

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

SEASON 1956-57

First Concert

REID
CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Leader : DR. JOHN FAIRBAIRN

Conductor : SIDNEY NEWMAN

REID SCHOOL OF MUSIC
THURSDAY, 18TH OCTOBER, 1956

AT 7.30 P.M.

PROGRAMME : ONE SHILLING

PROGRAMME

1. CONCERTINO NO. 4 IN F MINOR (FOR STRINGS) *Pergolesi(?)*
(1710-1736)

Largo—
A Capella : Presto
A tempo comodo
A tempo giusto

In 1740 there was published at the Hague a set of six 'Concerti armonici.' The publisher was Carlo Ricciotti (known as "Bacciccia"—b. 1681, d. 1756), who in his dedicatory letter to Count Bentinck (through whom apparently he had obtained these works), refers to them as "parto d'un Illustre mano." When Walsh published them in England in 1755, he attributed the works to Ricciotti himself. Mr. C. L. Cudworth (see *Music and Letters*, Oct. 1949) in an article devoted to "Instrumental Works attributed to Pergolesi" inclines to the view that Ricciotti was the composer, despite the dedicatory letter, and that these concertos are not genuine works of Pergolesi, to whom they are attributed in an early manuscript. No one seems to be able to tell us anything else of Ricciotti as a composer. Whether or no they are genuine Pergolesi, they are rightly acknowledged as genuine Italian masterpieces of the seventeen-thirties—and I am quite content, following the precedent set by the directors of Art Galleries, to attribute them to the 'Master of the Concerti armonici' and to enjoy them free of all speculations and inhibitions—and moreover to append Pergolesi's name, because nobody can find these works unless he asks for 'the Pergolesi concertos'!

2. BRANDENBURG CONCERTO NO. 1 IN F *J. S. Bach*
(1685-1750)

Allegro
Adagio
Allegro
Menuetto, alternating with Trio I, Polacca, and Trio II

The first of the set of six Brandenburg Concertos, composed in 1721, is scored for 2 horns, 3 oboes, bassoon, strings and continuo.

3. RICERCARE (FOR SIX PARTS) FROM "THE MUSICAL OFFERING" *J. S. Bach*

The "Musical Offering" was the outcome of Bach's visit to Frederick the Great at Potsdam in May, 1747. The royal theme upon which its various pieces and canons are based is that which the king then gave to Bach as a subject upon which to extemporise. Bach excused himself from extemporising there and then a six-part

Ricercare upon this royal theme, though he did so upon a theme of his own devising; but he made good the omission by composing this six-part Ricercare for inclusion in his 'Offering.' He published it on six staves without indication of any specific instrumentation. The practical edition adopted for this performance is that of Mr. Howard Ferguson.

4. SINFONIA IN G (FROM CANTATA NO. 174) *J. S. Bach*

Bach drew liberally upon his own instrumental works (and especially concerted works) to furnish introductory symphonies to his cantatas. Thus, for example, the Prelude of the E major Suite for Violin became a Sinfonia for Organ obbligato with orchestra, whilst the D minor Clavier Concerto (itself derived from a Violin Concerto no longer extant) not only furnished a Sinfonia from its first movement, but also had a newly composed cantata chorus superimposed upon its slow movement.

This G major Sinfonia is the first movement of the Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 with additional parts for two horns (using a high compass), two oboes and a taille (or cor anglais) and continuo (reinforced by bassoon). The effective tempo for this reorchestrated version confirms one's impression that when the strings have it all their own way in the state of Brandenburg (as they normally do) they are perhaps often a little inclined to confuse an alert robust tempo with that of Light Infantry.

INTERVAL

5. INVERTIBLE FUGUE ON FOUR SUBJECTS (FOR STRINGS) (WRITTEN FOR THE COMPLETION OF BACH'S "ART OF FUGUE") *Tovey*
(1875-1940)

Bach died before he had completed his design for the Art of Fugue. It is still not clear as to how he intended the Canons to fit into the scheme of things, or whether he purported to enlarge their number and range of device. For a long time the view was generally held that the great fugue which was left incomplete at the point where its three subjects (one spelling the notes B A C H) are combined, was an independent work unrelated to the great sequence of the Art of Fugue. Nottebohm was the first to show that the motto theme 'combines with the other three in a manner quite beyond the possibility of chance,' in fact that Bach was engaged upon a fugue on four subjects which was to culminate in the combination of the motto theme with the three already treated of so generously. Sir Donald Tovey's conjectural finish of that fugue (79 bars to complete the extant 238 bars of the original) is a brilliant tour de force which on this occasion we can but note in passing, since it is with a second tour de force that we are here concerned.

Mizler, writing in 1754 only four years after Bach's death (and two years after the incomplete *Kunst der Fuge* was first published in a somewhat confused form) said, "His last illness prevented him from completing according to plan the last fugue but one, and from working out the last which was to contain 4 themes and to be inverted note for note continuously in all 4 parts." This exceptionally precise statement indicates a final fugue (not to be confused with the unfinished fugue) which was to be totally invertible, i.e. a mirror fugue analogous to but more exacting than the 3 pt. and 4 pt. mirror fugues already completed.

This totally invertible fugue on 4 subjects was composed by Tovey in vindication of that plan, thereby effectively meeting Rust's objection that 'this is impossible' ! The first and fourth subjects of Tovey's fugue are of his own devising, the second and third are the BACH and the motto subjects respectively. In performance, we shall present the inverted image (*inversus*) before the original (*rectus*) since this makes for a finer climax.

6. SYMPHONY No. 47 IN G

Haydn
(1732-1809)

Allegro

Un poco adagio, cantabile

Minuet al Roverso

Finale : Presto assai

Within the last few seasons we have had an opportunity of studying at first hand a number of Haydn's Symphonies of the late 1760's and early 1770's, the *Trauer-Sinfonie*, the "Mercury," the bright D major (No. 42) which immediately preceded it, "La Passione" of the following year, and so on. The G major, No. 47, has perhaps the finest stature of them all. Haydn himself seems to claim as much in the broad firm build of his opening theme (gloriously transformed into the minor key when he recapitulates). The slow movement with its tune and counter-melody in invertible counterpoint expands in luxurious ease in a continuous design of symphonic variation.

Sir Donald Tovey, it is recounted, once puzzled an audience with a novel work which proved to be the National Anthem in reverse. Haydn's Trio and Minuet, however, bring no bewilderments : he merely devoted a little time and ingenuity to the amusement of saving paper and himself the bother of writing out second sections. If this was unkind to his copyist (who may well have been obliged to clean his shaving mirror before he could proceed with his task *Da Capo*), Haydn made him the happiest amends in the exquisite romance of the Presto assai. Who knows or cares twopence whether this is a Rondo or Sonata form or both or neither. The melody sings on and the Tutti have enough power in them to smash up any analytical chemistry.

S.T.M.N.