

The thirty-first concert in the Enterprising series

Guildford
Philharmonic
Orchestra

Guildford Corporation Concerts 1973-74

Civic Hall—Guildford

SATURDAY 10 NOVEMBER 1973

at 7.45 p.m.

**Guildford
Philharmonic
Orchestra**

Leader: HUGH BEAN

**Philharmonic
Choir**

Rodney Friend

Violin

Anthony Roden

Tenor

Vernon Handley

Conductor

This concert is promoted by Guildford Corporation with financial assistance from the Arts Council of Great Britain

Rodney Friend

Rodney Friend, one of the outstanding British violinists of his generation, has pursued a successful double career as soloist and orchestral leader. Born in Yorkshire, he studied at the Royal Academy of Music on an open scholarship awarded to him at the age of twelve and later at the Royal Manchester College of Music, when he became widely known through his solo appearances and broadcasts. He made his London début in 1961, playing the Sibelius Concerto with the Hallé Orchestra under Barbirolli, and he has since appeared as a soloist with most of the major British orchestras, as well as abroad.

He was appointed Leader of the London Philharmonic Orchestra at the remarkably early age of twenty-four, and his leadership has played a major part in achieving the world-wide renown that that Orchestra now has. He has often been engaged as a soloist with the Orchestra, winning warm tributes from the critics.

Mr Friend, who plays a Guarnerius del Gesù violin made in 1731, has also given recitals in Britain and abroad, and has taken master classes for Dutch orchestral violinists in Amsterdam.

Anthony Roden

Anthony Roden studied at the Adelaide Conservatoire, South Australia with Arnold Mathers and later with Donald Munro.

Whilst in Australia he sang many concerts for the Australian Broadcasting Commission. He came to Britain in January 1969, and recommenced his studies at the London Opera Centre, and also with Alexander Young. In September 1969 he gained second place in the S'Hertogenbosch competition, and was thereafter offered several concerts by Hilversum Radio.

After two years on tour with Opera for All, he was engaged by the Glyndebourne Festival Opera, and in 1971 he won the much coveted John Christie Award.

Anthony Roden made his début with the Welsh National Opera Company this year, and in 1974 he will be appearing with the Sadler's Wells Opera Company, and will also return to Holland to sing with Dutch Opera.

Philharmonic Choir

The Philharmonic Choir is the larger of the two choirs under the conductorship of the Musical Director, who acknowledges with thanks the help he has received in training the Choir from Mr. Kenneth Lank, and accompanists Miss Mary Rivers, Miss Patricia Finch and Miss Prudence Edden, and from Mrs. D. W. Wren who has given time to a seating plan to accommodate the Choir.

PROGRAMME

Concerto For Double String Orchestra Tippett b. 1905

Allegro

Adagio (cantabile)

Allegro molto

The first two works in this evening's programme were written within the space of two years. Tippett's Concerto for Double String Orchestra was composed between 1938 and 1939, and Britten's Violin Concerto in the latter year. Both of these composers have shown throughout their careers a need to develop their musical language to keep pace with their similarly developing spiritual worlds. The process is clearer in Britten than in Tippett, but there can be no doubt that many of the seeds later to flower in Tippett's music were planted well and truly in the Concerto for Double String Orchestra. These characteristics are a tautness of rhythms, a similar tautness, not to say muscularity, of melody, and a frequent return to lyricism, a lyricism which eschews sentimentality in the course of a work.

The first movement of the Concerto plunges into a syncopated two part exchange between the two orchestras. The movement proceeds with development of the original material which can be clearly followed by the listener, and in fact ends with a formal, though shortened, recapitulation. This continuous development owes much to the bouncing nature of the first rhythmic idea. The strange thing about Tippett's work is his ability to mould different styles into what becomes a clearly individual language, and

in this movement and the ensuing ones, he has recourse to baroque procedures, rhythms which come to their full flower in the madrigals, and even sonata form in the central development. The force of the first movement gives way to a quiet song-dominated second movement. As the song is repeated, so the accompaniment becomes more complicated, and we realise suddenly that we are hearing a slow version of the syncopated figure from the beginning of the previous movement. The song itself is a beautiful one, and is given to all the sections of the double string choir in turn. The finale, a sort of sonata rondo, is just what is required to round off the work. There is a great sweep of melody related to the second movement, and dancing rhythms related to the first. The rondo can be followed easily: A B A C A B D, for the coda suddenly produces a new theme, rather like a Spiritual, and yet one which, if isolated, bears a strong resemblance to the opening phrase of the second movement's song. This might be considered a formal weakness, but the strength of the idea itself, and the way it soars above the design figure of the finale, achieves a great exhilaration for the end of the work.

**Concerto for Violin and Orchestra,
Op. 15
Britten b. 1913**

Moderato con moto

Vivace

Passacaglia: andante lento

Formal freedom marks the approach of Britten to the Concerto, at least in this particular example. The three movements are quite different in material and mood, and Britten's tremendous ability to create different pictures within the span of the work is amply evidenced. One thing is clear, when formal freedom is the order of the day and the moods are so varied, the solo voice will not be enough to bind a work of this length together. The composer therefore employs two devices in order to give the Concerto its unity. The first is ostinato, a device of which Britten is particularly fond, and the second is the late placing of the cadenza, in which the soloist records earlier material, and this helps to concentrate our feelings about the work. Signs of an ostinato begin the first

movement. The soloist states the first melodic material over the little rhythmic figure of the ostinato, and soon the movement tears itself away from its mould with a repeated note idea. The composer has now given us a lyrical tune, a mysterious ostinato and a repeated note figure from which anything can be made. It is with these elements that he develops the first movement, changing mood constantly and keeping our attention. The vivace is no more settled. It is a savage one-in-a-bar dance with orchestra and soloist constantly answering one another in a percussive three-eight. Later comes a more sinuous section, the soloist in two-four against the orchestra in six-eight, and here Britten's love of Verdi can be heard creeping into the portamento of the soloist's phrases. The quick three-eight returns, and after a passage of extraordinary orchestration with two piccolos, muted strings and solo tuba, the movement ends by leading to the cadenza. The final movement relates to Britten's love of ostinato, because it begins with a passacaglia. Low instruments have the tune at first, and we soon realise that it is not an ordinary passacaglia, for each repetition seems to start from a different harmonic point; sometimes bits of the theme are used instead of the whole theme, and around it the violin explores the development of each fragment or harmonic situation. Eventually, a great statement of the passacaglia on the brass is decorated by the rest of the orchestra, and this climax recedes for the final lento. One of the most beautiful passages that Britten has ever composed closes the Concerto. It is a strange broken procession: repeated chords are given different colours in the orchestration while the soloist utters a broken-phrased lament over each last chord left by the orchestra. This lament seems to end, and its sheer beauty of sound lessens the sadness. It is a strange mood which defies description, and yet brings a wonderful sense of completion to the Concerto.

INTERVAL

During the interval refreshments will be served in the Surrey Room by members of the Concertgoers' Society.

Intimations of Immortality

Gerald Finzi 1901—1956

Gerald Finzi's setting of one of Wordsworth's finest poems was first performed at the Gloucester Festival in 1950.

It had been conceived and partly written before the outbreak of war in 1939, but being then of necessity laid aside it was only taken up again after a break of several years and completed in the year of its production, which happened to coincide with the centenary of Wordsworth's death.

It has been said that in his odes and elegiac poems Wordsworth best exhibits his power of fusing metaphysical thought with lyrical feeling. What makes this statement interesting to us here is: Why should a composer choose to set the work of a philosophical poet, who, to judge by the fact that only two of his poems are called 'Song', took little interest in the composition of verses for music?

Gerald Finzi gave an answer to this question 'It is sometimes argued', he wrote, 'that certain poems, complete and wonderful in themselves, are in no need of musical setting. Such a view may express personal feelings, but by no means the feelings of the composer, if he has been lit by the impact of the words and obsessed by their content.' Let so much suffice by way of thoughts upon the relationship between poet and composer.

The subject matter of this work may be said to continue the argument of the composer's earlier cantata 'Dies Natalis'—words by Thomas Traherne—where the theme is the glory of birth and the perfection of childhood; where there is

only joy and no fear at all. But Wordsworth, standing in the 'light of common day', speaks in a different tone. He speaks as one who having had much experience feels that he is living as part of an immense unbounded system with a height above and a depth beneath. The composer has resolved the wide range and changing moods of the poem into music which can be enjoyed for its own sake even by those to whom Wordsworth's mysticism carries no message.

Preceded by an orchestral introduction the poem is set complete except for stanzas 7 and 8. The omission of these does not disturb the train of thought. 'Wordsworth's repetition in stanza 10, of lines which appear in stanza 3', wrote the composer, 'helps to make for a natural reprise and to balance the contemplative aspect of the music with vigorous contrast'.

IMITATIONS OF IMMORTALITY

From Recollections of Early Childhood

I

There was a time when meadow, grove, and
stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore;—
Turn whereso'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see
no more.

II

The Rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the Rose,
The Moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare;
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;
The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath past away a glory from the
earth.

III

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief:
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong:
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the
steep;
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;
I hear the Echoes through the mountains
throng,
The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
And all the earth is gay;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every Beast keep holiday;—
Thou Child of Joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou
happy
Shepherd-boy!

IV

Ye blessèd Creatures, I have heard the call
 Ye to each other make; I see
 The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
 My heart is at your festival,
 My head hath its coronal,
 The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.
 Oh evil day! if I were sullen
 While Earth herself is adorning,
 This sweet May-morning,
 And the Children are culling
 On every side,
 In a thousand valleys far and wide,
 Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,
 And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm: —
 I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
 —But there's a Tree, of many, one,
 A single Field which I have looked upon,
 Both of them speak of something that is gone:
 The Pansy at my feet
 Doth the same tale repeat:
 Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
 Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

V

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
 The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
 Hath had elsewhere its setting,
 And cometh from afar:
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home:
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing Boy,
 But He
 Beholds the light, and whence it flows,
 He sees it in his joy;
 The Youth, who daily farther from the east
 Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
 And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended;
 At length the Man perceives it die away,
 And fade into the light of common day.

VI

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;
 Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
 And, even with something of a Mother's mind,
 And no unworthy aim,
 The homely Nurse doth all she can
 To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
 Forget the glories he hath known,
 And that imperial palace whence he came.

* * *

IX

O joy! that in our embers
 Is something that doth live,
 That nature yet remembers
 What was so fugitive!

The thought of our past years in me doth breed
 Perpetual benediction: not indeed
 For that which is most worthy to be blest;
 Delight and liberty, the simple creed
 Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
 With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his
 breast: —

Not for these I raise
 The song of thanks and praise;
 But for those obstinate questionings
 Of sense and outward things,
 Fallings from us, vanishings;
 Blank misgivings of a Creature
 Moving about in worlds not realised,
 High instincts before which our mortal Nature
 Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised:
 But for those first affections,
 Those shadowy recollections,
 Which, be they what they may,
 Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
 Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
 Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
 Our noisy years seem moments in the being
 Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,
 To perish never;
 Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
 Nor Man nor Boy,
 Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
 Can utterly abolish or destroy!
 Hence in a season of calm weather
 Though inland far we be,
 Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
 Which brought us hither,
 Can in a moment travel thither,
 And see the Children sport upon the shore,
 And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

X

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
 And let the young Lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound!
 We in thought will join your throng,
 Ye that pipe and ye that play,
 Ye that through your hearts to-day
 Feel the gladness of the May!
 What though the radiance which was once so
 bright
 Be now for ever taken from my sight,
 Though nothing can bring back the hour
 Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the
 flower;

We will grieve not, rather find
 Strength in what remains behind;
 In the primal sympathy
 Which having been must ever be;
 In the soothing thoughts that spring
 Out of human suffering;
 In the faith that looks through death,
 In years that bring the philosophic mind.

XI

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and
 Groves,
 Forebode not any severing of our loves!
 Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
 I only have relinquished one delight
 To live beneath your more habitual sway.
 I love the Brooks which down their channels
 fret,

Even more than when I tripped lightly as they;
The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
Is lovely yet;
The Clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
Another race hath been, and other palms are
won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

William Wordsworth

Saturday 24 November at 7.30 p.m.
in Holy Trinity Church

Guildford Concertgoers' Society
Members' Evening

The Syrinx Wind Ensemble

***Sunday 25 November at 7.00 p.m.**

Introduction and Bridal Procession
from Le Coq d'Or—Rimsky-Korsakov
Piano Concerto No. 3 in D minor—
Rachmaninov

Symphonic Dances—Rachmaninov
Guildford Philharmonic Orchestra
Hugh Bean—Leader

Jeffrey Siegel—Pianoforte
Vernon Handley—Conductor

*Please note the time of this concert