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HENRY WOOD

PROMENADE CONCERTS

★ *WINTER SERIES* ★

MONDAY 16 JANUARY 1950

PROGRAMME
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BASIL CAMERON

WINTER SERIES OF
HENRY WOOD
PROMENADE CONCERTS

Monday, 16 January 1950 at 7.30

MENDELSSOHN-BRAHMS CONCERT

OVERTURE, A Midsummer Night's Dream	<i>Mendelssohn</i>
CONCERTO in E minor, for Viola and Orchestra	<i>Mendelssohn</i>
SYMPHONY No. 2, in D	<i>Brahms</i>

INTERVAL

CONCERTO No. 1, in G minor, for Pianoforte and Orchestra	<i>Mendelssohn</i>
ACADEMIC FESTIVAL OVERTURE	<i>Brahms</i>

Solo Violin

ALAN LOVEDAY

Solo Pianoforte

CYRIL PREEDY

THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Leader: George Stratton

CONDUCTOR

BASIL CAMERON

PROGRAMME NOTES

PART I

OVERTURE, A Midsummer Night's Dream *Mendelssohn*
1809-1847

In the roll of juvenile fame the first place goes to Mozart, the second to Schubert for his early songs, and the third to Mendelssohn for his *Midsummer Night's Dream* Overture. It was composed in 1826 when Felix (apt name) was seventeen years old, and it contains nine of the most happily-inspired ideas that ever came to him. At this the world has wondered for a hundred years, as if the knack of hitting upon pretty notions were any less unaccountable at fifty-seven than it is at seventeen. What we should really marvel at in these juvenile feats is the part they borrow from experience and maturity. Mozart's teen-age music should have come from a composer long practised in the finer points. The emotion and drama in Schubert's *Gretchen* and *Erl-King* are those of a grown man who has himself learnt that life is real and life is earnest. In Mendelssohn's Overture the shaping and proportion, the progress from one idea to another, the clever joinery, the exquisite detail, the aptness of it all—these are tokens, one would say, of a mind that has taken years to polish its craft.

The piece was immediately popular. In 1830 it came to London where it started the Mendelssohn epoch at the Philharmonic; and now it survives after shedding most of its epochal companions. The remainder of the *Midsummer Night's Dream* music—the scherzo, nocturne, wedding march and all the incidentals—was written seventeen years later for a production of the play in Berlin.

The Overture is programme-music as far as the themes were suggested by, and themselves suggest, various persons and things; and it is absolute music as far as the persons and things are marshalled in sonata form. Thus Duke Theseus makes his ceremonial entry twice over, because he is the first subject. No character is linked to the second subject; but Bully Bottom with the Ass's Head trails behind it each time, because he is the after-subject. On the whole the programme interest takes the foreground, for it has the magic of apt inspiration, which is the part we enjoy most; and formal interest is there because a musical text, however inspired, goes uncomfortably without an artistic progress of its own.

The persons and things need little pointing out. Anybody can tell where the script says 'enter fairies'; the Duke and his court effectually announce themselves; so do the hempen homespuns,

and the ass's bray. And in the development section you can if you like hear the fairies obeying their king's behest, *pizzicato*:

Through this house give glimmering light
By the dead and drowsy fire;
Every elf and fairy sprite
Hop as light as bird from brier.

But the true programme is not in these picturesque details; rather is it the midsummer-night air that pervades the piece and takes us to a land as fantastical as the poet's, where everything is a dream more real than Regent's Park. The sign of this translation is the fairy formula, four chords long, that begins and ends the Overture: one of those simple and obvious things that need a genius to think of them.

W. McNAUGHT

CONCERTO in E minor, for Violin and Orchestra *Mendelssohn*

Allegro molto appassionato—
Andante—
Allegretto non troppo—
Allegro molto vivace

Solo Violin ALAN LOVEDAY

If the six favourite violin concertos had to be reduced to a Big Three this would be one of them, slight as it is in stature and unassertive by nature. It comes into the front rank by the excellence of its melodies, all so clear-cut, sure of themselves and pleasing to the ear; by its beautiful workmanship throughout; and by the aptness of everything—the tunes, the developments, the design, the fiddling, the orchestral writing, and little touches everywhere that come in just rightly. In short, a perfect work of the kind that does not aspire to be great.

In the case of so familiar a work everything that it is and does is apt to be taken for granted. A few technical comments, however, may serve to show that it did in fact break conventions. The first is concerned with the way the concerto begins.

1. One of the formal requirements of the classical concerto was the double exposition. The main themes were first exposed to view by the orchestra; then the soloist laid them out in a different way. Such was the plan to which Mozart and Beethoven adhered, and within it they were constantly doing interesting things that gave life and growth to the pattern. Mendelssohn, very boldly, shortened it to a

single exposition, with the soloist in the ascendant nearly the whole time.

2. Mendelssohn wisely protected himself from that perennial infliction, the cadenza composed by someone else. Probably he had witnessed with alarm the growing licence by which composers of no account imposed long sections of stodgy development under the heading of 'cadenza' (they are still doing it), though all that the composer meant was a few flourishes on the part of the violinist or pianist to show that he still had some technical tricks up his sleeve. So Mendelssohn refrained from providing the usual signpost (a chord and a pause), and wrote his own cadenza, thus obviating the intrusion of an alien style into a stylish work. Moreover, he did not put the cadenza in the usual place near the end of the movement. He put it into his development section, where he used it in an entirely novel way to bring back the chief melody. The moment when the soloist carries on with his arpeggios while the orchestra enters with the tune is one of those touches that belong to the region of genius.

3. At the end of the first movement the music does not stop. A bassoon note remains poised in the air and leads into the *Andante*. In the days (not so long ago) when each movement of a concerto was applauded this link was usually lost in a burst of clapping followed by a chorus of 'Sh!' from those who were quick to spot that the conductor was still conducting. We know better now.

4. The *Andante* is in the only right key: it had to be C major. But, after a slow movement in C, how to proceed with a quick movement in E? Mendelssohn could have plunged; but, the music being as it is, the jerk would have been uncouth. So we have another unorthodoxy in the form of a quiet introduction to the last movement. It picks up the tale discreetly, makes the required key-change and ends with a pretty cadence that invites the plunge. Then comes the finale, which snaps a gay finger at the writer of programme-notes.

W. McNAUGHT

SYMPHONY NO. 2, in D

Brahms
1853-1897

Allegro non troppo
Adagio non troppo
Allegretto grazioso (Quasi Andantino)
Allegro con spirito

BRAHMS waited till he was over forty before venturing upon so considerable a work as a symphony. Meanwhile the art of the symphony had been fighting a losing battle. Music was no longer content to convey its own meaning and submit to a system of artistic controls. Everything that Wagner wrote was a symbol, and the only control

known to Liszt's music was that of the emotions. This nineteenth-century modernism, unlike its twentieth-century counterpart, proved very attractive to the world of its time; and it seemed that the art had abandoned the chief sources and safeguards of its culture and of its integrity. Symphonies were still being written, acceptable symphonies by Mendelssohn, Schumann and Raff; but not symphonies of the true line.

Then came two eventful years:

- 1875 August—Wagner's *The Ring* at Bayreuth.
- 1876 November—Brahms's first Symphony, in C minor.
- 1877 December—Brahms's second Symphony, in D.

—so that just at the time when the romantic ideal rose to its most spectacular achievement, the classical ideal re-asserted itself with a power and an assurance unknown since Beethoven.

The C minor and D major symphonies were complementary in their difference. The former is tragic; tonight's symphony is lyrical. Between them they sum up what is best known of Brahms's two personalities, the one rather forbidding, the other kindly and agreeable—but each a great stickler for the artistic proprieties. The D major is perhaps the best full-scale display of Brahms's sunny side, none the less so for an occasional reminder that the sterner side of him is in attendance. The four movements lend themselves to copious technical analysis, while their nature pleads for none. It may serve just as well to quote Brahms's own analysis; he told Hanslick to expect 'a symphony which sounds so cheerful and delightful that you will think I wrote it especially for you, or rather your young wife'. When Richter conducted the first performance at Vienna the symphony was warmly received (the third movement being actually encores), and it has ever since been a favourite with the Viennese.

W. McNAUGHT

PART II

(at 9.15 p.m. approximately)

CONCERTO NO. 1, in G minor, *Mendelssohn*
for Pianoforte and Orchestra

Molto allegro con fuoco—
Andante—
Presto

Solo Pianoforte CYRIL PREEDY

THE pianoforte plays a specially important if not dominant part in this early concerto. Mendelssohn himself referred to it as 'a thing rapidly

thrown off'; dating from about 1830, it was used by him as a display piece on his second visit to Munich on 17 October 1831, when the composer was in his twenty-third year, at a concert of his works; the programme also contained his C minor Symphony (the one which bears the number 1 but which was in fact his thirteenth essay in the form), the *Midsummer Night's Dream* overture, and an improvisation by himself. The concerto is scored for an orchestra that includes two horns but no trombones, on the classical model. After an introduction the pianoforte takes the music in hand and states the main subject; the 'second subject' is also announced by the soloist, with a curious hesitant catch on the first beat. In the slow movement there is much filigree work for the pianoforte. The last movement, again, opens with an introduction and, again, the pianoforte takes the lead. It is more in the character of a scherzo than a finale. The concerto has a prodigious fluency and, as well as balance, more than a little youthful charm.

HUBERT FOSS

ACADEMIC FESTIVAL OVERTURE

Brahms

THIS is a *pièce d'occasion*, though it does not in any way sound like it. The occasion was the acceptance by Brahms, in 1880, of an honorary Doctorate of Philosophy at the University of Breslau. This overture was his offering, or thesis, to qualify for his honour. The *Tragic Overture* appears to have been written in the same summer recess at Ischl, and the two strangely different works were performed together at Breslau on 4th January, 1881, and given at Leipzig nine days later. The material for the *Academische Fest-overture* is drawn from old and customary tunes—a students' convivial song, the *Gaudeamus igitur* (which is, one believes, still sung, even in these anti-old-school-tie days), and such-like airs. 'It was an audacious experiment', wrote Sir Henry Hadow, 'and one which could only have succeeded in Germany. Not even Brahms could offer, as a Doctor's exercise at Oxford or Cambridge, a work based on the melodies with which our own studious youth beguiles its leisure moments'. Sixty-nine years have passed—more than thirty since Hadow wrote those words—and times and manners have changed. So massive a piece as Brahms's might seem out of place, even in a Doctor's thesis, today: but we can still enjoy Brahms's North German fun, and hear the shouts of the *alumni* as he gives us their tunes.

HUBERT FOSS

HENRY WOOD
PROMENADE CONCERTS

TOMORROW at 7.30

THE BBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Conductor SIR MALCOLM SARGENT
MOZART — HAYDN CONCERT

Symphony No. 35, in D (Haydn) (K.385) (Mozart); Sinfonia Concertante in B flat for Violin, Violoncello, Oboe, Bassoon, and Orchestra (Haydn); Motet, Exsultate, Jubilate (Mozart); Symphony No. 86, in D (Haydn); Pianoforte Concerto (Debussy); Three Dances (The Three-cornered Hat) (Falla).

JOAN ALEXANDER
Solo Violin PAUL BEARD Solo Violoncello PETER MUSCANT
Solo Oboe EDWARD SELWYN Solo Bassoon RICHARD NEWTON
Solo Pianoforte IRIS LOVERIDGE

WEDNESDAY 18 JANUARY at 7.30

THE BBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Conductor SIR MALCOLM SARGENT
BACH — HANDEL CONCERT

Suite No. 3, in D (Bach); Recit and Aria, Lusinghe più care (Alessandro) (Handel); Organ Concerto in B flat (Op. 7 No. 3) (Hallelujah) (Handel); Violin Concerto No. 2, in E (Bach); Passacaglia and Fugue in G minor (Bach-Repigini); Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis (Vaughan Williams); (a) Saturn (b) Jupiter (The Planets) (Holst).

ELISIE MORISON
Solo Violin MAX ROSTAL Solo Organ GEORGE THALBEN-BALL

THURSDAY 19 JANUARY at 7.30

THE BBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Conductor SIR MALCOLM SARGENT

Overture, The Waver (Vaughan Williams); Violoncello Concerto in E minor (Elgar); Symphony (William Walton). Part 2 conducted by John Hollingsworth; Wanderer Fantasia for Pianoforte and Orchestra (Schubert-Liszt); Scherzo, L'Apprenti Sorcier (Dukas).

Solo Violoncello ANTHONY PINT Solo Pianoforte MEWTON-WOOD

FRIDAY 20 JANUARY at 7.30

THE BBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Conductor SIR MALCOLM SARGENT

Overture, Alceste (Gluck); Symphony No. 9, in D minor (Choral) (Beethoven). Part 2 conducted by John Hollingsworth; Symphonic Poem, En Saga (Sibelius); (a) Royal Hunt and Storm (b) Trojan March (The Trojans) (Britten).

STYLIA FISHER MARY JARRED
RICHARD LEWIS NORMAN WALKER
THE ROYAL CHORAL SOCIETY

SATURDAY 21 JANUARY at 7.30

THE BBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Conductor SIR MALCOLM SARGENT

Overture, The Bartered Bride (Smetana); Pianoforte Concerto No. 2, in C minor (Bachmaninoff); Symphony No. 5, in E minor (Tchaikovsky); A London Overture (John Ireland); The Walk to the Paradise Garden (A Village Romeo and Juliet) (Delius); March, Pomp and Circumstance No. 1, in D (Elgar).

Solo Pianoforte ISO ELINSON

TICKETS 7/6 to 3/- may be obtained at the Box Office during the Interval of tonight's concert.

ROYAL ALBERT HALL
Manager: C. S. Taylor

BBC
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

Leader: Paul Beard

SEASON 1949-50

Wednesday, 1 February at 8

SYMPHONY No. 49, in F minor HAYDN
PIANOFORTE CONCERTO No. 5, in E flat BEETHOVEN
(Emperor)
PRÉLUDE À L'APRÈS-MIDI D'UN FAUNE DEBUSSY
LE SACRE DU PRINTEMPS STRAVINSKY

SOLOMON

SIR ADRIAN BOULT

Wednesday, 15 February at 8

OVERTURE, Il Seraglio MOZART
FLUTE CONCERTO in D MOZART
SYMPHONY No. 39, in E flat (K.543) MOZART
SYMPHONIC POEM, Also sprach Zarathustra STRAUSS
FINALE, Feuersnot STRAUSS

GEOFFREY GILBERT

SIR THOMAS BEECHAM, Bart.

Wednesday, 8 March at 8

CHACONY in G minor, for Strings PURCELL
SONGS OF FAREWELL DELIUS
THE HYMN OF JESUS HOLST
BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST WILLIAM WALTON

DENNIS NOBLE
THE BBC CHORAL SOCIETY
THE GOLDSMITHS' CHORAL UNION
SIR MALCOLM SARGENT

Wednesday, 22 March at 8

OVERTURE, A Midsummer Night's Dream MENDELSSOHN
SYMPHONY No. 3, in F BRAHMS
DAPHNIS AND CHLOE (The complete Ballet) RAVEL

THE BBC CHORUS
SIR ADRIAN BOULT

Wednesday, 19 April at 8

VARIATIONS ON A THEME OF HAYDN BRAHMS
SYMPHONIC STUDY, Falstaff ELGAR
SYMPHONY No. 9, in C SCHUBERT

SIR ADRIAN BOULT

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ROYAL ALBERT HALL
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FRIDAY, 27 JANUARY at 8

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BBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CONDUCTOR

SIR ADRIAN BOULT

Overture, Coriolan BEETHOVEN
Violin Concerto in B minor ELGAR
Variations on a Theme of Haydn BRAHMS
Violin Concerto in E minor MENDELSSOHN

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LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

First Violins

Stratton, George (*Leader*)
Moore, K.
Steadman, J.
Drake, F.
Parker-Smith, G.
Mouat, R.
Meek, W.
Davies, R.
Halling, P.
Shlaen, I.
Tass, P.
Davis, A.
Zimble, A.
Mony, W.
Lewis, B.
Ross, A.

Second Violins

Scutter, James
Hatfield, L.
Hulson, W.
Cook, T.
Nicholson, R.
Dyson, F.
Veasey, H.
Greenwood, H.
de Leeuw, J.
McMenemy, J.
Havelock, K.
Weber, M.
Leech, A.
Adams, G.

Violas

Edwards, Gwynne
Grainger, Miss E.
Shingles, C.
Burwood, M.
Katz, P.
Linden, H.
Meek, J.
Aronowitz, C.
Legge, H.
Cuthbertson, E.
Turner, H.
Jeremy, R.

'Cellos

de Mont, Willem
Heath, K.
Talagrand, P.
Law, K.
Dugarde, H.
Leonard, F.
Roskelly, W.
Leonard, L.
Gabarro, F.
Ferryhough, G.

Double Basses

Yates, George
Bailey, F.
Peters, R.
Griffiths, A.
Hatton, G.
Meyer, R.
MacArthur, C.
Craske, A.

Flutes

Walker, Edward
Gillham, R.
Walker, G.

Piccolo

Sanders, Lowry

Oboes

Whittaker, Alec
MacGillivray, J.
Jones, T.

Cor Anglais

Cruft, John

Clarinets

Fell, Sidney
Matthews, D.
Hughes, F.

Bass Clarinet

Whelan, Patrick

Bassoons

Waller, Ronald
Shamlian, J.
Waters, A.

Contra Bassoon

Parry, Peter

Horns

Burden, John
Foster, M.
McGavin, A.
Dennis, J.
Buck, J.
Outway, H.

Trumpets

Eskdale, George
Wiggins, B.
Brown, B.
Haines, C.

Trombones

Ashby, John
Lindon, G.

Bass Trombone

Mansfield, Frederick

Tuba

Bell, William

Timpani

Taylor, Henry

Percussion

Wilson, Herbert
Wilson, J.
Turner, C.
Norrington, C.

Harp

Goossens, Marie
Wilson, Kitty

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Concerto in A minor — B a c h
Tibor Varga and Philharmonia String Orchestra DX 1586-7

Suite for String Orchestra — C o r e l l i
The Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy
LX 1214

Piano Quartet in G minor, Op. 25 — B r a h m s
Rudolf Serkin and Members of the Busch Quartet
LX 1217-21

Symphony No. 6 in B minor ("Pathétique")
Tchaikowsky
The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Herbert
von Karajan LX 1234-9

Marriage of Figaro — Act 1 — "Non piu andrai" —
M o z a r t

Die Zauberflöte — Act 2 — "Ein Madchen oder Weibchen" —
M o z a r t
Sung by Erich Kunz with the Vienna Philharmonic
Orchestra LX 1123

WORKS FROM THE PROGRAMME

Concerto in E minor for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 54
M e n d e l s s o h n
Joseph Szigeti and the London Philharmonic Orchestra
conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham LX 262-5

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 73 — B r a h m s
The London Symphony Orchestra conducted by the late Felix
Weingartner LX 899-903

Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 25 — M e n d e l s s o h n
Ania Dorfmann with the London Symphony Orchestra
conducted by Walter Goehr DX 893-4

Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80 — B r a h m s
The Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by
Sir Malcolm Sargent DX 1447-8

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