

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

C O N C E R T

- at -

ST. PETER'S CHURCH,

WOLVERHAMPTON

- on -

SATURDAY, 22nd MAY, 1982

- at -

7.30 p.m.

P R O G R A M M E

Overture, The Marriage of Figaro Mozart

Organ Concerto No. 4 Handel

Clarinet Concerto Copland

I N T E R V A L

Symphony No. 7 in A Beethoven

Overture, "The Marriage of Figaro"

W.A. Mozart
(1756-91).

The overture to Mozart's comedy-opera "Le Nozze di Figaro" is a short movement in archetypal sonata form, minus the central developmental section. The first half changes key, the second half makes as if to but then capitulates, and is succeeded by a relatively long coda. The beauty and strength of the music is its simplicity.

No, it was certainly not Mozart's music which caused the succeeding opera to be such a contentious one after its first performance in 1786 (three years before the French revolution), though it may admittedly be something to do with his piquant delight in the class ribaldry exhibited by the libretto of Messrs. da Ponte and Beaumarchais.

Organ Concerto No. 4

G.F. Handel
(1685-1759).

Soloist - Andrew Newberry

Handel loved organ-playing and his modernising influence spread the use of swell-box and pedal-board. The organ concertos were 'interludes of intimate dialogue' (Percy Young), performed by Handel with the orchestra, between the acts of his oratorios.

Andrew Newberry is organist at St. Peter's Church, Wolverhampton.

Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra

A. Copland
(b. 1900).

Soloist - Martyn Parfect

Benny Goodman commissioned and played the first performance of the clarinet concerto which Copland began work on in 1947 and finished in 1948. The first performance took place in November 1950 with the NBC Symphony Orchestra. Obviously with Benny Goodman in mind Copland exploits the elements of jazz melodies. We hear the laziest of jazz melodies over a slapbass, followed by rumba rhythms. Later the three-plus-five rhythm of the Charleston is heard. The work finishes after a rising

glissando in C Major.

I N T E R V A L

Symphony No. 7 in A Major

L. van Beethoven
(1770-1827).

Poco sostenuto - Vivace
Allegretto
Presto
Allegro con brio

Beethoven's 7th symphony took four years to evolve after the "Pastoral" symphony and was completed in 1812. It is above all an essay in rhythm, and it is therefore in keeping that there should be an "Allegretto" in place of a slow movement. Among the audience at its first performance in 1813, given for the benefit of wounded soldiers, were Spohr, Meyerbeer, Hummel, Moscheles, Salieri, Romberg and Dragonetti. It is interesting to conjecture as to whether it was they or the military attachment present who were responsible for the fact that the slow movement was encored.

The mammoth scalic passages of the "poco sostenuto", the longest of all Beethoven introductions, leads via the distant key areas of C and F to a "vivace" whose all-pervasive rhythmic character can only be compared to the use of rhythm in his fifth symphony. Several themes are derived from the basic rhythmic germ, although, as Tovey astutely observes, the individual character of a derived theme is of greater importance than the fact of its derivation, interesting and natural though it may be.

It is difficult to describe the beauty of the second movement in traditional terms. When one tries to recall its sound it is not simple melody that is being recaptured although the two interludes to the set of variations feature some marvellous melodic inventions for the woodwind, but rather something deeper - literally, something we are able to sense in a downward as well as a chronological dimension. One is reminded of Schuman's remark that although melody is important in musical structure "harmony is the queen and decides the game". The whole

movement is set in the "inverted commas" of two woodwind.

The 'presto' is an unusual movement in that after the normal scherzo-trio-scherzo arrangement is placed a further trio-scherzo to produce a five part form. The dynamics of the middle scherzo are significantly different, however. Furthermore, it is difficult to imagine a scherzo movement which has a more widely contrasting trio section. This fact is played upon, as is the listener's sense of expectation, in the "joke ending" to the movement.

Wagner called the "finale" the apotheosis of the dance. It is, indeed, an extraordinary movement. The second theme is in the unusual key of C# minor, and some very romantic "modulations" ensue. And it is one of the profoundest characteristics of this symphony what when the time comes for recapitulating these romantic modulations, while the general framework of the passage remains unchanged, the modulations are quite different. It was Schubert's and Brahms' realisation of this fact that led them to carry on in the German symphonic tradition mould when other minds had turned to other pastures.

Martyn Perfect started the clarinet at the age of 10. He was self-taught for 3 years before starting lessons with Joseph Rooney in North Wales. At the age of 15 he also started to receive lessons from John Fuest, Principal Clarinet of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. In 1974 he attended the Birmingham School of Music. Since 1974 he has given many recitals around the West Midlands and in Merseyside and North Wales.
