

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

SEASON 1963-64

Sixth Concert

REID ORCHESTRA

Leader: Dr. JOHN FAIRBAIRN

Guest Conductor: RODERICK BRYDON

Solo Pianoforte:

AUDREY INNES

REID SCHOOL OF MUSIC
THURSDAY, 30th JANUARY, 1964

AT 7.30 P.M.

PROGRAMME TWO SHILLINGS

PROGRAMME

1. OVERTURE: "LA SCALA DI SETA" *Rossini*
(1792-1868)

This one-act opera buffa was produced in 1812, when Rossini was just twenty and had already shown himself to be a prolific composer. Though the opera was a failure, the overture, which has all the sparkle and gaiety of the true Rossini, remains a lasting favourite.

2. PIANOFORTE CONCERTO IN C (K.467) *Mozart*
(1756-1791)

Allegro
Andante
Allegro vivace assai

On Friday, 11th February, 1785, Leopold Mozart arrived in Vienna for a stay of some weeks with his son and daughter-in-law. He was just in time for the first of Mozart's six Friday subscription concerts held at the Mehlgrube and that very evening heard the first performance of "the new and very fine concerto" in D minor K.466 which Mozart had entered in his catalogue as finished only two days earlier and on which the copyist was busy till the last moments, so that the rondo had no rehearsal at all. But Leopold had arrived on a scene more crowded with music than even he had bargained for, and a month later he is reporting in his letters to Nannerl that they never got to bed till one o'clock, that practically every day there is a concert (sometimes two concurrently), that Mozart's fortepiano had been carried out of the house for one concert or another more than a dozen times in four weeks, that it is one long round of composing, teaching, rehearsals and concerts and that he feels a bit out of it all. Consider but the first week. The second evening had been the private party at which Haydn had been present and the last three (only recently finished) quartets dedicated to Haydn had their second performance. Next day Mozart was playing his Pianoforte Concerto in B flat (K.456), written the previous September for Mlle Paradis, at Madame Laschi's concert. Two days later he played "most magnificently" a second performance of the new D minor concerto at another

concert at the theatre. The following day they all went to a concert at the house of the Salzburg agent von Pleyer. Two days later it is Mozart's own second subscription concert.

At some time in this incredible February Mozart composed this, his third, C major concerto (as he noted on the MS). It was entered in his catalogue on 9th March, and probably received its first performance at his fifth concert on 11th March. It is entirely unlike its profound neighbour, the D minor—bright, spacious, with a festive grandeur, yet with a charming unaffected lyricism, and a rich romantic vein in its Andante with its searching and subtle harmonies, and full of spirited humour in its rondo finale, and above all it is avowedly virtuosic in its pianoforte writing. Just as Mozart's earlier C major symphonies point the way to their culmination in the "Jupiter" symphony, so do his C major concertos point the way to their apotheosis in the great K.503 concerto. The vein of thought common to these catches elements of contrapuntal strength, the hinted march which prompts both festive blaze and the recoil to a gloriously naive lyricism, and the solid strength of firmly wrought sequences exuberantly enjoyed by the soloist. The whole scene is far removed from that very special spirit that pervades the dark and passionate D minor concerto, though there is indeed one very unexpected moment when the solo obtrudes (once and once only) a G minor theme that is compounded of some kind of prevision of the G minor symphony of later years and a reflection of the rondo theme of the foregoing D minor concerto. But though the first great movement may seem a trifle loosely knit in comparison with its neighbour, it proves to be extraordinarily highly organised in its pattern of events.

Later in the year when Leopold was at home in Salzburg he received a copy of this and other works, and in preparing for a Salzburg performance has occasion not only to comment upon the difficulty of the solo part but also to question whether the copyist has correctly transcribed the accidentals in the orchestral parts. No doubt it was the sight of the remarkable (though entirely logical) harmonies in the most beautiful slow movement which he at first found it hard to translate into sound in the mind's ear.

INTERVAL

3. "QUIET CITY"

Aaron Copland
(b. 1900)

This reflective piece, composed in 1940, is scored for Strings with Cor Anglais and Trumpet, whose roles are almost entirely melodic or imbued with rhetorical freedom of utterance. The piece grew out of the incidental music Copland composed in 1939 for the play "Quiet City" by Irwin Shaw—a fantasy concerning the night thoughts of different people in a great city.

4. ITALIAN SYMPHONY IN A MAJOR (OP. 90)

Mendelssohn
(1809-1847)

Allegro vivace
Andante con moto
Con moto moderato
Saltarello. Presto

This symphony was inspired by Mendelssohn's travels in Italy in 1830-31. In his letters from Italy he always refers to it as the "Italian Symphony". The score was not completed until March 1833—the first performance being given by the Royal Philharmonic Society in London under the composer's direction. Publication was delayed until after Mendelssohn's death in 1847 owing to his desire to revise the finale—a task which he never accomplished. Whilst this spirited movement fails to attain the perfection of the other three, its qualities are very much more than merely adequate for the purpose it fulfils, and despite the fact that the writing of the symphony cost Mendelssohn a deal of hard work, the finale does preserve the happy impression of the whole that it was written *da prima intenzione*.

All the sunshine of Italian skies is gathered in the brilliant A major of the first movement, whilst the dexterity of the fugato development exhibits a craftsmanship worthy to match the finest achievements of that land of the arts.

The slow movement was inspired by a religious procession which Mendelssohn saw in the streets of Naples.

S.T.M.N.