

**GORTON
PHILHARMONIC
SOCIETY**

127th YEAR

OCT. 30TH 1981.

ORCHESTRAL CONCERT

STOCKPORT TOWN HALL

FRIDAY 30th OCTOBER 1981 7.45 p.m.

Conductor . John Crosdale
Leader John Wilson
Soloist Murray McLachlan
(piano)

PROGRAMME

Plymouth Hoe JOHN ANSELL

We begin our concert this evening with a rousing Edwardian work for full orchestra. The piece is subtitled "A nautical overture" and paints a musical portrait of that area of Devon which has played such a vital part in our naval history since the time of Drake.

Chanson de Matin ELGAR

Born in 1857, Edward Elgar has been described as the "man who drew English music out of its 200 year sleep". As the son of a music teacher, the young Edward received a sound training on the violin and piano. He left school at 15 and worked in a law office for a year, but soon realised that he wanted to be a professional musician. His career had an inauspicious beginning, as director of the orchestra at the local lunatic asylum. Elgar had to work hard to gain national acclaim but some works from his early days have survived and achieved lasting popularity. This charming little piece is one of them.

Variations on a theme of Paganini RACHMANINOV

Sergei Rachmaninov was born in Russia in 1873 and died in America in 1943. As a music student he was famed for his prodigious talent for both composition and the piano and by the age of 21 was famed throughout Russia. He suffered an eclipse in popularity after the publication of his first symphony, and this led him to consult a hypnotist; the beloved second piano concerto followed soon afterwards. His work became increasingly popular in the West and in 1935 he entered self-imposed exile in the USA. The work we are to hear this evening dates from 1934 and has remained one of his masterpieces. After an initial flourish, the original Paganini theme (much borrowed by other composers) is presented very simply and then is followed by a set of twenty-four brilliant variations. On one occasion, the theme is combined with the solemn intoning of the "Dies Irae" on brass. In the eighteenth variation (probably the most famous) the theme is inverted to provide Rachmaninov with the gorgeous lyrical melody. Although branded as bourgeois and decadent by his native Russia, his work has retained its popularity with audiences.

INTERVAL

Polovtsian Dances "Prince Igor" BORODIN

Alexander Borodin was born in Russia in 1833 and his childhood was divided between passions for music, and scientific experiment. Initially, he studied science and was highly successful and travelled Europe to further his studies. His mother, however, had always continued to encourage his musical talent and in 1862 when he returned to St. Petersburg, Borodin met Balakirev who encouraged him to compose seriously and from then until his death in 1887 he devoted himself to music. Of his output, the Opera "Prince Igor" represents probably his best known work although it was never finished. His music has an Eastern flavour to it stemming from his widespread use of oriental modes and is full of life and brilliantly orchestrated. The Polovtsian Dances from "Prince Igor" have remained a favourite with audiences both on stage and in the concert hall. Although tonight we will hear them in their purely orchestral form, a choral version does also exist. Many of the melodies from Prince Igor gained a new popularity when they provided the basis for the recently revived musical "Kismet".

Capriol Suite PETER WARLOCK

Born Philip Heseltine in 1894 and educated at Eton, he became known as a writer under that name. As a composer, he changed his name to Peter Warlock, and found fame under that name also. As a teenager in France, he met and befriended the English composer Delius, who was then living there and who had a profound influence on him. Most of Warlock's compositions were written between 1917 and his death in 1930, (an apparent suicide from gas poisoning). He did much to revive Elizabethan music and wrote widely for the voice and for small chamber ensembles. The Capriol Suite, a set of short pieces for string orchestra is one of his outstanding compositions.

Pomp and Circumstance No. 4 ELGAR

Although international recognition was slow to come, Elgar realised it with his set of military marches with the general title "Pomp and Circumstance". Although No. 1 has always been the most popular, we offer no apologies for performing No. 4 this evening for, in the year of the Royal Wedding, this was the piece selected by the Prince and Princess of Wales to be played as they left the Cathedral.