

The University Musical Society

of
The University of Michigan

Presents

LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

ANDRE PREVIN, *Conductor*

FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 6, 1973, AT 8:30
HILL AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

P R O G R A M

Overture: "Portsmouth Point" WALTON

Symphony No. 3 ("Pastoral") VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

Molto moderato
Lento moderato
Moderato pesante; presto
Lento; moderato maestoso; lento

INTERMISSION

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 73 BRAHMS

Allegro non troppo
Adagio non troppo
Allegretto grazioso
Allegro con spirito

Angel and RCA Records

PROGRAM NOTES

Overture: *Portsmouth Point* WILLIAM WALTON

For want of a better term, *Portsmouth Point* is described as an overture and was inspired by a print of Rowlandson's (1756–1827), whose graphic and sometimes savage caricatures tore the veils of politeness off Georgian and Regency life. Showing a Portsmouth dockside scene at the turn of the 19th century, it is as full of realistic detail as of roystering activity.

The music is of incessant, highly syncopated, and deliberately strident exuberance. Cross-accents, rhythmic irregularities, rapid changes of time signature, snatches of a hornpipe and even a suggestion of a bosun's whistle are complemented and enhanced by the pungent scoring, which exploits triple wind and a busy percussion section.

—CHRISTOPHER GRIER

Symphony No. 3 (*Pastoral*) RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

Few symphonies have so magical an opening: two streams of triads, the one (woodwind) gently undulating, the other (harp and lower strings) moving with more definite intent. The chords softly clash; a mood of active contemplation is at once established. So begins a beautifully accomplished sonata form, lyrically composed throughout. Each idea prompts the next: the important transitional theme (cor anglais) is felt to be an outgrowth of the preceding cadence-figure, and similarly the second subject (cellos, then clarinet) seems a natural extension of the transition. All of which takes us from the G major of the opening to the A major in which the development begins (the major-key feeling is strongly coloured by the Mixolydian mode with its flattened seventh). The streams of triads are resumed, with fuller scoring but still very quietly, and then comes a passage that is open-textured yet crowded with thematic detail. As the interplay of the themes generates a climax (the marking is only *f*) the texture is again filled out, gradually and inevitably. The beginning of the recapitulation is subtly truncated, the streams of triads being reserved for the coda, which is extensive and richly thematic.

The absorbed mood of the first movement carries over into the second (*Lento moderato*); even the themes bear a family resemblance. But the tone is more elegiac and the texture more continuous. At the outset muted strings sustain an F minor chord, against which a solo horn plays a pentatonic theme with emphasis on the notes A, G and E: the theme and the chord are really quite separate, in a way that is of the essence of this symphony's sound-world. A solo viola, lightly accompanied, broods on its own derivative of the horn theme, and the feeling gradually becomes a little more animated. At the centre of the movement is a tangible reminder of the music's war-time origins: a sublimated bugle-call directed to be played on a natural trumpet (i.e. without valves), the point being to give the crucial flattened seventh its true pitch. The horn theme is passionately resumed by the winds and strings, and the first part of the movement is sensitively re-created. At the end the two themes are heard simultaneously, the 'bugle-call' on a natural horn, the first theme on a clarinet. In the closing bars the violins reaffirm the spiritual loneliness that lies at the heart of this movement.

The third movement (*Moderato pesante*) is a scherzo (G minor) with two trios (G major), but this is followed by a passage marked *Presto* that cannot be described simply as a coda. The movement begins *f molto pesante* with a firm rhythm on the lower strings and horns. At the fourth bar, however, the pulse is modified, and seven bars later comes a trumpet tune in cross-rhythm with the lower string. The concluding *Presto* is like a light wind blowing in from nowhere; it picks

up the first trumpet tune and, at the close, the initial rhythmic theme, but is itself a new impulse, aerial and fantastic.

Thus the scherzo dissolves into thin air, in a way that leads naturally to the finale. Musically, the wordless voice part is a summing-up of the work's most characteristic melodic expressions. After a brief transition (mainly strings) the other principal element follows. This is the most sustained song melody (*Moderato maestoso*) in the entire symphony and carries with it an inescapable feeling of community. Indeed, the very composure of the *maestoso* theme serves to emphasize the urgency and passion of the middle of the movement where the two themes interact. This is the most overtly dramatic part of the work, culminating in a big declamatory statement by woodwinds and strings (*fff appassionato*) of the soprano theme. Formally, this declamation is the apex of an arch-like design. The movement ends as it began, but with the violins, not the timpani, accompanying the voice.

—HUGH OTTAWAY

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 73 JOHANNES BRAHMS

The first movement grows out of two quiet phrases, both heard at the start, one played by the lower strings, the other by two horns. The broader subsidiary theme, played in thirds by cellos and violas, might easily come from one of Brahms's songs; all the themes of this symphony have a strong lyrical strain in their parentage. The chief subjects discussed in the development section are the two phrases from the opening, and the one played by the trombones shortly after. There is a powerful fugal passage, and a blinding instant in the recapitulation when two of the chief ideas are telescoped with the inevitability and unexpectedness of a superb conjuring trick. Absolutely Brahmsian is the sonorous and dreamy horn solo which bridges the restatement and coda; the coda itself is rich in new ideas up to its quiet ending.

The noble and philosophical melody for cellos opens the *Adagio*. Two more episodes, the second turning to the minor mode with a rushing accompaniment, bring back the cello tune, now shared by strings and wind. The Stravinsky-like passage with its sequel, richly ornamented, reappears before a ruminative close based on the opening tune. The third movement, more like a song than a scherzo, contains one of Brahms's most charming ideas in the oboe melody, with pizzicato cello accompaniment.

The theme of the fourth offers rich possibilities for development in counterpoint. A warbling clarinet figure spans the way to the second subject, a warm, broad A major melody. Development and restatement are clearly marked by return to the soft opening bars of the movement. There is impressive use of trombones in octaves with wind at the end of the development, during the recapitulation in soft four-part harmony, and, as the end is sighted, throwing off sturdy scales like a chime of deep bells. This coda rises gloriously to a triumphant restatement of the second subject by brass. The last bars find the trombones again prominent as their exultant D major triad bursts through the sharp final chords.

—WILLIAM MANN

Arthur Hill Portrait

The Board of Regents of the University and the Directors of the University Musical Society gratefully acknowledge a gift from Mrs. Harrie Hill Page of a portrait of her grandfather, Arthur Hill, which shall henceforth hang in the lobby of Hill Auditorium. The funds for the construction of this Auditorium were bequeathed to the University by Arthur Hill. Sixty years ago this spring, concerts were first given in Hill Auditorium.

ANNOUNCING 1973-74 INTERNATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

Choral Union Series / Hill Auditorium

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|---|------------------------|
| DETROIT SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA | Sunday, September 30 |
| JULIAN BREM, <i>Guitar and Lute</i> | Sunday, October 21 |
| LONDON BACH SOCIETY | Friday, October 26 |
| LENINGRAD PHILHARMONIC | Saturday, November 3 |
| BUDAPEST SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA | Saturday, November 10 |
| MARTINA ARROYO, <i>Soprano</i> | Monday, November 19 |
| WARSAW PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA | Sunday, January 27 |
| LUCIANO PAVAROTTI, <i>Tenor</i> | Wednesday, February 27 |
| ORCHESTRE DE PARIS | Friday, March 1 |
| YEHUDI MENUHIN, <i>Violinist</i> , and HEPHZIBAH MENUHIN, <i>Pianist</i> | Wednesday, March 13 |

Choice Series / Power Center

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| AMERICAN BALLET REPERTORY COMPANY | Thursday, October 4 and Friday, October 5 |
| BAYANIHAN PHILIPPINE DANCE COMPANY | Sunday, October 14 |
| BALLET WEST, U.S.A. | Friday and Saturday, October 19 & 20 |
| CLAUDE KIPNIS MIME THEATRE | Saturday, October 27 |
| MODERN JAZZ QUARTET | Thursday, November 15 |
| KRASNAYARSK DANCE COMPANY, SIBERIA | Saturday, December 1 |
| MOZART's <i>Impresario</i> and MENOTTI's <i>Old Maid and the Thief</i> , GOLDOVSKY OPERA COMPANY | Saturday and Sunday, February 23 & 24 |
| VIENNA CHOIR BOYS | Monday, March 11 |
| NORWEGIAN NATIONAL BALLET | Saturday and Sunday, March 16 & 17 |
| ROUMANIAN FOLK BALLET | Friday, March 29 |
| NIKOLAIS DANCE THEATRE | Thursday and Friday, April 18 & 19 |

Chamber Arts Series / Rackham Auditorium

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| GYORGY SANDOR, <i>Pianist</i> | Friday, October 12 |
| SLOVAK CHAMBER ORCHESTRA | Tuesday, October 23 |
| BAROQUE ENSEMBLE, USSR | Sunday, October 28 |
| TEL AVIV STRING QUARTET | Wednesday, November 14 |
| LA SALLE STRING QUARTET | Sunday, January 20 |
| ROUMANIAN TRIO (Piano, Violin, Cello) | Friday, February 22 |
| NETHERLANDS WIND ENSEMBLE | Thursday, February 28 |
| EARLY MUSIC CONSORT OF LONDON | Saturday, April 13 |

Asian Series / Rackham Auditorium

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| MUSIC FROM IRAN | Wednesday, October 31 |
| THE LITTLE ANGELS, KOREA | Sunday, November 11 |
| AWAJI PUPPET THEATER OF JAPAN | Tuesday, February 19 |
| KATHAK, NORTH INDIAN DANCE | Wednesday, April 3 |

Guitar Series / Rackham Auditorium

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| ABREU BROTHERS, ARGENTINA | Wednesday, November 7 |
| NARCISO YEPES, SPAIN | Wednesday, November 28 |
| CARLOS BARBOSA-LIMA, BRAZIL | Saturday, February 2 |
| ROMERO QUARTET (family of guitarists) | Wednesday, March 20 |

Series ticket orders now being accepted in our Burton Tower office. Phone 665-3717