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# MUSIC AT ST. JOHN'S

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## DULWICH ORCHESTRA

Conductor

STEPHEN WHITTAKER

Leader

LYNN COOK

Solo Clarinet

MICHAEL WHIGHT

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Saturday Dec 9th 1995 at 7.45 p.m.

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

PROGRAMME

FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797 - 1828) : "ROSAUNDE" OVERTURE

Schubert died even younger than Mozart and composed at least as much. Alongside his major works he wrote a series of ever popular pieces as light music for play on the "Rosaunde" which has since been lost. Just as well, as by all accounts it was dire - but then one of Schubert's greatest talents was the turning of sow's ears into silk purses. His greatest songs cycles, for example, are settings of the most tepid verse.

This overture, to confuse matters, was originally written in 1823 for an opera called "The Magic Harp" - but this doesn't stop us enjoying this delightful piece for its own sake.

CARL MARIA VON WEBER (1786 - 1826) : CLARINET CONCERTO NO.2 IN E FLAT

1. Allegro 2. Romanze 3. Polacca

Weber was a younger contemporary of Beethoven who played his part, albeit on no such scale, in the birth of the romantic movement. His music is always brilliant, though in the "Polacca" the four sonatas and two great operas "Der Freischutz" and "Oberon", the four sonatas and Konzertstuck for piano, and the larger scale pieces for clarinet, an instrument for which he obviously felt a special affinity.

The clarinet was only just invented a generation before in Mozart's time, and its evocative tone was ideally suited to, perhaps even a reason for, the romantic style. Weber then took place from the formal classicism to the personal, romantic style in the same way it, and its relation to the saxophone, are a vital part of that most personal of modern musical styles, jazz.)

Mozart achieved extraordinary subtlety in his three great works for clarinet. Weber didn't get near this, but his clarinet works, while full of the customary display a composer owed his soloist, exploit this haunting quality remarkably well.

The second of his two concertos for clarinet was written in 1811. The first movement is in standard classical concerto form with a full opening orchestral introduction. The slow movement is beautifully lyrical, and the finale a Polonaise, a stately dance of which Weber was very fond.

Soloist: Michael Mhight - Clarinet

INTERVAL

ALEXANDER BORODIN (1833 - 1887) : "IN THE STEPPES OF CENTRAL ASIA"

Being "a composer" by trade has always been a chancy business, and very few in history have had the good fortune to make their living from it. While most have been practising musicians or teachers, some have had other careers. For example, Mendelssohn's father was a banker, and Alexander Borodin a medical man and professor of Chemistry who composed in his spare time!

But his compositions are far from being amateurish - in fact he was a supremely gifted and successful artist whose musical language is recognisable at once as uniquely his own. He had a particular flair for memorable melody (his tunes have spanned several centuries), not to mention a full scale musical, highly original but always with a pungent Russian flavour.

Like many other composers of his time who drew their inspiration from their country folk melodies, Borodin soaked up music from all over the Russian Empire. The piece we play tonight, dating from 1880, is a typical example full of atmosphere and colour.

ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810 - 1856): SYMPHONY NO.3 IN E FLAT "THE RHEINISH" OPUS 97

1. Lively 2. Scherzo: moderately 3. Not fast 4. Solemnly 5. Lively

To us Schumann is so standard a classical composer that it's hard to imagine how modern and way out he was in his day. His third symphony was novel in a number of ways, not least that it had movements instead of the usual four. It also sets out to paint romantic images instead of Rhineland (in Schumann's music literary or scenic ideas are never far away): though as in Beethoven's Pastoral or Mendelssohn's Italian this doesn't get in the way of its serious purpose as a symphony.

Just to confuse everyone No.3, written in 1850, is actually the last of Schumann's four symphonies! The first movement contrasts two moods, grandly joyous opening and a gently flowing second these in the minor key: the second, perhaps one of those Rhineland scenes, is a rustic Landler (a slow German dance) with a typically catchy Schumann tune.

Then a compact slow movement, again with two contrasting elements. The gorgeous polyphony of the fourth movement is intended to be heard in the vast spaces of Cologne cathedral. And the finale returns to the triumphant mood of the opening. By one of those ironies of art this introspective and often melancholic man produced some of the most thrillingly joyous music ever written, and this symphony is typical of him.

Programme Notes by Lynn Cook.

MICHAEL WHIGHT - SOLOIST.

Michael Whight is Principal Clarinetist with the Philharmonia Orchestra and has appeared as Guest Principal with all the major London Orchestras as well as with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. He is a founder member of The Classical Wind Quartet, an ensemble playing on period instruments and formed from principal players of the major London Orchestras.

He made his concerto debut with the Philharmonia and Leonard Slatkin in 1994, playing the Mozart Concerto on the bassett clarinet, to the highest critical acclaim. He is a Professor of Clarinet at the Guildhall School of music and drama.

MEMBERS OF THE ORCHESTRA.

1st. Violins.

Lynn Cook (leader)  
Maisie Hipperson  
Emma Robson  
Lina Timini  
Susannah Allen  
Toby Hawkes  
Pauline Martin  
Don MacGown

2nd. Violins.

Nigel Stevens  
Barry Mawer  
Christine Bailey  
Elizabeth Simister  
Dianah Hyams  
Frank D'Alquen  
Isla Mulligan

Violas.

Roger Mundy  
Philip McKenna  
Barbara Mattner  
Bing James  
Vincent Turner  
Bernadette Benati

Cellos.

Sara Heathcote-Holmes  
Marion Wooton  
Katherine Badger  
Julian Barber  
Jean Horn  
Alison Rose

Double Bass.

Arthur Pennie  
Matthew Berry

Flutes.

Sam Morris  
Jim Colby  
Barbara Langford

Oboes.

Graham Ruffell  
Hilary Gould

Clarinets.

Sue Best  
Duncan McInnes

Bassoons.

Jill Blakey  
Stephen Preston

Trumpets.

Eric Milner  
Tim Collett

Trombones.

Ian Whittaker  
Michael Brooks  
Paul Goodwin

Horns.

Peter Brown  
Jenny Davis  
John Atkinson  
Ann Warnes

Timpani.

Thomas Gordon