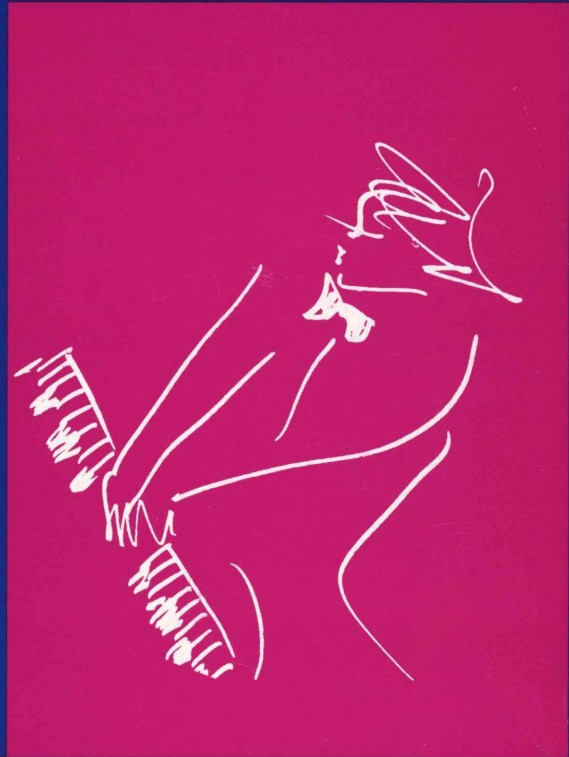


Beethoven Mozart Festival

February - July 1998



London Soloists Chamber Orchestra

Conductor - David Josefowitz

SUPPORTED BY THE FRIDART FOUNDATION

May '98

THURSDAY 21ST MAY 7.30PM, BARBICAN CENTRE

Beethoven Mozart Festival

Beethoven **Overture: Egmont**
Piano Concerto No. 5 in E flat ("Emperor")
Allegro con brio; Largo; Rondo: Allegro - Presto

Interval (20 minutes)

Beethoven **Symphony No. 9 in D minor ("Choral") opus 125**
Allegro ma non troppo, un poco maestoso; Molto vivace; Adagio molto e cantabile; Allegro assai
with **Mary Nelson** (soprano); **Jeanette Ager** (mezzo); **Robert Carlin** (tenor); **Julian Saïpe** (bass)

Egmont is a five-act tragedy by Goethe. The action of the play takes place in 16th century Brussels and concerns the efforts of Count Egmont to liberate the Netherlanders from the Spanish Hapsburg yoke. He is in love with Clärchen, a burgher's daughter, who tries to help him organize a revolt, without success, and who eventually commits suicide. Towards the end of the play, Egmont, about to be executed, has a vision in which Clärchen appears to him as the personification of freedom; as the vision fades and he awakes, he proclaims that he is happy to die for freedom, the cause for which he has lived and fought, and he prophesies the coming of victory. Beethoven's music to the play dates from 1810, and was commissioned for a production at the Hofburgtheater in Vienna that year. The incidental music is unjustly neglected and seldom heard, whereas the overture has become most popular.

The Emperor Piano Concerto, the last Beethoven composed, dates from 1809. The nickname was not Beethoven's – as a staunch republican it was a word he particularly disliked – but it does have an historical connection in as much as Beethoven was working on the concerto when, in the late spring of 1809, Napoleon marched into Vienna. The key of E flat, however is one that prompted a certain breadth in Beethoven's music – as is also found in the *Eroica Symphony* – and if the description *Emperor* is inappropriate, the term *heroic* aptly describes this aspect of Beethoven's style. The concerto boasts several innovative features: the piano's opening flourish preventing the orchestra from beginning its customary exposition; the lack of a full-blown cadenza later in the movement; and the linking of the adagio to the rondo finale, with the Rondo theme anticipated in the final bars of the slower tempo. But the most remarkable aspect of the work is its sense of scale and proportion and its balance between symphonic structure and pianistic virtuosity. The pianist is never allowed to flaunt his skills, but they are used to the full to enhance the symphonic writing – the result is a work of majestic, if not imperial splendour. © Ann Manly

Beethoven's work is often divided into three creative periods: the early music, bearing the influence of Haydn and the Viennese school, the middle period in which he was exploring new directions and pushing back the boundaries of the classical style, and the final years which include the late piano sonatas, quartets and the *Ninth Symphony*.

Written in 1823, when Beethoven was totally deaf, this monumental work takes the classical four-movement symphony and stretches the form to its utmost limits. It was by far the longest symphony written to date, and is scored for a large orchestra, four soloists and chorus. The opening is Wagnerian in concept as the main theme is gradually moulded from the most basic elements, the interval of a fifth, before blazing forth portentously in the full orchestra. The whole movement, one of the longest that Beethoven ever wrote, is a struggle between opposing forces, tensing and relaxing as the human spirit battles against its fate. Beethoven reversed the traditional order of the central movements, placing the scherzo first. It is a powerful, rhythmical assault, displacing the apparently foursquare phrasing with accents and additional bars, to create an unsettling sense of massive forward propulsion. The fluid trio section is in an altogether more tranquil vein. The glorious hymn-like slow movement is a set of variations on a serene melody first stated in the violins, each variation melting almost imperceptibly into the next to create a seamless line of radiant beauty.

The great orchestral scream that opens the finale heralds a series of recitatives in the lower strings, while brief excerpts of the preceding movements are presented before being summarily dismissed. The famous *Ode to Joy* melody is simply announced before being subjected to a series of variations. The baritone soloist emulates the opening instrumental recitatives and the quartet of soloists, choir and orchestra close the symphony in a mood of unbridled optimism.

Beethoven himself was never completely happy with the inclusion of the human voice in the finale and even contemplated reworking the material into a purely instrumental version. However, response to the premiere was broadly speaking favourable, a soloist recalled that she had to lead Beethoven by the hand onto the stage to receive the applause: "His turning around, and the sudden conviction thereby forced on everybody that he had not done so before because he could not hear what was going on, acted like an electric shock on all those present, and a volcanic explosion of sympathy and admiration followed, which was repeated again and again, and seemed as if it would never end." © James Pestell 1997

Abbey Simon has been hailed as a super-virtuoso whose appearances in the concert halls of the world are eagerly anticipated not only by music lovers, but by professional musicians who come to hear him spin his own particular brand of magic. Over the last 50 years, he has performed with virtually all the major orchestras in the music capitals of six continents. He is recognised as one of the grand masters of the piano. Through the years, critics have hailed Abbey Simon's mastery and noted that his playing has its roots in the great pianists of the past. Improvising at the piano at the age of three, he had natural perfect pitch and started taking lessons at the age of five. After studying with David Saperton, son-in-law of the celebrated pianist Leopold Godowsky, Saperton took him to play for the great pianist Josef Hofmann. At the age of eight, Abbey Simon was accepted by Hofmann as his scholarship student at the Curtis Institute, where he trained with fellow classmates Jorge Bolet and Sidney Foster.

On graduating from the Curtis Institute, Abbey Simon won numerous awards and made his official debut in New York's Town Hall as winner of the prestigious Naumberg Award. Following this success he performed at the Carnegie Hall a number of times before his debut tour of Europe in 1949. His success in Europe was so great that he did not return to the USA for some twelve years.

Abbey Simon has been the recipient of the Federation of Music Clubs Award, the National Orchestral Association Award, and the Ford Foundation Award. Following his debut in Europe he received the Harriet Cohen Medal and the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Award. One of the most recorded classical artists of all time, he has recorded Liszt, Schumann, Chopin, Brahms, all of the Rachmaninov concertos and the entire works of Ravel (on Philips, EMI, Vox and HMV). He has become so closely associated with the music of Chopin that the International Chopin Society invited him to be the only guest artist at their recent gala benefit concert in New York, followed by a Chopin performance at the Kennedy Centre which drew rave reviews.

Guildford Philharmonic Choir was founded in 1947 by the Borough of Guildford to perform major works from the choral repertoire. The choir has grown in stature and reputation under the batons of such eminent British musicians as Sir Charles Groves, Vernon Handley and Sir David Willcocks, the latter being the Choir's President. As well as performing standard choral repertoire, the Choir has developed an interest in 20th century British music and has recorded Gerald Finzi's *Intimations of Immortality* and Patrick Hadley's *The Trees So High* under Vernon Handley. They performed Britten's *War Requiem* with the Freiburger Bachchor in Freiburg Munster in 1993, and took part in the VE Day celebrations in front of HM The Queen in Hyde Park. Last weekend they sang Handel's *Israel in Egypt* in Freiburg. Their Chorusmaster is Jeremy Backhouse.

Conductor **David Josefowitz** studied music and science in Berlin, Switzerland and the USA, receiving a Ph.D. for research into plastics for the record industry. In 1946 he co-founded the Concert Hall Record Club and produced over 2,000 LPs - including firsts such as Vivaldi's Four Seasons - winning over 50 international awards. He began conducting in the 1960s, recording with Frankfurt and Hamburg Radio, later with the Vienna State Symphony, Paris Opera, and Monte Carlo Orchestras. The artists with whom he worked - Pierre Monteux, Markevitch, Schuricht, Walter Goehr and Fritz Busch - enhanced David's musical development, and he now encourages young talent through the LSCO.

London Soloists Chamber Orchestra comprises some of Britain's most talented musicians, many of whom have embarked on successful careers as solo artists. They perform regularly at the South Bank Centre, the Barbican and St Martin-in-the-Fields, and have appeared at the Wigmore Hall and St John's Smith Square. They have toured Spain, Italy, Switzerland and France, performed at festivals and broadcast on Swiss and French Radio.

Violin 1

Martin Smith
Elizabeth Williams
Imogen Taylor
Roy Theaker
Helen Cox
Andrew Bernadi
Padraic Savage
Maria Cooper

Violin 2

Ulrike Kipp
Daniel Mullin
Tomas Wanat
Alison Strange
David Williams
Lucy Cantrill

Viola

Stephanie Chambers
Sue Appel
Rachael Arning
Jong On Lau

Cello

Andrew Hines
Penny Bradshaw
Emma Black
Duncan Moulton
Kalina Krusteva

Double Bass

Michael Mansbridge
Joe Berfy

Flute

Jane Koster
Jane Harris
Belinda Dunn

Oboe

Victoria Brawn
Clare Hoskins

Clarinet

Mandy Burvill
Barry Deacon

Bassoon

Robert Garrigos
Jo Turner
Daniel Roberts

Horn

Kevin Elliott
Christine Nørsworthy
Terry Shew
Andrew Sutton

Trumpet

Julian Brewer
Alex Cromwell

Trombone

Amos Miller
David Whitehouse
Omar Khokher

Timpani

Paul Philbert

Percussion

Mark Taylor
Matthew King
Jason Holling

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Thursday 26 February 7.30pm

St Martin-in-the-Fields

Mozart Eine Kleine Nachtmusik

Beethoven Violin Concerto

Beethoven Symphony No. 3 (Eroica)

Wednesday 4 March 7.30pm

Purcell Room

Mozart

Piano Concerto No. 9 K271 (Jeunehomme)

Rondo for violin K269

Sinfonia Concertante

Symphony No. 37

Monday 16 March 7.45pm

Queen Elizabeth Hall

Mozart Overture: Don Giovanni

Beethoven Piano Concerto No. 3

Mozart Concert-rondo K382

Beethoven Symphony No. 2

Thursday 2 April 7.30pm

St Martin-in-the-Fields

Verdi Requiem

Saturday 25th April 7.30pm

St Martin-in-the-Fields

Beethoven

Overture: Coriolan

Piano Concerto No. 4

Symphony No. 6 (Pastoral)

Saturday 9th May 7.30pm

St Martin-in-the-Fields

Mozart Overture: The Marriage of Figaro

Beethoven Piano Concerto No. 1

Mozart Horn Concerto No. 3

Beethoven Symphony No. 5

Wednesday 13th May 7.30pm

Purcell Room

Mozart

Divertimento K138

Piano Concerto K449

Violin Concerto No. 3

Symphony No. 29 K201

Thursday 21st May 7.30pm

Barbican Centre

Beethoven

Overture: Egmont

Piano Concerto No. 5 (Emperor)

Symphony No. 9 (Choral)

Friday 5th June 7.30pm

St Martin-in-the-Fields

Mozart Overture: The Magic Flute

Beethoven Piano Concerto No. 6 in D

Beethoven Concert Rondo for Piano

Mozart Symphony No. 35 (Haffner)

Monday 15th June 7.30pm

Barbican Centre To benefit **mencap**

Leopold Mozart Trumpet Concerto

Beethoven Triple Concerto

Mozart Concerto for two pianos

Beethoven Symphony No. 8

Friday 26th June 7.30pm

St Martin-in-the-Fields

Mozart Flute Concerto

Beethoven Piano Concerto No. 2

Mozart Violin Concerto No. 5

Mozart Symphony No. 40

Saturday 4th July 7.30pm

St Martin-in-the-Fields

Beethoven Romance for violin

Mozart Piano Concerto No. 19 K459

(Coronation)

Mozart Coronation Mass K317

Beethoven Choral Fantasy

 **Barbican Centre**

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