



Wolverhampton
Symphony
Orchestra

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

ADMISSION BY PROGRAMME £

(Students & OAPs) £

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

41

Conductor Mark Finch
Leader Martyn Blythe

SUMMER CONCERT

"Vltava" from 'Má Vlast' - Smetana
"Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen" - Mahler
Symphony no. 8 in G - Dvořák

THE POLYTECHNIC , COMPTON PARK,
WOLVERHAMPTON

-on-

SATURDAY , 7th JULY
1984

-at-

7.45 p.m.

Admission by Programme

Waged : £2.00 Unwaged : £1.00



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PROGRAMME

Má Vlast : Vltava

Bedřich Smetana
(1824-84)

Vltava is the second of six symphonic poems collectively entitled "Má Vlast" (My Fatherland) written by a composer who came late to an awareness of nationalism in art, and who, yet, by the age of fifty-one, had revitalised the musical life of his native Czechoslovakia. It was written in three weeks and premiered on 4th April, 1875.

The composer prefaced the score with an explanatory note: "This composition depicts the course of the river Vltava, beginning with its two sources, cold and warm; the two combine to form a gradually widening stream which flows through woods and meadows, past villages where countryfolk are celebrating; by moonlight water nymphs dance in its depths - in the background proud castles, mansions and ruined masonry break up the storyline; the Vltava rushes through the St. John Rapids, then as a broad and noble river it approaches Prague. Vysehrad looms up (a castle on a rock, symbolic of Czech nationhood)- and streaming past it majestically, the river passes out of sight, flowing into the Elbe"

M.A.F.

"Songs of a Wayfarer"
Anthony Scales (Baritone)

Gustav Mahler
(1860-1911)

The four songs which make up this short orchestral song-cycle were written in 1884. The words, by the composer himself, tell of a young man who has been forsaken by his sweetheart, and they were almost certainly the result of an earlier personal experience which Mahler suffered when he was conductor of the orchestra at Cassel. The agony and ecstasy of the young man's situation are keenly contrasted in the first song. Material from this, the second and the fourth songs re-appeared later in Mahler's first Symphony. Even though the work is that of a young composer, already the hallmarks of Mahler's musical language are discernible.

The extreme chromaticism lies midway between the music of two other Viennese composers, Franz Schubert and Alban Berg. Indeed, the subject-matter itself and the frequent alternations between major and minor tonality bear witness to a musical bond between Schubert and Mahler. On the other hand, Mahler's control over the orchestra and the variety of sound textures he conjures from it root him firmly to the mainstream German tradition of Wagner and Richard Strauss, while his music nevertheless retains a fresh and individual originality.

M.A.F.

- I N T E R V A L -

Symphony No. 8 in G major op. 88

Antonin Dvořák
(1841-1904)

(i) Allegro con brio (ii) Adagio
(iii) Allegretto grazioso (iv) Allegro ma non troppo

The relationship that this symphony, Dvořák's penultimate, bears with its neighbours reminds one of the epithet that Tovey applied to Beethoven's 8th Symphony - "a slender Greek maiden between two Trojan gods". Indeed, Dvořák's 8th Symphony, written in 1889, is far less weighty than either its predecessor, with its extremely closely-knit thematic working, or its successor, the ever popular "New World" Symphony.

Dvořák's use of the 'cellos in announcing the main theme of the first movement is a romantic trait contrasting with the classical procedure of invariably placing the themes in the violins. A trademark peculiar to Dvořák is the frequent use of a three-note motif reminiscent of "Three Blind Mice" which can also be heard in the 7th and 9th symphonies.

An impassioned slow movement precedes a delightfully waltz-like scherzo in which typical use is made of the cross-rhythm caused by successive 3/4 and 6/8 metres.

After its fanfare opening, the finale proceeds with a theme that is clearly linked to the first movement. There are further unusual features, such as the broad arch-form of the movement, the subtle speed changes and the large amount of consecutively repeated material.

cont'd....

Few symphonies contain as many melodies as does Dvořák's 8th, and the treatment of each of them is unmistakable. The drones, "folksy" harmonies and extended nine-bar phrases are all part of the "stock in trade" of the mature style of this splendid Bohemian composer.

M.A.F.

ANTHONY SCALES was born in 1951 and was educated at Tiffin School and Durham, where, although not reading music, he contributed much to the musical life of the University. Since then he has been much in demand as a soloist in oratorio in Liverpool and the Midlands. He won the 1983 John Ireland Song Competition, and has sung major roles in Mozart's "Don Giovanni" and Bizet's "Carmen". Mr. Scales has also made appearances on television, "face-bashing" with his twin brother on B.B.C.'s "That's Life", and has been heard on radio with his close-harmony group, "The Demon Barbers".

The National Federation of Music Societies is a voluntary organisation, supported by the public and the Government, which is devoted to the promotion of music in Great Britain.