

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH  
ORCHESTRAL CONCERT

SEASON 1966-67

FIFTH CONCERT

REID ORCHESTRA

Leader: MILES BASTER

Conductor: SIDNEY NEWMAN

Solo Pianoforte:

COLIN KINGSLEY

REID SCHOOL OF MUSIC

THURSDAY, 19th JANUARY, 1967

AT 7.30 p.m.

PROGRAMME TWO SHILLINGS

1. OVERTURE: "Coriolanus" (Op. 62)

Beethoven  
(1770-1827)

Although it was for a German play by a contemporary writer, Collin, that Beethoven wrote this overture, the listener will be better advised to remember Shakespeare's drama, and need not deplore the fact that Collin's play is unknown to him. If a programme note is required it is ready to hand in Shakespeare's verse; but any who are familiar with Wagner's prose writings will know his study of this overture to be amongst his most inspired writings. More briefly, he sketched the same argument in his article on Beethoven which marked the centenary of the composer's birth: "If we call to mind the impression left upon us by the Coriolanus of Shakespeare's drama, and retain such details of the complicated action only as were impressive with regard to the chief character, the single figure of a Coriolanus defiant will arise before us, in conflict with an inner voice, which, again, in person of his mother, speaks louder and stronger to his pride; and the dramatic development will appear to consist in the mastering of his pride by that voice, in the breaking of the defiance of his extraordinarily powerful nature."

"Beethoven chose for his drama these two chief motives only, and they induce us to feel the essential nature of those two characters more distinctly than any conceptional presentation thereof."

2. PIANOFORTE CONCERTO IN F MINOR,  
Op. 21 (1829)

Chopin  
(1810-1849)

Maestoso  
Larghetto  
Allegro vivace

An earlier work than the E minor Concerto (1830), although published later, this belongs to the period of Chopin's triumph as a Polish virtuoso composer-performer. It was in works with orchestral accompaniment (there are six such works in all) that he could most surely command success, not because he was an orchestral composer, but because the public looked for such things. Little of the healthy independence of the orchestra of the classical concerto is to be found here. The work is a law unto itself, and if the orchestra is required to serve almost throughout as a background, that does not prevent it from offering a service of perfect freedom to an imagination of great originality and never-failing invention.

When Hallé gave the first Scottish performance of the E minor Concerto at a Reid Concert in 1873, he played only the last two movements, and for some reason he likewise omitted the first movement of the F minor when performing it in 1887.

INTERVAL

3. DIVERTIMENTO FOR CHAMBER ORCHESTRA "SELLINGER'S ROUND" *Michael Tippett*  
(b. 1905)

Sir Michael Tippett's "Divertimento" was commissioned and first conducted by Paul Sacher in Zurich in 1954. Scored for single woodwind, solo trumpet and horn with a small group of strings, it includes a statement of the traditional tune of the title in each of its five movements, together with short quotations from Gibbons, Purcell, Arne, Field and Sullivan, aptly showing Tippett's awareness of the heritage of British music.

A potent influence on the moulding of Tippett's style has been the linear freedom and rhythmic flexibility of the composers of the sixteenth century, and this aspect of his idiom is shown in the closely imitative part-writing of the opening and closing sections of the initial "Allegro." Over the soft pizzicatos of the middle section, the oboe plays Byrd's version of "Sellinger's Round."

The "Lament" is based on a Purcell ground bass, over which a solo violin plays expressive embellishments of the round in the minor key.

In the playful third movement, the solo trumpet is entrusted with a variant of the round over rapid "ostinati" in which the interval of the fourth is predominant, as it is in much of the imitative string and woodwind writing of the ensuing "Adagio." Amongst these elaborations, and between recurrent soft tollings of trumpet and horn, there may be heard veiled references to the various phrases of the round on the 'cellos.

The spirited "Finale" begins with an angular horn theme, suitable for canonic treatment, over bustling figurations on the strings, followed by a gigue-like statement of the round on the woodwind. A delightfully unexpected touch is the good-natured

use as a contrasting second subject of a well known song from "The Yeomen of the Guard" on the clarinet, with flute obligato; one phrase of the melody's refrain being treated in canon by inversion between clarinet and bassoon.

L.C.

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I N T E R V A L

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4. SYMPHONY NO. 2 IN D (OP. 36).

*Beethoven*  
(1770-1827)

Adagio molto—Allegro con brio  
Larghetto  
Scherzo  
Allegro molto

Beethoven's idyllic symphonies, the Second and the Fourth, have always been a little overshadowed by their terrific neighbours, the Third and the Fifth. The greatest feature of Beethoven's greatness, however, consists in his being as great in his serenity as in the most heroic aspects of his art. As a matter of fact, the Second was the favourite of his contemporaries, and as to plasticity of form and sheer beauty of melody—qualities that would most of all impress a naive listener—it is unsurpassed among Beethoven's works. If its thrills are not of the titanic kind, they are not less Beethovenian, as the beautiful, starlit night of the introduction, the sudden irruption of the recapitulation in the first movement, the playing at shuttlecocks, with a little phrase of three notes, in the Scherzo, or the boisterous good-natured humour of the Finale.

H.G.