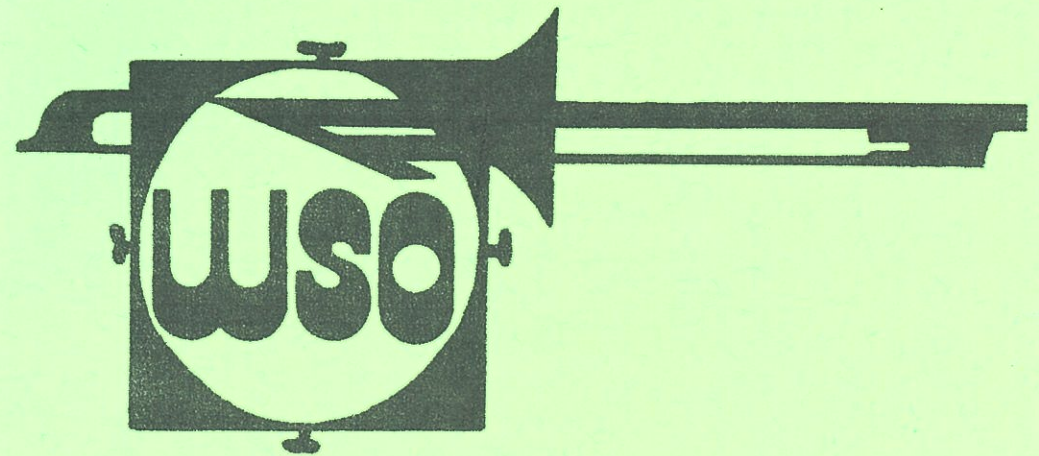


1981.

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Wolverhampton
Symphony
Orchestra

Conductor : Mark Finch

Leader: Cyril Love

The National Federation of Music Societies, to which the orchestra is affiliated, supports this concert with funds provided by the Arts Council of Great Britain.

CONCERT

21-3-81

PROGRAMME

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

C O N C E R T

- at -

WOLVERHAMPTON POLYTECHNIC

- on -

SATURDAY, MARCH 21st, 1981

- at -

7.30 p.m.

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P R O G R A M M E

Overture 'The Italian Girl in Algiers'..... Rossini

Kindertotenlieder Mahler

INTERVAL

Symphony No. 9 in C major 'The Great' Schubert

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Overture "L'Italiana in Algeri" G. Rossini - 1792-1868

"The Italian Girl in Algiers" was Rossini's first major comic opera completed in just over three weeks when the composer was twenty-one and received its first performance in Venice in 1813. The story concerns Isabella who has been searching for her lover, a slave of the Bey of Algiers. In the opera the lovers are reunited although not before the Bey has also fallen for Isabella.

The Overture has all the ingredients of Rossini's overtures - a slow introduction featuring a poignant oboe solo, some perky tunes for woodwind in the main allegro section and, of course, the characteristic "Rossini Crescendo".

M.F.

Kindertotenlieder Gustav Mahler - 1860-1911

(GLORIA FINCH - Contralto)

The song and the symphony are uniquely linked in the work of Mahler. They represent almost his entire output and the first four symphonies quote directly from his earlier songs.

These songs to poems by Rückert were written between 1901 and 1904 at about the same time as the fifth symphony and are usually considered with their basically elegaic mood, the experience of loneliness and resignation, as marking the beginning of Mahler's middle creative period.

Of the poems Adomo wrote, "In the 'Kindertotenlieder' there lies a germ of unbridled, immeasurable feeling, at the same time an element of inward melancholy which seems to have been waiting for Mahler". A further attraction could well have been the parallel that exists between Rückert's strange mixture of elaborate artifice contrasted with the sudden outbursts of profound feeling and Mahler's own symphonic style: the use of major/minor

ambivalence, enharmonic changes, instrumental contrasts, subtle dynamic shadings in which one instrument might be getting louder as another is getting softer, and the frequent speed changes, slowings down and surges forward.

The resultant scoring is like that of a huge chamber piece for a mass of individual instruments. The human voice is still the principal means of expression, but now it can scarcely be separated from the instrumental texture: 'melody' and orchestral 'accompaniment' are fused together in a sublime monody.

1. Nun will die Sonn' so hell aufgehin.

The tragedy of the night is mine alone. The sun, it shines for everyone; joyous, eternal light.

2. Nun seh'ich wohl, warum so dunkle Flammen.

We did not see that your eyes were gazing, whose rays were turned to their maker, fount of all light. We would have comforted you. Look now, for what in these days are only eyes to you, in future nights to you will be but stars.

3. Wenn dein Mütterlein.

When I see your mother coming into the room I still feel as though you are with her, coming in too! Oh you, your father's comfort, alas, too soon, extinguished light of joy!

4. Oft denk'ich sie sind nur ausgezander.

They have only gone for a long walk, have just gone ahead of us. We will catch them up on yonder heights in bright sunshine.

5. In diesem Wetter, in diesem Braus.

In this weather, in this storm I would never have let the children go out I would fear they might die tomorrow

This fear I no longer have.
They rest as if in their mother's house,
Not frightened by any tempests,
Protected by God's hand.

M.F.

I N T E R V A L

Symphony No. 9 in C major 'The Great' F.P. Schubert -
1797-1828

- (i) Andante, Allegro ma non troppo
- (ii) Andante con moto
- (iii) Scherzo - Allegro vivace
- (iv) Allegro vivace

This symphony, perhaps more than any other, shows how easy it is to draw false conclusions about a composer and his music when we are denied a true historical perspective. For it was not as a symphonist at all that Schubert was revered by his circle of amateur musician friends: but rather as the composer of over six hundred songs and some rather "dainty" chamber music. Indeed, they probably did not even know of this symphony's existence.

It was quite by chance that Robert Schumann, the most perceptive composer-critic of his age, should have come across the manuscript of the symphony in the hands of Schubert's younger brother, Ferdinand. That was in 1839 eleven years after the composer's untimely death at the age of thirty-one. He immediately arranged for Mendelssohn to give several successful performances of it in Leipzig. However, it did not fare so well in Paris or London where, even under Mendelssohn, musicians were baffled, and therefore irritated by its length and difficulty.

In actual fact, it took many more years for the truth to sink in - that Schubert, through this symphony could

be ranked alongside the greatest of all symphonists. The initial discovery of the score and the eventual understanding, largely from a technical point of view, of the music had called into question the hitherto commonly held view of Schubert as a highly gifted, wayward, and rather parochial musician who had written distinctly Viennese songs in the early nineteenth century.

The stylistic hallmarks and innovations so characteristic of all Schubert's music are here fully synthesised to articulate the expanded time-scale of this symphony - this "heavenly length" as Schumann called it. Simplicity of melody coupled with a great deal of complexity in the juxtaposing of contrasting key areas to produce new and exciting relationships are the twin foundations of Schubert's style, which allow the same melodic phrase to be shown up in so many different lights. For example, Schubert, having taken C as his home key, frequently uses "A flat/a" on the one side and "E flat/e" on the other, as "stopping off" points along the ways to F and G, the subdominant and dominant respectively, to produce the scheme:- F - A flat/a - C - E flat/e - G.

This means that whereas in former years two principal key areas may have been contrasted in a symphonic movement (e.g. C and G) now the use of at least three is common even if one of these may eventually be understood to have assumed a traditional function.

M.F.

GLORIA FINCH - Contralto

Began her singing career at the age of twenty-eight, her main interest previously having been in drama.

She won the coveted rose bowl for Lieder at the Cheltenham Competitive Festival three times and on the last occasion also won three more of the classes open to professional singers.

Having learnt much of her music under Dr. Herbert

Sumsion, organist of Gloucester until 1969, she has since enjoyed working with choral societies throughout the West Country, South Wales, and the Midlands, including the Wolverhampton Civic Choir.

An extensive knowledge of Lieder and of twentieth century English songs, particularly Gurney, Finzi, and Howells from her adopted Gloucestershire, has meant that Gloria Finch is also frequently engaged in much recital work.

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WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Conductor Mark Finch

Deputy Sheila Freeman

Violin I

Cyril Love (leader)
Connie King
Julie Richards
Jim Hyslop
Kathleen Colley
Colin Elton
Penny Shaw
Rita Lakeland

Violin II

Martyn Blythe
Eric Jones
Ken Hawkins
Hilary Oseman
Christabel Jones
Jennifer Lewis
Philip Ward
Helen Cubberley
Mary Zieionka

Viola

John Riseborough
Sheila Freeman
Frank Greenwood
Geoffrey Haynes

Cello

Virginia Whinyates
Glyn Davies
Sheila Moore
Andrew Bound

Flute

Diana Mannasseh
Douglas Servant
Philip Leah

Oboe

Richard Anderson
Ann Clements

Double Bass

Donna Jones

Clarinet

Diana Cotterell
Jane Allison

Bassoon

Gill French
Ron Buckley
Stuart Hicken

Trombone

Michael Cummings

Mike Coxon

Stephen Preedy

Timpani

Anne Douglas

Horn

Percy Cotterell

Sarah Clymo

Trumpet

Stefan Astbury

Michael Garbutt