

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH  
ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

SEASON 1957—58

*First Concert*

REID  
CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Leader: DR. JOHN FAIRBAIRN

Conductor: SIDNEY NEWMAN

*Solo Soprano :*  
BARBARA DELANO LAING

*Solo Oboe :*  
MARGARET RENNIE MONCRIEFF

REID SCHOOL OF MUSIC  
THURSDAY, 17th OCTOBER, 1957  
AT 7.30 P.M.

PROGRAMME ONE SHILLING

## PROGRAMME

### 1. CONCERTO GROSSO IN F, (OP. 6, No. 9)

*Handel*  
(1685-1759)

Largo  
Allegro  
Larghetto  
Allegro  
Minuet  
Gigue

If as Titania has reminded us the Elizabethans of two ages have had cause to see the seasons alter, the Georgian widwinter of 1739-40 certainly suffered no unseasonable transformation. Almost everything in London seems to have been frozen solid except Handel's invention. He began that winter by composing the twelve concerti grossi for strings within one month. Not only are they supreme amongst his instrumental works, but they exhibit a remarkable variety of mood and character.

The ninth concerto opens with a broad introduction to the sturdy forthright Allegro which is ever intent upon wresting a minor third out of all its major cadences. The concertino group of two violins and violoncello is used here as in the succeeding Larghetto antiphonally against the ripieno, though the first violin makes the running as *primus inter pares*. The second Allegro is a fugue. It can hardly be said that all fugues live up to their name, but the subject of this one is obviously imbued with the powers of flight and exultantly rides its course beneath the sun without fear of fall. The F minor Minuet has a major surprise in store for us, before the soli fiddles are accorded the honours of leading an exhilarating jig.

### 2. CONCERTO FOR OBOE IN B FLAT

*C. P. E. Bach*  
(1714-1788)

Allegretto  
Largo e mesto  
Allegro moderato

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, second son of John Sebastian, was the great clavier player and composer of his day, i.e. of the generation of Gluck with whom he was an exact contemporary. He composed something over fifty concertos for the harpsichord, the first forty of which were written or revised during the twenty-seven years (1740-1767) during which he served Frederick the Great as official accompanist at Potsdam. Three of the concertos dating from the early 'fifties exist also in versions both for flute and for violoncello as solo instrument. Two others dating from 1765 (Nos.

39 & 40) exist also as oboe concertos, of which this in B flat is the first. It was transcribed by me from the autograph score at Berlin some twenty years ago. It is a tuneful and happy work, though plaintive in its slow movement, and with its relish of the piquancy and good humour of the 'galant' style it comes much closer to the art of the younger brother, John Christian, than do the majority of C.P.E.'s rhetorical and often intensely dramatic concertos.

### 3. "LES ILLUMINATIONS" (OP. 18) (FOR SOPRANO AND STRING ORCHESTRA)

*Britten*  
(b. 1913)

Fanfare  
Villes  
Phrase.—Antique  
Royauté  
Marine  
Interlude  
Being Beautous  
Parade  
Départ

This setting of poems of Arthur Rimbaud was composed in the autumn of 1939. The work is dedicated to Sophie Wyss the distinguished Swiss soprano whose early performance of it quickly established it as one of the finest works of Britten's earlier years. Patrons of these concerts may recollect that she introduced it to Edinburgh at a Reid Concert in 1943.

*Note:* The leaflets, containing the full text of the poems and English translations, which are made available *on loan* to purchasers of this programme, constitute the publishers' complete stock which the promoters of this concert have purchased for the convenience of patrons. In order that they may be available to audiences at other performances, patrons are asked kindly to hand them back to programme sellers at the end of the concert.

## INTERVAL

### 4. CONCERTO FOR STRING ORCHESTRA

*Rawsthorne*  
(b. 1905)

Largo maestoso—Molto allegro—Andante  
expressivo—Molto Allegro  
Lento e mesto  
Allegro piacevole

This concerto received its first performance on the radio in Holland by the Dutch String Orchestra in June, 1949, and its first concert performance at a London Promenade concert the same year.

The opening *Molto Allegro* (basically in D minor) is a restless movement for the most part of contrapuntal texture, whose main theme is weightily set forth in the grand gesture of the opening two bars of *Largo*. This theme which in its several recurrences is variously extended in lines of eloquent rhetoric appears often in the bass and is also subject to inversion and *stretto*. The main contrasting motif is a forceful and brusquely rhythmic passage of homophony whose phrases are separated from one another by quiet static chords entwined by florid scales of solo violin and finally of viola who extends in an eloquent rhetorical line. The design of the whole retains the main features of exposition, development and recapitulation, the approach to this latter being by way of an episodic *Andante* for solo violin against a shimmering background of *tremolando* from which the action quickens again to restatement of the main theme.

The slow movement is in effect (though not so styled) a *marche funèbre* in F minor opening simply with viola melody supported by *pizzicato* bass. The reiteration and expansion of this leads to a passionate climax. From the aftermath of stillness emerges a quiet plaintive chanting of strings in chorus mounting again to a climax of intense passion before the march is calmly resumed and fades away to the threshold of the finale. Here there is ecstasy of joy spreading at first in the quiet flowing lines of *Allegro piacevole*, quickened by strong rhythmic ejaculation and solo *bravura*, and diversified by increasing contrapuntal dexterities to end, after a quiet backward glance, in a glow of triumph.

5. SERENADE FOR STRING ORCHESTRA (OP. 11)

*Dag Wirén*  
(b. 1905)

Preludium : *Allegromolto*  
*Andante*  
Scherzo : *Allegro vivace*  
Marcia

Dag Wirén is a Swedish composer. He studied at the Conservatoire in Stockholm and subsequently (as holder of a State Scholarship) at Paris. In 1939 he was appointed a music critic in Stockholm. His compositions include, besides several chamber works, a symphony, a *sinfonietta* and a violoncello concerto. The *Serenade* (dedicated to the Stockholm Chamber Orchestra and published in 1939) is an attractive work of a fairly light character, which has quickly won favour in this country.

S.T.M.N.