
MUSIC AT ST.AUGUSTINE'S

DULWICH ORCHESTRA

Conductor

STUART DUNLOP

Leader

LYNN COOK

Soprano

MARIE PROST

Bassoon

DAMIAN BRASINGTON

Saturday December 9th 1989 at 7.30 p.m.

MENDELSSOHN - OVERTURE: THE HEBRIDES

Understandably one of the most popular of Overtures The Hebrides, or Fingal's Cave as it is often known, was the fruit of the composer's visit to Scotland. In common with the Scottish and Italian Symphonies, it is a distillation through Mendelssohn's fecund musical imagination of sights, sounds and impressions and therefore although the seascape is vividly evoked the overture could share Beethoven's summing up of his own Pastoral Symphony: "More an expression of feeling than tone painting".

BEETHOVEN: SCENE AND ARIA - Ah! Perfido Op. 65

As is the case with a number of Beethoven's works, Ah! Perfido belies its late opus number, dating from 1796 - at least three or four years before the First Symphony (opus 21 !). Beethoven specifically studied the setting of Italian words (almost mandatory for a composer of that time and place since all operas except Singspiel tended to be in Italian) and this is one of the results of those labours.

It is an heroic scene reminiscent of the parting of Dido and Aeneas. The heroine is caught between the desire to call down the vengeance of the gods on her departed lover and the desire to die herself for the love of him.

-----INTERVAL-----

CARL MARIA VON WEBER : BASSOON COCERTO IN F op.75

Allegro non troppo
Adagio
Rondo - Allegro

By turns grand, tender and mischievous, Weber's

Bassoon Concerto is the legacy of a composer in empathy with the soul of an instrument.

H.C. Robbins Landon said of Haydn's Symphony No 104 that it was the last symphony in which the aspirations of the composer and the taste of the public were in complete agreement. While Weber's work may not be the last of its kind to gain approval, throw in the gratitude of the soloist and Robbins Landon's description is not far wide of the mark here !

BEETHOVEN : SYMPHONY NO. 1 IN C op. 21

1. Adagio molto - Allegro con brio
2. Andante cantabile con moto
3. Menuetto : Allegro molto e vivace
4. Adagio - Allegro molto e vivace

Beethoven's First Symphony was premiered on April 2nd 1800 and presumably composed in the period immediately preceding. The volcanic energy characteristic of Beethoven's early and middle periods is everywhere abundant, not least in the opening - an extended deception as to the home key (which is only established with conviction at the start of the Allegro).

The splendid trumpet and drums character of the first movement gives way to an Andante which is most definitely not a "slow movement" and has a determined, purposeful quality.

The Italian term "scherzo" means, literally, a joke. The fact that the Third Movement is called a Minuet and not a Scherzo is a bigger joke by far (try to imagine dancing to it!).

The Finale opens with a wonderful coyness which reveals an Allegro of an ebullience which is scarcely ever clouded by introspection or care and finishes in fine style.