



Serge and Olga Koussevitzky at their home (late 1940s)

By 1945 Koussevitzky was over 70 and no longer wanted the responsibility of supervising the publishing house. As has been seen, Hawkes, who had secured the sole agency for Édition Russe in 1923, was closely in touch with Koussevitzky from the late thirties onwards and encouraged Heinsheimer to cement a relationship when he came to work in New York. Eventually, Hawkes approached the conductor formally, and a deal was struck, thus giving B&H an incredible treasure-trove containing many works of Rachmaninoff, Prokofieff and Stravinsky: highly desirable rights at the time which were to increase in value as the century progressed. Today, the ‘Koussevitzky works’, which include *The Rite of Spring* and *Petrushka*, *Lieutenant Kijé* and the *Classical Symphony*, Rachmaninoff’s Second Piano Concerto and Second Symphony, and Ravel’s orchestration of *Pictures at an Exhibition*, are among the top earners in the B&H catalogue.

Not surprisingly, it was an expensive acquisition: a figure of \$300,000 is mentioned in 1946, and the bank had to be approached to help raise it. This was not a single payment: numerous other payments for rights and territories were to be made in the following years.

So much for the works of Stravinsky’s youth: Hawkes was, as ever, looking to the future. On the day that Stravinsky became an American citizen, 28 December 1945, Ralph Hawkes went to Beverley Hills to meet him, as he

recalled in an article in *Tempo*, ‘in the incongruous but unavoidable setting of an hotel dining room complete with dance band and cabaret.’

They discussed his current works, the *Symphony in Three Movements* and the *Ebony Concerto*, though B&H did not ultimately obtain these. Stravinsky’s future plans included a concerto for string orchestra for Paul Sacher, his first European commission for twelve years, and it was this, the *Concerto in D*, that was the first work to bear the imprint of Boosey & Hawkes. A full agreement was drawn up and signed in 1947, by which time he was working on the ballet *Orpheus* and planning a full-length opera in English. In fact, it was Hawkes’s contract that had made the composition of an opera possible: Stravinsky was to be guaranteed a minimum of \$10k a year rising to \$12k after two years. Hawkes never underestimated Stravinsky’s worth, as Friede Roth noted in her memoir of Hawkes: the agreement was ‘so lavish that at last one composer could feel that something was being put over on a publisher’. By 1948 *Orpheus* had had a ‘smash hit’ reception at the Ballet Society in New York and his *Mass* had been praised at its first performance at La Scala.

The Rape of Lucretia and a monstrous misrepresentation

With Stravinsky now a house composer too, Britten would have to share the limelight, and the attention of Hawkes, LAB and Roth. The two composers could not help but be aware of each other. An exchange between them during Britten’s 1949 recital tour of America reveals the outwardly dismissive attitude of the older to the younger composer: the Earl of Harewood recalls that when Britten asked if he would write a full-

Ralph Hawkes (left) and Leslie Boosey (right) at Tanglewood with the Koussevitzkys and Clare Hawkes (late 1940s)

