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SPECIAL FEATURE on British composer ARNOLD COOKE

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born 4th November 1906 - Gomersal (West Yorkshire), England
died 13th August 2005 - Five Oak Green (Kent), England

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Arnold {Atkinson} Cooke was born in November 1906 near Leeds. He was educated at Repton School, later obtaining his BMus at Cambridge University in 1929. From then until 1932 he was a pupil of Hindemith at the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin.

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After completing his studies, he became Director of Music at the Festival Theatre, Cambridge, and was later appointed Professor of Harmony and Composition at the then Royal Manchester College (now Royal Northern College) of Music from 1933 to 1938. During the war he served with the Royal Navy, and after the termination of hostilities his compositions enjoyed a growing number of performances, with his chamber music making a particularly strong impression. He took his MusD at Cambridge in 1948, a year after he had been appointed Professor of Harmony and Composition at Trinity College of Music, where he taught for many years.

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His compositions are characterised by openness of texture and directness of appeal and have been widely performed. His most important works include the Violin Concerto (1958) first performed by Yfrah Neaman and the Halle Orchestra under Sir John Barbirolli in 1959, and the Cello Concerto (1974) first performed in 1975 by Thomas Igloi, and the BBC Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Sir Charles Groves. Cooke enjoyed five postwar PROMS concert premieres, and the Cello Concerto was premiered at the Proms in 1975.

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Of Cooke's six symphonies, the First (1947) was premiered by the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Sir Adrian Boult; the Second to Fifth were first heard between 1963 and 1979, and the Sixth Symphony, completed in 1984, remains unperformed. His last major orchestral work, the Concerto for Orchestra of 1986, was first performed by the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra in 1987.

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A wealth of some 45 chamber and instrumental works respond to Hindemith's utilitarian concept of *gebrauchsmusik*, being capable of performance by the talented amateur rather than the virtuoso.

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Cooke largely ceased writing after 1987, though a Suite For Organ - part of a substantial body of work - was first performed by Simon Preston in 1989; and in 1996 came a setting of one of Blake's Songs Of Innocence for voice and recorder in memory of soprano Tracey Chadwell - his last music.

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Key Works:

1947 - Symphony No 1

1954 - Oboe Concerto

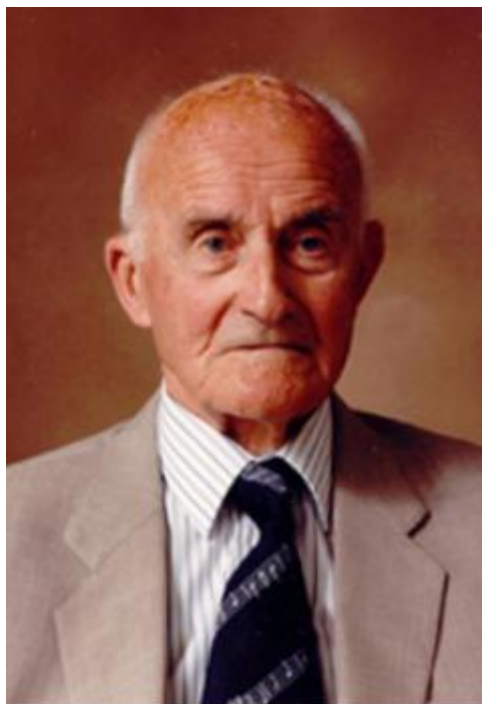
1958 - Violin Concerto

1974 - Cello Concerto - HEAR the world premiere from the BBC archives!:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkGeStNAOp0>

1986 - Concerto for Orchestra

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‘documenting the cello’

Please do see other original works for many different instruments and groupings, and also special transcriptions for cellists, and cellists with other instruments on the *Johnstone-Music* web page

Also both general musical and cello based articles, directories of famous historical cellists, and many other items of interest

DOWNLOADS - Many downloads on *Johnstone-Music* are now available, for those that are interested, at a *symbolic* payment, which is to help cover the costs of this web site. Some scores/parts are presented in musical edition programmes but generally they are found here in a most “clear” hand-written manuscript copy (the majority to almost a professional copyist standard) and transferred to a PDF file.

As far as *Johnstone-Music* is concerned you are welcome to publicly perform or record any work or piece found in the web; however you DO need to make mention of the name of the composer and the arranger on any printed information (hand programmes, disc covers etc.).

FREE PUBLICITY - If you care to inform us of any public performance (no matter how formal or informal the event is), recording or other uses of the original music or arrangements of David Johnstone or of other musical colleagues included in this web, we are happy to give your event free publicity on the *Johnstone-Music* web.

To take advantage of this, try to write to us three weeks or more in advance with any information. Last-minute entries are certainly better than not writing at all - however, understandably, once we have past the calendar month of the event it is not usually possible to add old items to the calendar. It is very interesting for the promoters of *Johnstone-Music* to have knowledge of your activity - and so in return for your information you will be entitled to a free gift of a work/s for every diary addition you tell us about. To find out more about this, please visit the “*Cello Club*” section in the web!