

  
ABC  
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# THE AMADIO FAMILY

Clive Amadio  
Neville Amadio  
John Amadio

  
ABC  
Classics



John Amadio adjusting the microphone for soprano Glenda Raymond



Above: Bombadier Neville Amadio in 1944, talking with visiting American conductor Eugene Ormandy



Left: John Amadio as he appeared on tour with lyric soprano Frieda Hempel, in her performances as Jenny Lind

## THE AMADIO FAMILY

CD1

John Amadio

FLUTE

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART 1756-1791

- 1 **Flute Concerto No. 2 in D major, KV314:** III. Allegro 5'05  
*Unknown orchestra*

CÉCILE CHAMINADE 1857-1944

- 2 **Concertino for Flute and Orchestra in D major, Op. 107** 5'24  
*Unknown orchestra*

CHARLES-FRANÇOIS GOUNOD 1818-1893

- 3 **Valse-ariette 'O légère hirondelle'** from Mireille 3'48  
Glenda Raymond *soprano*, Australian Symphony Orchestra, Hector Crawford *conductor*



Clive Amadio

CLARINET, SAXOPHONE

JOHANNES BRAHMS 1833-1897

**Clarinet Quintet in B minor, Op. 115** (excerpts)

- 4 I. Allegro 10'04  
5 II. Adagio 12'22  
*William Krasnik viola; other players unknown*

DULCIE HOLLAND 1913-2000

- 6 **Ballade for Clarinet and Piano** 4'39  
*Olga Krasnik piano*

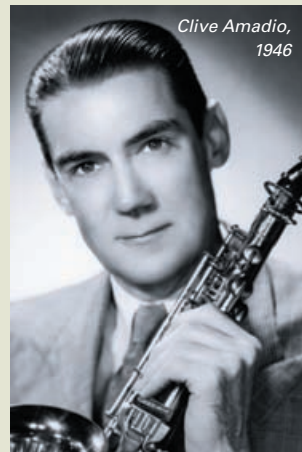
	CLAUDE DEBUSSY 1862-1918		
7	<b>Rhapsody for Clarinet</b>	8'05	
	Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Eugene Goossens <i>conductor</i>		
	JACQUES IBERT 1890-1962		
8	<b>Concertino da camera: III. Animato molto</b>	4'44	
	Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Jean Martinon <i>conductor</i>		
	CONRAD BECK 1901-1989		
9	<b>Nocturne for Saxophone and Piano</b>	4'03	
	Olga Krasnik <i>piano</i>		
	PIERRE LANTIER 1910-1998		
10	<b>Sicilienne</b>	4'00	
	Olga Krasnik <i>piano</i>		
	ARNOLD BAX 1883-1953		
11	<b>I Heard a Piper Piping</b>	2'57	
	Olga Krasnik <i>piano</i> , Edward Cochman <i>violin</i>		
	Total Playing Time	66'18	



*The Clive Amadio Quintet  
(L-R Edward Cochman,  
Maynard Wilkinson, Clive  
Amadio, Olga Krasnik,  
Charles Gray)*

## CD2

	<b>The Clive Amadio Half Hour No. 621</b> (mid-1950s)	[30'00]
1	Theme (From Me to You) and Introduction	1'12
	BERNARD BARNES	
2	Dainty Miss	2'28
	FREDERICK CROUCH 1808-1896	
3	Kathleen Mavourneen	
	THOMAS P. WESTENDORF 1848-1923	
	I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen (Thomas P. Westendorf)	4'48
	ROBERT FARNON 1917-2005	
4	Jumping Bean	2'33
	FRANZ DOPPLER 1821-1883	
5	Hungarian Pastoral Fantasy	4'08
	Neville Amadio <i>flute</i>	
	VICTOR HERBERT 1859-1924	
6	L'Encore	2'15
	Neville Amadio <i>flute</i> , Clive Amadio <i>clarinet</i>	
	RICHARD A. WHITING 1891-1938	
7	The Japanese Sandman	4'18
	IRVING BERLIN 1888-1989	
8	Alexander's Ragtime Band	2'19
	A. EMMETT ADAMS	
9	The Bells of St Mary's	3'17
	GABRIEL PIERNÉ 1863-1937	
10	March of the Little Fauns (Gabriel Pierné)	1'53
11	Closing credits	0'52
	The Clive Amadio Quintet (Clive Amadio <i>clarinet</i> and <i>saxophone</i> , Olga Krasnik <i>piano</i> , Edward Cochman <i>violin</i> , Maynard Wilkinson <i>keyboard</i> , Charles Gray <i>bass</i> ) John Chance <i>presenter</i>	



*Clive Amadio,  
1946*

## Neville Amadio

FLUTE

	MAURICE RAVEL 1875-1937	
12	<b>Pantomime</b> from <i>Daphnis and Chloe</i> Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Willem van Otterloo <i>conductor</i>	4'12
	CARL NIELSEN 1865-1931	
13	<b>Wind Quintet, Op. 43:</b> III. Präludium: Adagio – Tema con variazioni: Un poco andantino New Sydney Wind Quintet	11'08
	FRANTIŠEK BENDA 1709-1786	
	<b>Concerto for Flute and Orchestra in E minor</b>	[22'00]
14	I. Allegro molto	8'41
15	II. Andante	8'09
16	III. Allegro Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Karel Ančerl <i>conductor</i>	5'07
17	<b>Neville Amadio on Eugene Goossens</b> (October 2002)	3'44
	Total Playing Time	71'33

The Amadios were one of the foremost musical dynasties of 20th-century Australia. From their first arrival in Melbourne in the last days of the 19th century, the age of Melba and the eve of Federation, the Amadios were principal players in the evolution of our modern national concert, orchestral, recording and broadcast music cultures. This 2CD set of historic takes from the sound archives is a tribute to the extraordinary music artistry and outstanding public profile of the three greatest Amadios – flautists John and Neville, and clarinettist, saxophonist and popular broadcaster Clive – whose variously brilliant and turbulent careers ran in close parallel with the rise in mid-century of the ABC to become the foremost Australian musical entrepreneur of the past century.

John, the archetypal Edwardian showman virtuoso, was typical of talented 'British' Australians of his era who took their lead from Melba, building his huge reputation abroad, on a combination of a staggering technique, his associations with some of the greatest singers of his day, and a solo repertoire of flashy light classics. He was also, in the 1920s, the first flautist anywhere fully to embrace new recording technology. And beyond his trademark classical pops, John Amadio will be remembered for introducing to a wider public the then little-known flute music of Mozart and Bach.

John spent the heyday of his career abroad in the inter-war years, only coming back to Australia

to retire. By contrast, his nephews Clive and Neville belonged to the first generation of Australian musicians able and content to carry on significant artistic careers at home, thanks chiefly to the rapid development of the local musical economy, live performance and broadcasting, following the founding of the ABC in 1932.

Though lacking the technical brilliance of John, Clive was possibly the finer interpreter. But his far from negligible, largely freelance classical career was overshadowed by his professional dedication as Australia's most popular light music broadcaster. Clive inherited his uncle John's showmanship, and adapted it to new conditions. A darling of the press, a canny entrepreneur and opportunist, he sometimes took self-promotion too far. But in the precarious world of radio, and against considerable odds, he survived.

His brother Neville's career, by comparison, might seem safe and uneventful. Like John and Clive, he had plenty of the Amadio charm, and traded on it onstage and off. But he was no entrepreneur or seeker of the limelight. The stability of a lifelong permanent position allowed him to hone his talents as one of Australia's finest orchestral artists.

Our three Amadios played together in the same public concert (but not all in the same piece) only once, on 12 September 1947 with the Sydney Symphony. John was soloist, Neville the orchestra's permanent Principal Flute, and Clive,

probably specially for the occasion, arranged to be booked as guest bass clarinet! The conductor that night was the young Joseph Post, who a few years earlier had taken clarinet lessons with Clive at the Sydney Conservatorium.

### The Amadio dynasty

The Amadios trace their family ancestry to the north-west Italian region of Piemonte. Fortunato Amadio (1801-1886) emigrated to England by 1840, and thirty years later to New Zealand, where he continued to ply his trade as a coachbuilder. Shortly before his death in the late 1880s, his English-born grandson, the craftsman carpenter and amateur flautist Henry Antonio Amadio (1868-1943) joined him there. In the Amadio family history, it is Henry Antonio who is attributed with establishing its musical tradition in the Antipodes. In Wellington, New Zealand in 1890, aged just 22, he married a local widow, Eliza Taylor, 17 years his senior, thereby gaining two young stepsons, Harry and John. The Taylor boys' stepfather not only uncovered and nurtured their latent musical talent, but lent them his own euphoniously musical Italian surname. In New Zealand in 1893, another musical son, Adrian, was born. Then, some time in the very last years of the 19th century, the family crossed the Tasman to seek its fortunes in Melbourne.

Thereafter, the musical Amadios were regular players in Melbourne's theatre orchestras and touring Australia for J.C. Williamson's. The youngest son was only 16 when, as 'Master'

Adrian Amadio, he toured around the country with Amy Castles and Peter Dawson in 1909. Reputed to have been the most talented of them all, he also inherited his father's taste for strong drink. As his nephew, Neville, remembered Adrian: 'He died, I think, in his forties. The grog got to him. He was a brilliant, beautiful flute player.'

Adrian also conducted J.C. Williamson's orchestras and composed incidental music for theatre productions, including an overture for the 1904 season of Rostand's *L'Aiglon*. His wartime song *I Love Thee* (published by Allan & Co. in 1915), with words by Dorothy Boyes, inspired and cheered the troops (see <http://nla.gov.au/nla.mus-an13362023>).

Neville also recalled having an occasional music lesson from his grandfather, Henry Antonio, in the mid 1920s: 'He seemed very old to me then. I don't remember him playing the flute, but you'd play a phrase and he'd sing how it should be. He had a terrible voice, but he conveyed the expression and he'd criticise phrasing and tonguing and things like that.'

### John Amadio (1883-1964)

The 'Signor Amadio' regularly billed in advertisements for Williamson's Italian Opera Company throughout the first decade of the century was certainly John. In a family letter dated November 1911, his stepfather wrote



proudly: 'We have had an exciting and busy time through the Melba Opera Season. Jack and Adrian are both playing for her; Jack has been out of theatre for some time, but Melba wanted him particularly to play first flute, and as the work is very interesting he did so.'

Like his older colleague John Lemmone (1861-1949), Melba's flautist-manager, John Amadio owed the beginnings of his extraordinary career to a prevailing public taste for operatic soprano arias with florid flute obbligatos. Early on in Melbourne, in Williamson's 1902 season, John so beautifully accompanied European diva Madame Clementine de Vere Sapio in the Mad Scene from *Lucia di Lammermoor* that, from the

stage, she presented him with the ruby ring from her finger.

John was born on 15 November 1883 in Christchurch, New Zealand. Under his stepfather's tutelage, he played his first flute concerto in public with the Wellington Orchestra conducted by Alfred Hill. He was an orchestral soloist in Williamson's 1901 Italian Opera Company Melbourne season. The following year, Nellie Melba was so charmed with his playing that she made a first unsuccessful bid to 'take that boy home with me' to London, but his parents refused permission.

Biding his time in Melbourne, he played in George Marshall-Hall's orchestra, and taught at the University Conservatorium, where his students included the two leading Melbourne mid-century flautists Victor McMahon (1903-1992) and Leslie Barklamb (1905-1993).

Miraculously, on a single Saturday evening, 7 December 1918, the *Argus* reported him performing in not one, but two concerts, playing a Bach sonata for the Musical Society of Victoria at the Assembly Hall, and flute obbligatos in Bishop's *Lo! Here the Gentle Lark* and the *Lucia* Mad Scene for soprano Stella Power at the Auditorium, along with one of his already then personal signature solos, Chaminade's Concertino.

In 1915, John had married local pianist Leonora Soames (who later taught composer Peggy Glanville-Hicks). But within a few years he was in

an adulterous relationship with his performing colleague, the singer Florence Austral (1892-1968). Circumventing parental and social disapproval at home, the couple's decision, in 1919, to seek out greener pastures in England was thus not only professionally inspired. Nevertheless, their two benefit farewell concerts in Melbourne Town Hall in August and November that year were sell-outs (John's raising 460 pounds).

John was based in London for the next 28 years. In Britain, Europe and North America he accompanied, to great acclaim, sopranos Luisa Tetraxzini, Emma Calvé and Frieda Hempel, as well as London-based Australian, Amy Castles (with whom he had performed many times previously in Australia) and, of course, Austral, whom he finally married in London in 1925. (While at home, Austral was named publicly in the *Argus* as co-respondent when John's first wife divorced him.) From 1925 to 1936, they spent six months each year on tour in North America, where John became known as the 'Pied Piper from the Antipodes'. In January 1928, when they appeared in concert in Detroit supporting Italian tenor Tito Schipa, on the heels of recent appearances there by Heifetz, Kreisler and Casals, reviewer Haydn Mathews (*The Flautist*, February 1928) added Amadio to the celebrity list, judging John to be 'one of the very greatest flutists [...] Schipa is a fine artist and he drew a bigger crowd than did Heifetz, yet Amadio and his flute quite completely over-

shadowed Schipa during the first half of the program. He was awarded four recalls.' His performance of a Bach sonata, moreover, 'was positively the first time the writer has ever thoroughly enjoyed a Bach number.' That same year John played flute obbligato (beside Leon Goossens' oboe) in a pioneering HMV ('His Master's Voice') recording of a pair of Bach Passion arias with Elisabeth Schumann.

On a triumphant visit home to Australia in 1934, Amadio and Austral were (along with Percy Grainger) the first celebrity returnees to appear in concerts and broadcasts for the newly-established ABC (Australian Broadcasting Commission). It was only thoughts of retirement that prompted John to bring his international career to a close and return to Australia permanently. He first tried to come home in 1941, but was prevented by war conditions. He and Austral meanwhile having separated, he finally arrived back in Melbourne to settle in 1947.

Besides his ground-breaking Bach (and Handel) performances, for which he was already well known before he left Melbourne, John's solo classical repertoire centred on a little Mozart played a lot. (It should be remembered that even Mozart, in the first half of last century, was considered a somewhat specialised taste.) John is known to have played the Flute and Harp Concerto (KV299) in public only once, in Tasmania in 1956, and, to the best of our knowledge, the G major solo concerto

(KV313) never. Otherwise, his every other documented **Mozart** performance and recording was of the solo Flute Concerto in D major (KV314), its outer movements typically played at literally breathtaking speeds. He was one of the first flautists to embrace recording technology, and some of his performances from the 1920s onward can now be heard online on the [www.musicaustralia.org.au](http://www.musicaustralia.org.au) website. Without loss of clarity or accuracy, he often sped up his performances so that they would fit on the early shellac discs.

John's dexterity in flashier Romantic repertoire was already a byword with UK reviewers when, unexpectedly, he released his first recording of the concerto's *Andante* second movement and rondo finale, with its cascades of octaves in the cadenza, on two sides of an HMV disc, C1533, on 1 December 1927. The UK journal of record *Musical Times* greeted his 'pleasant' performance of the then little-known Mozart as 'tuneful stuff, delightfully played'.

For the remainder of his long career, in concert from Boston to Bournemouth to Brisbane, the D major concerto was John Amadio's personal trademark. He played it yet again on his first appearances with both the Sydney and Melbourne ABC orchestras after his return home in 1947. In Sydney Town Hall on 12 September that year, under Joseph Post, the *Sydney Morning Herald* reviewer again noted John's

'extraordinary technical facility', his 'supremely stylish and fluent melodic line', and his characteristic 'carolling of the linnets in the finale'. The unidentified recording of the finale included here is thought to date from his later Australian years.

In Europe and America in the interwar years, John's recordings made him the best known of all flautists. Even in the 1950s, James Galway recalls treasuring a 78rpm record of John playing Mozart: 'Amadio became my role model. He was the first person I ever heard play the flute on a record. He was technically mind-boggling.' Composer Walter Giesecking's 1937 Flute Sonatine was inspired by John Amadio's playing. And as recently as 2005, veteran UK *Gramophone* magazine reviewer Jeremy Nichols remembered that Hoffman's *Konzertstück* as 'played by the miraculous John Amadio' was one of the discs which, in childhood, got him hooked on recorded sound.

Already in July 1924, the *Musical Times'* gramophone reviewer 'Discus' was noting: 'John Amadio's brilliant flute playing scores as usual in a 10-inch disc of Terschak's *La Sirène* and Doppler's *Fantaisie Pastorale Hongroise*.' Thereafter, reviews of John's latest discs, often of now long-forgotten pieces of virtuoso frou-frou, appeared almost monthly, 'Discus' typically reporting that 'Amadio's dazzling performance makes us overlook the superficiality of the music.'

Beyond 19th-century showpieces like the many-versioned *Carnival of Venice*, John also played music by composer contemporaries such as Ravel and Frank Bridge. Another of his landmark recordings was of Cécile **Chaminade's** single-movement Concertino for Flute and Orchestra in D major, Op. 107, still today her most popular work, composed in Paris in 1902. Having pioneered its performance in Melbourne in 1917 and 1918, John first recorded it in Europe for HMV in 1927.

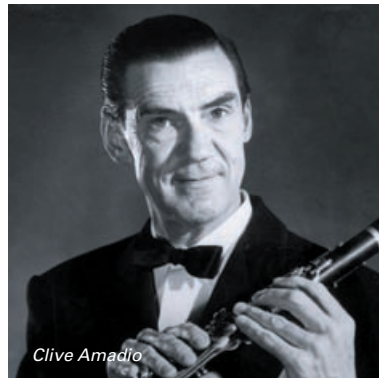
In semi-retirement in Melbourne in the early 1950s, John played on a freelance basis with the ABC Victorian (Melbourne) Symphony, and from August 1950 was Principal Flute with the 3DB Radio Orchestra, under conductor Hector Crawford (1913-1991). As he had in concert almost 50 years earlier, John became well known again in Melbourne via radio and TV, especially for his appearances with Crawford's protégée and wife, the coloratura soprano Glenda Raymond (1922-2003). This otherwise undated recording of John playing the flute obbligato to Raymond in **Gounod's** 'O légère hironnelle' (O airy swallow), the *valse-ariette* from Act 1 of his opera *Mireille* (1864), was almost certainly made in the early to mid 1950s, with Crawford and his Melbourne-based 'Australian Symphony Orchestra'. Among many other occasions, the same performers gave it in public at an outdoor 'Music for the People' concert in the Sidney Myer Music Bowl in December 1954, when, as the *Age* headline

reported, the 'Orchestra won against cicadas'! By then, John was also commuting to Hobart, where from March 1953 (at age 69) until 1958 he was Principal Flute of the ABC Tasmanian (Symphony) Orchestra.

Though long since officially retired, John Amadio died on stage during a rehearsal at the Myer Music Bowl on 4 April 1964, having just run through a piccolo solo for another Music for the People concert that night. He was 80 years old. John left behind a large collection of flutes, three of which, all transposing instruments, are now in the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney: a silver flute in B flat and a silver alto (John was an early proponent of metal flutes), and a wooden 'soprano' flute (sounding a minor third higher than the modern C concert flute). His daughter Judy Amadio was also a Melbourne flautist, recitalist and music teacher.

### **Clive Amadio (1904-1983)**

Henry Antonio Amadio's other musical stepson, and John's brother, was Harry Amadio (1884-1945). Harry carried both the family name and musical tradition to Sydney. There, as his son Clive remembered, he played 'flute, clarinet and oboe for The Firm, as J.C. Williamson's was known in those days. He was also a foundation member of the NSW State Orchestra, conducted by Henri Verbrugghen.' Most importantly, however, Harry fathered and taught four musical sons, and sent them out early to start playing in suburban



picture theatre orchestras. The eldest, Harry junior (1901-1986), was shaping up to be a good pianist before a hand injury halted what could have been a promising career, and even that did not stop him continuing arranging work and learning to play trumpet and horn with his left hand. The third son, Leon (1905-1993), meanwhile, played trumpet in various Sydney theatre orchestras, including St James and the Regent, and was later a member of the ABC Military Band. But it is the two most talented – second son Clive and the youngest, Neville – who are the other subjects of this collection.

Clive was born in Sydney on 28 February 1904. After attending Stanmore Public School, he started a trade apprenticeship at 13, but always

said that his father virtually 'forced' him to take up music professionally instead. They had 'a great relationship, dad taught me everything I know about music.' But for years his parents had communicated solely by writing notes, and he gladly left home at 14. At 18 he was playing 'clarionette' (as his instrument was usually billed) with the NSW State Military Band, and by 1922, aged 19, was also touring Australia with the Tivoli Theatre orchestra as solo saxophone. A program for a show with the Rose Bay 'Wintergarden Symphony Orchestra' in 1929 billed him as 'that handsome sheik of the sax'. He broadcast Rimsky-Korsakov's *Song of India* on the newly nationalised ABC radio service on its very first day, 1 July 1932, and for the next two years was Principal Clarinet of the Sydney ABC Studio Orchestra and played in the ABC's light music ensemble, the New Note Octet.

In 1939 he launched his own long-running ensemble, billed as the Mode Moderne Quintet until his enormous personal popularity in the group's weekly Sunday night ABC radio spot dictated it become the Clive Amadio Quintet. Over the program's extraordinary 20-year run, *From Me to You* became the standard signal for the announcer (in later years the mellifluous John Chance) to intone, with a typical ABC mix of precision and understatement: 'To the melody of this theme ... Clive Amadio invites you to be his guest for another half hour of pleasant and distinctive music.' In recognition of its place in

national broadcasting, the Quintet was chosen to play for the Australian Parliament Jubilee banquet in Canberra.

One of his longest-lasting musical relationships was with ABC conductor Henry Krips, who from 1946 was also employed as a composer-arranger for Clive's quintet. In 1947, Clive was soloist for a Columbia orchestral disc of Krips' *Rondinello*, specially written for him. During the 1950s, Clive toured as soloist in Krips' Festival of Light Music with the state ABC orchestras.

Clive's biographer Donald Westlake, himself one of Australia's best clarinetists, judged Clive to be by mid career 'one of Australia's most accomplished clarinetists and its finest saxophonist'. Though most of his work was in light music, Clive was also in demand for serious repertoire. In 1940, he played for an ABC broadcast series of chamber works in Brahms' Clarinet Quintet and (with his flautist brother Neville) Ravel's *Introduction and Allegro*. He gave the first Australian performances of Zemlinsky's Trio with Carl Gotsch's Sydney Collegium Musicum in 1942, and, after the war, of Khachaturian's Trio and Bliss' Quintet with Richard Goldner's Musica Viva Ensemble.

With ABC orchestras, he and Krips gave the Australian premiere of **Debussy's** Saxophone Rhapsody in 1946. He also performed both that and the Clarinet Rhapsody several times under Eugene Goossens. A recording of the latter

made around 1950 is included in this set, along with a movement of another Australian premiere, that of **Ibert's** *Concertino da camera*, recorded in the Sydney Town Hall in 1956 with visiting French conductor Jean Martinon. Among the works written for him by Australian composers were Dulcie **Holland's** Ballade and Saxophone Sonata, and pieces by Krips and Frank Hutchens.

From 1935, his inseparable duo partner (later his third wife) was pianist Olga Krasnik, the couple recorded here playing Conrad **Beck's** Nocturne for Saxophone and Piano. After the war, Clive and Olga were stalwarts of the active music club circuit that then accounted for most of the classical concert-giving in suburban and rural NSW, playing for clubs in (a snapshot of the times) Cronulla, Roseville, Lithgow, Killara, Coogee, Manly, Pymble, Strathfield, Hunter's Hill, St George, Bathurst, Griffith, Narrandera, Yass, Nowra, with the Windsor Ladies Music Association and the Coffs Harbour Town Orchestra, and as far afield as the Innisfail Sugar Festival. They also travelled abroad together in 1954-55, when Clive was soloist in the BBC broadcast of Eric Coates' Rhapsody for Saxophone and Orchestra with fellow Australian, conductor Charles Mackerras. In London he paid for session musicians to make the studio recording of **Brahms' Clarinet Quintet** included here. Apparently only two movements were recorded, and apart from

Olga's brother William Krasnik (viola) the names of the string players are not known.

Clive, along with much of his audience, was devastated when, moving with the times, the ABC cancelled his Quintet's weekly spot in mid 1958. In 1957 Clive had played in a TV special marking the 25th anniversary of the ABC. By then, despite a long record of bureaucratic quibbling from the ABC, his regular weekly fee had risen to around 100 pounds. For most of the 1950s, as Martin Buzacott wrote in his warts-and-all history of music at the ABC, 'with the support of Keith Barry and the eventual head of ABC Variety Department Clem Semmler, Amadio's contract was renewed continually, but when Werner Baer joined the Music Department staff as NSW Music Supervisor, the battlelines were drawn as never before, with a viciously personal dispute being played out between them from the end of 1952.' By 1956, Clive had to 'bludgeon' (his word) solo classical dates out of the ABC, and it was probably little short of miraculous that the performance of Ibert's *Concertino* included here ever took place.

Reasonably enough, some in the ABC wanted to free up scarce money and airtime for a variety program including other artists, like the also hugely popular Jay Wilbur Strings. (From Brisbane, Bob Boughen's Jazz Ensemble and, fashionably in the wake of Russia's Sputnik satellite launch, the Melbourne Balalaika

Orchestra were both mentioned as possibilities in internal memos discovered by Donald Westlake.) But in the event, a spat occasioned by a forced move to a new studio with an unsuitable acoustic served the ABC, internally at least, with the pretext for Clive's removal. At the end of the Quintet's very last broadcast, Clive played Ponce's *Estrellita* as an alto saxophone solo, followed by a last, mournful reprise of *From Me to You*.

Relations with the ABC remained acrimonious. Even Krips could not persuade Werner Baer to book Clive for solo orchestral dates beyond 1959, the last year he ever played with an ABC symphony orchestra. The Quintet persevered with casual dates until 1961. By then, Clive (with some help from an old friend, Frank Packer) had bought a Woollahra newsagency, which he and Olga ran for 13 years. They retired to Nelsons Bay in 1972, and Clive taught clarinet part-time at the Newcastle Conservatorium.

Clive only went to air on the ABC once more, in a broadcast from a 1977 concert at the Sydney Opera House, playing Dulcie Holland's Saxophone Sonata. Donald Westlake remembered hearing it on the radio: 'Fairly impressive for a 73-year-old who had been out of the performing arena for so long.' Clive was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 1980. He died on 21 October 1983.



### Neville Amadio (1913-2006)

All four of Harry Amadio's sons started out on the bottom rung of Sydney's music industry in those days, in the suburban picture theatre orchestras that accompanied silent films. Neville, the youngest, recalled 'playing with my father in a cinema in Bankstown when I was 14. You went into the pit at half past seven or eight and played solidly for two hours except for the interval. Everything was sight reading. I used to think of it as a sort of wonderful tuition you were being paid for.'

Neville was born in Rose Bay on 15 February 1913 and spent his childhood in Stanmore. His father Harry was his principal teacher, as he had been for his brothers, though Neville also had some lessons from his two uncles, John and Adrian, and their shared interest in the flute brought him close to his cousin Judy. Like Clive, he attended Stanmore Public School, and later Fort Street Boys High. He also took lessons at the Sydney Conservatorium with Albert Arlom, a mate of Harry's from the Verbrugghen and Williamson's orchestra days, who had taught the flute at 'the Con' since it opened in 1915.

The turning point for Neville, professionally, came when, aged 13 or 14, he played for the first time in the 2FC studio ensemble. When the station was taken over by the then still commercial ABC (Australian Broadcasting Company) in 1929, the permanent membership of the band was increased to 15, and Neville



was signed up as one of them. In practice, the 'orchestra' often got by with as few as eight players. Neville recalled: 'We were expected to play virtually everything, from salon music to reduced versions of the *1812 Overture*. Most of it was done on one rehearsal.' When the ABC was nationalised on 1 July 1932, the 2FC orchestra was subsumed into the first 25-member ABC Sydney Orchestra, and in 1934, at age 21, Neville became its Principal Flautist. He finally retired from the position, in what had meanwhile become the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, 45 years later, at the end of July 1978.

In the years leading to and during the Second World War, Neville Amadio was one of the bright young lights of Sydney music scene. Though he

loved jazz and occasionally played it (his niece Nadine Amadio later married jazzman Ray Price), Neville, unlike his brother Clive, was geared to the serious end of the musical spectrum. As a young man, he was idealistic about music generally and his craft in particular.

Fresh-faced and looking younger than his years, Neville's closest friends in the Sydney Orchestra included the beautiful young rank-and-file violinist Patricia ('Bambi') Tuckwell (b. 1926), older sister of Australian horn virtuoso Barry Tuckwell, and, from 1943, a former Kings School boy and aspirant oboist Charles Mackerras (b. 1925). All three were involved in the pioneering concerts of Baroque and modern chamber music presented by Carl Gotsch and his Collegium Musicum, which also included Richard Goldner, later founder of Musica Viva. In December 1945, Neville on flute and Charlie Mackerras on oboe were in the pit at Sydney's Theatre Royal for an amateur production of *The Pied Piper of Hamelin* in which the young Leo McKern made one of his earliest appearances.

Neville signed up in the army during the war, though he was often given leave for Sydney Symphony concerts, and for some of Bernard Heinze's great 1943 Beethoven Symphony cycle he played in uniform. In 1944 visiting American conductor Eugene Ormandy chose Neville and a handful of other Sydney principals (including concertmaster Haydn Beck) to tour with him to the other state capitals to bolster the local ABC orchestras there. With his commanding officer's

tacit consent, Bombadier Amadio went AWOL to do so. After one concert, Ormandy personally asked the Minister for the Army, Frank Forde, to release Neville from the services, as the *Canberra Times* reported, 'to pursue his art in America', an experience that for Neville would be 'the difference between a good and great player'.

Neville stayed, however, also turning down offers from several other visiting conductors (Beecham included) to give him work should he choose to go 'abroad'. Perhaps he lacked the ambition to become the internationally recognised 'great player' that Ormandy saw in him. Perhaps, though, he understood that a 'good player' could achieve a far more necessary greatness at home, by contributing to raising the still fairly low standards of Australian orchestral playing. Perhaps, too, a sign of the new post-war national confidence, he believed that, rather than seeking advancement overseas, Australian musicians could let the musical world come to them. In his case, it certainly did. Having played under the ABC's first guest conductor, Hamilton Harty, in 1934 (Harty singled him out for special praise), over the next two decades, simply by virtue of staying put, he also played for Malcolm Sargent (the first of his many tours in 1936), George Szell (1938 and 1939), Thomas Beecham (1940), John Barbirolli (first in 1950) and Otto Klemperer (1949 and 1950). Like his flautist uncle John, he was also an associate artist for Australian tours with many world famous singers, including Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Rita Streich and Mattiwilda Dobbs.

Neville became a living repository of Sydney's and Australia's 20th-century orchestral history, and his recollections have been an important source for many written music histories and biographies. He knew every important resident Australian conductor, major and minor, most of them personally, from Heinze, Edgar Bainton and Percy Code under whom he first played in the 1930s, to Joseph Post, Henry Krips and Eugene Goossens in the 1940s, Walter Susskind in the 1950s, Dene Dixon and John Hopkins in the 1960s, and Willem van Otterloo in the 1970s.

He was a long-serving teacher at the Sydney Con, and was flautist of the New Sydney Wind Quintet (not to be confused with today's group of the same name), founded in 1965 with fellow Sydney Symphony members Donald Westlake (clarinet), Clarence Mellor (horn), David Woolley (oboe – later replaced by Guy Henderson) and John Cran (bassoon). During its brief life, the Quintet was an important advocate for Australian composers. Works specially written for it included Nigel Butterley's *Variations* (1967), Barry Conyngham's *Five* (1971), and Larry Sitsky's Concerto for Wind Quintet and Orchestra (1971). It recorded George English's Quintet for Wind Instruments, and the first commercial disc of Peter Sculthorpe's *Tabuh Tabuhan*, for Philips.

Neville was the first of the Amadios to receive Australian honours for his services to music, first in 1969 under the old imperial system as an MBE, and, following his retirement, in 1981 as

an AM, Member of the Order of Australia. (His nephew, Clive's son Len, is the third Amadio to receive an AM, in recognition of his long public service career as one of Australia's leading arts and music administrators.) Neville lived at Manly Cove for the last 40 years of his life with his second wife Hilda (Toni), to whom he had been married for almost 56 years at the time of his death, at the age of 93, on 29 May 2006.

Not many years ago, Sir Charles Mackerras, in recognition both of Neville's sacrifice of an international career and of the measure of his achievements nevertheless by staying in Australia, remembered his 'great friend' as, in his humble opinion, 'without doubt, the greatest flautist the world produced in the 20th century'.

In London in 1965, on the Sydney Symphony's first ever overseas tour, Neville was chosen to perform a Mozart concerto. In the mid 1970s, he was the soloist in the orchestra's recording of Mozart's G major Flute Concerto (KV313) – the work that his uncle John never performed – under Patrick Thomas, in the Sydney Symphony's Chatswood studio, the Arcadia Theatre. (Released on an RCA Red Seal LP in 1977, the recording was featured in a 2007 ABC Classics boxed set celebrating the orchestra's 75th anniversary.)

The overwhelming bulk of Neville's artistic legacy is in archival ABC broadcast and studio recordings of Sydney Symphony orchestral concerts. Of his many such recordings, in 2003 Neville himself

chose, among others, the **Ravel** *Daphnis and Chloe* extract and the first and last movements of the **Benda** concerto included in this set to play during an ABC radio interview celebrating his 90th birthday. As Phillip Sametz has pointed out in his history of the Sydney Symphony: 'His playing in Goossens' performances of Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloe* and Debussy's *Prelude to The Afternoon of a Faun* were highlights of the era.' Neville was one of the few Sydney Symphony players who were close to the orchestra's enigmatic and ill-fated chief conductor, and in an extract from the same interview he recounts his memories of what he believed to be the 'golden years' of Goossens's conductorship. The Ravel extract recorded here is later, however, made with the Sydney Symphony under Otterloo on 12 May 1973. The Concerto for Flute and Orchestra by the Czech Classical master František Benda he performed in a series of Sydney Town Hall concerts in July 1961, under visiting Czech conductor Karel Ančerl (1908-1973), and recorded it there on 3 August.

This small retrospective of Neville's recordings is completed with his performance of the final movement of Carl **Nielsen's** Wind Quintet, Op. 43 (1922), a set of variations in which he and – in the generously collegial spirit which Neville practised throughout his life – all of his New Sydney Wind Quintet colleagues get a chance to shine.

**Graeme Skinner**

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CD1 [4](#), [5](#), [9-11](#) and CD2 [1-11](#) were first released on the CD 'From Me to You', a Bowerbird Heritage recording issued with Donald Westlake's book of the same name.

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