

SCOTTISH SINFONIA

patron Roderick Brydon
conductor Neil Mantle

leader PHILIP TAYLOR

soloist MILES BASTER

2ND FESTIVAL CONCERT

Sunday 2 September 1979 5pm

Cathedral Church of St Mary

programme

PLEASE NOTE that there will be NO INTERVAL at this concert.

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS
(1872-1958)

FANTASIA ON A THEME OF THOMAS TALLIS

Solo Quartet: Philip Taylor and Doreen Busbridge (violins),
Mary Ann Alburger (viola), George Reid (cello)

Orchestra II: Anne Giles, Brigid Maclean, Lawrence Dunn and
Gillian Pickup (violins), Gary Clemson and
Helen Tasker (violins), Miles Morrison and Alan
Anderson (cellos), Joy Cox (bass)

Vaughan Williams encountered Tallis' theme in 1906 when he was editing the music for the English Hymnal. Tallis composed it in 1567 as the third of nine settings for Archbishop Parker's Psalter. Vaughan Williams shared with his friend Gustav Holst a strong interest in the musical renaissance which had taken place in sixteenth century England and fashioned Tallis' theme into the Fantasia, which received its first performance in September 1910 at the Gloucester Festival. The work made little impact, probably because interest was centred upon the main work of the evening, Elgar's Dream of Gerontius, conducted by the composer. Although some people recognised the work to be a profound utterance, it was also criticised for being too long for its musical content. Vaughan Williams must have seen the force of these arguments: he twice revised the work (in 1913 and 1919), shortening it by some four minutes from its original nineteen. It has since become one of his most popular works.

In the Fantasia time seems to stand still and the three centuries between the two great English composers are spanned and united. This timeless quality makes the work quite unique. The music needs space in which to unwind and expand itself, and thus it finds its perfect setting today, as it did seventy years ago, amongst the lofty pillars of a great cathedral.

EDWARD ELGAR
(1857-1934)

CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN AND ORCHESTRA in B MINOR
Opus 67

Allegro
Andante

Allegro molto

MILES BASTER violin

The great violinist Fritz Kreisler was deeply impressed by hearing a performance of the Dream of Gerontius and forthwith commissioned a concerto from its composer. Elgar started work on it during the summer of 1909 and completed it in the August of the following year. Although he had been a very fine violinist in his earlier years he consulted W.H.Reed, the leader of the London Symphony Orchestra, - he later became a life-long friend - on technical points. Those interested will find a full account of this partnership in Reed's book Elgar as I knew him, happily reissued in 1973.

Kreisler and Elgar gave the first performance in November 1910. Although it was a great triumph, it seems that Kreisler did not especially care for the work as he rarely played it thereafter and avoided all attempts to get him to put his interpretation on disc. Albert Sammons and the young Yehudi Menuhin, who recorded the concerto with Elgar in 1932, were the principal advocates in the early years. (Incidentally the 1932 recording has remained in the catalogue ever since and is still available today.)

Although Elgar dedicated the work to Kreisler it really belongs to another: AQUÍ ESTA ENCERRA EL ALMADE.....(Herein is enshrined the soul

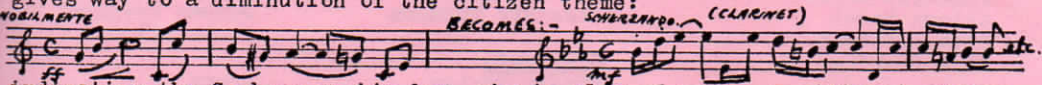
of.....'). Elgar, who loved Enigmas, admitted that the five dots stood for a woman's name, probably Alice Stuart-Wortley, with whom he had a deep relationship in a spiritual sense, and it is not too fanciful to read into the nostalgic, wistful quality of the accompanied cadenza in the finale a feeling of what might have been between them had circumstances permitted. The 'pizzicato tremolando' effect devised by Elgar in this section creates an extraordinary effect.

EDWARD ELGAR
(1857-1934)

CONCERT OVERTURE 'COCKAIGNE'
(In London Town) Opus 40

The ways of a genius are indeed mysterious to ordinary folk. Elgar had suffered a dreadful blow to his morale - probably the worst in his entire career - from the failure of his Dream of Gerontius at its premiere at the 1900 Birmingham Festival. That was on 3 October. In spite of his deep dejection he started work on the rumbustious Cockaigne Overture a few days later! It was commissioned by the Philharmonic Society of London, and was first given on 20 June 1901 with Elgar conducting. The score is dedicated 'to my many friends, the members of British orchestras'. To A.E. Jaeger (of Novello, his publishers) he wrote: 'It's cheerful and Londony - "stouty and steaky"'; and to the distinguished conductor Hans Richter, who had done so much for Elgar's reputation abroad by championing his works, 'It's intended to be honest, healthy, humorous and strong, but never vulgar'. All these qualities are present in Elgar's own recordings of the overture.

The overture opens without preamble with a lively theme representing the cheerful animation of London streets (vintage 1901!). The second theme, marked 'nobilmente', a term coined by Elgar, has a grandiose, spacious character and represents the citizen. The next section is more contemplative in mood and portrays two lovers strolling in a London park. This eventually gives way to a diminution of the citizen theme:



indicating the Cockney urchin boy, who is also of course a citizen! Before long this romantic interlude of the lovers is interrupted by the arrival of a military band, a comparatively common sight in the streets of Victorian London. After the band has passed by, it is followed by a somewhat less accomplished ensemble, a Salvation Army band complete with big drum and tambourine. (Elgar has a dig here at the amateur bandsman by making the bass line appear to be out of tune.) Our lovers have now entered a church in the hope of finding some peace and quiet. Even here the sounds of the busy streets gradually intrude and we are soon back 'in the thick of it' with a recapitulation of the earlier material. The overture is rounded off with an enriched treatment complete with organ of the citizen theme.

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MILES BASTER was a pupil of Albert Sammons and Frederick Grinke at the Royal Academy of Music, where a distinguished studentship culminated in the award of the Dove Prize. The Boise Scholarship enabled him to travel to New York, where he studied with Louis Persinger, Menuhin's former teacher. In 1956 he was a finalist in the Carl Flesch competition, and he is also a silver medallist of the Worshipful Company of Musicians. Since 1960 he has been the leader of the Edinburgh Quartet. Miles Baster last appeared with Scottish Sinfonia in 1978 when he played the Bruch Concerto No.1.

SCOTTISH SINFONIA

leader Philip Taylor
conductor Neil Mantle

Violins I

Phillip Taylor
Robert Fraser
Jan Kouwenhoven
Anne Giles
Erigid Maclean
Daya Rasaratnam
Kevin Deland
Andrew Rodden
Morvyth Armstrong
Julian Ryall
Hamish Alexander
Jean Edwards
Andrew Nowak-Solinski
Bridget Blackmore

Violins II

Doreen Busbridge
Lawrence Dunn
Gillian Pickup
John Innes
Molly Craxton
Jennifer Gibb
Fiona Mann
Judith Dean
Morag Campbell
Graham Holton
Philippa Snell
Alison Scott
Yola Jacobsen
Gica Loening

Violas

Mary Anne Alburger
Paula Snyder
Alison Dundas
James Campbell
Helen Tasker
Gary Clemson
Alan Mackie
Patrick Criswell
Carrick McLelland
Vivienne Farris

Cellos

George Reid
John Busbridge
Alan Anderson
Miles Morrison
Alan Johnson
Jane McNaught
Alastair Neale
Michael Borthwick
Alasdair Mitchell

Basses

Fiona Donaldson
Joy Cox
David Ogilvie
Jennifer Sharp
Elizabeth Bradley
Eric Jeffrey

Flutes

Peter Lunt
Jean Murray

Piccolo

Peter Lunt

Oboes

Charles Dodds
Alastair Thomson

Clarinets

Pamela Turley
Vaughan Townhill

Bassoons

Bruce Gordon
Alison Green

Contra bassoon

Graham Fraser

Horns

Dick Rimer
Helen Suckling
Fiona Elliot
David Pryce

Trumpets

Colin Douglas
Graeme Williamson

Cornets

David Wright
Andrew Kinnear

Trombones

Bill Giles
James Bertram
Alan Douglas

Tuba

Nigel Durno

Timpani

Anne Douglas

Percussion

Euan Fairbairn
Steve Callaghan
Jerome Gregson
Fiona Milne

Organ

William Minay

Orchestral Manager

Stewart Wilson

Concert Administration

Inga Mantle
Fiona Milne
Alistair Wilson
Antonia Dodds
Caroline Sinclair
Kelvin Sinclair
Elizabeth Harley

SCOTTISH SINFONIA

NEXT CONCERT

SUNDAY 25 NOVEMBER
7.30 pm

MOZART Sinfonia Concertante K364
MAHLER Symphony No.6 in A Minor

JOHN TUNNELL violin
CAROLYN SPAREY viola
NEIL MANTLE conductor

MUSIC HALL, George Street

Tickets £1.50 & £1.20 (students 80p)