

BANBURY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

(Leader: Geoffrey Kent)

**Clarinet Soloist
JACK BRYMER**

**Conductor
Philip Shaw**

on Thursday 27th March at 8.00 pm 1986
in The College Theatre,
Broughton Road, Banbury

PROGRAMME

The National Anthem

Overture: Egmont, Op. 84

Beethoven

Like many of Beethoven's overtures, *Egmont* – part of the incidental music to Goethe's tragedy, composed for a performance in Vienna in 1810 – is concerned with the freedom of nations. Such was the dramatic impact of the play that Beethoven wrote "I read the play with absorbing interest, thought it over, lived it through, and then gave it musical expression". Beethoven concentrates the whole content of the drama in the overture.

Although a prisoner and condemned by the Netherland tyrant Alva, Egmont sees a vision of freedom, and for this he gladly goes to his death.

The Overture opens with portentous chords indicative of the ruthless severity of Alva. After a nervous *Allegro* this theme is heard again, now occupying the normal place of second subject, and answered by a pleading phrase in the woodwinds. Some effective modulations follow, leading to a development and a recapitulation which broadens dramatically to prepare the way for the concluding "Symphony of Victory". The music is taken from the end of the play; it breaks in on the sombre rhythms and minor mode of the Overture, softly at first, but soon swelling to triumphant fanfares of hopes and freedom.

Clarinet Concerto in A.

Allegro; Adagio; Rondo Allegro.

Mozart

soloist: Jack Brymer

As early as 1778 Mozart became interested in the clarinet, but it was not until the last few years of his tragically brief life that he composed the *Trio for Clarinet, Viola and Piano* (K498), the *Quintet for Clarinet and Strings* (K581), and the *Clarinet Concerto* (K622). These three magnificent works were written for his friend Anton Stadler, the leading clarinettist of the day, who served as musical adviser to Mozart's widow after her husband's death. Mozart himself invariably referred to the quintet as "Stadler's quintet".

A few weeks after completing the quintet Mozart made the first draft of the concerto in October 1789. The opening movement, originally sketched as a concerto for basset-horn, was laid aside and less than two months before his lamented death he recast it (at Stadler's request) as a clarinet concerto, transposing it from G major to A major. A work in the composer's most mature vein, the concerto displays superb invention and craftsmanship. In the initial movement (*Allegro*) the orchestra sets the scene for the soloist in an extended introduction. Mozart presents many attractive ideas and employs the full range of the instrument, with abrupt leaps from the *chalumeau* (i.e. lower) register to the upper, and vice versa, the various colourings being used with great skill and vivid effect. The *Adagio* in D major stresses the singing qualities of the solo instrument against a rich instrumental background, with permutations of wind and strings. The Finale (*Allegro*) is a 6/8 rondo, the first two of the three most important themes abounding with Mozartian good humour, while the third brings a tinge of sadness. After this interlude the soloist races away in a series of brilliant *coloratura* passages.

Enigma Variations

Elgar

The *Enigma Variations*, Op 36, or *Variations on an Original Theme for Orchestra* as the work is properly titled, were written in 1899 and were Elgar's first major composition for orchestra. The *Enigma* of the popular title refers to the fact that there is supposed to be another and larger theme which "goes" with the actual theme, but which is never heard. There have been many attempts to solve the *Enigma* but Elgar never

divulged the secret, although he stated that the tune was "so well known that it was strange no one had discovered it". The score bears the dedication "To my friends pictured within" and each of the variations has the initials or a pseudonym of a friend of the composer.

The *andante* theme in G minor is stated immediately on the first violins, VARIATION 1 (C.A.E.) portrays Lady Elgar, with flutes and clarinets prominent; VARIATION 2 (H.D.S.-P.) is H. D. Steuart-Powell, a pianist friend who often accompanied Elgar – the variation gives the strings an agitated part while the woodwinds give fragments of the theme; VARIATION 3 (R.B.T.), *allegretto* in G major depicts R. B. Townsend, an amateur actor and mimic with a voice capable of surprising changes in pitch; VARIATION 4 (W.N.B.) was W. Neath Baker, a bluff, hospitable countryman who gets a simple variation in G minor, *allegro di molto*; VARIATION 5 (R.P.A.) portrays R. P. Arnold, son of the poet, who was a gifted amateur pianist, with humour and seriousness blended in C minor, *moderato*; VARIATION 6 (Ysobel), Miss Isabel Fitton, a viola pupil of Elgar's suitably portrayed by that instrument; VARIATION 7 (Troyte), a *presto* in C major reproduces the vain attempts of Arthur Troyte Griffiths to play the piano and mimics his energetic manner; VARIATION 8 (W. N.), Winifred Norbury receives the dedication although the simple variation portrays 'an eighteenth-century house' – *allegretto* in G major; VARIATION 9 (Nimrod), Elgar's greatest friend A. E. Jaeger, a keen huntsman, and also something of a tribute to Beethoven. A serene movement in E flat, *moderato*; VARIATION 10 (Dorabella), portrays a Mrs. Powell, then Dora Penny, who had a slight hesitancy in her speech, *allegretto* in G major; VARIATION 11 (G.R.S.), *allegro di molto* in G minor depicts G. R. Sinclair, the organist of Hereford Cathedral, who throws a stick into the River Wye for his bulldog to retrieve – it is brought back with a triumphant bark; VARIATION 12 (B.G.N.), the eminent cellist Basil Nevinson naturally gets a cello theme – he was also the inspirer of the later *Cello concerto* – an *andante* variation; VARIATION 13 (given no initials but said to be Lady Mary Trefusis who was on a sea-voyage at the time) hence the clarinet quotation from Mendelssohn's *Calm sea and prosperous voyage*, G major *moderato*; VARIATION 14 (E.D.U.), Edu was Elgar's nickname, a self-portrait and a challenging statement of future intentions.

JACK BRYMER was born in Co. Durham. He spent his early adult years as a school master and after war service with the RAF he returned to that profession until 1947, when he was invited by Sir Thomas Beecham to take the post of Principal Clarinet with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, a post he occupied for sixteen years. During this time he extended his activities to chamber music and solo playing both here and abroad, and was a founder member of several well known ensembles such as The Wigmore, The London Baroque and The Prometheus Ensemble. He was also a Professor at the Royal Academy of Music.

Between 1963 and 1972 he was principal clarinet with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and he now holds the same position with the London Symphony Orchestra. Jack Brymer is often on television and radio, not only as a performer but as a talker on musical topics, and his two lecture films in the educational series, "We Make Music" are viewed the world over. He has recorded most of the important works for the clarinet and is Director of the London Wind Soloists. He was awarded the OBE in 1960 and received the honorary degree of M. A. from the University of Newcastle in 1973. He recently contributed the Clarinet volume in the Menuhin Guides series of books. His autobiography, "From Where I Sit" is now published.

BANBURY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

First Violins

Geoffrey Kent (Leader)
Jane Hargrave
Arun Bharali
Sally Gale
Rachel Gebbels
Laurens Katgerman
Eric Snowden
Bronwen Thomas
Andrew Waite

Second Violins

Jeremy Bache
Gill Walker
Katherine French
David Golby
Helen James
Martin Saunders
Irene Tuthill
Cyril Williams

Violas

Laura Smith
David Bolton-King
Denise Cummins
Roy Shields
Paddy Millard
Trevor Kilbey
Nicky Kilpatrick

Cello

Lucy Caperon
Alaster Thom
Robert Gilchrist
Catherine Goodey
Beryl Hodson
Stephen Jakeman
Jo Preece

Double Basses

Eddie James
Stephen Parrott
Stuart Riley

Piccolo

Sally Adams

Flutes

Rachel Townsend
Sue Blanch
Heather Malcolm
Hester Oliver

Oboes

Amanda Barton
Robert Jordan

Clarinets

Joanna Chadwick
Anita Hall
Cheryl Taylor

Bassoons

Clare Pawley
Cathy Gray

French Horns

Paul Willett
Karl Kerridge
Malcolm Taylor
Michael Wood

Trumpets

Ron Barnett
Richard Abrahams
Bob Auld
Cathy Whale

Trombones

Paul Macey
Stephen Mitchell
Malcolm Saunders

Tuba

Alan Prickett

Timpani

David Petts

Percussion

Cressida Heyes

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Anyone wishing to join the orchestra, or become a patron should contact the Hon. Secretary.*

Ron Barnett, 7, Rookery Close, Banbury.