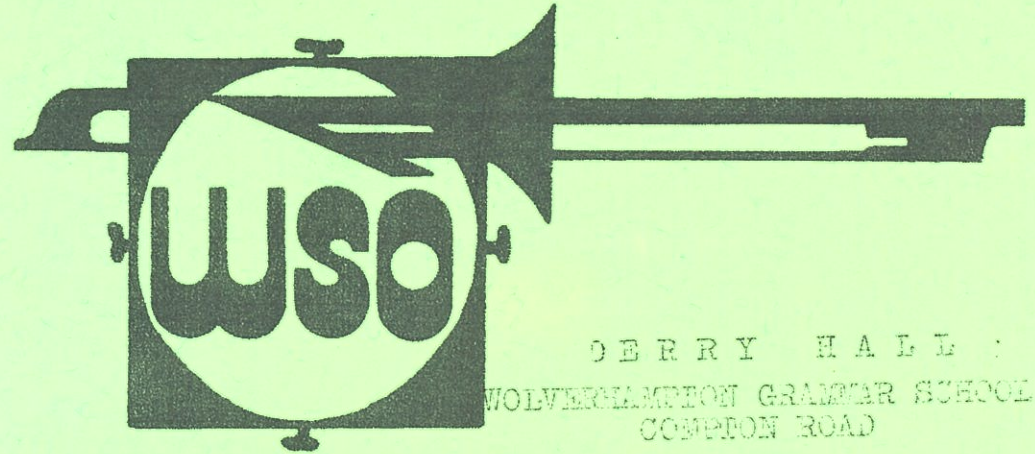


1981

S.M.

(25)

BT



Wolverhampton
Symphony
Orchestra

DERRY HALL :
WOLVERHAMPTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL
COMPTON ROAD

Admission by programme £1
Children, students, O.A.P. and
disabled - 50p
Family - parents and up to
four children - £2.50

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

SATURDAY
JULY 4th
1981

PROGRAMME

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

C O N C E R T

- at -

THE DERRY HALL,

WOLVERHAMPTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

COMPTON ROAD

- on -

SATURDAY, 4th JULY, 1981,

- at -

7.30 p.m.



P R O G R A M M E

Overture 'Helios' Nielsen
St. Paul's Suite Holst

I N T E R V A L

Symphony No. 7 in D Minor Dvorak



Helios Overture

Carl Nielsen (1865-1931)

During a stay in Athens (1903) in a house which overlooked the Aegean Sea, Nielsen wrote "Helios Overture" in which, inspired by the clear sky of the south, he depicts the course of the sun; its rise, culmination and setting. Despite the programmatic element the work is written in an absolute-musical form. A regular sonata form movement with fugue (allegro) is surrounded by a slow introduction in two phases and conclusion. The composer supplied a short motto in four parts corresponding with the four main stages of the musical development:

"Silence and darkness - then the sun rises with a joyous song of praise - it wanders its golden way - and sinks quietly into the sea!"

Four horns enter the stillness of the dark with their repetitions of the "primitive" 7th, C - B^b and G - F in C major. A crescendo to forte emerges and prepares a strong and broad hymn-melody from the horns. Modulating to E major a blaring trumpet fanfare introduces the festal main theme of the allegro. After the climax (fff) the allegro ebbs away and, returning to the andante tempo and C major, the movement is, as it were, gradually extinguished in the deep C of the cellos in unison.

St. Paul's Suite for Strings

Gustav Holst (1874-1934)

From 1905 until his death Holst was director of music at St. Paul's Girls' School. It was for the school orchestra that this Suite was written in 1913 soon after a new music wing to the school had been built. Imogen Holst, the composer's daughter and a pupil at St. Paul's, relates that originally the music contained wind parts which served both to keep everybody happy and to keep the strings in tune.

An exuberant "Jig" opens the work. In the "Ostinato" which follows, muted strings thread their way with ease through their alternating rhythms while the same four quavers curl up and down over and over again. The

beautiful tune for solo fiddle in the "Intermezzo" borrows its passionate augmented 2nds from the orchestral suite "Beni Mora" while the contrasting vivace tune was later used in the "Perfect Fool". The "Finale" is a clever transcription of the finale to his "Second Suite for Military Band". With great skill Holst combines the rapid $\frac{6}{8}$ of "The Dargason" with the slower $\frac{3}{4}$ of "Greensleeves", to achieve the perfect marriage of the two contrasting folk-tunes.

Symphony No. 7 in D Minor

Anton Dvorak (1841-1904)

"The 7th symphony is generally held to be Dvorak's greatest symphonic achievement". So begins one commentator's account of the present work. Normally, such a statement is made patronisingly by one who judges a work to have approached the German symphonic ideals embodied, almost as canon law, in the works of Beethoven and Brahms. Consequently there has been the establishment of an almost "a priori" set of ideals, against which the works of others can be judged, often to the detriment of composers such as Schubert and Dvorak; composers, notably to whom melody came easily.

The present symphony was written in early 1885 at a time when Dvorak was becoming increasingly self-critical, as is witnessed by the innumerable alterations made to the sketches. Surely, it was this fact which made him so receptive to the greatness of Brahms's newly composed 3rd symphony. A composer must have it in himself to be influenced by another. The feeling of tight construction in Dvorak's work is largely due to the sense of inevitability created by deriving subsidiary material from the main themes, as well as to the subtle cross-references that exist between the first and last movements. Such unity is also created within these outer movements by the frequent reference at formal turning points to the main themes, a device not normally associated with classical sonata form.

Yet, despite the Germanic breeding of Dvorak's work, his music remains essentially Slavonic. The modality

(flattened 7ths), the luminous orchestral colours and the vigorous, often syncopated rhythms ($\frac{6}{8}$ / $\frac{3}{4}$), are so characteristic that Tovey's concluding remarks, "that no line of this great symphony could have been written by anybody else, is the most important accolade.

The general tone is set immediately by the first $\frac{6}{8}$ narrowly-compassed and slightly unnerving theme, the $\frac{8}{4}$ time signature without a slow introduction being a comparative rarity. It is played by the cellos (with violas) who also have important themes in the slow movement and finale, an example of one of the stylistic differences between the Romantics and their classical predecessors. The articulations of the theme's tail provide many of the seeds for later thematic development. Indeed, the subtle use of rests throughout the movement adds much to the powerful tension of the music. Unusually, this minor theme is repeated after the 2nd subject in D major.

The opening forty bars of the "Poco adagio" state four contrasting melodies which later return in a differing order and with different instrumentation. Key relationships of a third away (mediant) supersede the old classical ones of a fifth (dominant). Nowhere is there a better example than the return to the main key of f which, coming after the keys of D^b and A, is achieved by a huge Wagner-like interrupted cadence; fittingly, since the return here is to the continuation rather than the opening of the main theme. In the long concluding passage over the tonic chord (F - A - C), first heard as a Cadence to the opening eight-bar melody, we can hear the cultured-Viennese chromatic decoration of the chord, caused by using E - ~~G~~ - B as appoggiaturas, together with the more folkly pentatonicism of melodic lines emphasising the notes G and D as slow passing notes.

The scherzo and trio is one of Dvorak's most successful 3rd movements and certainly caused the composer a great deal of thought. Judging from the manuscripts, he neither wanted a straightforward $\frac{3}{4}$ movement or a complex, over-synthetic combination of $\frac{6}{8}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ metres. The links with the Slavonic dance, the Furiant, are obvious, as are those with the trio of his 8th Symphony.

There is also a link between the opening theme of the finale and that of his "Symphonic Variations" in which the sharpened 4th degree of the scale is extremely characteristic. As Tovey observes:- "this music is admirably endowed with that quality which is the rarest of all in post-classical finales - the power of movementDvorak had the classical secret of movement".

Composed for the Philharmonic Society of London who gave its premiere on April 22nd 1885 under Dvorak's own stick, the symphony was received with enthusiasm "such as is rarely seen in a Philharmonic concert". Dvorak who during its composition had written to a friend, "Wherever I go I think of nothing but my work, which must be capable of stirring the world" obviously thought well of it for he gently demanded, and received, 6000 rather than the customary 3000 marks from his publisher.



WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

List of Players for 4th July

Violin I

Cyril Love
Connie King
Julie Richards
Jim Hyslop
Phil Turley
Colin Elton
Penny Shaw
Rita Lakeland
Barbara Harris
Kathleen Colley
Jim Gosling

Violin II

Martin Blythe
Eric Jones
Ken Hawkins
Hilary Oseman
Christabel Jones
Jennifer Lewis
Jim Chugg
Philip Ward

Viola

Cecilia Galloway
Paul Westwood
Geoffrey Haynes
Louise McCarthy
Paul Jarvis
Jenny Chugg
John Riseborough

Cello

Virginia Whinyates
Andrew Bound
Glyn Davies
Sheila Moore
Sheila Freeman
Woody Lishman
Ian McCarthy
Jean Johnson

Double Bass

Donna Jones
Brother Godric

Flutes

Dianne Mannasseh
Philip Leah

Oboes

Richard Anderson
Anne Clements

Clarinets

Diana Cotterell
Jane Allison

Bassoons

Stuart Hicken
Graham Rudd

Horns

Percy Cotterell
Sarah Clymo
Alwyn Manley
David Gray

Trumpets

Michael Carbutt
Stefan Astbury

Trombones

Michael Cummings
Michael Coxon
Stephen Preedy

Timpani

Anne Douglas

