

ORCHESTRAL CONCERT

STANBRIDGE HALL

BANBURY SCHOOL

Saturday 6th June 1981

at 8.00 p.m.

B A N B U R Y

S Y M P H O N Y O R C H E S T R A

(Leader: Stephen Bingham)

CONDUCTOR

PHILIP SHAW

The National Federation of Music Societies, to which this Society is affiliated, gives support towards the cost of this concert with funds provided by the Arts Council of Great Britain.

The Orchestra acknowledges Financial Assistance from the P.F. Charitable Trust, and General Foods Ltd.

PROGRAMME: 1Op.

The National Anthem

OVERTURE TO THE MAGIC FLUTE

MOZART

On September 28, 1791, Mozart completed the last music he wrote for the stage: the Overture to "The Magic Flute" and the second-act introduction, the sublimely melancholy "March of the Priests". Two days later he conducted the premiere at Emanuel Schikaneder's suburban theatre, the Theatre auf der Wieden.

Two months later, Mozart lay on his deathbed. Unable to witness the triumph of his opera in the theatre, Mozart was very much present in spirit. The opera was close to Mozart's heart, not merely because its growing success was the ray of cheer in his last tragic weeks, but because he had put so much of himself into it, including his highest ethical ideals.

New to Mozart's operatic style was the ethical symbolism with which "The Magic Flute" abounds. Three solemn chords, which return during the opera as part of the ritual of Sarastro's Temple of Wisdom, open the slow introduction to the Overture. The number three was an important symbol in the idealistic order of the Freemasons, to which both Mozart and Schikaneder belonged, and the teachings of Sarastro and his priests were closely related to the humanitarian doctrine of the Freemasons.

The quiet measures and the shifting harmonies that follow those solemn opening chords are like a slow damming up of energies which, in the fast "Allegro" section of the Overture, burst into a stream of glittering, dancing counterpoint. This counterpoint, too, has its symbolic implication - it recalls the only contrapuntal scene of the entire opera, the dramatic climax where Tamino and Pamina are prepared for their trial by fire and water, before being admitted to the mysteries of Isis and Osiris. As if to emphasise his symbolic intent, Mozart repeats the three solemn chords at a crucial point halfway through the Overture - this time in precisely the rhythm used to greet new members into a Masonic lodge. The great Mozart scholar, Alfred Einstein, once wrote that Mozart compressed into this Overture the struggle and victory of all mankind.

But with all its impressive symbolism and its lofty spiritual content, the Overture preserves a delicate fairy-tale atmosphere. There is quicksilver in the learned couterpoint. And the whole is invested with Mozart's unfailing charm, like an outward sign of inward grace.

SIMPLE SYMPHONY

BRITTEN

i) Boisterous Bourree ii) Playful Pizzicato
iii) Sentimental Saraband iv) Frolicsome Finale

Perhaps the most versatile British composer of the twentieth century, Benjamin Britten was born in Lowestoft in 1913 and died in Aldeburgh in 1976. His prolific output, begun whilst a boy, ranged from incidental music for theatre, films and radio to solo song, large-scale orchestral works to chamber operas suitable for performance in churches.

This "Simple Symphony" which first appeared in 1934, is entirely based on material from works which the composer wrote between the ages of nine and twelve. Although the development of these themes is in many places quite new, there are large stretches of the work which are taken bodily from the early piece—save for the re-scoring for strings. The "Simple" in the title refers to the style, construction and brevity of the work rather than the playing standard required to cope with the individual instrumental lines!

I N T E R V A L

SICHEHERAZADE

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV

"To orchestrate is to compose; it has as much to do with the emotional effect as the melody itself." This was Rimsky-Korsakov's belief and it is demonstrated admirably in his "Scheherazade" which is one of his most richly orchestrated works. The music is descriptive rather than narrative and the composer provides only a general outline of the story in his preface to the score.

The Sultan believing all women to be false, vows to kill each of his wives after one night. But the Sultan's Scheherazade saves her life by telling stories for a thousand and one nights until the Sultan revokes his vow."

The four movements give the atmosphere of some of these stories.

After an introduction on the brass, representing the stern Sultan, Scheherazade, identified throughout by a "solo-violin", begins the tale of Sinbad. A stormy sea, strange birds and animals and grim shadows are depicted; and at the end the quiet reappearance of the violin tells us that Scheherazade has been spared for another day.

The second movement is the tale of the Kalendar Prince. A Kalendar is an Arabic storyteller, and portrayed by the bassoon he tells a wild story of changing moods. Here Rimsky-Korsakov's brilliant orchestration is demonstrated to the full. This is followed by a quiet movement representing the idyllic love of a prince and princess.

In the finale Scheherazade describes the fabulous Baghdad festival with its Eastern delights. But the Sultan interrupts and she changes her story to the shipwreck of Sinbad in a storm. Gradually the music becomes more peaceful and near the end the violin, playing Scheherazade's melody, suggests that she has been spared her life once and for all.

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THE BANBURY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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There are vacancies in some departments of the orchestra. Inquiries may be made to the Hon. Secretary, Mr. L. Farbrother, 41, Longleat Close, Banbury, Tel: 61421 or the Conductor Mr. P. Shaw, Banbury School, Tel: 51451.

Dates for your Diary:

Saturday 27th June 1981

10th Anniversary Concert -

Polyphonic Music Group at Broughton Castle.

Tuesday 14th July 1981

Banbury School Summer Prom.

Tuesday 13th October 1981

Banbury Symphony Orchestra -

Programme to include Sibelius' Violin Concerto