

1988

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...the music of the night... the music of the night... the music of the night...

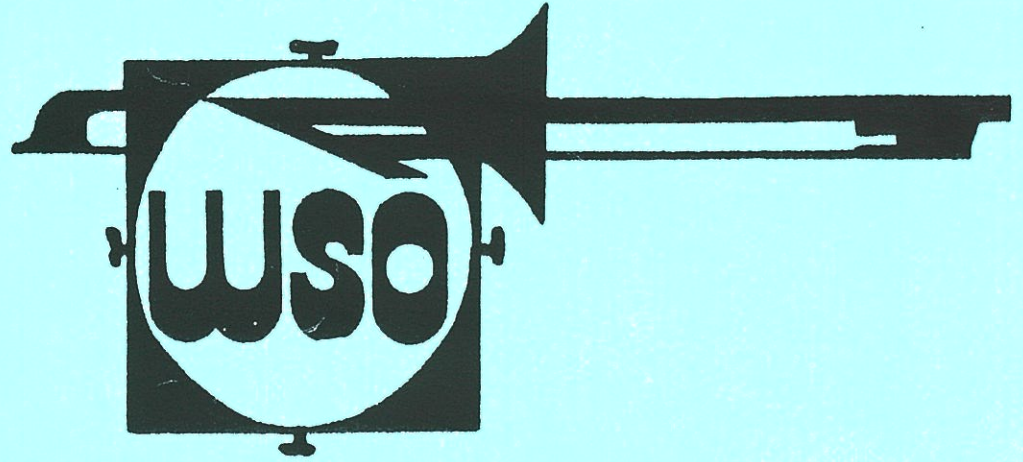
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Wolverhampton
Symphony
Orchestra

CONCERT

10/12/88.

PROGRAMME

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Saturday 10th December 1988
Main Hall, Wolverhampton Polytechnic.

Conductor : Sheila Freeman.

First Violins

Martyn Blythe
Maragret Friar
Colin Elton
Richard Lane
Susan Hopkins
Shuan Valentine

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Second Violins

Katalin Beke
Jennifer Lewis
Margaret Myatt
Cyril Love
Linda Murray
Harry Green
Philip Ward

Violas

David Cope
Elise Williams
Anne-Marie Simpson
Fiona Glasscock
Marion Smith

Trombones

Mike Coxon
Craig Sproston
Dan Howard

'Cellos

Richard Painter
Sheila Moore
Glyn Davies
Margaret Bell
Sylvia Ulrich
Peter Gosling
Virginia Whinyates

Double Bass

Thelma Green
Jennifer Moore
John Mason

Timpani

Peter Morey

Percussion

Samantha Price
Rita Lakeland

Horns

Percy Cotterell
Gordon Robson
Julia Burton
Robin Hopper

Flutes

Diana Menasseh
Hannah Cowie

Piccolo

Jane Coxon

Clarinets

Diana Cotterell
Lynn Sargeant

Oboes

Richard Anderson
Jennifer Marshall

Bassoons

Maggi Rowland
Douglas Servant

Trumpets

Mike Garbutt
David Payne

Tuba

Len Hazelhurst

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8 2
2 1

22 4

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Prelude to Hansel and Gretel Engelbert Humperdinck
1854 - 1921

Humperdinck wrote several operas, all on fairy-tales, but this is the only one to survive. It was first produced in 1893. Humperdinck was an habitue of the Bayreuth circle and helped Wagner in the first production of Parsifal, also teaching his son Siegfried. He played piano, organ, and 'cello and became a professor of music. Hansel and Gretel started as a collection of songs intended for children to sing, with words by his sister. Thus the tunes are simple and appealing and although it was later expanded to a full scale opera these qualities were never lost.

Variations on St. Anthony Chorale Brahms:
1833 - 1897

Brahms was an accomplished musician by the time he was ten and narrowly escaped, through the efforts of his teacher, being sent on an American tour. His father was a double Bass player and the young Brahms would write and arrange music for his father's small orchestra. These variations on a theme often attributed to Haydn, were written in 1873 when Brahms was also writing his first symphony.

The theme is announced by brass and woodwind over pizzicato lower strings and the first section is characterised by two five bar phrases, a feature which is retained throughout most of the work. It ends with a repeated, bell - like note.

Variation 1 has the strings moving in opposite directions in conflicting rhythms and is quite gentle in character. Variation 2 continues the same idea but with a dotted rhythm predominating, especially in the woodwind.

Variation 3 features the oboes and bassoons over lower strings and the phrase length is shifted slightly to six bars and four. Later flutes, carry on a little conversation over a simply stated string section.

Variation 4 we plunge into the minor and gently running semi-quavers can be heard in both strings and woodwind throughout the movement.

Variation 5 Back into the major -- but what a change! Chattering quavers, quiet for the most part but arguing occasionally, gradually simmer down and end peacefully. Variation 6 A busy and energetic movement involving the full orchestra (which does not however include trombones who have no part in this work).

Variation 7. A little gem. A lovely, floating 6/8 with the tune spread between strings and woodwind who complement each other moving alternately towards and away from one another.

Variation 8. Back into the minor and a lot of busy scurrying the theme now completely obscured but retaining the framework.

Finale; This is an extended section with a prominent bass line which supports the structure for the greater part of the movement. This same bass line is used also at the top at double speed in canon. The end is signalled by rushing scales and the insistent, repeated, bell - like note.

Symphony Number 4 Tchaikovsky
Andante sostenuto
Andantino in modo di canzona
Allegro
Allegro con fuoco

1840 - 1893

This symphony was written at a most traumatic time of Tchaikovsky's life, during his disastrous marriage. The opening theme on horns and bassoons, joined after a few bars by the rest of the woodwind and brass, is held to represent Fate. It returns in three other places in the symphony and helps to colour the mood of the outer movements.

The first movement is an extensive piece based on sonata form although the key structure is very unusual being founded on the diminished 7th F Ab B D F. The first subject is a sweeping 9/8 in F minor and is thoroughly worked over before the second subject in Ab major makes its appearance on the clarinet with comments from the rest of the woodwind.

7B

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8B

2

An insistant drum motif heralds the next key of B major and the music speeds up. The A. minor section is so chromatic that no strong sense of key is felt. The second subject returns in D. minor with bassoon giving the lead this time and this soon slips into F major. The third statement of the Fate theme precedes the coda and the music speeds up again and ends as it began in F minor. B
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The second movement opens with a simple tune on the oboe accompanied by pizzicato strings. The 'cellos soon take over and it's worth listening for a short counter-melody in the flutes. There is a change of mood and pace in the middle of the movement followed by more decorative woodwind remarks reminiscent of the second subject of the first movement.

The scherzo is a test for both strings and woodwind. The first section is entirely pizzicato strings --- never a popular technique for string players. 1

However they can relax in the trio and listen to the woodwind demonstrating their agility. Then the brass have their turn but....very quietly! The strings must stay awake for they have to cut in with their pizzicato again and finally all the orchestra comes together.

Finale: A turbulent start soon gives way to a plaintive folk song first heard in the woodwind. These two ideas are combined until the folk song is thundered out by trombones against skirling wind and strings. C
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The music continues with these two elements until interrupted by the Fate fanfare from the opening of the work. The need is broken, but not for long. The full forces take over and sweep the movement to its inevitable conclusion. B
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S. C. F.

6B 1C