
MUSIC AT ST. PAUL'S

DULWICH ORCHESTRA

Conductor

STEPHEN WHITTAKER

Leader

LYNN COOK

Solo Cello

JOHN KIRBY

Sunday December 11th 1994 at 7.45 p.m.

Admission by Programme £4.00 • Concession £2.50 • Family £10

Handwritten: Schubert's No.

PROGRAMME

JOHANN CHRISTIAN BACH (1735 - 1782) Symphony in B Flat

I. Allegro Assai II. Andante III. Presto

No, not the Bach we all know and love - but one for whom this audience should have a particular affection, for Johann Christian was the English Bach who lived and worked in London for the last 20 or so years of his life.

He was the last of the great Johann Sebastian's many musical sons, though temperamentally not at all like his grandly serious father or Emanuel, his quirky and witty brother. Most of his music is in the last category, second-hand, and his style is altogether lighter of touch, easier on the ear, and freshly tuneful.

This three movement work is typical of his symphonies, which look forward to the later greater achievements of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. Yet the slow middle movement does have a melodic quality reminiscent of his father, and the jig-like rhythm of the finale could almost have come from one of the old man's instrumental suites.

ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810 - 1956) Cello Concerto in A Minor Opus 129

I. Not too fast II. Slowly III. Very lively

The most popular of Schumann's four concertos, the celebrated Piano Concerto in A minor, was written in 1845, and is one of his most joyous and exuberant works. But Schumann was a typical romantic, who recognised in himself two contrasting sides, a personality split between what we would now perhaps call the extravert and the introvert.

And so the Cello Concerto he wrote five years later is a great contrast with its predecessor, being notable for its reserve and lyrical melancholy. It's a mood perfectly suited to the cello's intimate character, of course, especially in the rapt slow movement, one of his creations.

In a cello concerto, too, the orchestra has to speak with a quieter voice than usual, for fear of swamping the soloist, and this adds to the reserve of the music; but for all this, and its conscious lack of display, the Concerto is formidably difficult to play. Each movement leads into the next without a break.

Soloist - John Kirby Cello.

INTERVAL

Back -

FELIX MENDELSSOHN (1809 - 1847)

Intermezzo and Nocturne from "A Midsummer Night's Dream".

Mendelssohn, one of the first truly romantic composers, was infatuated with Shakespeare's magical world of the English Middle Ages, and composed his Overture to it in 1826 when he was a very young man. After his first return to the subject and wrote a large set of shorter pieces to be played and sung during a stage performance.

Separately or in groups, these have since become some of his best loved of the earlier ones. They have all the youthful freshness and imagination of the earlier ones, and the same delicate and evocative quality of atmosphere in a wonderfully vivid way. At least one of these pieces, one that everybody knows, even if they don't know where it comes from - the famous Wedding March.

The two we hear tonight are especially beautiful - the Intermezzo, enchantingly conveying the anxious yearning of love, and the Nocturne, with its plaintive horn theme perfectly evokes the peaceful and romantic atmosphere.

Symphony No. 1 in C Minor Opus 11.

I. Allegro Molto II. Andante III. Menuetto - allegro molto
IV. Allegro con fuoco.

Mendelssohn's more famous "titled" symphonies (Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 5, respectively "The Hymn of Praise", "The Scottish", "The Italian" and "The Reformation") are magnificent mature works dating from the 1840's. But this Symphony No. 1 is in many ways no less remarkable, written as it was by a fifteen year-old.

Even at this age, one must wonder at his relaxed mastery of classical symphonic form and his intuitive grasp of the active themes, and all the subtleties of the instruments. Already he had written no less than twelve shorter symphonies for strings, and now this was his first for full orchestra on a large scale - fully thirty minutes long. Of course there are passing resemblances to the great composers of the day - Beethoven and Weber in the outer movements, Spohr in the second, and the Mozart of the 40th Symphony in the minuet. But Mendelssohn is already finding his unmistakable voice in this passionate symphony.

It's far too seldom heard - good for the Dulwich Orchestra to give it a well-deserved airing!

THE SOLOIST : JOHN KIRBY - Cello

John is making his welcome second appearance with the Dulwich Orchestra tonight, having delighted us with the Saint-Saens Concerto last year. He is a graduate of the Guildhall School of Music, and his depth of experience as soloist, chamber musician and orchestral player has made him one of London's most versatile cellists and sought after teachers. The Schumann Concerto is a special favourite of his, though he confesses a healthy respect for its considerable difficulty.

MEMBERS OF THE ORCHESTRA.

1st Violins

Lynn Cook (leader)
Maisie Hipperson
Don MacGown
Barry Mawer
Lina Timini
Emma Robson
Jim Kelly
Isla Milligan

2nd Violins

Nigel Stephens
Kate Jones
Frank Dalquen
Elizabeth Cleary
Philip Bailey
Toby Hawkes
Dinah Hyams
Christine Bailey
Elanor Abdelnoor

Violas.

Philip MacKenna
Roger Mundy
Maureen Montrose
George Fuller
Madelaine Coelho
Barbara Mattner

Cellos

Sara Heathcote-Skinner
Katherine Badger
Julian Barber
Andrew Brabin
Steven Clarke
Hannah Lynes

Double Bass

Arthur Pennie
Keith Scarr

Flutes.

Jim Colby
Barbara Langford

Oboes.

Graham Ruffell
Hilary Gould

Clarinets

Sue Best
Duncan McInnes

Bassoons.

Jeremy Crump
Stephen Preston

Trumpets.

Luke Williams
Eric Milner

Horns.

Peter Brown
Giles Brindley
Joe Wright

Tympani.

Mike Grant

Programme Notes by Lynn Cook.