As part of the Festival of Labour 1962

the Labour Party presents

PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA

GIULINI

RUBINSTEIN

June 17, 1962

ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL

General Manager: T. E. Bean, C.B.E.

PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA

LEADER: HUGH BEAN

CARLO MARIA GIULINI

HAYDN	Symphony No. 104 in D ('London')
MOZART	Piano Concerto in G, K.453

TCHAIKOVSKY	Piano Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor
STRAVINSKY	Suite, 'The Firebird'

ARTUR RUBINSTEIN

Sunday, June 17, 1962, at 7.30 p.m.

This concert is presented by the Labour Party, which is grateful for the assistance given by the Philharmonia Concert Society Ltd (Artistic Director: Walter Legge)

Programme One Shilling and Sixpence

I am very pleased that this Concert has been organized and sponsored by our Party as one of the most important events during the Festival of Labour.

We shall be listening to a programme of classical music interpreted, with an orchestra of superb quality, by one of the greatest pianists and one of the finest conductors of our generation.

I am sure that this evening's performance will be immensely appreciated by the many visitors to the Festival as a rare and memorable experience.

Hugh Gaitskell

PROGRAMME NOTES

BY MOSCO CARNER

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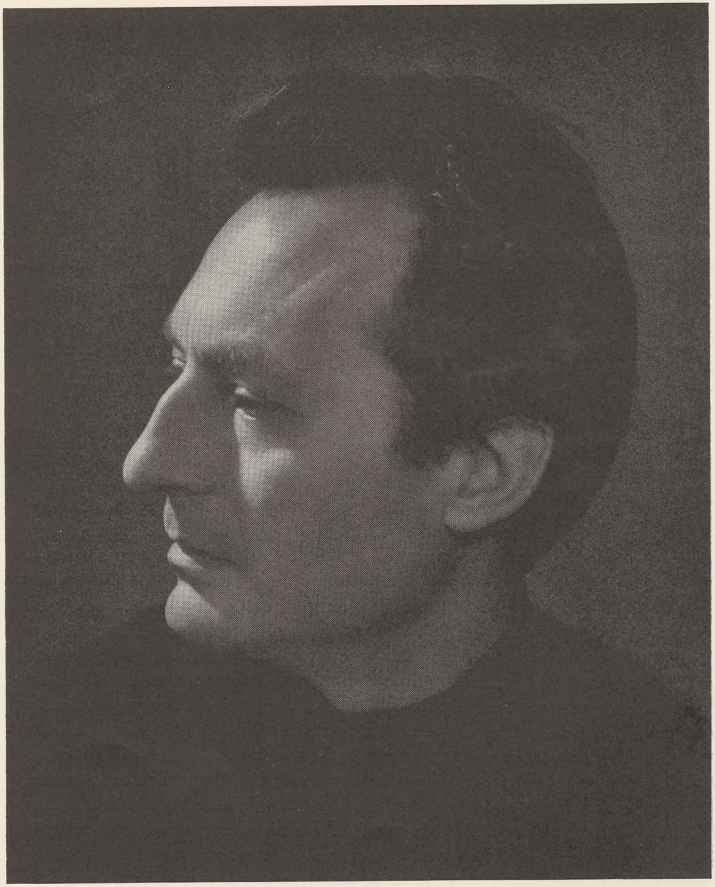
Symphony No. 104 in D ('London') **Haydn**
1732–1809

Adagio – Allegro
Andante
Menuetto: Allegro
Allegro spiritoso

Haydn's first visit to London in 1791–2, undertaken at the invitation of the impresario and violinist Salomon, proved so triumphant a success that two years later, in 1794, he returned to take part in a series of subscription concerts organized by Salomon. Yet for some reason the impresario decided to discontinue these concerts in the following January, but Haydn, far from being left high and dry, appeared soon after in a newly founded and highly successful enterprise—the Opera Concerts at the King's Theatre, Haymarket, which were under the direction of the famous violinist Viotti. It was for these concerts that Haydn wrote his last three symphonies with which he completed the set of twelve known as the 'London' or 'Salomon' Symphonies. This evening's symphony appears to have been written especially for a concert given for the composer's benefit—an occasion on which we find the following remark in his diary: 'The hall was filled with a distinguished audience. The whole society was extremely pleased and so was I. I netted four-thousand florins on this evening. This one can only make in England.' These concerts were organized on a scale hitherto unknown in London, with an orchestra comprising sixty instrumentalists. These sumptuous means, and also the occasion for which he composed it, largely explain the remarkable character of Haydn's last symphony. There is an air of festive brilliance about it, it is more spacious than the rest of his late symphonies, and his invention was perhaps nowhere more felicitous than in this work, which in fact represents the crowning achievement of Haydn's career as a symphonist.



[*Photo: Lotte Meitner-Graf*

CARLO MARIA GIULINI

The first movement opens with a solemn introduction which recalls an overture to an *opera seria:* a tutti call in *ff* is repeated three times and is each time followed by a meditative continuation in *p*. But this solemn mood is completely contradicted by the sprightliness and vivacious humour of the ensuing *Allegro* in which virtually the entire material derives from one principal idea. The *Andante* is in variation form and Haydn has scarcely written anything as poetic and as delicate in orchestral colouring as this movement. The third movement is a Minuet only in name, for it is in the character of a stamping German Dance, with strong accents mostly on the third beat of the bar to underline the heavy tread. The Trio is by contrast a smoothly flowing piece in B flat whose second section displays an ingenious contrapuntal combination of the two limbs of the theme. Like the opening movement, the Finale is monothematic and is based on a theme which Haydn derived from the popular Croatian folk song, *Oj Jelena.* The music provides a most delightful instance of Haydn's irrepressible sense of fun and boisterous comedy.

Piano Concerto in G, K.453 **Mozart**
1756–1791

Allegro
Andante
Allegretto

Mozart wrote no fewer than twenty-seven piano concertos—a prodigious number even for so prolific a composer as the Salzburg master. How do we account for this striking number and the concentration on the medium of the keyboard concerto while Mozart displayed only a limited and temporary interest in the violin concerto of which he wrote only five? Mozart was himself a pianist and one of the greatest of his age; his reputation dated in fact back to the years of his early youth when under the tutelage of his father he undertook several European tours as an infant prodigy. Later his fame as a virtuoso tended indeed to obscure his achievements as a creative musician. He wrote the majority of his piano concertos for his own use, performing them mostly at his so-called Academies or subscription concerts in Vienna. They were in the first place a means of gaining a livelihood, but it is no exaggeration to say that, although utilitarian in purpose, they represent Mozart's instrumental genius at its most imaginative and wide-ranging, and with them he laid the foundation for the modern piano concerto from Beethoven to Bartók.

The Concerto in G, K.453 (April 1784) was written for Barbara Ployer, a gifted pupil of Mozart's. Musically it crowns the series of concertos written during that miraculous year of 1784 and is in fact a unique work. It is more intimate and more subtle than its companions, it welds piano and orchestra into a closer unity, and shows a most ambiguous character being full of hidden tears and hidden laughter. Sadness and happiness here blend in a way which Mozart rarely attempted in any other work. The music seems to spring from unfathomable depths of feeling and the flow of invention is astonishing. Beethoven unquestionably took it as his point of departure for his own G major Piano Concerto which must, however, be called powerful and robust in comparison with the delicate and inward character of Mozart's work.

The first movement is largely in the vein of a march, but how sublimated and refined the march-like features have become under Mozart's hand! And while it conforms to orthodoxy in its overall architecture, in the detailed formal design it goes its own way, as indeed do all the first movements of Mozart's great piano concertos. Thus the soloist is given, in addition to the second subject, a theme of his own which in the exposition and recapitulation is entirely reserved for him. Again, the development section belongs to those fantasias in which Mozart probes into deeper, more inward emotions, with unceasing modulations into remote keys (mostly in minor) and with fleeting melodic phrases of a sad character.

The *Andante* is in musical substance and emotional expression at least equal, if not indeed superior, to the first movement. It is a profound and most remarkable piece which, instead of introducing contrast to the preceding *Allegro*, carries on its thoughts. Serenity and melancholy are blended to perfection. The opening theme is like a question, and Mozart poses this question five times, each time answering it differently. The scoring is a masterly study in the most subtle orchestral shades, with the piano and the woodwind frequently engaging in a dialogue of muted tones.

The Finale consists of five variations on a charming child-like theme which belongs to the same sphere from which later the Papageno music was to spring. It begins with the notes emitted by Mozart's pet starling which he had bought shortly before the composition of the concerto. (He was very fond of his *Vogel Stahr*, and when it died, gave it a grave in his garden, with an inscription in verse.)

Var. 1 belongs almost entirely to the soloist.

Var. 2 is equally divided between soloist and orchestra, with a brilliant triplet accompaniment on the piano.

Var. 3. While the first two variations represented merely embellishments of the theme, in the third it is subjected to transformation.

Var. 4 is in the minor key and marked by an intensely melancholy expression. The

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texture is woven of chromatic contrapuntal lines and the piano has heavy syncopations. The piece approximates to the 'character variation' of Beethoven.

Var. 5 is in a vigorous vein and ends in rich polyphony.

The movement is rounded off by a *Finale-Presto* of considerable length and vividly recalls the spirit of *opera buffa*.

INTERVAL

Piano Concerto No. 1 in B flat minor, Op. 23 **Tchaikovsky**
1840–1893

Allegro ma non troppo e molto maestoso—Allegro con spirito
Andantino semplice
Allegro con fuoco

Tchaikovsky was thirty-four when he wrote the first and most successful of his three piano concertos (No. 3 is one movement only, derived from a discarded symphony, and it was possibly intended to be followed by two more movements). The composer was then professor of theory at the Moscow Conservatory, a post for which its founder and head, Nicholas Rubinstein, had engaged him a short while before. Not being a pianist, Tchaikovsky thought it advisable to consult Rubinstein about certain passages which he considered on his own admission 'technically impracticable, ungrateful or ineffective' and he needed 'a severe critic but at the same time one friendly disposed' towards him. Rubinstein, as it turned out, proved not only severe but unfriendly to the extent of completely damning the concerto, declaring it 'worthless and absolutely unplayable . . . the passages manufactured and, withal, clumsy as to be beyond correction, the composition itself bad, trivial and commonplace'. And to add insult to injury, he suggested that Tchaikovsky had stolen from others and that 'only two or three pages had any value, all the rest should be either destroyed or entirely rewritten'.

There is no doubt that at the time Rubinstein sincerely meant what he had said and presumably thought he was doing his young friend and colleague a service by being so

cruelly frank with him. It took Tchaikovsky the best part of four years to forget this incident. The first move for a reconciliation came from Rubinstein who admitted with a disarming generosity of spirit that he had been completely at fault over the concerto and had failed to recognize its beauty and effectiveness on that regrettable occasion. The irony of it all was that subsequently he became one of its most ardent and successful champions in Russia and abroad. Tchaikovsky had originally intended to dedicate the concerto to Rubinstein but on account of the quarrel changed his mind, inscribing it with a dedication to Hans von Bülow, the great pianist and conductor, who was a great admirer of the composer and one of the first to make the work known in Germany.

Though the first movement is in B flat minor, the introduction is cast in the key of D flat major, and it is most strange that its big tune, which is one of Tchaikovsky's finest inspirations, should not have been made use of later in the movement; it remains a mere episode, in spite of the pomp and circumstance with which it is introduced. The following *Andantino* is remarkable in that it combines a slow movement with a scherzo, its middle section being a *Prestissimo* in six-eight which recalls the style of Tchaikovsky's ballet music. Its attractive tune derives from a French ditty, *Il faut s'amuser, danser et rire*, popular in Russia in those days, and according to the composer's brother Modest, he incessantly whistled it about the house. The Finale is in the character of a ferocious Cossack dance, the fiery theme of the opening deriving from a Ukrainian song, *Come, come, Ivanka!*

Suite, 'The Firebird' **Stravinsky**
Born 1882

Introduction; The Firebird and its Dance
The Princesses' Round (Khorovod)
Infernal Dance of King Katchei
Lullaby
Finale

The Firebird, which was Stravinsky's first ballet music and the first he wrote for Diaghilev's celebrated company, was first produced in Paris in June 1910. It brought the twenty-year old composer a great personal triumph and was responsible for his future collaboration with Diaghilev, a collaboration to which we owe two supreme masterpieces of modern choreographic art, *Petrushka* and *The Rite of Spring*. Stravinsky subsequently extracted two concert suites from *The Firebird*, music the second of which,

to be performed tonight, consists of five numbers and is scored for a medium-sized orchestra.

The plot of this *conte dansé* was worked out by Diaghilev's choreographer Fokine, and is based on an old Russian fairy-tale in which a bird with a plumage like fire acts the part of the good fairy, while a green-taloned ogre, Katchei, a sort of Russian Klingsor, is the villain of the piece. Katchei holds in captivity twelve princesses, and any man who happens to stray into Katchei's enchanted garden is turned into stone. In the ballet, a young prince wanders one night into this garden (*Introduction*), and sees the fire-bird fluttering round a tree of golden apples (*The Firebird and its Dance*). He captures the bird but releases it for the forfeit of one of its golden feathers, which possesses magic powers. Next enter the princesses and divert themselves in a dance (*The Princesses' Round*). Into this charming scene there suddenly burst the ogre and his monsters, bent on the destruction of the prince (*Infernal Dance*). But the prince, remembering the magic powers of the golden feather, waves it and thus summons the firebird to his aid. The bird dances a slow dance lulling the monsters to sleep (*Lullaby*). It then reveals to the prince the secret hiding-place of the casket which contains Katchei's soul in the form of an egg. The prince smashes the egg and the ogre expires. Daylight shines on a happy scene: the firebird flies to freedom, the captive princesses are released, and the prince marries the most beautiful of them (*Finale*).

Like Rimsky-Korsakov in his fantastic operas, *Katchei* and *The Golden Cockerel*, Stravinsky, who was his pupil, contrasts the human and the supernatural elements of the story by associating the former with diatonic and the latter with chromatic motives. And like Rimsky-Korsakov, Stravinsky makes use of Russian folk tunes, as in the Dance of the princesses and the Hymn of Thanksgiving in the Finale. But in sheer orchestral virtuosity and in the creation of novel and very striking sonorities, the pupil far outshines his master. Where Stravinsky is entirely himself is in the tremendous rhythmic vitality of the Infernal Dance, with its ferocious syncopations. *The Firebird* is a symphonic ballet: not only the dancers' movement but the atmosphere and the characters are translated into orchestral terms with such resourcefulness that the music can stand on its own feet and makes a splendid piece in the concert hall.

LCC REQUIREMENTS

(i) The public may leave at the end of the performance or exhibition by all exit doors and such doors must at that time be open.

(ii) All gangways, corridors, staircases and external passages intended for exit shall be kept entirely free from obstruction, whether permanent or temporary.

(iii) Persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any of the gangways intersecting the seating, or to sit in any of the other gangways. If standing be permitted in the gangways at the sides and rear of the seating, it shall be limited to the numbers indicated in the notices exhibited in those positions.

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