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The Royal Philharmonic Society

Founded 24th January 1813

ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL

(General Managar : T. E. Bean, C.B.E.)

OCTOBER 10 1962 8 p.m. ONE SHILLING

THE ROYAL PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY

Founded 24th January 1813

Under the immediate patronage of
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

THE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FIRST SEASON
AUTUMN 1962 AND SPRING 1963
(*In association with the Arts Council and other Guarantors*)

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IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL:

(i) The public may leave at the end of the performance or exhibition by all exit doors and such doors must at that time be open.

(ii) All gangways, corridors, staircases and external passageways intended for exit shall be kept entirely free from obstruction, whether permanent or temporary.

(iii) Persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any of the gangways intersecting the seating or sit in any of the other gangways.

SMOKING IS NOT PERMITTED

A warning gong will be sounded for five minutes before the end of the interval.

151ST SEASON
FIRST CONCERT

Programme

Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis, for double stringed orchestra — *Vaughan Williams*

Pianoforte Concerto No. 4 in G — *Beethoven*
Soloist: ARTUR RUBINSTEIN

Symphony No. 4 in A (Italian) — *Mendelssohn*

Symphonic Metamorphoses on Themes by Carl Maria von Weber — *Hindemith*

THE HALLE ORCHESTRA
(Leader: MARTIN MILNER)

SIR JOHN BARBIROLLI

PROGRAMME NOTES
by JULIAN HERBAGE

The National Anthem

Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis, for double stringed orchestra — *Vaughan Williams* (1872-1958)

On 20 November 1913, the Royal Philharmonic Society gave a concert of British Music conducted by Balfour Gardiner and Charles Kennedy Scott. It began with Bax's *In the Faery Hills* and ended with Vaughan Williams's *Norfolk Rhapsody No. 3*, the first works by these two composers to be played at a Philharmonic concert. Nine years later the Society sponsored the first performance of Vaughan Williams's *Pastoral Symphony* conducted by Sir Adrian Boult, and in 1930 Vaughan Williams received the Gold Medal at a concert in which John Barbirolli conducted the first performance of the *Fantasia on Sussex Folk-songs*. It is appropriate, then, that this anniversary season should open with Vaughan Williams's most typical and best-loved work, the *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*.

Memory may be deceptive, but the writer of these notes seems to remember Vaughan Williams once telling him that the tune on which this Fantasia is based—it is one of nine that Tallis contributed to Archbishop Parker's

SIR JOHN BARBIROLLI

Metrical Psalter of 1567—was first used in a score that Vaughan Williams wrote around the turn of the century for an amateur pageant about John Bunyan. Certainly when Vaughan Williams edited the English Hymnal in 1906 he included as Hymn 92 this tune by Tallis in the Phrygian mode with harmonies similar to those used in the Fantasia. So the tune and its harmonies, in which the alternation between the major and minor third is so characteristic, must have been in Vaughan Williams's mind many years when the Fantasia was produced at the Three Choirs Festival at Gloucester in 1910. It is also significant and characteristic that the work was at least twice revised and that on its final revision the composer was over fifty.

This Tallis theme, like Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, seems therefore to have absorbed Vaughan Williams for a great part of his life. Yet the words of No. 92 in the English Hymnal

When rising from the bed of death,
O'erwhelmed with guilt and fear,
I see my Maker face to face,
O how shall I appear?

were written, not by Bunyan, but by Joseph Addison. So this Fantasia has in it something of the 16th, 17th, 18th and 20th centuries. Something, too, not only of religious extasy but also of religious passion.

The phrases of Tallis's tune are individual, powerful and well contrasted. Each of them in turn is taken by Vaughan Williams for development, or perhaps active meditation is a better description. There is antiphony between the two orchestras, the second consisting of single desks, placed if possible apart from the main orchestra. The solo quartet, and in particular the solo viola and violin, have a large say in the main development section, which is based on the second part of Tallis's theme and which is treated in the style of a 17th-century string fantasia. It may be for this reason that Vaughan Williams gave the work its title. In general mood it is more a profound and powerful spiritual meditation on Tallis's theme.

Pianoforte Concerto No. 4 in G — *Beethoven* (1770-1827)

Allegro moderato
Andante con moto—
Rondo: Vivace

Soloist: ARTUR RUBINSTEIN

Beethoven's concertos seem to have taken a long time in reaching the Philharmonic Society's concerts, though this perhaps merely reflects the fact that in the early 19th century a concerto was still largely the property of its composer-virtuoso and his own personal stock-in-trade. Whereas three of Beethoven's symphonies were given in the first season it was not until 1820 that the C major concerto appeared in the programmes, played by Charles Neate, one of the Society's original members. This was, however, a first performance in England, as were the performances in 1824 and 1825 by Cipriani Potter of the C minor and G major concertos. The 'Emperor' concerto was not heard until seven years after Beethoven's death, when it was played by Mrs. Lucy Anderson, the first lady pianist to appear at a

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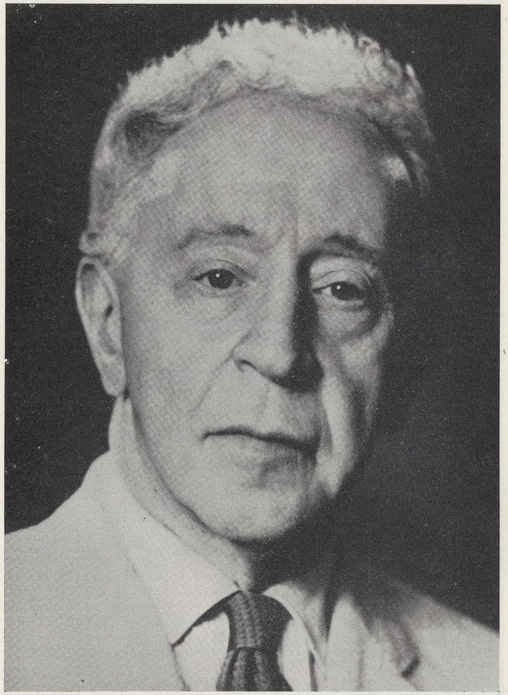

ARTUR RUBINSTEIN

Philharmonic concert. As to the little B flat concerto, which would surely have charmed the Philharmonic audiences, it was not performed until 1855, sixty years after it was composed.

The first three piano concertos were indeed comparatively early works and No. 3 was completed in 1800, the year that saw the production of the First Symphony. Five years elapsed, however, before Beethoven wrote another piano concerto, and during that period he had not only composed the 'Eroica', but had also begun sketches for the Fifth Symphony. In the Third Concerto he had extended the Mozartian model to its utmost symphonic limit, but in the Fourth he opened up an entirely new musical world.

From the very first bars a completely individual, more mature Beethoven emerges. It is not that these bars are allotted to the soloist instead of the orchestra—Mozart had foreshadowed that innovation in an early piano concerto. It is, firstly, the quality of the theme itself—no longer, as in earlier concertos a fanfare around the tonic chord, but the introduction of a rhythmic pattern (a note three times repeated) which has so important a say in the movement that it anticipates Beethoven's later symphonic writing. Yet it is a deceptively quiet beginning, with complete avoidance of over-emphasis and an atmosphere almost of improvisation.

Perhaps as great an innovation is the fact that the orchestra's answering phrase, in an unexpectedly remote key, is marked *pianissimo*, and only towards the end of the opening orchestral *tutti* is a *fortissimo* reached. Two other features will also be noticed—the unusual aptitude for modulation of a transitional theme and the entry of the soloist before the orchestra's traditional full close. As the main theme has been announced at the outset by the soloist it is now only rhythmically hinted at, and a new melody, harmonized in chords of the sixth, takes its place.

New thematic material has been held back for the exposition, including the second main subject, heard first on the strings and repeated on the woodwind with an ornamental figuration from the soloist. The development brings further new ideas, though the first of them, characterised by a descending scale-passage in triplets, seems familiar through being harmonised in chords of the sixth. It is combined with the four-note rhythmic figure from the opening theme, and in turn gives way to a new subject (recognisable by its trills) which is treated fugally. The recapitulation is free, and indeed the whole movement gives the impression of improvisation, so skilfully does Beethoven shape its formal construction to his creative purpose.

The inspiration of the slow movement is so unique that it defies analysis. Liszt has supplied an analogy, comparing it to Orpheus taming the wild beast with his music. The Finale, a rondo, follows without a break and its vivacious theme, announced in a whisper by the strings, is repeated in embellished form by the soloist. Like the opening movement this Finale is built on a spacious scale and so, despite the lightness of its main theme—or indeed perhaps because of it—it preserves the balance and symmetry of the whole concerto.

INTERVAL

AN APPEAL

A Century-and-a-half of Music

That, in a few words, is the history of The Royal Philharmonic Society, which celebrates its 150th Anniversary on March 8th, 1963. Not only is the Society the oldest of its kind in Great Britain but it is the second oldest in the world.

When inviting and securing the services of four other orchestral societies, all of which have a history of over a hundred years, to take part in the anniversary season the R.P.S. had three particular objects in view. Firstly, to celebrate worthily and appropriately an important landmark in the musical history of this country. Secondly, to enlist the financial support of music-lovers everywhere to enable this age-old Society not merely to continue its splendid work but also to *expand* its activities and its influence at a propitious stage in its history. In other words, to enable The Royal Philharmonic Society to maintain its rightful position as the parent of all the orchestral societies in our country. Thirdly, to endeavour by all possible means to make the 150th Anniversary the dawn of a new and even greater era in the already illustrious history of this venerable institution.

To achieve these objects and aims more resources are needed over and above the monies received from subscriptions for the concerts. Cheques for any amount will be gratefully received and should be made payable to The Royal Philharmonic Society and sent to:

The Hon. Treasurer of the Anniversary Committee,
The Royal Philharmonic Society,
4 St. James's Square, S.W.1
or donations given at the R.P.S. Table in the Main Foyer

Symphony No. 4 in A (Italian) — *Mendelssohn* (1809-1847)

Allegro vivace
Andante con moto
Con moto moderato
Saltarello: Presto

Mendelssohn's association with the Philharmonic Society was probably due in the first place to his friendship with Ignaz Moscheles, who in 1826 made London his permanent home and who was elected a Director of the Society a few years later. It was in 1824 that Moscheles, on his way from Vienna to London, became a visitor almost daily for six weeks to the Mendelssohn's Berlin home. Young Felix had just written his thirteenth symphony, or No. 1 in C minor as we now know it. "A mature artist, and yet but fifteen" Moscheles wrote, and later he no doubt remembered the work when in 1829 Father Mendelssohn decided that his son should make a grand tour, starting with England, in order "closely to examine the various countries, and to fix one in which to live and work."

Moscheles met young Mendelssohn on his arrival in England and accompanied him to his lodgings in Great Portland Street. Mendelssohn's first English appearance was at a Philharmonic concert on May 25th, when he conducted the symphony that had impressed Moscheles five years earlier, but substituting for the original minuet an orchestration of the scherzo from his string Octet. The performance was a triumph, the scherzo being "obstinately encored against his wish." The score of this version (the Symphony, incidentally, had been announced as "M.S.—First performance") was dedicated and presented to the Society, who elected Mendelssohn as their first Honorary Member in the following November.

Mendelssohn's music soon began to take a regular place in the Philharmonic programmes, and at the General Meeting of the Society in 1832, a resolution was unanimously passed "That Mr. Mendelssohn-Bartholdy be requested to compose a Symphony, an Overture and a vocal piece for the Society, for which he be offered the sum of one hundred guineas." Mendelssohn was prompt in executing his commission, and on his arrival in England in April, 1833 he wrote to the Society's Secretary "I beg you will inform the Directors of the Philharmonic Society that the scores of my new Symphony and Overture are at their disposal, and that I shall be able to offer them a vocal composition in a short time hence, which will complete the three works they have done me the honour to desire me to write for the Society. But as I have finished two new Overtures since last year, I beg to leave the choice to the Directors as to which they would prefer for their concerts; and in case they should think both of them convenient for performance, I beg to offer them this fourth composition as a sign of my gratitude for the pleasure and honour they have again conferred upon me."

The new "Symphony in A (No. 2), 'Italian' (MS.)" as it was announced, was given on 13 May, 1833, in a concert at which Mendelssohn not only conducted but was also soloist in Mozart's D minor Piano Concerto. Like the Overture, *Fingal's Cave*, this Symphony was one of the musical results of the British and European tour that Mendelssohn's father had planned for his son. Strangely enough the composer appears never to have been entirely satisfied with the score, and it was not published during his lifetime. It is

therefore known today as No. 4, though it actually preceded the 'Scottish' Symphony by nine years.

The orchestration of the opening is most original. Over an accompaniment of repeated chords in the woodwind the lively first subject is given out by the violins and soon builds to an exuberant *tutti*. The music suddenly drops to pianissimo, and after a *staccato* passage on the strings (later used to link the exposition with the development) bassoons and clarinets are given a typically Mendelssohnian second subject, to the lightest of string accompaniments. An unusual feature of the development is that a new theme in the minor is introduced by the second violins and treated fugally by the strings. It soon assumes the character of a march, played *fortissimo* by the full orchestra and dying away to give place to the recapitulation. Here the second subject is taken over by the strings with graceful decoration by flute and clarinet. The march reappears lightly in the woodwind and the strings join in to build up a brilliant *coda* which quickens in tempo to the close of the movement.

The so-called 'Pilgrims' March' opens with a short introductory phrase in unison, after which oboe, bassoons and violas are given the main theme over a bass that moves throughout in quavers. It is repeated with changes of orchestration and contrapuntal figuration from the flutes, gradually subsiding into a *staccato* passage from the strings derived from the introductory phrase. A melodious second subject is now heard on the clarinets, and after a repetition of both themes with ever-changing orchestral colour the music dies away to its close.

The third movement takes the form of a minuet and trio. The theme of the minuet is allotted to the violins and the scoring throughout is mainly for strings. In contrasts horns and bassoons have the important rôle in the trio, giving out a call that might well have echoed softly through 'A Wood near Athens'. In the reprise of the minuet a graceful variant is introduced by the strings beginning the opening phrase in canon, while the movement ends with a brief *coda* based on the horn call.

The finale introduces a strongly rhythmic figure in the strings over which the flutes softly give out the principal theme, unexpectedly in the minor key. The main second theme makes relatively few appearances, and more importance is laid on the tarantella-like *moto perpetuo* that dominates most of the final section. Throughout the whole movement a vigorous rhythm is sustained, and the minor key prevails to the end. It cannot surely have been this stroke of genius and individuality that caused Mendelssohn to have misgivings about his Italian Symphony?

Symphonic Metamorphoses on Themes by Carl Maria von Weber

Hindemith
(born 1895)

Allegro
Turandot, Scherzo
Andantino
Marsch

Humour is a rarely recognised element of Hindemith's temperament. Yet forty years ago he wrote of himself "I was born in 1895 in Hanau. Studied

music from my twelfth year. As violinist, violist, pianist and drummer have played in the following spheres of music: chamber ensembles of all kinds, cinema, coffee house, dance band, operetta, jazz band, military band. Since 1916 I have been leader of the Frankfurt opera orchestra. As a composer I have for the most part written music which I don't like—chamber music for the most diverse combinations, songs and piano pieces. Also three one-act operas which will probably remain my only ones, since in view of the continual increase in the price of manuscript paper one can now only write small-scale works."

Luckily the price of manuscript paper has not restricted Hindemith's output in any way, either orchestrally or operatically, and it is quite inconceivable to think that the *Symphonic Metamorphoses on Themes by Carl Maria von Weber*, composed in 1943, is music that he doesn't like. This light-hearted orchestral divertimento is Hindemith at his most amiable and witty. He has taken some most delightful themes from Weber—from the piano duets Op. 10 and 60 and from the Overture, *Turandot*—and not only has he made them very much his own, but has also developed them in his highly individual harmonic manner.

This music is entirely for enjoyment, and needs little analysis. The first movement is based on No. 4 of the Eight pieces, Op. 60 for piano duet, and here Hindemith follows Weber comparatively closely. The opening, indeed, is note for note the same. In the Turandot Scherzo Hindemith's treatment of Weber's material is much more free. It begins with an introduction in which bells slowly give out the first four notes of the Turandot theme (*f. d. c. A*), between which the woodwind announces the two repeated sections of the theme itself. A brief 'break' for the large percussion section then leads into the main part of the movement, in which the theme, starting in the basses, is repeated as in Weber over and over again until it builds to a brilliant orchestral climax. Then comes a *fugato* on a syncopated metamorphosis of the theme, another 'break' on the percussion with the timpani now drumming out the opening of the tune, and a passacaglia based on its first section with the last bar elongated. The final bars of this most colourful and original movement are again dominated by the percussion, the timpani drumming out the opening of the theme and the bells tolling out its first four notes in augmentation, more and more slowly as the music dies away.

The beautifully orchestrated slow movement (*Andantino* in Hindemith and *Andantino con moto* in Weber) is a fairly literal transcription of Op. 10, No. 2, making most romantic use of those unromantic instruments, the tuba and bass drum. The final movement, based on the *Marcia*, Op. 60 No. 7, is again a completely free treatment of Weber's music, the first four bars being separated from the march and turned into an introduction. Weber marked his score *maestoso* but Hindemith's transcription is far more brisk, and provides brilliant and powerful conclusion to a work that is both musically attractive and also an orchestral showpiece.

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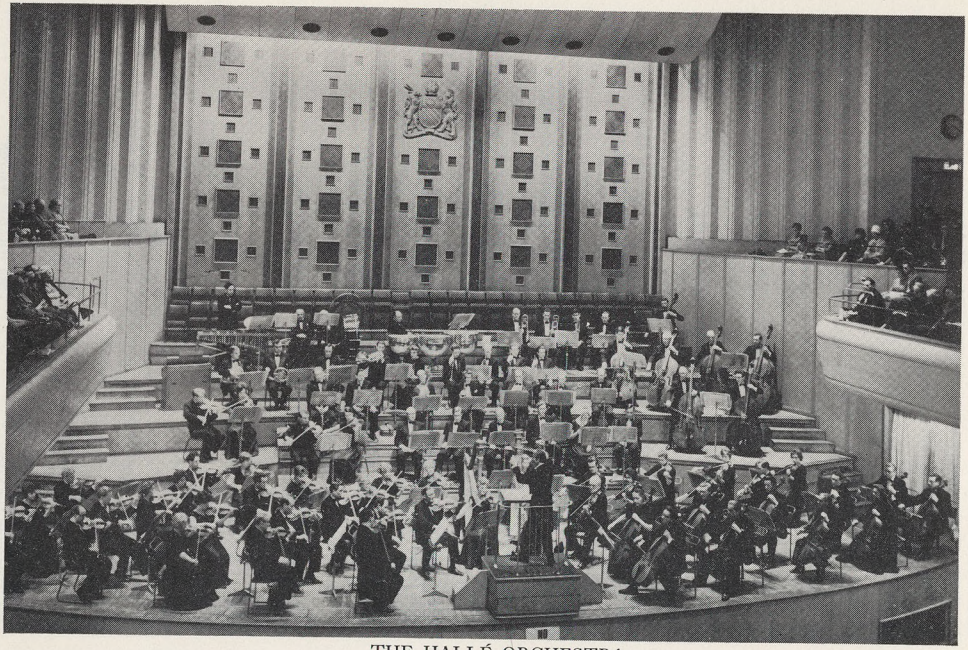

THE HALLÉ ORCHESTRA

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THE ROYAL PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY

November 7th 1962

YEHUDI MENUHIN

Overture: The Flying Dutchman	*Wagner*
Symphony No. 4 in B♭	*Beethoven*
Violin Concerto in D	*Brahms*

THE ROYAL LIVERPOOL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
(Leader: Peter Mountain)

PIERRE MONTEUX

WEDNESDAY, 5 DECEMBER at 8

ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

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WEDNESDAY, 13 FEBRUARY at 8

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(Conductor and Soloist)

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(actual date of first concert 1813)

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VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

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TICKETS:

42/- 30/- 21/- 15/- 10/- (November 7, December 5, March 8)
63/- 42/- 30/- 21/- 15/- (February 13 and April 24)

may be obtained not earlier than one calendar month before each Concert from the Royal Festival Hall (waterloo 3191), Chappell & Co. Ltd., 50 New Bond Street, W.1 (mayfair 7600) and usual agencies.