

Wolverhampton
Symphony
Orchestra



89

PROGRAMME

25/11/95

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
CONCERT AT ST. MARY'S CHURCH, ALBRIGHTON
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25TH, 1995

PROGRAMME



Symphony No. 45 "Farewell" Haydn

Interval

Symphony No. 4 Brahms



Conductor - Michael Darke

Leader - Martyn Blythe

Symphony No. 45 in F sharp minor "Farewell"

Joseph Haydn 1732-1804

- I** *Allegro assai*
- II** *Adagio*
- III** *Minuet: Allegretto - Trio - Minuet*
- IV** *Finale: Presto - Adagio*

This symphony, in the most unusual key of F sharp minor, dates from 1772 and is quite conventional until the *finale* is reached.

The restless, and at times stormy opening *allegro* sets the classical atmosphere for the piece. It seems to whisk the listener down the corridors of some grand palatial residence. It leads to an *adagio* (in the related major key of A) which, with its muted violins and carefully placed grace notes, has a restrained delicate air to it. The *minuet* in F sharp major observes the strict social requirements of a formal evening dance and the final *presto*, with its rushing quaver passages, brings us back again to the minor key.

Just when the final *coda* would be expected Haydn suddenly introduces another *adagio* in which, at the composer's instruction, the instruments stop playing, one at a time, and the musicians leave the platform.

To understand this ending we must look at Haydn's situation when he wrote the work. He was employed, as were his musicians, by Prince Nikolas Esterházy who spent part of the year in Vienna and part of the year at Esterházy. The orchestral players were not allowed to have their wives at Esterházy and they were getting restless because the prince was dragging out his stay. They appealed to Haydn and he came

up with this subtle hint to the prince that it was time the players were allowed to leave and return to Vienna. The prince got the message and the court moved the day after the first performance.

This story may or may not be true. An alternative version was suggested in 1830 by G. G. Ferrari who had known Haydn. He claimed that the prince was considering reducing or even disbanding the orchestra and Haydn devised this unusual ending to show the prince what the effect would be. Whatever the truth may be this delightful work has remained firmly in the repertoire ever since.

INTERVAL

Symphony No.4 in E Minor Op. 98

**Johannes Brahms
1833-1897**

- I** *Allegro non troppo*
- II** *Andante moderato*
- III** *Allegro giocoso*
- IV** *Allegro energico e passionato*

Brahms thought that the symphony represented the ultimate challenge in musical composition and constantly looked to emulate some of Beethoven's success. It took him over twenty years to finish writing his First Symphony. He was characteristically diffident about his Fourth when it was completed in 1885, although it met with considerable success when he conducted its first performance.

This symphony illustrates the way in which Brahms employs romantic passion and thematic variety within a tightly

structured classical format. The first movement is in classical sonata form but contains some moments of great drama despite the lyrical nature of its first subject. The second movement is elegiac both in its mournful sound and its six-beat metre, (Richard Strauss said it reminded him of a "funeral procession moving in silence across moonlit heights"). In this movement Brahms makes use of Phrygian mode (an ancient type of scale), showing his reverence for old forms.

The *scherzo* which follows has been described as "perhaps the greatest since Beethoven" and is full of energy and fury. It would not be out of place as a closing movement and Brahms needed to find a complete contrast for the *finale* while maintaining the prevailing tragic tone of the symphony. To this end he turned for inspiration to Bach, taking the bass line from Cantata No. 150, "Nach Dir, Herr, verlanget mich". He used it as the basis for a massive set of thirty-two variations which form a powerful *passacaglia*.

M.D. & P.C.

Our next concert:

Dvorak: Symphony No. 7
Grondahl: Trombone Concerto
(soloist Tom Hammond)

Saturday March 16th 1996
at the Church of St. Mary & St. Chad, Brewood

WOLVERHAMPTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Leader - Martyn Blythe

First Violins

Colin Bates
Katalin Beke
Susan Bellingham
Colin Elton
Coralie Forbes
Jessica Ford
Catherine Hunt
Jo Jordan
Richard Lane

Second Violins

Sara Birchall
Barbara Bostock
Michael Clement
Ken Hawkins
Louise Hunt
Margaret Myatt
Ros Rayner
Jenny Walton
Philip Ward

Violas

Sharon Bayley
Rory Freckleton
Sheila Freeman
Dilys Lane
Philip Turley

Violoncellos

Margaret Bell
Glyn Davies
Sheila Moore
Louise Lawrie
Sheila Moore
Sylvia Ulrich
Maggie Wenham

Basses

John Mason
Jennifer Moore

Flutes

Diana Manasseh
Krista Bromley

Oboes

Richard Anderson
Sally Griffiths

Clarinets

Diana Cotterell
Lynn Sargeant

Bassoons

Jill Sparke
Bryan Shepherd

Horns

Percy Cotterell
Hazel Whitefoot
Robin Hopper
Maurice Hopper

Trumpets

Jeremy Cross
Tony Bayliss

Trombones

Chris Manasseh
Lawrence Hopper
Don Howard

Timpani

Peter Morley

Wolverhampton Symphony Orchestra is registered charity no. 1040991 and is a member of the National Federation of Music Societies.