

Next concert: Thursday 29 November IN ST CECILIA'S HALL

SONATAS AND CANTATAS
of the
ENGLISH BAROQUE

LEONARD FRIEDMAN *violin*

DAPHNE GODSON *violin*

MICHAEL TILMOUTH *cello*

LEON COATES *organ and harpsichord*

CAROLYN COXON *soprano*

Works by Young, Purcell, Ravenscroft,
Handel, Arne and Boyce

Admission Free

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EDINBURGH
UNIVERSITY
CONCERTS

1973-74

THE REID ORCHESTRA
Miles Baster leader

ALASDAIR MITCHELL
guest conductor

HIRO IMAMURA
piano

Reid Concert Hall, Thursday 6 December 1973

FRANKEL b.1906

Symphony No. 5, opus 46

(First public performance in Britain)

Moderato amabile

Grazioso

Allegro brillante

Completed at Locarno on 10th May, 1967, the work is about twenty minutes in duration. Frankel himself said of his symphonies . . . 'I believe that the works will explain their argument out of their own musical nature.' But, on this occasion it may be helpful to discuss certain aspects which throw light on Frankel's genius as a composer of symphonies.

In the Third Symphony (1964) Frankel introduces what he believed to be a new symphonic proposition: i.e. 'the gradual transformation, in the progress of the piece, from pure diatonism to strict serialism'. This proposition is developed in the Fourth Symphony (1966) in which a radiant, lyrical *white-note* idea violently contrasted with a tortuous 12-note pattern forms the symphonic argument of the first movement, the succeeding two movements being strictly serial.

The Fifth Symphony further refines this progression to serialism by working the process in three distinct stages. The first movement sets off so firmly in tonality that one could be forgiven for thinking that this is a symphony in F major! The movement continues in a circular, almost ritualistic manner, each convolution bringing the various thematic ideas into a more complex, sometimes atonal, relationship. F major is touched again and at the time appears to be a signal for the movement to come to a close, but the wheel turns on relentlessly until an unsteady and ambiguous G minor/major is reached. (Parallels with Nielsen's tonal procedures can helpfully be drawn.)

Having touched on atonality in the first movement Frankel seeks to stabilise the tonal functions of the work by casting the harmony of the second movement in a 12-note row (which incidentally derives from the opening harmonies of the symphony). The melodic aspects of the movement are serialised by another row first stated by solo clarinet. Thus melodic and harmonic functions are tightly controlled yet by dint of their separation into two note rows the music can only be lightweight due to the intrinsic 'melody with accompaniment' structure. Although *grazioso* in mood this is no intermezzo for having begun a progression from tonality through atonality to two note rows used serially Frankel reaches his structural goal in the

Finale with brilliant and fiery music in which all the elements are derived from a single 12-note row.

The result could so easily have been a suite of three orchestral pieces; the technical secret of symphonic thought is surely the large-scale *integration* of contrasts. And it is here that Frankel shows his true symphonic mind, the contrasts in the Finale are derived from the two previous movements now translated into terms of the strict serial use of the single note row on which the movement is based. Moreover, the tonal implications of the first movements are not neglected; the progression from F major to G in the first movement and from C to B flat implicit in the harmonic note row of the second movement is continued in the Finale . . . the symphony ends in a blaze of B natural.

DEBUSSY 1862-1918

Fantaisie for Piano and Orchestra

Andante ma non troppo—Allegro giusto

Lento e molto espressivo—Allegro molto

The *Fantaisie* was written in 1889. The opening motive serves as a recurring cyclic idea throughout the music and shows the young composer following examples set by Cesar Franck in the *Symphonic Variations* and Vincent d'Indy in the *Symphony on a French mountaineer's song* for piano and orchestra. It may be that just these influences prompted Debussy to withdraw the work before its first performance in 1890, not wishing to be associated with this school; he always felt culturally at odds with the d'Indy-ists. We also know that he was dissatisfied with certain elements in the Finale. Today we can listen to the work free from musical politics and at once are struck not by how Franckian but how Debussyan it all sounds, bearing in mind that this is one of the earliest of his works. Although never performed during his life Debussy had a particular fondness for the piece and nearly twenty years after its composition he revised much of the orchestration. The work is in three movements, the first has a slow introduction and the second movement leads without a break into the Finale.

INTERVAL

DVORAK 1841-1904

Symphony No. 7 in D minor

Allegro maestoso

Poco Adagio

Scherzo. Vivace

Finale. Allegro

Dvorak spent the months of December 1884 to March 1885 writing the Symphony in D minor opus 70, his second in this key. It received its first performance in London at a concert of the London Philharmonic Society on 22nd March that same year under the direction of the composer. The work owes much of its inspiration to Brahms 3rd Symphony, not only in its broad heroic scale and the inner density of the writing, for Dvorak was consciously striving to equal the achievement of his friend and advisor. Written at a time when Dvorak was being tempted by international success to use a more international, i.e. at that time German, idiom it is perhaps the least nationalistic of his works in this genre. Only in the Finale does his real Czech spirit emerge triumphantly shrugging off the alien muse to reveal his true symphonic nationality.

A.M.

Next concert: Thursday 10 January

THE EDINBURGH QUARTET

MOZART Quartet in D major (K. 575)

SEIBER Quartetto Lirico

SMETANA Quartet in E minor

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piano

Reid Concert Hall, Thursday 31 January 1974