
MUSIC AT ST. BARNABAS'

DULWICH ORCHESTRA

Conductor

STUART DUNLOP

Solo Violin

OLIVER LEWIS

Saturday April 7th 1990 at 7.45 p.m.

CARL MARIA VON WEBER - Overture to Der Freischutz

The opera "Der Freischutz" is so widely regarded as the seminal work of German "romanticism" that all manifestations that went before are obscured. The Overture was the last number to be composed and its completion date is the clue to perhaps the most astonishing fact concerning this opera, and Weber in general's, place in the unfolding of music in the nineteenth century: May 13th 1820; two years before Beethoven completed the Missa Solemnis, three before the Ninth Symphony and only eleven years after the death of Haydn.

The first performance, in 1821, was a roaring success (quite literally, according to reports of the first night). The ripples of Weber's influence touched such disparate figures as Berlioz and Wagner, the latter claiming in his monograph "On Conducting" to have rediscovered (to Weber's widow's satisfaction) the "true way" of conducting the Overture.

The Overture itself is built from fragments of the opera proper - the menacing "Wolf's Glen" scene for instance, with its diminished harmonics and thudding bass pizzicati, or the Allegro's vibrant second theme which comes from Agathe's Second Act aria - but it is prefaced by the Glorious horn quartet which is many people's abiding memory of the piece.

MAX BRUCH - Violin Concerto No.1 op.26 in G Minor

If the spirit of Max Bruch is still sentient I imagine that it must be feeling a mixture of exasperation and elation tinged with gratitude. Exasperation because of the fruits of a long and productive life, this concerto and perhaps the Scottish Fantasy are the only works to have found a place in the accepted repertoire. Elation that this, the first Violin Concerto, has worn itself an apparently ineradicable niche in the affections of several generations of concert goers.

A relatively early work, written in Bremen in 1868 when the composer was 30 it is a perfect union of

DULWICH ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN I

Julia Atkinson
Derek Bond (Leader)
Valerie Breze
David Chapman
Maisie Hipperson
Linda Mages
Don McGowan
Judith Morrey
Jane Parker
Marika Sturdy
Stephen Watson

VIOLIN II

Rebecca Randall
Leo Bennett
Elizabeth Cleary
Elaine Galloway
Elizabeth Heap
Caroline Perkins
Kate Robinson
Denis Sullivan
Margaret Williams

VIOLA

Mary Keeler
Richard Dubeck
Sarah Lodge
Janet Miller
Roger Mundy
Jane Shulz
Beverley Smith

CELLO

Catherine Hare
Roger Clayden
Annika McKee
Jonathan Rowling
John Theaker
Marion Wootton

DOUBLE BASS

John Hutchings
Linda Bishop
Keith Scarr
Alfred Solomon

FLUTE

Helen Williams
Jane Hurrell
Julia Wilson

OBOE

Stephen Gates
Graham Ruffell

CLARINET

Sue Best
Duncan McInnes
Steve Preston

BASSOON

Gareth Jones
Giles Brindley

HORN

Martin Lawrence
Sarita Belmonte
Hilary Brindley
Nigel Putt
Anne Warnes

TRUMPET

Derek Cozens
Matthew Redfearn

TROMBONE

Dennis Mycroft
Natalie Butcher
Christine Durrand

TUBA

Dennis Treloar

TIMPANI

John Tilzey

fantasy and clarity, passion and formal articulation. On the page it divides into three movements - a Prelude, Adagio and Finale. In practice, the first two movements are explicitly run together and the third starts so obviously where the second left off that the piece is a continuous whole, the beauty of which needs no introduction.

*** INTERVAL ***

BRAHMS - Symphony No. 2 in D op.73

I. Allegro non troppo. II. Adagio non troppo
III. Allegretto grazioso- Presto non assai - Tempo primo
IV. Allegro con spirito.

Brahms' First Symphony appeared in 1876. Its composition was the result of four years work and more than twenty years of preparation that Brahms felt necessary before approaching the form consecrated by Beethoven! The Second Symphony was completed in around four months in the middle of 1877!

The Second is generally regarded as the sunniest of Brahms' symphonies, a view supported by Brahms' own heavily ironic comments about it, e.g.:

"The musicians play my new work with crepe round their arms because it sounds so mournful. It will be printed on black edged paper".

Man and music evidently in complete agreement!

Caution, though. As ever with great music, the simplistic judgement is the one that obscures more than it enlightens. The symphony is epic in scale, nowhere more so than in the first movement and the journey encompasses darkness as well as light; conflict as the prerequisite of reconciliation. The material of the music unfolds in such an inevitable way as to make brief analysis redundant save to comment on the first movement's extraordinarily verdant growth from such simple beginnings. Notice particularly the very first three note figure

that the lower strings play.

The second movement inhabits the enigmatic world between joy and pain, never losing sight of one in pursuit of the other, and has a wonderfully deep sonority all its own. The third movement puckishly varies its opening material by way of sudden tempo changes - a masterly example of keeping the notes the same while changing the music entirely. The fourth movement, while it is not as long as the first, is just as massive and is propelled by a momentum which, subdued at first, results in the blazing fulfilment of the symphony as a whole.

OLIVER LEWIS started playing the violin at the age of 8. When 12 he became leader and soloist of the National Children's Orchestra, and at 14 performed in West Germany, sponsored by Sutton Arts Council. Two years later he won an open scholarship to the Purcell School, after which he continued his studies at the Guildhall School of Music where he won the School violin prize and was awarded the Ernest Warshaw prize for his performance of Berg's Chamber Concerto. His teachers have included Carl Pini, David Takeno, Jack Glickman, and he is currently studying on a scholarship with Igor Ozim in the soloist class at the Berne Konservatorium, Switzerland.