

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

SEASON 1963-64

Third Concert

REID ORCHESTRA

Leader: Dr. JOHN FAIRBAIRN

Guest Conductor: JAMES LOCKHART

Solo Soprano: MARGARET PRICE

REID SCHOOL OF MUSIC
THURSDAY, 14th NOVEMBER, 1963
AT 7.30 P.M.

PROGRAMME TWO SHILLINGS

PROGRAMME

1. SYMPHONY NO. 36 IN C MAJOR ("LINZ"), K. 425

Mozart
(1756-1791)

Adagio—Allegro spiritoso
Poco Adagio
Menuetto
Presto

On 30th October, 1783, Mozart and his wife reached Linz in the course of their journey back to Vienna after the two months' visit paid to Mozart's father and sister. Writing to his father on the following day, Mozart informs him "On November 4th I am giving a concert in the theatre here, and, as I have not a single symphony with me, I am writing a new one at breakneck speed which must be finished by that time." It was finished and entered in his catalogue on November 3rd! (Presumably the Linz orchestra had scant opportunity on that occasion to prove itself an orchestra which had rehearsed!)

What sort of a symphony was it that Mozart wrote at breakneck speed? A work in the grand manner, big in design, extended in its paragrapping, characteristically succinct in the development of the first movement yet stretching out quite long limbs in the development of the finale without indulging in any great complexity, triumphantly resplendent with panoply of brass and drums, which it carries with dominant solemnity amidst the more tender and sensitive emotion of the Poco Adagio. If Mozart has elsewhere fashioned themes of greater intrinsic beauty and character, he has seldom displayed them on such broad lines. Tovey was somewhat impatient of those who claim that Mozart here modelled himself upon Haydn. Certainly the device of an Adagio introduction is used with altogether different effect than that of Haydn's usage—as Tovey says, here it is a portico whilst with Haydn it is usually a sort of tunnel leading one wonders where. But this was Mozart's first employment of such an introduction to a symphony, whilst with Haydn it was already a common occurrence (if anything in Haydn could ever be called common). There is a good deal of other internal evidence here that Mozart had been listening to Haydn. To admit this is not to deny the fact that the result is quite different from what we could look for from the older master.

S. T. M. N.

2. RECITATIVE AND ARIA FROM "MEDEA"

Cherubini
(1760-1842)

"Medea, O Medea . . . Solo un pianto"

Cherubini is remembered far too readily as a formidable antique hazard to entrée into the Conservatoire library in the memoirs of Berlioz and as the label on a disused treatise on musical theory than as the composer (and indeed prolific composer) that he was. True, a society was formed in 1948 under the presidency of Willem Mengelberg to make his works better known through recordings, but the best advocacy of his art was provided by the revival of his masterly opera "Les deux Journées" (1800), that heroic romantic classical forerunner of Beethoven's "Fidelio", by the B.B.C. some few years ago. Cherubini was a native of Florence and his earliest operas were all in the comparatively light Neapolitan style, but the true man emerges in the operas composed after he settled in Paris in 1788 (of which today little but the impressive overtures are to be heard), and the noblest of these is the "Médée" of 1797 to a rather unsatisfactory libretto by François B. Hoffman. The work is published in pianoforte score by Peters with German text: it was not very successful in Paris but was taken up by German opera houses from 1800. The first English production in 1865 was given in Italian, though the first performance in Italy

(with text by Zangarini) was apparently given only in 1909. If the opera is rather overlong (and even in this great aria it is usual to make cuts) there is no doubt that Cherubini's music is worthy of this classical Euripidean tragedy whatever the shortcomings of his librettist.

The aria, which is coloured by a very eloquent and expressive bassoon obligato solo, is not sung by Medea but by her attendant Neris who expresses her helpless but devoted desire to share her pain and to go with her whatever may betide. It contrives to convey that morose brooding spirit of tension that prevails in Medea before the storm breaks and she wreaks her vengeance upon Jason's bride and upon her own children born to him.

S. T. M. N.

3. DANCES OF GALANTA

Kodaly
(b. 1882)

Kodaly has not been a prolific composer, nor one who has had much popular appeal. The composition to be played this evening is only the second work to appear at these concerts, the Psalmus Hungaricus having been performed a few years ago, in collaboration with the University Musical Society.

Bartok and Kodaly became interested in the collecting of Hungarian folk-music at the beginning of the century, and their joint efforts have resulted in the preparation and printing of more than 3,000 melodies. These composers have been most insistent in proclaiming that what they have collected, sifted, and edited, is the pure Hungarian folk-music, and bears no relation or resemblance to the Gipsy music of Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsodies, and Brahms' Hungarian Dances.

The Dances of Galanta was composed for the 80th anniversary of the Budapest Philharmonic Society, in 1934. Galanta, where Kodaly spent part of his youth, is a town on the main Vienna-Budapest railway, and presumably he heard some of the dance tunes there.

There are five dances, prefaced by a lengthy introduction, and arranged progressively from slow to fast. It is not a pot-pourri, but a most artistic realisation of the melodies, with a suggestion of Rondo form, as the first dance is repeated after the second and third, and also in the coda.

J. F.

INTERVAL

4. DIVERTIMENTO FOR STRING ORCHESTRA (OP. 15)

Thea Musgrave
(b. 1928)

Allegro vivo
Andante espressivo—Poco più mosso—Tempo I—
Grazioso
Andante con moto

Thea Musgrave was born at Cramond Bridge near Edinburgh. She received her later schooling at Moreton Hall, Shropshire, and graduated B.Mus. at Edinburgh in 1950, having won the Tovey Memorial Prize and the award of the Bucher and Andrew Fraser Scholarships. For four years she then worked under Nadia Boulanger in Paris. Since 1954 she has lived and worked in London devoting herself primarily to composition, but also active as an extra-mural lecturer for London University, as a lecturer at summer schools, and also on occasion as a pianist. She quickly gained recognition as a distinctive British composer of the younger generation both here and abroad, and several of the near-thirty works she has composed in these ten years have been commissioned by concert promoters such as the B.B.C., the Cheltenham Festival and Glasgow University (under the McEwen Bequest), or have been specially composed for certain artists.

The Divertimento for Strings was composed in 1957 (a year before her orchestral "Obliques" and "String Quartet", both of which have been heard in Edinburgh). The Divertimento received its first performance by the Eric Roberts String Orchestra. It is twelve-tone music but not serial music. The thematic patterns are devised by processes (often free) of inversion, retrograde motion, and so on, but there is freedom to compose and none of the inhibitions of predestination; and as the movement headings show there are bold contrasts of rhythm and tempo between the four movements. The instrumental forces deploy much as in concerto grosso—sometimes it will be only violin or 'cello that deploy as a soloist, at other times a trio of high or of low strings, or a whole quartet.

S. T. M. N.

5. EL AMOR BRUJO

Manuel de Falla
(1876-1946)

The work might be styled a Ballet—but it is ballet with a difference—something *sui generis* as is Stravinsky's "Histoire du Soldat" which received its not very successful première concurrently with the first Paris performance of this piece. El Amor Brujo, misleadingly translated as "L'Amour sorcier", only little better matched by "Wedded by Witchcraft" (for which Professor Trend characteristically suggested the better alternative of "Wedded in spite of Witchcraft") owes its origin and its character to the finest art of the Andalusian gypsies. By 1914 Falla had been seven years resident in Paris, the most stimulating and adventurous centre of music at the time for all who sought to make a new language of the colour, rhythm and orchestration of music. But with the outbreak of war he returned to Spain, and very shortly the dramatist Martínez Sierra told him that Pastora Imperio, a very famous dancer in the Andalusian gypsy style, wanted a song and dance written for her. But under the influence of Pastora's superb rhythms and the stories and fables recounted by her mother (also a great artist) the song and dance became an Andalusian dramatic ballet. It was first performed in semi-private with Pastora and others from her gypsy clan, and then publicly at Madrid in April 1915; but the greatest fame attaches to the Paris performance featuring the famous dancers "La Argentina" (Antonia Mercé) and the Spaniard Escudero.

El Amor Brujo is well known as a concert piece, but it must be envisaged as danced, and as telling its dramatic tale.

Carmelo is courting a beautiful gypsy Candelas who returns his love. But always there comes between them the ghost of her former dead lover—malignant and cruel, nor is he to be exorcised by any magic circle or ritualistic fire-dance. Carmelo devises the plan that Candelas' friend Lucia shall divert the ghost's attention on his next appearance. The ruse succeeds, and the lovers are left in peace as the bells of morning ring out.

S. T. M. N.

Introduction and Scene—
The night watch in the camp—
"Song of Sorrowful Love"—
The apparition—
Dance of Terror—
The Magic Circle—
Midnight—
Ritual Fire-dance—
Scene—
"Song of the Will-o'-the-wisp"—
Pantomime—
Dance of the Game of Love—
Finale: The bells of morning.