 Holst included her music in a concert that he conducted at Chichester Cathedral , alongside works by William Byrd , Thomas Weelkes and Vaughan Williams . Over the course of the next few years Joseph 's works were played at concerts and events organised by Morley College , the SWM , SPGS and the English Folk Dance Society . At Eothen a " Jane Joseph Memorial Prize " was established , and music scholarships were endowed in her name at Eothen and SPGS .

A friend who expressed personal sadness on hearing of Joseph 's death revealed another aspect of her character : " England won 't be the same without Jane . She was terribly difficult to get to know

at all , and awfully lonely , I thought , in spite of all her friends ? don 't you think so ? ? but I can 't imagine Music without her " .

= = Music = =

Much of Joseph 's music was written for performances at modest @-@ scale events by amateur performers . As such it was never published , and over the years many works have been lost . The published works and the few others that survive , Gibbs believes , place Joseph in the category of " progressive " English composers . Although her first few compositions were mainly songs , she demonstrated early abilities as an orchestral composer . Gibbs finds in her two short pieces , Morris Dance (1917) (originally Barbara Noel 's Morris) and Bergamask (1919) , three and five minutes respectively , a " fine feeling for orchestral sound " . The Morris Dance has added sparkle from a glockenspiel , while Bergamask has a festive Italianate feel . The music writer Philip Scowcroft praises Joseph 's confident handling of the sizeable orchestral forces required for the Morris Dance , while the composer Havergal Brian , Holst 's contemporary , found Bergamask " exhilarating " and " full of promise " . Gibbs suggests that these two works presage Holst 's late choral ballets , and comments : " That these carefree pieces did not find a permanent place in the repertory is unfortunate " .

In Joseph 's Mirage song cycle of 1921 (five songs with string quartet accompaniment) , a Holstian influence is evident alongside her own distinctive compositional voice . Gibbs highlights the first in the cycle , " Song " , which initially echoes " To Varuna " from Holst 's Rig Veda hymns , but evolves into " a different creation , distinguished by its own uncluttered quartet writing in which the viola has a special part to play " . The final song , " Echo " , has as much in common with Brahms as with Holst . Joseph 's Festival Venite from 1922 is an example of her use of the Modern Dorian mode (an ascending scale from D to the next D on the white piano keys) , which became a feature of some of her later works . Scowcroft and Gibbs both point to Tudor influences in the Venite in which also , says Gibbs , " the congenial influence of Vaughan Williams in melody and harmony is felt " . The orchestral score for this work lost , but an organ accompaniment has been devised . Joseph 's unaccompanied choral Hymn for Whitsuntide also uses the Dorian Mode in what Holst described as a " flawless little motet " ; this was first work of Joseph 's to be broadcast , in 1968 . A Short String Quartet in A minor was performed by the Winifred Smith Quartet in December 1922 and was accepted for publication by J.B. Cramer and Co . However , it was not published , and subsequently disappeared .

Joseph 's carol " A Little Childe There is Ibore " , is a setting of a 15th @-@ century poem for three female voices and piano or strings . Holst considered this " the best of Jane 's many carols , and perhaps the hardest to perform well . " Written in alternate bars of five and seven beats , it was praised by Brian for its originality . It was eventually broadcast by the BBC on 21 December 1995 . Brian was also an admirer of Joseph 's many instructional piano pieces : " pleasingly simple and unaffected " . These were published between 1920 and 1925 ; Gibbs writes that these pieces " focus on technical aspects in tuneful and often modal contexts " , with occasional excursions into other forms such as chaconne and rondo .