

ORCHESTRAL CONCERT

The College Theatre
Tuesday, 30th November, 1965

BANBURY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Leader : Harry Wilks

*(The National Federation of Music Societies, to which this society is
affiliated, supports this concert with funds provided by the Arts
Council of Great Britain)*

CONDUCTOR: NOEL DE JONGH

NIGEL COXE (Pianoforte)

Programme One Shilling

PROGRAMME

Overture to The Barber of Seville

G. Rossini (1792-1868)

Rossini wrote his opera, *The Barber of Seville*, when he was a young man of twenty-four, and although it subsequently became one of the most popular of opera buffa, the first performance was a failure. The original overture has been lost, and the one generally used today he first wrote for his opera *Aureliano in Palmira* and subsequently used for a later opera, *Elizabetta, Regina d'Inghilterra*.

The gaiety and ebullience of the Overture proved a perfect curtain raiser for the opera to which it was finally attached, *The Barber of Seville*, and it is not surprising that it has become one of the standard works of the popular concert repertoire.

Symphony No. 104 in D Major (The London)

J. Haydn (1732-1809)

Adagio—Allegro

Andante

Menuetto : Allegro

Finale : Allegro spiritoso

Haydn's last twelve symphonies are collectively called the London Symphonies as they were written for the London concerts arranged by the promoter Salomon, so the title given to this symphony seems rather illogical. These symphonies represent the summit of Haydn's artistic achievement in this field. Haydn twice visited England in the 1790's producing six symphonies each time and receiving £300 for the first batch.

The so-called London Symphony was Haydn's last, written in 1795, and performed in that year at a benefit concert. The work opens with a sombre Introduction in the minor key with a powerful opening phrase in unison and contrasts in dynamics suggestive of Beethoven. The succeeding *Allegro* immediately changes the mood, with one of Haydn's most enchanting melodies. The structure of this movement is unusual with the first subject dominating throughout. The second movement consists of variations and developments of a theme of great beauty, rising at times to highly dramatic climaxes and containing one of Haydn's most magical modulations before the final return to the home key. In the third movement, the rustic vigour of the *Minuet* is contrasted with the graceful *Ländler* character of the Trio. The *Finale* begins with a long-held pedal, over which the violins give out the principal theme without any other accompaniment. Haydn develops this one subject with inexhaustible imagination into a *Finale* full of surprises and high spirits, a superb conclusion to one of his greatest symphonies.

INTERVAL

Concerto No. 2 in C Minor, Op. 18

S. Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)

Moderato

Adagio sostenuto

Allegro scherzando

Rachmaninoff's early life was spent in Russia. He studied at the Moscow Conservatory where his brilliant gifts as a pianist and composer were soon apparent. After the Soviet Revolution, Rachmaninoff left Russia, finally settling in America where he

died in 1943. Although his output was not large, his remarkable understanding and command of the piano shows itself in his compositions for that instrument which represent an important and invaluable contribution to the pianist's repertoire. Rachmaninoff wrote four piano concertos, of which the second, in C Minor, is the most frequently performed. In it are combined melodic invention of great beauty, brilliance and virtuosity in the piano writing and highly effective scoring for the orchestra.

After some introductory chords for the piano, gathering tension and power as they proceed, the first movement begins with a rich and sombre melody, played by the strings against an accompaniment by the piano. After a brief climax, the soloist presents the second subject, a tune of great beauty and simplicity with a sinuous twist in its tail. The Development section gathers speed and momentum and in a glorious climax unleashes the opening tune again, this time in the manner of a triumphal and solemn march. The second movement is reflective and romantic and again displays Rachmaninoff's powers of melodic invention and his unflinching command of the keyboard. He enhances the beauty of his melodies by his pianistic accompaniments, which weave delicate patterns of infinite variety around the tune. The movement builds towards a climax followed by a brief cadenza for the piano before returning to the main theme, and finally closing in an air of unruffled calm. The introduction of the third movement takes us from the key of the middle movement, E Major, back to C Minor, the piano announcing the vigorous first subject on its own. The speed slackens for the second subject, a long and expressive melody, played by the oboe and violas. The movement is conceived in a very free form and there is considerable development and some *fugato*. Finally the slow second subject returns in grandiose fashion, the upper strings and woodwind playing the tune in octaves over which the piano superimposes powerful bravura chords. The music gathers speed and hurtles forward to its dashing conclusion.

Night on the Bare Mountain

M. Mussorgsky (1839-1881)

arr. N. Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908)

Night on the Bare Mountain was originally composed by Mussorgsky as a symphonic poem, and was called *St. John's Night on the Bare Mountain*, based on Gogol's *St. John's Eve*, the subject being a witches' sabbath. This version was not a success, and it was not until after Mussorgsky's death that Rimsky-Korsakov rewrote the piece in the form in which it has become familiar today. The "programme" of the work is as follows :

"Subterranean sounds of unearthly voices. Appearance of the Spirits of Darkness, followed by that of the god Chernobog. Glorification of Chernobog and celebration of the Black Mass. Witches' Sabbath. At the height of the orgies the bell of the little village church is heard from afar. The Spirits of Darkness are dispersed. Daybreak."

The Committee are very grateful to the Directors of Messrs. Haydn Heard, Church Lane, for their help with the Box Office and publicity.

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David Meadows
Andrea Piggott
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There are vacancies in most departments of the orchestra. Inquiries may be made to the Hon. Secretary, Mr. H. Wilks, 7 Queensway, Banbury.