

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH  
ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS  
SEASON 1966-67

*E I G H T H   C O N C E R T*

**REID ORCHESTRA**

Leader: MILES BASTER

Conductor: SIDNEY NEWMAN

Solo Violoncello:

**JOAN DICKSON**

REID SCHOOL OF MUSIC

THURSDAY, 2nd MARCH, 1967

AT 7.30 p.m.

**PROGRAMME TWO SHILLINGS**

1. VARIATIONS ON A THEME BY HAYDN, OP. 56A

*Brahms*  
(1833–1897)

In 1870 Brahms was shown this theme by Haydn's biographer Pohl. The Variations were composed in 1873 and given their first performance that November in Vienna under Brahms' conductorship. In the same year Brahms made the version for two pianos. The "Chorale St. Antoni" (as some think possibly taken from an old Austrian Pilgrims' song) is the second of the four movements of one of a set of six Divertimenti, or more precisely "Feldpartiten", for wind instruments which Haydn provided (probably in the 1780's) for the military band of Prince Anton Paul of Eszterhaz. The original was published by Schubert of Leipzig in 1932 edited by Geiringer.

THEME: Andante (Chorale St. Antoni)

- Var. I Poco piu animato
- Var. II Piu vivace (minor key)
- Var. III Con moto (with varied repeats adorned by woodwind)
- Var. IV Andante con moto (minor key – melody and counter point which are inverted at the interval of the twelfth in the varied repeats)
- Var. V Vivace (a lively scherzo)
- Var. VI Vivace (based on the sturdy fanfare of the horns)
- Var. VII Grazioso (violas and flutes announce the new melody)
- Var. VIII Presto non troppo (minor key – dark and mysterious, with the melodic line inverted in direction)
- Finale (Ostinato bass culminating in the apotheosis of the theme).

2. CONCERTO FOR VIOLONCELLO AND ORCHESTRA *Kenneth Leighton*

Completed in 1955 this work was first performed at the Cheltenham Festival of 1956 under Sir John Barbirolli and with Florence Hooton as soloist. The following year it was given at the 'Proms' and also in Edinburgh by the Reid Orchestra. Subsequent performances by Florence Hooton and Maurice Gendron include the Leeds Festival, Copenhagen, Saarbrücken and a number of broadcasts by the German radio.

The work attempts to exploit the lyrical possibilities of the solo instrument by means of extended melodies based on key intervals. This is at once apparent at the start of the first movement. The 'cello enters in the second bar with a tune of which the opening, rhythmic and intervallic shape becomes the central idea of the design. The orchestra takes this up in notes of shorter value, and leads to a more rhythmic and energetic section, in which the more athletic possibilities of the solo instrument are exploited. The excitement of this soon dies down, however, to make way for the second main subject – a slower tune of which the first four notes are thematically important and which is characterized by the leap of a major seventh. The extended development which follows contrasts and combines these two main subjects, culminating in an orchestral climax and a cadenza, part of which is accompanied. In the recapitulation that follows attention is claimed first by the rhythmic version of the first subject, but soon the tempo slackens into a final meditation on the "motto-theme", ending quietly on a chord which prepares us for the tonality of the Scherzo.

This movement is gay and exuberant, and the soloist leads off with both the main themes. The brass also contribute a subsidiary idea shortly after the opening. The Trio (Moderato dolce) beginning with an oboe solo, is by contrast,

of a lyrical nature. After this the material of the Scherzo is elaborated and brought to a big climax by the full orchestra.

The emotional climax of the work (as in the composer's Violin Concerto) comes in the slow final movement, which uses material related to that of the first movement. The opening leap of a minor ninth on the 'cello, immediately contradicted by the drop of a whole tone, in an important thematic element. Oboe, flute, then 'cello successively play the second subject, and there is an impassioned orchestral climax in the centre of the movement.

K.L.

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I N T E R V A L

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3. SYMPHONY IN C

*Igor Stravinsky*  
(b. 1882)

Moderato alla breve  
Larghetto concertante  
Allegretto  
Largo – tempo giusto

Stravinsky wrote his Symphony in C for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's fiftieth anniversary season in 1940. The first two movements were composed in Paris before he sailed for the United States, where he completed the work.

The symphony is one of the finest examples of Stravinsky's period of 'classicism' – a period bounded by the 1924 piano concerto and "The Rake's Progress" of 1951 in which he sought to re-establish the virtues of that music of earlier centuries which was unfettered by romantic idealism and unaided by programmatic or autobiographical accretions – music whose justification as a work of art was afforded by its design, texture and internal logic.

Scored with crystal clarity for a normal-sized symphony orchestra, this firmly diatonic work opens with strong references to the motif "te-doh-soh" on the noted B, C and G, a motif which pervades much of the symphony. The classical idea of sonata form and thematic development is clearly felt in this movement, whose first main theme is a limpid oboe melody which grows out of the opening BCG statements. Contrasting ideas growing from the same germinal motif include a lyrical idea, opening on flute and bassoon, with follow-up wind figurations in dotted rhythms accompanied by vigorous throbbings on the strings, and a somewhat martial motif on the horns.

The extensive development shows Stravinsky's gift for employing irregular accentuation over regular barring. A sturdy climax precedes the recapitulation. The main part of the coda is a march-like expansion of the woodwind's dotted rhythm figuration, while a version of the opening oboe melody, using expanded

rising intervals and beginning on flute and clarinet, brings a taut and totally 'symphonic' movement to a close.

The 'Larghetto' is a ternary conception beginning with an oboe melody embellished by a complimentary lyrical figure on the violins. Comments from other wind instruments charmingly interrupt the melody, as do short passages on 'concertante' solo string groups. A vigorous contrasting section follows. The final three-note fragment of the 'Larghetto' provides a link between this movement and the first notes of the scherzo-like third movement. Irregular barrings are employed and the movement begins with a lively passage in which rapid woodwind figurations are interrupted by syncopated stampings on the strings - a process reminiscent of Stravinsky as a composer for the ballet. After a more tranquil section based on a swaying string figure, the trombone provides the first entry of a fugal exposition which grows out of the material of the movement. An exciting brass stretto employing polytonal elements concludes the movement.

The BCG motif is noticeable in the opening of the 'finale', both in the lugubrious initial idea on low bassoons and in the more vigorous section which follows. It becomes even more marked in the ensuing dance-like syncopations. A lyrical oboe fragment provides a brief moment of respite in a generally 'agitato' movement. A stronger contrast is the brief return of the 'Largo'. After continued agitation, the predominance of the BCG motif becomes overwhelming, and an increasingly tranquil passage based entirely on this idea leads to a pianissimo coda in which the same motif is treated in the manner of a chorale on woodwind and brass.

L.C.

Wednesday, 8th March, at 7.30 p.m.

in the Reid School of Music

CONCERT by Students

in the Faculty of Music

Programme of vocal and instrumental music.