

In the rapid Scherzo only snatches of the theme are heard, but its Trio, slightly slower, cleverly imitates the drones of a hurdy-gurdy, the viola playing the bass note with the 'cello double stopped above; the peasant flavour is later enhanced by buzzing open violin strings.

The finale develops a bright tune, in comic-opera style, from its short slow introduction, and finally closes the circle by referring to the triplet melody from the first movement. R.M.

There will be a silver collection in aid of the Queen's Silver Jubilee Appeal.

Next Concert: Thursday 3rd November, 7.30 St Cecilia's Hall

THE ALBANY BRASS CONSORT

Decades of Brass

Printed by THE SUMMERHALL PRESS LIMITED
12a West Newington Place Edinburgh (031-667 5506)

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY CONCERTS

1977-78

MICHAEL LESTER-CRIBB

piano

St Cecilia's Hall, Thursday 10 November 1977

MOZART 1756-1791

Fantasia and Fugue in C, K 394 (1782)

NIELSEN 1865-1931

Three piano pieces op. 59 (posth.) (1928)

Impromptu

Molto Adagio

Allegro non troppo

CHOPIN 1810-1849

Nocturne in C minor, op. 48 No. 1 (1841)

What, pray, can the three works in this first group have in common? They have a deep emotional seriousness, and apart from that there is the rather negative aspect that they are all only partly typical of their composers.

Mozart's fugues have the text-book reputation of dull academicism—of Mozart's trying to 'do a Bach' with material which is not suited to such treatment; and yet, both in this work and in the C minor fugue for two pianos (or strings), there is a strength deriving directly from this conflict. These works are harsh (in the 18th century terms), and from this diatonic discordancy an overwhelming sense of tonal security arises.

The 'Three Piano Pieces' of Nielsen are contemporary with the Clarinet Concerto, and indicate a transition, at the end of his life to a new mastery of balancing material with its presentation; in some respects similar to what Beethoven was doing in his opus numbers around the 90's and early 100's. There is severe economy: to the extent of making some connections difficult to comprehend without repeated hearings; there is deceptive simplicity; and there is energy. Irony, too, has its place—the last page of the first piece is marked '*molto patetico quasi parodico*'. Unlike the Mozart the tonality in these pieces is constantly shifting, and this is possibly their greatest source of originality.

In Chopin's C minor Nocturne we meet the composer at the height of his powers, using the piano as the ideal vehicle for his message. The pianistically extreme middle section can be referred back only to the extraordinary second movement of Schubert's late A major Sonata (op. posth.), and forwards only to the music of Liszt.

BLISS 1891-1975

Sonata for pianoforte (1952)

Moderato marcato

Adagio sereno

Allegro

Sir Arthur Bliss was Master of the Queen's Musick for most of the first 25 years of the present reign, but his Piano Sonata deserves attention for more than purely loyal reasons. It is a large-scale (though only 21 or 22 minutes long) romantic sonata in which the harmonic style is at once striking: almost every chord has an accretion of chromatic or discordant diatonic notes—not for the purpose of producing chromatic and complex diatonic harmonies with all their prescriptions for horizontal progressions, but so that each melody note may have the exact colour of harmonic support needed to reinforce its emotional context. This use of chromaticism has, of course, no influence on tonality.

The first movement, a sonata-like structure, has something in common with the textural and rhythmic busy-ness and the weight of Chopin's *Fourth Ballade*. The second movement has only one melodic theme—a long one, taking eight adagio bars; this is treated in the manner of a passacaglia. There are two main ideas in the last movement, freely varied and transformed in their repetitions; and there is a central cadenza-like passage which combines the two in a dialogue. The organisation of the music is the natural outcome of the material; there is no sense of contrivance. The work is a highly successful and satisfying example of the tonal non-avant-garde music of its generation, from which we are only just beginning to be widely enough separated in time to be able to be dispassionately critical of its products.

INTERVAL

SCHUBERT 1797-1828

Sonata in G op. 78 (1826)

Molto moderato e cantabile

Andante

Menuetto

Allegretto

Schubert's piano sonatas—'Too long!', they cry. For my part, I can always listen to another and not want it to stop. In these

works there is no story being told which can outstay its welcome, we are not being preached at, nor are we suffering violence. On the contrary, we are presented with a vision of the Earth, fair as she may be, tinged with the aspirations and regrets of humanity. There is the heart-warming intimacy of François Couperin translated to nineteenth century Vienna; and a pianist, playing this music, can convince us, on a good day, that the piano is a musical instrument after all.

D. M. L-C.

There will be a silver collection in aid of the Queen's Silver Jubilee Appeal.

Forthcoming concerts:

Tuesday 15th November St Cecilia's Hall

CONCERT BY STUDENTS OF THE FACULTY
OF MUSIC

Thursday, 17th November McEwan Hall

THE REID ORCHESTRA
MICHAEL TILMOUTH *Conductor*
DENIS MATTHEWS *Piano*

STERNDALE BENNETT Overture '*The Naiades*'
JOHN FIELD Piano Concerto No. 3 in Eb major
BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor
MENDELSSOHN Overture and incidental music to
'A Midsummer Night's Dream'

Tickets 70p (Students 40p) from the Edinburgh Bookshop and
Music Faculty Concert Office, 12 Nicolson Square.

Proceeds are in aid of the Queen's Silver Jubilee Appeal.

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY CONCERTS

1977-78

THE STUDENTS OF THE FACULTY
OF MUSIC

St Cecilia's Hall, Tuesday 15 November 1977