

The Constancy of Lambert and some lesser-known aspects of the man

*Stephen Lloyd **

According to the novelist Anthony Powell, Constant Lambert used to affirm that, with the exception of the Russian composer Modest Mussorgsky, no one had ever been given a less appropriate forename than himself. It was the sort of witty conversation opener that Lambert was fond of; it would quite likely lead on to a discussion of the paradox of names. He delighted in limericks, in crosswords and in any play on words. While travelling by train on tour with the Vic-Wells ballet, he enjoyed devising 'thematic' crosswords that would include the nicknames of members of the company, the ballets they appeared in, and so on. Ralph Nicholson, who was a student in Lambert's conducting class at the Royal College of Music, remembered how on one occasion he asked his class for any amusing shop names they knew, and he was delighted when Nicholson came up with a shop in Dorking called Swaddling & Company that sold baby carriages.

Yet was Lambert right in questioning the appropriateness of Constant as a name? And we should of course remember that it was not his *first* name, as he was christened *Leonard* Constant Lambert. The answer is surely no; because in almost all he did he was *most* constant and steadfast, most notably in the way that he selflessly devoted the greater part of his life to English ballet, sacrificing much of the time that might otherwise have been given to composing. For us it is one of the sadnesses of his life that composition had always to come second. What other scores might he have written had he been able to give himself full-time to them?

* Stephen Lloyd is currently completing a full-scale study of Constant Lambert.

There was constancy about his friendships — Humphrey Searle wrote that *"he was inclined to keep other people at arm's length until he got to know them well, but once he made friends he kept them"*. He was constant in his championing of those composers close to his heart, whether through conducting or writing; and, sadly, there was a constancy in his drinking habits, that hastened his end.

Despite his outward conviviality and bonhomie, Lambert was a very private person. His second wife, Isabel Rawsthorne (as she later became), wrote in her unpublished memoirs: *"He was a loner. This was not apparent to most people. He hid behind a carapace of wit, sharp remarks and great vitality."* He had a select group of friends, people like Cecil Gray, Michael Ayrton, Paddy Hadley, Alan Rawsthorne and Anthony Powell, whom he kept rather 'in compartments'. Many were, like himself and his friends of earlier years, Philip Heseltine and Bernard Van Dieren, eloquent conversationalists. Meetings with his friends were irregular because of his frequent touring with the Vic-Wells/Sadler's Wells ballet company and his various other conducting engagements, chiefly for the BBC. When stuck in some dull provincial town for a week of ballet, he would combat his loneliness by sending postcards to his friends, choosing not, as we would, a picture of the place where he was staying, but one to which he could add a humorous tag.

On a tour of northern England and Scotland in 1941, his postcards to the Scot Cecil Gray had short messages like *"Hoots Mon!"* and *"I belong to Glesky, deir auld Glesky toon!"*. On one picture card he chose of highland cattle, he wrote: *"A happy snap at the Braemar Gathering (reading from left to right):- The Dinwiddie of Dinwiddie & children, The Hon. Mr. Norman McGlinkie, the Bishop of Galashiels (and friend)."* Although never publicly malicious, he could not resist selecting another card depicting sheep among hilly scenery and adding the caption: *"a distinguished group of mourners at the funeral of the late Professor Tovey."* The writer and musicologist Edward Sackville West wrote of Lambert: *"He was among the most amusing people I have ever met and I often wake in the night and laugh over the joke postcards he used to send Gerald Berners. They graced the chimney-piece in the drawing room at Faringdon for years at a time and were perfect examples of Constant's inimitable humour."*

This humour concealed his sense of isolation that he experienced even at an early age. He was devoted to his mother, but he saw much less than most children did of his father who, as a portrait painter, was often away fulfilling commissions and, as a war artist, was abroad for long periods of time. George Lambert certainly put his own career before his family. In February 1921 he returned alone to Australia, the country in which he had been brought up, never to see Constant (then fifteen) and his elder brother Maurice again. When some years later Constant was visited by an Australian writer who tried two or three times in the course of conversation to point out the Australian element they shared, he totally ignored his comments: "*Neither he nor his sculptor brother ... seemed to want to mention their father,*" the writer observed.

More serious still was Constant's near-fatal illness at school. In September 1915, at the age of ten, he went to Christ's Hospital school at Horsham, in Sussex. The following July he had almost completed his first year with considerable success when he was admitted to the school's infirmary with a rash and high temperature. At length it was diagnosed as streptococcal septicaemia. He had a septic throat and an abscess in the right ear that necessitated a partial mastoidectomy that was to leave him permanently deaf in that ear. All through the summer holidays he remained isolated in the school infirmary, and then in August he was found to have septic arthritis in his right knee and left ankle that had to be operated on, with tubes fitted for regular draining. At the end of September he was transferred to the Royal Sea Bathing Hospital in Margate where he stayed for six months. In his doctor's words, "*after nearly dying [he] made a very good recovery*" and he was eventually able to go home in April 1917. A year later he was considered well enough to return to school after an absence of five terms. Even so, as a fellow student remembered, "*his disabilities were exceptionally serious — one ear was a constant source of trouble to him and his feet were so injured that he could never put the whole of the foot to the ground and had to walk on his toes.*"

His worries were not yet over. In October he was rushed to hospital with an appendicitis, and in June 1920, after having had six operations, his doctor recommended one more on the tendons of his right leg to prevent him from being lame for the rest of his life. While generally successful, it still left him with a limp so that afterwards he often walked with a stick.

Being absent from school for so long was bad enough but, at a boys' public school, not being able to participate in sports made him something of an outsider. But he put that time to advantage, and music became the chief focus of his activities. Even from an early age he had shown a musical interest but, as he once explained in an interview, he did not fully appreciate what music meant to him until his prolonged illness cut him off from the usual schoolboy pursuits. As he was later to realize, this illness affected the entire course of his life because, while he was indisposed, he had little else but music and books to occupy his attention. He took full advantage of the school's music facilities. He found the piano a great consolation and even resolved to become a professional pianist. Under the circumstances, the reactions of his contemporaries are perhaps understandable:

"He had his admirers and friends but I would not call him a popular boy. His lameness and his maturity of outlook were great handicaps to success in the philistine society of a public school."

*"He was quite the most out-of-the-ordinary person I have known, and by that I don't mean that he was **extra**-ordinary. He was very aloof and appeared to take little interest in school activities or in individuals."*

But there were occasions when he became fully involved, such as joining the school's debating society —

"In any argument [he] was always devastating. He had an annoying habit of closing a discussion by saying 'I'm sorry, but it served you right'."

— and in more light-hearted activities, like playing the piano and providing the music and lyrics for concerts and shows. His intellectual ability was never in question.

In 1922 he entered the Royal College of Music where his fellow students, soon to become firm friends, included Angus Morrison, Guy Warrack, Thomas Armstrong, Gavin Gordon, Patrick Hadley and Gordon Jacob. Gavin Gordon observed:

"He was very shy; rather intense, and rather introvert, I suppose you would say; a little bit suspicious of people. Very quiet when he came into his lessons and went out when they had finished. He didn't really become the jolly hail-fellow-well-met until quite a lot later. It was perfectly obvious in his very early College days that he was a very brilliant person."

Lambert soon made his mark. Michael Tippett, who joined the following year, has written that Lambert was "generally regarded as the whizz-kid". It was music for the stage that most occupied his



Constant Lambert - a sketch by Gavin Gordon

thoughts. While at Christ's Hospital, exposure during the holidays to Diaghilev's *Ballets russes*, with its mixture of Stravinsky and Les Six, together with its colourful and innovative designs and enchanting choreography, had left the imprint of ballet on him, and *Prize Fight* and *Mr. Bear Squash-you-all-flat* both date from his College days, as does *Adam and Eve* — to a scenario by Angus Morrison — that Diaghilev heard and accepted, drastically revising it as *Romeo and Juliet*. After that there was no looking back. For its première at Monte Carlo (the first English ballet score to be accepted for the *Ballets russes*), Lambert left the Royal College and headed straight into his famous collision with Diaghilev over some of the changes the impresario had made.

Just before the opening of *Romeo and Juliet*, Lambert struck up another association. Even before joining the RCM he had become friends of the Sitwells and their 'discovery' William Walton, and in April 1926, at the second public performance of *Façade*, he proved himself to be an ideal reciter of Edith's verses; throughout his lifetime he became closely connected with the work, so much so that when the score was eventually published, in the year of his death, it was dedicated to him.

Before ballet occupied most of Lambert's life (he was appointed conductor of the Camargo Society on its formation in 1930 and of the Vic-Wells Ballet Company from 1931 until 1947), he had another experience that was to make an indelible impression on his

musical thinking and help shape his musical future. In 1923, while still a 17-year-old student at the RCM, he saw a Cochran review called *Dover Street to Dixie* that had just opened at the London Pavilion. The show was a curious mixture of British performers and American Negro artists, though kept in separate halves. It was the second half that appealed to Lambert and he saw the show — or at least the second half — several times with Walton, who recalled "going night after night with him to hear Florence Mills, that great coloured singer, and to hear Will Vodery's band", and with Morrison, who retained clear memories of the show and the effect it had on his companion:

"The arresting start of the whole performance was a sort of fanfare-like fantasia on the tune of 'Carry me back to old Virginia' It was indeed the memory of the very opening flourish played by the superb first trumpeter, Johnny Dunn (described in the programme as 'the creator of Wa Wa') that remained with Constant all through his life."

On a number of occasions in his writings and broadcasts Lambert referred to the show and his reaction, how "*after the rather hum-drum playing of the English orchestra in the first part it was an electrifying experience to hear Will Vodery's band play the Delius-like fanfare that preceded the second. It definitely opened up a whole new world of sound.*"

The star of the show was Florence Mills. When she returned to London in September 1926 in another show called *Blackbirds*, Lambert and Morrison went again many times, and Florence Mills's death, soon after she returned to the States, stirred Lambert to write his *Elegiac Blues (In memory of Florence Mills)* which contains many references to that "Delius-like fanfare".

Of the first show Lambert wrote that "*although they maintained an extraordinary high standard of musicianship throughout, it is hardly necessary to say that they were abused by the English press for their crudity and vulgarity*", and it was quite likely the stuffy reaction of the music establishment to jazz in general that caused Lambert to champion it so strongly in his writings and broadcasts in the late 1920s and the 1930s.

In May 1927 *Blackbirds* was replaced at the London Pavilion by another Cochran show, *One Dam Thing After Another*, that starred a white jazz pianist, Edythe Baker, and it was her playing that inspired Lambert to write his *Rio Grande* for piano, solo alto,

chorus and orchestra, first performed in a BBC studio concert in February 1928. Its second performance, also a studio broadcast in July (that included the *Elegiac Blues*), was part of a ninety-minutes-long programme entitled 'Blue on the Boulevard: A Study of black and white' that can only have been assembled by Lambert. It also included Negro poetry and works by Satie, Milhaud and Auric. That week's issue of *Radio Times* contained an article by Lambert on 'The Future of Jazz' in which he wrote: "*I see no reason why England should not eventually produce the most interesting examples of symphonic jazz.*"

This brought a virulent response from Sir Henry Coward in an article entitled 'Jazz has no future!' that began: "*For seventy years I have been acquainted with the salient features of the twangy strains and grotesque posturings of negro music and dancing*", and continued in a similar vein. There followed a stormy correspondence in *Radio Times*, forcing Jack Payne, Director of the BBC Dance Orchestra, not wanting his style of music to be tarred with the same brush, to contribute an article 'A Fair Hearing for Syncopated Music'.

At the same time Lambert contributed an article on jazz to the periodical *Life and Letters* (July 1928) in which he boldly claimed:

"The virtuosity displayed both in the orchestration and performance of jazz is, indeed, little short of amazing, and at a time when the more serious forms of music seem gradually to be sinking into a slovenly amateurishness, the thoroughly slick efficiency of popular music cannot be too highly praised. It is no exaggeration to say that if one wants a really perfect ensemble, whether in dancing, singing or orchestral playing, one should go to such an entertainment as Blackbirds, rather than to the Ballet, the Opera or to Queen's Hall."

For someone who throughout his life was rarely well-off financially, journalism soon became a source for some steady income. Among his earliest pieces were two film reviews he wrote in 1929 for *Figaro* (in French) under the pseudonym of C. Leonard. He was an occasional contributor to *The Listener* (with an article on William Boyce in its first issue in 1929, and thirteen others up to 1940) and to *Radio Times*. From April 1930 until February 1937 he had a regular column in *The Nation and Athanaeum* (which in 1931 became *The New Statesman and Nation*). His brief was chiefly to review gramophone records, and his range of music covered was extraordinarily catholic, having no hesitation to

include Duke Ellington (which he frequently did) whom he greatly admired not just as a performer but also as a composer. On a few occasions he reviewed books relating to music, and in one instance — a true Francophile — he supplied a review of René Clair's film *Sur les Toits de Paris*.

But his most substantial efforts of journalism were for the *Sunday Referee* for which he wrote almost weekly from November 1931 until March 1938, reviewing concerts and discussing topics of the moment or matters he wanted to air. There were some lively exchanges. His defence of Duke Ellington in June 1933 brought forward an 'open letter' from Roger Wimbush (a name some may associate with *Gramophone* a few years back) who found his attitude towards jazz "somewhat disturbing", as in Wimbush's opinion jazz was nothing more than "a Jew-ridden racket and the child of Mammon". In July 1934 he called Massine's choreographic treatment of Brahms's Symphony No.4 "a deplorable example of [his] latest Roxy-cum-Delacroze manner" which was met by a sharp response from the choreographer, and in June 1935 Lambert's review of Adrain Stokes's book, *Russian Ballets*, resulted in a notable clash, with Stokes's letter and Lambert's reply printed side-by-side. All this, of course, was just the controversy the paper wanted and Lambert's flair for journalism led inevitably to a book, *Music Ho!* [1934] — a study of music ("in decline") in the 1920s and early 1930s — which was generally well received and recognized as a brilliant piece of writing, even if the reviewers did not always agree with the points he made. But here for once was a book on music that was never dull, was not afraid to risk making provocative and challenging statements, that could be read without much musical technical knowledge, and which embraced all the arts and made often revealing parallels between music, painting and writing. While scorning Stravinsky he wrote intelligently about jazz in a way that few before him had, certainly very few with a 'classical' training.

Lambert wrote occasional pieces for other papers and journals. In 1937 he was appointed music critic for the short-lived weekly magazine *Night and Day*, a wittier and more intelligent version of *Punch*, but he only supplied two articles before the magazine was forced to close down after a libel case was brought against it as a result of its film critic's remarks about Shirley Temple. That critic was Graham Greene. Even so, in his last piece he managed to

attack Sir Donald Tovey for the "laborious analyses" in his programme notes. Tovey certainly seemed to be Lambert's *bête noire* as two months later, when reviewing his hour-long Cello Concerto for the *Sunday Referee* he wrote: "I was compelled to leave at the end of the first movement, which seemed to last as long as my first term at school."

More interesting still were his five occasional articles in 1947 and 1948 for the monthly magazine *Lilliput*. In these entertaining non-musical pieces Lambert seemed to be cutting out for himself a new path in journalism, one that regrettably he did not follow any further.

With his distinctive, clear and clipped pronunciation, he was equally adept as a broadcaster, his first talk being given in February 1931 on Debussy. He gave thirty-six broadcast talks, his last being in 1951 on his good friend Lord Berners who had died the previous year. Of particular interest was his account of the Sadler's Wells ballet company's escape from Holland in May 1940 under the German attack, and two earlier talks that made an impact were on 'The Origins of Modern Dance' — or jazz in general, in 1936. One keen listener was the young Malcolm Arnold who remembered:

"[In] those talks about jazz he came out with an entirely original and interesting point that hasn't been followed up at all that jazz, or a particular flavour of jazz, comes from African slaves whose only musical influences were missionary hymns, Victorian hymns, which is typical sort of Lambert."

Another aspect of Lambert's career not to be overlooked is his time in the recording studio, fifty-one sessions in all, from his unsurpassed recitation with Edith Sitwell of *Façade* in 1929 under the composer's direction, up to his final session in September 1950 when he recorded the *Façade* suites and his own orchestration of Chabrier's *Ballabile*. His recording repertoire naturally reflected his own tastes:

Adam *Giselle*

Auber *Fra Diavolo*, *Crown Diamonds* and *The Bronze Horse* - Overtures

Bartók Roumanian Folk Dances (arr. Willner); *Portrait* op.5 no.1

Berlioz *Reverie* and *Caprice*

Bizet *Roma - Carnaval*

Bliss *March The Phoenix*; *Miracle in the Gorbals*

(a CD release of *Adam Zero* was from a BBC Transcription Service recording)

Borodin *In the Steppes of Central Asia*; *Symphony No.2*

Boyce *The Prospect Before Us* (arr. Lambert)

Chabrier *Joyeuse marche; Le Roi malgré lui - Danse slave* (orch. Lambert);
Ballabile (Pièces Posthumes)
Delibes *Coppélia; Le Roi l'a dit*
Delius *La Calinda; Hassan - Intermezzo and Serenade;*
On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring; Piano Concerto
Glazunov *Stenka Razin*
Gordon *The Rake's Progress*
Grieg *Sigurd Jorsalfar - Homage March*
Lambert *Horoscope; The Rio Grande* (twice)
Liszt *Dante Sonata* (arr. Lambert); *Apparitions* (arr. Lambert); *Hungarian Fantasia*
Meyerbeer *Le prophète - Coronation March; Les Patineurs* (arr. Lambert)
Offenbach *Orpheus in the Underworld - Overture*
Purcell *Chaconne in G minor* (arr. Whittaker); *Dido and Aeneas* (arr. Lambert);
Comus ballet suite
Rawsthorne *Street Corner Overture; Symphonic Studies*
Rimsky-Korsakov *Fairy Tale; Ivan the Terrible - Overture*
Rossini *William Tell* - ballet music
Suppé *Morning, Noon and Night in Vienna and Pique Dame - Overtures*
Tchaikovsky *Hamlet and Romeo and Juliet Overtures; Eugene Onegin - Tatiana's*
Letter Scene, Sleeping Princess/Beauty ballet suite; *Symphonies Nos.4 & 5*
Waldteufel *Pomona, Sur la plage, Estudiantina and Les Patineurs - Waltzes*
Walton *Façade* [original version as speaker]; *Façade Suites Nos.1 & 2*
Warlock *The Curlew; Capriol Suite; Serenade*
Weingartner *Under the Spreading Chestnut Tree*

Lambert did a great deal of conducting for the BBC, both for home broadcasts and for the BBC General Overseas Service programme and the BBC Transcription Service. In his last years he was closely involved with the Third Programme, almost from its opening in September 1946. One of the producers was Humphrey Searle who was responsible for much of Lambert's participation. Constant was able to bring his specialist knowledge to a wide range of music that included Liszt, Purcell, Warlock, Handel, Satie, Glück, Van Dieren, Walton's *Façade*, Berners, Searle, and Aplvor, not forgetting on occasions his own music. It was following a Third Programme broadcast of *King Arthur* in 1949 that John Lowe (on the BBC staff) wrote: "*I cannot hope to hear better conducting of Purcell than was done by Constant Lambert.*"

Lambert's excellence as a conductor has often been overlooked. In an obituary tribute Ninette de Valois wrote: "*He was adored by his orchestral players, and we noted with particular pride in New York how he held the American players in the hollow of his hand. But his exceptional beat and wonderful rhythm filled all players and dancers with confidence.*" It was after hearing Lambert conduct in New York (when the Sadler's Wells Ballet toured America in October 1949) that Lincoln Kirstein was moved to describe him to Richard Buckle as "*a divine conductor, the greatest ballet man in*

the business." Bernard Shore, principal viola for many years in the BBC Symphony Orchestra, drew an interesting comparison between Lambert and Bliss in his *The Orchestra Speaks*:

"Arthur Bliss and Constant Lambert share the honour of being the most efficient composer-conductors. Both are first-rate, with all the technique and experience necessary for the task their own music sets them Constant Lambert is also completely master of his orchestra, he conducts other men's music as admirably as he does his own and possibly with more care. Less authoritative in manner than Bliss, he still has a strong grip and is extremely purposeful and definite about everything. He is not [sic] less clear and easy to follow than Bliss, but the two are dissimilar in method, Lambert being more imaginative in conception and less critical in execution. His ear is more than adequate and he always gets his way. A work of his composition receives no unduly favoured treatment at rehearsal, whatever its difficulty. His strong rhythmic sense and clear stick, together with his innate musicianship, makes him a refreshing personality to the orchestra."

Lambert's career took a new turn when he was appointed assistant conductor for the 1945 Proms, making ten appearances. Each of his concerts except one was shared with either Basil Cameron or Adrian Boult, and all three conducted on the Last Night. For the 1946 Proms he was appointed Associate Conductor, with seventeen appearances. The works he conducted tended again to reflect his own tastes: Liszt, Sibelius, Haydn, Chabrier, Russian music, etc. It was because of his excellence in the lighter classics that when, in 1948, the Third Programme attempted to popularize its output by including a series of concerts of lighter music, Lambert was invited to present a programme. In January 1950, in the Light Programme, he was given his own six weeks' series called 'Constant Lambert's Music at Eight'. In these works, as his commercial recordings illustrate, he had a touch not unlike Beecham's. His presence on the ISCM jury after the war acknowledged his understanding of contemporary music (although he was not really in sympathy with serial music), and in April 1949 he conducted at the ISCM Festival at Palermo. (This was a rather more relaxed time than four years earlier when he was conducting in Poland and had to be driven around in an embassy car with a Sten gun at the ready in case of guerrillas). His last years were difficult times, not made any easier by his drinking on top of undiagnosed diabetes, nor by the critical assault on his last ballet for Covent Garden, *Tiresias*, which only now is being recognized for the fine, innovative score that it is. His collapse at home and death in the London Clinic came as a great shock to his friends.

Following his friendship with Anthony Powell, one can imagine Constant making some witty comment at being immortalized as Hugh Moreland in the sequence of novels, *A Dance to the Music of Time*. He is first introduced in the fifth novel, *Casanova's Chinese Restaurant* [1960], an appropriate title remembering Constant's fondness for things Chinese, most notable his infatuation for the actress Anna May Wong, to whom he dedicated his eight settings of the *Poems of Li-Po*. In the opening chapter Powell — or rather the narrator Nicholas Jenkins — remembers meeting Moreland at the *Mortimer* pub (surely the famous *George*, in Mortimer Street?) and, with a woman in the distance singing Amy Woodford-Finden's *Kashmiri Love Song*, he quotes a line or two: "*Where are you now? Who lies beneath your spell?*", words that are heavily symbolic of Lambert then nine years dead and the fact that Powell, like so many of those who knew Constant, came heavily under his spell.

A little while after Constant's death, another friend, Denis ApIvor, wrote:

"As I sat in the pub at Covent Garden the other day after the dress rehearsal of Wozzeck I saw most of the composers who were Constant's friends chatting in discrete groups to other people. If Constant Lambert had been there the whole lot would have coalesced around him. What was that magic power he had of acting as a sort of pivot? He combined a really galvanising personality with an encyclopaedic knowledge of music, high executive gifts and the soul of an artist. Finally he was a man of integrity"

One of his great gifts that he brought to his conversation, his writing, his work for the ballet, indeed to his life as a whole, was his depth of knowledge and his fluency, not just in music but in the sister arts of painting and writing. Let the last words be from those who, like ApIvor, were privileged to have known the real Constant.

Frederick Ashton:

"I remember that Maynard Keynes once said to me that [Constant Lambert] was potentially the most brilliant man he'd ever met.... He was a tremendous influence on me musically and cultivated my musical tastes tremendously and I owe him a very big debt in that way."

Robert Helpmann:

"I don't suppose anybody will ever really know how much he contributed to the success of the English Ballet as it stands today, not only being the most remarkable ballet conductor probably that there ever has been but in every way the way he contributed in every department of it, the décor, the musical taste, the standard of music, the playing of the orchestra."

Ninette de Valois:

"In Lambert lay our only hope of an English Diaghilev... Everyone loved him and respected him so enormously. He was quite unique."

Lydia Lopokova:

"There's a genius there; it's rich and talented in spite of all that drink. I like it."

Gordon Jacob:

"He was the most brilliant musician I have known in my lifetime."

Elizabeth Lutyens:

"Amongst musicians Constant Lambert towered and the music world was duller with his dying.... The musical world shrank for me at his death."

Michael Ayrton:

"He simply had a human quality which made him enormously exciting company, on any subject, serious, absurd, grotesque, comic — simply to be in his company was a most extraordinary and stimulating experience and I've never known anyone else who could match it."

Steuart Wilson:

"You could not miss his vitality: it sparkled, it flowed like a torrent, it drenched like a fountain, it was real, and when it came it was spontaneous. He wrote criticism as he talked; ... when he thought a thing was good, no composer ever had a better champion."

Thomas Armstrong:

"Those who remember Constant as a young man will remember that he was the most wonderful companion, a marvellous musician and a gay enchanting companion whose conversation was like a display of fireworks."

Arthur Bliss:

"Constant Lambert is almost kaleidoscopic in his talent. A sensitive composer, a brilliant pianist, an acid critic. And an accomplished conductor, his influence on English music is liberal and compelling."

Christian Darnton:

"He will be remembered as a person, a fertilizing influence, of wide culture, with a flair for the bizarre in almost all spheres of living.... His gifts as conversationalist, conductor, critic, writer, poet (tanto lascivo!), were, I think pretty equally divided. And what a richness!"

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Lambert's principal works are available on the following Hyperion CDs :

CDA66436 : *Horoscope* (with Walton *Façade Suites* & Bliss *Checkmate Suite*)

CDA66565 : *Summer's Last Will and Testament*; *The Rio Grande*; *Aubade Héroïque*

CDA66754* : *Concerto for Piano and Nine Players*; *Eight Poems of Li-Po*;
Piano Sonata; *Mr. Bear Squash-you-all-flat*

CDA67049 : *Tiresias*; *Pomona*

CDA67239 : *Salome Incidental Music* (with complete Walton *Façade*)

CDA67545 : *Piano Concerto for Solo Piano, Two Trumpets, Strings & Timpani [1924]*;
Romeo and Juliet; *Elegiac Blues*; *The Bird Actors Overture*; *Prize Fight*

English Northern Philharmonia (David Lloyd-Jones)

*Nash Ensemble (Lionel Friend)