

# SCOTTISH SINFONIA

leader PHILIP TAYLOR

patron Roderick Brydon

soloist BRYN TURLEY

conductor Neil Mantle

## CONCERT

Music Hall, George Street

Sunday 14 June 1981 at 7.30pm

programme 15p

Allegro non troppo e molto maestoso -  
Allegro con spirito  
Andantino semplice - Prestissimo -  
Tempo primo  
Allegro con fuoco

soloist BRYN TURLEY

In December 1874 Tchaikovsky wrote to his brother Anatol: 'I am now completely absorbed in the composition of a pianoforte concerto. I am very anxious Rubinstein should play it at his concert. The work progresses very slowly, and does not turn out well. However, I stick to my intentions, and hammer pianoforte passages out of my brain: the result is nervous irritability.' The Rubinstein referred to was Nicholas Rubinstein, Director of the Moscow Conservatoire. As Tchaikovsky's own pianoforte technique was somewhat limited, he decided to play the new work through to Rubinstein, having already dedicated it to him, to seek his advice on any passages that might be made pianistically more effective. Accordingly they met at the Conservatoire on Christmas Eve of that same year. Tchaikovsky later wrote: 'I played the first movement. Never a word, never a single remark ... I gathered patience and played the concerto straight through to the end. Still silence. "Well?" I asked and rose from the piano. Then a torrent broke from Rubinstein's lips. Gentle at first, gathering volume as it proceeded, and finally bursting into the fury of a Jupiter Tonans. My concerto was worthless, absolutely unplayable ... I left the room without a word ... Rubinstein, seeing how upset I was, called me into another room. There he repeated that my concerto was impossible, pointed out many places where it needed to be completely revised, and said that if I would suit the concerto to his requirements he would bring it out at his concert. "I shall not alter a single note," I replied. "I shall publish the work precisely as it stands." This intention I actually carried out.' The orchestration of the concerto was completed by the end of February 1875. Tchaikovsky rededicated the work to Hans von Bülow, who gave the first performance in Boston during the same year. Rubinstein in later years altered his views and became one of its leading exponents. All this is well known. What is not at all well known is the following information revealed by the musicologist David Brown. In his BBC Radio 3 talk entitled 'Tchaikovsky and ciphers' (broadcast 3.1.81) he lays out most convincingly his theories about the genesis of the themes of much of the concerto. In 1868 Tchaikovsky met and formed a strong attachment to Désirée Artôt, a Belgian opera singer who was visiting Russia with her company. Although wedding plans were discussed, she suddenly married another early the next year, and it is known that as late as 1888 when they met in Berlin he was still sufficiently attached to her to compose a group of songs specially for her. Unfortunately there is very little space to go into detail, but Mr Brown demonstrates that the second theme of the first movement (ex.1) is based on a cipher of her initials. Tchaikovsky uses the first three letters of her Christian name, which make up the German term for Db, and the first letter of her surname, which give us the rather tense interval of a diminished fourth. The chords underpinning this should be noted as they occur later on in our discussion. The first four notes of the entire concerto are themselves the cipher of Tchaikovsky's own name transposed up a tone, with the 'Artôt' chord referred to above underpinning it (ex.2). In the second movement her initials are again represented by the notes of the flute at the outset. In the fast section of the movement the strings play a theme derived from a French chansonette (ex.3) that she is known to have sung. Although I have only been able to give the briefest indication of Mr Brown's convincing arguments, I hope I have managed to show that the whole concerto should be seen in a new light.

Des. A.

EX.1 (Clef) [ "Des" is the German for Db (Désirée) etc. ]  
"ARTÔT" → CHORDS: (A major, Bb major)

EX.2 PETER TCHAIKOVSKY  
(Transposed up a tone) for the Concerto

EX.3 Chansonette (Vivace) ARTÔT CHORDS

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CLAUDE DEBUSSY  
(1862-1918)

THREE NOCTURNES

1. Nuages
2. Fête
3. Sirènes

Female voices of the  
EDINBURGH BACH SOCIETY CHOIR

These started life as three nocturnes for violin and orchestra composed for the great Belgian violinist Eugène Ysaÿe. They were completed in 1896, the year in which Debussy wrote to a friend: 'They can only be played by him. If Apollo himself asked me for them I should refuse him!' It seems strange therefore to find Debussy recasting them for orchestra alone the following year. Ysaÿe however was not to be so easily beaten for he turns up in 1903 giving one of the early performances of the Nocturnes as a conductor. Debussy wrote of the Nocturnes: 'The title is to be interpreted here in a general, or more particularly, in a decorative sense. Therefore it is not meant to designate the usual form of the nocturne, but rather all the various impressions and the special effects of light that the word suggests. Nuages renders the immutable aspect of the sky and the snow, solemn motion of the clouds, fading away in grey tones lightly tinged with white. Fête gives us the vibrating atmosphere with sudden flashes of light. There is also the episode of the procession (a dazzling fantastic vision) which passes through the festive scene and becomes merged in it. But the background remains persistently the same; the festival, with its blending of music and luminous dust, participating in the cosmic rhythm. Sirènes depicts the sea and its countless rhythms and presently, amongst the waves silvered by the moonlight, is heard the mysterious song of the Sirens as they laugh and pass on.' Debussy likened Nuages to a study in grey in painting. The cor anglais interjections which occur several times were suggested to him by the hooting of passing passenger steamers as he watched the grey sky over the Seine from the Pont de la Concorde. Debussy's scoring here is masterly: he divides the strings (always muted) into as many as 16 parts, and yet the writing for wind is very economical. Fête makes a perfect contrast with its very bright tone colouring. The female voices in Sirènes (wordless throughout) are treated as another instrumental colouring tracing long melodic lines through the luminous orchestral texture.

MAURICE RAVEL  
(1875-1937)

DAPHNIS ET CHLOË: SECOND SUITE

EDINBURGH BACH SOCIETY CHOIR

In 1909 the Ballets Russes took Europe by storm with their performances at the Châtelet Theatre in Paris. The unfamiliar music (mainly Borodin and Rimsky-Korsakov at first), the fantastic décor and brilliant costumes and the virtuosic dancing quite surpassed anything seen before. Soon Diaghilev began commissioning new music by, amongst others, Ravel, Stravinsky, Poulenc and Falla, the sets being designed by Picasso, Rouault and Bakst to choreography by Fokine, Nijinsky and Massine - quite a collection! Ravel started work on a book by Fokine after the Longus original of Daphnis and Chloë, but soon lost interest in the face of his new opera L'Heure Espagnole. When he returned to the ballet it was with renewed inspiration. The score cost Ravel great effort, especially the final bacchanal, which alone took a year to complete. By the time the work was ready in 1912 Diaghilev had almost lost interest in it, but Durand, Ravel's publisher, brought the great man round. The Second Suite, which is the most popular part of the ballet, occupies approximately the last third and requires a very large orchestra. According to the story so far Daphnis and Chloë have fallen in love, Chloë has been captured by pirates and rescued by the god Pan in response to the pleas of Daphnis and some nymphs. When the music begins it is daybreak. Daphnis is still lying before the nymphs' grotto. Chloë appears surrounded by shepherdesses, and she and Daphnis throw themselves into each other's arms. An old shepherd explains that Pan saved Chloë in remembrance of the nymph Syrinx, whom he had once loved. The lovers mime the adventure of Pan and Syrinx: while she shrinks from him, he plucks some reeds, fashions them into a flute and plays a melancholy tune; she dances. The dance grows more and more animated until in a mad whirl Chloë falls into Daphnis' arms. Groups of young girls and young men enter; there is a joyous dance.

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SCOTTISH SINFONIA  
leader Phillip Taylor  
conductor Neil Mantle

Violins I

Phillip Taylor  
Robert Fraser  
Jan Kouwenhoven  
Daya Rasaratnam  
Alison Rushworth  
Andrew Rushworth  
Duncan Orr  
Lorna Stevenson  
Anne Giles  
Philippa Redman  
Andrew Nowak-Solinski  
Molly Craxton

Violins II

Doreen Busbridge  
Lawrence Dunn  
Bridget Blackmore  
Elizabeth Clement  
Judith Dean  
Irene Horne  
Richard Pinnegar  
Valerie Shaw  
Kate Cullen  
Philippa Snell  
Fiona Milne

Violas

Paula Snyder  
Hilary Forbes  
Richard Andrews  
Ian Walker  
Gary Clemson  
Richard Heathwood  
Alan Mackay  
Ruth Addinall  
Carrick McLelland  
Sarah Lupton

Concert Administration

Inga Mantle  
Jeremy Brown  
Linda Mitchell  
Antonia Dodds

Cellos

Rosemary Cumming  
John Busbridge  
Astrid Gorrie  
Miles Morrisson  
Alan Anderson  
Misia Boron  
Barbara Ritchie

Basses

Colin Stephen  
Gordon Murray  
Elizabeth Bradley  
Eric Jeffrey  
Jennifer Sharp

Flutes

Anne Evans  
Heather Guild

Alto Flute

Jean Murray

Piccolo

Simon McCann

Oboes

Charles Dodds  
Iain Thompson

Cor Anglais

Margot Cruft

Clarinets

Pamela Turley  
Mark Casson

Eb Clarinet

Lawrence Gill

Bass Clarinet

Hilary Saunders

Orchestral Manager

David Wright

Bassoons

Bruce Gordon  
Kathryn Plommer  
Susan Lester-Cribb

Contra-Bassoon

Graham Fraser

Horns

Dick Rimer  
Louise Maclean  
Fiona Elliott  
Robin Tait  
Douglas Wright

Trumpets

David Wright  
Andrew Kinnear  
Lawrence Haig  
Wendy Colquhoun

Trombones

Bill Giles  
James Bertram  
Ian Burness

Tuba

Nigel Durno

Timpani

Euan Fairbairn

Percussion

Wendy Michie  
Debbie Garden  
Simon Archer  
Charles Stoddart  
Fiona Milne  
David Podd  
John Hall

Harps

Winifred Freeman  
Janet Annand

Celesta

Janet Arthur

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BYRN TURLEY was born in Cambridge, and at the age of 15 won a scholarship to study at the Royal College of Music, where he studied with the late Cyril Smith and with Bernard Roberts. During his stay at the College Bryn Turley gave many concerts both as soloist and accompanist, and broadcast several times, once with the BBC Northern Orchestra. He has since given several recitals at the Wigmore Hall and Purcell Room in London, and numerous recitals to music clubs throughout the country. He has played in America, West and East Germany, Holland and Belgium. He is now living in Edinburgh and is on the staff of the Edinburgh Academy, and he gives regular broadcasts on BBC Scotland. He last appeared with Scottish Sinfonia in November 1978, when he played Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto No.3.

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THE BROCHURE FOR NEXT SEASON 1981/82 IS NOW AVAILABLE.