

GORTON
PHILHARMONIC
SOCIETY

131st Year



CONCERT

MANCHESTER TOWN HALL

FRIDAY 10TH MAY, 1985

7.30p.m.

Conductors Colin Touchin
Stephen Threlfall
Leader Elaine da Costa
Soloist James Stocken
(organ)

PROGRAMME OF ENGLISH MUSIC

Overture 'Iolanthe' Sir Arthur Sullivan
(1842-1900)

Iolanthe...or 'The Peer and the Peri'... was produced at the Savoy Theatre, London and at the Standard Theater, New York on the same date, 25th November 1882. The overture is the only one of the series which Sullivan wrote himself - the others were 'cobbled' together by various musical directors - usually at the last minute. Therefore we can discern a skilful composer at work in the magical opening, the lightness of the rhythms and the counterpoint, all making the best of the overture.

Selection 'Merrie England' Sir Edward German
(1862-1936)

Originally called Edward German Jones, this English composer was educated in Chester and returned home to Whitchurch where he founded and conducted a band and studied organ and violin. In 1888 he became musical director of the Globe Theatre, writing incidental music. This opera to a libretto by Basil Hood, was produced in London, at the Savoy Theatre, in 1902.

Concerto for organ and orchestra George Frederic Handel
Op. 4 No. 6 in B flat Major (1685-1759)

Andante - Allegro: Larghetto: Allegro Moderato:

This work was originally written for the harp and was used in that form in 1736 in 'Alexander's Feast' where it stood for the musician of earlier times playing a lyre. The top written note is too high for most contemporary English organs, and a transposed version by Handel himself exists. The sparseness of the writing for the orchestra (flutes and strings) leads one to think that it might have been merely a harp sonata at first and expanded for concert use: an intriguing gem from a great composer.

Suite in E flat Gustav Holst
(1874-1934)

Chaconne: Intermezzo: March.

This is one of two suites which Holst wrote for military band, which marked the beginning of the long road to public approval which this ensemble has trodden - nowadays the movement spearheaded by the British Association of Wind Bands and Ensembles (started in Manchester recently) is a well-known and positive force. This evening we are playing an orchestration by Gordon Jacob.

INTERVAL (15 minutes)

Suite 'Things to come'

Sir Arthur Bliss
(1891-1975)

Ballet for children: Theme of reconstruction: March.

This suite of three pieces from the Bliss score to the film of H.G. Wells' 'Things to come' dates from 1935: the effect of the music in the context of the film is utterly compelling and as dramatic as anything ever written for the cinema. When a real composer writes for films, the art takes on a new level of quality - Prokofiev, Walton and Hermann are three who all created masterpieces of music for films, and this evening's example is justifiably held as highly.

Serenade for Strings, Op.-20
(conducted by Stephen Threlfall)

Sir Edward Elgar
(1857-1934)

Allegro piacevole: Larghetto: Allegretto:

The earliest, and most promising of his youthful works, one of which Elgar himself was particularly proud. Complete mastery of the string orchestra, subtle control of dynamic effects, and an emotional and expressive depth far beyond its slim structure mark this as one of the great small works; the central elegiac Larghetto is the filling in a sandwich of sensitivity and optimism - the brief finale sums up and recalls the first movement's music.

March 'Pomp and Circumstance No.1' Sir Edward Elgar

This all time favourite march, popular at Proms throughout the country, was written as the first of a projected set of six, but Elgar fell one short of his target; his main aim, however, he did achieve - to write a good piece of music which happened to be a march, treating the form on a large scale. The words 'Land of Hope and Glory' were added later to the trio section: please join in tonight, the second time round!

We are pleased to welcome STEPHEN THRELFALL tonight as conductor of the Elgar 'Serenade'. He is, of course, a former leader of 'The Gorton' 'cello section before becoming a permanent member of the B.B.C. Philharmonic Orchestra.

In July 1983, Stephen appeared as soloist, along with Tom Bangbala, our former leader (also now of the B.B.C. Philharmonic) in the Brahms Double concerto at Stockport Town Hall

JAMES STOCKEN is 17 years old and studies with Derrick Cantrell at Chetham's School of Music. He comes from Rugby, and before coming to Chetham's in 1984, attended Southwell Minster School where he was a cathedral chorister and studied the organ with Kenneth Beard.
